

Impact of Isis on Radical Groups of Southeast Asia Countries

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Abstract

Radicalization is not a new phenomenon in Southeast Asia. Islamic radicalization has increased and became a significant issue in Southeast Asia since 2001. Faith-based organizations have supported the radical spreading of misinformation, and therefore various measures have many casualties. The development of Islamic radicalism in Southeast Asia is starting to spread in Indonesia, Philippines, and Malaysia, mostly via social media. This research focuses on how the ideology of ISIS affects (re-activated) radical groups in Southeast Asia. More specifically, through discourse text analysis and frame analysis, this research aims to analyze similarities in discourses and frames through their communication campaigns. Besides, how the spreading of Islamic radicalism in Southeast Asia and broadening the scope of knowledge on the impact of Islamic radicalization in other regional countries also become a discussion. While ISIS shrinks in the Middle-East, the researchers argue that in recent years ISIS has started to affiliate with countries in Southeast Asia.

Keywords: *ISIS, Radicalization, Social Media, Southeast Asia, Terror attack, Radical groups*

Abstrak

Radikalisasi bukanlah fenomena baru di Asia Tenggara. Radikalisasi Islam telah meningkat dan menjadi isu penting di Asia Tenggara sejak tahun 2001. Organisasi berbasis agama telah mendukung penyebaran informasi yang radikal secara radikal, dan karenanya berbagai tindakan memiliki banyak korban. Perkembangan radikalisme Islam di Asia Tenggara mulai

menyebarkan di Indonesia, Filipina, dan Malaysia, sebagian besar melalui media sosial. Penelitian ini berfokus pada bagaimana ideologi ISIS mempengaruhi (mengaktifkan kembali) kelompok radikal di Asia Tenggara. Lebih khusus lagi, melalui analisis teks wacana dan analisis bingkai, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kesamaan dalam wacana dan bingkai melalui kampanye komunikasi mereka. Selain itu, bagaimana penyebaran radikalisme Islam di Asia Tenggara dan memperluas ruang lingkup pengetahuan tentang dampak radikalisme Islam di negara-negara kawasan lain juga menjadi bahan diskusi. Sementara ISIS menyusut di Timur Tengah, para peneliti berpendapat bahwa dalam beberapa tahun terakhir ISIS telah mulai berafiliasi dengan negara-negara di Asia Tenggara.

Kata kunci: *ISIS, Radikalisasi, Media Sosial, Asia Tenggara, Serangan Teror, Kelompok Radikal*

INTRODUCTION

There are many radical groups that they want to bring a caliphate system in their countries. This ideological frame is similar to ISIS that calls all Muslims to join the caliphate system. They started making a campaign to reach people who want to join them through social media to people all around the world. Since the Syrian civil war began, ISIS tried to extend in the region, mainly in Iraq and Syria. Many foreign fighters joined ISIS from Europe, Balkans, and Southeast Asia. In this article, the researchers will focus on foreign fighters from South Asian and how ISIS affects Southeast Asian radical

groups. Hundreds of Asians went to Syria and joined ISIS.

Some of them went with their family. Especially this year, ISIS started to focus on Southeast Asia because a massive number of the Muslim population joins ISIS coming from radical groups throughout the countries. Recent magazines and videos ISIS used Asian children to show them that many Southeast Asians already joined, gave them courage, and spread the ideology of ISIS in the region. Last year, there were many terror attacks in Europe and Turkey, even though there was not any attack news since it erupted in the Philippines after the Manchester

attack. Some of the radical groups in the Philippines announced that they accepted the caliphate of ISIS, and they siege the city of Marawi. This issue was in the tenth magazine of ISIS (Rome 10th). They said that ISIS fighters extended in Southeast Asia.

METHODOLOGY

The researchers critically examined how ISIS affects radical groups in Southeast Asia and their campaign progress also how they tried to gain followers in Southeast Asia. This paper analyzed ISIS magazine, statement in 2016-2018 regarding Southeast Asia, and analysis of critical published news about ISIS in Southeast Asia between 2016-2018 to figure out the impact of ISIS in Southeast Asia. the paper reviewed the narrative strategies adopted by the news media. in this study, the researchers used frame analysis and discourse text analysis.

Meanwhile, the international news agency showed that ISIS shrinks. in reality, they are spreading, especially in Southeast Asia. ISIS changes its strategy and starts investing in Southeast Asia. the research is inventive because it examined the magazine of ISIS, which they publish regularly, and international news coverage in a

critical comparison with major events. the main goal of this research is to find out the affiliation of ISIS in Southeast Asia.

RESEARCH METHOD

In 2014, when the civil war in Syria started point for radical group, Syria and Iraq accrued ISIS and leader of ISIS Baghdadi declared his caliphate in June 2014. Baghdadi called, "Global Jihad is gone on to build a global network of affiliates and branches that now stretches from Afghanistan to West Africa, from the Middle-east to Southeast Asia." the most critical factor in easy spreading is social media and online publications in different languages. Recently, ISIS starts to focus on Southeast Asia. It is Southeast Asia with a Muslim majority or substantial Muslim-minority populations that have been the most worried by the effect of Islamic State, because of the number of foreign fighters from the sub-region who have gone to Syria and Iraq. Al Qaeda and ISIS are different. It means they do not collaborate. Their split has had an impact in Southeast Asian radical groups, such as most senior activists of the JI (Jamaatul Islamiyah) network support Al Qaeda's Syrian affiliate Al-Nusra.

Jemaah Islamiyah has a base in Indonesia, which links to the

global jihad vision of Al Qaeda and commits to the establishment of a pan Southeast Asian Islamic state (Ramakrishna: 2017, 3). the statement aims to include Muslim groups in Southeast Asia, especially Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore also some territory of Thailand and even Australia, where Muslim communities located. Another group is Abu Sayyaf (AS) in Southeast Asia bloody attacks in their regions. There is also an Islamist movement, Darul Islam, established by Abu Bakar Ba'asyir and Abdullah Sungkar. the two believed that the Jamaatul Islamiyah (JI) should wage jihad against Indonesia. Some extremist leaders supported the idea of ISIS, such a Ba'asyir and Aman Abdurrahman. However, some of them eschew the concept of ISIS, such as Abdul Rohim and Ridho. Therefore, they left JAT to establish Jamaah Ansharusy Shariah (JAS) (Ramakrishna: 2017). Also, JAS rejected the declaration of ISIS so-called Global caliphate and has even sought to recruit Indonesian fighters for its chief rival, Al-Nusra, in Syria.

The Bali attack rebuilt the threat of radical network to Southeast Asian security, edited deadly attacks by the extremist groups. August 2003 was the attack of the Jakarta Marriott, in September 2004. This attack

happened outside the Australian embassy in Jakarta. in October 2005, there was an attack in Bali, after a couple of years, a suicide attack that targeted Jakarta Ritz-Carlton and the near to Marriott hotel in July 2009 to set up an Islamic State (Hashim: 2015). Their aim was not only in Indonesia, but all of Southeast Asia countries establishing the Islamic States. Since then, radicalization has increased in Southeast Asia and become a severe threat to the regions.

Also, there are some other radical groups in Indonesia, which have similar ideological thinking with ISIS in Indonesia. Hizb-ut Tahrir, the extremist organization, founded by Syrian Omar Bakri Muhammad Al-Muhajiroun in 1938. It is hard to argue all of the members that have a radical ideology. However, there is a potential of radicalization. Al-Muhajiroun believes that countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Indonesia, and Malaysia should be his aim to establish the caliphate (IPAC Report: 2014, 13). the ideology of Hizb-ut Tahrir has been a spread among young people in Southeast Asia. Mainly, Hizb-ut Tahrir started to make links with their supporters and online activities. One of their followers, Fachry, established a

magazine because online magazines and news were an easy way to find followers. He believed that Islam's enemies, particularly America and western countries, controlled the mainstream global media. Thus, it was crucial to establish a magazine to fight in the media.

In 2007, Al-Muhajirun published their first magazine titled "Staying on the Road to Jihad" (IPAC Report: 2014). In the beginning, Fachry and his friends in FAKSI were neutral (*tawaquf*) toward the campaign of ISIS.

Nevertheless, on October 1, 2013, Omar Bakri proclaimed that they supported ISIS. He said that ISIS was the most active group among other Jihadi groups. He believed that Baghdadi descended from the Quraishi, the tribe of the Prophet. He thought that Baghdadi had in-depth religious knowledge, knew for his piety, and was a proven faithful commander (IPAC Report: 2014). After the declaration of Al-Baghdadi, many radical groups accepted and approved his idea regarding global jihad.

Also, the idea of the Islamic State is not a new phenomenon in Indonesia, especially Malang city, East Java, where the ISIS movement in Malang had campaigned for the setting up of a well-prepared

Islamic caliphate. In 2006, a group of people who promoted the idea of an Islamic state in Indonesia sneaked to school and university students and became their mentors. Between 2006 and 2007, they held mass demonstrations on campus under the banner of freedom of expression in support of the Islamic State (TheJakartaPost: 08/08/2014). It means that Indonesia is convenient for the idea of ISIS since many people support the concept of an Islamic state. However, the establishment of Islamic states discussed in the past, with many Islamic thinkers is hard. There is a gap in the idea of an Islamic state. Who would be the leader? How should someone be chosen as caliph? To dispose of those gaps, the ISIS leader of Baghdadi claimed that God wanted him for Muslims all over the world. He used a spiritual way to convince to Muslim join his idea. ISIS leader of Baghdadi made his campaign mostly social media, which is a useful tool current time for spreading ideas and information.

FAKSI (Forum Aktivis Syariat Islam) is a radical youth actively publishing via online websites and supporting ISIS. Salim Mubarak is one of the FAKSI members from Malang, East Java. He went to Syria with his wife and children. When

he arrived in Syria, he changed his name to Abu Jandal Al-Yemeni (IPAC Report: 2014). He fluently spoke Arabic and quickly improved an extensive network within ISIS and helped facilitate arrangements for other Indonesians who wanted to join ISIS, including five of his former students in Malang. When the researcher was teaching in Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang and explaining about ISIS, some of his students gave their testimony. They said that there were some cells of ISIS in which students and local people in Malang (Batu) did propaganda. Batu is one of the best places in Malang, where there are many resorts and villas for internal tourists to come. It means that ISIS members were trying to gain wealthier followers. East part of Java Island is an available spot for ISIS because Java is a region where people are quite open to beliefs. Therefore, ISIS tried to connect with local extremist groups and gain more members in Indonesia.

Another extremist group is JAD (Jamaah Ansharud Daulah) based in Indonesia, and since 2015, JAD has linked with ISIS. Jamaah Ansharud Daulah (JAD), as two other terrorist incidents published by ISIS, was officially responsible for the Jakarta Thamrin attack in January 2016. It

was the first ISIS-inspired attack in Southeast Asia (Sidney: 2016). JAD also perpetrated Kampung Melayu Bombings in May 2017 (Arianti: 2018). All the knives perpetrators attacks in Indonesia outside Poso consulted ISIS online propaganda material because most of the people in Indonesia are active social media users. Radical literature in Indonesia, most of them translated from English and Arabic, has been encouraging militants to use stabbing (including beheading) against their adversaries (ICPVTR).

ISIS' mainstream media Al-Hayat Media Center released a video entitled "Join the Ranks," describing a group of Indonesian foreign fighters in Syria. in the video, most militants were young people from Southeast Asia.



Figure.1

Al-Hayat media center photo taken as a screenshot from the video of ISIS published on their website in 2016

In the video published (Sputnik News: 20/05/2016), there were several teenagers and children from Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines who went to Syria. They burned their passport and gave a message, “We renounce your so-called citizenship. We join soldiers that you will never be able to defeat. It is Allah’s promise.” They tried to encourage people who are radical to join them.

Besides, Rome (Rumiyah) is one of the online journals of ISIS. They started publishing in 2016. Publication languages are in Arabic, English, Turkish, and French and recently begin to issue their declarations in Urdu, Bahasa Malay, and Bahasa Indonesia. They are giving general information regarding Jihad action in different countries, how they do the operation, and give courage to their followers. the tenth issue of Rumiyah focuses on East Asia with the title of the magazine, Jihad in East Asia. in recent years, ISIS attacked the western countries, especially in Central Europe and Turkey.

ISIS attacked Manchester Arena after a concert by an American

singer. the world’s attention focused on the British city of Manchester, and suddenly radical groups erupted in the Philippines. So it came as a surprise when, several thousand miles from Manchester, the ISIS in Southeast Asia erupted the city of Marawi violently in the southern Philippines, Mindanao Island. Many Muslim armed groups in the country’s south, including some commanders of the violent Abu Sayyaf, have pledged loyalty to ISIS (The Guardian: 28.08.2016).

When the siege of Marawi by ISIS from the Maute and Abu Sayyaf groups was almost two-month, the unsettling events in the southern Philippines served as a grim reminder of a militancy and terrorism problem threatening the security and stability of much of Southeast Asia (Forbes: 29.06.2017). Abu Sayyaf is one of the extremist groups in the southern Philippines. Abu Sayyaf is notorious for kidnapping for ransom and attacks on civilians and the army. Several of its factions declared their allegiance to the ISIS in 2014.

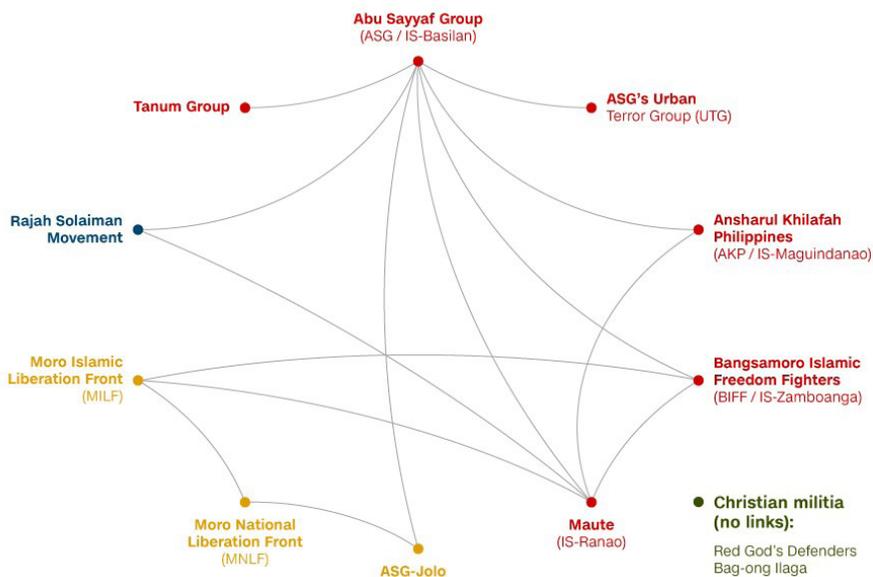


Figure.2

Institute for Policy Analysis of conflict; Philippine institute for political violence and terrorism research



Figure.3

An ISIS fighter erects the flag of the so-called Islamic State atop a school near a mosque in Marawi, southern Philippines, on May 24, 2017. Source CNN (<http://edition.cnn.com/2017/05/28/asia/isis-threat-southeast-asia/index.html>)

The Sulu Sea is the intersection of Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines. For extremists, it is accessible to reach the city of Tarakan (Indonesia) or Malaysia. Indonesia suspects that some of the extremists involved in the siege of Marawi may have slipped away during the battle with military sources of the Philippine. In recent years many ships passing through the Sulu Sea, including several Indonesian ships, have been hijacked by the Abu Sayyaf militant group, based Southern Philippines, group demand money in return for the safety of the detained crews.

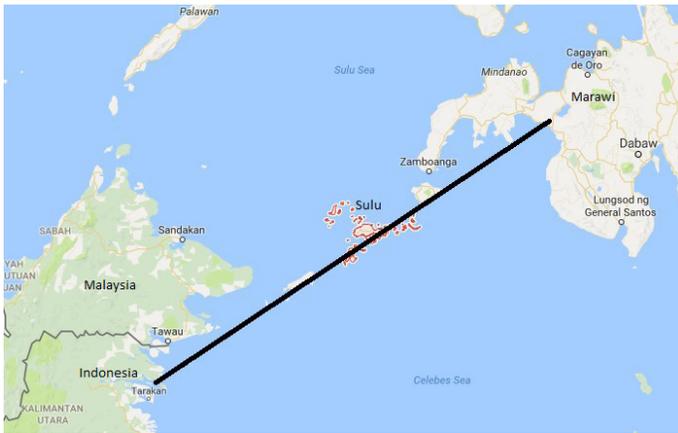


Figure 4

The Sulu Sea between Malaysia, Indonesia, and Marawi (Philippines)

Indonesia, Philippines, and Malaysia deployed a warship to reconnaissance patrol the waters plagued by this threat, signaling the start of unheard-of joint patrols by the countries that share borders in the region. There is a sense of urgency in the joint patrols following the alarming collapse of security in the southern Philippines after ISIS-linked fighters, including some from Indonesia and Malaysia, overran the city of Marawi. Malaysian Defence Minister Dato said, “I expected other Southeast Asian countries to participate in more joint patrols in the future to ensure security and safe travel throughout the region.” Extremist groups are connected, and terrorism has become transitional. The national police of the Philippines reported

that 38 Indonesians involved in the Marawi conflict. Four of them died, and the Philippines government deported 12 others, and the other 22 are still in Marawi (TheJakartaPost: 20.06.2017).

Malaysian government estimates that there are 50,000 ISIS sympathizers in Malaysia, a vast number compared to a country population. It is difficult to find out how many there are ISIS sympathizers in Indonesia because there are more than 17,000 islands. Still, at least there are some research radicalism maps, especially islands where the most population exists.

Regarding research of Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University Jakarta (UIN), the following Table.5, Kalimantan is intolerant, and there is a tendency to radicalism.

Therefore, ISIS members tried to link from Marawi to Sulu after reaching Kalimantan (Tarakan). Social media and applications

such as Telegram, WhatsApp, etc. facilitate them to communicate local extremist groups or gain more supporters for their goal.

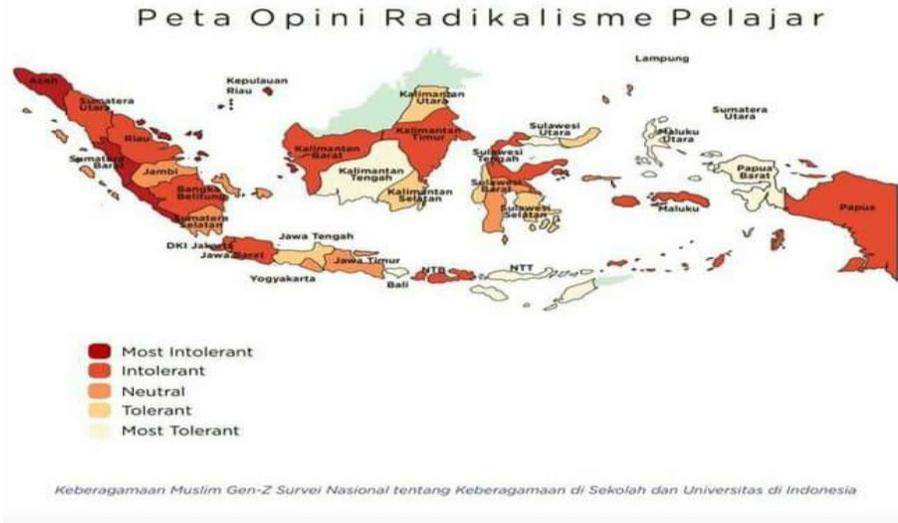


figure.5

PPIM Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University Jakarta

ISIS published made massive propaganda via social media in Bahasa Indonesia, also Bahasa Malay, which are similar to each other. Anyone who speaks Malay will understand Bahasa, and so will people who speak Bahasa (more than 90 percent of Muslims in Southeast Asia) (Nawab: 14.09.2017). Nowadays, the internet or social media propaganda remains the most important means of recruitment.

Indonesia has the most Muslim population in the world, after

Marawi siege worries about the growing impact of ISIS in Southeast Asia. Telegram is a popular messaging platform for Islamic State sympathizers. They use chatrooms with hundreds of members, besides holding private conversations. Indonesian authorities have blocked access to some Telegram channels, saying it has several “full of radical and terrorist propaganda” forums. the authority has blocked 11 of Telegram’s Domain Name Systems (DNS) for its web-based service on July 14, 2017, and they would

be reopened these soon, as said by Communications Minister Rudiantara in a statement (Reuters: 01.09.2017). Pavel Durov, the founder of Telegram, noted that “We have discussed ways to block publicly available propaganda of terrorism on Telegram, which is something we have committed to do globally, and particularly in Indonesia,” a joint news conference with the minister (Reuters: 01.09.2017). Durov added that it could take about 24 to 36 hours for the app to shut down public channels with terrorism content. Still, a direct communication line to Indonesian authorities would allow it to “shut them down more efficiently within several hours.” Also, there has been considerable pushback against the ideology of ISIS.

Indonesia is home to two of the most significant Muslim mass movements in the world – first is Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), and the second is Muhammadiyah (Liow: 2016). Those movements are much more moderates than other actions. Both organizations are active and well-known by society. Therefore, their declaration has an essential impact on the community. Muhammadiyah organization has many schools, universities, hospitals, and such institutions

in different regions of Indonesia. the organizations’ followers are approximately 30 million, which means it is a reputable organization in Indonesia. Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) followers are about 40 million and the most prominent religious organization in Indonesia. Both religious movements endeavor at countering the ISIS narrative in Indonesia; nevertheless, as seen above in Table 5, a massive number of population intolerant and most intolerant.

On May 13, 2018, a couple of days before Ramadhan, a series of terrorist attacks occurred in Surabaya, the second biggest city in Indonesia. There was a big terror attack made by family members below.



Figure 6

Dita with his family suicide bombers including children (Photo: East Java Police HQ)

Evan Hudojo, 11, and Ethan Hudojo, 8, went to the entrance of the Santa Maria Catholic Church

located in East Java in Surabaya. At that moment, the two brothers, Firman Halim, 16, and Yusof Fadhil, 18, waited at the cross of the church on a motorcycle and detonated explosives that they were carrying.

At the entrance of the Santa Maria Catholic church in Surabaya on Sunday at 7.30 am local time, the attack killed all four boys and four other church members (Channelnewsasia: 27.05.2018). Then, their father drove a bomb-laden car to the Surabaya Centre Pentecostal Church at 7.35 am local time and detonated explosives. After that, his wife, Puji Kuswati, 42, and her two daughters, Fadhila Sari, 12, and Famela Rizqita, nine, brought a bomb attack on Diponegoro Indonesian Christian Church (Channel News Asia: 27.05.2018)..

As a result of this attack, 12 people died, including the suicide bombers. the Father of that family convinced family members of the suicide bombings. He said that all of them would gather in heaven after this suicide. Former Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) bomb-maker Ali Fauzi Manzi, said to Channel NewsAsia. "That is their belief, and that is their ideology (Channelnewsasia: 27.05.2018).

According to Indonesian police chief Tito Karnavian, Dita was the

branch of Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD) linked with ISIS since 2015. There was no proof that Dita went to Syria and returned to Indonesia. Tito Karnavian believed that they had learned how to make bombs via the **Internet and social media**. Surabaya attack was the third attack of JAD since they linked with ISIS every year. After a couple of days, another attack occurred in Sumatra Utara. Four sword-wielding men were shot dead, and one police officer also died. the investigators believed that the families in the attacks on Sunday and Monday were all part of the same cell of Jamaah Ansharut Daulah. This Indonesian terrorist group had declared loyalty to the Islamic State (New York Times: 16.05.2018). Islamic State claimed responsibility for those attacks in Indonesia and published a statement via social media (Amaq).

CONCLUSION

Social media has a significant role in societies; even radical groups used social media actively for spreading their magazine and reached ISIS in 2014. Abu Sayyaf is one of the extremist groups in the Philippines notorious for kidnapping for ransom and attacks on civilians and the army. in 2014, they accepted the "Global Jihad" of

ISIS, and some of its factions have declared their allegiance to ISIS. In Indonesia, there was a massive attack in Bali in 2002 by JAD (Jamaah Ansharud Daulah). After this attack, there was no such attack until JAD accepted the declaration of ISIS in 2014. The periodical terrorist attack appeared in Indonesia after JAD received a claim of ISIS. Also, Marawi siege in the Philippines, and regarding Malaysian authority, there were 50,000 people feeling sympathy for ISIS. All cases indicated that ISIS re-activated extremist groups in Southeast Asia. The 10th issue of Rumiya, which is ISIS magazine regularly published, focused on Southeast Asia and mentioned about Jihadist from Southeast Asia (Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, etc.) to give courage to followers join them and gain more sympathizers. Internet and social media are one of the significant tools of ISIS to gain more followers and connect with local extremist groups. They used “**Twitter**” for spreading their magazine and declarations, “**Youtube**” for giving courage to their followers and “**Telegram**” for communicating with their followers or members.

Despite the measures taken after the siege of Marawi in the Philippines, terrorist attacks are

unavoidable in Indonesia. Regional governments should remain alert to ISIS or related extremist group's developments, especially in terms of monitoring both returnees as well as communications between militants in Syria and their counterparts and members back homeland. Most of the attacks in Indonesia came from local extremist group members inspired by ISIS. These cases indicate how ISIS re-activated local extreme group members.

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