



Terrorism Monitor

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Portrait of Hezbollah leader in Turkey

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AFGHAN TALIBAN REJECT CLAIMS THEY ARE LED BY AL-QAEDA

An important interview with senior Taliban spokesman Zabihollah Mujahid attracted little attention in Western media despite indications in the interview of several important new directions in Taliban policy (Afghan Islamic Press, April 21). Most notably, Zabihollah appeared to distance the Taliban movement from al-Qaeda. Repudiating the suggestion that the resistance in Afghanistan was led by al-Qaeda rather than the Taliban, Zabihollah declared; “The ongoing resistance against the foreigners in Afghanistan is a pure Afghan resistance. The commanders and leaders of this resistance are Afghans and everything to do with this struggle is led by Afghans... The leader of our resistance is known and he is Mullah Omar Mujahid. Local commanders in each and every province and region are known.” Western media and governments have long regarded the two movements as inseparable.

While conceding the presence of foreign fighters in the Taliban ranks, the spokesman compared the situation to the anti-Soviet jihad of the 1980s, when many foreign fighters were found in the ranks of the mujahideen; “It was obvious that the struggle was a purely Afghan movement. The current ongoing jihad and resistance is also a pure Afghan affair.” Zabihollah ended his comments on al-Qaeda by suggesting that international concerns about the terrorist group had nothing to do with the program and operations of the Afghan Taliban, saying “We are not responsible for the affairs of other parties or the world. We are only concerned about Afghanistan. It is up to al-Qaeda and the rest of the world

whether they resolve their problems or not. Such issues have nothing to do with the Taliban.”

A second shift in Taliban policy was outlined in Zabihollah's remarks on Taliban inclusiveness. The post-invasion movement is generally regarded as exclusive to Afghanistan's Sunni Muslim Pashtun tribes, but Zabihollah insists, “This is a wrong opinion. The Taliban is composed of all the tribes and nations of Afghanistan. The Taliban appoint their commanders in each province and district from among the inhabitants of those areas. The only condition is that the individual must be a Muslim and Afghan.” Most surprising is Zabihollah's claim that the Taliban has a growing following in Afghanistan's Shi'a communities, despite a long history of Taliban animosity for Shi'ism, as expressed in a number of massacres of Shi'a civilians. “[The Shi'i] also do not want the foreigners and infidels to dominate Afghanistan. Therefore, they are also fighting against the foreigners in the ranks of Taliban.”

Lastly, Zabihollah commented on the expansion of the Taliban's war to parts of northern Afghanistan previously considered stable. “The northern provinces are also part of Afghanistan. When the Taliban declared jihad against the forgoers [of religion] a few years back, some people in the northern provinces came under the foreigners' influence and were saying that the Taliban were not mujahideen but terrorists, and that the foreign forces were in Afghanistan to help the people. But now people in the north have also realized that the Taliban are fighting and performing jihad just for the sake of Almighty Allah.”

The Taliban spokesman said that suicide bombings would play an important part in the Taliban's offensive in northern Afghanistan. The expansion of the war to northern Afghanistan will help nullify the impact of the influx of new American troops to Afghanistan while relieving pressure on Taliban operations in other parts of the country. Suicide bombers will also play a role in disrupting the upcoming national elections. During the month of April there were a number of suicide bombings and ambushes of national security forces in the previously secure northern provinces of Balkh, Kunduz, Samangan and Baghlan (*Cheragh* [Kabul], April 21, Afghan Islamic Press, April 12; Voice of Jihad, April 12, April 19).

SOMALIA'S AL-SHABAAB THREATENS TO OCCUPY NORTH-EASTERN KENYA

Kenyan officials claim to have received warnings from al-Qaeda and Somalia's al-Shabaab movement that they intend to invade Kenya's North Eastern Province to annex the region to Somalia and implement shari'a law. Provincial Commissioner Kimeu Maingi expressed concern at the influx of small arms into the dominantly ethnic-Somali region and claimed that the recent kidnappings of Kenyan citizens at the border town of Mandera was intended to provoke a reaction from the Kenyan government. Maingi noted it was unjustifiable for provincial residents to keep demanding food aid from the central government when they are exchanging their livestock for arms, adding that the government had moved extra troops up to the border as part of its continuing disarmament campaign (Kenya Broadcasting Corporation, April 26).

Foreign Affairs Assistant Minister Richard Onyonka declared al-Shabaab had little chance of carrying out its plan, stating, “Kenya is a sovereign country and no person or country will come and threaten the government. We have the capacity and ability to stave off any incursions from anybody else” (Capital FM Radio [Nairobi], April 27; *Daily Nation* [Nairobi], April 27).

The Somali government of President Shaykh Sharif Shaykh Ahmad condemned the threats, noting al-Shabaab's opposition to government efforts to implement shari'a in Somalia. Somali Minister of Commerce Abdirashid Irro Muhammad said, “Really, we are very sorry and we condemn such actions. Kenya is our neighbor state and our brotherly country, and they have their own constitution. So there is no reason that al-Shabaab should attack them and endorse the Shari'a law... They are getting orders from the outside Islamic world and really they are not interested whether we will implement the Shari'a law or not” (VOA, April 28). So far, al-Shabaab has not commented on the alleged threats, nor has the Kenyan government released the text of the warning.

The chairman of al-Shabaab's “Islamic administration” in Gedo, Shaykh Isma'il Adan Haji, recently attacked the government's introduction of shari'a, describing it as an “apostate regime's” unacceptable attempt to “dupe the people” (Shabelle Media Network, April 26).

Kenya has received threats from al-Shabaab before, in connection with its provision of military training for

Somali government troops, its practice of extraditing Somali nationals to Ethiopia for questioning by U.S. intelligence services and its declared intention to send a battalion of Kenyan troops to join the undermanned African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) (see *Terrorism Focus*, November 26, 2008).

Fighting between ethnic Somali clans in the Mandera region of Kenya's North-Eastern Province intensified last fall. Kenyan intelligence sources claimed that the arms and funding that the rival groups were receiving from allies across the Somali border constituted a threat to national security (NTV [Nairobi], October 30, 2008; see *Terrorism Focus*, November 5, 2008).

Rival Islamist Groups Vie for the Support of Southeast Turkey's Conservative Kurdish Population

By Wladimir van Wilgenburg

The enigmatic figure of Fethullah Gulen, a Turkish-born U.S. resident who runs an extensive Islamic movement in Turkey, has been warned by the Kurdish Hezbollah (Hezbollahi Kurdi - HK) against making further statements critical of Hezbollah. [1] Gulen recently argued that the Kurdistan Workers Party (Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan - PKK) and other terrorist organizations were formed by the Turkish "deep state," but went out of control. The Turkish "deep state" (*derin devlet*) is a clandestine ultra-nationalist alliance alleged to include notable members of the Turkish media, armed forces, judiciary, organized crime and security services. According to Gulen:

Some circles in Turkey [i.e. The Deep State]... formed these terrorist organizations themselves. These organizations spun out of the control of these circles due to a conflict of interests related to drug and arms trafficking. Then another team of brigands was formed in opposition to these organizations, such as Hezbollah.

Gulen added that those forces behind the formation of the terrorist organizations within Turkey "may now be plotting new conspiracies in Turkey" (*Today's Zaman*, April 9).

In issuing its warning, the Hezbollah Press Office declared the movement has abandoned violence, though

some unrelated groups could use their name for violent actions: "This time the Fethullah Gulen group is trying to ignite an atmosphere of conflict. Gulen and his group are aware of the fact that they cannot act in this dangerous manner..." (*Haberkapisi*, April 21).

Hezbollahi Kurdi is a militant Islamist organization founded by the late Huseyin Velioglu (killed by Turkish security forces in 2000) with the goal of establishing a Kurdish Islamist state (see *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, March 12). Though it had a short alliance with the PKK in 1993 against the Turkish state, Hezbollah was allegedly used by the Turkish security forces against the PKK and Kurdish activists during the 1990s, when HK became known for the torture and murder of Kurds that it believed to be in favour of creating an independent socialist Kurdish state.

Referring to the PKK's Marxist-Leninist ideological roots, Hezbollah has declared it is firmly against "PKK communism." Hezbollah has also broadcast a YouTube video in which the ethnic-Kurdish Democratic Society Party (Demokratik Toplum Partisi - DTP) was depicted as an anti-Islamic organization. [2] The Kurdish nationalist DTP can be seen as the political branch of the PKK, similar to the Irish Sinn Fein party in Ireland, which was the political branch of the IRA.

Since 2004, Hezbollah claims to have abandoned its armed struggle and to have reinvented itself as a charity organization. The movement has also undergone ideological changes – it now rejects the Turkish state and pursues Kurdish nationalist objectives (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, December 29, 2006). Hezbollah now engages in activities similar to those of the Gulen movement, which focuses on education, religious inclusiveness and the inclusion of modern science in Islam. Hezbollah has established its own non-profit organizations, media, trade activities and even its own music groups, such as the female *Peygamber Sevdalıları* ("Those who love the Prophet"), a group that performed at a Hezbollah meeting in Diyarbakir in March. [3]

Turkish security forces apparently believe that Hezbollah is not as far removed from militancy as it claims. On April 27, Turkish security forces rounded up at least 20 members of Hezbollah's "Ilim" branch during raids on Ilim bookstores, offices and houses in Elazig and Malatya (*Today's Zaman*, April 28). This followed earlier roundups in March and February (*Zaman*, March 17; Dogan News Agency, February 18). On April 21, eleven Hezbollah members were indicted on charges of "establishing and leading an armed terrorist

organization.” According to the indictment, Hezbollah has tried to “conceal its real face” through a change of strategy since 2003:

It has been understood that the terrorist organization tried to conceal its real face that had been exposed, especially on 17 January 2000 [the day Hezbollah founder Huseyin Velioglu was killed]. The organization tried to achieve this goal by appearing to show interest in the people’s problems and by introducing its activities as innocent activities. It tried to recruit new grass roots [members] through activities that would be praised by the entire community (such as soup kitchens, the Palestinian issue, mass rain prayers, etc.)... (Anatolia, April 23).

With an estimated two million followers, the Gülen movement has close ties with the current Islam-oriented Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi – AKP) government. Gülen’s followers have created a huge network of businesses, foundations, charities, and media outlets, including the popular daily newspapers *Zaman* (in Turkish) and *Today’s Zaman* (in English), as well as the television channel Samanyolu (“Silk Road”) (see *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, November 21, 2007).

As a result of the new policies of the Hezbollah organization, the influential Gülen movement and Hezbollah have become enemies. Both compete in Turkey’s ethnic- Kurdish southeast for the support of conservative Kurdish Muslims. Hezbollah has become increasingly active in the region, organizing mass political and religious meetings in Diyarbakir (January 4 and March 8) and in Batman (April 12). During pro-Palestinian demonstrations, Hezbollah members warned against the influence of Israel and America. Gülen is certainly aware of these Hezbollah-organized events in which thousands of Kurdish Muslims participated.

In February there were clashes between Hezbollah and PKK supporters in Adana (Dogan News, February 2, 2009). Before the March 29 local elections, HK said in a statement that they would remain neutral in the political process. At that time there were suggestions that the Kurdish Islamist organization would support the AKP, but Huseyin Yılmaz, the General Secretary of the Hezbollah front organization Mustazaf-Der, said the group wouldn’t support any political party (Habereditor.com, March 23). Yılmaz declared that the election system wasn’t based on Islam and that

they will follow the example of the Kurdish theologian Said Nursi (1878-1960), who didn’t participate in the political system of the Turkish republic for religious reasons. The implication is that Hezbollah does not regard the AKP as sufficiently Islamic. Said Nursi’s Nurcu movement, which advocates combining scientific and religious education, is also the foundation of the Gülen movement.

The Gülen-owned media often report that Hezbollah, the PKK and other militant organizations have good ties with or are used by Ergenekon, a criminal network tied to the deep state and accused of plotting to overthrow the AKP government. They have also been prominent in reporting Hezbollah’s involvement in extrajudicial killings in the southeast. Bones found during excavations of “Ergenekon death wells” were the remains of missing people “allegedly killed by Hezbollah in 1990.” Again and again the Gülen media depicts Hezbollah as a “terrorist organization that reportedly has links to an illegal group within the gendarmerie known as JITEM [Jandarma Istihbarat ve Terorle Mucadele - Gendarmerie Intelligence and Counterterrorism]” (*Today’s Zaman*, March 18).

It’s likely the competition between Gülen movement and Hezbollah will continue. At the moment the Gülen movement is in a stronger position due to its good ties with the ruling AKP government. The possible revelation of links between Ergenekon and Hezbollah could weaken Hezbollah’s legitimacy in southeast Turkey and result in further police operations against Hezbollah front organizations. Hezbollah will likely try to respond by increasing their presence, establishing charitable foundations (in the model of the Gülen movement) and by staging religious and pro-Palestinian/anti-Israel events.

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Notes:

[1] The movement is also known as the Turkish Hezbollah. Hezbollah means “party of God” in Arabic.

[2] “DTP members attack the Quran – Mustazaf-Der” http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f-IWmYA_ogs&feature=related, March 30, 2008.

[3] <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SOI-EYGdjww&feature=related>, March 8, 2009.

Mujahideen Leader Appeals to Scholars and Professionals to Defeat U.S. – Iranian Plot to Subjugate Iraq

By Pascale Combelles Siegel

On 20 April 2008, al-Furqan, the media production company of the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI), released an audio interview with Abu Hamza al-Muhajir (a.k.a. Abu Ayyub al-Masri), the Amir of al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) and the ISI’s “Minister of War” (“An audio interview with Shaykh Abu Hamza al-Muhajir,” al-faloja.com, April 20). The interview was released barely a month after the ISI’s Amir, Abu Omar al-Baghdadi, called on Iraqi insurgents to join forces with the ISI in support of its new campaign: “The Good Harvest” (see *Terrorism Monitor*, April 3). Coincidentally, the Muhajir interview appeared just a few days before the Iraqi Government claimed to have captured Abu Omar al-Baghdadi in Eastern Baghdad (U.S. authorities still have doubts regarding the identity of the captive – see al-Arabiya, April 29; al-Sumaria, April 25).

Abu Hamza al-Muhajir has been an elusive figure in the radical Salafi-Jihadi movement in Iraq. He was named Amir of AQI in June 2006 after the death of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and became ISI’s minister of war in April 2007. He has been featured only sporadically in the group’s propaganda, releasing a total of seven speeches since he was named Amir. Neither AQI nor the ISI have released videos or still pictures featuring him.

Al-Muhajir’s 40 minute interview is divided into three parts. First, Muhajir seeks to reinforce Abu Omar al-Baghdadi’s call for mujahideen unity. Second, he reframes regional issues to show that there is no other choice but to wage jihad alongside the Salafist radicals. Third, he calls on key pillars of the Islamic community to accomplish their religious duty and support international jihad.

Like al-Baghdadi, al-Muhajir argues that the threat to Islam in Iraq is existential and calls on other Iraqi jihadis and insurgents to unite with the ISI to fight the United States and Iran. Al-Muhajir again follows al-Baghdadi by acknowledging that the ISI may have committed mistakes in the past.

However, the similarities stop there. For as much as al-Baghdadi tries to appear humble and conciliatory, Muhajir plays the bad cop to al-Baghdadi’s good cop and lays out the strict conditions under which unity of effort may occur. While al-Baghdadi hopes to leave past mistakes behind, al-Muhajir warns that the alleged mistakes will be reviewed according to shari’a principles. Where al-Baghdadi appealed to other factions to acknowledge the complexities of the plots against Islam in order to motivate them to unite with the ISI, al-Muhajir argues that true Muslims have no other legitimate choice but to join the ISI. And where al-Baghdadi vaguely defined the enemy as a U.S.-Iranian coalition, Muhajir proposes a far more extensive list of enemies, adding the mainstream ulama (religious scholars), the Awakening Councils, the Islamic Iraqi Party and the Shiites.

Possibly to compensate for his intolerant and sectarian overtones, al-Muhajir reframes current regional dynamics in an effort to appeal to the largest possible Muslim audience. He argues that the goal of the U.S. invasion of Iraq was simply to advance Israel’s interests in the Middle East by fostering a “Jewish state from the Nile to the Euphrates.” He argues that the recent massacres in Gaza are a result of the weakness of Hamas and the umma (Islamic community) and were designed to test the Arab regimes’ ability or willingness to put up a fight. By framing the Gaza invasion as support for a supposed Israeli plan for regional domination, Muhajir seeks to convince all Muslims who feel disgruntled by the U.S. pro-Israel policy to enlist in the fight. He also gives them a rationale for continuing the fight after a U.S. withdrawal from Iraq.

Al-Muhajir then argues that after the U.S. realized it had lost in Iraq, it went on to “deliver Iraq” to Iran. Here, al-Muhajir seeks to capitalize on a theme largely used by insurgents of all ideological stripes in Iraq, from the nationalist Ba’ath Party, to the Islamo-nationalists (such as al-Jabha al-Islamiya lil-Moqawama al-Iraqiya [JAMI] or the 1920 Revolution Brigades), to the Salafi-Jihadis: Iran and the United States have colluded to divide and conquer Iraq. Again, the manipulation of Iran’s growing

influence in Iraq is used here to draw more supporters into the ISI's fold. He argues that the current economic crisis has cost Muslim businessmen 60% of their wealth, hoping to stir them towards supporting a Muslim shari'a-sanctioned business model.

Finally, al-Muhajir eloquently appeals to four categories of Muslims to take up their responsibilities in the defense of the umma, implying that they are not currently doing so. Al-Muhajir identifies the four categories and outlines how they can best contribute to the global jihad:

- The ulama (scholars), who have been “converted from builders of the creed of tawhid to pickaxes of destruction.” Al-Muhajir calls on the ulama to constitute a “secret fatwa committee” that “issues fatwas regarding the calamities of the umma to be adopted by your mujahideen brothers in the jihadist media until the time some of you migrate to a safer place.”
- The Muslim businessmen who have lost much in the current global economic crisis. Al-Muhajir calls on them to financially back the mujahideen at a rate of “one tenth of one tenth of what you lost in the previous period.”
- The “educated and the thinkers,” whom al-Muhajir calls on to put their pens at the service of the cause of Muslims.
- Muslim scientists are reminded that “the mujahideen are in dire need of chemical, biological, electronic, and even nuclear weapons.” For al-Muhajir, these scientists “should deploy every effort to have an unconventional weapon that is a deterrent in the hands of the mujahideen.”

Unsurprisingly, al-Muhajir appeals to those whom the Salafi-Jihadi pundits and ideologues usually rail against for failing to adequately support the umma: the scholars and the thinkers. He also calls opportunistically on Muslim businessmen who may have suffered from the current global downturn.

Al-Muhajir's stern appeals have not been very well received so far. On April 21, a message signed by Hamas' Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades issued a rebuttal of al-Muhajir's criticisms of Hamas. [1] On April 22, the Islamic Army in Iraq's spokesman, Dr. Ibrahim al-Shemmari, rejected al-Muhajir's call for reconciliation, saying: “we do not see any reconciliation in this speech.”

Al-Shemmari added that the speech was full of “false accusations and fabrications against the groups that started the jihadist project” (al-Jazeera, April 22).

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Notes:

1. “A Message from a Soldier of al-Qassam to the War Minister of the Islamic State of Iraq,” al-Faloja.com, April 21, 2009.

Countering the Counter-Terrorists: Senior Jihadis Offer Advice on Security Techniques

By Abdul Hameed Bakier

In a quest to spread security and military knowledge that is vital for successful Salafi-Jihadi terror operations, jihadi internet forums intermittently release training lessons in all kinds of subjects. This article will examine two types of jihadi security training materials. The first training episode, published by al-Qaeda in the South Arabian Peninsula, tutors jihadis on ways to resist interrogation. The group published three training episodes entitled “Triumph over Interrogators” in their monthly e-magazine, *Sada al-Malahim* (malahem.maktoobblog.com January, February, March, 2009). A second security training episode was prepared by an Ingush jihadi nicknamed Abu Anas of Khacharoy (it does not appear that this individual is the same as Commander Abu Anas [a.k.a. Muhannad, a.k.a. Khalid Yusuf Muhammad al-Emitat], an Arab field commander operating in Chechnya). This posting discusses intelligence and security techniques in an article entitled “Security Advice from an Ingush Jihadi.” The material is based on the experiences of Salafi-Jihadi fighters operating in the Russian North Caucasus republic of Ingushetia.

Triumph over Interrogators

The anti-interrogation lessons, prepared by an al-Qaeda operative nicknamed Abdulaziz al-Abini, discuss two methods of interrogation aimed at eliciting confessions and intelligence from imprisoned jihadis and ways

to counter them. The first method is psychological manipulation and the second method is physical torture. The lesson starts with the psychological methods used by security forces, which begin on day one of imprisonment when the jihadi is restrained with chains as a show of authority. This is typically followed by further manipulative techniques:

- **Intimidation versus Endearment** - This method is applied by two interrogators. One plays the good guy and the other the bad guy. The good-guy interrogator will promise to help the jihadi if the latter confesses and provides intelligence on the terror cell. The training warns jihadis not to fall for the false promises of this interrogator. The bad-guy interrogator will use obscene language while threatening the jihadi with all kinds of torture. The counter-measure suggested by the training is to simply ignore the interrogators' threats – easier said than done.
- **Empathy** - Interrogators use empathy, pretending to care for the jihadi's fate in an attempt to build rapport with the subject. Building rapport achieves short-term and long-term objectives for security forces. The long-term objective is to recruit the jihadi and release him to penetrate the terror cell. Even though the technique is a very common and crucial instrument in counterterrorism operations, the training fails to explain how the jihadi is supposed to counter this technique.
- **Indifference** - Leaving the imprisoned jihadi for long intervals without interrogation is another technique used by interrogators when no timely intelligence is required in the given case. In this case, the jihadi is instructed to pretend to be coping well with prison conditions and spend the time reciting the Holy Quran.
- **Exaggeration** - The interrogators will question the jihadi about a very serious case, implying his involvement, such as a conspiracy to assassinate a head of a state. This technique is designed to manipulate the captive into confessing a lesser evil and to study his reactions when he is being honest and compare them to his reactions when he lies. To fend off this technique, the jihadi should answer sarcastically to all allegations. The training relates the experience of a fellow jihadi who was accused of involvement in the

9/11 attacks. The accused told his interrogators that he was in one of the planes used in the attacks.

- **Simplify** - The interrogators try to convince the jihadi that his case is not serious, unless he keeps denying the charges. The training reminds the jihadi that denying the charges will not exacerbate the case legally.
- **Wear Out** - The jihadi is repeatedly questioned about a single incident.
- **Insult** - Obscene language may be used in the interrogation to break the jihadi's morale. Interrogators may curse God and religion to shake up the pious jihadi who is ordered by God not to tolerate blasphemy and to try and stop it in any way possible. In this case, the jihadi might think its better to confess than to let the blasphemy continue.
- **The Bombshell** - After long sessions of trivial conversation, the interrogators will surprise the jihadi with questions related to terror activities, hoping to catch him off guard. The training relates other "bombshell" techniques from actual experience, such as awakening the suspect and immediately posing questions.
- **Uncertainty** - The training warns the jihadi not to believe allegations that security forces have penetrated the terror cell using one of the amirs. The attempt to cast doubt in the jihadi's mind and weaken his loyalty to his group is an old technique known even to novice jihadis. The jihadi must have strong faith in the face of the authorities' efforts to dissuade him from his path, such as the Saudi Arabian reeducation and reconciliation prison program (see *Terrorism Monitor*, August 16, 2007). The training promises separate lessons on countering the rehabilitation program in future issues of *Sada al-Malahim*.
- **Entrapment** - Interrogators will ask questions that sound trivial, such as the time of a particular terror cell meeting, the kind of drinks served in the meeting and details of the rendezvous place. The training warns the answers to these seemingly irrelevant questions will be used on another imprisoned cell member to convince him security

forces have comprehensive intelligence about the cell. Captured jihadis are instructed to give short “yes” or “no” answers to such inquiries because elaboration leads to the disclosure of sensitive intelligence.

- Polygraph - The training briefly explains polygraph technology. The instructions to counter the polygraph reveals that the jihadis do not fully understand the technology or do not train their operatives to deceive the polygraph by using Yoga techniques, as do some other insurgent groups.

The training warns interrogators can persist in breaking the suspect if they are convinced the suspect is holding back crucial intelligence on activities that might jeopardize human lives. Interrogators will also use all possible means to get a conviction if they believe the jihadi would resume terror activities when released.

Physical Duress and Cover Stories

The second part of the training discusses physical duress methods allegedly used by all security forces against Salafi-Jihadis. The training describes different torture techniques and urges jihadis to endure pain for the sake of God, who will reward them in heaven.

The training session puts emphasis on the importance of cover stories. Examples are given of the repercussions of bad cover stories in real encounters with security forces. Finally, the lessons sum up counter-interrogation techniques by instructing jihadis to preplan for interrogation in order to minimize the effects of interrogation on future jihad operations. Different cover stories should be devised for each and every terror plot. Tolerance, sarcasm and indifference will wear out the interrogator, resulting in a “triumph over the interrogators.”

No matter how thorough and experienced the jihadis are in anti-interrogation, the fact remains that human psychology differs from person to person. Jihadi tactics have failed to address the wide range of psychological methods researched and adopted by security forces. For example, there is no mention in the training of the four different psychological categories interrogators use to try to identify the suspect at the beginning of each interrogation.

Security Advice from the Caucasus

This security posting, supposedly prepared by an Ingush Salafi-Jihadi, aims to educate fellow mujahideen about necessary safety procedures from lessons learned in the North Caucasus jihad (Hanufa.com, March 18). The author warns that security agents continuously inquire about ways to join jihad through internet forums, hoping to deceive and identify jihadis involved in trafficking mujahideen. Jihadi candidates must maintain safety requirements and take precautions to avoid capture.

Although jihad has been waged for many years in the Caucasus, very few Muslims were able to safely travel to the Caucasus and join in, says Abu Anas. Additionally, negligence and incompetent security practices, even by experienced jihadis, have led to arrests which decreased the already modest number of mujahideen active in the Caucasus. Jihad in regions heavily controlled by security forces requires extra precautions and good cover stories capable of disguising even the intention of joining jihad. To hide these intentions, the author suggests would-be jihadis take the following measures:

- The elimination of all religious aspects of appearance, such as the beard and the traditional Salafi dress code.
- Avoid frequenting mosques. Mosques are closely monitored by security services.
- Avoid discussions about jihad with unreliable Muslims who don’t believe in the pillar of jihad.
- Allow women to take off their head covers to disguise religious commitment. Abu Anas claims there is a fatwa (religious verdict) authorizing this measure.

To stress the importance of eliminating religious aspects of the jihadi’s appearance, Abu Anas says Russian secret services arrested, by chance, an active jihadi among many bearded men in connection with a botched assassination attempt on the pro-Russian president of Chechnya.

Abu Anas warns that the internet is a very valuable source of information for secret services, blaming jihadis for carelessly posting pictures and video clips pertinent to jihad. He offers the example of a policeman’s son who made a jihadi-style video while holding his father’s state-issued weapon. Security services were able to identify the serial number on the gun and arrest the would-be

jihadi. Abu Anas cautions against trusting relatives in the security services:

Sometimes some Muslims are so naive that they think that ties of kinship will prevent members of disbelieving forces from harming them. It should be clearly understood, that bitterness of war in Caucasus reached such a high degree, that local “cops” do not hesitate to shoot, abduct and torture their “militant” relatives or those “suspected in links to militants.”

The release of pictures and videos on the false assumption that the jihadis in these graphics are already known to the secret services limits the chance of those jihadis conducting any kind of clandestine operation, such as collecting intelligence on a possible target. Despite Abu Anas’ warnings, jihadis in the Caucasus keep posting their pictures on the internet, apparently in an attempt to solicit donations from jihad supporters (caucasusemirate.maktoobblog.com April 13, 2009)

Insecure communications methods, such as landlines, mobile phones and the internet, are a major factor in compromising jihad activities. For the security services, this is the fastest and easiest way to uncover jihadi intentions. Secret services eavesdrop on what the jihadi says and analyze what he writes. Therefore, jihadis must turn off mobile phones in secret meetings and throw away SIM cards if phone calls suddenly disconnect. Jihadis who release audio statements through any means must realize that their voiceprint is saved in the electromagnetic database of the secret services for future auto-tracking. Abu Anas says there are no secure telephones - 80 to 90% of successful security operations against jihadis are, at least in part, the result of intelligence collected through technical means. Hence, jihadis should train on safe communications and severely punish those who are sloppy in these areas.

Finally, Abu Anas recommends the following security precautions:

- Avoid Russian servers when using internet communications. All Russian police forces have authorized access to any email.
- Insurgent groups must immediately expel any mujahid who fails to perform his duties in a secure fashion
- A bad mobile connection in a place that usually

has good reception indicates the secret services are listening in on the call. Evacuate the area immediately and dispose of the SIM (Subscriber Identity Module) card. SIM cards are the first things to be checked by secret services when a jihadi is arrested.

Although more advanced jihadi training materials have been made available on the internet, the “General Security Advice” prepared by the Ingush jihadi was posted in almost all Salafi-Jihadi forums and blogs to depict a united Salafi-Jihadi global front. However, facts on the ground indicate intrusive Salafism is losing ground to traditional Sufism in the North Caucasus, particularly in Chechnya.

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Gems, Timber and Jiziya: Pakistan’s Taliban Harness Resources to Fund Jihad

By Animesh Roul

The Taliban resurgence in Pakistan’s lawless provinces and its unhindered march towards the heartland of the restive country is fueled by an ever increasing economic life-line. Unlike Afghanistan’s Taliban, which depends on the poppy trade for revenues, the robustness of the Pakistan Taliban’s financial strength depends on a variety of sources, ranging from the timber trade, precious stone mining and now, the imposition of a religious/protection tax collected from minority religious communities.

The Islamabad administration has buckled under pressure from the Taliban, promulgating the Nizam-e-Adl (Islamic Jurisprudence) regulations in the Swat valley where the government has virtually lost control. The peace agreement gives the Taliban forces a massive opportunity to exploit the rich natural resources of Swat at will.

Before fighting broke out in Swat, one of the region’s main sources of revenue was a thriving tourist industry. Needless to say, there is no tourism in the region now and the Taliban have dismantled tourist resorts and tourism training facilities, auctioning off furniture,

computers and building materials in Barabandai (*The News* [Islamabad], April 13).

The multiple sources of Taliban income make the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) a resilient and well-armed group with an agenda of turning Pakistan into an Islamic state. Observers fear the wealth at the disposal of Taliban will enable them to sustain their jihad activities in Pakistan and beyond.

The exploitation of northwest Pakistan's natural resources for organizational revenues started in April 2008, when Taliban militants took over the Ziarat marble quarry, a white marble mine in the Mohmand tribal district. Before the arrival of the Taliban, Islamabad had planned to modernize the marble mines at Ziarat as part of an effort to increase marble and granite exports to \$500 million per year by 2013. Roughly one million tons of marble are extracted from FATA every year (*Daily Times* [Lahore], July 20, 2008). Since the Taliban takeover, the quarry has brought the Taliban tens of thousands of dollars. Buoyed by this success, the TTP began eyeing the emerald deposits of Swat.

Emerald Mining

Arguably, the Taliban's current strategy in the Swat region of Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) is to exploit all resources available to them while the truce agreement with the Pakistan government is in force. Late in March, reports from the Swat valley emerged that the Taliban militants had taken control of government controlled emerald mines located in the mountains of Mingora. The occupation of the Mingora mine apparently took place sometime in February 2009, following the peace deal between the provincial administration and Sufi Muhammad, leader of the Tehrik-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi (TNSM - Movement for the Enforcement of Islamic Law). Taliban forces then seized the nearby Shamozaï and Gujjar Killi mines and initiated mining and trading processes on their own, employing a large number of local laborers. Locals are eager to work for the Taliban, who take one-third of the profits and distribute the rest to the workers.

The Gujjar Killi emerald mine in Shangla district (NWFP) was formerly leased to Luxury International, a US-based firm that abandoned operations when fighting began in the area. Nearly 70 Taliban militants occupied the mine after ousting government-appointed officials and employed local laborers on a profit sharing basis

(*Daily Times*, April 2). Locals said the Taliban had decided to occupy Gujjar Killi when the government failed to take any action after the seizure of the Mingora mine (*The News*, April 2). Muslim Khan, spokesman for the Swat Taliban, justified the mining by saying that "all these minerals have been created by Allah for the benefit of his creatures" (*Sunday Telegraph*, April 4).

Mullah Fazlullah, the leader of the Swat-based Tehrik Taliban Swat (TTS), has been largely responsible for this economic activity in the NWFP. Fazlullah, the son-in-law of TNSM leader Sufi Muhammad, now controls these mining activities in Swat and adjoining places. According to one report, the gemstones are sold quickly at below market prices and smuggled to the Indian city of Jaipur (capital of Rajasthan) and thereafter transported to Bangkok, Switzerland and Israel (*Sunday Telegraph*, April 4). A BBC report indicated that emerald prices range from \$1,000 to more than \$100,000 for a cut stone, depending on the size and quality (BBC News, March 24).

Emerald mining and the international sale of gemstones through various channels provides much needed capital for the Taliban to capture other natural resources in the region. Most alarming is the possibility that the Taliban, which is largely immune to any offensive for now, could target other precious stone mines in the NWFP. Pink Topaz, Peridot, Aquamarine and Tourmaline are all available in abundance in different parts of the province. There are also reports that archaeological sites in the area are being looted, with the Taliban likely taking a cut of the proceeds, either as protection money or to encourage the continued instability that makes such looting possible (*Dawn* [Karachi], March 22). It is feared that the Taliban will use the money made from the excavation and sale of gemstones to finance more suicide attacks on NATO forces in neighboring Afghanistan and support Taliban expansion in Pakistan.

Timber Trade

Another lucrative source of income for the Taliban is Swat's forests. The symbiotic tie between Taliban militants and the timber mafia in Swat and nearby Dir is no secret. Large-scale illegal cutting of the region's pine forests began simultaneously with the 2007 Taliban offensive in the area and the flight of most of the people living in the forests (*Dawn*, March 22). Taliban militants have been involved in the widespread cutting of the thick pine forests and apple orchards of Malam Jaba, Fatehpur, Miandam and Lalko, often in collusion with

the mafia elements that cause enormous environmental damage to the region while making immense profits (*The News*, April 13).

The Taliban has long been in control of the timber trade in the NWFP and parts of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). In mid-2008, Environment Minister Hamidullah Jan Afridi pointed towards the militant-criminal nexus in FATA and stated that the “timber mafia” has been responsible for funding militancy in the NWFP and in FATA (*Daily Times*, July 28, 2008). The enormity of the illegal exploitation of this state-owned natural resource can be determined by the statement of one government official: “The losses suffered by forests in the last year were more than the losses of the last two decades” (*The National* [Abu Dhabi], April 3).

The Jiziya Tax

Taliban financing efforts have reached the Orakzai Agency of FATA, situated close to Swat and Bajaur Agency, the site of heavy fighting between the Taliban and government forces in recent months. Taliban militants have demolished houses belonging to the minority Sikh community and confiscated their property in the Ferozkhel area of Orakzai Agency after they failed to pay the negotiated amount of 15 million rupees to the Taliban as jiziya—the poll tax levied on non-Muslim minorities living under Islamic rule as sanctioned by Shari’a. The houses were destroyed at the behest of Taliban commander Hakimullah Mahsud, the Taliban head in the Orakzai Agency and a close aide of TTP chief Baitullah Mahsud (*The Nation* [Islamabad], April 30). Earlier in April, Taliban militants demanded 50 million rupees a year as jiziya. To enforce their demands they held local Sikh leader Sardar Saiwang Singh captive and occupied a number of Sikh-owned houses (ANI, April 15; *Daily Times*, April 16).

Many Sikhs have decided to flee Swat, followed by members of the Hindu and Christian minorities (SamayLive, April 25). The situation for the Christian minority in Swat following the imposition of a Shari’a-based administration is not good and they are reportedly living in constant fear of the Taliban, even though the TTP’s Qari Abdullah is reported to have agreed to provide equal opportunities to the religious communities of Swat (Compass Direct News, March 31). Qari Abdullah’s pledges to protect minorities aside, pro-Taliban elements have attacked the Christian community in the Karachi neighborhood of Surjani Town. The violence began when pro-Taliban militants

tried to prevent local Christians from removing graffiti on their church that demanded Christians convert to Islam or give jiziya, like the Sikhs in Orakzai (*Daily Times*, April 23; *The News*, April 23).

Conclusion

Surprisingly, the Islamabad administration has so far remained silent over the Taliban takeover of mines and the exploitation of forest resources. Pakistan is suffering the loss of 65 billion rupees annually from the illegal timber trade and indiscriminate deforestation alone. The plight of minority communities has been ignored by the government.

The brief military operation against a marauding Taliban in Buner and Lower Dir notwithstanding, the Pakistan government is largely reluctant to initiate any major offensive in Swat against TNSM-TTP militants there. Instead of addressing the exploitation of minorities and the indiscriminate looting of Swat’s resources, the central government seems prepared to go ahead with implementing Islamic law in the Swat region under the Nizam-e-Adl Regulations. The continuing decline in government authority in the region will give ample opportunity to the Taliban to organize an exploitative but functioning financial system.

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