

Jakarta Terror Attack

14/1/2016

What do we know?

Mr. Kirk D'Souza

Overview of the Attack

On 14 January 2016, a terror attack took place in the capital of Indonesia, Jakarta. The location of the attack was a major intersection in Jakarta, near the Sarinah shopping mall. The main targets were the Starbucks café and a police post near the intersection¹. The attack involved a suicide bomb blast at the Starbucks café, gunmen shooting at customers who ran out of the café, a suicide bomb explosion at the police post and a gun battle with the police. This was the first major terrorist attack in Jakarta since 2009.

The Weapons

According to Indonesian police, the guns used in the attack are most likely from the Philippines. This information on the origin of the weapons came from some of the 12 people

¹ BBC, "Jakarta attacks: Convicted militant named as attacker" – <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-35320352>

arrested in the raids that were conducted after the attack (more details below)². The attackers also used an unknown number of suicide bombs and home-made grenades, but reports say that at least six explosions occurred in quick succession³.

Timeline of the Attack:

- At 10:40 am, several bombs exploded near the Sarinah shopping mall, at the intersection between Jalan Kyai Haji Wahid Hasyim and Jalan MH Thamrin. The first blast targeted the Starbucks café. As civilians ran out of the café, two gunmen shot at them⁴. The two gunmen seized two civilians, dragged them to a parking lot, and shot them⁵.
- At approximately the same time, at least two militants attacked the police post in the center of the intersection in a suicide bomb attack⁶.
- After the police arrived, there was an armed stand-off for several hours between the police and the attackers. The attackers threw grenades and fired rifles at both civilians and the police⁷. The police had to battle the militants for hours on the streets⁸. The stand-off ended at approximately 3:20 pm⁹.

² WSJ, “Guns used in Jakarta attacks suspected of coming from Philippines” – <http://www.wsj.com/articles/guns-used-in-jakarta-attacks-suspected-of-coming-from-philippines-1453029543>

³ BBC, “Jakarta attacks: What we know” – <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-35309005>

⁴ BBC, “Jakarta attacks: What we know” – <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-35309005>

⁵ CNN, “12 arrested after deadly Jakarta attack” – <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/01/16/asia/jakarta-gunfire-explosions/>

⁶ BBC, “Jakarta attacks: What we know” – <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-35309005>

⁷ CNN, “12 arrested after deadly Jakarta attack” – <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/01/16/asia/jakarta-gunfire-explosions/>

⁸ BBC, “Jakarta attacks: Convicted militant named as attacker” – <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-35320352>

⁹ Reuters, “Timeline – Explosions, gunfight rock central Jakarta” – <http://in.reuters.com/article/indonesia-blast-timeline-idINKCNOUS11H20160114>

Jakarta attacks



Casualties

In total, the attack left eight dead and over twenty injured¹⁰:

- An Algerian-Canadian citizen, Taher Amer-Ouali, 70, was shot by the attackers.
- An Indonesian, Rico Hermawan, 21, was killed in the suicide bomb attack at the police post.

¹⁰ The Sydney Morning Herald, "Jakarta police reveal names of those killed in deadly attack" – <http://www.smh.com.au/world/jakarta-police-reveal-names-of-those-killed-in-blasts-20160116-gm7fv7.html>

- An Indonesian, Sugito, 43, died in the attack. Indonesian police initially thought that he was a perpetrator of the attack, but later claimed that he was not (more details below).
- An Indonesian, Rais Karna, 37, who was a security guard at a nearby bank.
- All four militants were killed in the attack – two died from suicide bombs and two were shot by police.

Suspects

The police initially reported that there were five attackers, but later corrected their report to note that there were four. The attackers were Afif Sunakim, Marwan a.k.a. Muhammad Ali, Ahmad Muhazan Saron, and Dian Juni Kurniadi. The fifth man, Sugito, was at first thought by the Indonesian police to be one of the perpetrators, rather he was a victim¹¹.

ISIS took credit for the attack, and claimed that there were four attackers¹².

Afif Sunakim, in his 30s, was from Karawang, West Java. He was sentenced to seven years in jail for attending a training boot camp for militants in Aceh. He was captured by the police in 2010. While in Cipinang prison in Jakarta, his ideology became even more radical after meeting Aman Abdurrahman, a central figure connecting several IS-aligned terrorist organisations in Indonesia. While in jail, he refused to cooperate with a de-radicalisation program¹³. He was released from prison in August/September 2015 on early parole¹⁴.



Marwan a.k.a. Muhammad Ali, 40, was alleged to have been involved in several deadly armed bank robberies in North Sumatra aimed at raising funds for a terrorist training camp in

¹¹ The Straits Times, “Jakarta attacks carried out by 4, not 5, militants: Police” – <http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/jakarta-attacks-carried-out-by-4-not-5-militants-police>

¹² BBC, “Jakarta attacks: What we know” – <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-35309005>

¹³ ABC News, “Jakarta attack” – <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-01-16/jakarta-attack-indonesian-police-arrest-12-death-toll-rises/7093458>

¹⁴ BBC, “Jakarta attacks: Gunman from widely circulated photo identified” - <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-35320452>

Aceh¹⁵. He was a father of three who lived in Sangrahan, west of Jakarta. He was described by his brother as a “very private person”, “disciplined and nationalistic”, and a “good man”. His neighbours described him as a “nice and humble” man who had “wanted to go to Syria to free Muslim people from oppression”. According to his neighbours, he had said that “if someone wanted to give him some money to go to Syria, he would be very happy”.¹⁶

Ahmad Muhazan bin Saron, 25, exploded a suicide bomb in the Starbucks café.¹⁷

Dian Juni Kurniadi, 26, exploded a suicide bomb at the police post.¹⁸

Inspector General Tito Karnavian, Chief of Police, said that the attackers were linked to other cells in Java and Sulawesi¹⁹.

According to security analyst Yohanes Sulaiman, the attackers showed that they were inexperienced; this suggests that the attackers were an amateur group, not foreign fighters trained in Syria. Mr Yohanes’ interpretation is that the attackers are part of a new generation of radicalised militants, who lack equipment and combat experience²⁰.

Suspected Mastermind and Accomplices

The Indonesian police believe that the attack was planned and coordinated by Bahrum Naim, an Indonesian citizen who joined ISIS in Syria. Naim has links with the ISIS-allied East Indonesia Mujahidin Group (MIT), based on the island of Sulawesi²¹.

Naim set up Katibah Nusantara, the Southeast Asian militant wing of ISIS, with the vision of uniting all ISIS supporting elements in Southeast Asia²². According to police chief Tito

¹⁵ Jakarta Globe, “Five Attackers or Four? Police Still Unsure” - <http://jakartaglobe.beritasatu.com/news/five-attackers-four-police-still-unsure/>

¹⁶ CNA, “Terrorist behind Jakarta attack ‘a good man’: Brother” - <http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asiapacific/terrorist-behind-jakarta/2440510.html>

¹⁷ Guardian, “Indonesian police arrest 12 over Jakarta attacks as death toll rises to eight” - <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/17/indonesian-police-arrest-12-over-jakarta-attacks-as-death-toll-rises-to-eight>

¹⁸ Daily Witness, “Indonesian police identify 4 men suspected of Jakarta attacks” - <http://dailywitness.com/update1-indonesian-police-identify-4-men-suspected-of-jakarta-attacks/>

¹⁹ BBC, “Jakarta attacks: Convicted militant named as attacker” - <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-35320352>

²⁰ BBC, “Jakarta attacks: Indonesia’s new breed of militants” - <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-35310951>

²¹ BBC, “Jakarta attacks: Convicted militant named as attacker” - <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-35320352>

Karnavian, Naim wants to be ISIS's leader in the region, which is why he plotted the attack²³. Naim was arrested in 2010 for illegal possession of ammunition and was sentenced to at least 2½ years in prison²⁴.

On 16 January, the police announced the arrests of 12 other individuals. Police spokesman Anton Charliyan said Jakarta attackers and the 12 others who were arrested had plans to attack cities elsewhere in Indonesia, including Bandung, which lies some 120 kilometres south-east of the capital²⁵. One was accused of receiving a wire transfer from Naim. The transfer helped to finance Thursday's attack, the police chief said²⁶. The Indonesian police have also named an alleged ISIS militant, Abu Jundi, as one of Naim's coordinators.²⁷

Responsibility for the Attack

ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack in an official statement – the Arabic and Bahasa Indonesia versions are found below²⁸. The English translation of the Bahasa Indonesia version is provided below.

مفروزة أمنية من جنود الخلافة
تستهدف تجمعاً لرعايا التحالف الصليبي
في مدينة جاكرتا
عاجل
إندونيسيا ٣ ربيع الثاني ١٤٣٧

في عملية أمنية نوعية، قامت مفروزة من جنود الخلافة في إندونيسيا باستهداف تجمع لرعايا التحالف الصليبي (الذي يقاوم الدولة الإسلامية) في مدينة جاكرتا، وذلك بزرع عدد من العبوات الموقوتة التي تزامن انفجارها مع هجوم لأربعة من جنود الخلافة - تقبلهم الله - بالأسلحة الخفيفة والأحزمة الناسفة، وأدت العملية إلى مقتل ما يقرب من خمسة عشر علجاً صليبياً مع من خلف بحراستهم من المرتدّين، وإصابة عدد منهم، ويعلم رعايا التحالف الصليبي ومن يحميهم أنه لا أمان لهم في ديار المسلمين بعد اليوم بإذن الله، والله غالب على أمره ولكن أكثر الناس لا يعلمون.

KABAR TERKINI Unit Intelijen Junud Khilafah Menyerbu Gerombolan Warga Negara Koalisi Salibis di Kota Jakarta
Indonesia 03 Rabi'ul Akhir 1437

Dalam sejumlah operasi Intelijen yang Allah memudahkan sebab-sebab kemenangannya, Unit Intelijen Junud Khilafah di Indonesia menyerbu gerombolan warga negara anggota Koalisi Salibis (yang memerangi Daulah Islamiyyah) di kota Jakarta, dengan ledakan bom yang ditanam sebelumnya, bersamaan dengan serangan empat Kesatria Junud Khilafah -taqobbalahumullah- dengan senjata ringan dan sabuk peledak, membunuh 15 warga Salibis bersama sejumlah aparat keamanan yang mengawal mereka, dan melukai sejumlah orang lainnya. Hendaklah warga negara Koalisi Salibis dan para pengawalnya mengetahui bahwa mereka tidak akan merasa aman di negeri-negeri kaum muslimin setelah hari ini, dengan izin Allah. Allah Maha Menang atas segala urusanNya akan tetapi kebanyakan manusia tidak mengetahuinya.

²² CNN, “12 arrested after deadly Jakarta attack” – <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/01/16/asia/jakarta-gunfire-explosions/>

²³ BBC, “Jakarta attacks: What we know” – <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-35309005>

²⁴ CNN, “12 arrested after deadly Jakarta attack” – <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/01/16/asia/jakarta-gunfire-explosions/>

²⁵ ABC News, “Jakarta attack” – <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-01-16/jakarta-attack-indonesian-police-arrest-12-death-toll-rises/7093458>

²⁶ CNN, “12 arrested after deadly Jakarta attack” – <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/01/16/asia/jakarta-gunfire-explosions/>

²⁷ CNA, “Police warned about terror attack before Jakarta blasts” – <http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asiapacific/police-warned-about/2430438.html>

²⁸ <https://daulahislamiyahbaqiyyah.wordpress.com/category/is-indonesia/page/3/>

“In a number of intelligence operations whose victory Allah has facilitated, the Junud Khalifah Intelligence Unit in Indonesia attacked members of the Crusader Coalition (which is attacking the Islamic State) in Jakarta, with explosions from planted bombs, along with the attack of four Kesatria (knights?) Junud Khalifah – taqobbalahumullah – with light weapons and explosive belts, which killed 15 Crusaders along with a few security forces guarding them, and injured a few other people. Members of the Crusader Coalition and all the guards should know that they will not feel peace in any Muslims countries after this day, with God’s permission. Allah Almighty wins over all affairs but most people do not know him.”

Government Response

President Joko Widodo called the attacks “acts of terror” and said, “Our nation and our people should not be afraid. We will not be defeated by these acts of terror. I hope the public stays calm. We all are grieving for the fallen victims of this incident, but we also condemn the act that has disturbed the security and peace and spread terror among our people.”²⁹

Targets

There is debate amongst analysts about whether the main target of the attack was the police, civilians or Western targets.³⁰

- Main target was police:
 - According to Benjamin Soloway from *Foreign Policy* magazine, it is not clear if civilians were the main targets, because the attackers appear to have focused on the police post in the middle of the intersection.
 - According to Judith Jacob, an analyst based in Singapore, extremists in Indonesia have usually targeted the security services.
 - According to Mr. Fitriyan Zamzami, the national affairs editor of *Republika*, extremists have been targeting the police in previous years, ever since the police started chasing radicals in Poso since 2011 or 2012. According to Mr

²⁹ NYT, “Four Confirmed Dead in Jakarta” – <http://www.nytimes.com/live/jakarta-indonesia-explosions/four-confirmed-dead-in-jakarta/>

³⁰ The Straits Times, “To understand why ISIS hit Jakarta, don’t look to Paris – look to Indonesia” – <http://www.straitstimes.com/opinion/to-understand-why-isis-hit-jakarta-dont-look-to-paris-look-to-indonesia>

Zamzami, the police may have sparked the attack by launching a crackdown on domestic terror suspects shortly before Christmas.

- Main target was civilians
 - According to Mr. Ryan Greer, a fellow with the Truman National Security Project, it is significant that the attack happened in a public setting. He sees the home-grown threat starting to overlap with ISIS.
- Main target was Western targets (like Starbucks)
 - According to Ms. Sidney Jones, director of Jakarta-based Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict, the attack could have been a response to Western-coalition attacks on ISIS in Syria, which have killed many Indonesians.

Police Preparedness

According to the Director of the State Intelligence Agency, Mr. Sutiyoso, the authorities were on high alert for a terror attack to hit Indonesia, five days before the suicide bombings and shootings.³¹ The State Intelligence Agency had also told police as early as November that “something would happen”. However, it is “very difficult to determine when and where they will strike”, Mr. Sutiyoso said.

“We intensified our focus on them, especially during Christmas and the New Year holidays, and sure enough, they struck. Our last piece of information was that they would attack on January 9 but they didn't. They attacked on January 14,” he stated. “You can't arrest and detain suspects if they haven't broken the law.”

Arrests in Malaysia

On 16 January, Malaysian police announced that they had arrested four individuals with suspected links to ISIS³². The arrests took place between 11 and 15 January. Police said one of the four men arrested in the past few days admitted to planning an attack in Kuala Lumpur after receiving instructions from an Islamic State member in Syria. Arrested at a train station

³¹ CNA, “Police warned about terror attack before Jakarta blasts” – <http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asiapacific/police-warned-about/2430438.html>

³² WSJ, “Malaysia Arrests After Jakarta Attack Fuel Fears of Islamic State's Reach” – <http://www.wsj.com/articles/malaysia-arrests-suspected-islamic-state-militants-1452931418>

Friday, police said the 28-year-old man had raised the black Islamic State flag in several locations in Malaysia, in a warning to governments to stop arresting the group's supporters. The other three suspects were previously arrested by authorities in Turkey after they attempted to enter Syria to join Islamic State forces there. They were sent back to Malaysia on 11 January and were arrested on arrival at Kuala Lumpur International Airport.

Conclusion

The main conclusion is that the attackers were most likely not foreign fighters, but home-grown radical Islamists who received instructions from Bahrun Naim, who is the leader of Katibah Nusantara in Syria.

At the time of writing this report, it is not yet known if the attackers were members of Indonesian jihadist groups or not.

However, since this attack involved the transfer of instructions and funds from an ISIS militant in Syria to attackers in Indonesia, it can be claimed that this attack was the first ISIS attack in Southeast Asia.³³

With the latest arrests in Malaysia, there is growing concern that ISIS is planning more attacks in Southeast Asia. These attacks could be carried out by foreign fighters returning from Syria and Iraq, or by home-grown extremists receiving instructions and funding from ISIS.

³³ The Straits Times, "To understand why ISIS hit Jakarta, don't look to Paris – look to Indonesia" – <http://www.straitstimes.com/opinion/to-understand-why-isis-hit-jakarta-dont-look-to-paris-look-to-indonesia>