

# Terrorism in Indonesia

**Aryono D. Pusponogoro, MD**

Chairman, Department of Surgery, University of Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia; Chairman, Committee on Trauma, Indonesian Surgeons Association; Chairman, 1-1-8 Emergency Ambulance Service; Chairman, National Medical Disasters Relief Brigade, Indonesia

**Correspondence:**

Aryono Pusponogoro, MD  
Department of Surgery  
School of Medicine, University of  
Indonesia  
6, Salemba Raya  
Jakarta, Indonesia  
E-mail: aryonodp@rad.net.id

**Keywords:** bombing; disaster; disaster medicine; emergency; emergency management; international; Indonesia; terrorism

**Abbreviations:**

ATLS = Advanced Trauma Life Support  
EMS = Emergency Medical Services

**Web Publication:** 06 February 2004

**Abstract**

Indonesia has had its share of natural and manmade disasters. From 1997 to 2002, Indonesia has experienced 90 incidents of terrorist bomb attacks. In 13 (14.4%) of the terrorist attacks, the bombs did not explode. A total of 224 persons have been killed, and 340 persons have been injured. Most of those killed or injured were the result of the bombings in Jakarta and Bali. Besides bombings, there have been riots, especially in Jakarta. The Indonesian Surgeons Association established the 1-1-8 Emergency Ambulance Service Foundation to develop the Prehospital Emergency Medical Services in Indonesia. Despite difficulties, this service has been implemented in 18 cities. The occurrence of disasters, riots, ethnic conflicts, terrorist attacks, and the introduction of the Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS) course in 1995, have helped to convince the people and the government that it was important to develop this 1-1-8 Emergency Ambulance Services system, and agreed to accept a Safe Community Program. With the Safe Community Program, Jakarta with its Integrated 1-1-8 Emergency Ambulance Service managed to provide proper emergency medical care to the casualties caused by terrorist bombings, riots, and in the three weeks of floods during which 75% of Jakarta was submerged.

Pusponogoro AD: Terrorism in Indonesia. *Prehosp Disast Med* 2003;18(2): 100–105.

**Introduction**

Indonesia is a country composed of thousands (>18,000) of islands. The people are very friendly and full of smiles. But we have our share of disasters because Indonesia is in the Ring of Fire of Volcanoes and three Tectonic Plates converge under this country. Deforestation contributes to floods and landslides that result from excessive rainfall. We also have had our share of man-made disasters and ethnic conflicts, such as the type that occurred in Kalimantan (Borneo) (Figure 1) between the Dayaks and Madures settlers, and religious conflicts such as those that have occurred in the islands of Ambon and Poso and in the island of Sulawesi (Celebes).<sup>1</sup>

**Burden of Terrorism in Indonesia**  
*Incidence of Terrorism*

During the Soeharto regime, small incidents of terrorism occurred that were supported by dissidents to the regime, but information about such events was suppressed by the regime. After the fall of the Soeharto regime, all persons regardless of their political or religious interest, or separatism philosophies, have been free to express their ideals, goals, etc. Terrorism in Indonesia has included bombings; the recent bombing in Bali is the most serious incident. Hostage-taking has happened only once (in 1978) with the kidnapping of the Garuda Indonesia Airways DC-9 airplane en route to Bangkok. The

Date	Location	Number killed	Number injured	Comments
Jul 1997	Lampung, Sumatra	--	--	Mentally ill
Jan 1998	Jakarta	--	--	Arrested
Nov 1998	Pamekasan, East Jawa	2	6	Political rally
Jan 1999	Jakarta	--	--	Department store
Feb 1999	Jakarta	--	--	Public transportation
Apr 1999	Jakarta	--	--	Department store
Apr 1999	Jakarta	--	--	Shopping mall
Oct 1999	Jakarta	1	6	Political rally
Dec 1999	Jakarta Jakarta	-- --	-- 3	Bank robbery Red light district (grenade)
Mar 2000	Bekasi, West Jawa	--	2	Road side
May 2000	Medan, North Sumatra	--	23	Church in army barrack
May 2000	Medan, North Sumatra	--	4	Public building
Jun 2000	Jakarta	--	1	Attorney Building 1 hour after Tommy (son) Soeharto left the building
Aug 2000	Jakarta	2	21	Car bomb Philippine Embassy Ambassador injured.
Aug 2000	Cimahi, West Jawa	--	--	Shopping center—2 kg high explosive
Aug 2000	Medan, North Sumatra	--	--	Christian church
Aug 2000	Medan, North Sumatra	--	--	2 Bombs
Aug 2000	Jakarta	--	--	Public trans bus bomb, 11 hours before Soeharto Trial
Sep 2000	Jakarta	10	15	Jakarta Stock Exchange basement parking garage
Sep 2000	Jakarta	--	--	Anti-Soeharto, NGO Office
Nov 2000	Medan, North Sumatra	1	4	University campus, home-made bomb
Nov 2000	Jakarta	--	1	Governor residence, home-made bomb
Nov 2000	Jakarta	--	--	Hotel
Dec 2000	Jogyakarta, Middle Jawa	--	--	General hospital, next day another bomb found
Dec 2000	Jakarta, Bekasi – Sukabumi – Bandung (West Jawa), Mojokerto (East Jawa), Pematang Siantar, Medan (N Sumatra), Batam, Pekan Baru (Riau), Mataram (West Nusa Tenggara)	16	96	31 bombs, 16 bombs exploded simultaneously
Jan 2001	Jakarta	--	--	Bomb exploded under a car
Jan 2001	Mataram, West Nusa, Tenggara	--	--	Newmont (foreign company) office
Mar 2001	Tangerang, Banten Jawa	--	--	Bomb exploded on a railway bridge
Apr 2001	Jakarta	--	--	Prison complex, home-made bomb
May 2001	Jakarta	3	--	Aceh students dormitory, high explosive
Jun 2001	Palu, Middle Sulawesi	--	--	Police HQ, during riots
Jun 2001	Semarang, Middle Jawa	--	1	Christian church, low explosive
Aug 2001	Jogyakarta, Middle Jawa	--	--	Catholic priest's house, low explosive
Aug 2001	Surabaya	1	--	Private home
Aug 2001	Aceh	--	--	Training center
Sep 2001	Jakarta	--	--	Shopping center parking area

Prehospital and Disaster Medicine © 2003 Pusponegoro

**Table 1**—Bombings in Indonesia, 1997–2002<sup>2</sup> (HQ = headquarters, NGO = non-governmental organizations)

*Continued*

Date	Location	Number killed	Number injured	Comments
Oct 2001	Makassar, South Sulawesi	--	--	1 McLife Insurance office 2 Kentucky Fried Chicken
Oct 2001	Jogyakarta, Middle Jawa	--	--	Catholic church
Nov 2001	Gowa, South Sulawesi	--	--	Public health center
Oct 2001	Jakarta	--	--	Australian International School
Oct 2001	Jakarta	--	--	Christian church, 3 bombs
Dec 2001	Karawang, West Jawa	--	--	Under railway
Jan 2002	Jakarta Jakarta & Palu South Sulawesi	11 Police	--	1 School complex 2 Adventist in Jakarta & 2 in Palu bombs exploded simultaneously
Jan 2002	Jakarta	--	--	Electrical transmission unit
Apr 2002	Ngawi, East Jawa	--	--	House of a political party official
Jun 2002	Jakarta Jakarta Jakarta	-- -- --	4 4 --	Hotel & discotheque, 2 bombs simultaneously Hotel 2 Shopping centers
Jul 2002	Jakarta	--	7	Shopping mall
Jul 2002	Sumedang, West Jawa	1	3	Police barrack
Aug 2002	Medan North Sumatra	--	--	Hotel
Sep 2002	Medan North Sumatra	--	--	Shopping center parking area
Sep 2002	Langkat, North Sumatra	--	--	Shops
Sep 2002	Jakarta	--	4	Shopping center
Sep 2002	Palu, South Sulawesi	--	3	Public building
Sep 2002	Jakarta	1	--	US Embassy official house
Sep 2002	Poso Middle Sulawesi	--	--	Market, at night
Oct 2002	Kuta, Bali Renon, Bali Manado, North Sulawesi	184 -- --	132 -- --	2 Discotheques, mostly tourist, culprits arrested US Consulate Christian church
Nov 2002	Bandung, West Jawa	--	--	Shopping mall parking area

Prehospital and Disaster Medicine © 2003 Puspongoro

Table 1 Continued— Bombings in Indonesia, 1997–2002<sup>2</sup> (US = United States of America)



Prehospital and Disaster Medicine © 2003 Puspongoro

Figure 1—Map of Indonesia and surrounding area (printed with permission)

Date	Location	Site	Number of bombs found
Jul 1998	Bekasi, West Jawa	Car	1
Jul 1999	Jakarta	Industrial complex	3
Dec 2000	Jogyakarta, Middle Jawa	General hospital	1
Jan 2001	Jakarta	Recreational complex	3
Sep 2001	Surabaya, East Jawa	Public swimming pool	2
Sep 2001	Manado, North Sulawesi	Harbor	2
Oct 2001	Bandung, West Jawa	Shopping mall	2
Nov 2001	Jakarta	Hotel room	1
Dec 2001	Jakarta	Hotel room	1*

Prehospital and Disaster Medicine © 2003 Pusponegoro

**Table 2**—Unexploded bombs found in Indonesia, 1998–2001 (\*High explosive)

Date	City	Site
Feb 1998	Medan, North Sumatra	Polonia International Airport
Aug 1998	Jakarta	Bank
Aug 2001	Bandung, West Jawa	Secondary school
Aug 2001	Jakarta	Australian Embassy
Sep 2001	Surabaya, East Jawa	International hospital

Prehospital and Disaster Medicine © 2003 Pusponegoro

**Table 3**—Bomb threats in Indonesia, 1998–2001

rescue was accomplished by the Indonesian Special Forces with only one soldier killed and no casualties among the hostages.<sup>1</sup> From 1997 to 2002, there were 90 incidents of bombings by terrorists in Indonesia with 13 incidents (14.4%) of unexploded bombs. A total of 224 people have been killed and 340 injured. Jakarta was the most frequent city attacked by these bombings (Tables 1, 2 and 3).

These terrorist bombings have occurred nationwide, and sometimes they occurred simultaneously (more than one phase at the same time). This demonstrates that these attacks are well-organized. But the number of persons injured has not been high: sometimes no persons were injured or killed. This is because many of the bombs have been homemade. However, the bombings of the church in Jakarta and of the clubs in Bali, injured or killed a large number of persons.

It has been difficult to collect precise data about the types and mechanisms of injuries associated with these bomb blasts because Indonesian hospitals do not have disaster plans and they have not recorded the patients properly. But, according to our observation in Jakarta, most of the victims have suffered from burn injuries, while the rest of the victims sustained blast injuries and/or secondary blunt injuries.

Also, it is difficult to obtain autopsies of the victims due to the religious culture of Indonesia. More than 80% of the Indonesian population is Muslim, and according to Islam, family members cannot be mutilated by autopsies. Also, the dead must be buried before sundown.

#### *Underlying Factors*

During the Soeharto Regime, the terrorist attacks were done by the different Muslim groups, because the Muslims were suppressed by Soeharto. The communists had no power, because when Soeharto seized power from Soekarno, the communists were massacred and the rest of the inhabitants with communist connections were banned to the island of Buru in the islands of Ambon.

After Soeharto stepped down, the party of Mrs. Megawati (daughter of the first President—Soekarno) won the election, only to lose the presidency to Mr. Abdurachman Wahid (a moderate Muslim cleric). Mrs. Megawati became the vice-president. One year after the election, Mrs. Megawati became the president following the impeachment of the president by the Parliament. As a result, the Muslims are unhappy, and they may have been involved in some of the more minor bombings, but none have been arrested because the Muslims have the majority in the Parliament and in the government. Some members of the separatist groups however, have been arrested for minor bombings. These Muslim groups also are not happy because they want to bring the Shariah Law into Indonesia as in Saudi Arabia; they do not like the fact that a woman rules the country.

Even the Soeharto family and its group are not pleased, because the government has been trying to put Soeharto on trial; they did put his son in jail for bombings, murder, and corruption. Some of Soeharto's colleagues also are in jail for corruption.

Religious conflicts in Ambon and Poso were prolonged with thousands killed or injured. The bombings in the Jakarta churches and the Bali bombings are connected. The bombers were arrested, and they were proven to have connections to the Indonesian Radical Islamic group of Jamaah Islamiyah that has connections in Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, and other groups in Southeast Asia. They wish to establish a Pan-Islamic Nation in Southeast Asia. It also was noted that the Jamaah Islamiyah was connected to this group and had received some finances from the Al-Qaeda.<sup>2</sup>

#### *Future Risk of Terrorism*

We are not sure whether terrorism in Indonesia will continue after the bombers are arrested. We have a large num-

ber of residents, radical Muslims, but for the time being, they don't operate openly. We also don't know what the silent Muslim majority is thinking. For now, we know that the majority of Muslims in Indonesia is moderate.

In April 2004, we will have our next General Election. We expect that there will be more riots and maybe terrorist attacks, because the political parties and groups are trying to win the election or force their opinion and interest onto other parties and the population. And, we believe they may do anything to have it their way.<sup>1,2</sup>

### **Emergency Management of Terrorist Events**

#### *National Initiatives*

After the Bali Bombing, the Parliament approved a new law empowering the police to hold terrorist suspects in custody for 30 days without trial. This term can be prolonged if the police need more time to gather more information. This new law was used to keep the leader of the Jamaah Islamiyah in custody, and he now is on trial.

Previously, the police department was responsible to the Armed Forces Commander and to the President. It was separated from the Armed Forces, and now it is responsible only to the president and the Parliament. The police department has its own budget and program. Now, it is responsible for domestic security. Previously, the Army was responsible for domestic security as well; now it only is responsible for National Defense.<sup>2</sup>

#### *National Systems of Emergency Management*

Indonesia, as does any other developing country, does not have a developed Emergency Medical Services System. Nor are we prepared to manage disasters or terrorist attacks. As evident from the Bali bombings, the prehospital response was chaotic, because Bali does not have an organized Prehospital Emergency Medical Service to respond to disasters or a terrorist attack. During the Hospital Phase, the surgeons are able to provide proper care to the injured patients. Since 1995, they have participated in Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS) courses. Also, in 2000, the Definitive Surgery for Trauma Care Course from the International Association for Trauma Surgery and Critical Care also was introduced. But, hospital management does not seem to be aware that disasters must be managed not only by medical support, but also requires good management support. The Indonesian Surgeons Association founded the 1-1-8 as the Emergency Ambulance Telephone Number (1-1-0 is for the Police and Security, and 1-1-3 is for the Fire Brigade - Rescue). The Emergency Ambulance Service Foundation set out in 1972 to develop the Prehospital Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in Indonesia. In attempting to establish this system, there have been two major obstacles: (1) the financial resources are not available; and (2) the majority of the population is Muslim who believe that accidents, disease, and death are the will of

God—so we must accept it. Despite this, we have developed the 1-1-8 Emergency Ambulance Service in 18 cities: there are EMS in the major cities of Jakarta, Jogjakarta, Surabaya, Makassar, Palembang, and others are in smaller cities. A breakthrough occurred in 1995, when the ATLS course was introduced. Since that time, the people and the government have developed an interest in this program. We have had our share of disasters and terrorist bombings, which have made people and the government aware that the 1-1-8 Emergency Ambulance Service is important for the country and for the people.<sup>3</sup> In November 2000, the Safe Community Program was adopted; it states that we must be able to guarantee that citizens, whether in the rural or the urban areas, are safe and healthy. This Safe Community Program has helped to train laypeople, police, fire brigade, security guards, etc. Also, a Training Center for Paramedics was established in Jakarta. An Integrated EMS system was established that combines transport ambulances and upgrades them from the 1-1-8 Basic (Non-Invasive) Emergency Ambulance into a One-System and One-Command Integrated 1-1-8 Emergency Medical Service. Also, general physicians in the Emergency Departments have been trained in ATLS, Advanced Cardiac Life Support, Advanced Neonatal Life Support, Advanced Pediatric Life Support, Urban and Rural Emergencies, and Disaster Management. This system currently is operational in Jakarta, and now, there are 50 1-1-8 Emergency Ambulances for a population of eight million. It is not perfect, but we have been able to manage 96 casualties properly during a church bombing, 200 casualties during one of the riots against Soeharto, and managed thousands of displaced persons in February 2002 when 75% of Jakarta was flooded for three weeks.<sup>4</sup>

### **Future Challenges**

The Trauma Committee of the Indonesian Surgeons Association collaborates with the other medical associations and the Department of Health to develop the Safe Community Program throughout the nation. Because of financial problems, it is going to be difficult, but we are confident that with this approach, we will have a Safe Community Program from the villages up to the big cities within the next 5–10 years. Besides the medical problems, Indonesia still has some problems with the quality of the police and of the judicial offices.

### **Conclusion**

Indonesia has had its share of natural and manmade disasters including terrorist attacks. Because of the terrorist attacks, we now have new laws to fight terrorism. We have developed the Safe Community Program, so that Indonesians, whether they live in rural or urban areas, can be guaranteed to be safe and healthy.

**References**

1. Suwardiman IK: Indonesia in crisis. Research and development. *Kompas* 2002;308-313.
2. Puspongoro AD: *Pattern and Type of Manmade and Natural Disasters in Indonesia*. Department of Health: Indonesian Surgeons Association: Jakarta, 2002.
3. Committee on Trauma, Indonesian Surgeons Association: *Integrated System for the Management of Emergency Cases*. 2nd ed, Jakarta, 1999.
4. Committee on Trauma, Indonesian Surgeons Association: *Safe Community Program in the Development of an Integrated Emergency Medical Service in Indonesia*. 1st ed. Indonesian Surgeons Association: Jakarta, 2000.