Extremism: Old Paradigms; New Frontiers

Event Report
4-5 October 2022

Centre of Excellence for National Security

RSiS S. RAJARATNAM SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

NSCS NATIONAL SECURITY COORDINATION SECRETARIAT

EXTREMISM: OLD PARADIGMS; NEW FRONTIERS

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Report on the workshop organised by: Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS) S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

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INTRODUCTION

The Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS) organised a Workshop titled, 'Extremism: Old Paradigms; New Frontiers' on 4 and 5 October 2022 at the Park Royal Collection, Singapore. The workshop aimed to a) enhance our understanding of radicalisation from a multi-disciplinary perspective, b) learn how countries and organisations around the world are confronting extremism and c) explore new methods to counter extremism.

The Workshop consisted of seven panels over the course of two days. The focus of the first day was on the extremism situation in the Southeast Asian region. The three panels discussed issues such as jihadist activity and the resurgence of hate speech and intolerance in the online space in countries like Indonesia, Philippines, and Malaysia. The second day consisted of four panels with a diverse range of topics which looked at more global issues of radicalism in-depth.

Nineteen speakers from institutions in Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, India, Denmark, France, the United Kingdom, and the United States shared their insights. Workshop participants included members of the Singapore civil service, the private sector, and academia involved in examining counter terrorism, religious conflict, hate speech and other national security topics.

This report summarises key points from the panel speakers' presentations. Key takeaways made by participants during the syndicate discussions and the Q&A sessions, are included at the end of each panel section.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS), with the support of the National Security Coordination Secretariat (NSCS), organised an in-person Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) workshop titled "Extremism: Old Paradigms; New Frontiers". The last in-person CENS workshop on P/CVE and radicalisation was in 2019. The 2022 workshop went beyond previous editions, and also reflected changes in the field as a whole, by moving beyond a simple focus on ISIS and jihadism. For the first time, there were speakers (and panels) examining hate speech, intolerance, gender, misogyny, and RWE (right-wing extremism).

Of particular note, across panels, was the equal focus given to online and offline (real-world) elements in the radicalisation process. Online activity increased exponentially during the global pandemic, with more people embracing the Internet that has led to a growing engagement with extremist material like conspiracy theories, disinformation, and terrorist content. The workshop gave policymakers, practitioners, and the academic community in Singapore the opportunity to examine the role of Internet and its impact on the process of radicalisation. At the same time, as some speakers suggested, individual or group trajectories in radicalisation should not solely be studies in terms of online dimensions. Some of what seems to hold promise when it comes to early interventions and disengagements, for example, can be predominantly found in the offline (real-world) space.

There was useful discussion (especially, but not limited to the "foreign fighters" panel in the workshop) on motivations and will to fight across locations and contexts. Studying these disparate motivations (either across individual or group grievances) will be important in future workshops (not least, whether the drivers are online, or offline, or both). Also, worth further exploration (and hinted at across panels) is whether individuals motivated in this way end up posing future security threats either in their home countries, or elsewhere.

Other forms of radical thought and action include right-wing extremism (RWE), whether stems from Trumpism in the United States, or the Modi brand of extremism Hinduism (Hindutva) in India. Despite having varied global contexts, both countries share narratives of purity, supremacism, exclusion, hate and imagined threats.

Besides some of the issues named above, also deserving study are ideologies of extreme nationalism and religious conservatism which act as the feedstock for extremism, and which on their own (even if they do not in each and every case lead to violent attacks) pose significant security risks if left unchecked.

Violent extremism should continue to be a stable of CENS' radicalisation workshops. Based on the positive feedback received from the 2022 edition, future programming will need to take in other issues too which are increasingly interlinked with VE, in order for CENS to remain at the cutting edge of these issues.

WELCOME REMARKS

Shashi Jayakumar, *Head, Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS), RSIS, NTU*

- Dr Shashi Jayakumar, Head of the Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS), opened the Workshop by thanking the speakers and distinguished guests for making the trip to Singapore, and the participants for taking time out of their schedules to join the discussion. This year's RSP workshop marks CENS' first major in-person event in almost three years, after the pandemic.
- The issues CENS studies regarding radicalization and extremism have not remained stagnant within this three-year period. They have become even more complex, multifaceted, and interlinked.
- Many of these changing trends were noticeable even before the pandemic; however certain issues, exacerbated by the pandemic, have since segued into hate and intolerance and some forms of extremism can no longer simply be regarded as an interesting sideline. There is a pressing need to reckon with new forms of extremism or polarised thought, as well as to look at the whole picture about these issues.

PANEL 1 – THE FUTURE OF GLOBAL JIHAD

Understanding the Revival and Resiliency of Islamic State in Afghanistan – Amira Jadoon*, Associate Professor, US Military Academy, New York [US]*

- This presentation focused on the Islamic State Khorasan (ISK) and the Pakistani Taliban (TTP), organisations that have both demonstrated remarkable resilience in recent years. It is important to discuss both organisations in parallel with each other, as they illustrate the blending of local groups and activities with transnational agendas.
- A lot of risks that have been observed due to these interlinkages are now becoming especially pronounced in South and Central Asia. These risks are likely to grow, which will not only expand the agendas of local groups, but also make it more difficult for governments to dismantle these interlinkages. This would have the effect of extending these groups' survival in their respective regions.
- Both ISK and the TTP's resilience is underpinned by their relationships with a multitude of other organisations that exist in the region. ISK, which first emerged officially in 2015, is Islamic State's official affiliate in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Drawing upon existing local militant infrastructure, ISK views TTP as a potential source of new recruits.
- Soon after its emergence, ISK shifted its base of operations to the border of Afghanistan and Pakistan, and currently wields most of its influence in Nangarhar. By mid-2016, ISK continued its upward trajectory despite losing its first Emir - by 2018, it became regarded as the fourth most lethal terror group in the world. Counter-terrorism operations subsequently managed to interrupt this upward trajectory, and by 2019 ISK had been declared a defeated organisation - an ultimately premature declaration. As its strength dwindled, ISK subsequently switched to a protracted conflict strategy, carrying out less frequent, but more brutal and horrific attacks.
- In 2020 and 2021, ISK increased the frequency of its attacks once more, including a notable attack on Kabul Airport which killed 13 US personnel. 200 of its (claimed) attacks were against the Taliban, a strategic rival since 2015. Given the ongoing humanitarian crisis in the region, ISK has arguably found itself in a better position to exploit security gaps, leading to its resurgence between 2020-2021 and into this year.
- As enemies, clashes between ISK and the Taliban are particularly intense in Kunar and Nangarhar. The Taliban regaining control over Afghanistan sparked key shifts in ISK's strategy, for instance, focusing on undermining the Taliban's legitimacy by highlighting their incompetence, and increasing its recruitment from across the region. This has included members of nationalities across South and Central Asia, as well as more Urdu, Farsi, Tajik and Uzbek speakers. ISK strategically advertises the nationalities of their attackers to showcase the diversity of their membership, giving the impression that they will cater to everyone's grievances. As the Afghan Taliban continues to transition into a

state actor a year after returning to power, ISK is now aiming to fill the vacuum they have left and have since claimed multiple cross-border attacks (e.g., in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan).

- Existing for almost a decade in the region, ISK have adopted a two-prong strategy toward extending their survival and enduring its reputation: generating a sustainable support base, and strategically choosing its rivals and alliances. Taking advantage of the presence of numerous sectarian groups in the region, the group has continued to draw on these connections. This has allowed them to project power and build an enduring reputation. and one that is further strengthened by conducting spectacular attacks.
- Like ISK, the TTP's relationships with other organisations have also brought it back from being regarded as 'largely defeated'. Emerging as one of Pakistan's deadliest organisations in 2007, the TTP first gained ideological legitimacy from the wider public through its links with Al-Qaeda, before experiencing a steep decline in presence by 2016 due to counter-terrorism operations.
- By 2018 however, TTP had once again begun to carry out an increasing number of cross-border attacks. They entered into a series of militant mergers with other groups facilitated by Al-Qaeda; an example of how transnational groups facilitate the existence of a local group. While the Pakistani state has engaged in dialogue with the TTP, leading to the declaration of a ceasefire, this now seems to be unravelling. Talks have since reached a deadlock as the TTP remain emboldened in its demand of a constitutional amendment (which would allow for the reversal of the merger of FATA with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa). The Afghan Taliban is also reluctant to moderate the TTP's activities, due to the fear of defections to ISK.
- To summarize, both ISK and the TTP are the outcomes of increasing links between local and transnational militants. Like how the rise of ISK is underpinned by alliances with deadly groups such as Islamic State (while continuing to poach militants from rivals), TTP's rise is tied to its relationship with Al-Qaeda. Additionally, the ongoing alliance between TTP and the Afghan Taliban is further strengthened by their united front against ISK.

State of the global jihadist threat: rising threat in Africa, call for recruits in SE Asia, exploitation of geopolitical developments (Taliban, Ukraine war), media warfare - Mina al-Lami, *Editorial Lead, Jihadist Media Team, BBC Monitoring [UK]*

- This presentation focused on key jihadist trends, inter-jihadist debates, the overall state of the jihadist movement, as well as how key messaging is taking shape in Africa and South Asia.
- The fragmentations and ideological divisions within the jihadist movement (such as the divide between 'pragmatic' jihadists and hardliners) are notable, as these divisions have led to the movement experiencing a crisis, with some even speculating that jihadism may be a ship that is about to sink. Pragmatists

call for change and flexibility, to win over local communities, as opposed to the immediate implementation of Sharia which may alienate these communities. In the hard-line camp sit Al-Qaeda and Islamic State, who fear that further compromise may result in the loss of loyal hard-line members and are attempting to use this argument to undermine their more moderate rivals.

- A depletion in charismatic Al-Qaeda leadership figures has led to ongoing leadership succession problems, which have exacerbated internal crises. Deputies set to take over in leadership roles are said to be based in Iran, undermining their credibility. A lack of transparency over their appointment in new IS caliphates has led to even more uncertainty, exposing significant weaknesses within these Islamic groups. As a result of these fragmentations (which have also led to Al-Qaeda losing some of its key branches due to defections), moderate voices have urged Al-Qaeda to disband, or move on to local projects instead of continuing with the project of global Jihad. However, despite calls to shift the jihadist movement from a global to local scope, the moderate camp's 'patient jihad' strategy remains a dangerous long-term threat, as their 'pragmatic' image would eventually change as the movement gains more traction.
- Amid perception that the West is currently preoccupied with its own issues, such as the fallout from the pandemic, political polarisation in the United States and the Russo-Ukrainian War, jihadists view the current moment in world history as a golden opportunity for them to seize. Recent Western demobilisation, such as the US' withdrawal from Afghanistan and the French withdrawal from the Sahel in Mali, has further contributed to jihadists' perception of the West in retreat, and belief that they can take on these downsized forces.
- As such, IS-claimed attacks rose from just 3% in 2018 to 42% in 2022. The majority of these attacks have occurred in Northeast Nigeria and Sub-Saharan Africa, via the co-opting of local organisations. While previously challenging to make, IS have since become more confident in its calls for '*Hijrah*' (migration) in recent years, especially to West Africa. Such calls for 'Hijrah' represent IS' steady efforts to move its core of operations from the Middle East to Africa. The majority of graphic and deadly (and hence compelling) images have recently originated from Africa: such images portray militants in full force, equipped with all their gear. The Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP)'s charity work also serves as a useful propaganda tool, as it demonstrates the organisation having all necessary structures in place.
- Similarly, Al-Qaeda's Somalian wing, Al-Shabaab, is poised to take over Somalia and gain control over the entire country. Al-Shabaab's ongoing charity work, including relief efforts in response to droughts in the country, represents some of the most effective Al-Qaeda propaganda. Such charity work also illustrates Al-Shabaab's entrenchment in its adopted communities, allowing it to effectively govern many of these communities. Jama'at Nasr al-

Islam wal Muslimin (Al-Qaeda's Sahel branch in Mali) fulfils a similarly significant role.

- Online supporters of IS also contribute significantly to propaganda efforts and are particularly effective when it comes to quickly repackaging and disseminating messages from the leadership into bite-sized pieces. These are then broadcast in multiple languages in countries and regions all around the world. Understanding the key topics which strike a chord with Muslims around the world (including India, SEA, and Africa), IS' Central Media Department has managed to win hearts and minds in these regions, by broadcasting compelling messages. These include the persecution of Muslims and reiterating their priority of freeing Muslim prisoners, underlined by successful prison breaks organised in Nigeria and DR Congo.

Women, Gender, and the Islamic State: Lessons Learned and Implications for P/CVE - Kiriloi Ingram, *Post-doctoral Research Fellow, Charles Sturt University/ Coordinator University of Queensland [Australia]*

- This discussion focused on the roles of women and gender within IS, as well as the implications of these roles in preventing and countering violent extremism.
- There are persistent myths that occur around the role of women in IS. These include gender stereotypes about women in IS being naïve jihadi brides who have been coerced in joining the organisation, as well as the myth that only men engage in violence, while women are peaceful. The perpetuation of these myths may lead to security responses being compromised.
- Although Australia recently announced its intention to repatriate IS women - an overdue development - these plans nevertheless need to be handled carefully. While women are disproportionately victims within extremist organisations, it should be noted that women join extremist organisations on their own accord, with similar motivations to men. As such, P/CVE must therefore incorporate women's perspectives.
- In October 2014, an estimated 550 Western women performed Hijrah. By 2016, this figure had risen to 883 women from the EU alone. A key step in preventing women from joining IS involves addressing the broader contexts and conditions that cause gender inequality. One way to address these contexts is to define gender. Crucially, gender is not synonymous with sex: it refers to the social constructs and conditions over what it means to be a man or woman. These constructs and conditions are in turn contingent upon governing cultural values and beliefs that shape the way people understand themselves, and the lens with which they view the world through. Gender roles are therefore an important factor in both bottom up and top-down dynamics.

- IS' concerted efforts to target women are an indication that women are valuable assets to their goals. Notably, IS promotes rational-choice and identity-choice appeals. For example, when specifically targeting women, IS breaks down in-group identities into five individualised identities (mother, sister, wife, fighter, supporter), demonstrating the wide range of roles that women may take up within the organisation. 'Supporters' are encouraged to perform Hijrah; 'mothers, sisters, and wives' are promised a better life in the caliphate; 'fighters' are encouraged to take up arms alongside men. 'Supporters' were the most common portrayal of women in IS propaganda during the organisation's boom period in 2014-15; in contrast, 'fighters' were the most common portrayal of women during its lull in 2016 (in a bid to encourage women to remain steadfast and ready for combat, amidst depleted resources and dwindling personnel).
- In areas such as Bangladesh and Mindanao, local recruitment is similarly broken down into the above five capacities. Women are often the main force encouraging entire families to move to the caliphate., They are motivated by financial reward and the promise of a better life for themselves and their loved ones. Cost-benefit considerations play a key role in IS recruitment of women: it is observed that access to local populations is easier in locations with power vacuums (e.g., those with weak local governments). In the absence of an authoritative governmental presence in these locations, women are portrayed as empowering and active agents of change for their communities. This provides yet another incentive for them to join, as they are now given an opportunity to take political action to improve the lives of themselves and others. Such recruitment strategies reflect IS' leveraging of rational choice factors, in order for the organisation to portray itself as providing logical solutions to problems.
- The roles of women as active and voluntary participants are diverse, and not only include frontline roles such as snipers and suicide bombers, but also fundraisers and propaganda recruiters. It is however important to note that violent extremist groups such as IS benefit both strategically and financially by the subjugation of women, who are the victims of sexual violence by members of these organisations claiming to support them. Their feelings of hopelessness are exacerbated upon returning to their homes and not seeing any positive change, as IS' strategy of targeting women first also ensures that community cohesion in their homelands is destroyed.
- IS therefore exploits female recruits by offering them false promises of empowerment. As they are often targeted first, women not only perceive violence and exploitation before men but also differently, frequently indicating feeling voiceless and powerless. There is hence a pressing need to incorporate women's voices into P/VCE, for instance, by positioning local women front and centre to address local vulnerabilities through a range of different actions, since they are often the experts on these issues.

- Finally, there are four recommended pillars for incorporating women's voices into strategies to prevent violent extremism. These include a) capacity building and knowledge sharing workshops, which are important forums for local women to connect with other local women b) community activities, such as the provision of female hygiene kits c) active efforts to persuade women not to engage in extremism and, d) empowering women to speak up and approach appropriate institutions and providing a safe environment for women to do so.

SYNDICATE ROOM DISCUSSIONS

ISSUE: The level of threat posed by ISK to delegitimize Taliban in the region

ISK's attempts to delegitimize the group has not elevated to a level where the Taliban is going to be overthrown or replaced by ISK. ISK's role, despite what they say, is to be a constant nuisance for the Taliban, as they are draining the Taliban's resources essentially, by continuing with these attacks. Therefore, the Taliban, instead of governing the country, keeps on going on these excursions where they are battling with ISK. The National Resistance Movement in general is likely going to grow in the future. ISK's threat to the Taliban then is indirect because they are draining the Taliban so much that they are no longer the dominant state actor that they want to be, and they have too much resistance all around them. ISK's most optimistic outcome is that there is so much chaos, and the Taliban loses control, then they can easily recruit and have people joining their forces.

ISSUE: The broader agenda of ISK beyond Afghanistan and their interest in the West

In this sort of revived region of Islamic State, when they formed the ISK project, they included all these neighbouring countries as well. In their propaganda from day one, they've been differentiating themselves from all these other terrorist groups, so they have always been threatening all the surrounding state actors. As the US was there, and there was an Afghan insurgency going on, ISK has a lot of other opponents to deal with within Afghanistan. In terms of how they advertise or propagate their ideas there, this is exactly why or how they undermined the legitimacy by calling them "nationalists". Those are the concepts that they are proceeding on. To some extent, it does motivate some of the supporters. Some of them ideologically believe in Islamic states, ISK's ideologies, goals, whereas others are just joining for pragmatic reasons. Now, ISK has to include this within its propaganda as its strategy. ISK's agenda is so large that it can absorb all its goals, and this is how it aims to grow.

In terms of attacking the West, they might not have the incentives right now. ISK is rebuilding itself, as it suffered from immense losses in terms of leaders and territories. ISK's goal is not to target US or other Western countries. If ISK makes attacking Western targets the central goal of its propaganda, it will lose the support from groups having influence in regions such as North Pakistan and Kashmir.

ISSUE: The global branding of Al-Qaeda is a double-edged sword

The improved media operations of global Islamic groups like Al-Qaeda have played a big part in advancing the branding of their groups. Localised Islamic insurgencies still need the Al-Qaeda brand to promote themselves as a part of a wider cause. By joining Al-Qaeda, these local groups become part of the global tentacles of a global network and enable them to retreat to should they be driven out of any given territory. Some groups however have shunned the global branding of al-Qaeda, as it gives them too much attention from external parties. These groups choose to keep the messaging to the local context and consolidate power in its immediate neighbourhood. This is a pragmatic move that may allow for greater expansion in the future once it is seen not to be a threat.

ISSUE: Fewer people are tempted by the call to *Hijrah* (religious migration)

The fall of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria has left many disillusioned with the concept of *hijirah*. There are many reasons for this. First, there is a lack of an actual reward after much suffering in the process. Adherents would often uproot their lives and families to make the long trip, but because a lot of these families are now in jail following the fall of the Islamic State, adherents are now less likely to go. Second, there is also a lack of a "state" that has the requisite infrastructure to support people who are willing to make the journey. The Islamic State provided services that mimicked a state like education, healthcare, and jobs, giving adherents the purpose to make the trip to Syria. Third, there is lack of motivation and commonality among adherents. The Islamic State drew people in with its geographical and religious significance unlike the conflicts in Africa, which can make no such claim. The conflicts in Africa are often in places that are hard to get to, and even if there were adherents who were able to make the trip, they would not be able to understand the local language, unlike in the Levant where they spoke mainly Arabic.

ISSUE: Propaganda directed at the recruitment of women

Across the five representations of women described in the presentation, there is a focus on particular roles based on the cultural dynamics of the local population, and recruiters exploit local knowledge to tailor recruitment. For example, in Mindanao, most of the recruitment occurs through family and community networks, as such, a deep understanding of local grievances is important. However, across the contexts studied, the mother-sister-wife representation has been the most salient. This is also mirrored in English-language propaganda, where the mother-sister-wife roles are the most important roles a woman can fulfil in the Islamic state movement. With the analysis of propaganda material coming out of IS central, what is interesting to note is that very rarely is an author identified unless the propaganda is targeted towards women, in which case a female author is commonly identified.

ISSUE: On the problematising of fighter-civilian dichotomy in understanding women's roles in radicalisation and conflict

The fighter-civilian dichotomy and the notion that women are inherently peaceful has detrimental effects on the understanding of the diversity of women's roles in conflict, as well as on the design and implementation of deradicalization and integration initiatives. The mainstream narrative of many Islamist groups is that women are victims -however in reality, many are active participants even if they are not visibly violent. For example, in Mindanao, the matriarchs within the community were key to instigating the fight in Marawi, taking up influential roles in strategizing for the group and encouraging other members of the group to participate. The myth of women as non-violent has also been perpetuated in reintegration efforts and in the prevention and countering of violent extremism. However, narratives on biological determinism should be de-emphasised in favour of highlighting peaceful solutions towards a goal that some may have sought violent solutions for. Research on online radicalisation also has to be enhanced to incorporate an understanding of the roles women play. This is because it is difficult to assign specific archetypes to users who engage actively in conversations with radicals online but never engage in physical acts of extremism, as an example.

PANEL 2 – HATE SPEECH, INTOLERANCE, AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Digital Hate Speech and Othering: Is It a New Wave or Invented Culture in Malaysia?
- Norena Abdul Karim, *Senior Lecturer, Universiti Teknologi MARA [Malaysia]*

- Cases of hate speech online in Malaysia has risen in recent years owing to a number of factors. Over 1,700 hate speech complaints were recorded with the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) between 2020 to mid-2022.
- Data provided by #TrackerBenci – an initiative created to track and categorise hateful speech online on Twitter in Malaysia – saw an increase of 2,740 hateful tweets in March 2022. The figure rose to 3,088 in April 2022.
- This phenomenon is not new. Polarization over race, religion, and reform has impacted Malaysia for decades. Political conflicts and subjugated historical knowledge have contributed towards intolerance and polarisation in society.
- The 14th General Election in Malaysia saw the weaponization of social media, including Facebook and Twitter, to propagate online hate speech. The 2021 viral Twitter campaign #IsraelKoyak, for instance, was created in response to the usage of stun grenades inside the Al-Aqsa Mosque when Muslim worshippers were praying. Malaysian social media users used the #IsraelKoyak hashtag to flood the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) Twitter account and the Twitter space with pro-Palestine, anti-Israel/anti-Zionist posts. Analysis of the posts can be interpreted as expressions of individualization. #IsraelKoyak is frequently cited as an example of the influence of hashtags on social media and illustrate how alleged injustices can be brought to the attention of the wider public – and highlight the inflammatory and racist undertones of the viral campaign.
- A further prominent example of racist hate speech involved the targeting of the Tabligh gathering in Malaysia on 28 March 2021. Racially charged speech against Malay-Muslims and other ethnic groups on Twitter rose in tandem with Covid-19 cases. Authorities have acted against individuals who propagated inflammatory hate speech online. On 20 August 2022, Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (PAS) chief Hadi Awang posted on his Facebook page that non-Muslims and non-bumiputra were the causes of corruption in Malaysia. The Royal Malaysia Police launched an investigation into his remarks amidst police reports made by the Malaysian public. Authorities have also called on the public to be more mindful on issues dealing with religious and racial sensitivities that potentially threaten social harmony in the country.

The Evolving Challenge of Hate Speech and Intolerance in Indonesia – Jordan Newton, *Senior Advisor, Australia Indonesia Partnership for Justice (AIPJ2) [Indonesia]*

- A decade-long public campaign by conservative Islamic groups has sought to expand their public profile and influence to seek a greater role for Islam in public life and minimise the presence and role of minorities. Above all, the prioritisation of Indonesia as a Muslim majority country and the upholding of conservative Islamic values should have pride of place in the public realm.
- Conservative Islamic groups have tapped into religious texts to exert religious authority. Longstanding grievances around the perceived advantages of minorities were weaponised – framed around nativist calls to 're-take' Indonesia from minorities and other perceived foreign interests. Such rhetoric was mainly framed in the desire to Islamise the Indonesian state in accordance with conservative values. The efforts of conservative Islamic groups were galvanised in the 2019 presidential election, where the groups led large rallies in support for presidential candidate Prabowo Subianto's campaign – one that was ethnically and religiously charged. Though unsuccessful, these efforts managed to gain the support of 45% of the population.
- The Indonesian government launched a concerted campaign against radicalism, intolerance and hate speech, with National and Regional action plans to combat radicalism. Efforts include public awareness, education campaigns and support for Non-governmental Organisations (NGO) – centred around anti-radicalism efforts on Pancasila, the state ideology of Indonesia. Authorities have also cracked down on groups which promote elements of hate speech. Formal bans against groups such as Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia and the Islamic Defenders Front have been issued, and the groups have since been dissolved. Authorities have also used legislation on individuals, leaders and organisations propagating hate speech. Laws such as the Criminal Code, Anti-Discrimination Laws, Money Laundering Laws have been applied to individuals.
- While these efforts have driven intolerant conservatives away from the mainstream and reduced their public profile, social media platforms such as Telegram has become a refuge. Due to the difficulty in policing hate speech online, the broader number of social media users continue to engage in hate speech, conspiracy theories and hoaxes.
- The upcoming Indonesian elections in 2024 is predicted to be a potentially contentious election. Although intolerant actors have largely been driven from the mainstream, the elections will provide an opportunity to for them to creep back in, as religious and social cleavages are still an effective means for politicians to mobilise supporters.

Understanding Extremism and Reactionary Movements in Southeast Asia – Munira Mustaffa, *Executive Director, Chasseur Group [Malaysia]*

- Extremism in Southeast Asia is often seen through the lens of Islamist terrorism. The monitoring of violent Islamist extremist movements has taken up a considerable portion of the current security emphasis and resources for preventing and countering violent extremism in Southeast Asia. Other developing extremist beliefs and movements remain unchecked, and not much attention has been focused on it.
- Right-wing extremism is a worldwide phenomenon and can influence political developments by promoting populist interpretations and narratives – such as the preservation of politically dominant cultural and national identities.
- Research conducted by the Chasseur Group on right-wing extremism and reactionary movements in Southeast Asia analysed social media accounts associated with radical right politics across multiple platforms including Twitter, Facebook, Discord, Telegram, and Instagram. The social media accounts supported an extreme ideology of nationalism, cultural and religious conservatism in Southeast Asia. The study collected a total of 14,615 posts across social media. Analysis revealed that common topics across posts revolved around historical revisionism, Western hegemony, cultural purity, and a policing and military culture. Topics discussed amongst various individuals and groups online, including ethnonationalist supremacists, advocates for fascist ideology, and a pan-Asian nationalist coalition (although the coalition is amorphous and ambiguous).
- Overlapping values and commonalities can be found within the groups. Such similarities include a traditionalist mindset, holding chauvinistic and misogynistic attitudes, antagonism towards liberal values, having high support for police and the military in their country, and often hold racist beliefs. Such values contribute reflect their online behaviour. Activities conducted by the groups include the encouragement of online hostility, often with provocative statements to incite reactionary behaviour towards the posts. Cybertroopers are also often deployed to instigate and provoke and act as discourse vanguards. Harassment campaigns are utilised by leveraging reporting tools of social media platforms. Activities such as retweeting, using screenshots, and leaking account usernames are also common tactics used.
- Countering such behaviour and activities remains a challenge. The amorphousness of certain social media platforms has resulted in the disappearance of online spaces and avenues in which such discourse occurs. It is also important to identify the various motivations of such groups – and to grasp their capacities and capabilities. Violent speech does not necessitate a shift towards kinetic action, but it remains a powerful tool in fuelling political agendas, influencing voters and diminishing community relations.

Q&A

ISSUE: How effective are government crackdowns at groups who propagate hate speech

Previous strategies for extremists involved encouraging them to put down arms and rescind violence, and to express grievances through the democratic system (i.e., elections). The relative success of some Islamist conservative groups espousing hate speech (e.g., Islamic Defenders Front, Hizbut Tahhir Indonesia, and other Salafi groups) posed a conundrum for authorities as the influence of these groups continued to rise. These groups have been effective at campaigning in ways that hateful messages could be propagated and yet make advances using the democratic system.

This has posed challenged to authorities in curbing the influence of such groups and maintaining the balance in keeping previous extremists away from returning to violent extremism. This contestation in civil society will remain as a future challenge for years as attempts to strike a balance are made. Concerns over the erosion of civil discourse in Indonesia have been raised. Recent surveys by academics and Non-governmental Organisations (NGO) suggest a majority of Indonesians are uncomfortable in expressing their opinions, in part due to the increasing lack of civility in public debate.

Indonesia's challenge is to keep intolerance and hate speech out of the mainstream, without further driving polarisation and its damaging effects on its democracy. In this regard, Indonesia joins the ranks of other democracies, like the United States, facing this same challenge. Hate speech and intolerance must be treated as part of a broader challenge of polarisation with the potential for violence driven by intolerant groups in Indonesian democracy.

ISSUE: The attitudes of militant pluralists towards the anti-radicalisation law

The anti-radicalism campaign has also stoked broader polarisation with the emergence of militant pluralists. Militant pluralists are groups dedicated to promoting a diverse and tolerant Indonesia. The urgency of the anti-radicalism campaign is encouraging them to see their own presence as being under existential threat. Militant pluralists have adapted similar tactics used by conservative groups in promoting their narratives. For instance, sensationalist tones similar to that of hate speech actors are used, such as labelling people as 'terrorists' without adequate evidence to substantiate their claims. Some have also incited followers to commit acts of intimidation or violence against others. This further contributes towards the normalisation of anti-democratic and anti-pluralist behaviour.

ISSUE: Does the implementation of the anti-radicalisation law protect the rights of minority groups?

Surveys have suggested that support for the Indonesian government's firm approach to tackling radicalism has been substantial. Intolerant actors have been driven out of

the mainstream, but a general antipathy towards many of the minority groups targeted over the years appears to remain. A shift in attitudes towards minority groups in Indonesia has had limited impact. Attacks against minorities (e.g., attacks against Ahmadi communities) continue to persist and longstanding issues (e.g., over church constructions) continue to remain unresolved.

PANEL 3 – EXTREMISM IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Preventing and countering violent extremism efforts of Mindanao state university after the Marawi Siege of 2017 – Tirmizy Abdullah, *Coordinator*, *Institute for Peace and Development in Mindanao, Mindanao State University [Philippines]*

- Experiences in the provinces of Lanao Del Sur and Lanao De Norte reveal challenges that the term "violent extremism" (VE) poses as people within these communities generally feel othered by the term. The term gives the impression that community members are susceptible to violent extremism and are perceived as vulnerabilities to secure, rather than as resources.

- Furthermore, experiences on the ground challenge the notion of the "post-war" status of these provinces due to the ongoing issue of internally displaced people in Marawi languishing in temporary shelters. The conflict persists, and new conflicts have arisen from the protracted displacement, as Internally Displaced People (IDP) are disappointed with rehabilitation. This could potentially push youths into VE.

- In Lanao Del Sur and Lanao Del Norte, despite a decline in VE, ongoing conflict is reflected in the recruitment of young people and the presence of Dawla Islamiya (DI). Conversations with IDP families in temporary shelters reveal that individuals involved in VE are trying to penetrate IDP camps and recruit young people through the narrative of protracted displacement and the return of Marcos. In the region, VE is intertwined with *Rido* (conflict between family/kinship clans). Non-governmental Organisations' (NGO) efforts to map *Rido* in the area reveal approximately 300 active conflicts. DI are active mostly in the remote municipalities notorious for active *Rido.*

- In addition, DI still relies heavily on kinship networks for recruitment and membership comprises of relatives, fuelled by general distrust of strangers in the region. Research has shown that family members remain the most trusted and main source of information for young people in Lanao del Sur and Lanao del Norte, followed by teachers and religious leaders. Preceding the Marawi Siege, the Maute group recruited young people from their own clans from the Butig settlement. The interaction between *Rido* and VE can be seen more recently in Pagayawan where the involvement of DI has fuelled tensions. Young people are forced to fight, not because of VE ideology, but because of notions of loyalty to the family and clan. The municipality of Maguing in Lanao del Sur is also faced with a similar predicament, where members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) who are frustrated with normalisation and deradicalization initiatives tend to join DI through family networks. Often, it is the perception that the community is under threat - rather than VE ideology - that motivates conflict in the region.

- As such, it is essential for the Bangsamoro government to address these gaps in normalisation efforts, including guaranteeing the voluntary, safe, and dignified return of IDPs, and *Rido* settlement. Efforts to help resolve *Rido* have been undertaken by the Institute for Peace and Development in Mindanao (IDPM) of the Mindanao State University (MSU). Other initiatives include partnership with the Bangsamoro government, to elevate the presence of the local government on the ground, where the narrative that the Bangsamoro government is absent lingers. There are also initiatives that involve training for widows of former martyrs and awareness raising on preventing VE amongst the youth.

Indonesia's adaptation, facing changes in the movement of terrorism and VE groups – Adhe Bhakti, *Executive Director, Centre for Radicalism and Deradicalization Studies (PAKAR) [Indonesia]*

- Indonesia has had a long journey with violent extremism (VE) - the current situation is dynamic and influenced by the global geopolitical landscape and domestic politics. There has been a rise of religious movements in Indonesia following the 212 Action where demonstrators protested the election of a Chinese Christian governor (Basuki Tjahaja Purnama). This impacted many Indonesian Muslims, resulting in increased Islamisation in Indonesia. The presentation discusses the movement of Islamist individuals and groups towards violence, and the attempts of VE groups at legitimisation via involvement in social initiatives and politics.

- Arrests that followed the 212 Action include the arrest of cleric Habib Rizieq Shihab, leader of the Islamic Defender's Front (FPI) for breaching local COVID-19 laws by gathering people during the pandemic, and the arrest of an FPI sympathiser who had the intention of attacking Chinese interests in Indonesia. Acting on perceived injustice at the killing of six FPI members by the police, a woman crashed into a police station in North Sumatra. These reflect a shift towards more violent tactics.

- On the other hand, arrests targeting Jamaah Islamiyah (JI)- ve revealed their efforts to recruit through kinship ties and boarding schools, and more pertinently its involvement in social charity movements. JI are involved in two broad categories of charity organisations. The first are ones listed as terrorist organisations by the UN - the Hilal Ahmar Society Indonesia (HASI) as an example, and second and more recently, other charity organisations identified by the police to be affiliated with or operated by JI. The difference is in the leadership structure: HASI is operated by JI and its leadership comprises of JI members. JI is also increasingly emerging from the shadows by involving themselves in politics and will have their campaign debut in 2024.

- On global geopolitics, the situation in Afghanistan and the Ukrainian Crisis have influenced local conditions for VE. The Taliban takeover in Afghanistan has resulted in *hijrah* (migration). Abu Tolud of the JI, for example, has intentions to go to Afghanistan both because of his connections with the Deputy Foreign Minister of the Taliban, and because of opportunities to establish businesses there. He has also proliferated narratives on the openness of the Taliban with women, and the relations that the Taliban has established with other countries. Regarding the Ukrainian Crisis, Russia has learnt from ISIS propaganda and have used Chechnyan Muslim troops to garner support from other Muslim countries. Many Indonesian Islamists are in support of Russia. Militant groups in Indonesia (e.g., JI, ISIS, Al Qaeda etc.) on the other hand, do not support Russia due to their past involvement in aiding Syria against ISIS and Al Qaeda's experience with them in the Soviet era.

- In response to the dynamism of VE in Indonesia, the government has adopted an alternative approach to its law enforcement processes. This includes new regulation on terrorism which involves wider implementation, including the arrest of people involved with VE through social media. As such, pre-emptive strikes by law enforcement agencies have increased and despite having only two VE incidents in the last two years, a lot more individuals were arrested. Furthermore, Indonesia's new law also mandates the government to implement a national action plan to counter VE that leads to terrorism by involving more stakeholders. There is currently a total of 42 ministries and agencies involved in counter-terrorism efforts- including the Ministry of Religion, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Social Affairs etc. This collaboration and coordination of efforts amongst different agencies is essential in targeting complex problems, including the eventual repatriation of Indonesian women who are currently in the border of Syria.

- The Indonesian government is also trying alternative approaches for non-violent JI members, including attempts to work with JI members to rescind membership with JI and pledge their loyalty to Indonesia. In addition, the Indonesian House of Representatives recently passed a bill for the National Counter Terrorism Agency (BNPT) to secure an international loan to establish affiliates for ex-inmates associated with VE. However, this decision could be counter-productive to reintegration efforts as ex-inmates are congregated in once place.

- These developments in the intersection of politics and VE present new challenges for Indonesia. The more immediate problems include the upcoming General Elections in 2024 which expects political campaigning from JI presents a contentious time for Indonesia; and Indonesia's hosting of the upcoming 2022 G20 Summit which coincides with the 20th anniversary of the Bali Bombing. Already, law enforcement agencies have found messages on

Telegram groups calling for attacks in Bali and attacks on the Chinese Embassy in Jakarta.

Projection of the Future Leader of Indonesia's Jihadist Movement – Taufik Andrie, *Executive Director, Yayasan Prasasti Perdamaian; Jakarta, Indonesia [Indonesia]*

- The arrest of many senior members of Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) in Indonesia (e.g., Abu Rusydan, Ustaz Adung etc.), most of them in their 60s, marks the end of an era. Many of the senior members will be unable to keep up with the developments in the coming years. Some are physically unwell, and others have denounced their involvement with JI and recruited to participate in government counternarratives or have lost their credibility. For example, there have been inconsistencies in his views (significantly on *Pancasila)* released by Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, contributing to his diminishing influence.

- The younger generation are keen on newer ideas on Jihadist movements and organisations, reflected in their attempts to get more engagement and involvement within the organisation. This is especially so amongst the generation of graduates from Camp Abubakar.

- There are two categories of leadership through which the future leadership of JI can be understood: inheritance and organic. First, inheritance understands leadership as a legacy passed from father to son, through this model, respect for the father then translates to respect for the son. Organic leadership on the other hand reflects key figures amongst the younger militant membership with good networks that would enable them to achieve significant influence in the coming years.

- This can be further divided into two categories: spiritual leaders, and ideological leaders. Spiritual leaders include Abdul Rosyid Ridho, son of Abdul Bakar Ba'asyir, who are able to deliver *Fatwah* and influence the public. Strategic leaders on the other hand are individuals who have influence over their audience but are also knowledgeable on the management of the organisation, including training, fundraising, and operations. The younger generation of strategic leaders are popular amongst youth and on social media and have experiences beyond Indonesia. Because of these experiences, they are increasingly considered by the older members of JI as eligible for leadership positions.

- As such, despite inheritance or legacy leaderships being commonplace, and despite, there is an observed rise of organic leadership, by people equipped with the skills and capacity to lead the future generation of JI operations.

SYNDICATE ROOM DISCUSSIONS

ISSUE: The popularity of Jihadist messaging of Islamic State sympathizers in South Philippines

Although this is on the decline now, it was strong during pre-Marawi in 2016. University students were passionate to share the propaganda and saved it in their USBs (as internet connection in Lanao wasn't strong) to make print copies and translate to local dialect. This helped to contextualize and adapt the materials to the Lanao context. Another unique approach was the use of two-way radio, in municipalities in Palawan (charging it there as electricity was available) to disseminate propaganda. Words de-legitimatizing the Bangsamoro Transition Authority, Chairman Murad of Moro Islamic Liberation Front, and former decommissioned commanders who are now part of the government like Commander Bravo, are being channeled through two-way radio.

ISSUE: Why violent extremists in South Philippines are more affiliated to clans rather than ideology

There is a decline in ideological subscription due to what happened in Marawi because the outcome wasn't favourable and therefore is not palatable to young people now. Nonetheless, violent extremists are still trying to manipulate the narrative of what happened in Marawi using the kinship system in Marwan tribe and ethnic affiliations.

People do not necessarily subscribe to the ideology, but members of the VE are still relatives. In a recent attack the locals joined the VE, not because they subscribed to the ideology, but because they felt both the community and relatives were under assault. Now with better internet connectivity, the manner of spreading ideology is changing. For example, family/clans are shaping the ideology (by incorporating elements of religion and identity) and then using tech/social media to spread it.

ISSUE: Issues of rehabilitation efforts in Marawi post Covid-19

In Marawi, Covid added another layer of vulnerability for people staying in temporary shelters. IDP are yet to return and many of those staying in the temporary shelters are not fully vaccinated. Temporary shelters have improper hygiene, water scarcity, and lack of space, making it harder to practice social distancing. The government further red tapped the maintenance by directing it to other government departments, resulting in a lack of coordination and clear communication.

The rehabilitation plan of Marawi is not properly coordinated, adding more stress to the people. is occurring in the temporary shelters in the form of children wanting to join- ISIS to welcome back their family to Marawi and regard ISIS as heroes. This can be exploited by VEs in their recruitment.

In addressing radicalization in shelters, there are a few universities engaging in conversation with most assistance programs to address humanitarian needs of IDP.

Some of them end up leaving due to lack of electricity and water in the shelters and they are not tracked by the government.

ISSUE: Potential conflict over leadership and succession

Pathways into Indonesian jihadi organisations such as Jemaah Islamiyah vary and include kinship, which means that conflicts may arise between 'organic' and inherited pathways to leadership. This also raises questions over the cohesiveness of JI's leadership core, the potential for outside influence over leadership selection, as well as the nature of the relationship between leadership figures. The lack of a clear successor in some situations, as well as the predominance of older leadership candidates, also leads to speculation over JI's long-term trajectory.

ISSUE: JI's relationships with larger international terror organisations

The Jihadist movement in Indonesia continues to evolve as pro-IS and QAnon groups in Indonesia gain influence. As such, today's JI may not be as straightforwardly described as an Al-Qaeda-linked group. Despite IS' small following in Indonesia, IS attacks on Indonesian soil are likely to provoke a reaction from JI and their supporters. Additionally, although most JI leadership candidates belong to pro-Al-Qaeda groups, questions remain over whether these leaders will appeal to both Indonesian Al-Qaeda and IS supporters, and the implications this would have on Al-Qaeda's appeal in Indonesia.

ISSUE: Evolving communications strategy

As Islamist or radical groups become more politically mainstream and flexible, more social media and online savvy JI leaders stand a better chance of reaching out and appealing to younger generations. Given the new emphasis on electoral politics, the communication networks between JI and the Middle East have become increasingly significant. Charities also play an important role in the Jihadist movement when it comes to posting extremist content, leading to questions as to whether action should be taken against them.

PANEL 4 – GAMING AND ONLINE SUBCULTURES

Gaming platforms, post-organisational extremism, and 'hybridised' online threats – Milo Comerford, *Head of Policy and Research for Counter-Extremism Institute for Strategic Dialogue [United Kingdom]*

- The international extremist landscape is increasingly becoming hybridized, and the boundaries between disinformation, conspiracy theories, targeted hate, harassment, and violent extremism are increasingly becoming blurred. There is an intersection between online gaming and far-right extremists that needs to be looked at closely. This includes which subsets of the far-right use gaming platforms, the ways the far-right use gaming platforms, and the role of gaming in far-right digital strategies.

- Extremists are increasingly becoming a broad church of actors, opportunistically building loose coalitions around crises, shared goals, and common objectives. There is an ever-closer interplay between local, national, and international networks, particularly in the amplification of extremist narratives.

- Terrorism and violent extremism across the ideological spectrum have been marked by a "post-organisational" trend – where the influence or direction of activity by groups or organisations is ambiguous or loose. This is not a new phenomenon. Notions of "leaderless resistance" and "leaderless jihad" first discussed decades ago by extremist ideologues such as white-supremacist Louis Beam Jr. and al-Qaeda ideologue Abu Musab al-Suri.

- Post-organisational dynamics have accelerated with the COVID-19 pandemic, especially following the mass de-platforming of various actors in January 2021. This has led to a new crop of individuals leaving mainstream platforms to join fringe social networking sites where violent extremist ecosystems thrive. Despite the fracturing and franchising of violent extremist movements and the proliferation of decentralised online extremist spaces, responses to terrorist content online are still hampered by rigid organisational conceptions of terrorism.

- The role of gaming in extremist spaces cannot be discounted. Historical strategy and role-playing games provide the opportunity for extremists to fulfil their fantasies. A small number of political or extremist games can be used as a signifier of political identity or to provoke a response from outsiders. Raiding provided a gamified opportunity to engage in extremist activity.

- There is a wide range of extreme right communities and influencers operating across Steam, Discord, and DLive, and a smaller variety of influencers on

Twitch. There is support on Steam and Discord for violent extreme right groups, including content from proscribed terrorist organisations on Discord.

- Shifting notions of extremism requires a new generation of responses, which go beyond existing counter-extremism policy paradigms. They are:
    - First, there should be greater consideration of human-rights based approaches to social media regulation which focus on systemic risk mitigation and transparency rather than content removal alone, recognising platform design issues which facilitate the growth of extremist movements.
    - Second, there is a need for development of the next generation of offline and online interventions to address these looser movements and bringing people out of extremist ecosystems.
    - Third, strong prevention mechanisms are needed, including updated programmes from educational curricula and community initiatives, to raise awareness of and build resilience against hybrid extremism threats. These include greater partnerships to educate publics and develop critical thinking.
    - Fourth, there is a need to facilitate improved regional policy exchange, recognising the transnational nature of these threats, and consider lessons learned from mechanisms developed for international collaboration to counter specific groups (e.g., Counter Daesh Coalition).

Misogyny, Hostile Beliefs and the Transmission of Extremism Online – Claudia Wallner, *Associate Fellow, The Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) [United Kingdom]*

- There are commonalities among far-right groups worldwide despite these groups championing national and racial based issues. The narrative around gender issues is most common among these groups. Most of these groups can identify with gender issues and the struggles associated with the breaking down of gender stereotypes. This misogyny is amplified in the gaming space, sub-forums, and online channels.

- Far-right groups do not exist alone and have transnational connections. These connections are amplified by physical connections through more mundane activity like certain types of music and sports. Transnational conflicts like the war in Ukraine also draw these far-right people in, albeit that there are believers on both sides of the conflict. These transnational connections are manifested in how attacks in Norway in 2011 serve as an

inspiration for the 2019 Christchurch attacks and other attacks around the world.

- There is some overlap between men's rights groups and the far-right movements. These groups often offer a sense of belonging and camaraderie with people with similar mindsets of being emasculated. This position is useful in attracting followers by providing strategies and forums for to counter the changing role of gender in society.

- There are two strands of this school of thought: victimhood and supremacy of white men in society. Both strands believe that men are entitled to a certain position in society and these groups need to use all means necessary to reclaim their rightful place. The narrative of victimhood is based on the increase in migration and the rise of empowered women in society, which limits the imagined economic potential of white men. On the other hand, the narrative of supremacy is based on the restoration of the traditional role of men in the household and society in general.

- The rise of feminism is often seen as a moral threat in societies by these far-right groups and a major contributing factor in the emasculation of white men. The empowerment of women through the championing of equality and the giving of economic rights also contribute to this narrative of how men are being deprived of their rightful place. Feminism is also blamed for the declining birth rates in western countries, which links to the decline of the white race in their home countries.

- The discussions over the concept of masculinity in these outgroups on online sub-forums compare supremacist white masculinity with three broad deviant groups: Black men, Jewish men, and members of the LGBTQ community:

    - The discussants online boast about how white men have superior genes and brain development. They often see themselves as warriors of unrestrained masculinities and claim to be descended from Nordic tribes like the Vikings.

    - Black men are typically described as hypermasculine, hypersexual, and predatory, but are lazy and stupid, which prevents them from being real men. Groups on these sub-forums obsessively discuss the rape and seduction of white women by these black men, and how white women who have children with black men dilute the supremacy of the white race. Muslim men are classed similarly to Black men.

    - Jewish men are described as having a hyper-masculine mindset while being physically hypo-masculine. Their hyper-masculinity manifests as greed with a desire to dominate the world, while being typecast as being physically weak and incapable of hard physical

activity. Jewish men are not seen to be threatening the survival of the white race through race-mixing with white women but are seen to be doing so by contributing to the feminisation of white men and empowering white women. This is linked to the conspiracy theory of Jewish men wanting to dominate the world through the destruction of the white race.

- The LBGTQ community are seen as the antithesis of traditional family values and have found traction worldwide, especially in Eastern Europe. Putin in particular has been very vocal against the LGBTQ community which endears him to the far-right movement.

Q&A

ISSUE: Gaming is not the problem, the platforms that gamers use are

Platforms should be addressing systemic risks rather than illegal content. These platforms should be designed with security and safety in mind to protect users. There is a need to balance the freedom of expression and regulating against criminal content. Theoretically there is no end to the content that can be criminalised, and regulators are always playing catch up on evolving extremist views manifesting on platforms. Risk should be tackled more holistically through more creative measures including creating safer environments for individuals. This should be a fundamental issue for platforms, regardless of whatever new technologies come along, including block-chain and the metaverse.

ISSUE: It is hard to draw the boundaries around extremist content in post-organisation sphere

It is easy for officials to pinpoint an organisation with a specific identity, but it is much harder in a post organisation sub-group where there is a spectrum of views which feeds into each other. Some of the content posted online gaming platforms are toxic but perfectly legal, while co-existing in the same sub-group with other content may be terror-inducing. This creates a problem for officials who want to prevent individuals from interacting with extremist content. There is a need to address risk on an individual level rather than in groups in the post-organisation sphere because the threat profiles of these individuals are different.

ISSUE: Research into sub-groups can use ethical issues

While there is no consensus on how research on social media research can be done, a balance between privacy and responsiveness needs to be struck. Issues about transparency, openness and consent need to be addressed in a clear and open manner. This presents some problems in research in closed groups where researchers cannot be open about their presence, which in turn limits the amount of material that can be used. Most of the work done is therefore based on open forums where information is already public.

PANEL 5- FAR-RIGHT EXTREMISM: DECIPHERING DIFFERENCES AND EXPLORING CONNECTIONS

Understanding the rise of the far-right in India and the US – Stanly Johny, *International Affairs Editor, The International Hindu [India]*

- The focus of this session was the analysis of the rise of far-right politics in India, US, and Europe.
- In the post-war period, there was a rise in liberalism followed by strong economic growth. During this period, the far-right was pushed to the fringes. However, this has now changed in recent years.
- The far-right has come close to being elected or became a part of government via alliances in many countries. However, in the US and India, they came into power on their own. In India for instance, the BJP party won the majority in parliament.
- What is observed across democratic societies is that the far-right are capturing power, either as ruling parties or as significant part of coalitions. In addition to the US and India, Italy saw the election of a far-right government, headed by Georgia Meloni who has neo-Fascist origins. Her party had risen out of nowhere a mere four years ago. The recent Swedish elections also saw the rise of the far-right.
- The similarities in the rise of Modi and Trump were analyzed. Both had a "God, family and ideology" platform. Trump regularly attacked the Washington establishment, and like Trump Modi also attacked the prevailing establishment that he perceived to be corrupt. Steve Bannon, a close associate of Trump, had predicted that after the BJP victory in India, Latin America and Asia would quickly follow suit and called the trend "a global revolt". Sure enough, two years later, Trump won the US Presidential elections.
- The kind of political hegemony that is evident in India is based on Hindutva and started in 2014 when Modi first came to power. In fact, Modi called his 2014 victory "a break from weakness". This was then boosted in 2019, when Modi won the elections again. Modi defended his stance when he was asked if he was a Hindu nationalist in secular India. To this, he replied "I am born an Indian, I am a nationalist, I am Hindu, I am a Hindu nationalist…I see no conflict in that".
- Some structural factors that have contributed to the rise of the far-right include a crisis in liberalism as well as the rise of Islamism. The crisis in liberalism is aptly described in the political philosopher Francis Fukuyama's book: *Liberalism and its Discontents* where he argues that classical liberalism is in a state of crisis as it has not lived up to its promises and outlines the challenges to liberalism from the right and the left.

- The fusion of populism and far-right politics is unlikely to die down soon and in India at least there would be continual pushing of the ruling party further towards the right.

The Rise of the Extreme right – Lydia Khalil, *Research Fellow, Lowy Institute; Deakin University [Australia]*

- According to the EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report from 2019, there has been 320% increase in right wing extremist violence globally. While there are multiple data sets showing these increases in Europe and the US, many statistics don't capture RWE violence in Asia e.g., Myanmar, India and Sri Lanka which would drive the numbers even higher. In addition, the pandemic created the perfect storm for RWE. RWE capitalized on the fear and uncertainty around the pandemic and the disaffected were easily recruited.
- Yet despite this growing trend, there is no consensus on the definition of right-wing extremism (RWE). Many jurisdictions around the world do not officially use the term RWE. Scholarly definitions of RWE and far-right also vary significantly and the terminology and taxonomy are contested regularly. In fact, in an earlier study, there was there 26 different descriptions of RWE ideology. Hence it would be helpful to understand RWE as a 'spectrum' of movements and ideologies, with shared characteristics. These shared characteristics include anti-democratic tendencies, exclusion and hate, shared enemies, sense of supremacy and conspiracy as well as constantly believing they are under siege or imminent threat.
- Would the different definitions of RWE hamper our efforts to collaborate globally on RWE issues? It can be confusing to use one single term on these different RWE movements, however, there are important and relevant ways these movements are connected. Four main reasons were highlighted as contextual/structural factors that are driving the rise in RWE, and these factors are the commonalities between the different RWE movements:
    - Perception of global inequality and elite capture – In some countries, the majority of the population are seeing their superior status slipping. This is not necessarily about objective conditions but more about perceived threats to status. An example of this was the US capitol siege on Jan 26 where most of the participants came from areas where the white majority is in decline
    - Rapid infodemic (spread and consumption of disinformation) – RWE proponents have been early adopters of online platforms and are very switched on the role of the Internet. Digital communications have thus allowed for the unprecedented spread of disinformation, misinformation, and conspiracy theories. This has led to a fraying of our 'consensus reality' and has contributed to the growth of extremism through the hardening of views, the consolidation of

exclusivist identities and an increasing susceptibility to conspiracy theories.

- Climate change – Another contributing factor to the rise of RWE has been the increase in climate change discussions. Ecofascism has emerged as a response to the climate crisis. The lack of global co-ordinated action to climate change has led to right wing ideas for the cure to climate change e.g., population reduction
- Rejection of democracy – The global decline in democracy has accelerated. The number of countries that are designated as "Not Free" has reached its highest level since the deterioration of democracy began in 2006. Countries with declines in political rights and civil liberties outnumbered those with gains by the largest margin recorded during the 15-year period.

Q&A

ISSUE: On using the term 'Radical Right'

A distinction needs to be made between political parties and right-wing extremist groups. It is highly unlikely that Western Europe is going to be engulfed in civil war. Viktor Orban, Hungary's Prime Minster, for instance, is not inciting terrorist attacks. While Radical Right is more of an appropriate term, there are shared narratives and perspectives and intersections which present a more latent threat to multicultural societies. Trump was not part of the Pretty Boys, but it is likely he incited them and that is an important distinction.

ISSUE: Re-establishing consensus reality

Both speakers admitted that that this would be tough to do. From a media point of view, the greater common good should be the media's primary agenda when reporting. However, the media is being co-opted into this highly polarized atmosphere. In India, certain TV mainstream media like Republic World TV, Times Now etc all broadcast polarizing material, especially targeting Muslims and they do this in the name of freedom of expression. Far-right parties are not cracking down on the media but are appropriating this space to drive their messages. Therefore, it is difficult to reach consensus reality.

ISSUE: The rise of Modi and his popularity among the Indian diasporas

Modi is very popular with the Indian diaspora as demonstrated by his Madison Square speech in 2014 which was a big hit. Hindutva, a predominant form of Hindu nationalism in India, claim to be the leader of Hindus all over the world. This was further reinforced by Modi offering passports to persecuted Hindus and other minorities in the three countries sharing borders with India. His success can be traced back to 2014, when after 10 years of Congress government, there was a groundswell of anger against the perceived corrupt current government. The BJP's message was that the Congress Party was appealing to the minorities, ignoring majority Hindu, and

was inefficient and corrupt. The BJP offered a new beginning to voters in 2014. Modi sticks to this narrative to this day, and this explains the BJP's rise and hold to power.

PANEL 6 – FOREIGN VOLUNTEERS: FIGHTING FOR AND AGAINST NATION-STATES

Beyond FTFs: Trends in Transnational Recruitment of Foreign Fighters – David Malet, *Associate Professor, American University [United States]*

- Foreign fighters (FFs) are non-citizens of conflict states who join insurgencies during civil conflicts. They are not state affiliated militia or foreign legion. The term Foreign Terrorist Fighter was coined in 2010s following UNSC resolution 2178 and 2396, addressing foreign fighters affiliated with Islamic State or Al Qaeda. Repatriation, prosecution, and prevention of travel only applied to IS or Al Qaeda affiliated FFs. FFs are mobilized through transnational communities- religious, ethnic (diasporic communities), or logical affiliation (like Communists). Jihadist FF mobilizations are the 4th largest, trailing behind Soviet, Spanish, and Chinese mobilization. Career FFs travel between insurgencies, transmitting expertise.

- Returning FFs have a high casualty rate (<30% fatalities) as most are utilized without proper training and carry out suicide attacks. Recent returning FFs have been documented with severe PTSD and historically few remain in situ. Some stay loyal to a cause for decades (and are effective recruiters) but many feel betrayed and become critical

- For Ukraine, most countries allowed foreign volunteering, for countries where it was illegal, they were not prevented from joining. Volunteers with prior military experience who went to Ukraine as experts are able to operate openly as they are typically not FTF (highlighting double standards for non-Jihadi and Jihadi FFs). In this war transnational networks were less important as people were self-motivated to join after observing the conflict on news, leading to irregular experience of volunteers. Hence Ukraine was selective of recruiting as unhappy volunteers can be used for negative propaganda. Social media created double edged sword for recruitment – reaching more people but less message control

- There is increasing complexity of organizations and actors that have a financial stake in the presence of FFs. As organizations like Free Burma Rangers (and Syrian, Iranian, and Sudanese counterparts) and 1st New Allied Expeditionary Force, instead of being prosecuted, were provided government contracts from US and Canada respectively, for logistics and development assistance. Free Burma rangers' organization is now lobbying the US government to not withdraw troops from Syria, further complicating responses from security agencies.

Transnational Volunteers Against ISIS – Shashi Jayakumar, *Senior Fellow, Head of Centre of Excellence for National Security; Executive Coordinator of Future Issues and Technology [Singapore]*

- Collection of data of 500 foreign volunteers for ISIS from 2014-2019. The data consisted of fifty data points on each individual with basic identifiers, details about the individual's past, and motivations and ideology of the individual and was collected though social media profiles and verified by books and occasional interviews. 60% of the individuals in the database volunteered in Syria with the main Kurdish armed movement, YPG or its female equivalent, the Women's Protection Units (YPJ). 21 individuals (4%) are known to be affiliated with a Christian militia. The vast majority of individuals are American (173). The next most numerous are British, French, Canadian and German volunteers. Only a miniscule number of individuals come from Africa and Asia (Wang was one of the first from Asia). 67 individuals from the US with military experience.

- The individual motivation for joining was not restricted to single factor; there were overlaps between ideology, wanting to do good/moral outrage/search for meaning, adventurism, and ideology. Sometimes motivations changed over time as well.

- Religious belief: only for a minority of individuals is it a key driver. Those who fight with Christian militia are deeply religious. They may be religious but and this may be a primary motivation, but they keep it out of their FB page.
- Adventurism: subcategories of this included "assisting locals". Heroic types are often sent back by their comrades or are sent home early by YPG.
- Ideology (only 16%): this has a wide strand - right wing types, anti-Islam, Marxist, Anarchists; some see it as a struggle between good and evil. Some individuals see themselves at the metaphorical front line keeping at ISIS at bay or delaying its advance to their home countries.
- Wanting to do good/moral outrage: 150 out of 214 fall into this category. They see themselves in civilization terms as historical vanguards; giving purpose for some and as well as the possibility to express themselves.

- There were sub-motivators observed in the data as well:

    - Issues relating to past (or failed) army experience, including frustrations with non-deployment or inability to get promoted to the top rungs.

    - Personal Issues/ Redemption: Breakups, drifters, no gainful employment in home countries creating a sense of alienation' persons wanting to get away from something. There may also be a sense of making good or coming clean – those who want to make

something of themselves after being disappointed in themselves, being disappointed in society and the expectations it holds of them.

- The results show two things:
    - a) Volunteers inhabit a very wide band within the spectrum of religious, ideological, and political beliefs. There is difficulty in explaining why particular individuals go further and commit violence in the name of the group or the cause they identify with.
    - b) The provisional assessment is that ideological individuals would try to seek new battlegrounds, and whatever conflict they went to would shape them in ways not just on the battlefield but in terms of them wanting change back home.

Foreign volunteers: fighting for and against nation-states in Russia-Ukraine war (2014-2022+) – Kacper Rekawek, *Postdoctoral Fellow, C-REX, University of Oslo [Norway]*

- In 2014, Foreign fighters (FFs) - not volunteers as they were not affiliated with state - joined both sides of the war. More far-right individuals joined "separatist" militia in Donbas and some joined Ukraine's Volunteer Battalions. Non-state units on both sides were recruiting.
- In 2015/16-2020 there was a lull period with not much fighting. No longer the war of maneuver, no action no glory, FFs went back. Units were moved into Ministries of Internal Affairs which require citizenship and to avoid the liabilities of recruiting FFs. Many FFs from 2014 remained in Ukraine, married, and started families and were running business. Many rejoined in the 2022 conflict.
- In 2022, there was an explosion of volunteers, not FFs. They are joining state-led entities and units and are rebels and fighting for the government. Leading up to the build-up of Russian forces on the border, pre-24 Feb 2022, people started coming in. Ukraine put out a distress call for foreign volunteers in an attempt to internationalize the conflict.
- Foreign volunteers (FVs) were organized in more than one legion with sub-legions under different arms of the Ukrainian armed forces. Vetting was scarce as Ukraine was in a tight spot (and only became more stringent later). This resulted in sub-par quality of recruits. There were command and control issues as the officers leading these legions were inexperienced (the experienced fighters were on the front lines). FVs had different combat training from NATO, expecting air support, medical evacuation etc, and were not used to city warfare. Some even complained that they felt like the Taliban.

- FVs are ambassadors for Ukraine for propaganda and fund raising and there is genuine contribution by them at the tactical level. However, it is important to acknowledge that the Ukrainian victories would have still taken place if FVs weren't present.
- As the war is now in full swing, it is the professional or the dedicated FVs who remain. People go back to their home countries but do come back to the Ukraine as well; they come back with medical and food supplies from their home country.

SYNDICATE ROOM DISCUSSIONS

ISSUE: Blurring of the lines between foreign fighters, terrorists, and activists

Parallels may be drawn between narratives encouraging Western foreign fighters to Ukraine, and those that surround the Afghan transnational jihadi movement, which allowed Al-Qaeda to coalesce and develop as an organisation. Ongoing Russian attempts to mobilise men (and domestic resistance to this move) may also potentially encourage foreign far-right supporters of Vladimir Putin to travel to Russia as foreign fighters. Additionally, given the presence of already existing far-right elements in these countries, there is a real prospect of foreign fighters being radicalised into terrorist groups, as well as eventually posing a threat to domestic security in their own countries upon their return.

And some foreign fighters are motivated by the altruistic need to alleviate suffering, potentially posing challenges on legal regimes around the world. In the US, for example, the motivation is inconsequential. In the UK, some returning fighters were put on trial, but the trials collapsed because the UK military were engaged in a fight against the same enemy. In Singapore, laws against depredation are still in place, like the Internal Security Act. This was used to detain Wang Yuandongyu, a Singaporean who attempted to travel to Syria to fight with Kurdish militia against ISIS.

ISSUE: Motivations of foreign fighters

Drawing upon Chris Hedge's War is a Force That Gives Us Meaning (2002), certain theories suggest that foreign fighters are driven by a desire for meaning in a world that seems increasingly meaningless and materialistic. This contrasts with the argument that foreign fighters are motivated by narcissism. To complicate matters, some fighters who are mobilised across borders (e.g., Pakistan and Afghanistan) do not view themselves as foreign, raising questions over what exactly distinguishes a foreign fighter from a domestic one, as well as the legal status of those who choose to travel.

In the dataset examined of about 500 individuals, alienation as well as a search for meaning are recurring motivations. This sense of alienation and the drive to search for meaning is reinforced by "anomie": disassociation and lack of fixed anchors and

moorings in modern society, with the perceived erosion of traditional values and cultural norms, especially with the proliferation of social media. Another important factor is the notion of mortality - the idea that meaning has to be made of a short life.

ISSUE: Reintegration and the future of returning foreign fighters

After rising in their respective ranks, some foreign fighters are asked to assist in subsequent conflicts or wars. Questions remain over the prospects of foreign fighters who return to their own countries after battle, and the numerous factors that account for their transformation into either domestic terrorists or facilitators. Even more questions remain over the prospects of foreign fighters who stay in their adopted countries, especially regarding their families' prospects, as women take on the role of recruiters and children are viewed as future recruits. Should Ukraine emerge victorious from the war, and foreign volunteers are subsequently de-mobilised, there is much speculation over the extent to which these volunteers will impact or change Ukrainian society in the long term.

Many returning fighters from Iraq and Syria talk of PTSD. Others speak of never quite making peace with how the conflict turned out. This may motivate some to join in the fight in another conflict to "get the job right this time", expiate the trauma experienced, and address the dissatisfactions they have had with the outcome of the previous conflict. As for the involvement in foreign fighters in the socio-political arenas of their home countries, it is key to understand that the timelines for some of these individuals extends beyond the fight they joined abroad. For example, in the Spanish Civil War, many individuals who fought fell into obscurity. However, many remained committed to causes, and went on to become unionists and community activists in trying to make a difference in American society. This is a historical phenomenon that will take years to play out. After the strategic defeat of ISIS in the battlefield in 2017, many went home. However, there were others who were ideologically committed and stayed. Some like Aiden Aslin have gone onto Ukraine due to deep-seated motivations that outlived his motivations in Syria. Furthermore, deradicalization programmes need to be tailored in accordance with the motivating factors. For example, Singapore's deradicalization programme has been successful for individuals involved with Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), but is somewhat less successful for self-radicalised individuals, where ideological belief might take a backseat.

ISSUE: What makes some conflicts more attractive to foreign fighters than others?

Distance in some ways contributes to the allure, but it is not the key factor. One factor to privilege may be effective recruitment campaigns. When ISIS was on the rise, the People's Defense Units (YPG) created a sense of Kurdish solidarity through social media, boosting the narrative of historical oppression.

Foreign fighters often see themselves as global citizens rather than party to a single conflict. Their combat experience is therefore varied and have participated in conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq among others. They see themselves as agents of

political change and are always looking to the next conflict to involve themselves in. There may be more foreign fighters joining the conflict in Ukraine to ensure that victory is achieved.

ISSUE: The barriers to entry for foreign fighters in a conflict

Some states actively prevent their citizens from taking up arms as a mercenary through legislation, but some states are rather lax in allowing their citizens to take up arms. Many far-right supporters in Europe are also reticent to join the conflict in Ukraine because of the soldiers that Russia used at the beginning of the war. Russia sent in troops from the Eastern Military Districts into the war, which are composed of soldiers of Chechen and Asiatic descent. The optics of flighting with non-Europeans against a European state is a big turn-off for neo-Nazis that wish to fight for Russia.

PANEL 7 – EARLY INTERVENTIONS AND DISENGAGEMENT

A personal account of working with PVE and diversion in public schools in Aarhus – Christian Kristofferson, *Secretariat of Culture and Arts, City of Odense and Former Consultant, Department of Children and Youth, City of Aarhus. [Denmark]*

- The Aarhus Model is developed based on the school, social services, and police (SSP) approach from 1970s, by which all the three organisations sit together and discuss. It started in 2007, with the aim to address the presence of white supremacists and rose to fame in 2014 given the results of the work with returnees from the Syrian conflict.
- As part of the green section of the Aarhus Model with self-sustaining purpose, the workshops were offered to all schools in Aarhus, targeting to students from primary school 4th grade to secondary school 2nd grade. Topics/themes include digital literacy, online behaviour, critical thinking online, radicalization, extremism, discrimination, propaganda, conspiracy theory, recruitment and so on. No schools were singled out to make sure everyone can benefit from it. Teachers were presented but they did not participate, as it was the students' space, which broke up the traditional way of teaching. Elements of the workshops include central concepts and definitions, knowledge dissemination, exercises, dialogue with students on issues surrounding PVE, as well as personal and group reflection. Supplementary materials were also used before or after the workshops.
- Instructors for the workshop were recruited based on informal interviews. Most of them were university students, with the aim to benefit from the youth-to-youth approach. Background knowledge about radicalisation was required for the instructors. Training and competence development were provided to make sure that they were familiar with the workshop material through workshop observations and working with experienced instructors.
- Experiences and lessons learnt from the workshops: 1) The workshops provided an opportunity for students to voice their own opinions and at the same time, to hear from their classmates; 2) The workshops should be continuously updated with recent cases; 3) Teachers also learnt from the workshop with increased awareness of classroom dynamics; 4) The workshop also encouraged participation from low-activity and vulnerable students, since all opinions were welcomed with the non-judging rule.
- Reflections and perspectives for the future: 1) How to evaluate the effectiveness of such workshops and any PVE effort in general remains as a question; 2) How do we understand and hence address radicalization in an online context; 3) Such programme relied upon SSP (social services and police), while the impact of arts and culture are missing. Arts and culture are needed to understand what is going on and for hands-on prevention. They are also vessels for community building, offering interpretations of life, existence, and context.

Why People Don't Get Radicalized? – Bartolomeo Conti, *Researcher Fellow in Sociology, Centre for the Study of Social Movements (CEMS) of the École Des Hautes Études En Sciences Sociales (EHESS) [France]*

- This presentation is the result of an ethnographic study conducted in French prisons over three years, with the aim to propose an approach to study radicalization and non-radicalization.
- Prior research mainly focused on the factors of radicalization, while few researchers have tried to examine those who refuse or counter the jihadist narratives. The aim of this study was to explain why shared pathways could lead to different, even opposite outcomes. What prevented people from being radicalized, and what were the protective factors? Interviews were conducted with detainees accused of terrorism, affiliated to Islamic State, and those who refused or openly opposed the narratives.
- A 21-year-old man's (who is referred to as Momo to protect his identity) case was presented, which shows how the shift to violent extremism can be the consequence of a series of hardly predictable events and interactions. The origin of Momo's criminal path was the desire for money, and he had been involved in violence between young gangs and against the police. As a Muslim, firstly, Momo's discourse expresses a general shift in Islamic authorities, and also a process of individualisation in the construction of religious knowledge. Secondly, it reflects a dehumanisation of the other, including the police, imams, the guards, and a society portrayed as deeply unjust and corrupt.
- Momo's case shows the notion of "detachment", which refers to the breaking of social, political, and emotional ties. Radicalisation is a process of detachment from already fragile ties that bind individuals, and a process of resocialisation within a new entity. However, with the broken ties with French society, Momo did not cross the line into jihadism. Momo mentioned the neighbourhood as the last social space of defence for his wounded identify. Also, social movements, as a powerful alternative to jihadism, provide other engagement possibilities while facing injustices. Most importantly, the family, as a place of projection and memory, is also a strong protection against radicalization for Momo. Lastly, Islam is mobilized by those with a jihadist vision of the religion; however, it is mobilized to counter radical Islam as well. As proposed by jihadism, the religion is an Islam of movement, war, and rupture; while for countering radical Islam, the religion is seen as stabilization, salvation, a possibility of appeasement, and an ethical ordering.
- In conclusion, Momo's story reveals not only the fragility of the ties, but also the ties that prevent him from stepping into violent extremism and radicalization. By focusing on the preventing factors, there are opportunities for us to identify, strengthen, develop, and renew the links in order to avoid becoming violent extremists. Silence and deprivation of speech are not the way out. Individual and collective narratives should be developed, with

explicit and reflected links and social issues debated, to respond to the deep sense of injustice marking these young people's lives.

Violent Extremist Disengagement and Reintegration – Mary Beth Altier, *Clinical Associate Professor, New York University [United States]*

- This presentation focuses on the post-crime/involvement space, including individuals that have been picked up by law enforcement, as well as those leaving terrorism on their own. Disengagement refers to the process of ceasing terrorist behaviours; and deradicalization refers to abandoning the ideology, the beliefs that underlie their terrorism involvement.
- Push and pull factors were studied as the potential reasons for terrorists' disengagement. Push factors include disillusionment with group strategy or actions, personnel, one's role, burnout, inability for coping with psychological and physiological effects of violence, difficulty for adapting to clandestine lifestyle, and loss of faith in ideology. Pull factors include positive interaction with moderates, education or employment opportunities or demand, desire to marry and having a family, promise of amnesty, and financial incentives. It was found that some terrorists were already deeply disillusioned. Many of them found themselves being trapped, looking for a way out. Push factors were found to be more common reason for leaving as compared to pull factors. Pull factors are found to matter more for non-ideologically committed violent extremists.
- Violent operators and leaders are found to have a harder time exiting. Deradicalization is also found to be an often-lengthy process. As mentioned by a former Islamist extremist: "*The process is now you've come out. You're still carrying the narratives. Where do you get that tackled? Where do you find the alternative? It's probably taken me 10 years...*".
- Moreover, it is also important to look at the issue of re-engagement. Based on the literature, the risk factors for criminal recidivism can be labelled as static (not manageable to intervention, e.g., age, social class of origin, history of deviant friends and family members) or dynamic (manageable to intervention, e.g., anti-social attitudes and associates, lack of social achievements).
- As for terrorist recidivism rate, different measures were adopted by prior studies, such as re-arrest, reconviction, re-involvement, and re-incarceration. The majority of the studies found that the rate was very low. For terrorist re-engagement, there was evidence of age, childhood socio-economic status, ideological commitment, and ties to individuals still involved in violent extremism. There was no evidence of employment, marital, or parental status, but these factors are still important in a longer term.
- Terrorist stigma, as a societal barrier, can be critical for re-integration. A survey experiment was conducted with a representative sample of 1200+ US

residents, looking at support for rehabilitation programming, covering varied hypothetical offenders. The results showed that the support for re-entry programming was 78.91% for "ordinary" criminal offender, 58.27% for terrorist offender (white nationalist), and 47.11% for terrorist offender (Islamist).

- Based on the DDR (disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration) literature, public sensitization measures and community-based projects are helpful in reducing stigma. Moreover, it is also found that information sharing about the programs increased the willingness of individuals to engage with ex-offenders and decreased stigmatizing behaviors like avoiding them.

Q&A

ISSUE: On the efficacy of deradicalization programmes that measure factors like employment and marital status

There is a short-term and long-term issue to consider here. The dataset presented here studies the short-term effect. When ideological commitment is controlled, it does not matter whether someone is employed or not. But over the long term, studies do show that employment, marital, or parental status shapes one's ideological commitment. With pro-social friends, they might step back and start challenging their ideas. It is not that those things are not important, but it is just a much more long-term process.

ISSUE: The online triggers that push individuals to radicalise and utility of using formers in PCVE efforts

Denmark is one of the most Internet-connected countries in the world. Almost everyone is connected to the Internet, especially young people. Practitioners have been worried about this, as what happens online does affect the offline reality and this raises a question for us to think about, i.e., how do we act on that? There is a need to develop specific tools to deal with this and the idea of using formers has been considered. However, there is a risk involved here, especially for young people. Observations based on the US context have raised these questions: 1) How credible are these people? and, 2) While, their stories can be very useful for people to see that someone has found a way out and left the group, how effective is this if they have already adopted new identities?

ISSUE: Deradicalization and disengagement programs in Demark, France, and UK and the US

In France, there are several programmes whose approach vary depending on the purpose. For this particular study, since it was focused on the individual and not a group, it wasn't top-down.

In UK, the disengagement program usually involves a mentor with conversations on religion, job, or educational support, depending on the individuals. There is not a

federal program in the US, but there have been some efforts, e.g., a program sprung up in the Southern District of New York, where there are pockets of individuals who have gone off to try to join ISIS. These programs have been most successful in the UK and US context with the non-ideologically committed; whereas they have not been very successful with individuals who are deeply committed to the ideology.

In Denmark, there is a well-established program like the one in UK, which involves a mentor covering resource utilization, job, or educational efforts.

Workshop Programme

Venue: PARKROYAL Collection Marina Bay, Singapore

Tuesday, 4 October 2022

0800–0900hrs	**Registration** Venue	:	Garden Ballroom Foyer Level 1
0900–0915hrs	**Workshop Welcome Remarks** by ***Shashi Jayakumar****, Head, Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS), RSIS, NTU*		
0915–1015hrs	**Panel 1: The Future of Global Jihad**		
	Chair	:	***Shashi Jayakumar****, Head, CENS, RSIS, NTU*
	Speakers	:	***Amira Jadoon***, *Assistant Professor, U.S. Military Academy, New York [United States]* ***Mina al-Lami****, Editorial Lead, Jihadist Media Team, BBC Monitoring [United Kingdom]* ***Kiriloi Ingram****, Post-doctoral Research Fellow, Charles Sturt University/Coordinator, The University of Queensland [Australia]*
1015–1035hrs	**Networking Break**		
1035–1135hrs	**Interactive Syndicate Discussions**		
			Syndicate 1
	Venue	:	Clover 3, Level 1
			Syndicate 2
	Venue	:	Clover 6 & 7, Level 1
			Syndicate 3
	Venue	:	Clover 4 & 5, Level 1
1135–1235hrs	**Panel 2:**		**Hate Speech, Intolerance and Violent Extremism**
	Chair	:	***Benjamin Ang,*** *Senior Fellow, CENS, RSIS, NTU*
	Speakers	:	***Norena Abdul Karim*****,** *Senior Lecturer, Universiti Teknologi MARA [Malaysia]* ***Jordan Newton***, *Senior Advisor, Australia Indonesia Partnership for Justice (AIPJ2) [Australia]*

***Munira Mustaffa**, Executive Director, Chasseur Group [Malaysia]*

1235-1305hrs ***Question and Answer Session***

1305-1420hrs **Networking Lunch**

1420–1520hrs **Panel 3: Extremism in Southeast Asia**

Chair : ***Antara Chakraborthy,** Senior Analyst, CENS, RSIS, NTU*

Speakers : ***Tirmizy Abdullah**, Director, Institute for Peace and Development in Mindanao Mindanao State University [Philippines]*

***Adhe Bhakti,** Executive Director,Centre for Radicalism and Deradicalization Studies (PAKAR) [Indonesia]*

***Taufik Andrie,** Executive Director, Yayasan Prasasti Perdamaian; Jakarta, Indonesia [Indonesia]*

1520 -1540hrs ***Networking Break***

1540-1640hrs **Interactive Syndicate Discussions**

Syndicate 1
Venue : Clover 3, Level 1

Syndicate 2
Venue : Clover 6 & 7, Level 1

Syndicate 3
Venue : Clover 4 & 5, Level 1

1700hrs **End of Day 1**

1830–2030hrs **Welcome Dinner (By Invitation Only)**
Venue : Peach Blossom, Level 5

Wednesday, 5 October 2022

0800–0900hrs **Registration**
Venue : Garden Ballroom Foyer
Level 1

0900–0940hrs **Panel 4: Gaming, Online Subcultures and Extremism**

	Chair	:	***Benjamin Ang,*** *Senior Fellow, CENS, RSIS, NTU*
	Speakers	:	***Milo Comerford,*** *Head of Policy and Research for Counter-Extremism Institute for Strategic Dialogue [United Kingdom]*
			Claudia Wallner, *Associate Fellow The Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) [United Kingdom]*

0940-1000hrs **Question and Answer Session**

1000–1020hrs **Networking Break**

1020–1120hrs **Panel 5: Far-Right Extremism: Deciphering Differences and Exploring Connections**

Chair	:	***Raffaello Pantucci,*** *Senior Fellow, ICPVTR, RSIS, NTU*
Speakers	:	
		Stanly Johny*, International Affairs Editor,The Hindu [India]*
		Lydia Khalil, *Research Fellow, Lowy Institute [Australia]*

1120-1220hrs **Interactive Syndicate Discussions**

		Syndicate 1
Venue	:	Clover 3, Level 1
		Syndicate 2
Venue	:	Clover 6 & 7, Level 1
		Syndicate 3
Venue	:	Clover 4 & 5, Level 1

1220-1330hrs **Networking Lunch**

1330–1430hrs **Panel 6** : **Foreign Volunteers: Fighting for and Against Nation-States**

Chair	:	***Nur Diyanah Anwar,*** *Adjunct Research Associate*, *CENS [Singapore]*
Speakers	:	***Kacper Rekawek,*** *Postdoctoral Fellow C-REX, University of Oslo [Norway]*
		David Malet, *Associate Professor, American University [United States]*

Shashi Jayakumar, *Senior Fellow, Head of Centre of Excellence for National Security; Executive Coordinator of Future Issues and Technology [Singapore]*

1430-1530hrs **Interactive Syndicate Discussions**

Syndicate 1
Venue : Clover 3, Level 1

Syndicate 2
Venue : Clover 6 & 7, Level 1

Syndicate 3
Venue : Clover 4 & 5, Level 1

1530-1550 **Networking Break**

1550–1650hrs **Panel 7** : **Early Interventions and Disengagement**

Chair : ***Yasmine Wong,*** *Senior Analyst, CENS [Singapore]*

Speakers : ***Christian Kristofferson****, Secretariat of Culture and Arts, City of Odense and Former Consultant, Department of Children and Youth, City of Aarhus. [Denmark]*

Bartolomeo Conti*, Researcher Fellow in Sociology, Centre for the Study of Social Movements (CEMS) of the École Des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) [France]*

Mary Beth Altier*, Clinical Associate Professor New York University [United States]*

1650-1710hrs **Question and Answer Session**

1710-1730hrs **Closing Remarks**

1730hrs **End of Workshop**

1830–2030hrs **Closing Dinner (By Invitation Only)**

Venue : Peppermint, Level 4

LIST OF SPEAKERS AND CHAIRPERSONS

SPEAKERS

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Mina al-Lami
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Jihadist Media Team
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About the Centre of Excellence for National Security

The **Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS)** is a research unit of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) at the Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Established on 1 April 2006, CENS raison d'être is to raise the intellectual capital invested in strategising national security. To do so, CENS is devoted to rigorous policy-relevant analysis across a range of national security issues. CENS is multinational in composition, comprising both Singaporeans and foreign analysts who are specialists in various aspects of national and homeland security affairs. Besides fulltime analysts, CENS further boosts its research capacity and keeps abreast of cutting-edge global trends in national security research by maintaining and encouraging a steady stream of Visiting Fellows. For more information about CENS, please visit www.rsis.edu.sg/research/cens/.

About the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies

The **S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS)** is a professional graduate school of international affairs at the Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. RSIS' mission is to develop a community of scholars and policy analysts at the forefront of security studies and international affairs. Its core functions are research, graduate education, and networking. It produces cutting-edge research on Asia Pacific Security, Multilateralism and Regionalism, Conflict Studies, Non-Traditional Security, International Political Economy, and Country and Region Studies. RSIS' activities are aimed at assisting policymakers to develop comprehensive approaches to strategic thinking on issues related to security and stability in the Asia Pacific. For more information about RSIS, please visit www.rsis.edu.sg.

About the National Security Coordination Secretariat

The **National Security Coordination Secretariat (NSCS)** was formed under the Prime Minister's Office in July 2004 to coordinate security policy, manage national security projects, provide strategic analysis of terrorism and national security related issues, as well as perform Whole-Of-Government research and sense-making in resilience. NSCS comprises three centres: the National Security Coordination Centre (NSCC), the National Security Research Centre (NSRC) and the Resilience Policy and Research Centre (RPRC). Please visit www.nscs.gov.sg for more information.