



SINGAPORE TERRORISM THREAT ASSESSMENT REPORT 2023



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Internal Security Department

THE TERRORISM THREAT TO SINGAPORE REMAINS HIGH

49

self-radicalised individuals dealt with under the Internal Security Act since 2015



11 are youths

5 youths planned to carry out attacks in SG

13 convicted for terrorism financing offences since 2016

SOURCES OF THREATS TO SINGAPORE

TRENDS OF CONCERN



Youth radicalisation, with the youngest detainee being 15 years old.



Lone actor attack plans using easily available weapons.



Radicalisation and recruitment through social media and gaming platforms.



Self-radicalisation



Islamist terrorist groups, especially the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria



Al-Qaeda (AQ) and its regional affiliate, the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI)



Overseas conflicts and developments can have spillover effects

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF RADICALISATION

INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO, THE FOLLOWING:

Frequently surfing radical websites

Posting/sharing extremist views on social media platforms, such as expressing support/admiration for terrorists/terrorist groups as well as the use of violence

Sharing their extremist views with friends and relatives

Expressing intent to participate in acts of violence overseas or in Singapore

Making remarks that promote ill-will or hatred towards people of other races or religions

Inciting others to participate in acts of violence

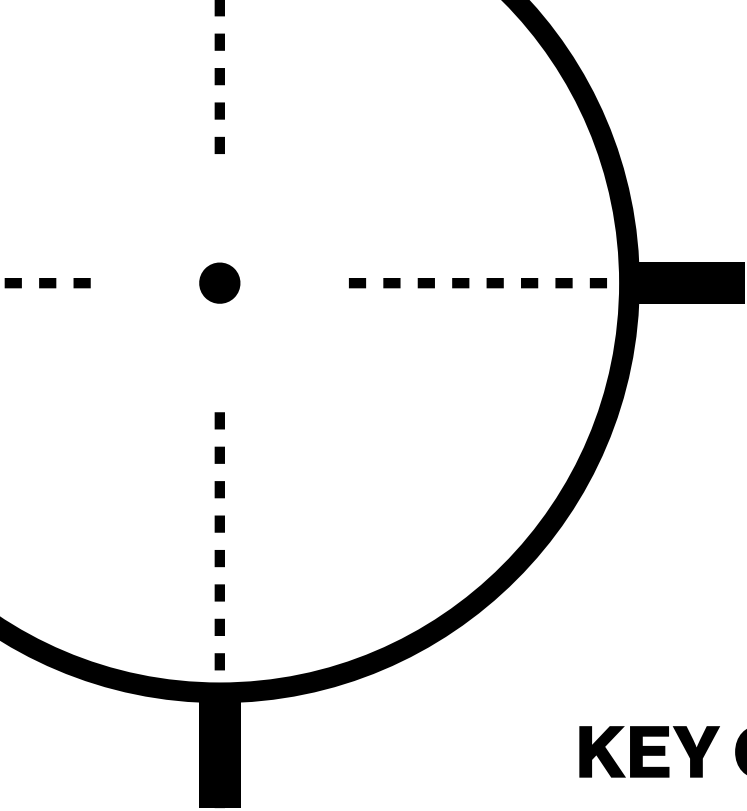
Public Vigilance and Preparedness are Key Components of Our Defence Against Terrorism

Report signs of radicalisation or suspicious activities to the **Internal Security Department (1800-2626-473)** or **Singapore Police Force (999)**.

Visit mha.gov.sg/isd to learn about about internal security threats.

Visit sgsecure.gov.sg to learn more about SGSecure or **sign up as an SGSecure Responder**.





KEY OBSERVATIONS



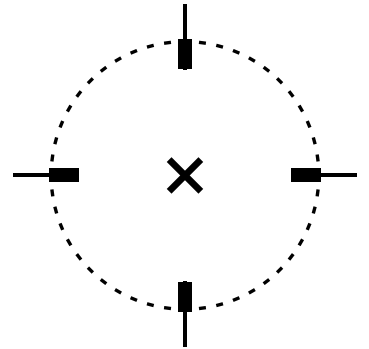
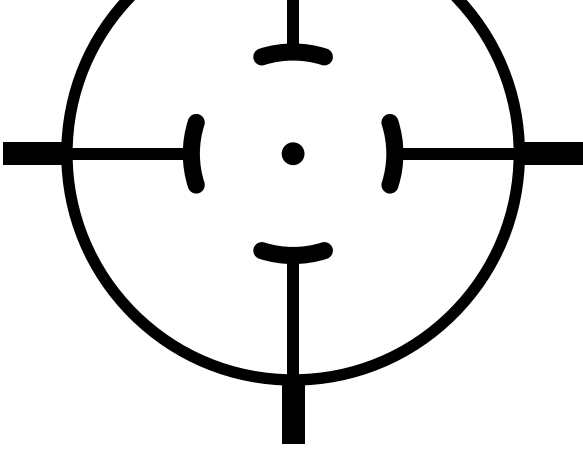
There is no indication of an imminent attack, but Singapore continues to be a target for terrorist elements.



Islamist terrorists continue to disseminate propaganda, raise funds and plot attacks, helped by a virtual network of supporters. This fuels the spread of violent ideologies that have radicalised many individuals globally, including in Singapore.



Since 2015, 49 self-radicalised individuals (comprising 37 Singaporeans and 12 foreigners) have been dealt with under the Internal Security Act (ISA). 11 of them were youths aged between 15 and 20, at the point when ISD picked them up. Five of the youths had plans to carry out attacks in Singapore, using easily accessible weapons.



With the Russia-Ukraine conflict and heightened tensions in the Middle East, state and other actors may become more inclined to use terrorist modus operandi against their enemies in third countries. There is a risk that Singapore may be caught in the crossfire.



Public vigilance and preparedness are key components of our defence against terrorism. It is also important for the society to maintain zero tolerance of all forms of hate speech, as this may promote extremism, as well as of funding of terrorists or their activities.



Anyone with information on terrorism-related activities, or knows or suspects that a person is radicalised, should promptly contact the ISD Counter-Terrorism hotline at 1800-2626-473 (1800-2626-ISD). Those interested to learn more about SGSecure or sign up as an SGSecure Responder may visit sgsecure.gov.sg for more information.

OVERVIEW



The terrorism threat to Singapore remains high. On the domestic front, self-radicalisation through the online sphere continues to be the primary threat driver. Since the last issue of this report published in July 2022, the Internal Security Department (ISD) has dealt with another four self-radicalised Singaporeans under the Internal Security Act (ISA). Three of them were aged between 15 and 18, underscoring the growing concern with youth radicalisation.

On the external front, Islamist terrorist groups, especially the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), remain a persistent threat, with their intent to perpetrate attacks in non-conflict zones, and their ability to radicalise and inspire their followers to carry out such attacks. At the same time, the Al-Qaeda (AQ) and its regional affiliate, the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), have been rebuilding themselves through their “long game” strategy, and continue to pose a security threat. Given ongoing geopolitical conflicts such as the Russia-Ukraine war and heightened tensions in the Middle East, it is also assessed that state actors and their proxies may adopt terrorist modus operandi against their adversaries in third countries. There is a risk that Singapore may be caught in the crossfire.

We must therefore stay vigilant to the possibility of a terrorist attack in Singapore or against our interests overseas – be it by organised actors or self-radicalised individuals.

EXTERNAL TERRORISM THREAT

Continued threat from Islamist terrorism

In February 2023, the United Nations (UN) assessed that the terrorism threat posed by ISIS, AQ and affiliated groups remains high in conflict zones. This includes Iraq and Syria, where ISIS has evolved into a covert insurgent organisation. Although ISIS has lost several senior leaders since 2022, it now has a new generation of leaders who are undeterred by the threat that they may similarly be killed, and have intent to expand ISIS's reach and carry out attacks in non-conflict zones. In April 2023, it was reported that ISIS could be positioning itself for a resurgence in Syria, where international counter-terrorism efforts may be compromised due to the strained relations between the major powers over the war in Ukraine.

ISIS and its affiliates have also expanded their influence outside the Middle East. One such region is Africa, where ISIS has declared at least eight *wilayat* (provinces).¹ Over the past year, ISIS has carried out a propaganda campaign portraying Africa as the next destination for *jihād*, and urging followers to travel there to join the caliphate. These calls have found resonance with some ISIS supporters. For example, a self-radicalised Singaporean youth (detained under the ISA in December 2022) had planned to travel to Nigeria to undertake armed violence with the Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP)², which he believed to be ISIS's strongest affiliate. Separately, in March 2023, US authorities reported that ISIS now has a stronger presence in Afghanistan than it did in 2022 and could be capable of carrying out attacks against Western interests outside Afghanistan – possibly in Europe or Asia - within six months.³



¹ The Sahel region of sub-Saharan Africa reportedly accounted for more terrorism-related deaths in 2022 than South Asia and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) combined. ISIS's African affiliates include: the Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP), ISIS-Somalia; ISIS-Libya; ISIS-Sinai (operating in the Sinai Peninsula); ISIS-Central Africa Province (operating in the Central African Republic); ISIS-Greater Sahara (operating in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger); ISIS-Mozambique (operating in Mozambique and Tanzania) and ISIS-Democratic Republic of Congo or ISIS-DRC (operating in Congo and Uganda).

² Established in March 2015, ISWAP is a splinter faction of the Nigeria-based terrorist group Boko Haram. With about 4,000 to 5,000 fighters, it is the dominant Islamist terrorist group in Nigeria. ISWAP has carried out numerous attacks, targeting mainly the police, military and Christian communities.

³ The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria - Khorasan Province (ISIS-K) has conducted many attacks in Afghanistan against the Taliban, foreign interests inside the country and sectarian and ethnic minorities.

In non-conflict zones, ISIS remains a global “brand” for Islamist extremists, who help disseminate its propaganda, ideology, and calls for terrorist attacks. Such calls have resonated amongst radicalised individuals, some of whom have mounted attacks in the name of ISIS. With the easing of pandemic travel restrictions, it may be easier for pro-ISIS elements to network and conduct attacks across borders.

Examples of ISIS-linked incidents outside the conflict zones

August 2022

A US citizen was arrested in New Mexico for allegedly establishing an “Islamic State Center” to provide ideological and combat training to people wishing to fight for ISIS.

September 2022

An ISIS-influenced German-Kosovar dual national in Iserlohn, Germany was arrested. The teenager had taught himself to build a bomb, but worried that his bombing plans would be foiled, had wanted to attack police officers using a knife instead.

March 2023

A number of ISIS supporters were arrested in the US, Canada and Europe, and their plans were disrupted.

- In Germany, a German citizen of Moroccan descent was arrested for planning a shooting attack in Frankfurt; the suspect also intended to travel to Iraq to join other ISIS militants.
- In the US, a New York man of Albanian descent, who had declared his support for ISIS, was arrested for threatening to murder US police officers and a local mayor.
- In Canada, authorities arrested an 18-year-old for plotting to carry out a terrorist attack; he had reportedly been radicalised by an ISIS supporter based in Italy.

While ISIS occupies a greater mindshare, AQ and its regional affiliates have been building alliances among some local communities as part of a “long game” strategy. According to UN reports, AQ elements have been such a part of the insurgency in Afghanistan that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to separate them from the Afghan Taliban, who had re-taken control of Afghanistan following the withdrawal of US-led forces in 2021. While the Taliban had agreed in 2020 to prevent AQ and other extremist groups from operating in Afghanistan, the fact that then AQ leader Ayman al-Zawahiri was killed in a US drone strike in Kabul in July 2022 strengthened widely held suspicions of a continued AQ-Taliban alliance.⁴ It is assessed that AQ’s new de facto leader Saif al-‘Adl (Saif)⁵ may place greater emphasis on conducting terrorist attacks, and this points to

a greater threat in the medium term, especially if AQ were able to use Afghanistan as a base from which to conduct attacks abroad. In this context, some UN member states have assessed that AQ could pose a greater threat than ISIS in the longer term.

Regional Islamist terror threat

In Southeast Asia, ISIS’s central message of defending oppressed Muslims continues to have traction on social media. Indonesian supporters widely shared translations of ISIS spokesman Abu Umar al-Muhajir’s speech in September 2022, which urged supporters around the world, including those in Southeast Asia, to continue fighting for ISIS’s cause.

Example: Al Malaka Media Centre

- ISIS has consistently portrayed itself as the true vanguard of Muslims who would liberate their co-religionists from the *taghut* (tyrants). Muslim-majority governments are branded as hypocrites and apostates, who align themselves with the *kafir* (infidels).
- In February 2023, a newly established pro-ISIS media group “Al Malaka Media Centre” (AMMC) emerged on social media channels. AMMC issued three propaganda posters threatening Malaysia for being complicit in the alleged war against Islam and proclaiming ISIS’s future conquest of the country. AMMC also claimed that ISIS would continue to fight to defend Islam’s supremacy until the end-times.

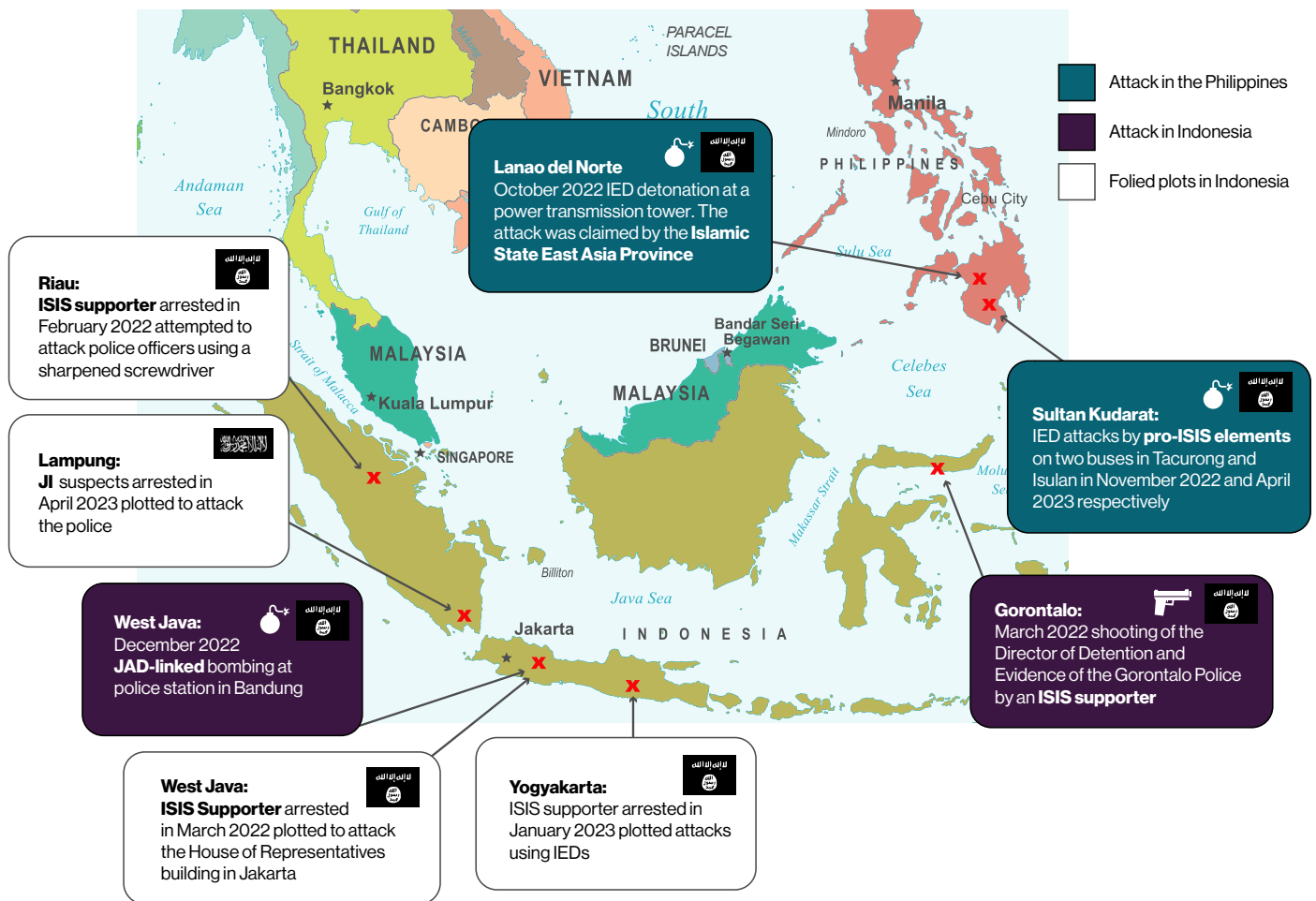
⁴ Under the auspices of an accommodative regime, AQ can better rebuild its external operational capabilities. This raises the risk of AQ using Afghanistan as a staging ground to facilitate attacks abroad.

⁵ Unlike al-Zawahiri who was mainly an ideologue, Saif (whose real name is Mohammed Salahaldin Abd El Halim Zidane) is a military, intelligence and security leader. He is considered to be a terrorist planner who had played a central role in AQ operations, including the 1998 bombings of the US embassies in East Africa (where over 200 people were killed) and the 2000 USS Cole attack (which killed 17).

Southeast Asian ISIS supporters in this amorphous and decentralised “virtual caliphate” have incited one another to undertake violence. Singapore remains a prized target and continues to be featured in ISIS propaganda. For example, in June 2023, Southeast Asian ISIS supporters called on social media for retaliatory attacks to avenge the death of the Islamic State East Asia Province leader Abu Zacharia, and circulated a poster that pictured several government leaders in Southeast Asia including President Halimah Yacob as targets.

There continues to be a steady stream of attacks and foiled plots in the region over the past year. Networks formed through this “virtual caliphate” may also serve to link ISIS-affiliated elements in the Middle East to their Southeast Asian supporters.

EXAMPLES OF RECENT ISLAMIST TERRORIST INCIDENTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA



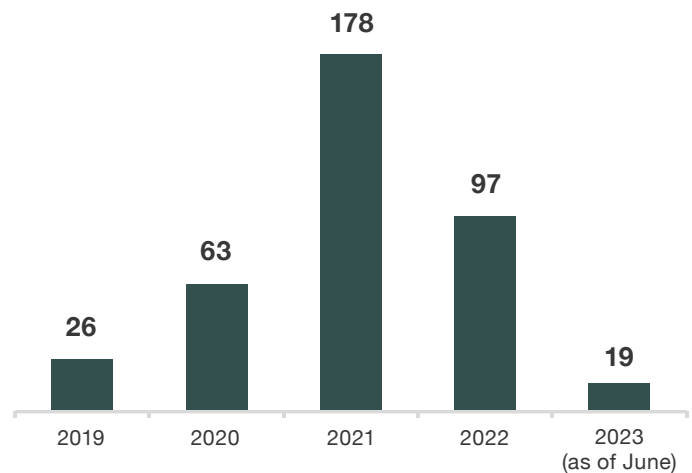
Strong counter-terrorism efforts by regional security agencies have helped to curtail ISIS-linked operational activities in Southeast Asia. In southern Philippines, the pro-ISIS factions of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) and the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters have been put on the defensive, after losing several key figures in security operations. In Indonesia, authorities launched pre-emptive security operations which led to the arrest of close to 250 suspected militants in 2022, the majority of whom were ISIS supporters and/or affiliates of the ISIS-aligned Jemaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD).

Example:**Surrender of ASG faction leader Majid Said @ Amah Pattit**

- Majid Said @ Amah Pattit (Majid), a prominent ASG-Sulu faction leader, together with 20 of his followers, surrendered to the Philippines military in January 2023.
- Majid was named by the Philippine Anti-Terrorism Council as one of the five most wanted terrorists in southern Philippines.
- He is a relative of ASG sub-leader and bombmaker Mudrimar “Mundi” Sawadjaan, the alleged mastermind behind the August 2020 twin suicide bombings in Jolo, Sulu carried out by two female militants that killed 15 and wounded at least 74 others.

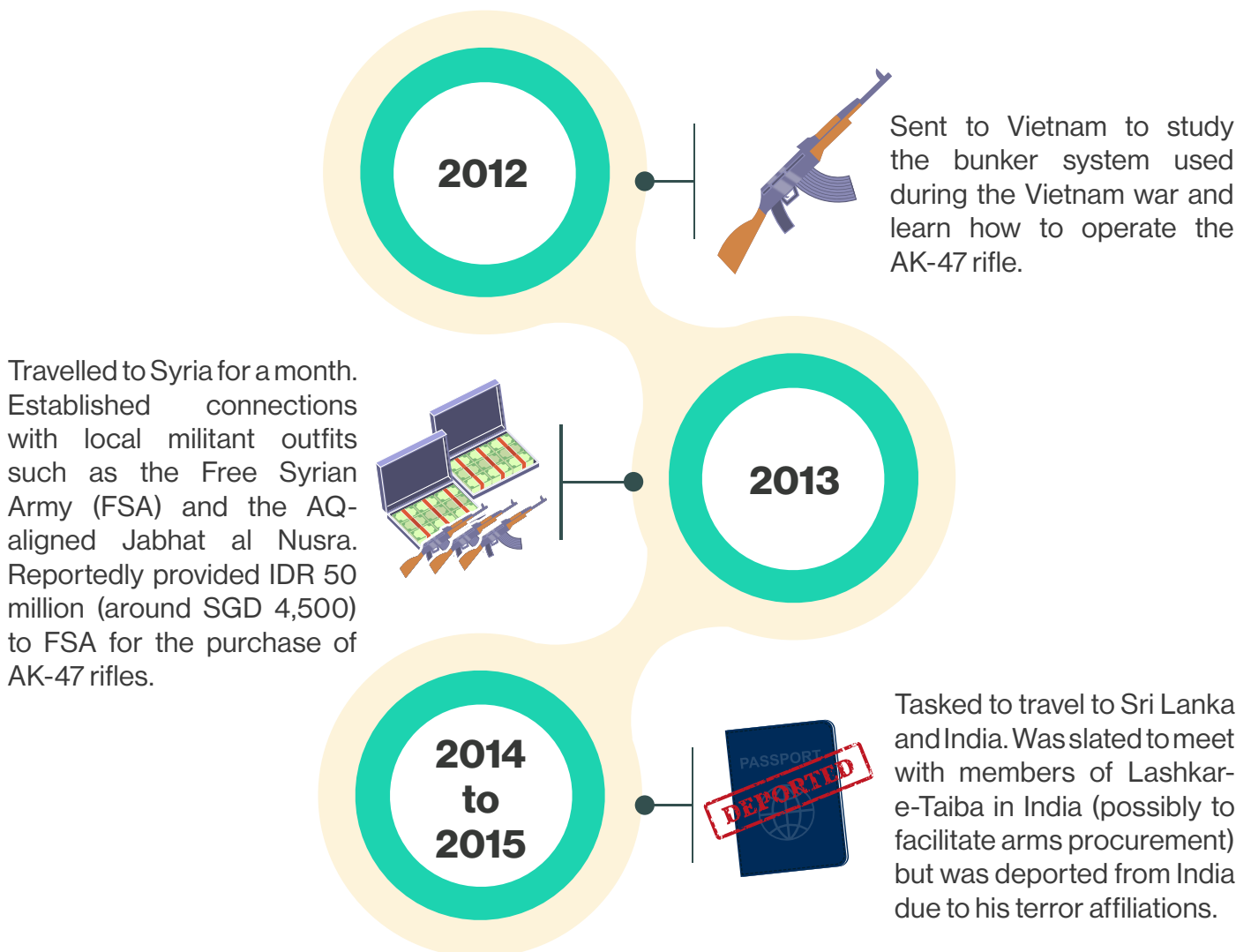
The AQ-aligned Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) poses a long term security concern to the region. Since 2019, Indonesian authorities have undertaken rounds of pre-emptive strikes against the JI and arrested key JI leaders. The JI has therefore been lying low, but quietly continues to seed ground support for the establishment of an Islamic caliphate in the region. This has included efforts to infiltrate Indonesian political parties and exploit the democratic process, which may intensify in the lead-up to the Indonesian General Elections in 2024. In April 2023, Indonesian authorities disrupted a JI militant cell in Lampung that had amassed weapons for an attack on the police, an indication that some JI elements remain keen to undertake armed jihad.

Number of JI-linked arrests from January 2019 to June 2023



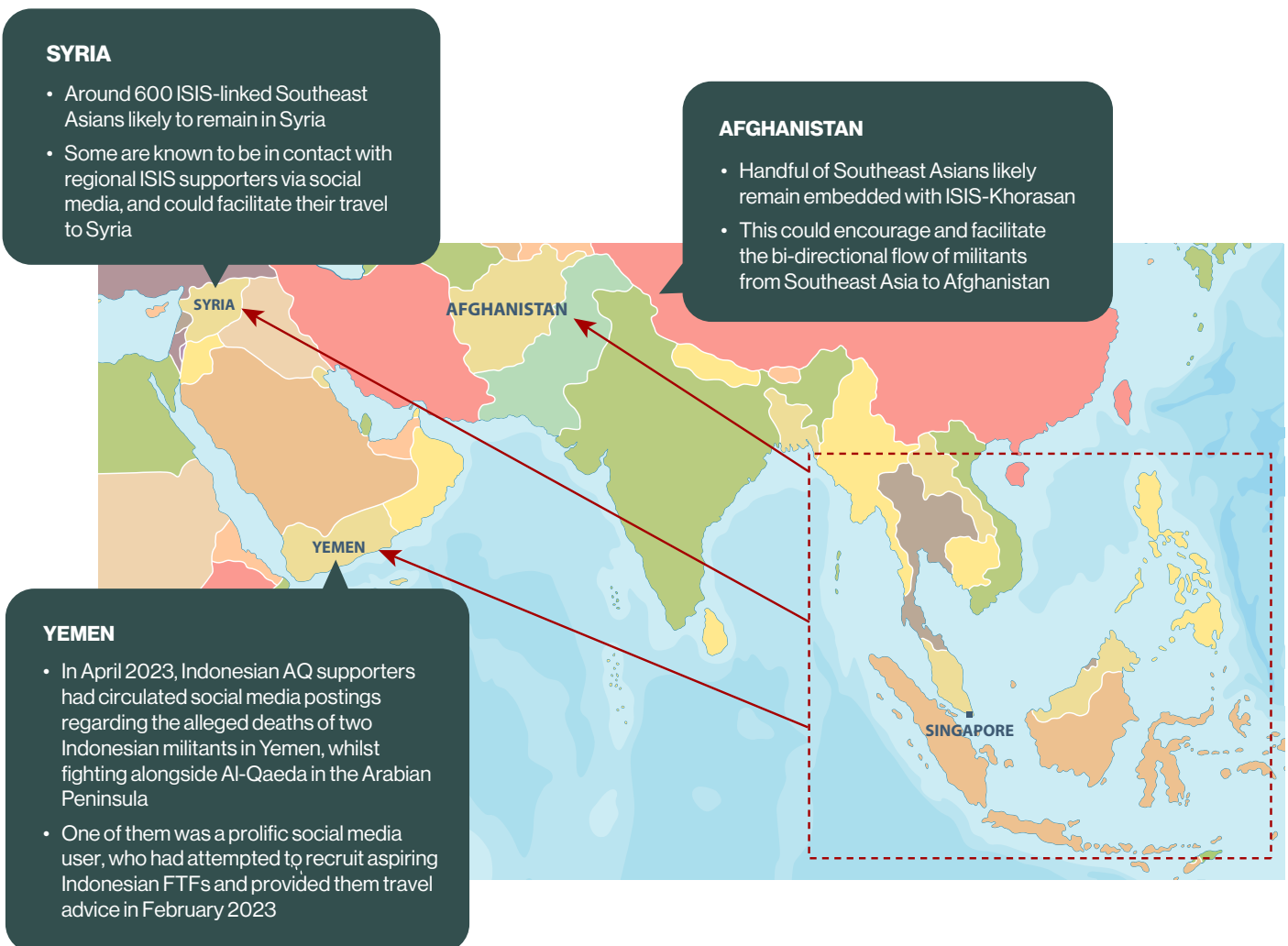
Arresting JI's Future – the Case of Askary Shibghotulhaq

- Askary Shibghotulhaq (Askary), the son of former JI leader Para Wijayanto (Para), was arrested in April 2022 in Bandung, West Java. He was sentenced to five years' imprisonment in 2023.
- Between 2012 and 2015, Askary had been tasked by Para to travel overseas to establish connections with global militant networks and procure resources for the JI.
- Askary was Head of JI's International Relations unit from 2015 to 2019, during which he reportedly dispatched five batches of JI members to Syria for military training.



With most countries lifting cross-border travel restrictions, radicalised regional elements may revisit their plans to travel to conflict zones to become foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs). Once embedded into their host organisations there, they could serve as bridges between global terror networks and regional militant groups, facilitate the transfer of operational expertise, and even facilitate and direct attacks back home.

TRAVEL OF RADICALISED SOUTHEAST ASIANS TO OVERSEAS CONFLICT ZONES



Concomitantly, extra-regional FTFs may seek to travel to Southeast Asia to conduct recruitment and operational activities. For instance, four Uzbeks were arrested in Jakarta, Indonesia on 24 March 2023. They were allegedly associated with a Syria-based AQ-linked militant group, and had attempted to recruit Indonesians to conduct attacks in the region.

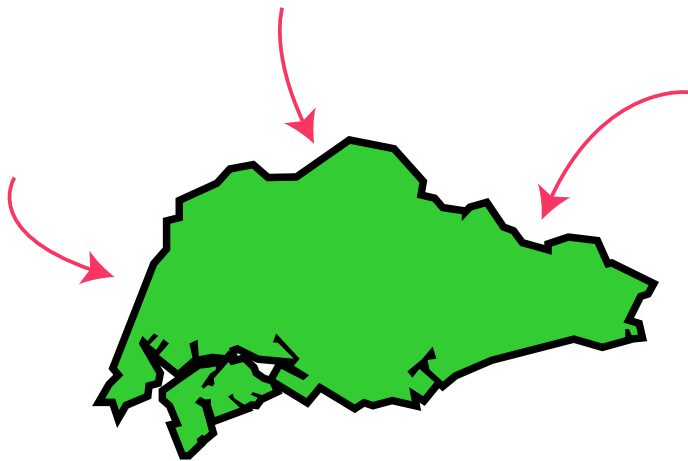
Concerns with far-right extremism

Some Western countries have highlighted growing security concerns with terrorism motivated by far-right extremism (FRE) and other extremist ideologies.⁶ Recent FRE-inspired terror incidents overseas suggest that the FRE threat has become increasingly diffused, motivated by a variety of conspiracy beliefs and ideologies, such as anti-Semitism, anti-Islam, anti-immigration, and racial supremacy ideas. FRE elements often take inspiration from one another in online communities.

Apart from the casualties and property damage that can be caused, FRE incidents can potentially spark a cycle of reciprocal violence between FRE and Islamist extremists. An example is the spate of far-right related Quran desecration incidents in Europe in January 2023⁷, which had reverberations around the world. These events inspired anti-Muslim activism amongst some far-right quarters in Europe.⁸ At the same time, they also provoked calls from Islamist extremists and terrorist groups, including those in Southeast Asia, for retaliatory attacks against “Crusader states” and “infidels” who had insulted the Quran.

Arrest of four Uzbekistan nationals in Jakarta in March 2023

- On 24 March 2023, four terror-linked Uzbeks aged 26 to 40 were arrested in Jakarta, Indonesia. Three were members of the Syria-based, AQ-aligned, militant group Katiba Tawhid Wal Jihad (KTWJ) and had received military training in Syria. The fourth suspect had provided the trio with financial assistance and fake travel documents.
- The Uzbeks arrived separately in Indonesia in February 2023 from Istanbul, Turkey, transiting through Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates and Malaysia. One suspect reportedly married an Indonesian woman in Bandung to facilitate their travel to Indonesia.
- The suspects disseminated extremist propaganda materials to recruit like-minded Indonesians to conduct terror attacks in Indonesia. One suspect was been responsible for recruiting and sending prospective operatives to KTWJ while he was based in Turkey.
- On 10 April 2023, three of the arrestees escaped from an immigration detention facility in Jakarta, after fatally stabbing an officer and injuring three others. Two escapees were swiftly re-captured, while the third drowned in his attempt to escape.



Other transnational threats

Given the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict and heightened tensions in the Middle East have highlighted concerns that state actors and their proxies may also engage in terrorist modus operandi against their adversaries including in third countries.⁹ There is a risk that Singapore interests may be caught in the crossfire.

Notably, on 15 November 2022, a commercial oil tanker operated by a Singapore-based shipping company was reportedly struck by an unmanned aerial vehicle off the coast of Oman.¹⁰

The possibility that such attacks may be carried out against civilians outside conflict zones, in third countries, cannot be discounted. In particular, there have been a number of recent incidents targeting Israeli/Jewish interests. On 27 March 2023, Greek police arrested two Iran-born Pakistani nationals for planning terrorist attacks against Israeli/Jewish targets including a Chabad House (Jewish community centre) in Athens. Israel has accused the Hizbollah of being responsible for a roadside bomb attack that wounded a motorist in Israel in March 2023. Hizbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah has since continued to ratchet up his anti-Israel rhetoric. While there is currently no indication of an imminent threat to Singapore, vigilance is advised, given that Hizbollah had carried out surveillance of the Singapore coastline and plotted to attack US and Israeli ships in the Singapore Strait in the 1990s.¹¹

⁶ Reports indicate that in Western countries, terrorist attacks motivated by FRE and far-left ideologies have outnumbered attacks by Islamist terrorists in recent years. While far-left elements have perpetrated more terrorist attacks, those by FRE elements have resulted in significantly more fatalities.

⁷ On 21 January 2023, Swedish-Danish far right politician Rasmus Paludan burned a copy of the Quran outside the Turkish Embassy in Stockholm, Sweden. He reprised the act in front of a mosque in Denmark on 27 January, and said he would burn the Quran every Friday until Sweden is included in the NATO alliance. On 22 January 2023 in The Hague, the Netherlands, Dutch far right leader Edwin Wagensveld tore out pages from a Quran and stomped on them.

⁸ Ultranationalists and white nationalists celebrated the Quran burnings on social media, referencing the “Great Replacement” theory. Far right groups in Sweden, Germany and the UK also published messages of support online.

⁹ For example, as part of the Russian-Ukraine conflict, there have been targeted assassinations of non-combatants and destruction of civilian infrastructure using terrorist modus operandi like vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices. There have also been a series of drone attacks targeting Israeli-associated vessels (including commercial ships) in the waters off the Middle East in recent years.

¹⁰ The Liberian-flagged Pacific Zircon was operated by Singapore-based Eastern Pacific Shipping which is owned by Israeli billionaire Idan Ofer. There was no claim of responsibility for the attack, which caused minor damage and no casualties.

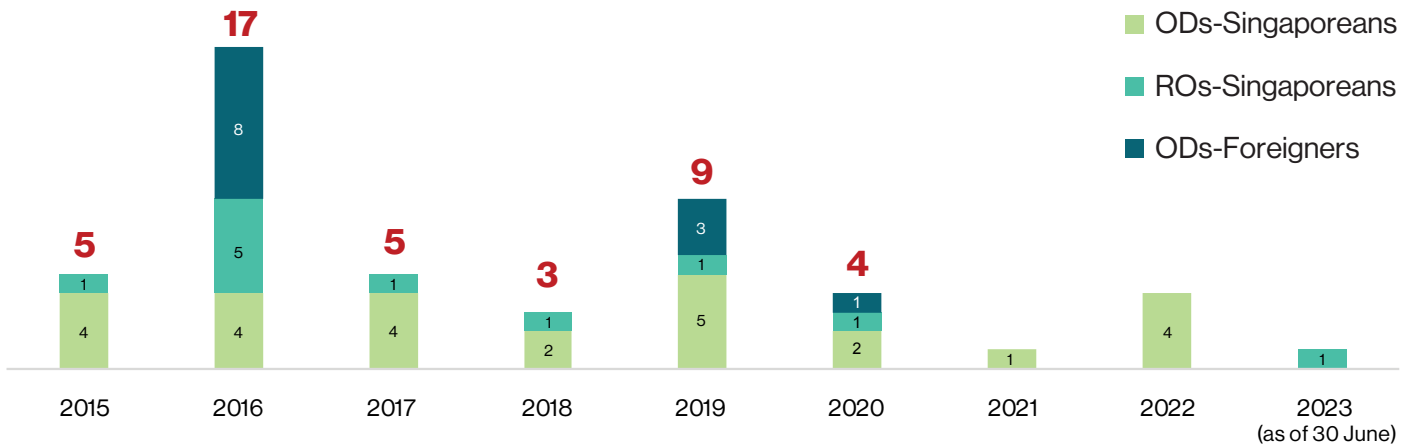
¹¹ Hizbollah had attempted to establish a terrorist cell in Singapore, recruiting five Singaporeans and tasking them to take photographs of the local US and Israeli embassies. When the five declined, Hizbollah operatives proceeded to conduct surveillance of the Singapore coastline for their plans to attack US naval vessels and Israeli commercial ships.

DOMESTIC THREAT SITUATION

In the fight against terrorism and extremism, we can never afford to let our guard down. The threat still exists, and continues to morph into new forms. ... Terrorism and violent extremism exploit racial and religious fault lines to promote fear and hatred. Our diversity makes our social cohesion particularly susceptible to the threat.

**Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong
at the Official Launch of the Religious Rehabilitation Group Majulah
Gallery,
3 May 2023**

Self-radicalised individuals issued with ISA orders since 2015



The recent ISA cases underscore the continued threat of terrorism in Singapore. Self-radicalised individuals are our key concern, with 49 self-radicalised individuals – comprising 37 Singaporeans and 12 foreigners – issued with ISA Orders since 2015.

Growing concern with youth radicalisation

Since 2015, 11 self-radicalised Singaporean youths aged 20 or below have been dealt with under the ISA. Of the four cases dealt with since STTAR 2022, three of them are youths. Those radicalised are getting younger; our youngest detainee is 15 years old.

Latest ISA Cases

38-year-old MOE Teacher

**Order of Detention,
November 2022**



- Aggrieved by Israel-Palestine conflict
- Made plans to travel to Gaza to engage in armed conflict alongside HAMAS and Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades against the Israel Defence Force

18-year-old Student

**Order of Detention,
December 2022**



- ISIS supporter
- Wanted to establish an Islamic caliphate in Singapore through violence
- Planned to travel to overseas conflict zones
- Developed three attack plans against local targets

15-year-old Student

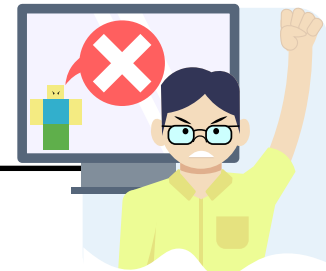
**Order of Detention,
December 2022**



- AQ and ISIS supporter
- Wanted to establish an Islamic caliphate through violence
- Considered conducting knife attacks against non-Muslims, and becoming a suicide bomber

16-year-old Student

**Restriction Order,
January 2023**



- ISIS supporter
- Believed in armed violence to establish an Islamic caliphate
- Created and uploaded three ISIS propaganda videos with his Roblox game footage

Most of the self-radicalised individuals detected in Singapore were influenced by Islamist extremist narratives, such as those propagated by ISIS and AQ. These narratives tap on underlying grievances to justify certain radical beliefs. For example, one ISIS narrative espouses that Islam is under siege by the West, and legitimises violence as a means to redress alleged injustices done to Muslims. ISIS's territorial and leadership losses have not diminished its appeal to this audience, many of whom consume a diet of violent, apocalyptic narratives from social media. There exists an online eco-system of ISIS supporters, who circulate and recycle these narratives and facilitate the radicalisation of like-minded individuals across borders.

The disbelievers that had oppressed Muslims and prevent the establishment of an Islamic caliphate deserve to be beheaded and killed. I support it as a form of punishment for disbelievers who are violently oppressing Muslims.

**15 year-old AQ and ISIS supporter,
detained in December 2022**

The three Singapore youths were all ISIS supporters, having been radicalised by ISIS propaganda online. The 15-year-old was also a staunch supporter of AQ, and had made online posts justifying AQ's violent actions. Muhammad Irfan Danyal bin Mohamad Nor (Irfan), an 18-year-old ISIS supporter who was detained in December 2022 under the ISA, was so seized by ISIS that he had made plans to declare Coney Island an ISIS *wilayat* (province), in the hope that it would be recognised by ISIS as an official ISIS affiliate. He also planned to travel to overseas conflict zones, such as Nigeria, Iraq, Syria or southern Philippines, to undertake armed violence with ISIS's affiliates.

My ultimate aim is to help ISIS to expand their territories, establish a strong Islamic State and implement sharia law over all the territories. I aspire to see ISIS rule over Muslims and all non-believers living in the lands controlled by them. ... In conducting armed jihad, I am prepared to die and give up my life ... because I know that I will become a *shahid* (martyr) and be able to enter paradise.

Muhammad Irfan Danyal bin Mohamad Nor, detained in December 2022

Social media as channel for radicalisation

Social media and online gaming platforms have featured prominently in our recent local ISA cases as channels of radicalisation. While the platforms themselves are innocuous, terrorists and extremists have co-opted their features for recruitment and radicalisation. There is a ready source of extremist material on social media, replicated on various online platforms, which are easily accessible. Beyond terrorist propaganda, social media also provides easy access to sermons of radical or segregationist foreign preachers, entrenching intolerant views that can serve as a pre-cursor to radicalisation. In each of the recent ISA cases, the self-radicalised individuals had spent significant amounts of time online, imbibing sermons of radical preachers such as Ahmed Deedat,¹² Zakir Naik,¹³ and Anwar Al-Awlaki.¹⁴



¹² Ahmed Deedat (deceased), a South African preacher of Indian descent, was banned from entering Singapore in 1982 after making inflammatory speeches here, which, among others, incited local Muslims to be more militant against other religious communities.

¹³ Zakir Naik, Ahmed Deedat's protégé, has been barred from entering Singapore since 2014 for his segregationist and extremist teachings.

¹⁴ Anwar Al-Awlaki, an American of Yemeni descent, was a leader and ideologue of the terrorist group Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. He was killed in a US drone strike in September 2011. His lectures continue to be accessible online and have radicalised individuals around the world.

You have it, Allah has given it to us! He is telling us in the Qu'ran [...] is to master, overcome and supersede every other deen. Every other way of life. Whether it be Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Communism. Every "ism". Islam is destined to master them all Bulldoze them all.

**Ahmed Deedat, "What is wrong with the Muslims?"
(YouTube video uploaded in December 2022)**

As to those who wage a war against Allah...As to those who create mischief in the land you either execute them, you either crucify them, or chop off the opposite limbs (that's right hand and left leg, or left hand and right leg), or you can put them in exile...This is the Islamic philosophy that everyone who wages a war against Allah...this is the consequence.

Zakir Naik, "Dial Dr Zakir" TV programme, March 2012

However, with the American Invasion of Iraq and continued U.S. aggression against Muslims, I could not reconcile between living in the U.S. and being a Muslim, and I eventually came to the conclusion that jihad against America is binding upon myself, just as it is binding on every other able Muslim.

**Anwar al-Awlaki, Audio Statement,
10 March 2010**



Screenshot of an ISIS propaganda video created by the 16-year-old using his Roblox game footage.

Social media and online gaming platforms also enable likeminded individuals to connect across borders, forming a “virtual caliphate” where they can propagate their support for terrorist groups, and potentially, violent actions. The three youths became acquainted through the same extremist social media channel. In private conversations online, they shared their radical beliefs and support for terrorist groups and discussed measures to conceal their online activities. The 16-year-old who was issued with a Restriction Order had joined multiple ISIS-themed servers on Roblox where he became acquainted with other pro-ISIS gamers. He had also propagated his support for ISIS by creating and uploading three ISIS propaganda videos onto social media, using his Roblox game footage.

Why are youths particularly susceptible to radical influences?



Youths are in the midst of developing a coherent sense of identity. The search for a sense of belonging and personal significance causes youth to be vulnerable to radical narratives and identify with a radical community. Also, extremists present a worldview that is structured and dichotomous, which could be more appealing to the young.



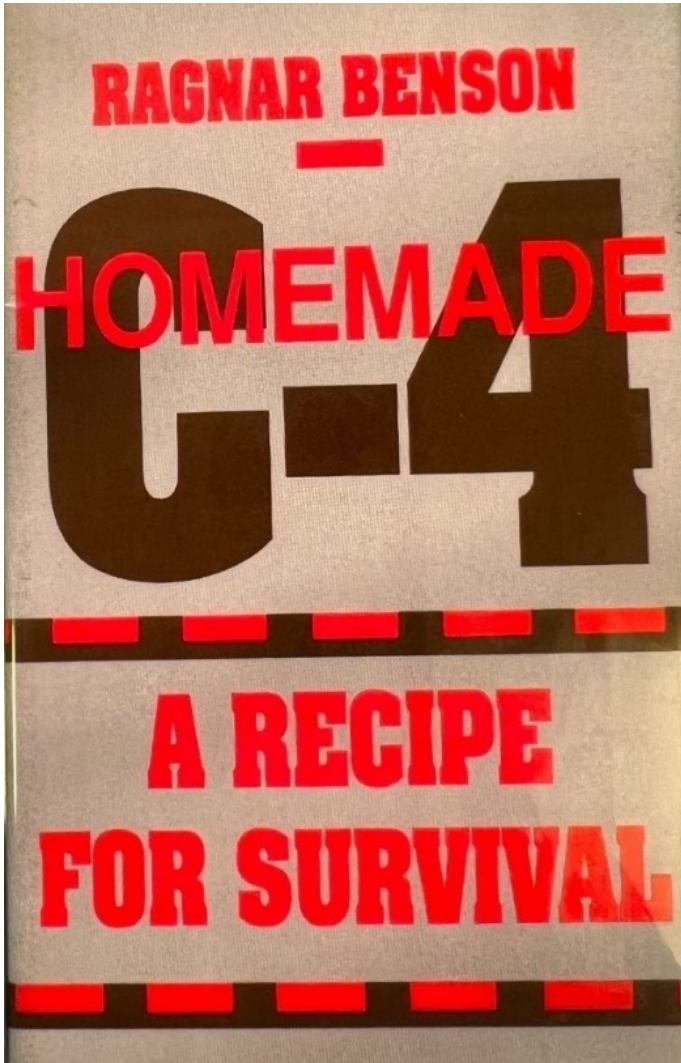
Youths tend to be more prone to emotional thinking. Extremist narratives that induce feelings of anger, fear, pride, and guilt to persuade are thus likely to find greater resonance. Youths are more likely to show a higher proclivity for sensation-seeking and risk-taking, which could induce them to act on their emotions. In the context of radicalisation, youths are hence more prone to engaging in negative and extreme responses towards diverse environmental stressors – including the pursuit of violent, extremist causes.

Lone actors using easily available weapons

Five of the self-radicalised youths dealt with under the ISA since 2015 had plans to conduct attacks in Singapore. Irfan had developed at least three attack plans against local targets – conduct knife attacks against non-Muslims in dark alleys, a mass-casualty attack at Amoy Quee Camp, and a bomb attack on Keramat Habib Noh, a gravesite at the Haji Muhammad Salleh Mosque. Irfan had purchased a knife from a convenience store in preparation for his knife attacks against non-Muslims. He had also downloaded a C4 bomb-making manual, intending to construct a homemade explosive. Separately, the 15-year-old detainee had considered conducting knife attacks in Singapore and fantasised about being a suicide bomber.

If he had carried out any of these plans, particularly the knife attack or the bombings, you can imagine that it would have been very damaging – a loss of lives, distrust and animosity in our community.

**Minister for Home Affairs
Mr K Shanmugam, Media
Doorstop Interview,
1 February 2023**



The C4 bomb-making manual that Irfan downloaded, intending to construct a homemade explosive.

Singapore has stringent laws on the use of firearms, explosive precursors as well as flammable materials.¹⁵ This helps preclude the more lethal options but perpetrators could pivot towards other available means for conducting terrorist attacks, such as knives.¹⁶



The knife that Irfan purchased in preparation for his knife attacks against non-Muslims.

¹⁵ The Guns, Explosives and Weapons Control Bill, which was passed in Parliament in January 2021, strengthened Singapore's regulatory framework on the handling of guns, explosives and other weapons (including types of bladed weapons).

¹⁶ STTAR 2021 reported on two self-radicalised Singaporean youths, aged 16 and 20 at the point of their detention in December 2020 and March 2021, who had separately made detailed plans and preparations to conduct knife attacks in Singapore.

Overseas conflicts impact Singapore

Overseas conflicts can fuel radicalisation, or potentially trigger self-radicalised individuals into action. For example, 38-year-old Singaporean Khairul Riduan bin Mohamed Sarip (Khairul), who was detained under the ISA in November 2022, was so aggrieved by the Israel-Palestine conflict, that he had planned to travel to Gaza, Palestine, under the guise of humanitarian aid to join HAMAS and its military wing, the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades (AQB). Khairul initially considered travelling to Gaza in 2012 after coming across an online poster calling for volunteers for a humanitarian mission to Gaza, indicating that HAMAS and AQB were waiting for volunteers. While Khairul did not follow through in 2012, he felt compelled to travel to Gaza whenever the conflict escalated – for instance in 2014 and 2021. Khairul is the first national school teacher and public servant to be detained under the ISA for terrorism-related conduct.

Singapore takes a zero tolerance stance against anyone who supports, promotes, or makes preparations to undertake armed violence, regardless of ideology, or where the violence takes place.

Singapore as a potential source of terrorism financing

Our current internal security concerns centre on radicalised individuals (who are largely self-funded), but it remains that terrorists and terrorist organisations need funds to operate. In Singapore, the Terrorism (Suppression of Financing) Act (TSOFA)¹⁷ criminalises the act of providing money for terrorist purposes. Since 2015, there have been 13 convictions under TSOFA – three Singaporeans and 10 foreigners. These cases mainly involved funds being collected or raised in Singapore that had been transferred (or was going to be moved) in support of terrorists and terrorist activities abroad.

There have been no prosecutions of terrorist financing (TF) offences in Singapore in the

past 12 months, but as a global financial centre and transport hub with a significant migrant workforce, Singapore remains a potential source of funds for terrorists and terrorist organisations abroad. As such, we must remain vigilant to TF. In October 2022, MHA, MOF and MAS jointly published the National Strategy for Countering the Financing of Terrorism (CFT).¹⁸ This document outlines Singapore's five-point strategy of how law enforcement and government agencies work together with financial institutions, designated non-financial businesses and professions, and non-profit organisations to monitor and mitigate our TF risks.

There are many causes around the world that many of us do, and can feel strongly about. ...There are legitimate organisations that Singaporeans can partner, to support these causes all around the world, including the cause of helping Palestine. ...But armed violence is different, unacceptable. What we cannot do is to support terrorism, support armed conflict, plan to kill people.

**Minister for Home Affairs
Mr K Shanmugam,
Media Doorstop Interview,
11 January 2023**

¹⁷ TSOFA gives effect to Singapore's obligations under the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, which Singapore adopted in 2001.

¹⁸ www.mas.gov.sg/publications/monographs-or-information-paper/2022/national-strategy-for-countering-the-financing-of-terrorism

Members of the public are reminded not to remit monies of any amount, or provide any other form of support to terrorist organisations or for facilitating terrorist activities. For those seeking to make donations to humanitarian causes, the Charity Portal (www.charities.gov.sg) provides information on Safer-Giving, which can help ensure that one's donations are used for genuine charitable purposes. Anyone with information on suspected TF activities should inform the authorities promptly.

OUR RESPONSE MATTERS

ISD and Home Team agencies will continue to work together with other Government agencies and the community to keep Singapore safe and secure (see Annex A for details of our ongoing efforts to enhance our counter-terrorism capabilities). Since its launch in 2016, the SGSecure movement has helped to mobilise the community in the fight against terror (see Annex B for various programmes of the SGSecure movement). Members of the public play a critical role in countering terrorism through their preparedness and vigilance, such as by joining the SGSecure Responders' Network. The first response of individuals at the scene of a terrorist attack is crucial. If they have been trained to respond, they would be better able to help those around them. More importantly, after an attack, the collective response by the community to denounce the attack and support those affected would be fundamental to the recovery of our nation.

A survey conducted by the Ministry of Home Affairs in late 2022 (see Annex C for details) found that the majority of respondents are aware of the terror threat and would keep a look-out for suspicious behaviours or items in a public place. Most believed that Singaporeans of different races and religions would stand united in the event of an attack in Singapore. However, only about two-fifths of the survey respondents indicated that they would contact the authorities if they believed that one of their loved ones displayed signs of radicalisation.

Time is of the essence when someone is displaying signs of radicalisation. By alerting the authorities early, we can help the individual to receive timely help, guidance, and counselling. Anyone who knows or suspects that a person is radicalised should promptly contact the ISD Counter-Terrorism hotline at **1800-2626-473** (1800-2626-ISD). The identity of the informer will be protected. When a report is made, authorities will carry out checks to ascertain the veracity of the report. In situations where there are no indications of radicalisation, no further action will be taken against the individual. Where there is basis to suspect that the person may be radicalised, he/she may be referred for counselling and other mitigating measures.



Possible signs of radicalisation include, but are not limited to, the following:

The infographic consists of six green callout boxes arranged in two rows of three. Each box contains an icon at the top and a text description below. The icons include: a person at a computer with a flag, a social media post with a 'SHARE' button, a person with a raised fist and a red 'X', a person with a red 'X' and a speech bubble, a hand holding a knife, and a person with a raised knife and a red speech bubble containing a knife icon.

- Top Left:** Frequently surfing radical websites;
- Top Middle:** Posting/sharing extremist views on social media platforms, such as expressing support/admiration for terrorists/terrorist groups as well as the use of violence;
- Top Right:** Sharing their extremist views with friends and relatives;
- Bottom Left:** Making remarks that promote ill-will or hatred towards people of other races or religions;
- Bottom Middle:** Expressing intent to participate in acts of violence overseas or in Singapore;
- Bottom Right:** Inciting others to participate in acts of violence.

CONCLUSION

The global threat from terrorism and radicalisation persists. Singapore and Singaporeans are not immune. Our strongest defence is our collective vigilance, preparedness, resilience and unity, along with a zero tolerance approach to those who seek to conduct or finance terrorist acts, or propagate extremist rhetoric.

INTERNAL SECURITY DEPARTMENT
24 JULY 2023

GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO ENHANCE COUNTER-TERRORISM CAPABILITIES

As the terror threat continues to evolve, the Government ensures preparedness by continuously enhancing our counter-terrorism capabilities.

Response Capabilities

To validate our operational readiness against the terror threat, the Singapore Police Force (SPF) conducts regular exercises on counter-terrorism and other crisis response with various stakeholders, such as the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) and partners from the Safety and Security Watch Group. Since August 2022, over 90 such exercises have been conducted. Some of the notable exercises include ground deployment exercises at Night Safari on 26 August 2022 and at Sentosa Cove Village on 30 September 2022. More recently, on 22 March 2023, a national-level emergency response exercise was conducted on Jurong Island. The exercise involved more than 300 personnel from SPF, SCDF, the Singapore Armed Forces and the Maritime & Port Authority of Singapore, as well as private sector partners, and served to validate our capability in responding to emergencies in industrial and marine environments.

In 2022, SPF continued to harness the potential of unmanned aircrafts (UAs), or more commonly known as drones, to strengthen Police operations in the areas of law enforcement, crowd management, public safety and search and rescue. Since its formation in 2021, the SPF Aerial Response Team has completed more than 60 flight operations.

While UAs can be used to facilitate Police operations, they may also be exploited as vectors to carry out attacks on infrastructures and major events with large crowd congregation. To tackle this threat, SPF operationalised a counter-UA system this year, comprising electro-optics sensors and UA detectors. These sensors detect and obtain visuals of UAs, along with any payloads they may be carrying, allowing SPF to take pre-emptive measures to locate the pilot and stop the flight before it poses any danger.



UA Detector

In 2023, SPF will be progressively rolling out patrol robots across key transport nodes and Police/Police-protected establishments. The robots will augment police patrols by serving as additional eyes on the ground and by projecting police presence round the clock. With its improved capabilities, the patrol robot will be able to sense-make incidents better, respond faster and complement frontline officers in their duties.

Electro-Optics Sensor



Police Patrol Robot

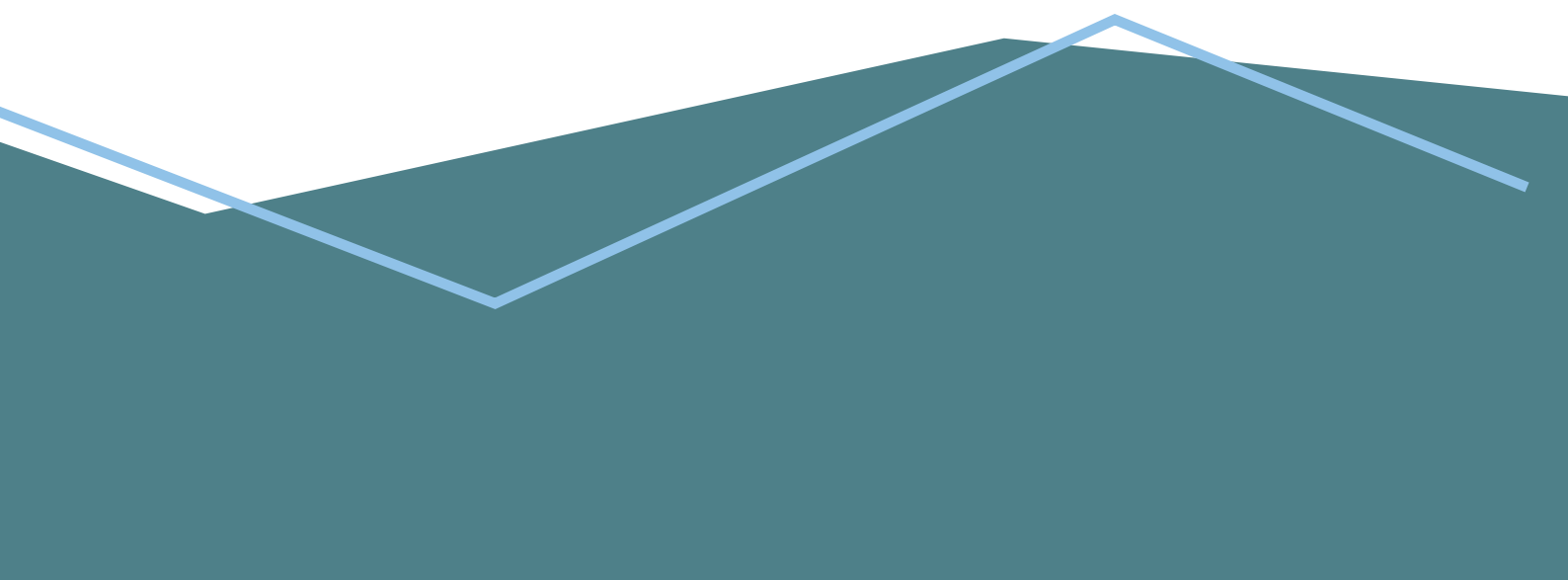
Border Security

The Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) plays a significant role at our border as the first line of defence against security threats. To achieve this mission, ICA has continued to innovate and enhance its capabilities. In January 2023, ICA took over the protective security functions from SPF at the land checkpoints. This added role enables ICA to achieve greater operational coordination, and command and control in border security incidents.

From 2024 onwards, ICA will be introducing the New Clearance Concept (NCC) to make automated immigration clearance the norm at checkpoints. This includes the use of facial and iris features in lieu of fingerprints as the primary biometric identifier during immigration clearance. The concurrent employment of both iris and facial scans enables more secure and reliable authentication of travellers' identities, further increasing our ability to safeguard our border. As the reliance on manual clearance is reduced, ICA officers will play an additional role in enhancing border security by performing real-time profiling and identifying suspicious travellers for additional checks.

The NCC for passengers will leverage advance information provided by airlines, for ICA to conduct pre-arrival risk assessment of travellers. Travellers who pose security risk will be flagged during clearance for further assessment. As part of the NCC for cargo, ICA is trialling the use of artificial intelligence technology to detect anomalies in the scanned images of cargo, parcels and baggage. This will strengthen our ability to detect potential threats in items before their entry into Singapore.

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS



ENHANCING OUR COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO THE TERRORISM THREAT THROUGH THE SGSECURE MOVEMENT

The SGSecure movement aims to sensitise, train, and mobilise the community to play a part in preventing and dealing with a terror attack. Since its launch in 2016, members of the public have responded to our call to action, to come together to safeguard Singapore and our way of life. This is of paramount importance in building the resilience of our community.

Sustaining Awareness

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has worked closely with our partner agencies to engage the community through various programmes to sustain public awareness on the terror threat. The programmes include:

a

SGSecure Roadshows.

11 roadshows were completed between July and December 2022 following the resumption of activities. The roadshows, which were conducted islandwide at strategic locations with high footfall, provided opportunities for the public to pick up relevant knowledge and skills. For example, they learnt how to spot suspicious behaviours and items, as well as emergency preparedness skills, and participated in a simulated terror attack to put into action what they have learnt.



Photo: A child learning CPR at the SGSecure Roadshow

b **SGSecure house visits in HDB estates and “Safety and Security Day” in private estates,** enable members of public to become aware of the terror threat, recognise the importance of safeguarding our social fabric, and know how to protect themselves and others in the event of an attack. More than 550,000 households have been engaged through the house visits thus far.

d The **SGSecure@ Workplaces programme** reaches out to workplaces through initiatives, such as seminars, webinars, workshops, and bulletins. These initiatives help to build awareness of terror threats and how businesses can be better prepared for crises, including a terror incident.



Photo: Counter-Radicalisation Workshop for Secondary School Community Engagement Programme Teams

c **School talks or exhibitions to familiarise students with SGSecure messages.** All Secondary Schools and Junior Colleges have conducted the talks or exhibitions on terrorism. The Ministry of Education has also run ISD-facilitated Counter-Radicalisation Workshops for Junior College student ambassadors and Secondary School Community Engagement Programme teams.

e **Counter-terrorism briefings** were conducted for more than 200 Religious Organisations. More than 20,000 participants joined a wide range of interfaith activities aimed at fostering better appreciation of various religions and cultures and/or raising awareness and increased understanding of extremism and terrorism.

Photo: Blessings in Harmony 2022 by Punggol West Harmony Circle



Enhancing Preparedness

Our response during a crisis matters. It is pivotal that the community goes beyond awareness to equip themselves with relevant emergency preparedness skills. MHA and our partner agencies have worked with various stakeholders to increase training opportunities and conduct crisis response exercises.

a

To **enhance emergency preparedness at the grassroots level**, over 5,200 residents and volunteers received emergency preparedness skills training organised by the People's Association from April 2022 to March 2023. More than 40% of grassroots leaders are trained in at least one emergency preparedness skill.

b

The SGSecure Guide for Workplaces, launched in 2017, serves as a useful resource for businesses to prepare for the terror threat. Sector-specific guides for the Hotel Sector as well as the Retail and F&B Sectors have also been produced. The guides are available for download on MOM's SGSecure@Workplaces webpage. There are currently more than 65,800 businesses with **SGSecure representatives** registered with MOM. SGSecure representatives serve as the link to the authorities on matters related to the terrorism threat and emergency preparedness. More than 29,000 companies are certified under the **enhanced bizSAFE framework**. These companies have incorporated the risk of terror attacks in their risk management plans. MOM had also conducted table-top exercises to familiarise businesses with responding to a terror attack.



Photo: Table-top exercise with Workplace Community Leaders

c

All schools conduct **annual lockdown drills** to reinforce students' and staff's responses to terror incidents. Additionally, all Institutes of Higher Learning have participated in a **ground deployment exercise** to validate and improve their plans.

d

Harmony Circle leaders have received **training in areas such as mediation and facilitation** to support them in conducting inter-faith activities and addressing racial and religious incidents.

e

The People's Association and MCCY organised **crisis response exercises** for grassroots leaders manning the Constituency Crisis Operations Centre and Harmony Circle volunteers manning the Group Representation Constituency (GRC)-level Harmony Circle Operations Centre. Such exercises test the key grassroots and community leaders in managing the functions and processes of the two crisis response structures, ensuring that key stakeholders are well prepared to respond to terrorist attacks and manage potential tensions within the community in the aftermath of an attack.

The Next Lap – Mobilising our Community

Terrorists aim to strike fear with their violent tactics. To not let terrorists succeed in their goal, we must be a resilient society that stands united and unyielding against terror. The new phase of SGSecure movement, which will be introduced in 2023, encourages all Singaporeans to deepen our social cohesion and contribute to our fight against terrorism.

One of the ways the community can strengthen our community response is through the **SGSecure Responders' Network**. Since its inception in 2019 and broadening of roles in 2022, more than 140,000 people have signed up as SGSecure Responders. Members of the public are encouraged to join us as an SGSecure Responder if they are willing to take up any of the following roles:

a) "Staying Alert"

– Report anything suspicious to the authorities early through the "Report" function in the SGSecure app.

b) "Staying United"

Help share information and news from credible or official sources such as the SGSecure app, which will send out alerts on security related information and the latest updates from authorities in the event of a terror attack or security incident. This will help to mitigate the spread of misinformation, thereby ensuring that the community stay better informed and therefore more calm and united during a crisis.

c) "Staying Strong"

– Timely response to nearby cases of cardiac arrest and minor fires. SGSecure Responders are encouraged to pick up skills such as First Aid, CPR/AED and basic firefighting. With the support from Temasek Foundation and Singapore Red Cross Society, existing and new SGSecure Responders will also be offered the opportunity to undergo psychological first aid training.



Photo: Nee Soon GRC Harmony Circles' Crisis Response Exercise

MHA and the People's Association have also been working closely to augment local community-level emergency preparedness and response through the Community Response Roundtable (CRRT). The CRRT is a whole-of-community crisis preparedness initiative under the SGSecure movement that aims to strengthen cooperation across key stakeholder groups within a geographical area. To date, there are 22 CRRTs in Singapore, with more to be formed islandwide.

The SGSecure movement will continue to engage, enable, and empower the community to actively play a part in protecting Singapore against terror. For more details, please visit sgsecure.gov.sg.

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

PUBLIC SURVEY ON THE TERRORIST THREAT AND SGSECURE

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) conducted a national-level survey to gauge public perception and sentiments towards the terrorism threat, and participation in emergency preparedness efforts as part of the SGSecure movement. The survey was conducted from October to December 2022 and involved a representative sample of 2,004 Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents (aged 15 and above) through a series of face-to-face interviews. Key findings include:



52%

of respondents believed that Singapore is a target for terrorist attacks.



70%

agreed that they were generally alert and would keep a lookout for suspicious behaviours or items when in a public place. However, **only about 37% would contact the authorities if they believed that one of their loved ones (e.g. family, relative or friend) was displaying signs of radicalisation.**



92%

believed all Singaporeans would stand united regardless of race or religion should a terrorist attack happen in Singapore.

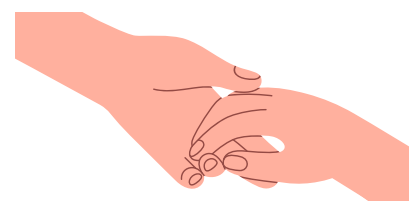


96%

saw themselves as having a role to play in preventing and dealing with a terror attack.

67%

were familiar with or trained in emergency preparedness skills.¹⁹



92%

were also willing to help other Singaporeans affected by a terrorist attack in Singapore, and 69% believed that their neighbours would help them if they were affected.

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

¹⁹ These skills include performing CPR, using an AED, providing First Aid, Psychological First Aid/Counselling, performing Improvised First Aid, operating a fire extinguisher, or managing/facilitating evacuation and lockdown scenarios during emergencies.



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