**2 maids sentenced to jail in Singapore for financing terrorism in separate cases**



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SINGAPORE — Two Indonesian maids pleaded guilty to financing terrorism and were sentenced to jail on Wednesday (12 February).

Turmini, who only goes by one name, was jailed for three years and nine months after the 31-year-old maid admitted to providing $1,216.73 to terrorist group Jemaah Anshaut Daulah (JAD), which is affiliated to the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), over five months.

Turmini had used her employer, whom she worked for six years, to unwittingly transfer the monies to a bank account of a supporter of the terrorist group, whom she had believed she loved and wanted to marry.

The other maid, 36-year-old Retno Hernayani, was sentenced to one year and six months’ jail after she similarly remitted $140 to a supporter of the same terrorist group whom she loved and intended to marry. She had collected the money from other foreign domestic workers for the donation.

Retno and Turmini, who did not know each other, had pleaded guilty to two and three charges respectively under the Terrorism (Suppression of Financing) Act, with remaining charges of a similar nature taken into consideration for their sentencing.

**Turmini**

Turmini first met a supporter of the terrorist group, Edi Siswanto, whom she knew as Zubair, on Facebook in 2018.

Turmini knew Edi to be a supporter of the group and a member of the religious charity, the Aseer Cruee Centre (ACC). The ACC conducted donation drives through social media platforms such as Telegram and Facebook, and was used by JAD to finance its terrorist activities.

Edi told Turmini that if she wanted to go to heaven, she must support entities that were trying to uphold Islamic Law, such as ISIS and JAD, said Deputy Public Prosecutors (DPP) Cheng Yuxi, Nicholas Khoo, and Tan Hsiao Tien.

Turmini learnt more about ISIS through Edi’s Facebook posts. The two chatted almost daily.

“He further added the accused to WhatsApp groups that he created, in which ISIS-relate topics were discussed, and materials such as photographs and videos of killings done by ISIS were shared,” DPP Tan said.

In 2018, Turmini also befriended through Facebook a Rozaliany Rozz, who asked her to download Telegram to learn more about ISIS. Turmini ended up joining at least four different Telegram channels and a group that consisted of supporters of ISIS and JAD. Turmini also fell in love with Rozaliany and planned to marry him upon her return to her village in September 2019 after she finished her employment contract.

On 19 September and 3 October 2018 and 30 January last year, Turmini asked her employer to help her remit money to a bank account belonging to Edi. She lied that the bank account was a joint account between her mother and Edi, whom she said was her brother.

Turmini had transferred the monies to Edi intending for him to donate the money to ACC.

Retno was arrested and detained by the Internal Security Department (ISD) on 22 August last year and issued an Order of Detention under the Internal Security Act (ISA) in September.

**Retno Hernayani**

In 2012, Retno befriended a compatriot, Tuning Ambarwati, while taking the same MRT train. She became acquainted with ISIS after reading Tuning’s Facebook posts about the terrorist group in 2014. While she did not initially buy into ISIS ideology, she gradually became influenced by Tuning’s posts and had a change of heart in 2018.

She began supporting ISIS, believing that its battles were in the name of Islam against a coalition of other countries and were legitimate. She started posting articles relating to ISIS and viewed videos depicting innocent people being killed. Her pro-ISIS stance was reported by Facebook users and her accounts were eventually banned. She then joined at least three Telegram chats and five groups related to ISIS.

She also created two WhatsApp group chats for the purpose of spreading ISIS ideology and added three friends to the group.

Tuning introduced Retno to Fikri Zulfikar, an ISIS sympathiser, in April 2018. Retno, a divorcee with two children aged 13 and 15, said she started dating Fikri, who later became her fiance. She said that she set up a mineral water business with Fikri and wished to join him if he were to go to Syria for jihad.

Retno and her three friends decided to donate to ACC. She collected $100 from friends while she donated $40, and remitted the sums to Fikri.

Retno was arrested and detained by the ISD on 20 August last year and issued an Order of Detention under the ISA in September.

Three of Retno’s friends had also donated to ACC. Two of them had left Singapore and had not re-entered while one of them, Anindia Afiyantari, had been charged under the same Act in Singapore.

Mitigating for Retno, lawyer Mohamed Muzammil Mohamed said that Fikri had falsely preached the beliefs of and teachings of Islam, and had even visited her family in the village of Lampung in Indonesia to win her affection and confidence.

As for Turmini, the lawyer highlighted the “humanitarian aspect” in Turmini’s donations, which she believed would aid family members of JAD and ISIS members who were either killed or detained, and not strictly to be used for war.