

**Refugee Review Tribunal  
AUSTRALIA**

**RRT RESEARCH RESPONSE**

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This response was prepared by the Country Research Section of the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT) after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the RRT within time constraints. This response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum.

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**Questions**

- 1. Where is Madura, Indonesia?**
- 2. Please provide some background on Islam Jamaah, such as their beliefs and activities?**
- 3. Is there any information on members of Islam Jamaah suffering difficulties in Madura or Lombok both in 1996 and now?**
- 4. Is there any information on Ahmadiyyah members suffering difficulties in Madura or Lombok both in 1996 and now?**

**RESPONSE**

**1. Where is Madura, Indonesia?**

Madura is a large island off the north coast of East Java. Bangkalan is located on the west coast of Madura ('Madura' (undated), Encarta World Atlas website

[http://encarta.msn.com/encnet/features/mapcenter/map.aspx?TextLatitude=-98.907&TextAltitude=0&TextSelectedEntity=39070&SearchEnc=false&MapStyle=Comprehensive&MapSize=Small&MapStyleSelectedIndex=0&searchTextMap=madura&MapStylesList=Comprehensive&ZoomOnMapClickCheck=on#map\\_frame](http://encarta.msn.com/encnet/features/mapcenter/map.aspx?TextLatitude=-98.907&TextAltitude=0&TextSelectedEntity=39070&SearchEnc=false&MapStyle=Comprehensive&MapSize=Small&MapStyleSelectedIndex=0&searchTextMap=madura&MapStylesList=Comprehensive&ZoomOnMapClickCheck=on#map_frame) – Accessed 2 March 2007 – Attachment 1).

**2. Please provide some background on Islam Jamaah, such as their beliefs and activities?**

A number of Research Responses completed between 1993 and 2004 have examined *Islam Jamaah* (IJ) in Indonesia. A comprehensive response was compiled in 2004 (RRT Country Research 2004, *Research Response IDN16480*, 2 March – Attachment 2). According to the information presented in this response, the history of IJ, as well as its beliefs and activities, are difficult to determine with any precision. The organisation has also undergone a number of name changes in Indonesia. Besides *Islam Jamaah*, the organisation has been referred to as *Darul Hadits* (DH), *Lembaga Dakwah Islam Indonesia* (LDII), and *Lemkari*. A detailed chronological history of IJ from 1940 to 2002 indicates that some consensus surrounds IJ's

founding by Haji Nurhasen Ubaidah Lubis, though 1940, 1941 and 1951 are all given as the year for when this occurred. One source indicates that Haji Nurhasen Ubaidah Lubis died in 1982, with leadership responsibilities passing to his son, “Abd. Dhohir Nur Hasan as the Amir/Imam”. Government bans with regard to the organization had appeared by 1967, with the principal government ban being issued by the Attorney General in 1971 (please see Question 2 of RRT Country Research 2004, *Research Response IDN16480*, 2 March – Attachment 2).

Question 1 of *Research Response IDN16480* provides information on the specific beliefs and practices of IJ as far as they can be determined with any precision. The most detailed source presented there is a translated document sourced from the Indonesian Department of Religious Affairs website in 2002, though the contents derived from research conducted much earlier in 1994/5. It must be noted that as this Indonesian Department regulates religious affairs and was at the time under pressure to reign in fundamentalist Islamic groups, this description may not be without bias:

[D]octrines which are adhered to until today include

1. The Amir (religious leader) is the head of the organisation and its spiritual leader and must be totally obeyed by the all members of the congregation
2. Membership is conducted through pledging an oath (although they have refuted this practice but members of the general public have witnessed this practice)
3. To relax the spiritual relationship between teacher and student by using the traditional Muslim system
4. Forbidden to teach diversions of teachings taught by the teachers. All teachings must be received directly from the teacher without questioning
5. The Friday sermons will only be conducted in Arabic and in an LDII mosque
6. Refusal to pray in a non-LDII mosque (because it is considered unclean/filthy) and listen to a religious leader who is not a member of LDII (because those Islamic teaching are considered un-pure)
7. If there is a non-LDII Muslim who prays in an LDII mosque, then whatever has been touched by that person must be washed
8. Other Muslims who are not members of LDII, including relatives and even parents, are considered impure Muslims and so there is a risk of family break-ups. In the organisation’s hierarchy, the position of the religious leader (Amir) and Muslim ‘brother’ is much higher than the position of relatives, and this includes parents (mother and father).
9. Weddings celebrated by the PPN (religious government body) is considered unlawful and must be re-celebrated (‘Lembaga Dakwah Islam Indonesia [LDII]’ 2002, Religious Research and Development Body & Religious Education and Training Body – Indonesian Department of Religious Affairs website, 20 November [Trans. National Translation Unit].  
<http://depag.web.id/news/kerukunan/39/> – Accessed 21 February 2004 – Attachment 3).

Other sources presented in *Research Response IDN16480* also refer to a certain exclusivity held by members of IJ, who consider other Muslim people heretics or heathens, along with the practice of obedience to the sect leader and to that of conducting Friday prayers at home rather than at the mosque (RRT Country Research 2004, *Research Response IDN16480*, 2 March – Attachment 2). That the above may have been misrepresentations of IJ doctrines or that these previously held beliefs have undergone some revision is suggested by a more recent report on IJ/LDII from 2005. It refers to a change in this attitude of exclusivity toward others by its adherents and to changes in other beliefs, as well as to past and present connections between IJ and the Golkar political party:

Leaders of the Indonesian Institute of Islamic Propagation (LDII) **said that exclusivity was not part of their doctrine** as suggested by a table published in *The Jakarta Post* on Thursday.

Such a perception would likely stem, among other things, from behavior displayed by organization members “whose understanding of the teachings has not matured,” one of the leaders said when visiting the Post on Friday, along with other board members.

“It is such members who we are educating,” said Aceng Karimulloh, a deputy LDII Jakarta branch leader and among the ulema from the organization.

LDII chairman Teddy Suratmaji, an engineer, **said such a misperception could have resulted from the “stigma” contributed by members of Islam Jamaah, an exclusivist and hard-line movement well known in the late 1970s, which later developed into the LDII.**

Islam Jamaah was closely scrutinized by the government following reports that its followers **considered non-members as infidel or kafir**, even though they were from the same family.

Nowadays, the LDII organization, which is legal, “has no connection” with **Islam Jamaah**, according to its official handbook. Information on LDII can also be viewed at [www.ldii.or.id](http://www.ldii.or.id) . The handbook addresses all “frequently asked questions” related to perceptions of Islam Jamaah and LDII.

Teddy displayed pictures of LDII’s activities in their bimonthly magazine, Nuansa Persada , which depicted its interaction with various Islamic groups, “which could not be possible if we were exclusivist,” Teddy said, **denying that they did not pray with non-members.**

**Nor it was true that each member must pay 10 percent of their income to the imam**, they said.

Perceptions that LDII members consider non-members as filth (najis ) was also denied. “In the 1970s, it was commonly accepted that people of different sexes who were not muhrim (directly related) could not touch each other,” board member R. Sabaruddin said, “so maybe people got the idea that non-members were considered najis. But now this practice is “common” among many Muslims in the country.

**The logo of LDII, which claims to be independent, clearly bears the banyan tree, symbol of former president Soeharto’s political vehicle Golkar, which sought all potential avenues to increase its control and influence.**

They said that they had intended to change the logo, but faced resistance from older members (‘Exclusivity is not our doctrine: LDII’ 2005, *The Jakarta Post*, 29 October – Attachment 4).

### **3. Is there any information on members of Islam Jamaah suffering difficulties in Madura or Lombok in 1996 and now?**

The only reference found to the difficulties of IJ members in Madura is a 1998 report indicating that three houses and two mosques belonging to the group were burned in the town of Pamekasan:

SURABAYA (JP): Rumors of an active Moslem sect that was banned in 1971 led to the burning of three houses and two mosques belonging to alleged sect members by hundreds of people on Monday in **Pamekasan, Madura**. However, on Tuesday residents resumed their activities while the police said they had made no arrests.

“We have only asked a number of people for clarification... the riot was only triggered by overt suspicions,” Madura Police chief Col. Baruto Badrus said.

People had heard that three residents in the districts of Batumarmar and Kadur were promoting Islam Jama’ah through an organization called Lembaga Dakwah Islam Indonesia. The sect was banned along with others considered similar to it by the Attorney General’s office in 1971.

The three residents were Busro, 55, Jufri, 40, and Abdullah, 60. In response to the rumors, which police have yet to clarify, **hundreds of people came by trucks, public transport and motorcycles to Busro’s home in the village of Kertagenah. They were unable to find Busro and resorted to burning his house and a small mosque.** The crowd then burned the neighboring homes of Jufri and Abdullah, and another small mosque believed to be owned by the sect in the Kadur district.

Security personnel fired warning shots and managed to disperse the mob. The head of the Forum of Madura Ulema, Dhofier Syah, expressed his concern over residents taking the law into their own hands. “People now are so impulsive and easy to provoke,” he said, adding that the Madurese were very sensitive in matters relating to religion. However, he dismissed the incident as “small”, adding that it was already settled (‘Moslem sect rumors lead to Madura burning’ 1998, *Jakarta Post* website, 16 December. <http://www.thejakartapost.com> – Accessed 12 February 2004 – Attachment 5).

With regard to Lombok Island, no information was found on IJ/LDII members for 1996, with information after this date limited to the year 2002. References were found to attacks against IJ members in two villages in East Lombok during late September/early October 2002. A mob burned down a mosque and destroyed eight house belonging to the LDII sect in Batuyag village in East Lombok (‘Lombok calm after attack on Islamic sect’ 2002, *Jakarta Post* website, 1 October <http://www.thejakartapost.com> – Accessed 12 February 2004 – Attachment 6), while some days later a mob also attacked the properties of LDII members in the village of Bajo Donggo on the island (‘More mob attack on exclusive Islamic sect’ 2002, *Jakarta Post*, 7 October. <http://www.thejakartapost.com> – Accessed 21 February 2004 – Attachment 7). Several other reports on the same incidents in Lombok are presented in RRT Country Research 2004, *Research Response IDN16480*, 2 March – Attachment 2.

#### **4. Is there any information on Ahmadiyyah members suffering difficulties in Madura or Lombok in 1996 and now?**

No information was found on the situation of Ahmadiyyah members in Madura for either 1996 or more recent years. Three recent RRT Country Research responses have examined the history and current situation for Ahmadiyyah members in Indonesia. These responses do include reports (quoted below) of attacks against members on Lombok in 2006, and references to attacks as early as 1994 (RRT Country Research 2007, *Research Response IDN31267*, 5 February – Attachment 8; RRT Country Research 2006, *Research Response IDN30493*, 7 September – Attachment 9; and RRT Country Research 2006, *Research Response IDN30577*, 15 September – Attachment 10).

In March 2006, the home of an Ahmadiyah member was destroyed by his neighbours in central Lombok without injury to any person. The report on the incident provides details on the origins of the attack and the role of police:

The provincial police spokesman Adj. Sr. Comr. HM Basri surmised that the attack occurred because the people did not like an Ahmadiyah member living near them. The house belonged to a man identified as Amaq Jumahir, aged 50.

“The local people have decided to forbid any Ahmadiyah follower from living in their neighborhood,” he said. No reports whether the police have arrested the attackers.

The idea to destroy the house and expel Jumahir had been announced after Friday prayers at a local mosque, Basri said. At least 300 people gathered in the kampong later in the evening and marched to Jumahir’s house and destroyed it.

“The owner had already fled, earlier in the afternoon,” Basri stated. He added that Jumahir was the only Ahmadiyah follower living in Praya village.

Police officers on Lombok explained that they had taken preventive measures to ward off such an attack a week earlier. Two officers were ordered to stand guard near the house. However, the police guards were outnumbered by the angry residents, Basri said.

The incident concluded after West Lombok police deployed more officers later in the evening, and as of Saturday, more security officers remained on guard at Jumahir’s wrecked home.

**The attack was the second such incident in as many months against Ahmadiyah followers on Lombok, after 32 families were expelled from Ketapang village in West Lombok on Feb. 4. Their houses were also destroyed and the people had to flee for their safety to other areas** (‘Ahmadiyah gets fresh attack, house razed in Lombok’ 2006, Jakarta Post, Asia Pacific Action website, 20 March <http://www.asia-pacific-action.org/southeastasia/indonesia/netnews/2006/ind11v10.htm#Ahmadiyah%20gets%20fresh%20attack,%20house%20razed%20in%20Lombok> – Accessed 5 March 2007 – Attachment 11).

The reference to earlier attacks in February 2006 in Lombok in the final sentence of the above article is covered in *Research Response IDN31267*. It provides two reports on attacks against approximately 200 Ahmadiyah members. An *Agence France Presse* article from October 2006 article stated that “[a]round 200 members of the sect have been living in a temporary shelter on the island of Lombok, near Bali, after hardline Muslims attacked their homes and mosques in February this year (‘Mosque attack spells more trouble for Islamic sect in Indonesia’ 2006, *Agence France Presse*, 27 October – Attachment 12). A *Jakarta Post* report from September 2006 provides greater detail on the plight of this group of Ahmadiyah, as well as reference to another group of 50 displaced Ahmadiyah members in central Lombok now living in a hospital:

Children were playing outside while their mothers were busy preparing food to break the fast in a makeshift kitchen at **Transito building in Mataram**, West Nusa Tenggara.

It was a familiar scene as Muslims around the world observe the fasting month of Ramadhan, **the only difference being that these 33 families or 155 people are members of Ahmadiyah congregation.**

**The Ahmadiyah followers were driven from their homes in Ketapang hamlet in Lingsar district in West Lombok and have stayed in the shelter for the past eight months.** Members of Ahmadiyah frequently face persecution from other Muslims who consider them heretics.

“If you ask whether we’re happy or not, it’s clear that all Muslims are happy to greet Ramadhan, the month of mercy,” said Zainal Abidin, the leader of the Ahmadiyah people in the building.

“But during the first tarawih prayer, we all broke into tears. Don’t ask whether they were tears of sadness or joy, we don’t know. It’s just a feeling of great relief, like our burden is being taken away.”

The Ahmadiyah people observe Ramadhan like any other Muslims, following the schedule set by the government, including the time to celebrate Idul Fitri next month. After breaking the fast, they perform the tarawih prayer in a small mosque inside the building.

The Ahmadiyah people said this year’s Ramadhan was a test of their patience and faith as life gets worse for them.

“All of our people are farmers so none of us can work while we’re staying here. We rely on government assistance. But we take this as a test from God,” Zainal said.

He said they were receiving rice, cooking oil and sardines from the government, but the amount kept declining, from a previous 12 kilograms per month for each person to 7.3 kg now.

Six of them who own motorcycles are working as motorcycle taxi drivers, while others have had to spend their savings.

Clean water has continued to be a problem, running only from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. daily, making it only available for cooking and bathing before praying.

**In Praya, Central Lombok, around 15 families or 50 Ahmadiyah members were also driven from their hometown in Kaliagek village and have been living at a former hospital in the city.**

The West Lombok administration is undecided whether Ahmadiyah members from Ketapang can return home.

“A five-member team has been set up to discuss the problem, comprising representatives from the Indonesian Ulema Council and Ahmadiyah, but no agreement has been reached,” said the administration’s spokesman Basirun Anwar.

**The West Nusa Tenggara administration is also finding it hard to solve the problem of people’s rejection of Ahmadiyah. “We’re still waiting for the central government’s stance on the matter,” the province’s spokesperson Lalu Gita Aryadi said.**

The Ahmadiyah faith developed out of Islam in India in the late 19th Century. Its members believe that its founder Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is God’s messenger after Muhammad.

Groups in Indonesia have been the subject of attacks by hard-line Muslim groups after the Indonesian Council of Ulema (MUI) outlawed the faith in a fatwa earlier this year.

But following the February attacks in Ketapang, President Yudhoyono said the state “guarantees the freedom of each citizen to practice his or her own religion”. He said the government did not differentiate between religious groups or categorize them as “recognized or unrecognized”.

Despite their problems, life goes on for the Ahmadiyah children in Transito building, with many playing while waiting to break the fast.

“They don’t have to know their parents’ burden,” said Ridwan, one of the members at the shelter (‘Ahmadiyah members welcome Ramadhan’ 2006, *Jakarta Post* website, 29 September <http://www.thejakartapost.com/yesterdaydetail.asp?fileid=20060929.G02> – Accessed 6 February 2007 – Attachment 13).

This group of displaced Ahmadiyah members were still living in temporary accommodation in Mantaram during February 2007 (‘Jamaah Ahmadiyah Lombok’ 2007, *Indonesia Matters* website, 7 February <http://www.indonesiamatters.com/526/jamaah-ahmadiyah-lombok/> – Accessed 5 March 2007 – Attachment 14).

In October 2005, the regional office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in West Nusa Tenggara, which includes Lombok, issued a ban on the Ahmadiyah. This followed earlier bans in 2001 for West Lombok and in 1983 for East Lombok (US Department of State 2006, *International Religious Freedom Report for 2006 – Indonesia*, 15 September <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2006/71341.htm> – Accessed 19 September 2006 – Attachment 15).

Another report on the February 2006 West Lombok attacks, published by Indonesia’s *MetroTV* and reproduced on the Persecution of *Ahmadiyya* Muslim Community website, makes reference to previous attacks in the area. This includes attacks in 1994 and 1999:

**Metrotvnews.com, Jakarta:** Head of National Office Bearers of Jemaat Ahmadiyya Indonesia, Abdul Basit, said that the attacking of Ahmadi houses in West Lombok was very deep concern. “We condemn such anarchist action. It seems that the government did not able to stop anarchist actions conducted by a number of mass arbitrarily to Ahmadi who are citizen of Indonesia,” he said explicitly to Metro TV by phone, Saturday (4/1).

Basit said that Ahmadi members are also Indonesian citizen who have the right to live and stay. He hoped that the government could protect his people. “If this happened how can we live under the protection of such this law state,” he said. Basit said, member of Ahmadi has driven out for several times, some of them evicted three times as well. He explain, in the new land, Ahmadi had to start living from zero. So far, head of the village welcome ahmadi members to live. Therefore, he gues that the attacker are from outside West Lombok.

Furthermore, Basit explain ahmadi members have tried to have dialogue with the people around so that they could live side by side. “We want to live in peace, we never create any harrassment, never doing anarchism. Since the time being, we want to live in peace. The problem is people who don’t want to live in peace with us,” he said.

Meanwhile, about 300 police officers keep guarding around Bumi Ketapang Indah Houses, West Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara province after it was attacked by thousands of mass. Up to now, 127 ahmadi member from 31 ahmadi families take refuge in Asrama Penampungan Transito (Transito dormitory). They will be taken into another place as the people of the village do not accept them.

**In addition, it was the third incident happened to Ahmadiyya members in Lombok. In 1994, ahmadi village in Bayan district destroyed by mass. In 1999, the incident happen again in Aikmal district, East Lombok. Whereas, ahmadi houses in Gegerung Village has been built since two and a half year ago (‘Head Of Ahmadiyya Indonesia: We Want To**



Live In Peace' 2006, *MetroTV* website, 8 February  
<http://www.thepersecution.org/world/indonesia/06/02/mt08i.html> – Accessed 29 August 2006  
– Attachment 16).

## List of Sources Consulted

### Internet Sources:

#### Government Information & Reports

US Department of State <http://www.state.gov/>

#### International News & Politics

*Jakarta Post* website. <http://www.thejakartapost.com>

#### Region Specific Link

Indonesia Matters website <http://www.indonesiamatters.com>

#### Search Engines

Google search engine <http://www.google.com.au/>

### Databases:

FACTIVA (news database)

BACIS (DIMA Country Information database)

REFINFO (IRBDC (Canada) Country Information database)

ISYS (RRT Country Research database, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, US Department of State Reports)

RRT Library Catalogue

## List of Attachments

1. 'Madura' (undated), Encarta World Atlas website  
[http://encarta.msn.com/encnet/features/mapcenter/map.aspx?TextLatitude=39.45&TextLongitude=-98.907&TextAltitude=0&TextSelectedEntity=39070&SearchEnc=false&MapStyle=Comprehensive&MapSize=Small&MapStyleSelectedIndex=0&searchTextMap=madura&MapStylesList=Comprehensive&ZoomOnMapClickCheck=on#map\\_frame](http://encarta.msn.com/encnet/features/mapcenter/map.aspx?TextLatitude=39.45&TextLongitude=-98.907&TextAltitude=0&TextSelectedEntity=39070&SearchEnc=false&MapStyle=Comprehensive&MapSize=Small&MapStyleSelectedIndex=0&searchTextMap=madura&MapStylesList=Comprehensive&ZoomOnMapClickCheck=on#map_frame) – Accessed 2 March 2007.
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8. RRT Country Research 2007, *Research Response IDN31267*, 5 February.
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11. 'Ahmadiyah gets fresh attack, house razed in Lombok' 2006, *Jakarta Post*, Asia Pacific Action website, 20 March <http://www.asia-pacific-action.org/southeastasia/indonesia/netnews/2006/ind11v10.htm#Ahmadiyah%20gets%20fresh%20attack,%20house%20razed%20in%20Lombok> – Accessed 5 March 2007
12. 'Mosque attack spells more trouble for Islamic sect in Indonesia' 2006, *Agence France Presse*, 27 October. (FACTIVA)
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<http://www.thejakartapost.com/yesterdaydetail.asp?fileid=20060929.G02> – Accessed 6 February 2007.
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15. US Department of State 2006, *International Religious Freedom Report for 2006 – Indonesia*, 15 September <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2006/71341.htm> – Accessed 19 September 2006.
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