

April
2021



Motives and Behaviours of Violent Extremist

- Introduction from SEAN-CSO
- Member Highlights: All Together Now (Australia) and Al-Mujadilah Development Foundation Inc. (AMDF) (Philippines)
- Research: Motives and Behaviours of Violent Extremist Groups in Southeast Asia
- Funding Opportunities

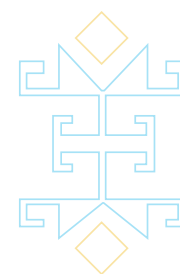




Introduction

Throughout the month of April, SEAN-CSO's campaign focused on the theme of Motives and Behaviours of Violent Extremist Groups. Political grievances motivate violent extremism and these have many sources. On an individual level, the routes to radicalization are many and varied. Often they are linked to trauma or personal beliefs. As the UN Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism underlines, radicalization is highly individual, has no discernible path, is non-linear, has a huge range of "push" and "pull" factors, but has no single determining feature.

In the words of the United Nations Development Programme, "conflict as well as religion, policing, peacemaking, citizenship, the rule of law, and autonomy shape the political environment in which violent extremism can exist." This month we researched and examined such factors and their impact on the ways in which extremist ideologies take root in different Southeast Asian countries.





Research: Motives and Behaviours of Violent Extremist Groups in Southeast Asia

Indonesia

In recent years, terror attacks in Indonesia have been carried out by ISIS-inspired groups. One of them is JAD (Jamaah Ansharut Daulah), which acts as an umbrella organization for almost 24 groups that pledged allegiance to the then-ISIS leader, Abu Bakar al-Baghdadi (UNSC, n.d).

Besides JAD, Indonesia, (with a population of 250 million) hosts 2 million ISIS followers. Furthermore, three influential local entities claim to represent ISIS in Indonesia (Beech, 2016). In the last few years, there have been 3 major attacks.

Surabaya Church Attacks (13 May 2018)



Illustration: This phenomenon attacks 3 church in Surabaya.

A family of six with two daughters (aged 9 and 12 years) and two sons (aged 16 and 18) carried suicide bombs into three different churches within minutes of each other, effectively killing 13 and injuring 41, two of which were police guarding the Sunday service. The family belonged to JAD, an ISIL-inspired network. ISIL claimed responsibility for the attack with no produced evidence. Motive: ISIL ideology. The ideology seeks to establish a caliphate, a form of government led by a supreme leader—believed to be chosen by God.

Medan Suicide Bombing (13 November 2019)



Illustration: This phenomenon attacks 3 church in Surabaya.

24 year old man detonated a suicide bomb at a police headquarter in Medan, Indonesia. Six people suffered injuries from the attack. Motive: Unknown. It is believed he was acting alone.

Makassar Suicide Bombing (28 March 2021)

A newly-wed couple in their 20s detonated bombs at the side entrance of a church in Makassar, Indonesia. The attack injured 14 people, including a church official who stopped the attackers from entering the cathedral. The couple was linked to JAD (Jamaah Ansharut Daulah), an ISIL-inspired network. Motive: ISIL ideology.

Sources:

"Indonesia church bombings: police say one family and their children behind attacks". The Guardian. May 13, 2018.

"What ISIS Really Wants". The Atlantic. March, 2015. "24-year-old man behind suicide bombing at Medan Police HQ, police confirm". The Jakarta Post. November 13, 2019.

"Indonesia bombing: Worshippers wounded in Makassar church attack". BBC. March 28, 2021.

Malaysia



Although Malaysia has not suffered from direct attacks, it has remained a transit hub and destination for terrorist groups. One of the most notorious is the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) who has orchestrated various kidnappings (often holding the victims for ransom) and killings. Furthermore, suspected supporters and individuals linked to ISIL have used Malaysia as a transit point to get into the southern Philippines.

Kidnapping by ASG (21 November 2019)

Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) demanded RM 24.5 million for the release of three victims from Indonesia. They were kidnapped by seven armed men while catching prawns on 24 September 2019. They were held hostage in Sulu, Philippines. Motive: ISIL ideology. ASG is affiliated with ISIL which believes in a caliphate, a form of government by one supreme leader chosen by God.

Abu Sayyaf's Beheading (18 November 2015)

Bernard Then, a Malaysian man, was beheaded by ASG in Jolo, Philippines. His head was found by a cleaner in front of a government building. Then's family had been negotiating with ASG, but negotiations fell through. Before his death, Then was held hostage for 6 months along with Thien Nyuk Fun. Thien was released after her family paid the ransom. Motive: ISIL ideology.

Sources:

"Abu Sayyaf demands RM2.45mil for Indonesian trio in video". Daily Express. November 21, 2019.

"What ISIS Really Wants". The Atlantic. March, 2015.

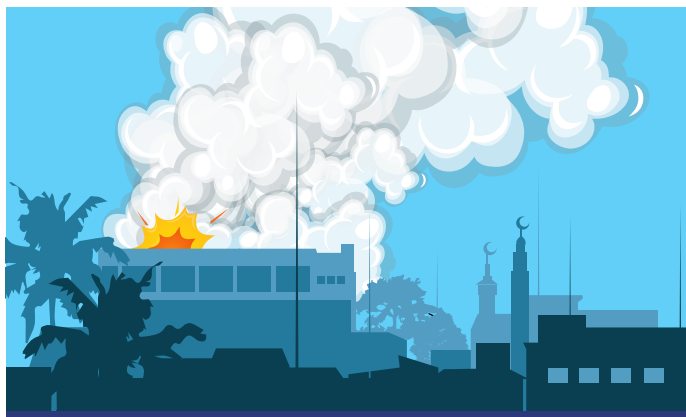
Philippines

The Philippines is currently ranked #9 on the Global Terrorism Index and has been impacted by a number of extremist groups in the last few years.

- Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG)
- Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF)
- Ansar al-Khalifa Philippines (AKP)
- Maute Group

In recent years, these groups have continued to train and recruit new members and carry out suicide bombings and other attacks.

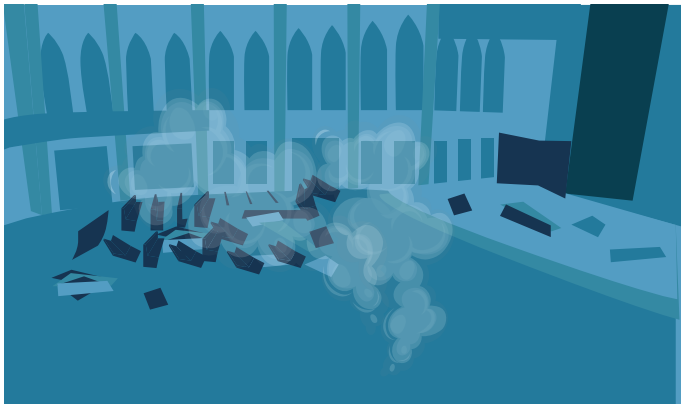
Battle of Marawi (2017)



Much of the conflict that occurs in the Philippines occurs in the south. Islamic extremists have been active in the Muslim-majority south for years. The conflict reached its peak in 2017 during the Battle of Marawi, a five-month long siege between the Filipino military and members of ASG and the Maute group. The jihadists were attempting to establish an Islamic caliphate in the Philippines.

Recent strides towards peace, including the creation of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARRM) will hopefully continue to reduce the amount of violence going forward. However, resistance to resolution is ongoing and so must the Filipino government's efforts to counter violent extremism.

Jolo Bombings (2019 and 2020)



In January 2019, a suicide bombing took place during Mass at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Cathedral in Jolo, Sulu. 23 people were killed and 102 wounded. ASG and ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack.

On August 24, 2020, two ASG suicide bombers again attacked people in Jolo, killing 15 and wounding 75. The first explosion went off near the town plaza where army personnel were carrying out Covid humanitarian efforts. The second exploded near Our Lady of Mount Carmel Cathedral the same church that had been targeted the year before.

In July 2019, the Philippines finalized a National Action Plan on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism. Furthermore, CVE training was created and implemented for the security sector and civil servants. Efforts to rehabilitate former extremists are in place as well. The Armed Forces of the Philippines assists with this process and they also push for defections from the ASG, BIFF, and the Maute group.

Sources:

"Country Reports on Terrorism 2019: Philippines." US Department of State. June 24, 2020.

"State of Violence: Government Responses to Violent Extremism in South-East Asia." UNDP. 2020.

"Philippines: Twin explosions hit Jolo, killing at least 14." BBC News. August 24, 2020.

Betteridge-Moes, Maxine. *"What happened in Marawi?"* Al Jazeera. October 29, 2017.

"Jolo church attack: Many killed in Philippines." BBC News. January 27, 2019.

Thailand

In recent years, Thailand has experienced attacks primarily from ethno-nationalist insurgents from the southern region of the country. Thai national identity is connected to religion, monarchy, and the state. With resistance to acknowledging the Malay-Muslim minority in the Deep South, much of the violence has taken place in that area.

One of the main reasons why Thailand is vulnerable to violent extremism is because of its role as a trading and transit trading hub. A high volume of people pass through Bangkok every day and there is a large market of illegal goods.

Groups such as al-Qaeda, Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), and Hezbollah have conducted operations out of Thailand. It is believed that JI planned the 2002 Bali bombings out of safe houses in Bangkok.

Yala Province Attack, 2019



On November 5, 15 people were killed and 4 were wounded by attackers at a checkpoint in the district of Tha Muang. Explosives were used and nails were left on nearby roads to slow down pursuers. The victims included the present and former assistant village and sub-district heads, a health official, and a police captain. No group claimed responsibility for the attack, but it was later attributed to the Barisan Revolusi Nasional separatist group. Over the years, the separatist movement in Thailand has killed thousands of people, but the Yala attack was the country's biggest single attack in over a decade.

Bangkok Bombings, 2019

On August 2, 2019, a series of bombs exploded at 5 locations in Bangkok.

- Chong Nonsi BTS Station
- King Power Mahanakhon tower
- Chaengwattana Government Complex
- Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters
- Miniso (store inside Siam Square One)

At the time, over 30 foreign ministers were in the city for the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting (AMM). 4 people were wounded, but no one was killed. Once again, no group claimed official responsibility, but many experts believe it to be the work of separatists from the south.



Violent Extremism and Insurgency

It is important to highlight the distinction between violent extremism and insurgency, specifically in the case of Thailand. According to the UNDP, “Violent extremists target all members of the out-group for violence. The ingroup sees violence as the only way to secure its future and political aims. Insurgents fight for self-determination and a great share of political power. Therefore, insurgencies can be resolved through political negotiation and compromise.”

In southern Thailand, it often appears that there is strong potential for ISIS or al-Qaeda to exert influence due to the geopolitical complexities of the area. However, the Muslim separatists are primarily insurgents and nationalists. Their ultimate goal is to create an independent and autonomous state.

While that does not eliminate the risk of transnational jihadism taking root, the separatists and the jihadists are not ideologically aligned. If the Thai government and the separatists can come to a constructive agreement, it would greatly reduce the ability of jihadists to make inroads into the separatist circles.

Sources:

“State of Violence: Government Responses to Violent Extremism in South-East Asia.” UNDP. 2020.

“Country Reports on Terrorism 2019: Thailand.” US Department of State. June 24, 2020.

Pathan, Muhammad Ayub and Benjakat, Abdullah.

“Insurgents attack security checkpoint in Yala, 15 killed.” Bangkok Post. November 6, 2019.

“Thailand: Extremism and Terrorism.” Counter Extremism Project.

Thepgumpanat, Panarat. “Bangkok bombings may be linked to politics: police.” Reuters. August 8, 2019.

“Jihadism in Southern Thailand: A Phantom Menace.” International Crisis Group. November 8, 2017.

April 2021

6 | Newsletter: Motives and Behaviours of Violent Extremist Groups



Member Highlights

All Together Now from Australia

All Together Now is an independent, secular, non-partisan, and non-profit Australian organisation dedicated to creating a more racially equitable society. Since its founding in 2010, All Together Now has been developing innovative and evidence based projects that promote racial equity.

As highlighted on their website, some of the strategies they employ to achieve their mission include: “raising awareness among Australian residents about different cultures, thereby breaking down misconceptions, busting stereotypes, and challenging xenophobia; increasing empathy, thereby lowering people’s biases against people from other cultures; educating about how racism manifests and the effects it has on the people subjected to it, thereby increasing personal accountability; and empowering Australian residents to embrace their own culture/s without fear of prejudice or prosecution, thereby enabling people to understand the importance of culture.”

One of All Together Now’s most prominent programs is the Community Action for Preventing Extremism (CAPE) project. It focuses on promoting and increasing community resilience to far-right extremism. From 2018-2020, the CAPE program facilitated 23 specialized urban and regional training programs, trained over 258 frontline workers in New South Wales, and provided training and support resources to over 6,000 people through its website and newsletters.

Another major program is their media monitoring project. This endeavor is rooted in All Together Now’s stance that “it is vital that



journalists have the ability to inform citizens about public affairs without fear or favour. However, this freedom comes with the responsibility to present information fairly and accurately. All Australians should be equitably represented by the media, regardless of their racial identity.”

All Together Now’s media monitoring project has a three-pronged approach focusing on: media monitoring, community-led solutions, and audience impact.

Media monitoring: In 2016, alongside collaborators at the University of Technology, Sydney, All Together Now developed a “media monitoring framework that collects and analyses racialised opinion pieces from the mainstream media.” In other words, they “assess the content and context of a media piece to determine whether it portrays racialized communities in an inclusive, neutral, or negative way.” This analysis helps them to better understand how racism is mobilized.

To learn more about All Together Now’s impactful work, check out here.

Facebook: [@alltogethernow.org.au](https://www.facebook.com/alltogethernow.org.au)

Instagram: [@alltogethernow.org.au](https://www.instagram.com/alltogethernow.org.au)

Websites: <https://alltogethernow.org.au/>
<https://reportingracism.alltogethernow.org.au/>

Al-Mujadilah Development Foundation Inc. (AMDF)

from the Philippines

Al-Mujadilah Development Foundation Inc. (AMDF) is a Philippine non-profit with a focus on gender justice, peacebuilding, governance, and human rights. The organization is located in Marawi City, the capital of Lanao del Sur. The name is derived from “Al-Mujadilah/Al-Mujadalah” a surah in the Holy Qur’an which translates to “The Woman who Seeketh Justice.”

AMDF is committed to eliminating various social, economic, and cultural factors that degrade the position and status of women in society. It is crucial to actively uplift women’s voices and advocate for their inclusion in a wide-range of leadership capacities.

AMDF became registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission in 1997. AMDF has grown from a small organization with very few volunteers, to a rather big entity that prides itself on its well-developed, efficient, and effective organizational structure, management operations, and internal systems.

In recent years, AMDF has created and managed a whole host of different events, trainings, and campaigns. AMDF is well-known for its aim of protecting girls and women from child, early, and forced marriages which many consider to be a form of child abuse. AMDF’s campaign “promotes education, capacity building, and initiatives of families and communities to address such violence by creating support systems for victims and survivors through a multi-sectoral approach that includes various members of the community including teenagers, parents, community influencers, local leaders, policymakers, and frontliners.”

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a disproportionate effect on women. With recurring lockdowns, there has been an increase in gender-based violence. Many women and girls are not only stuck with abusive partners and family members, but often further disconnected from trusted relatives, friends, and resources. To combat this, AMDF, in partnership with a few other organizations, began distributing Covid care packages to vulnerable individuals such as widows, orphans, senior citizens, pregnant women, and IDPs). In each care package, AMDF supplied an informative booklet containing information about the prevention of GBV, especially domestic violence, sexual and reproductive rights, national, regional, and local hotlines for people in need of help, and guidelines from the Department of Health on important Covid protocols.

To learn more about Al-Mujadilah Development Foundation’s amazing work, check out their Facebook: [Al-Mujadilah Development Foundation, Inc. \(AMDF\)](#).



How to make a self-recorded video:



Want to be exclusively featured on SEAN-CSO's Social Media? We want to hear more from you, especially in these pandemic times. You can talk about interesting projects that you're currently involved in, how the pandemic has affected your work or organization in the field, or anything related to P/CVE issues.

Still don't know how to make a good video? Don't worry, we have got your back. We have created this simple 2-minute tutorial on how to make a decent self-recorded video in your own home. Stream it online on YouTube:

bit.ly/SelfRecTutorial

Funding Opportunity

U.S. Department of State: Countering Violent Extremist Ideology

► bit.ly/USDeptofState-NOFO

Internet Freedom Fund

► bit.ly/SEANCSO-IFF

UNESCO-Hamdan Prize

► bit.ly/SEANCSO-HamdanPrize

CFLI ASEAN

► bit.ly/SEANCSO-CFLI

Updates

- SEAN-CSO currently **has**

126
members

- All SEAN-CSO social media is **followed by**

4,574 accounts

- SEAN-CSO posts focused on PVE **receive**

2,917 likes
an average

Follow us

Follow us for updated info on P/CVE issues:

[f @SEAN.CSO.WTAVE](https://www.facebook.com/SEAN.CSO.WTAVE)

[@sean.cso](https://www.instagram.com/sean.cso)

Also check our website:

sean-cso.org

Synergy in Harmony

Walk together for a better world



This update has been brought to you by SEAN-CSO in collaboration with Peace Generation Indonesia.

Would you like to be featured in the next SEAN-CSO Newsletter or in our upcoming social media campaign?

If you have stories, research, or programs focused on Preventing or Countering Violent Extremism, contact us at:

sean-cso@peacegen.id