

# RESILIENT MUSLIMS

SAFEGUARDING AGAINST  
RADICALISATION





# RESILIENT MUSLIMS

## SAFEGUARDING AGAINST RADICALISATION

### INTRODUCTION

Islam preaches moderation through the life and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. Following the Prophet's footsteps, Muslims are taught to embody the virtues of compassion and harmony. However, there are extremist groups that have committed acts of terror in the name of Islam and caused the loss of countless innocent lives, with the aim of tearing societies apart based on their false understanding of jihad.

Although no terrorist attack has taken place in our country, the threats of terrorism and radicalisation in Singapore are real. Extremist groups actively try to radicalise and recruit innocent and naïve individuals from all over the world, by spreading their dangerous and misguided ideologies online. Therefore, it is important to stay vigilant and protect the members of our community against the threat of radicalisation.

In 2016, the first edition of the booklet titled 'Resilient Families' was published to provide a guide for family members to understand the issue of radicalisation and know the signs that they should look out for.

The second edition of the booklet is a revised version with a new title 'Resilient Muslims'. It is specially created for the general Muslim community to understand the issue of radicalization and learn how to identify problematic behaviours and ideologies.

The booklet also teaches the community how to identify reliable sources of information online. In addition, a list of platforms to find credible religious information is included.

We hope that the second edition of the booklet will help the Muslim community in Singapore to be resilient to radicalization.



Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura  
(Islamic Religious Council of Singapore)

# UNDERSTANDING RELIGIOUS RADICALISATION







## WHAT IS RELIGIOUS RADICALISM?

Religious radicalism is not about being more committed to the teachings of Islam. In fact, a Muslim with a deep understanding of the Islamic faith will show greater commitment to values such as compassion (rahmah), and strive to contribute towards the greater well-being of society. Instead, religious radicalism promotes extremist beliefs which justify violence and terror to achieve certain political aims.

Individuals who are on the path of radicalisation may not necessarily engage in acts of violence. However, it may only be a matter of time before their radical ideologies turn into acts of terrorism.

## HOW CAN SOCIAL MEDIA LEAD TO SELF-RADICALISATION?

Before the advent of social media, religious radicalisation often took place within terrorist networks and groups. Today, the borderless nature of the Internet, as well as sophisticated social media tools and technologies, allow radical and extremist propaganda to reach anyone. Generally, all of us are more exposed and susceptible than ever before to the dangers of radicalisation.

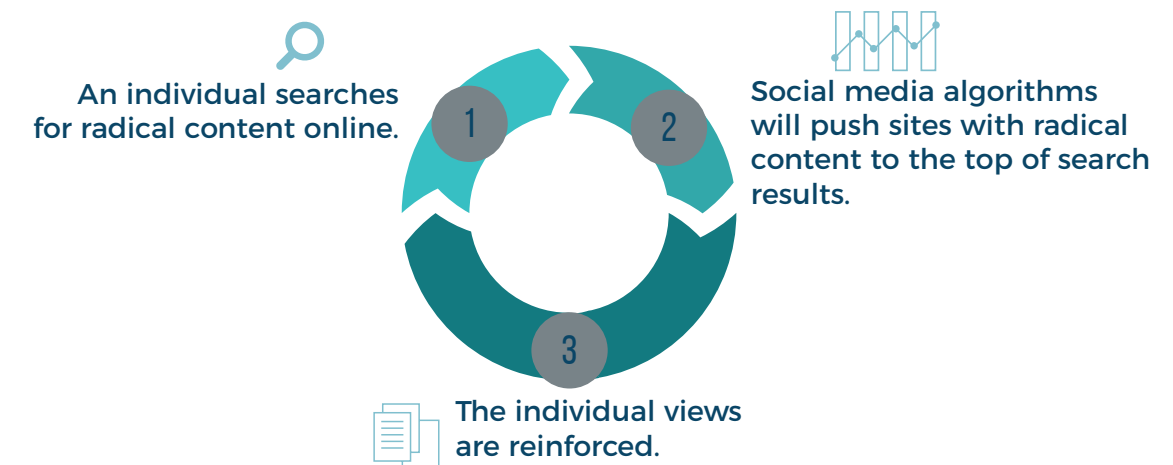
## WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA ALGORITHM?

Social media algorithm allows users to be familiarised only to similar content that they are interested in, reinforcing a specific view or orientation that an individual is inclined towards.

## HOW DOES SOCIAL MEDIA ALGORITHM AFFECT RELIGIOUS RADICALISATION?

When a user searches for extreme views online, social media algorithms would continually expose him/her to the relevant content.

Also, the user can easily connect with the individuals who are producing such content, including those who are already extreme in their views and beliefs.





## WHAT ARE THE **SELF-RADICALISED CASES** IN SINGAPORE?

Radical ideologies are spread by religious extremists through multiple online and offline platforms. These platforms provide an alternative to mainstream Islamic teachings and prey on individuals by provoking their emotions.

There have been several cases of self-radicalised individuals in Singapore. In some cases, members of the community were unaware of these individuals' online activities. In other cases, some were actually aware but did not take any action.

### **CASE A**



In 2017, a 39-year-old man was featured in a propaganda video by a terrorist group named ISIS, shorthand for the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. Before joining ISIS, he was reported to have left Singapore to work in the Middle East in 2014. He became radicalised during his time in the Middle East and then decided to travel to Syria to join ISIS.

### **CASE B**



In 2017, a 22-year-old female infant care assistant was detained under the Internal Security Act (ISA). She was found to be radicalized by ISIS propaganda online. Her radicalisation process started in 2013. In 2014, she started to share pro-ISIS materials on her social media accounts. In 2015, her family members came to know about her radical postings but did not report it to the authorities. As she became more radicalised, she actively planned to travel to Syria with her young child and had the desire to be the wife of a 'martyr'.

### **CASE C**



In 2017, a 19-year-old former full-time National Serviceman who served as a logistic assistant in the SAF was issued a Restriction Order (RO). He began to be radicalised after long exposure to the pro-ISIS online videos which he came across while he was watching online videos on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In mid-2016, he had the intention to fight for ISIS in Syria as he perceived the current war as a sectarian struggle between Sunnis and Shias. From August 2017 onwards, however, he became less convinced of ISIS' ideology and its violent tactics. He was subsequently issued an RO and is required to go through counseling which includes religious counseling.

*Source: Various media reports*

# PROTECTING AGAINST RADICALISATION





## ARE THERE OTHER BEHAVIOURS THAT I SHOULD BE CONCERNED ABOUT?

Apart from the problematic ideological leanings, we should also take note of certain behaviours such as:

Anyone can become radicalised. It is not exclusive to any religion, race, gender or nationality. Radicalised individuals have come from various socio-economic and educational backgrounds, and been in different states of mental health. However, there are certain beliefs and behaviours that make it more likely for someone to be radicalised.

## ARE THERE TYPICAL SIGNS OF RADICALISATION TO LOOK OUT FOR?

There are several behaviours that have been associated with the process of radicalisation. Anyone showing these behaviours requires early help and intervention:

- Cutting off ties with family members and the social circles in order to concentrate exclusively on a new circle of friends.
- Wearing or displaying symbols signifying connection with or support for recognised violent extremist groups.
- Insistently preaching to others (attempting to get them to adopt certain religious or ideological beliefs).

*Adapted from The Centre for The Prevention of Radicalisation Leading to Violence (CPRLV), Canada*

- 1 Displaying contempt and hatred for individuals or groups on the grounds of religious doctrine
- 2 Expressing polarising views related to what one considers the absolute truth, or displaying paranoia or extreme distrust of society at large or specific groups
- 3 Holding an absolute belief in conspiracy theories and discourse
- 4 Undertaking intensive and exclusive study of materials related to a particular ideology or belief
- 5 Legitimising the use of violence to defend a cause or ideology
- 6 Becoming obsessed with the end of the world or messianic views

## WHAT ARE SOME **DOCTRINAL EXPRESSIONS** THAT MAY BE **PROBLEMATIC**?

### **TAKFIRI**

- They consider anyone who disagrees with their interpretation of the faith as heretics and label them as kafir (disbelievers).
- They excommunicate other Muslims and banish them from the fold of Islam.
- They resort to absolutist outlook where only they are the righteous group and others can be fought, including through violent means, if necessary.

### **HIJRAH**

- They propagate that it is mandatory for Muslims to migrate to a specific land where they consider as a pristine 'Islamic State'.
- They consider living as minorities in plural societies as forbidden and therefore, one cannot participate in the political process of the nation-state that they are residing.

### **AL-WALA' WAL BARA'**

- They oppose the idea that Muslims and non-Muslims can co-exist peacefully.
- They propagate hatred against non-Muslims and reject any form of social relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims.
- They promote distrust and segregation between Muslim and non-Muslims.

### **JIHAD**

- They believe that armed jihad and violence are necessary.



These doctrinal expressions are not exhaustive as extremists also propagate many other problematic doctrines and concepts.

It is important to be critical in understanding religious doctrines and concepts. Do ensure that you clarify with our ARS asatizah should you or someone you know come across questionable doctrines.

# TAKE ACTION: BE PROACTIVE








## WHERE CAN I GO TO SEEK PROPER RELIGIOUS EDUCATION?

There are various religious education platforms you can refer to for appropriate religious guidance in Singapore.

### Engage Our Asatizah

- Our credible asatizah are equipped with relevant knowledge and skills to provide religious education and spiritual guidance to our community.
- Ensure that the religious teachers that you engage are accredited under the Asatizah Recognition Scheme (ARS).

Do visit the following website to check for the list of ARS asatizah:

 <https://www.muis.gov.sg/ARS-and-IECP>

## WHERE CAN I GO TO SEEK HELP?

If you discover anyone who exhibits any of the traits mentioned earlier, do take action and seek immediate assistance for proper intervention.

You may refer to the following platforms and channels for assistance and support:

### Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG)



1. RRG Helpline: 1800-7747747



2. RRG App for IOS/Android

Have a chat with the RRG asatizah to clarify issues related to extremism and terrorism through this app. Receive notifications from the RRG and make a booking for a visit to RRG Resource & Counselling centre.

If you need to speak to a religious teacher, you may contact Muis at following:



1. Muis hotline: 6359 1199



2. Email: [info@muiss.gov.sg](mailto:info@muiss.gov.sg)







## Explore Islamic Learning with Us and Our Partners

- We have various Islamic learning programmes that cater to different age groups and multiple needs of the community.
- Check out the following options for your Islamic learning needs:

### 1 Mosque Islamic Learning Programmes

The **aLIVE** programmes are designed to serve students at different levels such as Kids, Tweens, Teens, & Youths with relevant and practical religious knowledge as Singaporean Muslims.

Find out more about the aLIVE programme by connecting with them here:

 <https://www.muis.gov.sg>  [aLIVE.SG](https://www.facebook.com/aLIVE.SG)  [alive.sg](https://www.instagram.com/alive.sg)

The **'Adult Islamic Learning' (ADIL)** is a programme specially catered for adult Muslim learners in Singapore. ADIL provides students with religious knowledge that is not only credible but relevant to the Singapore context.

- ADIL offers structured programmes from basic level to intermediate and advanced levels.
- ADIL also offers an interactive learning experience between students and asatizah.

Find out more about ADIL programme here:

 [bit.ly/ADILsingapore](https://bit.ly/ADILsingapore)  [ADIL SG](https://www.facebook.com/ADILSG)  [muisadil.sg](https://www.instagram.com/muisadil.sg)

### 2 Private Islamic Education Providers

Beyond programmes offered by Muis, there are also many other local religious education programmes offered by private Islamic education providers.

- Check out the following link for the list of our accredited providers: <https://www.muis.gov.sg/ARS-and-IECP>
- For further information on guidance on your Islamic learning journey, do e-mail us at [iecp@muiss.gov.sg](mailto:iecp@muiss.gov.sg).







## Access Our Online Learning Platforms

There is a plethora of Islamic religious content available on the internet and social media platforms. However, not all of these religious content provides sound religious guidance for Muslims in Singapore.

We need to be cautious when attaining religious guidance online. Some of these religious content may be propagated with the ill intention of causing disharmony and distrust. At the same time, some of these content may be unreliable and contain false religious guidance and disinformation.

We have various online Islamic learning channels that you can refer for your Islamic learning.

### 1 Office of the Mufti Online (OOM)

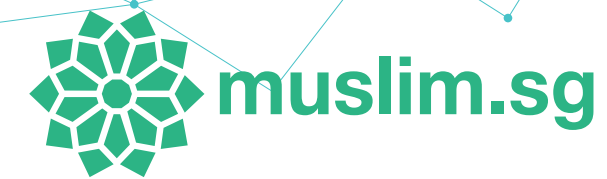
The official website of Office of the Mufti (OOM) provides access to Fatwas (religious edict), Friday Khutbah (sermons), Irsyad (religious guidance) and frequently asked questions (FAQs).

- If you wish to consult the OOM, you may drop us an e-mail at [info@muis.gov.sg](mailto:info@muis.gov.sg).
- You may also download free e-books issued by OOM and access it at <https://www.muis.gov.sg/officeofthemufti>

Find out more about Office of the Mufti by connecting with them here:



### 2 Muslim.sg



Discover. Learn. Inspire.

**Muslim.sg** is a one-stop platform that aims to inspire and empower Singapore Muslims through providing bespoke Muslim-centred content.

You can read interesting articles, download free e-books, view interactive videos and listen to podcasts.



visit

[www.muslim.sg](http://www.muslim.sg)

for more



Muslim SG



muslim.sg



muslimsg\_



MuslimSg





## GET TO KNOW ASATIZAH YOUTH NETWORK



## MUSLIM.SG POP UP EVENTS

Muslim.Sg organises several pop up events every year. Our pop up events offer our social media followers the opportunities to meet and engage members of the Asatizah Youth Network (AYN).

These pop up events create offline connections with our social media followers and bring online engagement to a physical space.


Ask, discuss and learn from AYN on selected relevant topics at every pop up session.


Do look out for any updates on future pop up events through our social media platforms. Subscribe to our mailing list to get exclusive invitations!


### Enjoy creative and relevant religious content on the go

Asatizah Youth Network (AYN) comprises dynamic religious teachers who are trained in digital media outreach, counselling and youth resilience work.



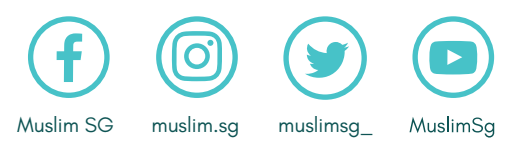
- 

Feel free to find us on our social media platforms and drop us a message, anytime!
- 

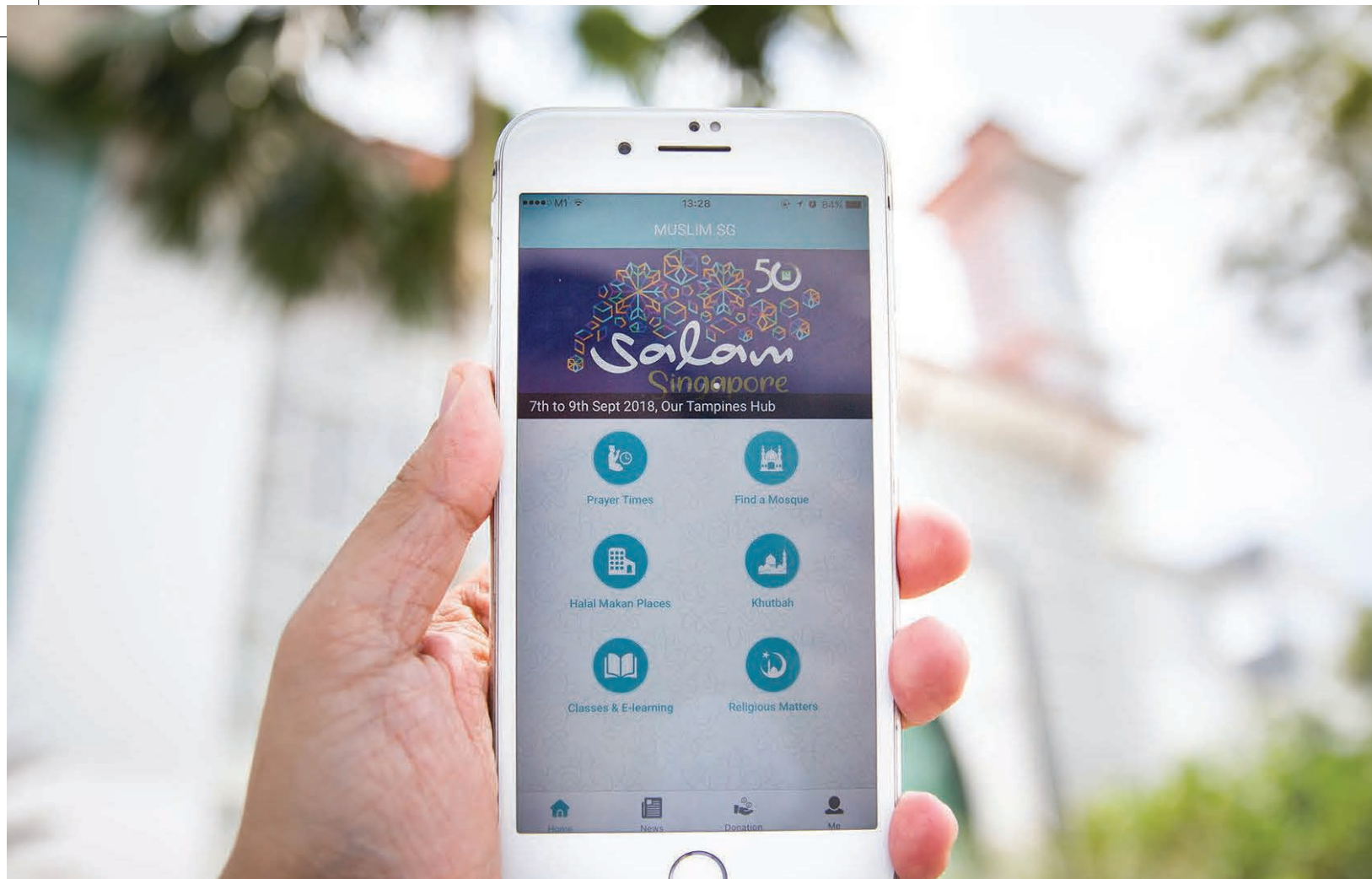
Attend Muslim.sg pop up events and get to know us!
- 

Get in touch with our content online. Watch our videos and bite-sized sharing!

FOLLOW US:







 **MuslimSG**

Download now for Free!

Prayer Times | Locate Nearest Mosque  
Halal Certified Makan Places | Latest News

Great features, with more coming soon!



SCAN TO DOWNLOAD



Download at <https://muslimsg.app/download>

## HOW DO WE NURTURE RESILIENCE IN RELIGIOUS LEARNING?





# HOW DO WE DEVELOP INFORMATION LITERACY?

Islam places special emphasis on the need to verify and authenticate information. The Islamic tradition of knowledge calls for an individual to be a responsible learner by verifying the authenticity of information that he/she attains.



The National Library Board launched a campaign to promote the importance of information searching and discernment, called S.U.R.E. It distils key Information Literacy (IL) concepts into 4 simple ways:

## Source

Look at its origins. Is it trustworthy?

## Understand

Know what you're reading. Search for clarity.

## Research

Dig deeper. Go beyond the initial source.

## Evaluate

Find the balance. Exercise fair judgement.

# HOW DO WE FIGHT FAKE NEWS?

The issue of disinformation has existed since the time of Prophet Muhammad p.b.u.h. Prophet Muhammad p.b.u.h would often verify information upon receiving it. The Quran too has mentioned the importance of being critical upon receiving information. As mentioned in Surah al-Hujurat verse 6:

*Meaning: "O you who believe! If a troublemaker brings you any news, investigate, lest you harm a people out of ignorance and become regretful for what you have done."*

This verse highlights that information must be verified before receiving it. It is essential for the Muslim community to be cognizant and critical when confronted with information that seems to be dubious.

## DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN FAKE INFORMATION AND FACTS

In building resilience among the Muslim community, it is highly encouraged for us to practice fact check to verify the authenticity of the information online. Below are some questions we can ask ourselves before taking in information and share the information with others.

- **Who** is the author/publisher of this content?
- **When** was the information published?
- **What** is the agenda of this content? Does it have a biased perspective?
- **Why** am I reading this content?

### WHO?

Find out about the author/publisher to verify their credibility.

### WHEN?

Always ensure that the information is up-to-date.

### WHAT?

Authors may create content to manipulate its readers to agree with their opinion. Ensure that the content is not put out of context. Cross-checking across multiple sources would be useful.

### WHY?

Be aware of your own bias. Remember to be objective when consuming information online.

<https://www.medialiteracycouncil.sg/Best-Practices/Authenticating-Information>

<http://www.nlb.gov.sg/sure/sure-campaign/>



## WHAT ARE THE **AVENUES** FOR INDIVIDUALS TO **CHANNEL THEIR ZEAL AND ENTHUSIASM?**

The Muslim community plays an important role in supporting one another to cultivate positive values such as resilience in dealing with contemporary challenges, inclusiveness in forging peaceful relations with others and contributiveness in seeking the common good for society.

Together with our friends and family, we can revive the spirit of volunteerism and channel our enthusiasm to help those in need. Let's encourage each other to participate in and contribute to various humanitarian and social causes.



Multiple community-led projects are available for the Muslim community to help those in need.

There are various local-based organisations and foundations that you can refer to:





# RESILIENT MUSLIMS

SAFEGUARDING AGAINST RADICALISATION



**Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura**  
(Islamic Religious Council of Singapore)