

HOW HE GOT AWAY

CHONG CHEE KIN & TEH JOO LIN piece together how Mas Selamat could have escaped from Whitley Road Detention Centre from both the Committee of Inquiry's executive summary and Minister Wong Kan Seng's statement to Parliament.



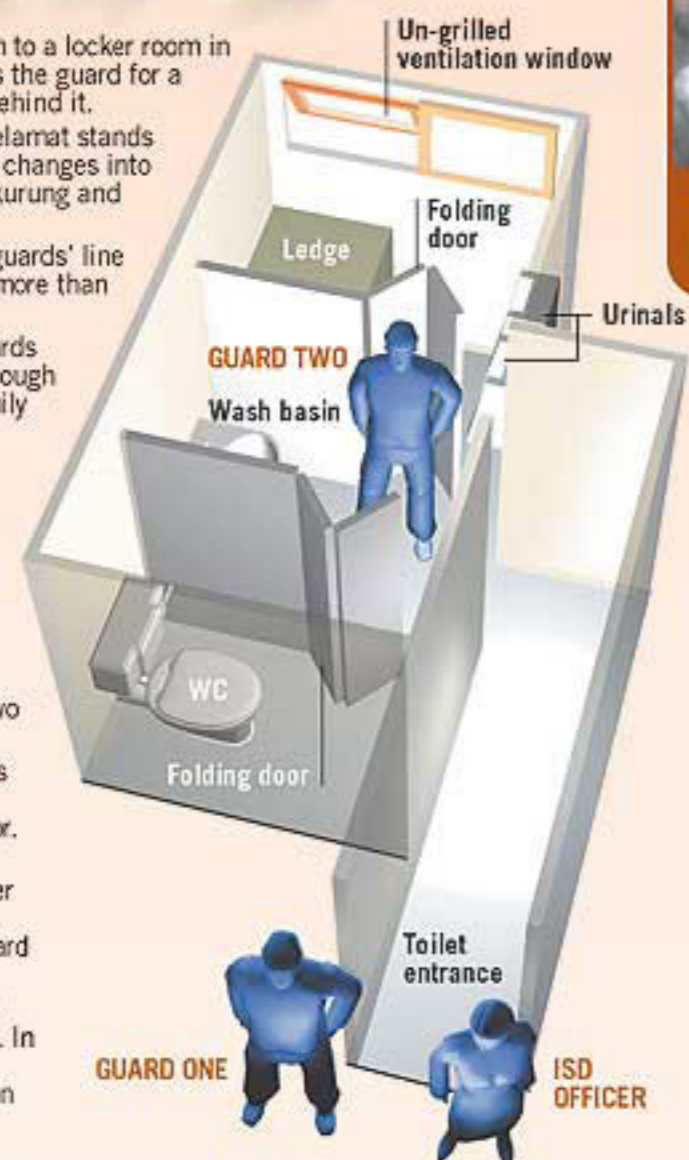
3.30pm

» A female ISD junior officer calls the Guard Commander to arrange for Mas Selamat to be taken out of his cell for his weekly family visit.
» His wife and children were due to visit him between 4pm and 4.30pm.



3.35pm

» Two Gurkha guards escort him to a locker room in the Locker Block, where he asks the guard for a curtain so that he can change behind it.
» As there is no curtain, Mas Selamat stands behind a column of lockers and changes into civilian clothes – a yellow baju kurung and greenish-grey pants.
» At this time, he is out of the guards' line of sight. He might have put on more than one layer of civilian garb.
» After he changes, the two guards and the ISD officer lead him through an enclosed passage to the Family Visitation Block.



3.54pm

» Mas Selamat enters the toilet next to the visiting room to freshen up. Guard One stands outside the toilet door. Guard Two follows him into the toilet.
» After shaving and combing his hair, Mas Selamat goes into a urinal cubicle and shuts the door. He flips his pants over the door.
» Guard Two hears running water from a tap. Thinking that Mas Selamat has taken too long, Guard Two alerts Guard One.
» Both report to the female ISD officer waiting outside the toilet. In turn, she asks Mas Selamat's assistant case officer to check on the detainee.



The window has two panels. Grilles were to have been installed but weren't because of a misunderstanding between the ISD and the vendor. When this was discovered, the centre's superintendent asked that the handle of the window be sawn off.

4.05pm

» The assistant case officer kicks open the door of the cubicle.
» It is empty. The window is open.
» The centre's guard room is alerted and the entire Whitley Road complex locked down.



» The Committee of Inquiry believes that Mas Selamat squeezed himself out of the window and went down a water pipe on the outside of the toilet.

» A bag of seven rolls of toilet paper was found on the ground, believed to have been used to break his fall.



» They are not sure how he escaped from the centre, but believe he ran 20m from where he had jumped out of the window to a part of the perimeter where the double security fences converge with an enclosed staircase and walkway.

» Mas Selamat scaled the fence, climbed onto the roof of the walkway and jumped over the perimeter fences.
» Two CCTV cameras had been mounted there but were not recording as they were in the midst of being upgraded.

49 seconds How long it takes to get from window to freedom, based on a re-enactment of his possible escape route.

2 minutes 44 seconds How long it takes to get from outside the perimeter fences to the Pan-Island Expressway, using the shortest and most direct way.

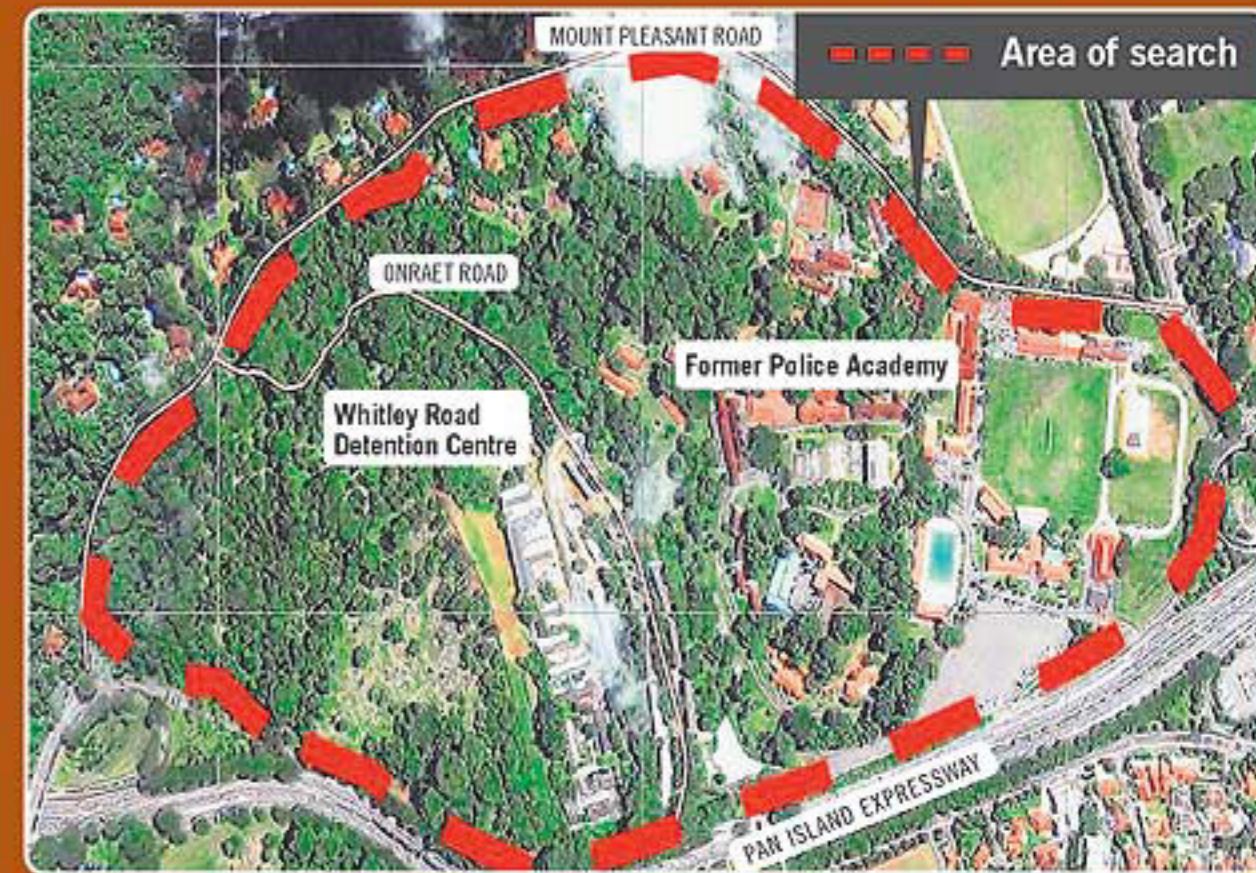
THE LAPSES

- » The window in the toilet had no grilles
- » Mas Selamat was out of the guards' line of sight twice
- » When the guard in the toilet thought Mas Selamat was taking too long in the urinal, he went out to alert the others, wasting precious minutes
- » The perimeter fence met at a point with a walled staircase and walkway
- » CCTV cameras in the area were not recording as they were being upgraded

THE TRICKS

- » Wore more than one layer of civilian clothes
- » Closed the door to urinal cubicle so guards could not see him
- » Hung his pants over the cubicle door as a decoy
- » Turned the tap on and let the water run

POST-ESCAPE



» **4.10pm** Gurka guards set up a cordon along Onraet Road.

» **4.20pm** ISD officers and Gurkha guards set up road blocks in the immediate vicinity, such as along Mount Pleasant Road.

» **4.30pm** Counter-terrorism units at the checkpoints are alerted. Soon after, all the land, air and sea checkpoints are locked down with full checks.

» **4.35pm** Gurkha trackers arrive to comb the wooded areas around the Whitley Road complex. Five minutes later, the area cordoned off had reached almost 44 football fields in size.

» **8pm** Singapore Armed Forces units activated to support the search operations. 8pm was also the time when the Government sent out the alert to the media/public.



Jemaah Islamiah (JI) leader Mas Selamat Kastari, 47, was captured in Indonesia in January 2006 with the help of security forces there.

The terrorist, who had planned to crash a plane into Changi Airport, was then detained at the Whitley Road Detention Centre under the Internal Security Act until his escape on Feb 27. He was last seen by the guards wearing a yellow baju kurung and greenish-grey pants.