



Yishun MRT Station Reconnaissance: Jemaah Islamiyah

“Yishun MRT Station Reconnaissance: Jemaah Islamiyah” Source: Government of Singapore



[According to the Singapore government, sometime in 1997, Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) operative Mohamed Khalim bin Jaffar conceived a plan to attack U.S. military personnel at the Yishun MRT station in Singapore. In preparation, he conducted video surveillance of the target, with fellow JI operative Hashim bin Abas providing English commentary. Below is the full transcript of the surveillance video,¹ discovered in the rubble of Al-Qaida leader Mohammed Atef's house in Afghanistan, as well as images of handwritten notes on the target.]

Full Transcript of JI Casing Videotape Recovered in Afghanistan

“This is the place where US military personnels [sic] will be dropped off from a bus and they will walk towards the MRT Station and this is one of the regular buses that carry the military personnels [sic] from Sembawang to Yishun MRT Station. Those personnels [sic] after they alighted from the bus, they will move towards the MRT Station, as you can see from the far left, the people walking towards the MRT Station, they will walk the same way as other people.”

“Now being zoomed in is a bicycle bay where the train commuters parked their bicycles in the morning before they board the train and they will pick it up later in the evening after work and there are also some motorcycles being parked there. This is a sight of the Yishun MRT Station as viewed from the opposite side of the road at Blk 146, I'm sorry, Blk 152. This is a bicycle bay.”

“There are some motorcycles being parked there also, this is the pickup point or the drop off point, where people were dropped from their vehicles or being picked up and this is where the US military personnels [sic] will line up to board their bus.”

“This view is from Yishun Central Road opposite Blk 203 next to Golden Village, now you can see is the NPP or the Neighbourhood Police Post which is located at Blk 203, located at Blk 204. This is the traffic junction where the Yishun MRT Station is located. This is the junction of Yishun Ave 2 and Yishun Ave 5. This is the bicycle bay as viewed from the footpath that leads towards the MRT Station. You will notice that some of the boxes that placed on the motorcycles, these are the same type of boxes that we intend to use. Beyond this motorcycle, you can see somebody waiting or stand beside a car, that is the pickup point where those personnels [sic] will queue up to board the bus or alight from the bus. This is a taxi stand, our bicycle can be parked there also, either bicycle or motorcycle. This is a view of the pickup point from the rear, there is a tree next to the bicycle bay, this is the place where the military personnels [sic] will alight from the

¹ Note: A three-minute video clip was released to the media and is available on the NEFA Foundation website.

bus or queue up for the bus. As you can see the distance between the pickup point and the bicycle bay is about 10 metres. This is the Yishun MRT Station viewed from Blk 743 in Map 49, Area A2, that is the pickup point. That is the traffic junction of Yishun Ave 2 and Yishun Ave 5, the block right ahead is Blk 204 where earlier we can see the Neighbourhood Police Post is located. This video is taken at about 4.00 in the afternoon. That is a bicycle bay, bicycles and motorcycles being parked there.”

“The military personnels [sic] from the wharves to Yishun MRT station and the bus will travel by this road at this traffic junction, it will turn right into Yishun St 11, you can find it in the Map 49, Area A1. This is the petrol kiosk located at the junction of Yishun Ave 5 and Yishun Street 11. This is taken from Blk 151, this is the pickup point. The same road, this is the junction of Yishun Ave 5 and the Yishun Ring Road, you can find this junction at Map 49, Area A1, right at the top. This is the traffic junction where the bus normally stops before it turns right, turns left towards Sembawang. So when, the bus travels from the MRT Station and turns into Yishun St 11, it will turn at the junction of Yishun St 11 and Yishun Ring Road, turning right, it will hit this traffic junction. That is a temple with about 1.5 metre high wall, that is the entrance of the temple where many vehicles parked there so it will not be suspicious to have a motorcycle or a bicycle there.”

“The pillars of the MRT track are very very solid. You will notice that there is a drainage hole, it might be useful. Another drainage hole right at the junction. At this junction, the bus will turn left. This is the road along Admiralty Road East, from here you can see the residential area of the US military personnels [sic]. On the right side, beyond this, are the Sembawang Wharves where the ships normally anchored for the test, now you can see the residential area of the US military personnels [sic]. This area is from Ottawa Road, Dunbar Road, Admiralty Road East, Pakistan Road and Sembawang Road.”

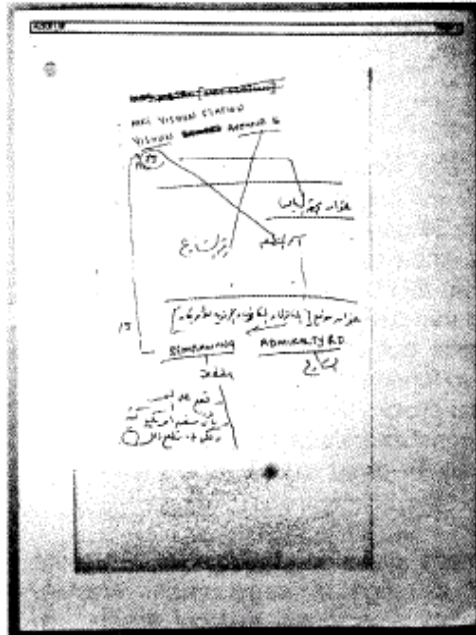
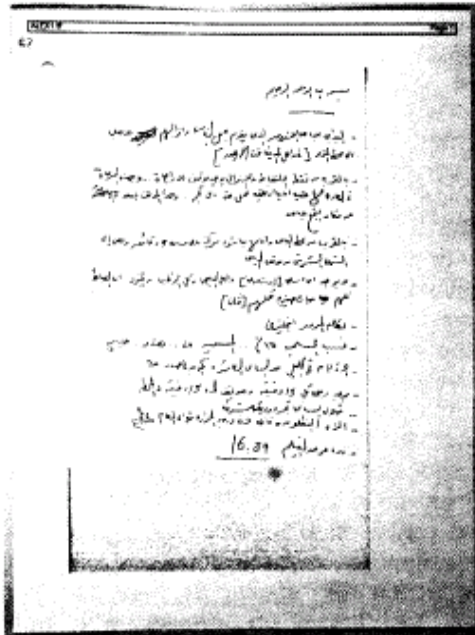
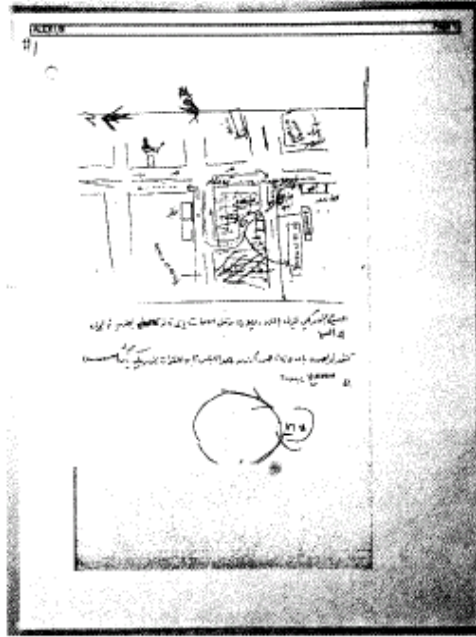
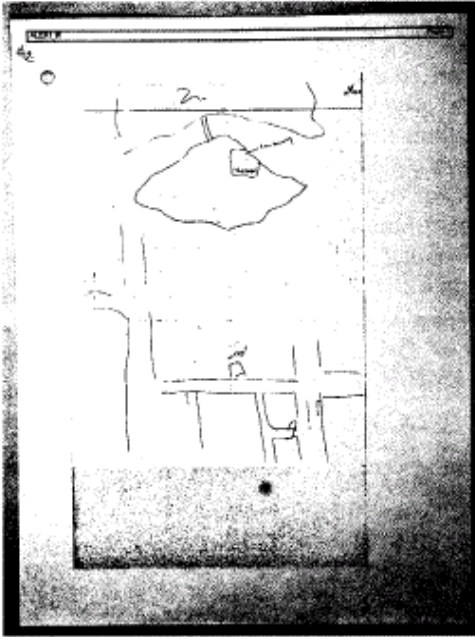
“Now beyond this fence is a playground where normally those US military personnels [sic] will gather to have recreation. We are travelling along Sembawang Road approaching the Junction of Admiralty Road East, you can see these buildings, these are the residential buildings for the US military personnels [sic]. This is Dunbar Road, now this is the Eagles’ Club, now we are turning into Admiralty Road East and this is the Eagles’ Club located at Pakistan Road, this is Pakistan Road. This is the residential area. Eagle’s Club is a mess for military personnels [sic], this area is privately owned, owned by the US government.”²

Notes & Drawings on the Reconnaissance of Yishun MRT Station

“From what can be deciphered, the hand-written notes (in Arabic) provided a brief description of the Yishun MRT Station and nearby facilities. Among other things, the notes highlighted the existence of an underpass leading to the MRT station, the nearby bus interchange and the traffic system which is English-based. The notes also mentioned the Singapore temperature (32 degrees). There was also mention of some ‘movement’ (unidentified) every 15 minutes. The notes were accompanied by 2 drawings and a diagram. The first drawing provided the general location of the Yishun MRT station in relation to the rest of Singapore and Johor. The second drawing gave the detailed location of the Yishun station, including the approach roads and nearby Police post and shopping centre. It also showed arrows running along Yishun Ave 2, down into Yishun Ave 5, Yishun Street 11, Yishun Ring Road and back to Yishun Ave 2, in the

² Source: Singapore Ministry of Home Affairs.

opposite direction, suggesting the looping movement of a person or vehicle. The diagram is unclear but make references to Yishun MRT Station, Yishun Avenue 6, Sembawang and Admiralty Road.”³



Four pieces of notes found in Afghanistan and conveyed by the US to Singapore in December 2001. These notes contained information on the Yishun Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) station and the shuttle bus service which ferried the US military personnel to the station. The note in Arabic contained information like the frequency of the shuttle bus service and the traffic system in Singapore.

³ Source: Singapore Ministry of Home Affairs. Note: The images of the handwritten notes and the caption can be found in “The Jemaah Islamiyah Arrests and the Threat of Terrorism,” White Paper Presented to Parliament by Command of the Republic of Singapore, January 7, 2003.