

Analysis: Bali II, Suicide Bomb Attacks Against Indonesian Resort Catering to Westerners
Al Qaeda Affiliated Terrorist Group, Jemaah Islamiyah, Suspected

Summary

- Three suicide bombers attacked restaurants in Bali that cater to Australian and Western tourists
- First two bombs exploded in beach side restaurants in Jimbaran Bay (see map below) about a minute apart, starting around 7:40 PM local time
- Next bomb exploded several minutes later at the Raja restaurant in shopping district of Kuta, the city where the 2002 bombings took place
- At least 22 people killed, including the three bombers, and over 90 injured, mostly Indonesians
- Police suspect Jemaah Islamiyah operatives Azahari bin Husin and Noordin Mohamed Top directed the attack, three others suspected of assisting suicide operatives



Tactics

- Restaurants catering to Australian and Western tourists targeted in Bali, home to a minority enclave of Hindus in predominantly Muslim country
- One bomber, caught on amateur video at Raja, carried explosive device in backpack; remaining two operatives may have carried either backpacks or explosive belts
- Evidence recovered on explosive devices includes nine-volt batteries, electrical wires, plastic food container (one site), pieces of black bags (two sites), and ball bearings
- In raid of bomb shop last October, Indonesian police discovered two explosive devices containing ball bearings packed in plastic containers, which indicates a trend toward man-packed devices
- Top Indonesian anti-terror official, Major General Ansyad Mbai, stated his belief that three assistants triggered the devices remotely
- His belief supported by reports that two men with heavy East Java accents were reported hanging around near the target restaurants in Jimbaran Bay; Java, a nearby island, is an Islamist base

Law Enforcement Response

- Police publicly aired photos of three severed heads to help identify the bombers (see IACP Training Key #582, "Finding a severed head is one of the quickest ways to identify a suicide bomber crime scene.")
- Police alerted to look for 3 men, identified as Abdullah, Abdul Ghani, and Dedy Mizwar, who are suspected of remotely detonating the explosive devices



- Police are checking passenger names and vehicle license plates of customers using the ferry between Java and Bali in order to isolate these fugitives and thwart potential follow on attacks
- Jemaah Islamiyah operatives already in custody have been questioned to help track down the masterminds
- Regional partners, such as the Australian Federal Police, have assisted in the investigation

Jemaah Islamiyah (JI)

- JI (“Islamic Organization”) is an Islamist group active in several Southeast Asian countries, including Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines
- JI has its roots in Darul Islam (DI), a militant, radical movement that emerged in the late 1940’s in response to Dutch colonialism in Indonesia
- Muslim clerics Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakir Bashir formed JI in 1993, after splitting with DI, and brought most of the Indonesian Afghan alumni with them. Bashir became JI’s emir (leader) following Sungkar’s death in 1999
- Sungkar and Bashir radicalized students at *pesantren* (Islamic religious school) they operated in Java named Pondok Ngruki
- Mission is to establish a fundamentalist state in Southeast Asia and attacking US/Western targets
- JI network is heavily dependent on a complicated web of marriage alliances that makes JI seem like one large extended family
- Responsible for first Bali bombing (2002), the Marriot bombing in Jakarta (2003), and the Australian embassy bombing in Jakarta (2004), among other violent attacks in the region
- JI has clear ties and contacts with al Qaeda, and partners with like-minded groups in the region such as the Philippines’ Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and Abu Sayyef Group (ASG)
- Until recently, JI’s signature attack method was vehicle-borne IED’s; most recent attack indicates trend toward smaller, man-portable devices and suicide operations
- In an October 2003 raid of JI safe house, Filipino police uncovered bomb making materials, manuals in Indonesian describing how to make chemical and biological weapons, along with possible traces of biological weapons
- JI expert, Dr. Zachary Abuza of Simmons College in Boston, cited arrest of JI operative in Malaysia, who was carrying sodium azide, which can be used to make poison gas, as evidence of JI’s pursuit of WMD (see http://wwwc.house.gov/international_relations/108/abuz1029.htm)

Abu Bakar Bashir: Ideological Motivation

- Islamic scholar and spiritual and ideological leader of JI; currently in jail on charges related to the Bali bombings in 2002
- Bashir is of Hadrami descent, as is bin Laden; Hadramis are a class of traders from an area, now part of Yemen, who have long sailed the Southeast Asian Seas

- Bashir provides ideological motivation, religious cover, and perhaps even operational guidance to JI members. He is still able to lead despite being incarcerated, due to the Indonesian government's unwillingness to confront him and his brand of Islamic fundamentalism
- In recent interview with journalist Scott Atran, Bashir stated, "No deed is nobler than jihad. None. If we commit to jihad, we can neglect other deeds." (see the full text of the interview at <http://jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?articleid=2369782>)
- In the same interview, he professed that "America [not Indonesia] is the proper target"; that the use of nuclear weapons was justified, "if necessary"; and that the vehicle-borne bomb used in the 2002 Bali attack was "a CIA Jewish bomb"
- He believes that conflict between Muslims and Christians/Jews is part of a natural order and will continue until all people "accept to be governed by Islam"



Implications for Law Enforcement

- Bashir, like bin Laden, is an extremely dangerous ideologue. While currently there is no indication that JI has the ability to target the U.S. Homeland, clearly Bashir's rhetoric leads in that direction; JI and Bashir's disciples must be taken seriously as an emerging domestic threat
- Bali II, London and Madrid indicate trends toward homegrown or local operatives using small, man-portable, and high-casualty producing IED's
- According to retired US Army Brigadier General Russell Howard, a noted counter terrorism expert, these smaller attacks indicate diminished capability, but are, paradoxically, more difficult to detect and prevent
- Multiple and near simultaneous attacks an Islamist hallmark
- Pause between attacks offered opportunity to mitigate casualties (similar to London and 9/11); public-private partnerships that incorporate methods of communicating in real time across a broad network could feasibly initiate counter measures before additional attacks occur
- Recent IACP bulletins on suicide operations should be mandatory professional reading for police executives (see <http://www.theiacp.org/pubinfo/IACP581SuicideBombersPart1.pdf> and <http://www.theiacp.org/pubinfo/IACP582SuicideBombersPart2.pdf>)
- Law enforcement should strengthen, build if necessary, and leverage cooperative ties with ethnic Southeast Asian immigrant communities in order to gain cultural understanding and establish avenues for early warning regarding potential threats

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