FORUM
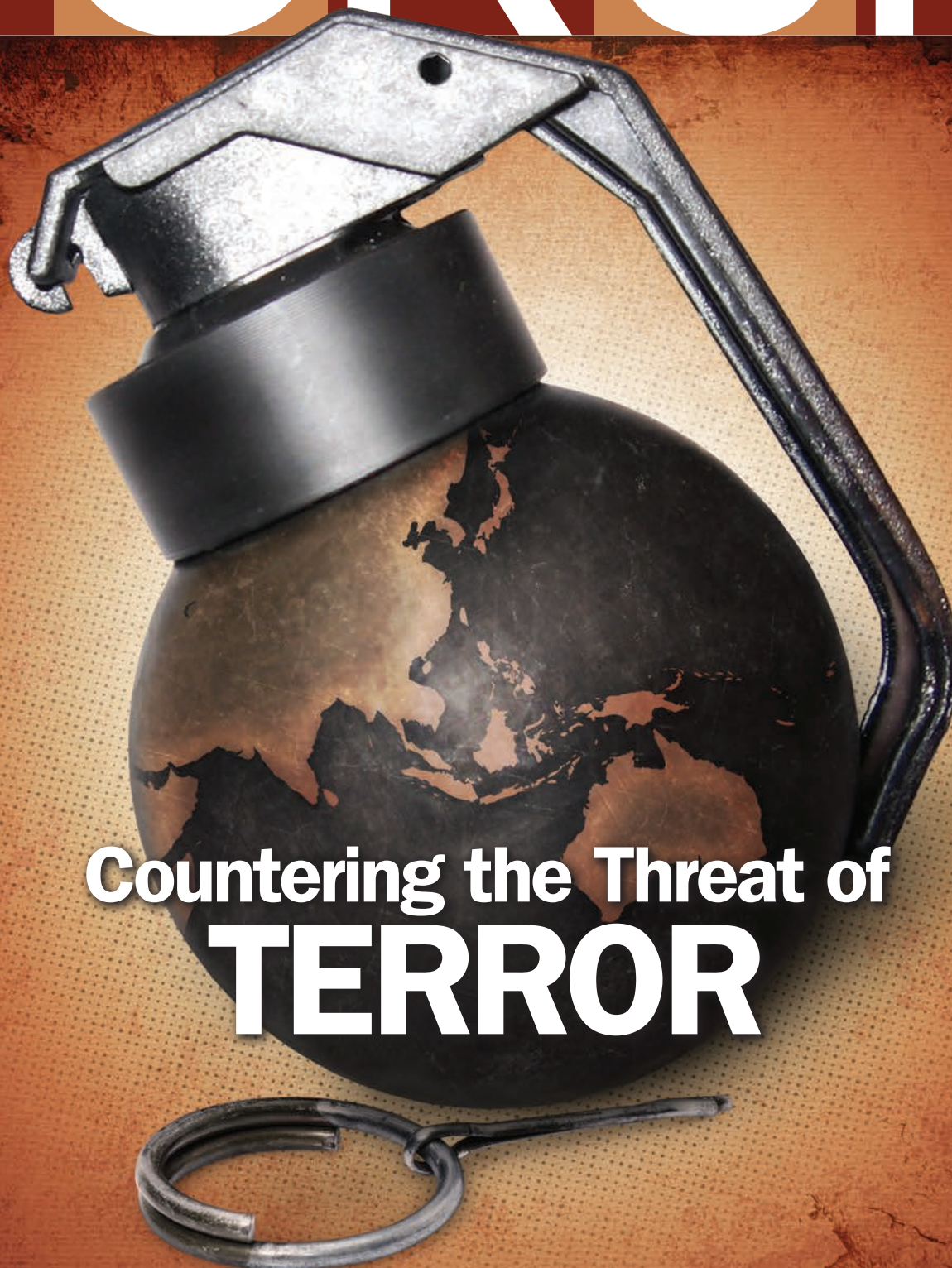
Countering the Threat of
TERROR

PLUS Ways to Deter Lone Wolf Attacks
Cutting the Money Supply to Extremists

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ABOUT THE COVER:
This cover design
conveys the urgency of
countering the global
threat of terrorism.

FORUM ILLUSTRATION

U.S. PACIFIC COMMAND

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the second quarter edition of *Indo-Asia-Pacific Defense FORUM*. As you likely noticed, *FORUM's* title has changed to more accurately reflect the region's evolution into a strategic system of interconnected economies, security agreements and political organizations. When *FORUM* was first published over 40 years ago, the region was very different from the way it is today. The Indian and Pacific oceans are now inseparable and contain the world's busiest trade corridors. This transition perhaps can best be seen in the multilateral organizations of the region such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which was originally composed of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. Over time, membership expanded to include Brunei, Burma, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. Today, ASEAN-centered groups and forums, such as ASEAN Plus and the East Asian Summit, have expanded participation even further to include countries such as Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Russia, South Korea and the United States. The Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS) now includes India, Bangladesh, Chile, Peru and Colombia. The trends in the region are pointing to even greater inclusion of regional members, and *FORUM* will continue to encourage that trend by providing a platform for military personnel of the Indo-Asia-Pacific region to address shared security concerns and opportunities.

As always, I hope this edition creates dialogue about these important security challenges, and I welcome your comments.

Please contact me at **contact-apdf@apdforum.com** with your perspectives.

All the best,

HARRY B. HARRIS, JR.
Admiral, USN
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CONTRIBUTORS

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DR. SHRUTI SHARMA is a researcher and a development practitioner who works with the New Delhi-based international nongovernmental organization Humana People to People–India. She designs and manages programs for the empowerment of some of the poorest and most vulnerable women's groups in India. She previously was head of research at OneWorld Foundation India and a senior research officer at the Indian Institute of Public Administration. Sharma earned her doctorate from the Centre for the Study of Law and Governance, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, where she focused on the interrelationship between conflict and governance in the states of Jammu and Kashmir in India. **Featured on Page 32**

DR. EDIT SCHLAFFER and **DR. ULRICH KROPIUNIGG** write about mothers fighting terrorism in this edition of *FORUM*. Schlaffer is a social scientist and founder of Women without Borders, a nongovernmental organization based in Vienna, Austria, that seeks to strengthen women to prevent violent extremism. In 2008, she launched the Sisters Against Violent Extremism (SAVE) campaign, focusing the organization's efforts on the security arena. Kropiunigg is an expert in psychology with an emphasis on social and political issues. He has studied attitude changes and group dynamics, taboos in families with adolescents, psychological determinants of radicalization and early prevention of extremism. He co-designed the curricula for the Women without Borders' Mother Schools program and was a professor at the Centre for Public Health at the Medical University of Vienna. **Featured on Page 38**

TOM ABKE writes about preventing lone wolf attacks in this issue. Abke is a freelance researcher and writer based in Bangalore, India. He has contributed to articles and research reports on topics ranging from mining to forced migration. Born and raised in Barbados, Abke has lived and worked in Algeria, Libya, Mali and Tunisia. **Featured on Page 20**

JIRI KOMINEK write about environmental disputes for this issue of *FORUM*. Kominek is an independent journalist based in the Czech Republic. He covers economic, defense and security matters in Central and Eastern Europe, Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States, and Asia for a number of publications and organizations, including IHS Jane's, Business New Europe, The Jamestown Foundation and CNBC European Business. **Featured on Page 46**

Join the Discussion
We want to hear from YOU!

Indo-Asia-Pacific Defense FORUM caters to military and security personnel in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. A product of U.S. Pacific Command, the quarterly magazine provides high-quality, in-depth content on topics that impact security efforts across the region — from counterterrorism to international cooperation and natural disasters.

FORUM provokes thoughtful discussions and encourages a healthy exchange of ideas. Submit articles, pictures, topics for discussion or other comments to us ONLINE or at:

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FORUM

Exploring the issues that impact so many lives

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

ASIA

ASIAN TECHIES
RISING IN THE RANKS

Asian universities with close ties to industry are catching up to U.S. universities in scientific innovation, according to a detailed analysis of academic papers and patent filings.

The Reuters Top 100 survey, published in September 2015, showed the top nine places for innovative universities taken by U.S. schools, with Stanford University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University ranking first, second and third, respectively. Asian universities are climbing up the list, however. The Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology ranked 10th, while Imperial College London was the highest-ranked European university in 11th place.

Asian universities are a growing force in scientific innovation and have proved particularly adept at turning this into products, with South Korea — home to rising tech giants such as Samsung — scoring high in patent approvals. South Korea has eight schools in the top 100, while Japan has nine — more than all other countries except the United States.

China, however, had only one entry on the list: Tsinghua University, ranked 72nd.

The Reuters survey analyzed 10 different measures, based on the volume and impact of scientific research, the volume and success of patent filings, and the use of cited discoveries in the academic and corporate worlds.
Reuters

ANCIENT TOOLS
POINT TO MYSTERIOUS HUMANS

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

The diminutive prehistoric human species dubbed the "Hobbit" that inhabited the isle of Flores apparently had company on other Indonesian islands long before our species, Homo sapiens, arrived on the scene.

Scientists have discovered stone tools at least 118,000 years old at a site called Talepu on the island of Sulawesi, indicating a human presence. Scientists said no fossils of these individuals were found in conjunction with the tools, leaving the toolmakers' identities a mystery.

"We now have direct evidence that when modern humans arrived on Sulawesi, supposedly between 60,000 and 50,000 years ago and aided by watercraft, they must have encountered an archaic group of humans that was already present on the island long before," said archaeologist Gerrit van den Bergh of University of Wollongong in Australia.

The original 2004 announcement of the discovery in a Flores cave of fossils of Homo floresiensis, a species about 1.1-meters tall that made tools and hunted little elephants, jolted the scientific community.

Scientists have been eager to unravel the region's history of human habitation. Sulawesi may have served as a stepping stone for the first people to reach Australia roughly 50,000 years ago. Reuters

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

Tourism *Rebounding*

Thailand expects tourism to exceed its targets, with more than 30 million arrivals this year, despite a bomb blast that killed 14 foreigners in August 2015 in Bangkok, said the prime minister. The country's worst-ever bombing put pressure on revenues vital to the military government's moves to resuscitate a struggling economy.

Tourism — worth about 10 percent of the gross domestic product — has been its only bright spot.

Average daily arrivals to Thailand fell from 85,000 to 70,000 after the blast, according to the tourism ministry.

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

The government had targeted 28.8 million arrivals and 2.2 trillion baht (U.S. $61.82 billion) in revenue in 2015 from tourism, which has become crucial as Southeast Asia's second-biggest economy stutters amid weak exports, manufacturing and retail spending. Reuters

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

INDONESIA

ENSLAVED FISHERMEN
RESCUED

More than 2,000 fishermen were rescued in 2015 from brutal conditions at sea, their freedom prompted by a yearlong investigation into seafood brought to the U.S. from a slave island in eastern Indonesia.

Beginning in March 2014, The Associated Press tracked fish — caught by men who were savagely beaten and caged — to the supply chains of some of America's biggest food sellers and popular brands of canned pet food.

In response, a multimillion-dollar Thai-Indonesian fishing business has been shut down, at least nine people were arrested, and two fishing cargo vessels seized.

Southeast Asia's fishing industry is dominated by Thailand, which earns U.S. $7 billion annually in exports and relies on tens of thousands of poor migrant laborers from neighboring Southeast Asian countries. Even with the increased global attention, many still are forced to work in the seafood industry. The Associated Press

HIGH MARKS FOR
ANTI-MONEY-LAUNDERING
— CAMPAIGN —

While Malaysia's premier faces tough questions over the origin of hundreds of millions of dollars transferred to his bank accounts, the country has tentatively received good grades for its anti-money-laundering efforts from the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

The global body, which monitors how countries fight illicit financial flows, reported that Malaysia had put in place a "robust policy framework" to combat money laundering, but that it needs to be more effective in targeting high-risk offenses and pay more attention to transnational crime.

It states that Malaysia has up-to-date anti-money-laundering laws, a "well-structured interagency cooperation framework," disseminates "good-quality financial intelligence" to law enforcement agencies, and has been successful in confiscating assets to combat tax evasion and goods smuggling.

MALAYSIA

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

FATF does offer some reservations regarding Malaysia's performance, noting that while its apparatus for conducting investigations and prosecutions is generally sound, the country had "produced minimal outcomes" and was "not effectively targeting its high-risk offences." It also states that, to date, Malaysia had not prosecuted any cases related to the financing of terrorism. Reuters

Philippine Court

OUTLAWS

TERRORIST GROUP

Abu Sayyaf Group spokesman Abu Sabaya, right, stands among his band of armed extremists in this undated photo. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A Philippine court has declared the Abu Sayyaf Group a terrorist organization in a ruling that provides the government with another legal weapon against militants who have survived years of government offensives.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Abu Sayyaf is the first militant organization to be officially outlawed in the Southeast Asian country under a rarely used anti-terrorism law. The brutal group, which has targeted Americans and other foreigners, has already been listed as a terrorist group by the United States.

Philippine prosecutors say the terror designation will help the government hunt down and prosecute Abu Sayyaf and get court permission to place suspected militants under surveillance. Officials intend to impose sanctions against members and supporters, making it harder for the militants to receive financial support because of their designation as outlaws.

"This is one more way to turn our country into a hostile ground for terrorists," state prosecutor Aristotle Reyes said.

He said the court decision was crucial because a number of Abu Sayyaf commanders have expressed allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), although there has been no evidence of any active collaboration or contacts.

Army Brig. Gen. Allan Arrojado, who has commanded sporadic offensives against Abu Sayyaf in the Philippines' southern Sulu province, welcomed the court ruling and expressed hope that other legal steps would be taken to support counterterrorism forces, including the creation of special courts to speed up terror convictions.

Abu Sayyaf — or Bearer of the Sword — was founded in 1991 on southern Basilan Island. An unwieldy collection of Islamic preachers and outlaws, it vowed to wage jihad, or holy war, but lost its key leaders early in combat, sending it on a violent path of extremism and criminality.

Today, it has degenerated into a few loose factions with about 400 ragtag fighters and no central leader. The group remains resilient and violent, engaging in ransom kidnappings and extortion that have allowed it to survive without considerable backing from foreign extremist groups.

Under the Philippines' 2007 Human Security Act, the Department of Justice asked a court in Basilan province to ban Abu Sayyaf. The 2007 counterterrorism law, aimed at tackling Islamist militants, gives investigators the authority to arrest terror suspects without warrants and temporarily detain them without charges.

Government prosecutors presented four witnesses, including a former Abu Sayyaf commander who testified how the group planned and committed brutal attacks, such as the 2001 kidnapping of 20 people, including three Americans, at the Dos Palmas resort in western Palawan province.

One of the Americans was beheaded, another was killed during an Army rescue, and the third was wounded but survived.

Judge Danilo Bucoy praised the witnesses in his 20-page decision. "These witnesses deserve praise and commendation for their courage and audacity to stand against this violent, treacherous and vicious organization," Bucoy wrote.

State prosecutor Peter Medalle said the government could now take steps to outlaw at least three other Muslim militant groups.

> "THESE WITNESSES DESERVE PRAISE AND COMMENDATION FOR THEIR COURAGE AND AUDACITY TO STAND AGAINST THIS VIOLENT, TREACHEROUS AND VICIOUS ORGANIZATION."
>
> — JUDGE DANILO BUCOY

They include the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters, a small group of militants who oppose peace talks with the government and have attacked government troops and civilians, he said.

"This first-ever terrorist designation is a template that we can use for other Muslim armed groups which sow violence and target innocent people," Medalle said.

COUNTERING

Indonesian Soldiers from the 2nd Airborne Division patrol near central Sulawesi island in March 2015 after parachuting from a transport aircraft. The military increased patrols to crack down on militants with suspected links to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.

ISIL'S IMPACT

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS, REGIONAL CAPABILITIES, AND WHOLE OF SOCIETY APPROACHES ARE KEY

FORUM STAFF
PHOTOS BY REUTERS

The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) attained a fever pitch of popularity nearly two years ago, appealing to a diverse group of recruits eager to pledge their allegiance and execute the types of extremely violent acts that ISIL perpetuates. While recent reports suggest that infighting and the lack of fulfilled promises has led to a growing number of defectors, ISIL maintains an effective messaging campaign that continues to lure new devotees.

"The Islamic State is like a dream come true for me and all Muslim people," Rahmat, a 33-year-old Indonesian who uses one name and planned to join the extremist group in Syria, told the *Los Angeles Times* newspaper in August 2015. "Now is the time to return to Islamic glory, like we experienced in the old days."

Such persistent sentiments have governments across the Indo Asia Pacific — and globally — on high alert. They remain vigilant in creating laws that denounce ISIL and provide authorities with tools and training to identify, detain and prosecute ISIL supporters.

"The very complexity of addressing this evolving set of terrorist threats, and the need to undertake efforts that span the entire range from security to rule of law to efficacy of governance, as well as pushing back on terrorist messaging in order to effectively combat the growth of these emerging violent extremist groups, requires an expanded approach to our counterterrorism engagement," said Tina S. Kaidanow, U.S. State Department ambassador-at-large and coordinator for counterterrorism. She spoke during a September 2015 panel discussion titled "Al-Qaida, the Islamic State and the Future of the Global Jihadi Movement" at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C. "More than ever before, we need to diversify our approach by bringing strong, capable, and diverse partners to the forefront and enlisting their help in the mutually important endeavor of global counterterrorism."

A successful approach to counterterrorism, she stressed, requires working together. "The vital role that our partners play has become even clearer over the last year with the emergence of ISIL as a hugely destructive force in Iraq and Syria," Kaidanow said. "ISIL's unprecedented seizure of territory in Iraq and Syria, its continued access to foreign terrorist fighters, its growing number of global affiliates, its use of social media to spread its message and radicalize and recruit, and external plotting through directed and inspired attacks has now elevated it to one of our most pressing counterterrorism priorities."

PREPARING FOR RETURNEES

Indonesia remains particularly concerned about nationals and others who traveled to Iraq and Syria and may be returning home and creating ISIL outposts on Indonesian soil.

Experts caution that the ISIL risk remains highest in Indonesia, where the nation of 255 million has the world's largest Muslim population and a history of terrorist attacks by an earlier incarnation of militants who trained in Afghanistan with al-Qaida in the 1980s, according to a July 2015 report by *The Wall Street Journal* newspaper. The same report said that Indonesian officials estimated ISIL supporters had created a presence in nearly half of Indonesia's 33 provinces.

"The threat for us is significantly serious. There are many radical and terrorist groups in Indonesia that would like to take revenge against what they see as injustice from the West against Muslims," Chief Commissioner General (Police) Saud Usman Nasution, head of the Indonesian National Counter Terrorism Agency BNPT (Bedan Nasional Penanggulangan Terrorisme), told Australia's ABC News in September 2015. "So we need to continue to stay alert — especially after the flock of returnees coming from Iraq and Syria to Indonesia."

Indonesia's counterterrorism authorities identified at least 76 Indonesians who returned from Syria. (The U.S. State Department estimates that more than 25,000 foreign fighters from more than 100 countries have traveled to Iraq and Syria since the conflict in that region began.) Indonesia's latest concern is that local ISIL networks have started smuggling foreign fighters into the country from Malaysia.

"We need to stay vigilant, more so because there is information that in Malaysia, there are thousands, a lot of foreign terrorist fighters there who are about to be deployed — we don't know where to — under the network," Saud told ABC News.

Sidney Jones, director of the Jakarta-based Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict think tank, agrees that the threat on Indonesian soil is growing. "I think there's some evidence that there's enough of a support base [in Indonesia] that if they got the green light from ISIS — which they haven't yet — they could quite quickly set up a structure of ISIS here," Jones told the *Los Angeles Times* in August 2015. "It would be tiny and there would be lots of opposition, but it raises concerns [that they might] follow other kinds of orders from ISIS, which could include violence."

Indonesian President Joko Widodo told *The Wall Street Journal* in August 2015 that ISIL had become Indonesia's biggest international concern — and that other leaders have shared with him similar remarks. "When we have a meeting with a president or prime minister from another country, always they say that now the number one issue is ISIS," he told *The Wall Street Journal*.

Indonesian officials are working to create tougher laws for combating ISIL.

In the meantime, they announced in September 2015 a plan to cooperate with Malaysia on a deradicalization program, with more details expected following a January 2016 workshop.

DEFECTORS EMERGE

It now appears that the characteristics that once attracted followers to ISIL have begun to repel those who vowed to carry out the terrorist organization's mission.

"Defectors from the so-called Islamic State (IS) are a new and growing phenomenon," Peter Neumann, a professor of security studies at the Department of War Studies, King's College London, and director of the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation wrote in a 2015 report produced by the center and titled, "Victims, Perpetrators, Assets: The Narratives of Islamic State Defectors."

"The defectors' very existence shatters the image of unity and determination that IS seeks to convey. Their narratives highlight the group's contradictions and hypocrisies," Neumann's report stated.

WHY I WALKED AWAY FROM ISIL

Researchers with The International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence interviewed 58 defectors from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant about why they walked away. Four narratives emerged from their stories. Here's what the report said about each category:

INFIGHTING

"One of the most persistent of the defectors' criticisms was the extent to which IS [the Islamic State] has been involved in fighting against other Sunni rebels. While the group's leadership considers the Free Syrian Army, Ahrar al-Sham, and al-Qaida's affiliate Jabhat al-Nusra as enemies and has engaged in vicious battles with all of them, grassroots members are often less hostile. Many defectors argued that fighting against other Sunni groups was wrong, counterproductive and religiously illegitimate. Several described the infighting as *fitna* — an emotive term which is mentioned in the Quran and has been used throughout Islamic history to refer to periods of internal division and civil strife."

BRUTALITY AGAINST (SUNNI) MUSLIMS

"Another defector narrative addresses the group's brutality. Many of the individuals in our dataset complained about atrocities and the killing of innocent civilians.

Their testimonies referred to military operations which had no regard for 'collateral damage' and led to the deaths of numerous women and children. They also cited the random killing of hostages, the systematic mistreatment of villagers, and the execution of fighters by their own commanders. Even so, none of the specific episodes that were highlighted by the defectors involved minorities or others that could be seen as 'apostates' or 'infidels.' The only brutality that the majority of defectors objected to was violence against 'Muslims' — that is, Sunni Muslims — whose rights they believed should have been protected. Brutality, therefore, didn't seem to be a universal concern: it was seen through a sectarian lens, and caused outrage mostly when its victims were fellow Sunnis."

CORRUPTION AND UN-ISLAMIC BEHAVIORS

"The corruption narrative covers a range of behaviors that defectors considered unjust, selfish, and contrary to the group's ideals and standards of conduct. Practically no one believed that corruption was systemic (though one described the leadership as a 'band of mercenaries' whose principal objective was to cut oil and business deals with the very people it was meant to fight). For the majority, incidents of 'corruption' had to do with the conduct of individual commanders and

'emirs' who had mistreated their fighters and favored some over others. The Syrian defectors complained about privileges that were given to foreigners, for which they claimed was no justification based on the group's philosophy or Islam in general."

QUALITY OF LIFE

"A small but significant number of the defectors expressed disappointment about living conditions and the quality of life. They were typically among the ones who had joined the group for material and 'selfish' reasons, and quickly realized that none of the luxury goods and cars that they had been promised would materialize. Moreover, Westerners seemed to find it hard to cope with shortages of electricity and basic goods, though few were willing to admit that this was the reason they defected from the group. A related aspect was the defectors' experience of combat, which — in many cases — failed to meet their expectations of action and heroism. One of them referred to his duties as 'dull' and complained about the lack of deployments, while others claimed that foreign fighters were systematically 'exploited' and used as cannon fodder. Two individuals decided to defect upon learning that their commanders were planning to deploy them as suicide bombers. They wanted to first experience fighting and get an opportunity to enjoy the spoils of war before going on their final mission."

Islamic students study the Quran in the Malaysian state of Kelantan.

Neumann and his team of researchers identified 58 defectors and interviewed them about their reasons for walking away. Through their narratives, defectors said they had had enough of ISIL's brutality, corruption and killing of fellow Muslims. The researchers believe sharing these experiences can help deter others from joining.

"The defectors' reasons for leaving may be as complex as the reasons they joined. Not everyone has become a fervent supporter of liberal democracy," the report said. "Some may have committed crimes. They joined the most violent and totalitarian organization of our age, yet they are now its worst enemies."

Four key narratives emerged throughout the course of interviews with defectors, according to researchers: (1) ISIL is more interested in fighting fellow (Sunni) Muslims than the Assad (Syria) government; (2) ISIL is involved in brutality and atrocities against (Sunni) Muslims; (3) ISIL is corrupt and un-Islamic; (4) and life under ISIL is harsh and disappointing.

"Defecting from IS is complex and dangerous. Wannabe defectors are faced with numerous obstacles. Their first challenge is to separate from IS and make

their way into non-IS held territory. But even those who succeed are not necessarily safe," the report concluded. "What prevents them from speaking out is the fear of reprisals and the worry that prosecutors may use their openness against them."

"Our recommendations are for governments and activists to recognize the value and credibility of defector narratives; provide defectors with opportunities to speak out; assist them in resettlement and ensure their safety; and remove legal disincentives that prevent them from going public."

Philippine Soldiers stand guard on a road as they are deployed to remote villages in Jolo, Sulu, in the southern region of the Philippines in October 2014. The Philippines announced in September 2015 that it had declared the Muslim militant Abu Sayyaf Group as a terrorist organization.

CONTINUTED VIGILANCE AND COOPERATION

Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong recognizes that there are no purely military options for combating ISIL. Governments must work to attack the group's ideological roots as well, he said.

In April 2015, Singapore hosted the inaugural East Asia Summit Symposium on Religious Rehabilitation and Social Integration, a counterterrorism meeting designed to share best practices — including Singapore's own comprehensive approach — with like-minded states, according to *The Diplomat* magazine.

The Philippines has expressed concern about ISIL's movements there. In a major expression of how serious the country is about cracking down on extremism, the Philippines announced in September 2015 that it had declared the Muslim militant organization Abu Sayyaf Group as a terrorist organization. The special legal notation — making the Abu Sayyaf Group the first militant organization to be officially outlawed in the Southeast Asian country — gives authorities greater powers in tracking down and prosecuting extremists, no matter their affiliation.

Still, some experts continue to stress that much work remains in the fight against ISIL. "While arrests and raids may help stem the threat for the time being, addressing the underlying root causes for growing allegiance and domestic support to IS will be a Herculean task. They include sympathy among Southeast Asian Muslims for fellow Muslims abroad and the politicization of Islam by some Southeast Asian states and other groups for their own ends, which can, at times, provide a climate for extremist and exclusivist ideas," Prashanth Parameswaran, an associate editor at *The Diplomat* who reports on Southeast Asia and Asian security, wrote for the World Politics Review website in May 2015. "And as officials have themselves noted, it does not help that the threat is itself becoming more challenging to confront, with the rise of lone-wolf terrorist acts and IS's effective use of social media for its extensive propaganda. All this suggests a long, rocky road ahead for Southeast Asia to tackle the latest form of Islamist extremism — a challenge the region thought it had already overcome."

Officials know the road ahead comes with challenges, but they're committed to the fight and seeing that every law enforcement tool available to deter ISIL is deployed.

"The terrorism challenges that we face continue to evolve at a rapid pace, and we cannot predict what the landscape will look like one decade or, frankly, even a year from now," the U.S. State Department's Kaidanow said.

Therefore, the best way for countries to protect their interests long-term, she said, requires "engaging in robust diplomacy, expanding our partnerships, building bilateral and regional capabilities and promoting holistic and rule of law-based approaches to counterterrorism and violent extremism." □

Shiite volunteers from the terrorist organization Hezbollah march as they join the Iraqi Army to fight hirabah militants of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant in Baghdad in July 2014.

ISIL
and the
HEZBOLLAH EFFECT

The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant presents a pressing terrorist threat, but Hezbollah remains a major menace

DR. SEAN K. ANDERSON | PHOTOS BY AFP/GETTY IMAGES

While the threat from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) dominates news across the Middle East and Indo Asia Pacific and grabs the attention of security experts, it is not the worst or only threat in either region.

The original al-Qaida now exemplifies a failed extremist movement, and Lebanon's Hezbollah excels as a violent extremist Muslim movement threatening the United States and its allies. Comparing ISIL to al-Qaida and Hezbollah shows that ISIL has pushed al-Qaida off center stage, but it does not create a picture that places ISIL as the biggest violent extremist threat.

ISIL is not a new phenomenon. During the Seventh century A.D., the first century of the Islamic era, a sect called the Kharijites excelled at terrorizing all other Islamic groups. Because they massacred fellow Muslims, the group failed to gain any foothold of legitimacy among Islamic scholars and the Muslim masses. It has become a footnote of Islamic history.

For ISIL to succeed at its mission, it must meet several conditions. Among them: The group must be well-organized; it must win uncontested control of territory; within that territory, it must create an effective government; its political front, armed military wing, police and intelligence services must achieve "unity of effort;" and it must win itself legitimacy on three levels —"legitimacy from below," "legitimacy from above" and "external legitimacy."

Without the ability to finance itself, another condition emerges: the need for a state sponsor.

Iraqi Kurdish peshmerga fighters stand in a military vehicle after capturing several villages from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant in the district of Daquq in September 2015.

Evaluating ISIL's Success

ISIL has proven itself as an organized group that has existed since at least 1999 under several aliases and leadership changes. By 2013, the terrorist group dominated western Iraq and eastern Syria. However, experts disagree whether ISIL has formed an effective government.

Between 2004 and 2010, when ISIL was known as al-Qaida in Iraq (AQI), it gave little thought to forming a government.

AQI was all but destroyed by the "surge" of U.S. Troops in 2007. After the U.S. withdrew from Iraq in 2011 and the Shiite-dominated Iraqi government functionally excluded the Sunnis from government, AQI made its comeback. After retaking all of western Iraq, it formed a government, renaming itself the "Islamic State of Iraq" (also referred to as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant).

Members of the foreign terrorist organization Hezbollah, a Shiite movement supporting Iraqi government forces in the ongoing clashes against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, gather in the holy central city of Najaf in February 2015 before advancing to the front lines.

The group's rebranding received mixed reviews. Some analysts claimed it created a viable political community, while others reported this "government" only ruled through a reign of terror over its Syrians and Iraqis.

Then there's the question of whether a clear demonstration of "unity of effort" exists between the military and civilian components of the Islamic State. Some experts report a gap between ISIL and the people under its control. For example, teachers and civil servants of Syria's and Iraq's bureaucracies are forced to remain and work under coercion.

Military Expansion

ISIL expands its military with disgruntled Iraqi Sunnis (including ex-Baathist army officers) and foreign fighters. Beginning when it was led by a non-Iraqi Jordanian, the late Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, AQI's recruitment of non-

Iraqi fighters antagonized local Iraqis. Although they were fellow Sunni Muslims, even those who were Arabs disrespected Iraqi culture while the non-Arabs treated Iraqis as conquered subjects. Expanding the number of fighters also pinches limited resources, depriving civilians in favor of fighters.

Winning Legitimacy

On certain levels, ISIL has repeated similar errors as the Taliban and AQI in the context of winning legitimacy from below. It has made fellow Sunnis suffer a militant theocracy more interested in harsh Sharia criminal sanctions than in rebuilding the economy or creating a publicly accountable government. Likewise, when U.S. troops invaded Afghanistan, few civilians defended the Taliban, who were fellow Muslims, against largely non-Muslim invaders.

Regarding "legitimacy from above," most Sunni Ulema, religious scholars and spiritual leaders respected by Sunnis worldwide, repudiate ISIL. Even radical religious scholars who mentored AQI and ISIL have condemned ISIL as "deviants" guilty of fitnah, or disrespecting lawful Islamic authority, particularly because their attacks have largely shed Muslim blood rather than the blood of the purported enemies of Islam. Similarly, this tactical error of the Kharijites led to their ultimate isolation and extinction. If the November 13, 2015, attacks on Paris were truly part of a new tactical plan of ISIL to attack "the far enemy" rather than fellow Muslims under their control, it would represent a significant strategic shift that might gain the movement legitimacy within the Islamic world which so far it has lacked. Many academic colleagues and students who are Muslim lament the media's referring to the group by its preferred name of "the Islamic State" and believe that an effective tactic in further delegitimizing the group would be to refer to it instead simply by its acronym "Da'ish," short for *ad-Dawlah al-Islamiyah fi 'l-'Iraq wa-sh-Sham*. For the Western public this move would counter "guilt by association" by distinguishing Da'ish clearly from our Muslim minorities and preventing populist xenophobic backlashes against Islam, whose adherents in the West are growing.

Regarding "legitimacy from outside," ISIL has alienated nearby fellow jihadists, potential allies such as al-Nusrah Front, the Muslim Brotherhood groups, and other al-Qaida-affiliated groups. Meanwhile, ISIL has accepted loyalty pledges from groups too geographically distant to provide direct military aid to its mission, thus repeating al-Qaida's "franchise" mistake. By using ISIL's "name brand," these groups gain prestige without directly helping ISIL. These franchises, however, will expose ISIL to ridicule if militaries defeat them in their respective territories.

State Sponsorship and the Hezbollah Effect

ISIL pays its way with internal resources — namely, oil wells, hydroelectric power, agriculture and the sale of looted ancient artifacts (though some reports suggest ISIL

has switched to a gold, silver and copper based currency). However, those oil wells and the dam power generators remain vulnerable to air strikes, and the worldwide overproduction of oil causing the recent deep drop in the price of crude oil has by itself cut ISIL's oil revenues in half. Therefore, the group's financial independence from external state support is limited.

Contrast this with Hezbollah, which began as a covert operations group in 1982 and transformed itself into an open political party by 1985. Hezbollah was the first Islamist group to stalemate the Israeli Defense Forces, coercing their retreat from southern Lebanon in 2000 through their 15 year-long anti-IDF insurgency. Although Hezbollah suffered heavy casualties in its July 2006 war with Israel, it became a credible tactical threat by launching Iranian short- and medium-range missiles against Israel. Hezbollah has also developed a widespread social welfare infrastructure, including clinics, schools and its own "construction jihad." It has invested in many enterprises, legal and otherwise. Hezbollah's rise within Lebanese electoral politics made it a maker and breaker of Lebanese presidents and governments. One Lebanese analyst lamented, "Hezbollah has become the non-state actor which functions as the de facto state versus the state nonactor which merely enjoys the status of the de jure state."

Also, Hezbollah deploys an overseas terrorist network that bombed the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires on March 17, 1992, killing 29 and injuring 242 victims, and on July 18, 1994, bombed the Israel-Argentina Mutual Aid Society's headquarters, killing 85 and wounding more than 300 victims.

Many analysts believe "Hezbollah International" made al-Qaida's threat insignificant by comparison. These organizational advantages and de facto control of Lebanon were possible only with Iranian military and material support, now estimated at more than U.S. $1 billion annually.

If Israel pre-emptively strikes Iran's nuclear facilities, Iran has already warned it will unleash Hezbollah International to attack the United States. In short, while ISIL is a potential threat, it lacks essential elements for long-term success. By contrast, Hezbollah has achieved remarkable success and already has the ability to strike worldwide.

Do the attacks in Paris show a turn in the direction of worldwide attacks by ISIL? Since these attacks have been so radically different from ISIL's usual modus operandi, this is sufficient reason to question whether the operations were masterminded by ISIL. However, ISIL may well have already lost the battle for legitimacy among Muslims worldwide, for many Muslims well aware of their history have begun to refer to them as "Al Khwaraj al Jadid," the new "Kharajites," the much-feared group that was so shunned by other Muslims that it caused its own self-extinction. □

Members of the Popular Mobilization Units, composed of Shiite militias, hold a position on a building in the Al-Hayakel area on the outskirts of Fallujah, Iraq, during an operation conducted with Iraqi government forces against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant in September 2015.

LONE WOLF

terrorism

Countering
the threat in the
field and online

TOM ABKE

Scattered clouds populated the sky above Sydney, Australia, on a humid summer morning in mid-December 2014 when the nightmare began. Armed with a shotgun and clad in a black cap and black headband inscribed in Arabic, "We are ready to sacrifice for you, O Muhammad," a tall, bearded figure named Man Haron Monis entered a Lindt chocolate cafe. He took 18 customers and employees hostage, forcing two of them at gunpoint to hold a black Shahada flag against the front window. On the flag were Arabic words that declared, "There is no god but God. Muhammad is the messenger of God." A 16-hour standoff with police ensued. Before it was over, Monis had killed one of the hostages. When police rushed in, they shot and killed Monis. Another hostage also perished, the victim of a ricocheted bullet.

A hostage runs to armed tactical-response police officers for safety after escaping from a cafe in Sydney, Australia, in December 2014. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

In late June 2014, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, leader of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), released a recorded message. "Terrify the enemies of Allah and seek death in the places where you expect to find it," it said in part. "Your brothers, on every piece of this earth, are waiting for you to rescue them."

Through the course of the Lindt cafe standoff, Monis, an Australian citizen born in Iran, clarified his allegiance to ISIL, both in statements and by demanding that Australian authorities supply him with an ISIL flag. The investigation that followed, however, showed that Monis had not been a direct agent of ISIL, but had operated on his own initiative — what has become known as a "lone wolf terrorist."

It was the second recorded attack by a lone wolf terrorist in Australia in 2014. On September 23, 2014, an 18-year-old man, Numan Haider, an Australian citizen born in Afghanistan, stabbed two police — both counterterrorism officers — in a Melbourne parking lot outside a police station. One officer dropped to the ground with severe wounds to the face and chest. Haider, refusing to surrender or give up his weapon, was shot in the head by the other officer and died.

Across the waters to the northwest, in Malaysia in spring of the same year, another lone wolf, a 26-year-old man, left his home, family and factory job to join ISIL in Syria. He eventually went to Al-Anbar province in Iraq where he took the lives of 25

members of an elite Iraqi SWAT team, as well as his own, when he drove an explosives-packed SUV into their headquarters.

A SPREADING THREAT

The broader threat of lone wolf terrorism in the Indo Asia Pacific was recognized in October 2014, in statements made by Datuk Ayob Khana, a senior Malaysian counterterrorism official, who publicly observed that the content of pro-ISIL websites could encourage lone wolf migrations to Iraq and Syria, as well as isolated attacks, adding that even an attack by a single perpetrator could have severely destabilizing consequences. The Malaysian government response, according to Ayob Khana, is to identify and shut down such sites.

Patterns can be perceived among lone wolves, according to Paul Lieber, associate professor of strategic communication at the University of Canberra, Australia.

Lieber identifies lone wolves as "byproducts" of existing extremist groups "where certain methods and messages tend to attract these individuals and

with potent effect." He added that they tend to come from the upper strata of their societies, with education and privilege, but also suffering from social and political disenfranchisement, adding that "depression, manic behavior, and related maladies would increase the isolationism through low and high periods."

Lieber's profile of a lone wolf resembles that of Man Haron Monis, a diagnosed schizophrenic with a criminal history of sexual abuse. Nonetheless, Monis had managed to support an often extravagant lifestyle as a "spiritual healer" and apparent con man.

Ayob Khana's office in Malaysia reported that many of the Malaysians they have tracked to Syria and Iraq to fight alongside ISIL tend to come from prosperous families. Among them were the daughter of a mini-market chain owner and a couple who owned a private kindergarten. Despite their prosperity, they fell prey to ISIL's online propaganda, Ayob Khana reported.

"I'm skeptical of the concept of 'lone wolf,' " Angel Rabasa, senior political scientist at the Rand Corporation and a leading authority on terrorism in the Philippines, Indonesia and throughout the Indo Asia Pacific, said in an interview with *FORUM*. By his count, almost every individual involved in what might have been described as a lone wolf attack has had some sort of connection to a group.

"It could be a physical connection," Rabasa said, "in the sense that individuals who have engaged in lone wolf attacks were later found to have had linkages or connections to more extensive groups, or, even in those cases where they did not have a physical connection, they generally had been engaged in some level of electronic interaction, through social media. So I find some problems with the description or category of lone wolf, in that it suggests that they act all by themselves."

If the definition of lone wolf is expanded to include individuals that have gone from Southeast Asian countries to join extremist groups in Iraq and Syria, then, according to Rabasa, "the concern of authorities in those countries where these people originate is less with the ones that get killed in the Middle East than with the ones that might come home. I know that authorities in Southeast Asia, particularly in Indonesia as well as in Singapore and Malaysia, are very aware and concerned about their nationals that have gone to join the extremists in Iraq and Syria. They're keeping an eye out for these people."

This resembles a pattern witnessed during the Afghan jihad beginning in the mid-1980s, observed Rabasa, when Muslim separatists from Indonesia and the Philippines traveled to Afghanistan for training and combat alongside the Mujahideen in their fight against the Soviets and later returned home to carry out attacks on their native soil.

"It hasn't happened yet, as far as I know," said Rabasa of active terrorists returning home to Southeast Asia from Iraq and Syria, "but this is certainly a potential threat."

While the call for a new caliphate by Al-Baghdadi may inspire lone wolves to action, said Rabasa, this threat is augmented by the galvanizing effect this call for global jihad is having on established extremist groups in the Indo Asia Pacific.

"Prior to this, JI [Jemaah Islamiyah] and associated groups were very much in disarray, they were fragmented," said Rabasa. "JI leader Abu Bakar Bashir had been quarreling with other people within JI and they were demoralized, having lost a good proportion of their leaders and their more experienced operatives, and were very much on the decline. Now it looks like the emergence of ISIS has served to revitalize the whole movement. Now they have somebody to look to. Bashir has pledged allegiance to ISIS, as have the Abu Sayyaf Group in the Philippines."

SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGIES

How are countries responding to the lone wolf threat?

"What have been called 'lone wolves' seem to have been largely radicalized through social media, and ISIS has been incredibly successful with this," said Rabasa. "Therefore, it's important to find ways of counteracting the appeal of these types of social media campaigns."

In agreement with Rabasa is "Countering ISIS in Southeast Asia: The case for an ICT [information and communication technologies] offensive," a 2015 study issued by the University of Perth, Australia.

"An empirically driven online and offline communications response that seeks to discredit the appeal of ISIS propaganda among vulnerable populations in Australia and Southeast Asia will be key to countering the threat," reads the study. "This could take several forms and would need to draw heavily on private sector expertise, including survey and public relations firms. Nationally representative opinion polling could be used to identify vulnerable communities in the four largest source states: Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines."

"In Indonesia, there is a very dense network of civil society groups with a long history of moderation," said Rabasa. "I think they do have an impact, especially in reaching out to young people. There have been several conferences — they had a very large conference in Jakarta" in March 2014 that involved government agencies, the police and civil society groups to counter the expansion of ISIS in Southeast Asia. "Indonesians have been very active in responding to this."

Making generalizations about the terrorist threat across the Indo Asia Pacific, lone wolf or otherwise, is of limited value, said Rabasa, emphasizing the vast area of the region and the variety of populations among its countries.

Taiwan is one country in the region so far untouched by attacks from Muslim extremists, despite a Muslim minority population of 240,000, which is broken down into 60,000 Muslim citizens and 180,000 Muslim guest workers. A tweet on February 24, 2015, from a Twitter account associated with ISIL depicted the skyline of Taiwan's capital, Taipei, in flames. This prompted coordinated discussion among seven of the country's government offices concerned with national security and an announcement by the country's Executive

Special Weapons and Tactics team members participate in an anti-terror drill in Seoul, South Korea, in August 2015 to prepare the public for emergencies, including lone wolf attacks. REUTERS

Yuan that it would be taking "emergency anti-terrorism contact mechanisms."

The threat of an impending attack on Taiwan, however, was played down by Professor Ching Chang, a research fellow for the Society for Strategic Studies in Taiwan. "The actions announced by the Executive Yuan refer to enhanced interagency collective efforts including information sharing, operational coordination and optimal resources allocation," said Chang. "Apart from domestic measures, it may also actively conduct the intelligence exchanges with appropriate agencies in other nations and international organizations."

Chang emphasized the harmony among Taiwan's population as its greatest defense against terrorism perpetrated by Islamic extremists, lone wolf or otherwise.

"The Islamic population and community in our society may not be like those in other societies," said Chang. "They are well-integrated into our life. It may surprise many people in the world that the Islamic population came to Taiwan more than 400 years ago. Of course, there are other groups within our Islamic population that came later. The Islamic population in Taiwan is not isolated in certain communities or villages. They are well-integrated. It is quite common for non-Muslims in Taiwan to have Muslim friends and acquaintances. The lifestyles of Muslims in Taiwan are very similar to everybody here. Moreover, they have a good reputation both for maintaining discipline among their young generation and a very low crime rate in this society. It is typical, for example, for young Muslims here to go to pub together with their non-Muslim peers, yet, they will order Coke instead of beer, but still have fun with all their mates. We have no problem on that, indeed."

Governments must work within and across borders to protect citizens from the spreading threat of lone wolf attacks online and across the region. Cooperation among nations will help build trust of the citizenries that their security leaders will work with others to fend off such threats in the most effective ways possible. □

CUTTING TERROR'S
MONEY SUPPLY

Authorities implement more measures to counter threat financing across the region

FORUM STAFF

Terrorism costs money. Violent extremist groups require cash flow for weapons, training, housing, food and transportation.

"Skillful financial management is at the heart of the success of any terrorist or insurgent organization — it represents their lifeblood but is also one of their most significant vulnerabilities," a BBC analyst wrote in January 2015. "Securing and maintaining reliable funding is the key to moving from fringe radical group to recognized terrorist organization."

Despite the efforts of financial regulators, funding continues to make its way to terrorist fighters. The money filters across international borders. It gets channeled through hidden accounts, loopholes and loosely regulated currency transactions.

Alarmed by the wide reach of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), authorities across the Indo-Asia-Pacific are striving to choke off sources of funding for militants. They're finding that multinational cooperation is key when it comes to following the terrorist money trails.

At the same time, international financial authorities are monitoring how countries all over the globe are fighting money laundering. They're holding banking systems to higher standards when it comes to stopping illicit financial flows.

"Regional and international cooperation are critical to combating money laundering and terrorist financing. Increasingly, these crimes are transnational in nature and involve sophisticated criminal networks," Dr. Gordon Hook, executive secretary of the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering, told *FORUM*. The advisory group's members include 41 countries and jurisdictions.

Across the Indo-Asia-Pacific region, a number of significant developments have occurred over the past couple of years:

- Australia and Indonesia co-hosted a counterterrorism financing summit for Indo-Asia-Pacific nations in November 2015. The purpose of the summit, held in Sydney, was to seek regional

agreements to share financial intelligence.
- Indonesia and Thailand successfully completed steps to get themselves removed from a money laundering "blacklist" compiled by the international Financial Action Task Force. Malaysia is in the process of continued implementation of its improved money laundering policy framework.
- India has been in discussions with Australia and the United States to share more real-time intelligence to fight international terror funding.
- Umbrella groups such as the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering are working with a number of countries, helping them to implement stricter anti-money laundering safeguards.
- Australia is providing technical assistance and training to help neighboring countries develop stronger counterterrorism financing regimes.

"Our relationships with our financial intelligence counterparts throughout the world — particularly in our region — help deliver a coordinated international response to transnational threats such as terrorism financing," Paul Jevtovic, CEO of the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre, told *FORUM*.

Sources of terror funding include criminal activity such as kidnapping, extortion and drug trafficking; private donations and misuse of charitable organizations; and state sponsorship, according to the U.S. Treasury Department's 2015 "National Terrorist Financing Risk Assessment."

RAISING THE STAKES

Cutting off violent extremists' money sources has been a priority and a slippery challenge in the nearly 15 years since the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

With military, intelligence and law enforcement authorities already on the case, political pressure has brought the private sector into the fray as well. Countless bankers, fund managers, accountants and solicitors are on the lookout for terrorist activity worldwide.

"Given the mutating nature of terrorist financing, international regulators keep layering on new laws and recommendations in an effort to keep pace," according to an article in *The Economist* magazine in 2005.

More recently, the emergence of ISIL has raised the stakes.

When the Group of Seven large industrialized democracies held their annual summit in Germany in June 2015, leaders discussed cracking down on international terrorist financing by closing loopholes and by coordinating on asset freezes. "The planned measures come amid evidence of Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, the militant Islamist group, raising huge amounts of money to finance its war in Syria and Iraq,"

A currency-exchange clerk holds stacks of Indonesian rupiah notes in Jakarta. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

the *Financial Times* newspaper reported.

ISIL is also making an impact in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. In its "East Asia and Pacific Overview" published in 2015, the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Counterterrorism wrote: "Governments became increasingly concerned about the growing threat of the Islamic state in Iraq and the Levant, which became a major impetus for further counterterrorism efforts in Indonesia and Malaysia, as citizens from both countries travelled abroad to fight with ISIL."

ISIL isn't the only threat; several countries in the region are dealing with their own insurgent groups.

In Indonesia, a January 2016 terror attack in Jakarta killed eight people. Analysts estimate that 500 Indonesians have gone overseas to fight for ISIL. Most get funneled into their own military units alongside recruits from Singapore and Malaysia, *The Sydney Morning Herald* newspaper reported in July 2015.

Support for ISIL appears to be growing among Muslim extremists in Southeast Asia, where analysts believe the risk is highest in Indonesia, *The Wall Street Journal* newspaper reported in July 2015. Militants continue to operate out of strongholds and training camps there.

Thailand has seen terrorist bombings in Bangkok as well as an ongoing insurgency in southern Thailand. A bombing at a popular Bangkok shrine in August 2015 killed 20 people.

"Thai officials have long expressed concern that transnational terrorist groups could establish links with southern Thailand-based separatist groups," the U.S. State Department stated in its "Country Reports on Terrorism 2014," a report released in June 2015.

In Malaysia, authorities have boosted

counterterrorism efforts in the wake of reports that Malaysian militant groups envision creating an Islamic caliphate spanning Southeast Asia, *The Straits Times* newspaper in Singapore reported in 2014.

In the Philippines, the Abu Sayyaf Group, a brutal al-Qaida-linked organization, has pulled off mass kidnappings for ransom for 15 years, according to The Associated Press. Other insurgent groups continue to operate.

Bangladesh continues to face threats from multiple Islamist insurgent groups such as Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh and Harkatul Jihad al Islami-Bangladesh, the U.S. State Department reported in 2015.

TERROR DOWN UNDER

In 2014, two significant terror attacks took place on Australian soil. In 2015, intelligence agencies there foiled several alleged terror plots, Agence France-Presse reported. Among them, two men in Brisbane were charged with recruiting jihadists and raising money for the al-Nusrah Front, an al-Qaida offshoot group.

In November 2015, Australia's anti-money laundering agency announced that the number of financial transactions suspected of being linked to terrorism had tripled over the past year, the Australian Associated Press reported.

Meanwhile, an estimated 110 Australian citizens have left the country to fight alongside ISIL in the Middle East, prompting the Australian government to launch an effort to crack down on "homegrown terrorism" fostered within its borders, officials said in 2015. "This is one of the most disturbing developments in our domestic security in quite some time," Australian Foreign Affairs Minister Julie Bishop told the Australian Broadcasting Service (ABC) in March 2015.

There's evidence that more Australian extremists are funding terrorist fighters. In early 2015, Australian banks stopped sending money transfers to Somalia. Authorities had learned that some of the money was being remitted under false names to fund the Somalia-based terrorist group al-Shabaab, according to ABC News.

Amid signs of growing support for ISIL in Indonesia, a money-laundering watchdog detected inflows of funds from Australian residents to ISIL-supporting extremist groups in Indonesia, *The Jakarta Post* newspaper reported in March 2015.

Agus Santoso, deputy chairman of Indonesia's Financial Transactions and Analysis Centre, said the agency had found that some of the money being spent by ISIL insurgents in Indonesia had come from Australia. "We have detected supporting funds from an Australian source to terrorist networks in Indonesia," he announced during a March 2015 international conference on ISIL.

Australia responded by co-hosting a counterterrorism financing summit with Indonesia in November 2015 — coincidentally just after the November 13 ISIL attacks in Paris. The intent was to draw together counterterrorism financing specialists, law enforcement agencies, national security representatives, policymakers, industry leaders and academics from throughout the Indo-Asia-Pacific. The goal: to seek agreements to share financial and other intelligence to follow the money trails that are lining terrorists' pockets.

"Australia welcomes this unprecedented collaboration between our two countries," Australian Justice Minister Michael Keenan said during an August 2015 visit to Jakarta, according to the justice minister's website. "Because following the money trail is an essential element of tackling terrorism and organized crime, and international cooperation is vital in detecting and disrupting illegal operations."

Thai officials hold confiscated elephant tusks before destroying the ivory at the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation in Bangkok in August 2015. Globally, proceeds from trafficking everything from ivory and endangered species to drugs and humans have been linked to terrorist funding. REUTERS

INDIA'S OUTREACH

India is extending a hand as well.

It and Australia are in deep discussions regarding intelligence sharing, international terrorism and cyber security, *The Times of India* newspaper reported in September 2015. This came up when Indian Minister of State for Home Kiren Rijiju met with visiting Australian Defence Minister Kevin Andrews. The two leaders particularly discussed global efforts to curtail terror funding, an official release said.

The *New Indian Express* newspaper reported in August 2015 that India and the United States were working on an agreement to share real-time intelligence on terror financing as well as the source of materials used in counterfeit currency. India's *Daily Excelsior* newspaper reported in September 2015 that India and the U.S. were "continuing efforts to finalize a bilateral agreement to expand intelligence sharing and terrorist watch-list information."

INTERNATIONAL EYES

Nations that take little action in these matters will find themselves at odds with international financial regulators.

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF), an international body based in Paris, sets standards for how countries should combat money laundering and terrorist financing. Countries that fail to implement its standards run the risk of being labeled as high-risk or uncooperative jurisdictions, making it more costly and difficult for those nations to transact with the banking systems of FATF member states.

As of late 2015, three countries were on FATF's "blacklist" — Iran, North Korea and Burma. This designation also puts a damper on foreign investor confidence, FATF says.

Additionally, FATF has identified Papua New Guinea and 10 other countries worldwide as having deficiencies in their efforts to stop money laundering and terrorism financing.

The organization also said Laos hadn't made sufficient progress on a plan to improve its methods in this area.

In 2012, FATF placed Indonesia and Thailand on the blacklist. After those countries took steps to correct the issue, FATF removed Thailand from the list in 2013 and Indonesia in 2015.

Indonesia raised its status with FATF by enacting new laws on preventing terrorism funding and blocking terrorist-related bank accounts, *The Wall Street Journal* reported.

"This legislation is essential to preventing acts of terrorism," Indonesian Justice Minister Amir Syamsuddin told reporters, "because money supply is the lifeblood of terrorist activities." □

BATTLEFIELD

of the Mind

A LOOK AT HOW
TERRORIST GROUPS
RADICALIZE AND
MOBILIZE CIVILIANS
FOR NEFARIOUS ACTS

DR. MALKANTHI HETTIARACHCHI
PHOTOS BY AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Terrorist groups continually hone their skills in the art of manipulation.

They project the face of the victim to sympathizers, the face of the aggressor to the perceived enemy and the face of the rescuer to their own vulnerable community.

Pioneering psychiatrist Stephen Karpman originally used these images to analyze dysfunctional human interactions. Today, similar components can be identified in terrorism.

Terrorist group members identify with all three aspects and switch between these roles, thereby maintaining the conflict. Therefore, it is not surprising that these groups, by projecting these images, win the support of the populace even in communities battling terrorism. Caught up in the projected image and message, actors such as activists, rights groups and nongovernmental organizations can shift in the direction of sympathizing, romanticizing and even advocating for terrorist groups. Countermessaging has to be creative to reach these different audiences.

Sri Lankans hold candles in Colombo during a May 2015 commemoration ceremony for those who died in battles between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam fighters and government troops at the end of the three-decades-old separatist conflict.

MOLDING A TERRORIST

Terrorists are not born but cultivated. The transformation of a civilian into a terrorist happens due to a number of factors and requires a multifaceted response. Terrorist groups need a powerful emotive narrative to influence the community. Depending on the resonance of the message, whether it is emotion-focused, attraction-focused or blended, the community produces potential recruits. Some join the group as members, while others remain supporters and sympathizers. Recruits are groomed into terrorism through indoctrination and training. Members develop an identity linked to the group and a sense of responsibility. The member experiences power, dignity and significance in the eyes of the community as a defender of the cause; develops self-efficacy, a belief in his or her own ability to carry out duties required to redress grievances; and is able to morally justify the use of violence.

The member is sustained within the group when mentored into its subculture. When mobilized to carry out violent activities, the individual becomes a valued member of the group and gains significance within the organization. The member then gains the respect of the community, peers and leaders and becomes self-motivated. He or she goes on to develop greater self-efficacy with each operation carried out and becomes further celebrated and entrenched within the group.

THE NARRATIVE

Terrorist groups have a foundation narrative. They exploit grievances and develop an emotive story woven with discrimination, subjugation, occupation and suffering caused by the enemy. The narrative heightens imminent threats and risks to community members by exposing them to selected incidents directly or vicariously. A sense of urgency is evoked, propelling individuals to act against the "enemy." As the conflict evolves, an ever-increasing number of injustices are added to continue to justify the need for violence.

Events are sequenced to form a powerful narrative to demonize the enemy and justify violence. The images are sequenced to evoke emotions.

The messages vary depending on the target audience. All these actions help to generate a vibrant array of emotive images that enhance the narrative and buttress the ideology of violence.

UNDERSTANDING RADICALIZATION

Radicalization occurs when an individual's beliefs become extreme. Of grave concern is when that radicalization turns into violent action. All terrorist groups formulate an ideology through which the narrative is put into action, enabling them to mobilize their membership. Ideology is a set of beliefs to which the individual subscribes based on political, religious, social or historical narratives.

Counterterrorism initiatives focused on depleting the supply of recruits and funding could minimize the

operational capability of terrorists. The kinetic response to terrorism is a familiar and essential aspect in reducing the immediate threat, while intelligence gathering is invaluable in dismantling active and potential threats.

Engaging in the "battlefield of the mind" is an equally important and highly skilled task that requires a psychological approach to dismantling the ideology that locks the mind into legitimizing violence. It is essential to engage with the terrorist to identify thoughts and beliefs and facilitate critical thinking. Cognitive strategies to build rapport, overcome resistance and access thoughts and beliefs in a nonthreatening manner will help identify errors or distortions in thinking. Using the Socratic method of questioning to explore alternative responses to violence-justifying narratives and question established beliefs helps delegitimize the need for violence.

Sri Lanka's rehabilitation program is one of the few that takes a holistic approach to the rehabilitation and reintegration of the former Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) terrorists. The program was managed by the military and conducted by more than 40 private and public sector partnerships. The initiative started in 2008 and was formalized in 2009.

Today, Sri Lanka has reintegrated more than 12,200 former LTTE members into the community.

SUSTENANCE AND MOBILIZATION

The LTTE was one of the world's most ruthless terrorist groups until it was defeated by Sri Lankan security forces in 2009. It developed proactive and reactive methods for retaining its membership. Training included lectures on the narrative for a separate state, mentorship, the flow of disinformation and misinformation, reframing the narrative, anger generated over members who died in battle, celebrating suicide attacks, a terrorist leader venerated as a demigod, salaries and benefits that sustained the fighters' families, extensive punishments and incarceration of those who attempted to leave the group, rewards and martyrdom for suicide attacks, projecting ongoing threats to the cause, and predicting imminent victory over the enemy.

Each successful attack motivated the membership to aspire for similar victories, leading more people to join. With each loss, the membership was further motivated, aspiring to avenge the dead and to encourage more people to join.

MORAL JUSTIFICATION OF VIOLENCE

Moral justification of violence is essential to suppress social norms and to be able to engage in terrorist activity. Morally justifying attacks on civilians reduces the cognitive dissonance and frees the member to celebrate the attack. The use of violence is legitimized.

The moral justifications crafted by the leadership are backed historically, religiously and politically. This allows the members to conduct attacks without any moral qualms and become further motivated and a beacon for

Philippine military personnel sit near high-powered firearms at a military camp in Cotabato, on the southern island of Mindanao, in February 2015. Moro Islamic Liberation Front rebels returned the firearms that they took during a firefight with police commandos.

others to follow. Most terrorists would believe that their actions are justified in pursuit of a higher goal. This allows terrorists to morally disengage from the norms of society. They can spare themselves blame for their detrimental conduct by converting their harmful acts into moral ones in their minds. The members gradually become desensitized to violence, and the value for life diminishes.

Language plays a vital role in moral justification. Dehumanizing the individual, using language that sanitizes actions, minimizing consequences, displacing blame and group decision-making allows the individual to disengage from taking responsibility.

CONCLUSION

The psychological transformation of an individual — from an upstanding member of the community to a terrorist — is a result of indoctrination into a violence-justifying ideology. Terrorist indoctrination is geared to grip the mind and harness the skills of individuals to inflict terror into the heart of the enemy and civil society. Communities are indoctrinated and radicalized to serve as a resource base for terror networks. Nefarious groups depend on the motivated few from the community for their survival. These structures are made functional by a group's leaders, members and support base that operate in local and distant spheres. The motivations are many when joining a group, but it is the ongoing indoctrination and training that ensures mobilization. The key to deradicalization is engaging, understanding and dismantling the justifications for violence used at the

individual, group and community levels. Puncturing the arguments and attacking justifications used to recruit, radicalize and mobilize. Using the same media for countermessaging to create doubt, which helps to reframe the grievance narrative in realistic terms.

To dismantle the terrorist ideology, the justifications and legitimization of terror tactics, the psychological approach must focus on reaching the hearts and minds of terrorists and their recruiting communities from within.

The real work of counterterrorism initiatives must include understanding the process of radicalization and what works in de-radicalization. Counterterrorism officials must use this knowledge to formulate a strategy for "messaging" and "countermessaging." Messages targeted at countering narratives, justifying violence and legitimizing the actions of terrorist groups need to be factual, realistic and delivered using methods that are equally or more powerful, emotive and attractive. If the messaging space is not occupied by nation states, nonstate actors will occupy and manipulate this space, which is a powerful opinion maker and opinion changer.

This space is in the mind. This space cannot be protected or defended with conventional weapons of war but by adopting a psychological approach to techniques used by terrorist groups and delivered using effective communication strategies. Innovative thinking and creative strategies that resonate with the masses are required to engage in the battlefield of the mind. □

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resolving conflict

A WHOLE OF SOCIETY APPROACH BRINGS RESULTS

DR. SHRUTI SHARMA

The war on terror has changed tremendously since the 9/11 attacks in the United States, which sparked a drive for sustained global efforts to contain terrorism.

Close to 15 years down the line, we unfortunately see an increase in the expanse of terror and conflicts. The emergence of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) has profoundly altered the picture.

The conflict is perplexing. It ranges across space, from countries such as Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Tunisia and Egypt, to Indonesia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, India and many more. It spans time, with each of these conflicts having a lengthy history. The complexity of the crises is also perplexing, where one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter.

In spite of all the differences that separate these conflicts, some similarities run through them. Attempts to deal with any of these conflicts make it imperative to understand the underlying similarities among them.

Common Threads Across Conflicts

Such conflicts have at least four common features. First, all of them emerge from highly fragmented societies. Most nations facing unrest today have heterogeneous populations with a history of friction among factions.

Second, there is a history of conflict between the various fragments that dates back to the prepolitical state period. Most of the conflicts that we see today are a continuation of historical conflicts that were present before the advent of current states and political institutions that govern these regions today. In fact, many of these states along with their institutions of governance were superimposed on an underlying set of conflicts.

For instance, we could look at some conflicts in Africa, where the ethnic strife among various tribes and clans predates the current political organization of the continent. Similarly, the societal divisions among tribes and groups in northeast India predates the Indian state. The tensions between Sri Lankan Tamils and Sinhalese predate the Sri Lankan state.

Third, the idea of a nation-state as a vehicle of political organization emerged much later and was influenced and shaped by these ongoing conflicts within the societies. A closer look at state formation in these regions highlights that the pre-existing fault lines — built on historic rivalries, defined by ethnicity, economic class, social caste, socio-religious identity and linguistic identity — were carried on to gain control over the state institutions and resources.

The nations that failed to take along all those who comprised a part of the society as "a nation" or "a people" have experienced the intensification of these conflicts. The conflicts in Libya, Iraq, Afghanistan, Indonesia and many other nations can be understood from this prism.

Fourth, the creation of new political institutions of governing became another arena to carry forward the conflicts. The newly created political institutions across South Asia and the Middle East have seen elites from various factions clash in efforts to capture more power. In most cases, certain classes could gain greater control, leading to the exclusion of others.

This allowed the pre-existing conflicts to be carried forward through a new avatar — the political institutions of the state. These factors underscore the need to understand conflicts in their historical perspective. Hence, the first step in containing political violence must be understanding the history and the continuing exclusions that perpetuate these conflicts.

Conflicts and Exclusion: The Inter-linkages

There is a mutually sustaining relationship between conflicts and political exclusion. Exclusions are mostly studied from the perspective of the state. However, there is also a need to understand exclusion from the perspective of those excluded, rather than solely from the perspective of the state actors.

Research interactions with respondents in conflict zones, be it Kashmir or Manipur in India, invariably bring up the word "injustice" the moment that questions are asked about the ongoing conflict.

Researchers have found three reasons why people who consider themselves excluded fight to correct injustices:

Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena speaks with minority Tamil residents in the eastern town of Muttur in August 2015.
AFP/GETTY IMAGES

- **Recognition:** Each collective of people that a nation-state claims as citizens needs to feel recognized equally. Whenever any single group feels underrecognized as a part of the state, seeds of conflict are sown. The demand for fair recognition transitions from a "felt need" to formal demand in terms of representation in political institutions. It becomes a yardstick to measure the levels to which a community is recognized by a state. This can be classified as a demand for equality.
- **Representation:** As can be gauged from all the conflicts mentioned so far, excluded people struggle for "fair" representation. Perpetual denial leads to polarization along fault lines — which could be ethnic, tribal, linguistic, economic or regional, depending upon the context of the conflict. For example, many of the struggles on the African continent are between ethnic groups striving to either retain control over political institutions or to upset the current arrangement in their favor. This can be equated with a demand for liberty to shape their own progress.
- **Equitable development:** The issues here are basic needs such as food, shelter, education, health, employment and connectivity — the needs that shape people's everyday existence. Tensions are

worsened by the perception that the two previously noted factors lead to inequitable development, both human and infrastructural, and that better development could meet these basic needs. A vicious cycle is generated when all three factors work simultaneously, strengthening each other and perpetuating a sense of alienation that brews conflict.

These three aspects can be condensed into the age-old demands of equality, liberty and justice that most societies have come to see as rightful demands.

Denial of these three factors combines to create a sense of injustice that fuels a web of perceptions, breeding and eventually nurturing conflict, an expression of which is armed resistance or terrorism. Thus, exclusion acts as a gear of conflict in society. Certain factions control the political institutions, accentuating the exclusion of other groups and nurturing a sense of injustice. Each rotation of the gear perpetuates this exclusion.

It is important to understand that this gear is able to reverse its mechanics and break free of the vicious cycle of conflict. The beginning of this reversal can be achieved only by an honest inquiry into exclusions from the perspectives of those excluded and by correcting those stands and actions that perpetuate that sense of exclusion.

Indian voters wait in line
to cast their ballots during
the Jharkhand assembly
elections in November 2014.

Conflict situations have a disempowering effect on women and children globally.

Whole of Society Approach

The whole of society approach implies a partnership in governance between the state and various sections of society that the state seeks to represent, organize and regulate. In that sense, this approach makes these components partners in the process of governance. As can be deduced from the Arab Spring uprisings, there is a strong demand for equality and partnership among citizens globally.

Along with the state, the primary stakeholders in the whole of society approach are women, youth and civil society organizations (CSOs).

In containing conflict, the focus is often on the terrorist, who frequently is a fringe element in a society reeling under war and conflict. However, between the protagonist (state) and the antagonist (terrorist), there is a larger society that gets neglected and further excluded.

Conflict situations have a disempowering effect on women and children globally. The current conflicts provide numerous illustrations, such as schoolgirls being held hostage for attending school in Nigeria or ISIL's harsh treatment of Yazidi and other female captives. Each conflict has its own set of ramifications on women and children.

The mere fact that conflicts inherently contain seeds of criminality toward women is beyond argument and denial. The breakdown of law and order causes the most serious repercussions for them.

The extent of their suffering paradoxically makes them the strongest stakeholders for establishing the rule of law again. The response of escapees from Boko Haram to return to the very schools that were considered un-Islamic and the response of Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace in forcing the warring factions in Liberia to sign a peace pact substantiates the claim that women can play a critical role in forging sustainable peace.

The whole of society approach also underscores the need for a level of trust between CSOs working in conflict areas and the respective states. Many CSOs such as the Red Cross and Doctors Without Borders work to create normal living conditions for those forced to live under the shadow of violence — especially women and children.

Many CSOs find themselves at a crossroads, becoming a target of extremists as well as being distrusted by certain states by virtue of their work. In Sri Lanka, Pakistan, India and elsewhere, many activists have been marginalized for their efforts or for their criticism. A recent example was the assassination of Pakistani human rights activist Sabeen Mahmud in April 2015.

Initially, trust is needed for any discursive process to begin between states and CSOs. Mutual trust is often lacking due to claims of human rights violations that these organizations highlight, creating unease between the two sides in this dialogue. Further, government officials often denounce CSOs as "armchair critics."

Dissent and criticism are constructive for better developing any idea, and this is expected of a state rather than a high-handed curb on dissenting voices. Repressing dissent is not conducive for peace and cooperation. The whole of society approach recommends a partnership between states and CSOs.

There have been practical examples of the two sides joining forces for better governance. For instance, activists with Libyan Women's Platform for Peace are engaged in drafting the constitutional rights for women in a new Libyan constitution.

Women have formed many CSOs in conflict states such as Afghanistan, India, Liberia and Libya. Various indigenous women's initiatives have engaged with states to contain conflicts, such as the Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace, Libyan Women's Platform for Peace, School of Leadership Afghanistan and the Manipur Women Gun Survivors Network in India.

In some cases, states can be seen to be responding with a gradual yet decisive inclusion of women in political decision-making roles. In the Jharkhand state of India, the process was triggered by a number of national-level policies empowering women, leading them to take up positions of responsibility by winning local, village-level elections.

Conclusion

Inclusion and conflict have a complex relationship. Any attempts at conflict de-escalation require critical understanding of the links between the outbreak of conflicts, divided societies and political institutions. This understanding can provide a useful background to understand the existing tensions and conflicts. A comprehensive perspective on conflicts and inclusion can be instrumental in developing sustainable mechanisms to de-escalate conflicts.

On this basis, inclusive policymaking and implementation can be explored as an effective means of countering armed conflicts. However, inclusion is essentially reflexive, because each attempt at inclusion will push the boundaries of exclusion. Each wave of inclusion will lead to another wave, until those excluded from fair recognition, representation and equitable development feel that they're a part of "a people" narrative that states seek to represent. ◻

EXTREMISM
DETOX

FORUM STAFF

A SINGAPORE-BASED MUSLIM COMMUNITY GROUP PROVIDES PROGRAMS AND COUNSELING TO COUNTER EXTREMIST IDEOLOGY

Youths skateboard in a park near Singapore's central business district in March 2015. Deradicalization groups in Singapore work to steer young people away from radical Islamic ideology.
REUTERS

Since its inception in 2003, the Singapore-based Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG) has worked to counter extremist ideology by exposing the misuse of Islam and helping subdue and prevent radicalization of Muslim communities. The group — composed of volunteer Islamic scholars and teachers — focuses primarily on countering the ideological misunderstanding of detained Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) members and their families through counseling and other programs.

"For the JI detainees, rehabilitation takes on particular importance, as rehabilitation seeks to correct the offender's misinterpretation of religious concepts and way of thinking," according to the RRG website, which says it has conducted 1,500 counseling sessions. "This will not only prevent future criminal acts but will also convince them that such behavior and interpretation is inappropriate and undesirable."

Terrorist acts occur when the ideological motivation meets with operational capability and opportunity. Terrorist groups have a knack for disseminating their radical message in such a way that it tugs at the hearts and minds of audiences worldwide. "The war on terror ought to be called the ideological battle against radical extremists who happen to use terror as a weapon to disrupt the conscience of the free and peaceful world," according to the RRG.

When it comes to self-radicalization, individuals often adapt extremist views when they set out to become better practicing Muslims, according to RRG.

"Incidentally, this was also the case with many members of JI who, when interviewed, considered religion as a topmost priority, above economic gains," according to RRG. "Effectively, what they are saying is that in an increasingly secularized world, their search for excellence goes beyond material concerns; it is in fact equated to a search for spiritual meaning."

The pursuit of filling that "spiritual void" can lead people down the wrong path without proper guidance — particularly for youth and particularly in an age when so much information is readily available on the Internet.

"A combination of blind fervor and shallow understanding of Islam among the youths is a lethal combination that can be exploited by extremists," according to RRG.

Singaporean Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean praised initiatives in his country by Muslim community groups like RRG. In August 2015, he pointed to a pair of teenagers the Singaporean Internal Security Department held on suspicion of self-radicalization.

"This shows that anyone is susceptible to the appeal of ISIS' [Islamic State of Iraq and Syria's] online extremist rhetoric," he told Channel NewsAsia. "Given that the armed conflict in Syria is likely to continue for some time, we can expect more such self-radicalized cases in Singapore."

Added RRG Co-chairman Ali Mohamed, the "Internet is one of the biggest challenges, especially the youths. They can be radicalized in very short terms, in very short moments. Just give them a few times to have a look at these radicalized websites, and they will be radicalized."

One challenge remains the degree of reluctance that some teachers and preachers have to counter these radical ideologies. They worry about being unpopular while trying to project their knowledge and correct misconceptions, according to Mohamed Fatris Bakaram, mufti, or Islamic scholar, of the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore.

"So this is a psychological challenge that the Muslim community has to face," he told Channel NewsAsia in August 2015. "Preachers and teachers have to stand up and develop self-confidence. They are part of the whole which has responsibility to guide youths."

Expressions of reason and legitimate interpretation of religious principles and practices must be heard as loudly and as often as the toxic religious messages that permeate communities across the Indo Asia Pacific and make inroads globally through the World Wide Web.

The Religious Rehabilitation Group provides resources, including counseling, to counter radical Islamic ideology. FACEBOOK

"More voices of moderation need to be heard from the local community, especially the religious leaders and scholars, as more counter-extremist websites need to be created," according to the RRG. "One of the most important lessons that can be learned and drawn by the Singapore experience is that active and continuous engagement with the Muslim community is vital in the fight against extremism. Cooperation with governments in the [region] and internally is crucial to keep abreast of the latest developments and radicalization trends. Ultimately, it is only when we challenge ideas with ideas that hearts and minds may ultimately be changed." □

To learn more about the Singapore-based Religious Rehabilitation Group, visit its website at www.rrg.sg.

Ozana Rodrigues, mother of Brian De Mulder, who left for Syria after being indoctrinated by the Islamic extremist group Sharia4Belgium, poses with a photo of her son outside the Antwerp courthouse in January 2015 in Belgium, where the trial of the group was underway. REUTERS

Mothers

AGAINST

TERROR

By DR. **EDIT SCHLAFFER** *and* DR. **ULRICH KROPIUNIGG,** Women without Borders/SAVE

A PERSPECTIVE ON HOW FAMILIES MAY HELP COUNTER VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Radicalization is a process that often takes place at home, with parents and other family nearby. However, parents can be unaware of what is going on with their adolescent or young adult child until it is too late.

When a son or daughter "changes," it isn't necessarily a warning sign. Adolescence is a time of change. Parents sometimes feel secure and relieved when their child turns away from drugs and embraces Islam instead. From then on, there is no smoking, no drinking, no sleeping until noon.

Other parents may ponder the seriousness of certain behavior patterns but assess them as harmless and within the undefined borders of adolescent "storm and stress," as one mother from Canada described it. She was concerned and torn between tolerance and helplessness. "He wouldn't talk with me as much as he used to. He stopped seeing his friends and spent more and more time in his room." These were warning signs, but they were overlooked until the son went to Syria. Soon after, he was killed.

A child helps her mother harvest chili peppers at a plantation near Sukabumi in Indonesia's West Java province in August 2015. Mothers can serve as a buffer between their children and radical influences.
REUTERS

What were the driving forces in his case? What pushed and pulled him away from his family? In general terms, society is more informed about pull factors and recruiting methods than the deep dynamics that cause a child to turn radical in the first place. A clue might lie in what a Belgian mother observed: "The recruiters gave him a sense of personal value that he didn't have in his life. This is what brought him to Syria."

MOTHERS ARE NEGLECTED

Experts have studied the underlying social and psychological factors that motivate individuals to adopt extremist ideologies, yet comprehensive conclusions have not translated into policies. The counterterrorism approach has largely consisted of reactive strategies, relying heavily on military and security forces to carry out actions meant to punish and deter. While this strategy has recently been scaled up, the incidence of terrorism is growing more critical.

Theoretically, we know push and pull factors and many other root causes, but these theories have not been applied on a practical preventive level. One reason is that countering violent extremism (CVE) research has left out a key actor: mothers.

As a group, mothers hold valuable data on what makes individuals vulnerable to radical influences regardless of economic, political and socio-economic factors. In particular, mothers of radicalized youth view their children's coming-of-age journey as navigating the uncertainty of adolescence and young adulthood. As a result, they provide unique insights into responses that are incomprehensible to outsiders.

Furthermore, mothers are also strategically placed to serve as a buffer between radical influences and those targeted next. They are the starting point for building resiliency within their children's early years of development, as well as the first to recognize and address signs of distress such as anger, anxiety and withdrawal. This dual capacity to pre-empt and respond to radical influences makes mothers essential participants in an effective security paradigm.

It is widely recognized that individuals are influenced by their social contexts: Their hopes, aspirations, struggles and reactions are largely shaped by the environment in which they emotionally and psychologically develop. In examining these social and emotional variables, we can gain a clear picture of the common factors that lead people to adopt extremist ideologies and therefore develop targeted prevention strategies.

Nigerian women hold a protest demanding the release of schoolgirls abducted by the militant group Boko Haram in April 2014. REUTERS

"If we really want to identify and support resilience in communities under threat, we cannot do so from a distance. We need to listen to and observe its residents and learn about its history, culture, social structure, values, needs, resources, and daily experiences, in order to determine precisely what resilience means for them," notes the article "Building Community Resilience to Counter Violent Extremism," published in *Democracy and Security* in 2013.

A NEW RESEARCH MODEL

Based on this understanding of the deficits of ongoing CVE approaches and of the unique position of mothers, the nongovernmental organization Women without Borders/Sisters Against Violent Extremism (SAVE) developed an applied research project to collect evidence on mothers' potential to protect at-risk youth. The organization's "Mothers for Change" study examined mothers' perception of the threat of violent extremism and their understanding of their role in the radicalization and deradicalization process.

The study draws on the subjective understanding of mothers on the causes, factors and realities of violent extremism as they experience them in their families, communities and, most important, in the lives of their children. The study focused on sons because, while daughters are increasingly joining extremist groups, boys remain the majority of those involved.

THE STUDY

The three-stage study was designed to collect, analyze and apply data from mothers living in Nigeria, Pakistan, Northern Ireland, Israel and Palestine — regions affected by violent extremism. In the first stage, 200 in-depth interviews were conducted in each country to gain an overall picture of the social and emotional environments of adolescent and young adult sons.

The questions were grouped into seven areas: family background, the children's lives, the mother's role in her children's upbringing, proximity to extremism, societal factors, combating violent extremism — individually and collectively — and future strategies.

In many communities, extremism and violence are taboo; therefore, gathering data requires breaking through social barriers. Some women were reluctant to talk at first, particularly mothers whose children were already involved in extremist activities. Guilt, shame and fear initially inhibited them. They eventually opened up once they understood that they are valuable contributors and allies. Many subjects expressed relief after speaking out.

From these interviews a number of themes emerged, and these were used to develop a questionnaire. Three key areas were explored: how mothers see their role in reducing the attraction of extremist ideologies; who they would turn to in a situation characterized by confusion, fear and alarm; and what they need to be effective in recognizing and responding to the warning signs of radicalization.

The interviewing team focused on more than 1,000 respondents — about 200 in each country — to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire used a Likert scale to assess levels of agreement with 43 statements and questions. Another three topics addressed were: What are the sources of extremist influences? Whom do mothers trust? What do mothers need?

STUDY RESULTS

Overall, a consensus emerged regarding perceptions of a mother's role in countering extremist influences. The data from the interviews and the surveys strongly conveyed mothers' concerns about the risk of their children becoming radicalized.

A majority of mothers expressed confidence in their own abilities to prevent their children from becoming involved with violent extremism in the first place and to recognize early warning signs. Moreover, in many of the interviews, the mothers expressed a sense of urgency and eagerness to collaborate with similarly concerned mothers in combating the growing problem of extremist recruitment.

A MOTHER'S FEAR

The mothers believe that extremist agendas are disseminated primarily through the Internet, radical religious leaders, political organizations and television. These sources are not surprising, but the overall picture that emerges is noteworthy. These four diverse sources are given almost equal significance, indicating that on an average day, youth are confronted by radical messages from many different angles: the media, the Internet, schools and social networks.

The breadth of these sources indicates that some communities have very little protected space, leaving youths highly vulnerable. Therefore, the pervasiveness of extremist messages, reported by the mothers in the study, provides strong support for a security approach that focuses on building resiliency within and around the home.

Moreover, this data is particularly important because this information — collected within a private realm — is largely inaccessible to local authorities, intelligence and other actors involved in terror research. From their unique position, these mothers' perspectives on the initial source of extremist influence is likely to be the most accurate.

As researchers and policymakers have widely acknowledged, gaining a clear picture of the initial entry into extremism has important implications for effectively addressing radicalization at its origin. Mothers' insights help to elucidate the most intricate details of this picture.

A MOTHER'S TRUST

Where do mothers turn when they have concerns about their children's safety and well-being? What people or institutions do they trust to provide support? The primary answer was other mothers, at 94 percent. Fathers were listed next, at 91 percent, followed by other relatives, at 81 percent.

Tajik mothers discuss concerns regarding their children and violent extremism at the inception of the Mothers School in Khujand, Tajikistan, in 2011.

DR. ULRICH KROPIUNIGG

In a crisis, the family circle is the primary source of support. Teachers, listed fourth with a trust score of 79 percent, and community organizations, at 61 percent, are the first institutions they turn to outside of immediate social networks. Religious leaders earned a 58 percent trust score, suggesting a level of some ambivalence.

State organizations earned among the weakest trust scores, with police at 39 percent, the army with 35 percent, and local government with 34 percent. International organizations earned similarly weak trust scores of 36 percent. The national government, however, earned the lowest trust score overall: 29 percent.

The most important piece of data, corroborated by other evidence in the study, is that mothers trust themselves along with other mothers first in protecting their children. This is notable because the existing security approach currently focuses implementation within national and local authorities, two groups that seem to evoke significant distrust.

Moreover, the lack of trust in the state is a critical finding and reveals a trust gap between the private and the public spheres as they relate to security. This fundamental problem was recently addressed in a 2014 *Terrorism and Political Violence* article titled "The Stagnation in Terrorism Research," which argues that government and private citizens need to collaborate to combat radicalization.

Therefore, a key step in countering terrorism is finding ways to enable cohesion and trust within communities. This is a finding that was likely only to come from mothers themselves.

WHAT DO MOTHERS NEED?

How then do mothers assess their own needs? What kind of support do they need to protect their children from radicalism? First, the data indicate strong radicalization concerns. This emerged during our interviews and during the survey. Of all needs provided in the survey, 86 percent of mothers considered increasing their knowledge about the warning signs of radicalization to be of highest importance.

This was followed by training in self-confidence, parenting skills and computer skills. Moreover, a majority of mothers favored connecting with similarly concerned mothers and speaking up together against radicalization.

This reveals two important conclusions. The first is that mothers are confident in their own security potential if equipped with the right tools and knowledge. Second, their awareness of their needs indicates they are already confronting radical influences and feel as if they are responding less than effectively.

Overall, these findings suggest that there is an immediate need for a more diversified approach to counterterrorism — namely, one that includes the expertise and strategic position of mothers. In a preventive paradigm, their voices and capacities are essential to develop new strategies and partnerships.

However, this requires mothers to be recognized as key allies; as long as they are excluded, so is this most valuable point of intervention. The gap in the existing security paradigm, seeking to address recruitment at the root, requires the involvement and active engagement of mothers.

In the wake of these significant conclusions, the final stage of the "Mothers for Change" study applied the acquired knowledge and developed a comprehensive model that addressed the most important needs expressed by the mothers. Specifically, the findings indicated that mothers hold significant, underrecognized potential in countering violent extremism, yet needed specific support to optimize their capacities.

THE MOTHERS SCHOOL MODEL

With this data, Women without Borders created the Mothers School (MS) model to address these needs and strengthen community resilience, starting at the center of the home.

A displaced Iraqi woman forced from her home by jihadists walks with her son at the Harsham refugee camp west of Erbil in February 2015.
AFP/GETTY IMAGES

The MS model seeks out mothers as an embedded security ally and arms them with the skills to be an effective foundation of community resilience. This model targets and optimizes a pre-existing, underutilized resource and is inherently a grass-roots approach. The curriculum, implemented through trusted community partners, includes specific exercises that facilitate dialogue, exchange information and use critical reflection through context-based techniques that apply to participants' daily lives. This model creates a formalized space for mothers to improve their knowledge of early-warning signs and strategize how to be effective barriers to radical influences. Together, they can deconstruct social barriers and have an open dialogue about their children's struggles, as well as their own.

MS has been a pilot project in Indonesia, Kashmir, Nigeria, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Zanzibar. Evaluations show that it has been embraced. Mothers report that participating in MS with similarly concerned women builds self-confidence, improves parenting skills and provides them more credibility in their homes and communities.

As one MS participant from Kashmir stated: "We always think that such discussions can only be among the educated and elite people from high profile societies. But, now we believe after exploring, our skills were with us always but unfortunately on sleeping mode, that we can also become friends with our children and help them to deal with any kind of support so that they don't feel the need to look for any violent alternatives."

The pilot findings also indicate that the MS curriculum provided the mothers with substantive information and targeted skills, better preparing them to identify and respond to radical influences.

THE MOTHERS SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The central components of the curriculum are building confidence and self-esteem, increasing knowledge and reflection of parent-child dynamics, and delivering specific training in countering radicalization. The curriculum includes 10 modules spanning three stages, guiding participants through a process of gradual awareness-building. These stages move successively from the self, to the family, to the community, and then to one's role in security.

The first four workshops aim to collectively create a safe and comfortable environment in which barriers can be deconstructed and productive dialogue can take place. The exercises guide them through critical reflection of themselves, including identifying their strengths and weaknesses, along with analyses of their communities and their roles within them.

Feedback from MS participants suggests that the workshops are meeting these needs. As one mother stated: "Once you encourage someone here who shares her sad story or about the problems in their lives, just a word of encouragement makes them feel strong. They think they are not alone. They get the feeling of acceptance."

The crucial adolescent phase is a small window of opportunity for two key actors. Radical recruiters appeal to disaffected youth at this time of heightened vulnerability with promises of honor, community and paradise. But it is also a pivotal point for mothers to instill counternarratives and positive alternatives.

The next stage progresses from addressing barriers to emphasizing targeted skill training. Primarily, it aims to address the need of improving parenting skills and focuses on education and analysis grounded in theory and on the social political realities of the community.

For example, one mother explains how she applied this knowledge in her home: "It is a common belief that you don't give much importance to the children and listen to them every time, and instead you should be strict so that a fear is maintained and they have respect. But, in this class, I came to know that the fact is something else. ... It is just a notion and it is very important to acknowledge the problems of our children." Another mother asserted, "Instead of making the problems an excuse, we should also develop positive thinking so that our children don't feel burdened and depression due to us."

The last stage focuses on how to establish and continually reinforce resilience in the home. Mothers are provided with specific instruction on recognizing and reacting to the early warning signs of radicalization,

including instruction on the role the Internet plays in spreading extremist messages, as well as how to engage fathers in looking out for, and addressing concerning behavior. At the conclusion of this stage, the mothers have an increased awareness of the threat of radicalization to their children, and a deepened understanding of their own role, as well as a broad tool kit of strategies.

MOVING FORWARD

As the study findings convey, mothers are instrumental in implementing targeted intervention at the previolence phase. They are a valuable source of information, not only about the intricacies of youths' social and emotional environment, but also as a reflective lens. Mothers of radicalized youths provide a perspective most salient to developing a new security approach. Mothers are the common thread to youth who vary in background, religion and political involvement. As the emotional link to their children, they have the unique ability to piece together common denominators.

To give prominence to this key data, Women without Borders brought together a group of mothers from Europe and Canada to share their insights about the radicalization process of their children, who had all departed for Syria. In sharing their experiences with security stakeholders in a strategy meeting, they painted a picture of their children's personalities, struggles and the changes observed in the early stages of the radicalization process. As one mother whose son died in Syria in 2012 explained: Recruiters "mislead children because it tells them they are selected, that they are chosen. These ideas tell them that Allah will take care of them." Another mother shared: "My son was very immature. He had no real information about religion and no real intellectual perspective about religious questions. This is why he was radicalized so quickly." These mothers were able to present to government officials, policymakers, counselors, educators and journalists how their children were lured away and what, in hindsight, were the warning signs.

For example, one mother noted: "Having a bottle of wine at dinner suddenly became a problem. Then we couldn't have friends over because he was afraid of how they would dress." Another mother said of her daughter, "She hid the voting card when it came in the mail. She started denouncing democracy."

These signs, in retrospect, are clear indicators of their children's new influences, but the mothers explained how fear, confusion and even false hope prevented them at the time from understanding their gravity. Most important, the mothers felt they lacked support that could have helped save their children. "I hid my concerns from everyone. … I was too afraid to talk. … If I had known where to turn, maybe I could have stopped him," said one mother.

Another mother shared how authorities failed to take her concerns seriously when she tried to warn them that her daughter was trying to leave for Syria: "In France, the authorities don't have connection with the parents. They don't have the will; so we all work for the same goals in different spheres and don't make any progress."

Indeed, clearly defined solutions evolved out of this conference, including improved communication and collaboration between local authorities and families, and scaling-up of counseling services and counseling referral mechanisms. These strategies are likely to be among the most effective as well as cost-efficient.

The conference's positive feedback from the mothers and the government and community representatives supports the need to explore ways to formally include mothers' insights into security dialogues. Security stakeholders not only found this conference uniquely informative, but the mothers returned to their homes inspired and equipped to help other at-risk families.

THE NEXT STEP

In establishing a robust security architecture, closing the information gap is the first step. This is accomplished in large part by including mothers' insights in the preradicalization phase, followed by development of prevention strategies that address these early concerns, and the use of mothers as the primary implementers.

Enabling mothers through capacity building is a key element in this bottom-up approach. However, for these initial fortifications to have an impact on curbing violent extremism, mothers must have support within civil society.

CONCLUSIONS

Mothers sit on the front line. Their position is even more vital than that of local authorities who are tasked with reacting to, rather than pre-empting, injustices. In the absence of society's global ability to eliminate the myriad causes and sources of radical messages, our only option is to build resiliency from within.

Addressing the internal, emotional forces that leave one vulnerable to extremist ideologies, such as anger, resentment, resignation or lack of purpose and belonging, requires individual attention and support from trusted, willing individuals. Violent extremism, understood as a symptom of these emotional deficits, is inherently beyond the scope of the government or local authorities. In fact, it demands the involvement of civil society.

Mothers are at the center of the home; they are the first to recognize changes in their children, such as anger, anxiety and isolation. They have unique access and a continuous connection with their children, which remains consistent throughout their growing interactions with the outside world. They are a crucial element to building resilience into the social fabric.

Indeed, tapping into mothers' preventive potential and establishing capacity-building mechanisms for mothers as key security allies is an essential part of an effective and cost-efficient security architecture. This is a tall order and deserves recognition and support. Overall, it is not just the mothers but the world at large that stands to gain the most from this effort. □

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

South China Sea stakeholders seek remedies to China's land creation practices and failures to preserve biodiversity

JIRI KOMINEK | PHOTOS BY REUTERS

From an environmental point of view, the South China Sea is an international treasure as home to one-third of the world's marine diversity. Beyond the intense blue and green beauty of the waters, the region is a crucial pillar in the global ecosystem. The South China Sea provides food security to marine life and is a crucial source of daily protein for up to one-seventh of the globe's population.

"Approximately 500 million people, excluding those in China itself, who inhabit countries that surround the South China Sea depend on fish caught in the region for their daily food intake," said Dr. Alan Friedlander, a marine biologist at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Friedlander and other scientists contend that all countries in the region, including Brunei, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam, are guilty of overfishing in the South China Sea, fueling highly contested territorial disputes.

"Oil and gas deposits are not that significant to be an issue; offshore fish stocks, on the other hand, are the issue," said Dr. John McManus, professor of marine biology at the University of Miami.

The Chinese government is subsidizing fuel for 50,000 commercial fishing boats operating in the South China Sea including in and around the highly contested Spratly Island archipelago, according to McManus. "These fishing boats are also equipped with sophisticated communications equipment enabling the crews to summon assistance from the Chinese military or Coast Guard if they feel challenged by vessels carrying flags of some of the other countries that border the South China Sea," he said.

"The number one rule is: Never subsidize a fishery," McManus added, stating that such policies inevitably lead to overfishing in a given region.

Scientists estimate that overfishing has caused the number of high-level predators in the South China Sea to decline by 50 percent from 1960 to 2000. These species include grouper, snapper, jacks, tuna (six species), mackerel (several species) and sharks, which continue to be the primary focus of commercial fishing operations in the South China Sea.

"I believe that a conservative estimate would be one decade in terms of when we cross the point when irreversible damage is caused to marine life in the South China Sea if something is not done quickly to stop current levels of overfishing and damage to the coral reefs due to dredging and related activities," said Friedlander.

Although several countries, including China, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam, maintain military outposts in the South China Sea, with Vietnam holding the largest number, it is China in recent years that has pursued the most aggressive strategy to occupy and transform submerged reefs and rocks (usually under water except at low tide) in the Spratly archipelago into military outposts for the sake of claiming additional territory in the region to expand a commercial fishing initiative that is unsustainable.

China, which has the largest fleet of dredgers in the world, has been pursuing a policy of dredging sand to increase the size of its outposts in the Spratly chain. Such practices are having devastating effects on the region's coral reefs, which are home to an array of marine species believed to be five to seven times greater than found in Hawaii or the Caribbean.

"Reef crests are the key. They must be kept healthy because not only are they home to diverse marine life themselves, they also protect lagoons where fish and other species lay eggs. The lagoons act as incubators for fish larvae," said McManus.

The region is home to a massive larvae bank that is the source of rich marine life and is being systematically destroyed through harmful practices, according to McManus and other marine biologists studying the sea.

"All the countries that directly border the South China Sea have decimated fish stocks near their respective coastlines, forcing them to conduct fishing operations further offshore. What took us time to understand was that despite the massive amount of overfishing, why were we not seeing the disappearance of a wide variety of species in the region, and the answer is the larvae banks found on the reefs," said McManus.

One country that has protected the reefs off its coast is Brunei, which has imposed strict bans on fishing near its offshore oil platforms.

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— DR. JOHN MCMANUS, PROFESSOR OF MARINE BIOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

Divers swim above a bed of mostly dead corals off Tioman island in the South China Sea. Scientists worry that China's land creation projects in the Spratly archipelago have severely harmed an important coral reef system.

China typically dredges sand from the sea to create land, a process that can have detrimental environmental effects, especially in the fragile South China Sea islands.

SATELLITE EVIDENCE

Scientists say a mounting pile of evidence shows that the Chinese government is aggressively expanding the size of reefs and rocks that are usually submerged except at low tide in the Spratlys by dredging sand and using it to smother fragile coral reefs.

"We can see from Google Earth that the Chinese have created 12.82 square kilometers of fake islands and completely buried coral reefs in the process. Mischief Reef, for example, is entirely gone," said McManus.

McManus said there are 20 more islands that show signs of dredging, with the Chinese government using its dredger fleet to obtain sand from neighboring islands.

"Sand is killing reefs around seven islands, and there are another 20 islands that are at risk," said McManus. Once a reef crest is damaged, an island becomes more susceptible to erosion caused by waves generated during typhoon season. This, in turn, requires additional dredging to recover artificially created land lost during the course of a typhoon.

LEGAL REMEDIES

Scientists, government officials from the South China Sea region and international legal experts agree there are solutions to help prevent China from continuing the practice of killing reefs for the sake of claiming territory. However, the solutions require international consensus. "There are legal mechanisms that could be applied by countries in the South China Sea region to stop the current practices; the problem is that such mechanisms can only be applied if there is the political will to do so," said Dr. Youna Lyons of the National University of Singapore Center for International Law.

Experts on the problem agree that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) must take part of the initiative. However,

PHILIPPINE

Faced with the very real risk that fish stocks will disappear through overfishing and coral reef destruction, Philippine government authorities have undertaken a number of measures to ensure that the marine environment within their sovereign waters will be protected from further mismanagement.

"The Philippine authorities have implemented coral reef restoration projects to return damaged reefs to full productivity," said Dr. Edgardo Gomez, professor emeritus for marine biology at the University of Philippines Marine Science Institute.

"Currently, there is a status study on damage caused to reefs underway and we should know the results, hopefully, within two years," Gomez added.

The Philippines has been spearheading conservation efforts to preserve the region's fisheries and aquatic resources, including reef systems. In 1998, for example, the Philippines reconstituted its Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR).

Asis Perez, BFAR director and Department of Agriculture undersecretary for fisheries attorney, stressed the significance of these resources because they provide livelihood for Philippine fishermen. Unabated destruction of coral reefs affects at least nine fishing municipalities along the country's western seaboard. That is equivalent to more than 12,000 people who directly rely on fishing for income.

"We urge China to respect its international commitments and be mindful of millions of people, not only in the Philippines, who depend on these very important marine resources," Perez said. "We cannot allow China's reclamation activities and tolerance of environmentally harmful fishing practices to continue, as these endanger global food security and long-lasting biological diversity," he explained.

In addition, BFAR has closed off access to specific fisheries where the number of fish species have dropped dramatically due

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFORTS JIRI KOMINEK

to overfishing or where coral reefs were in danger of being harmed and larvae banks destroyed in the process. The fisheries will remain closed until marine life has adequate time to recuperate.

"The unfortunate thing is that we cannot conduct similar studies in the Spratly Islands because the Chinese authorities will not allow us access to the area. Whenever our scientific teams attempt to enter the area, they are met with Chinese naval or coast guard vessels who force them to turn back," said Gomez.

The Chinese have destroyed at least 800 hectares of coral reefs from cementing or dredging operations, according to Gomez. He says that other reefs damaged by such practices could recover within 100 years.

"The problem is that we do not know the full extent of what has been damaged or destroyed," Gomez said.

A study by Philippine researchers shows that China's activities through March 2015 had already destroyed an area in the Spratlys, including portions of Fiery Cross and Gaven reefs, estimated at 311 hectares (see Figure 1). Gomez, who was named a national scientist of the Philippines in 2014, said the damage amounted to U.S. $108.9 million in annual economic losses to countries around the South China Sea, based on direct and indirect contributions of the ecosystem to human well-being, at U.S. $350,000 per hectare per year. He released the findings at an April 2015 news conference.

In addition to the construction of military bases in the West Philippine Sea, poaching of giant clam shells, corals and other marine species by Chinese fishing vessels has repeatedly caused damage to the area's ecological balance, Gomez said. Illegally harvested shells are brought to mainland China, particularly to Hainan province, to be processed and sold as various coral crafts, shell bracelets, shell necklaces and mounted shell carvings. "Healthy coral reefs in the West Philippine Sea are very important not only to us but also to the productivity of neighboring

marginal seas made possible through larval connectivity," Gomez explained.

Previously, the Philippines Department of Foreign Affairs has called on China to stop its land creation activities in the West Philippine Sea, which not only compromises ecological balance but also "threaten peace and stability in the region."

Traditionally, the Philippines relies on the South China Sea for 25 percent of its total fish production, however, in recent years the Chinese government has denied access to Philippine fishing operations in various fisheries located in the South China Sea.

"The Chinese authorities for the past two years have denied Philippine fishermen the right to catch fish on or near the Scarborough Shoal. Chinese naval and coast guard vessels have repelled Philippine fishing crews with high pressure fire hoses. Imagine being denied access to fishing grounds that they have fished in for generations," said Gomez.

The Philippine government is legally challenging such access based on the conflict between its exclusive economic zone and China's nine-dash line claims, a dispute that should be ruled on by a U.N. arbitration tribunal.

"Claimant countries should endeavour to resolve these territorial disputes through peaceful negotiations and consultations, and without resorting to force or threat of use of force in unilateral attempts to assert or enforce their claims, for the sake of maintaining peace, stability and security in the region," said Philippine Foreign Ministry spokesman Charles Jose.

China's land creation "activities gossly violate the 2002 ASEAN-China Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea [DOC]. ...These activities cause irreparable damage to the marine environment and marine biodiversity of the region. The Philippines calls on China anew to heed calls from the region and international community to exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities pursuant to Paragraph 5 of the DOC," Jose added.

FIGURE 1

Estimated areas of reef ecosystems destroyed by China in the Spratlys as of March 2015

REEF	Destroyed area in hectares
Gaven	14
Union North	7.5
Union South	12.5
Cuateron	12
Fiery Cross	265
Total Land Creation Area	311

Source: National Security Council Secretariat as cited in "Physical Destruction of Coral Reef Ecosystems and Overexploitation of Endangered Species: Compromising Biodiversity and Economic Productivity," a presentation by Emeritus Professor Edgardo D. Gomez, Ph.D., et al., University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute

Philippine Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources

The Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) is the government agency responsible for the development, improvement, management and conservation of the country's fisheries and aquatic resources.

BFAR Mission:
- Conserve, protect and sustain the management of the country's fishery and aquatic resources.
- Alleviate poverty and provide supplementary livelihood among municipal fishermen.
- Improve aquaculture productivity within ecological limit.
- Utilize optimally the offshore and deep-sea resources.
- Upgrade post-harvest technology.

SOURCE: http://www.bfar.da.gov.ph/aboutUS

PAVING PARADISE

Scientists Alarmed at Impact of China's Land Creation on Coral Reefs

REUTERS

Concern is mounting among some scientists that China's land creation and acquisition work in the disputed Spratly archipelago of the South China Sea has caused and continues to cause severe harm to one of the most important coral reef systems in Southeast Asia.

China's use of dredged sand and coral to build artificial islands on seven reefs has also damaged reef systems beyond the outposts, meaning the affected area could be greater than first thought, several scientists who have studied satellite images of the Spratlys said.

Those concerns contrast with repeated official Chinese statements that Beijing is committed to protecting reefs and the broader marine environment in the South China Sea in keeping with its obligations under United Nations conventions.

John McManus, a prominent University of Miami marine biologist who has worked with Philippine scientists to research the South China Sea, told fellow experts in June 2015 that China's land creation and acquisition "constitutes the most rapid rate of permanent loss of coral reef area in human history."

Beyond the outposts, a wider area of reef had been destroyed by the dredging of sand from lagoons for use on the new islands and the dredging of shipping channels to access them, he wrote in an online oceanographic forum operated by the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, a federal agency.

McManus urged claimants to put aside their disputes and create a marine "peace park" to preserve what was left.

"I can't help but use the phrase overused for forestry … they've paved paradise," he said.

Most foreign criticism of China over its new islands has focused on the spike in tensions their creation has caused or the possible impact on freedom of navigation, especially since Beijing has said the outposts will have undefined military purposes.

Only the Philippines has publicly accused China of causing ecological damage. Manila said China's land creation had caused annual economic losses of U.S. $281 million to regional coastal nations. Asked to respond to the scientists' concerns, China's Foreign Ministry pointed to a June 2015 statement from the State Oceanic Administration, the maritime regulator, which said numerous environmental protection measures were in place.

"Impact on coral reef ecology is localized, temporary, controllable and restorable," the agency said.

It did not respond to a request for further comment.

BIOLOGICALLY DIVERSE

Chinese dredgers in the Spratlys have added 2,000 acres (800 hectares or 8 square kilometers) of land since late 2013, U.S. officials said.

Other claimants, particularly Vietnam, have reclaimed land to support existing outposts or extend piers and runways but on a much smaller scale. The remaining claimants to the Spratlys waters are the Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines and Taiwan.

While the Spratly reefs are relatively small compared to major global reef systems, they are considered biologically diverse and could help propagate threatened coastal reefs with coral larvae and fish, scientists said.

They are also home to endangered sea creatures including giant clams, dugongs and several species of turtle.

In an April 2015 study for Singapore's S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, marine science and law expert Youna Lyons found that beyond the seven reefs, other unoccupied shallow features had been dredged to provide building material for the nearby reclamations.

"Coral reefs that have been left untouched for centuries by virtue of their isolation are now gone," Lyons wrote after research that included surveys of high-resolution satellite photographs.

Lyons, of the National University of Singapore, said she has since seen further evidence of Chinese-style dredging on reefs away from the land creations but wanted more detail on what was happening and who was behind it.

"The scale of the ongoing dredging of insular, uninhabited coral formations in the South China Sea is unprecedented in scale and nature in recent human history," she said.

"Chinese dredgers appear to be responsible for massive destruction, but we don't know how much destruction has been done, overall, and by the others before the current artificial island construction started."

QUESTIONABLE DEFENSE

Chinese officials have said facilities on the islands would help environmental preservation, along with search and rescue and weather observation.

"No one cares more than China about the ecological preservation of relevant islands, reefs and sea areas," Ouyang Yujing, head of the Foreign Ministry's Department of Boundary and Ocean Affairs, told the Xinhua news agency in May 2015.

Equal importance had been given to "construction and protection," he said, adding China would honor its obligations under the U.N. conventions on Biological Diversity and International Trade in Endangered Species.

One marine biologist, Terry Hughes of James Cook University in Queensland, said the land creation work was "locally devastating" but the Spratlys still might face bigger threats from long-term overfishing and climate change.

A study he produced with Chinese scientists in 2012 showed a steep decline in coral cover in the area due to such pressures, which are affecting reefs globally.

While Chinese construction was visually dramatic, some reefs were largely untouched, he added.

"Some of them are still in pretty good condition," he said.

Chinese dredging vessels are purportedly seen in the waters around Mischief Reef in the disputed Spratly Islands in the South China Sea. This image was taken by a U.S. Navy P-8A Poseidon surveillance aircraft in May 2015.

A U.S. Navy Sailor points to a computer screen revealing construction in May 2015 on land created near Fiery Cross Reef in the Spratly Islands.

some argue that China, although not a full-time member of ASEAN, is using its close economic ties to certain members to scuttle attempts to pass international agreements. "The ASEAN Forum must rule by consensus, and in the past, certain members such as Cambodia and Laos, which are very poor and indebted to China, have watered down attempts to approve collective rulings on issues concerning Chinese activities in the SCS," said Dr. Edgardo Gomez, professor emeritus for marine biology at the University of Philippines Marine Science Institute.
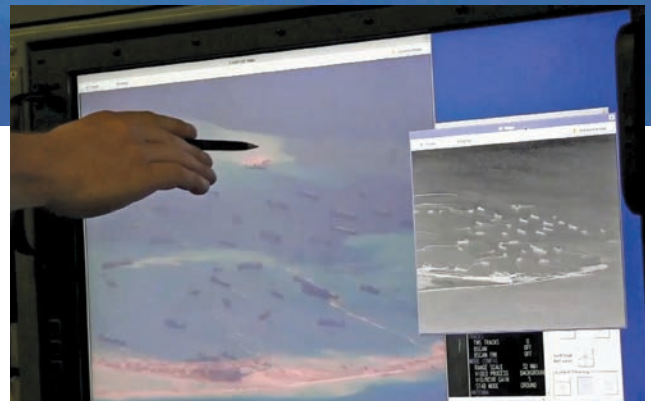
There are voices in the international community who are calling for the implementation of legislation along the lines of the Antarctic Treaty for the South China Sea since the former is enforceable.

Government authorities in the South China Sea region who are concerned about fishing rights and territorial claims argue that there would be civil unrest if they denied their citizens the right to conduct commercial fishing activities in the South China Sea.

"There must be a freeze on claims, and governments must relinquish the so-called tied hands approach through which they use the argument that unless they allow their people to continue fishing, there will be riots," said McManus.

"There must also be a freeze on claim-supportive activities such as constructing post offices and other symbols of government presence that assist in providing governments with arguments for claiming a particular piece of land," McManus added, arguing that China must take a lead in this.

Other measures that experts say should be adopted include joint resource management through a regional body that would coordinate a management committee. Offshore environmental management as well as offshore resources management should also be implemented through a multilaterally controlled set of bodies.

"China is the key. They must take the initiative as an emerging world leader to do something to turn this situation around. There is mounting domestic pressure within China to find a compromise to this set of problems," said McManus.

McManus said that some of the impetus for change could come from China's efforts to revive the maritime silk routes since at present 80 percent of China's global trade passes through the South China Sea.

"China needs friends to make this happen, and the current mood in the South China Sea region is one of fear of conflict. For example, 80 percent of the population of the Philippines fear potential violence. The last thing anyone wants is for one side or the other to start attacking commercial vessels because of unresolved territorial disputes," McManus said. □

Brig. Gen. Zakariyya Mansoor

shares his views on fighting terrorism regionally and in the Maldives

FORUM STAFF

Brig. Gen. Zakariyya Mansoor joined the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF) in 1984 and was commissioned eight years later. He was appointed director general of counterterrorism at the Ministry of Defence and National Security in July 2014. He previously served as commander of the MNDF Central Area.

During his more than 30 years of service, Mansoor has held various command and staff appointments including commandant of the MNDF Coast Guard, where he helped lead the Maldives Coast Guard through a rapid transformation and restructuring. He has served as the director general of the MNDF Coast Guard and commanding officer of Quarter Master Services at several regional headquarters.

Mansoor earned a master's in strategic security studies in 2014 from the U.S. National Defense University. He is also a graduate of the U.S. Naval Staff College and completed the midshipman course at the Royal Naval College in the United Kingdom, among other prestigious international courses. A highly decorated officer, he also represented the Maldives and MNDF at various seminars and courses around the world. Mansoor is a fellow of the Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Male, the capital city of the Maldives
ISTOCK

What is your key role as director general at the Ministry of Defence?

I'm responsible for working with other government agencies on threat analysis and also in an advisory capacity to the government on counterterrorism and counterradicalism because the Maldives is a Muslim country, but we have seen the threat of some parts of our society. We are working on a whole of government approach to counter radicalization in the country and also to prevent any act of terrorism.

How would you describe your style of leadership?

My style of leadership has always been delegation of authority and responsibility. But also, my style is to guide and to closely monitor.

What do you think is the greatest challenge for the Maldivian military for the next five years?

The challenge is to keep up with the changing world, changing threat, changing environment that is the biggest threat for us at the time. We must set up our strategic goals that we can achieve through regional cooperation with other partners and also at the national level.

What is unique about the Maldives from a security perspective?

We have one religion, one culture, one language. Our ethnicity is the same. Therefore, there should be no societal divide along those lines.

How big of a threat is terrorism for the Maldives?

Terrorism is the final product of radicalization. My country is not at the point that it is ready for terrorism yet. We haven't seen any acts of terrorism so far. Very few things have happened. We do worry about guys who have gone to conflict zones coming back someday, like any other country. Some have gone to Syria, but none have returned. This is a global phenomenon, and the Maldives is no exception. We have to counter them and rehabilitate them because they are ready to do anything. Sometimes, they are more trained than even our regular forces.

Overall, we don't perceive a real threat of terrorism in the Maldives. However, we have seen some more radical elements being engaged in the society that are outside the context of mainstream Islam. For example, when students go to Pakistan or Saudi Arabia and then return, some try to espouse a more radical type of Islam.

What are the biggest security challenges that the Maldives faces?

The challenge for the Maldives is that our country has 1,200 islands, and 198 of those are inhabited and there are about 130-plus resorts. The resorts are typically a one-island one-resort concept. So when you look at threats, there is a potential for a threat to emerge on some of these remote islands. As I wrote in my thesis, extreme, radical Islam in the Maldives is a potential threat to the tourism industry. The Maldives heavily depends on tourism. I would say 80 percent of our GDP [gross domestic product] is based on tourism. It has become a challenge to the government; some organizations have been preaching a different version of Islam. The groups have started to create a societal divide but also a political divide because people have differences of opinion about religion.

Maldivian Soldiers load a water tank onto a military vehicle in Male in December 2014. The capital, situated on a low-lying island, relies entirely on treated seawater.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Maldives is a maritime nation, so the threats from the maritime environment are present for the Maldives, such as piracy and maritime terrorism. It is in the middle of the Indian Ocean, so all the ships pass through here. All the crude oil and raw material pass from the Arabian and Red seas through the Maldives and go to the east to China and Japan and so forth. Climate change is a challenge for the Maldives. The last couple of years, our political leadership had been advocating and asking at the international level to have forums to do more to stop global warming. We have seen some climate changes, as other countries have witnessed. Climate change will be a threat to tourism if that continues.

The challenge is to keep up with the changing world, changing threat, changing environment that is the biggest threat for us at the time. We must set up our strategic goals that we can achieve through regional cooperation with other partners and also at the national level.

Are you worried about any regional security threats?

To bring regional peace and security, I believe the military relationship must be well-established. The Maldives has a very good relationship with all the countries through SAARC, or the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. The Maldives has a good friendship with India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan. … We have an excellent relationship with all of these countries. In case we need assistance from all these countries on our security, there would be no problem.

Do you train with other nations on counterterrorism?

We train with the U.S. on counterterrorism. The U.S. has been very helpful to enhance our capacity to train and equip our special forces with the right gear. Sri Lanka has also been very instrumental to develop our special forces. It is important to develop our special forces, because it's impossible to predict the threat 100 percent. Any act of terrorism, you must deter, so a well-trained force is a deterrence for any threat. So the Maldives being a small country, we must always maintain force that is ready, that will deter. It is important to continue ongoing mil-to-mil [military-to-military] exercises with the Maldives and U.S. Special Forces.

Do you have any suggestions for other ways to improve regional security?

The Maldives has a lot of potential to help other countries and to cooperate with our security partners. Because the Maldives is a Muslim country, there are other venues we could look at for our model. For example, Indonesia has been very successful after the first Bali bombing in 2002 in countering terrorism and deradicalization. They have a whole of society, whole of government approach that has been very helpful. For a country the size of Indonesia not to have any significant acts of terrorism for many years — it is incredible actually. They have done a lot — developed a lot of new terrorism law.

Regional small conferences would also be very helpful, especially if we can speak to countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia. These countries can learn what Islamist extremists have been doing in other countries, what are the success stories, what can we learn. That would be a good thing. Even when we include countries like Australia — its Muslim population is growing bigger and bigger. If you look at radical groups in these countries, they are small numbers. But small numbers can be lethal if they are unchecked. A good example is how it has been handled by the Indonesian authorities. It has the largest Muslim population in the world, but it has been handled quite well. So those things could be learned by countries like Australia and New Zealand about the emerging threats.

I'd also like to invite leaders of the region to visit the Maldives and take advantage of the peace and tranquility and stability that the Maldives has to offer. They can use our country as an example of how peace could be developed. And help the Maldives protect itself. We have huge challenges to protect ourselves — maritime security, environment, social development and so on and so forth, and

also the element of military training. We are friendly with all the countries. We have mil-to-mil relationships with all the regional countries, especially the U.S., and want them to continue.

What are some of the specific ways the Maldives is combating extremism?

In lines of economic, in lines of education through Islamic ministry. That means teaching and engaging with more moderate clerics. Also, we have been modifying the counterterrorism law and the religious unity act, which has been modified already. These are tools that will give the government the strength to come out with more force if necessary. The religious unity act clearly defines who can give religious sermons or talks. Unqualified people without permission cannot come out and give talks; that is not possible. The responsibility for these kind of activities under the religious unity act are given to the administration of Islamic affairs. The youth ministry is also getting engaged with youth through talks by moderate imams. We have designed programs with media to develop counter narratives to counter more radical imams. Also, the Maldives is trying to send more students to study in other countries like Egypt as a counterbalance. It's a matter of practice as well as a societal divide that we perceive as a threat if they go out to Pakistan or Afghanistan or to madrasas there. When they come back, they don't understand that Islam is not that narrow-minded concept. The understanding of our religion is the most important for our society. If these strategies start working as a whole of government approach, the Maldives will be very successful. □

Indonesian
Muslims
stand outside
a Jakarta
courthouse
during the
2003 trial
of cleric
Abu Bakar
Bashir, the
alleged leader
of al-Qaida-
linked terror
group Jemaah
Islamiyah.

COUNTERTERRORISM A PRIORITY AT SHANGRI-LA DIALOGUE IN SINGAPORE

LEE HSIEN LOONG

Terrorism is not an entirely new phenomenon that burst on the world only after 9/11. Fifty years ago, there were already terrorist groups in many stable societies, including advanced countries. In Europe, there were extremists like the Baader-Meinhof Group. In the U.S., there were anarchist terrorists — small numbers, but they existed and they were violent. Japan had the Japanese Red Army — and Singapore had firsthand experience with them. In 1974, members of the Japanese Red Army and the PFLP — the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine — attacked the Shell oil refinery on Pulau Bukom island. They held a ferry boat and its crew hostage and bargained for safe passage out of Singapore. These groups were politically motivated, not religiously driven, and have largely faded away.

Now, we are confronted with jihadi terrorism, religiously driven by a perverted version of Islam. When we first started the Shangri-La Dialogue, 9/11 had just happened. Countries worried about further major attacks by jihadi groups like al-Qaida. Fortunately, there have been no further spectacular attacks like 9/11, although there have been major incidents, like the Bali bombing and the

Chan Chun Sing, then Singapore's second minister for defence, left, in white shirt, speaks with Operationally-Ready National Servicemen from the 807th Battalion, Singapore Infantry Regiment in January 2015, stressing the importance of remaining vigilant against terrorism. SINGAPORE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE | Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong speaks during a news conference in July 2015. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

London and Madrid train bombings, and more near misses. For the fact that it has not been worse, we have to credit effective action and cooperation by many governments.

However, the problem is going to be with us for a long time. Although Osama bin Laden was killed, al-Qaida still exists, albeit in a weakened state. In many societies, we are finding homegrown terrorists, self-radicalized individuals who can mount attacks with minimal resources.

The latest virulent incarnation of the jihadi threat is ISIS [the Islamic state of Iraq and Syria, also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant]. By skillfully exploiting the Internet and social media, ISIS has attracted malcontents and misfits, misguided souls and naïve youths from all over the world. More than 20,000 people have gone to Iraq and Syria from Europe, from the U.S., from Asia, from Australia, to fight — for what? But they are

there, and one day when they return home, they will bring radical ideology, combat experience, terrorist networks and technical know-how with them.

ISIS supporters have carried out lone-wolf attacks in a number of countries — Canada, the U.S., Australia and France, so far. [Not long ago], Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the ISIS leader, repeated his call for Muslims worldwide to hijrah to the Islamic State. Hijrah means to migrate; it is what the prophet did between Mecca and Medina. Either you hijrah to ISIS,

It should be a world where legitimacy and constructive engagement are the international norm, and every country, big and small, can compete peacefully for the chance to prosper.

or you wage violent war for ISIS in your home countries, the ISIS leader said.

Southeast Asia is a key recruitment center for ISIS. More than 500 Indonesians have joined this terrorist group. Dozens have gone from Malaysia. ISIS has so many Indonesian and Malaysian fighters that it

has formed them into a unit by themselves, the Katiba Nusantara, or the Malay Archipelago Combat Unit. Recently, ISIS posted a propaganda recruitment video. It showed Malay-speaking children training with weapons in ISIS-held territory. Two Malaysians, including a 20-year-old, were identified in another ISIS video, which showed the beheading of a Syrian man. The Malaysian police have arrested more people who are planning to go, including armed forces personnel, plus groups plotting attacks in Malaysia. These individuals are going to Syria and Iraq not just to fight, but to bring their families there, hijrah there, including young children, to live in what they delusionally imagine as an ideal Islamic state under a caliph of the faithful.

Several radical groups in the region have pledged allegiance to ISIS. Some have links to the Jemaah Islamiyah group, whose Singapore chapter had planned to set off truck bombs in Singapore soon after 9/11. Last year [2014], Jemaah Islamiyah's spiritual leader, Abu Bakar Bashir, pledged allegiance to ISIS, posing for a photograph surrounded by followers in white Arab robes. He was in a jail in Indonesia, but he was able to pledge allegiance and take a group photograph and have it published around the world. Several hundred fellow terrorists presently in jail in Indonesia are due to be released in the next two years.

ISIS has said it intends to establish a wilayat in Southeast Asia. A wilayat is

a province under the ISIS caliphate. The idea that ISIS can turn Southeast Asia into a wilayat, into a province of a worldwide caliphate controlled by ISIS, is a grandiose, pie-in-the-sky idea. However, it is not so far-fetched that ISIS could establish a base somewhere in the region, in a geographical area under its physical control as in Syria and Iraq, to have territory in Southeast Asia somewhere far from the center of power of state governments, somewhere where government writs do not run. There are quite a few such places in Southeast Asia; if ISIS did that, it would pose a very serious threat to the whole of Southeast Asia.

Even in Singapore, where we have a peaceful and well-integrated Muslim population, some individuals have been led astray. A few have gone to join ISIS, and others have been intercepted and detained before they could leave. Recently, we arrested a 17-year-old student, and we detained another 19-year-old student who had been radicalized. The 19-year-old was planning to join ISIS in Syria, and if he was unable to leave Singapore, he intended to assassinate government leaders here, including the president and, for good measure, the prime minister.

This is why Singapore takes terrorism, and in particular ISIS, very, very seriously. The threat is no longer over there; it is over here. We are participating in the international coalition against ISIS, and we are contributing a KC-

A guard of honor marches past City Hall in August 2015 during the 50th anniversary celebration of Singapore's independence. GETTY IMAGES

135 tanker to the operation.

I have described how our region has changed in the last half-century. Fifty years ago, had we known that we would be in this position today, we would have been more than satisfied. Asia is peaceful and prosperous. We have successfully navigated a major transition out of the Cold War. A new international order is taking shape, not without problems, but basically stable.

Fifty years from now, I doubt the scourge of extremist terrorism will have entirely disappeared. After half a century, the jihadist ideology will surely have visibly failed or at least weakened its hold on the imaginations of troubled souls. However, remember that Soviet Communism, which was another historical dead end, took 70 years to collapse. That was a nonreligious ideology, so these things take a long time.

On the broader issues, my optimistic hope is that a stable regional balance will continue to exist. ASEAN [Association of Southeast Asian Nations] should be an effective and relevant actor. The Indochinese countries should have narrowed the development gap, and the grouping should have become more cohesive and more closely integrated.

I suspect that the U.S., China and Japan will remain major powers, and India will play an increasing role in the region. I hope that we will continue to have an open global system of trade, investment and economic cooperation. Certainly, I hope that there will be free trade in the Asia Pacific, instead of the current alphabet soup of trading arrangements. It should not be a world where might is right, where the strong do what they will and the weak suffer what they must. It should be a world where legitimacy and constructive engagement are the international norm, and every country, big and small, can compete peacefully for the chance to prosper.

There is no road map to such a happy scenario. The future is not a straight-line projection of the past. However, if we resist the temptation to be consumed by short-term issues, keep our focus on longer-term shared interest, and continue striving for a peaceful, open and inclusive international order, then step by step we will build confidence and trust and maximize our chances that the next 50 years will be stable, prosperous and an upward path. □

AFRICA

MILLIONS SAVED *from* MALARIA

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Rates of death from malaria have plunged by 60 percent in the past 15 years, meaning more than 6 million lives have been saved — the vast majority of them African children, according to United Nations agencies.

In a joint World Health Organization-UNICEF report, experts said that a crucial Millennium Development Goal to halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria by 2015 has been met "convincingly," with new cases of the parasitic mosquito-borne disease down by 37 percent since 2000. In 2014, 13 countries reported zero cases, and six had fewer than 10 cases.

Yet despite enormous progress, this year alone there have been an estimated 214 million new cases of malaria, with about 438,000 deaths.

A study at Oxford University found that "by far the most important intervention" in reducing malaria cases and deaths has been the use of insecticide-treated bed nets (ITNs). Sixty-eight percent of malaria cases prevented since 2000 were stopped by ITNs, while anti-malarial drugs called Artemisinin-based combination therapies and indoor spraying accounted for 22 percent and 10 percent of cases prevented, respectively, according to a study published in the journal *Nature*.

Reuters

Drink RESPONSIBLY

RUSSIA

A top Russian official has called upon state-owned arms producers to introduce an ethics code to battle alcohol abuse in the workplace.

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Olga Golodets, addressing human resources directors of major state-owned companies, lamented "a propensity for alcohol abuse" at those plants. She said "the lack of discipline" comes with a "high price not only for the factories, but for humankind."

Among the meeting's participants were representatives of the manufacturer of air-defense missile systems Almaz-Antei and nuclear corporation Rosatom.

A report by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in 2015 showed that 30 percent of Russian deaths in 2012 were due to alcohol, the highest ratio among the nations tracked. Privately owned companies have been raising alarms about alcohol and drug addiction among Russian workers as well.

The Associated Press

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

SIBERIA

GIANT VIRUS UNEARTHED

GETTY IMAGES

Scientists say they will reanimate a 30,000-year-old giant virus unearthed in the frozen wastelands of Siberia. They warn that climate change in the Arctic and sub-Arctic regions could awaken dangerous microscopic pathogens thought to be eradicated.

Reporting in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, a U.S. journal, French researchers announced the discovery of Mollivirus sibericum, the fourth type of prehistoric virus found since 2003 — and the second by this team. Before waking up the virus, researchers will have to verify that the bug cannot cause animal or human disease.

To qualify as a "giant," a virus has to be longer than half a micron, a thousandth of a millimeter. Mollivirus sibericum — "soft virus from Siberia" — comes in at 0.6 microns.

"If we are not careful, and we industrialize these areas without putting safeguards in place, we run the risk of one day waking up viruses such as smallpox that we thought were eradicated," said one of the lead researchers, Jean-Michel Claverie. The regions in which the giant microbes have been found are coveted for their mineral resources, especially oil, and will become increasingly accessible for industrial exploitation as more ice melts away.

Agence France-Presse

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Play review blamed for
RUGBY MATCH DELAYS

Rugby World Cup organizers are committed to reducing delays caused by Television Match Official (TMO) decisions after a series of controversial incidents in Rugby World Cup matches.

Lengthy holdups have infuriated spectators and television audiences around the world at the start of the global showpiece tournament. World Rugby Match Officials Selection Committee Chairman John Jeffrey said the technology available was invaluable. "The TMO process is used to make sure the correct calls are made to protect the integrity of the game," he said.

In the opening match between England and Fiji, the clock was stopped for 10 minutes and eight seconds while referee Jaco Peyper referred six incidents to the TMO. Jeffrey said 28 percent of stoppage time in that game was taken up by the TMO process. He added that he was committed to reducing that while not compromising accuracy.

Tournament organizers sought to clarify the situation. "The TMO is a tool to help referees and assistant referees with their on-field calls, and the referee remains the decision-maker who is in charge of the process," they said.

Reuters

aim for
OLYMPIC GLORY

Twirling spears, swords and clubs at frightening speeds, the brightly clad fighters performing flying kicks could be mistaken for extras in a kung fu movie. They are not actors, however, but athletes hoping not just to win gold at the World Wushu Championships but also to elevate the Chinese martial art — made famous by Jet Li and Jackie Chan — from an ancient warrior code to a modern-day Olympic sport.

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Wushu, a broad term for the martial arts disciplines from China, is often called kung fu and pits fighters against one another in hand-to-hand combat or intricate acrobatics focusing on flair and weapon work. It has transformed from a centuries-old, exclusively Chinese combat discipline into a global sport.

Now wushu hopes to follow other martial arts, like Japan's judo and Korea's taekwondo, by becoming an Olympic sport. The International Wushu Federation's efforts suffered a setback when wushu was dropped from a short list of sports being considered for the Tokyo 2020 Games, but the organization is confident of inclusion in 2024. Agence France-Presse

FILIPINO STRIVES
to SAVE ANCIENT

DANCE

PHOTOS AND STORY BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ligaya Fernando Amilbangsa teaches Pangalay at her home studio in Manila.

Amid the chimes of gongs, Ligaya Fernando Amilbangsa teaches a group of women and children the mystical moves of a centuries-old dance form she has struggled to save from oblivion in the Philippines' restive south.

Her dream is that the ethnic dance called Pangalay will continue as a living tradition, hopefully helping to heal divisions in the poor Southeast Asian nation, instead of ending up like a decorative museum piece.

"We have to think of a national symbol that can unite all of us," Amilbangsa said in an interview at her home studio in Manila.

Amilbangsa, 71, was a 2015 winner of the Ramon Magsaysay award, regarded as Asia's version of the Nobel Prize, for "her single-minded crusade in preserving the endangered artistic heritage of the southern Philippines."

The other winners were Sanjiv Chaturvedi, who exposed government corruption in India; Anshu Gupta, whose Indian volunteer group provides clothing to the poor and makes inexpensive sanitary pads for women; Kommaly Chanthavong, who helped revive Laos' ancient art of silk weaving and created livelihoods for poor villagers; and Kyaw Thu, a popular Burmese actor whose group provides free funeral services for the poor.

The awardees each received a gold medallion and a U.S. $30,000 prize.

Amilbangsa, the daughter of a Catholic political family in Marikina city, a Manila suburb, married a Muslim schoolmate from a prominent clan and moved to southern Sulu province, where she first saw and became smitten by Pangalay at a wedding in 1969 on the island of Jolo.

A sister-in-law wondered why she was interested in an ethnic dance associated with rural folk. But Amilbangsa, who loved culture and the arts, had made up her mind.

"I thought that this was so beautiful, it's so different," she said.

She was fascinated that the dance style is believed to have spread from India to the southern Philippines ahead of the arrival of Islam and Christianity centuries ago. She said classic dance forms similar to Pangalay are still found in Cambodia, Burma, Thailand, Indonesia and other parts of Southeast Asia.

Pangalay, originally a Sanskrit word meaning "temple dancing," means "gift offering" among Sulu villagers in the Philippines. It involves the peaceful swaying of the arms, hands and fingers in gestures resembling the movement of waves or animals. One version mimics a bird gliding as it swoops down to catch a fish at sea.

After being passed from one generation to another in Sulu and in nearby Tawi-Tawi province without any written guides, many of the original gestures started to be forgotten. Rural folk lost interest with the influx of modern entertainment.

In 1969, Amilbangsa began researching Pangalay, interviewing elderly villagers to codify the gestures, often by watching her own shadow on a wall as she danced in a candlelit room, according to Nanette Matilac, a Pangalay dancer and researcher.

Ligaya Fernando Amilbangsa, center, teaches Pangalay, an ethnic dance style from the Philippines' restive southern Sulu province, at her home studio in Manila.

Her years of research coincided with the flaring of a Muslim separatist rebellion in the south and the declaration of martial law in the country by former President Ferdinand Marcos in the 1970s. Public assemblies were banned at a time when she had to meet and transport groups of villagers to promote the dance.

Amilbangsa later traveled across Asia to study dance forms similar to Pangalay and then published a book in 1983 containing the first written dance instructions.

Joy Wadi, an ethnic Tausug civil engineer who has been studying Pangalay with her daughter at Amilbangsa's home studio, said she is happy that the dance is helping her home province of Sulu become known for something other than bloody conflict.

Predominantly Muslim Sulu is a base of al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf Group militants notorious for bombings, kidnappings and beheadings.

"When people see a Muslim or a Tausug, only terrorism and conflict come to mind," Wadi said in an interview. "But no, we're a good people with a very rich cultural heritage."

Seoul's
FASHION TAKEOVER

Move over Hong Kong, Tokyo and Singapore. Seoul is emerging as Asia's new fashion showcase, with the world's top luxury firms seeking to cash in on the regional trendsetting popularity of South Korean pop culture. Fast-growing Asia is a key market driving the global luxury industry, with purchases by Chinese consumers accounting for one-third of global sales, according to market researcher Bain & Co.

"Global luxury firms have begun to realize that what's popular in South Korea soon becomes popular across Asia," said Lie Sang-Bong, head of the Council of Fashion Designers of Korea. The real attraction for the brand names is the promotional reach into the rest of Asia and beyond provided by the so-called *Hallyu*, or the increasing popularity of Korean TV shows, pop music and culture.

Kate Ahn, Seoul representative of the British consumer research firm Stylus, said South Korea had effectively become a springboard for luxury brands to test consumer sentiment in the Asian market, adding that she had been bombarded with proposals from European and U.S. firms hoping to invest in Seoul cosmetics makers in recent years.

Agence France-Presse

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

TECHNOLOGY *doesn't boost*
BRAIN POWER

Computers do not noticeably improve school pupils' academic results and can even hamper performance, according to a report by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Conversely, in high-achieving schools in parts of Asia, where smartphones and computers have become an integral part of people's everyday lives, technology was far less prevalent in the classrooms. In South Korea, students used computers for an average of nine minutes at school and in Hong Kong, only 11 minutes — just a fraction of the 58 minutes spent in Australia, 42 in Greece and 39 in Sweden.

The report measured the impact of technology use at school on international test results, such as the OECD's Pisa tests taken in dozens of countries around the world, and other exams measuring digital skills. It found that education systems that have invested heavily in information and communications technology (ICT) have seen "no noticeable improvement" in results for reading, mathematics or science.

The OECD urged schools to work with teachers to turn technology into a more powerful tool in the classroom and develop more sophisticated software for experimentation and simulation, social media and games. "The real contributions ICT can make to teaching and learning have yet to be fully realized and exploited," it concluded.
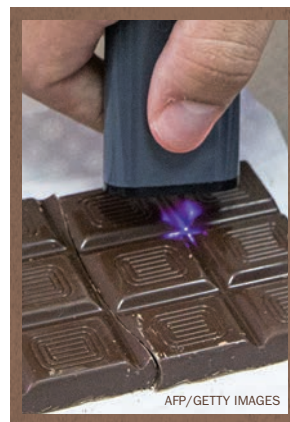
Agence France-Presse

Ingredient
IDENTIFIER

An Israeli startup has launched a pocket device that instantly analyzes the composition of food, drink, medication or other objects.

Consumer Physics says its SCiO tool sends data on the chemical makeup of a substance to the user's smartphone, where a variety of applications will present the results. It is "the first molecular sensor that fits in the palm of your hand," said Dror Sharon, co-founder of the firm based near Tel Aviv.

Users will be able to see how many calories are in the burger on their plate, what is in their drink or if that jacket is really leather. The SCiO does not need physical contact with the substance being tested because it uses a beam of light in what is known as near-infrared spectroscopy.

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Each molecule interacts with light to create a unique optical signature, which can reveal an object's chemical properties, such as moisture, fat or sugar content.

Agence France-Presse

Study concludes
PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCH CAN BE QUESTIONABLE

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Scientific studies about how people act or think can be replicated less than half the time by outside experts, according to a study that's raising new questions about the seriousness of psychological research.

A team of 270 scientists tried reproducing 100 psychology and social science studies that had been published in three top peer-reviewed journals.

Just 39 percent came out with the same results as the initial reports, according to the findings, published in an August 2015 issue of the journal *Science*.

The study topics ranged from people's social lives and interactions with others to research involving perception, attention and memory.

No medical therapies were called into question as a result of the study, although a separate effort is underway to evaluate cancer biology studies.

"It's important to note that this somewhat disappointing outcome does not speak directly to the validity or the falsity of the theories," said Gilbert Chin, a psychologist and senior editor at *Science*. "What it does say is that we should be less confident about many of the original experimental results."

Study co-author Brian Nosek of the University of Virginia said the research shows the need for scientists to continually question themselves.

"A scientific claim doesn't become believable because of the status or authority of the person that generated it," Nosek told reporters. "Credibility of the claim depends in part on the repeatability of its supporting evidence."

Problems can arise when scientists cherry-pick their data to include only what is deemed "significant," or when study sizes are so small that false negatives or false positives arise. Some experts believe the problem may be even worse than the new study suggested.

John Ioannidis, a biologist at Stanford University in California, told *Science* magazine that he suspects about 25 percent of psychology papers would hold up under scrutiny, about the same "as what we see in many biomedical disciplines."

KEY CAUTION

One study author who participated in the project as both a reviewer and reviewee was E.J. Masicampo, assistant professor at Wake Forest University in North Carolina.

She was part of a team that was able to replicate a study that found that people who are faced with a confrontational task, such as having to play a violent video game, prefer to listen to angry music and think about negative experiences beforehand.

ISTOCK
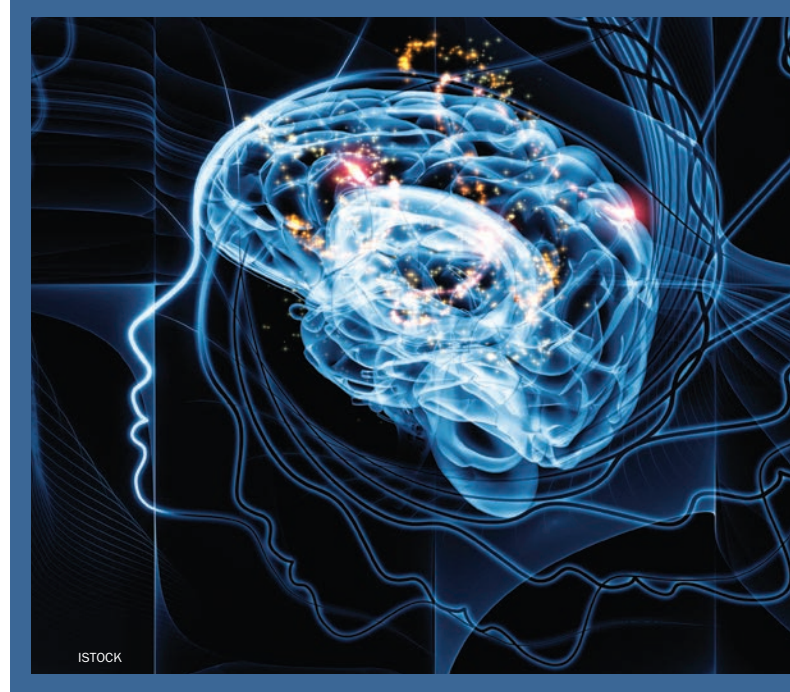
A study found that the results of psychological research can be replicated about 39 percent of the time by outside experts.

When outside researchers, however, tried to replicate Masicampo's own study — which hypothesized that a sugary drink can help college students do better at making a complicated decision — they were not successful.

Masicampo expressed no bitterness, chalking up the differences to geographical factors and stressing that the experiment showed how complicated it can be to do a high-quality replication of a study.

There are ways to fix the process so that findings are more likely to hold up under scrutiny, according to Dorothy Bishop, professor of developmental neuropsychology at the University of Oxford.

She urged mandatory registration of research methods beforehand to prevent scientists from picking only the most favorable data for analysis, as well as requiring adequate sample sizes and wider reporting of studies that show "null result" — or in other words, results that do not support the hypothesis that was initially put forward.
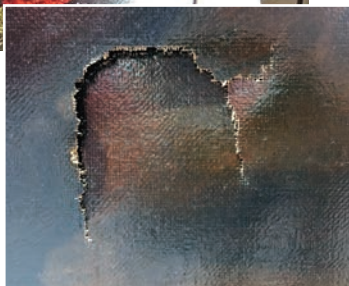
Scientists could also publish their methods and data in detail so that others could try to replicate their experiments more easily. These are "simply ways of ensuring that we are doing science as well as we can," Bishop said.

TST ART OF DISCOVERY CO.

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Enough to Make Mona Lisa Smile

A U.S. $1.54 million masterpiece by a 17th-century Italian artist was back on display in the Taiwan capital after a 12-year-old boy tripped, fell and punched a hole in the canvas, the exhibit organizer said. *Flowers* by Italian master Paolo Porpora is part of a Taipei exhibit showcasing artwork painted by or influenced by Leonardo da Vinci, according to main organizer David Sun. "It was such an unusual accident," Sun said. "The boy was listening to the guide and wasn't looking where he was going, and tripped and smashed a hole in the artwork." Sun said the boy and his family had expressed sincere regret and won't face any punishment. "We had an Italian appraiser on hand and immediately contacted the collector," Sun said. "We decided to repair the painting immediately on site, and it is back on display already." Reuters

DIAMOND DETECTIVES

The good news for the Chinese visitor to Bangkok was that a doctor had successfully removed a foreign object from her large intestine that could have damaged her digestive system. The bad news: It was a 10 million baht (U.S. $278,000) diamond the woman was accused of stealing from a jewelry fair, adding a piece of rock-hard evidence to the case against her. Authorities got to the bottom of the theft when a doctor wielding a colonoscope and the medical equivalent of pliers pulled the 6-carat gemstone from the large intestine of the woman alleged to have filched it, after nature and laxatives failed to get it out. The woman and a Chinese man were arrested at the airport on their way out of Thailand and now face up to three years in prison, according to police.

The Associated Press

Worth its Weight in Wool

RSPCA ACT

Around 40 kilograms of wool were sheared from a sheep found near Australia's capital, making him unofficially the world's woolliest. The animal, named Chris by his rescuers, was discovered on the northern outskirts of Canberra, struggling to walk under the weight of his coat. Tammy Ven Dange, chief executive of RSPCA ACT, the Canberra division of the animal charity, estimated Chris had more than five years of wool on him and likely had little contact with humans. The 40.2 kilos of wool removed from Chris mean that he was unofficially the carrier of the world's heaviest fleece, possibly shattering the current record set by New Zealand sheep Big Ben, found to be carrying nearly 29 kilograms of wool in 2014. Big Ben dethroned fellow Kiwi, Shrek, who gained national celebrity in his home nation, meeting then-Prime Minister Helen Clark and becoming the subject of several children's books before his death in 2011. Reuters

MIRROR
IMAGE

Troops from the Royal Thai Navy walk across a beach after disembarking from a ship on September 30, 2015. They were swapping places with another unit that was taking over patrolling the Gulf of Thailand off the coast of Narathiwat, a province on the southern end of Thailand that borders Malaysia. The Royal Thai Navy has a fleet of about 130 vessels, and its Second Naval Area Command is responsible for patrolling the southern Gulf of Thailand.

Photo By: **MADAREE TOHLALA** | AFP/Getty Images

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