



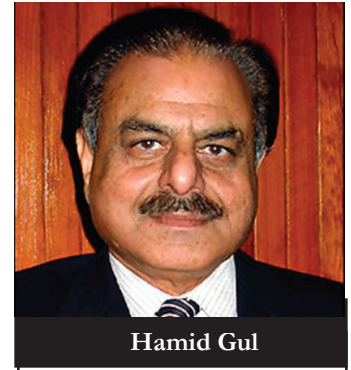
Terrorism Monitor

In-Depth Analysis of the War on Terror

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Hamid Gul

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NIGERIAN ELITE FORCE ACCUSED OF MURDERS IN PLATEAU STATE

Ongoing violence in Nigeria’s mixed Christian-Muslim Plateau State took a new turn when an elite force of Nigerian troops tasked with restoring order were accused of attacks on civilians in two Christian villages that killed eight, creating a new national scandal as the country approaches general elections in April. Over 100 people have been killed in the region surrounding the state capital of Jos since Christmas.

The government’s response to the violence was Operation Safe Haven, a campaign to be implemented by a Special Military Task Force (STF) drawing on members of the army, navy, air force and police. The STF is led by Brigadier-General Hassan Umaru, whose wife is believed to have been killed by attackers last month (NigerianNewsService.com, December 7, 2010).

On the night of January 24 the villages of Hamman and Farin Lamba (both roughly 25 km from the state capital of Jos) were attacked by uniformed gunmen who assaulted villagers with machetes and firearms (Next [Lagos], January 25). The attackers in Farin Lamba were observed arriving and leaving in a Toyota Hilux van of the type used to transport police in the region, an observation later confirmed by Plateau State Police Commissioner Abdurrahman Akano. Many of the attackers appeared to be wearing body armor of the type worn by security forces. However, Commissioner Akano also suggested that the reported theft of 100 cattle belonging to Fulanis was the cause of what he termed “a reprisal attack,” though he provided no evidence of a connection between the two events (Next, January 25; Vanguard, January 25; Daily Trust, January 25).

The attackers at Farin Lambo first struck a vigilante squad of villagers, killing three before torching homes and barns. The vigilante group was created to repel assailants after the two villages were attacked four times in the previous two weeks (Next, January 25). The military complains that difficult terrain in the region hampers their response to incidents of violence outside the major towns, leaving such villages with little in the way of defense.

After word spread of the killings, women dressed in black attacked the camp of the largely Muslim-officered STF in Vom, shouting anti-STF slogans while throwing stones and setting fire to STF tents. Six women were reported to have been shot by the STF during the demonstration (Nigerian Tribune, January 25; Reuters, January 25).

STF commander Brigadier Umaru said he thought it unlikely that any of his troops would attack people whose safety was in their hands and asked locals to provide him with proof of such allegations (Vanguard, January 25). Some STF members were recently arrested for failing to stop killings in Jos, and the ID card of an STF member was found at the site of some of the killings (Vanguard, January 20).

Even before the latest incidents, Chief Solo Akuma, the senior advocate of Nigeria, called on military authorities to closely monitor the STF for partiality and to reassure locals of the neutrality of the STF when carrying out their duties (Vanguard, January 20).

On January 18, a Nigerian military spokesman warned that soldiers would fire on any community members seen attacking civilians or burning mosques, churches or residences (BBC, January 18).

The sectarian violence in Plateau State began in 1994 and has since claimed thousands of lives. Since 1994 there have been seven commissions of inquiry into the violence, though the results have either been concealed or largely ignored. Though the conflict is often characterized as being a religious-based confrontation between the Muslim Fulani- Hausa and the Christian Berom, Afizere and Anaguta tribes, the dispute has more to do with competition for land and political power between indigenous Christian farmers and so-called “settlers” from the largely nomadic and Muslim communities of northern Nigeria (Next, January 23; Reuters, January 25).

There are also political differences, with the local Christian tribes generally supporting the People’s Democratic Party (PDP), while the nomadic Muslims are viewed as supporters of the opposition All Nigeria People’s Party (ANPP).

SHAYKH YUSUF AL-QARADAWI URGES MERGER OF SALAFISM AND SUFISM

Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, a Muslim Brotherhood ideologue and one of the most influential men in modern Sunni Islam, has long resisted the Salafist trend of condemning Sufi Muslims as heretics and even apostates. Though he has been offered the leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood several times, al-Qaradawi has always declined, saying he would prefer to be a guide for the nation in general, rather than be the leader of a specific group. The Shaykh has pursued this goal through a highly successful media strategy, involving a satellite television show and a popular website, IslamOnline. Nevertheless, he is held in suspicion by the West and is banned from travelling to the UK and the United States. The Shaykh recently offered his views on several issues, including the Sufi-Salafist split in Sunni Islam, in an interview carried by a pan-Arab daily (al-Sharq al-Awsat, December 23, 2010).

Al-Qaradawi naturally objects to Egypt’s official ban on political participation by the Brotherhood, asking if it is really possible that religious people are banned from practicing politics and participating in the development of the country: “There is no doubt that this is a crime, because religion is the essence of life, and the religious individual has the right to participate in building the country through his personal opinion, be it political, economic, educational, or health opinion... If the groups are banned from working publicly, they will start to work underground. The Islamist groups might be forced to work secretly. This is an unhealthy situation, because whoever works in the open can be held to account for his actions, and you can criticize him, but how can you hold to account whoever works in secret?”

Though the interview took place shortly before the uprising in Tunisia, al-Qaradawi noted that many of the governments in the Arab and Islamic world do not have any popular support and derive their authority solely from rigged elections disguised as democracy: “They are governments that are hated by their peoples, and they govern their countries by brute force and martial and emergency laws rather than governing through the consensus of the people.”

With regard to a growing perception in the Sunni world that Shi'a Islam is intent on expanding its numbers and territory in the Middle East, al-Qaradawi warned that Shiites are trained for preaching their creed and have access to large funds to promote Shi'ism as well as having the support of a major nation — Iran— behind them.

In his defense of Sufism, al-Qaradawi brought up the names of two medieval theologians who are regarded as providing many of the intellectual underpinnings of Salafist Islam: Shaykh Ibn Taymiyah (1263-1328) and his disciple, Imam Ibn al-Qayyim (1292-1350). According to al-Qaradawi, the two were “among the greatest Sufis,” but rejected what was inappropriate in Sufism: “Personally, I call for ‘making Sufi into Salafi’ and ‘making Salafi into Sufi.’ The Sufi takes from the discipline of Salafi in not following the fabricated Hadith, polytheist rites, and tomb-side rites, and we want the Salafi to take from the Sufi tenderness, spirituality, and piousness. From this mixture we get the required Muslim.”

In his search for reconciliation between the two trends of Sunni Islam, al-Qaradawi also called upon the thought of Muslim Brotherhood founder Shaykh Hassan al-Banna (1906-1947), saying al-Banna conceived the Brotherhood as an inclusive grouping of Sunni Muslims: “It is a Salafi movement as it calls for returning to the Koran and Sunna, it is a Sufi tendency as it calls for purifying the hearts and returning to God, it is a Sunni way that is based on honoring the Prophet’s companions and on the work of the Sunni school of thinking.”

Al-Qaradawi suggested that, contrary to public perceptions, Salafism is in fact a constantly evolving trend in Islam that now encompasses several schools of thinking, including those that are close to “centrism” and the ideology of the Muslim Brothers. After long denouncing the Brothers for participation in politics, the Salafists have now taken to politics in a major way. Exposure of the modern Salafists to developments in the wider world through travel after years of isolation and access to theological literature previously unavailable has also led to changes in Salafist jurisprudence.

Al-Qaradawi said the violent Salafi-Jihadi groups do not share the same agenda as the Muslim Brothers, who have told them: “We have tried such things, but they have not been helpful, and we have not gained anything out of them other than detention, suffering and victimization.” He noted that many of these groups,

especially those in Egypt, have now reconsidered their strategies, issuing books of “Revisions” outlining their mistakes. Nevertheless, “All Islamist movements are entitled to try for themselves, and start from zero until they reach the conclusions of the preceding groups.”

Is the Islamic State of Iraq Going Global?

By Murad Batal al-Shishani

Iraq’s director-general for anti-terrorism and organized crime operations, Major General Diya Husayn Sahi, recently told al-Arabiya TV that Iraqi citizen Taimur Abd al-Wahhab al-Abdali was given explosives training in the Iraqi city of Mosul for three months before his failed suicide bombing in Sweden last December (al-Arabiya TV, January 7). A few days later, General Sahi told the Swedish newspaper Expressen that al-Abdali was part of a group trained to attack the United States, but which had targets in Western Europe, including Sweden, as alternatives in the event of failing to reach the United States. Sahi said local al-Qaeda leaders had told the Iraqi police that the group “received orders from al-Qaeda leaders for them to themselves select targets in Europe, if they failed to get to the USA.” The general added that al-Qaeda wants to strike the United States on its home ground now that U.S. troops have begun to withdraw from Iraq (Expressen [Stockholm], January 9).

General Sahi’s allegations raise the issue of the increasing inclination of al-Qaeda in Iraq or the allied Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) to resort to attacks abroad. Indications of this trend were reinforced by suspicions that ISI is

responsible for the New Year's Day suicide bombings against the Coptic Church in Alexandria after making threats against Egyptian Copts (though Egyptian authorities blamed militants from Gaza).

Three major factors explain the transformation in the ISI's behavior:

- The importance of Iraq from the Salafi-Jihadist or al-Qaeda perspective.
- Social support for the ISI inside Iraq.
- The recent change in the structure of the ISI, particularly the increasing role of the new "Minister of War," who is known by his nom de guerre "al-Nasr li Din Allah Abu Sulayman."

The importance of Iraq to the Salafi-Jihadists is seen in their ideologues' literature, which regards the invasion of 2003 as a golden opportunity to wage jihad against American troops, as well as a chance to form a base to export jihad to neighboring countries, as seen in various incidents in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria between 2003 and 2007. [1]

However, the aim of al-Qaeda in Iraq to "export jihad" was linked to the strategy of the late leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, and that was mostly limited to the Levant region. The approach of al-Zarqawi's successor, Abu Omar al-Baghdadi, and the ISI minister of war, Abu Hamza al-Muhajir (both killed in April 2010), was to focus on strengthening the alliance with core al-Qaeda in the Afghanistan/Pakistan border region, as well as increasing efforts to regain the support of the locals inside Iraq after the 2007 creation of the Sahwah (Awakening) Councils led al-Qaeda to lose the support of the Arab Sunni community, the previous incubator for the movement. The ISI released a political document in January 2010 entitled, "A Strategic Plan to Improve the Political Position of the Islamic State of Iraq." The document revealed that gaining local support was a priority for the movement (Hanein.info, February 20, 2010; see also Terrorism Monitor, April 23, 2010).

In such circumstances, al-Qaeda in Iraq sought to continue targeting the Rafidah ("Rejecters" – a Sunni pejorative term for Shiites) after the start of U.S. withdrawal, regarding them as representatives of the current political regime, which is dominated by Shiite political parties.

ISI has adopted parallel strategies towards the Sahwah councils:

1. Attract members through the exploitation of some individuals' sense of injustice about the failure to implement government promises regarding demobilization.
2. Target the leaders of the councils for assassination and murder.

For instance, the ISI's April 3, 2010, targeted attack on Sahwah members in al-Bu Saifi village south of Baghdad was a manifestation of this strategy.

With the partial withdrawal of U.S. troops, al-Qaeda in Iraq has lost an essential part of its reason for existence. The additional loss of local support may mean linking the ISI to the global agenda of al-Qaeda central could offer a means of perpetuating the movement.

The last factor that suggests a likely shift in the ISI's agenda is associated with the nature of its current Shura Council and its key new member, Nasr li Din Allah Abu Sulayman. ISI announced the appointment of Nasr li Din in a May 14, 2010, statement which included a strong warning from the new minister of war that he would direct attacks against Shiite civilians and security targets in Iraq. [2]

Not much is known about Nasr li Din, though he is believed to be Moroccan-born and have Syrian citizenship (possibly through a fake identity). Most importantly, he is believed to have received training in Afghanistan from the senior aide to Osama bin Laden (al-Hayat, May 16, 2010).

Nasr li Din's closeness to core al-Qaeda leaders seems to suggest a greater influence from the center on the behavior, strategies and tactics of ISI, leading the movement towards larger regional or global agendas. This suggests that the ISI could continue its pattern of attacks within Iraq while adopting new patterns of violence by turning Iraq into a launching pad for terrorist operations abroad.

Murad Batal al-Shishani is an Islamic groups and terrorism issues analyst based in London. He is a specialist on Islamic Movements in Chechnya and in the Middle East.

Notes:

1. See, Murad Batal al-Shishani, "Islamists in Iraq and the Sectarian factor: the Case of al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia," in Khaled Hroub (ed.), *Political Islam: Ideology and Practice*, (SOAS Middle East Issues), 2010, pp.105-126.
2. The statement can be viewed on the Ansar al-Mujahideen web forum: <http://112.137.166.194/~asansar/vb/showthread.php?s=2ae27754d662af5a4311af7819faaf43&t=19863>.

Hostage Killings Raise Tension between France and Niger

By *Dario Cristiani*

Two French citizens, Antoine de Léocour and Vincent Delory, were kidnapped on January 7 from a restaurant in the residential area of Plateau in Niger's capital, Niamey (*L'Express*, January 9). De Léocour had worked for several years in the country and was there to marry a local Muslim woman the following week. Delory was his best man and arrived in Niger on the day of the kidnapping (*Radio France Internationale*, January 12).

The two hostages were then taken through the desert to northern Mali. Shortly after, French and Nigerien troops launched two failed operations to rescue the hostages. The two men were found dead at the border between Niger and Mali, but it was not clear how they died. Four kidnappers and three members of Niger's security forces were killed in the operation as well (*al-Jazeera*, January 10). Immediately after the failed attempt to

rescue the hostages, French and Malian sources claimed that al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) was responsible for the kidnapping and killing of the two Frenchmen.

AQIM claimed responsibility for the kidnapping only a few days after. Through a message to Reuters, the group claimed responsibility for the abductions but did not provide any explanation as to how the hostages died (*Reuters Africa*, January 13). Two days later, AQIM claimed responsibility for killing one of the hostages (*Jeune Afrique*, January 15). The main suspects belong to the faction led by Mokhtar Belmokhtar, an AQIM Amir active in the Sahel region and a key member of the organization (*Jeune Afrique*, January 12).

The circumstances of this event are largely unclear. First of all, it is still uncertain how the two hostages died. Paris chief prosecutor Jean-Claude Marin said that de Léocour died after being shot once in the face, while five arm wounds, as well as several burns, were found on Delory's body (*AFP*, January 13). After the failed rescue, France and Niger gave different versions of event. French Defense Minister Alain Juppé, in West Africa for some diplomatic meetings, decided to go to Niamey after the operation as well (*Gabonews*, January 9). Juppé said that the hostages had been killed in cold blood before the arrival of French and Nigerien troops. Moreover, he added that Nigerien authorities had detained two members of AQIM considered to be suspects in the abduction. Those men were supposedly under interrogation. Paris also suspected that the two men wearing uniforms of the Niger Gendarmerie found dead after the operation in northern Mali (15 kilometers from Tabankor) were partners of the kidnappers. Niamey strongly denied these allegations, claiming that the two men with the gendarme uniforms were following the kidnappers and were killed in an ambush by terrorists. Niger Home Minister Ousmane Cissé also denied that any terrorist suspects were being held, claiming that France did not transfer any suspects to Nigerien authorities (*L'Humanité*, January 14). However, the French Defense Ministry said the uniformed Nigeriens fought against French forces (*AFP*, January 13).

Before this attack, Niamey was considered a safe city (*Le Nouvel Observateur*, January 11). The area where the abduction was carried out, Plateau, is described in the recent work of a French anthropologist as a quarter "with many NGO headquarters, private enterprises, administrative buildings and high standard housing." [1] Normally, such areas in the cities of developing countries

are better controlled than others. Therefore, this action demonstrates an increased operational capability to allow the kidnapping of Western citizens in the heart of the capital city, in areas in which security should be better than elsewhere. Being able to operate under such circumstances could mean that Niger security forces are either unable to guarantee an adequate level of security in the most important areas of the capital or that the kidnapers could have been helped by agents within the security structure. In West Africa the corruption of policemen and security personnel is very common and it cannot be completely excluded that the kidnapers had internal partners.

The killings of the two Frenchmen represent the second failure of a French-led rescue operation in the area, after the killing of Michel Germaneau by his AQIM captors in July 2010 (see *Terrorism Monitor*, September 23, 2010). The possibility that a local criminal gang took the hostages with the intention of selling them to AQIM later cannot be excluded. However, AQIM gave political direction to the operation. The different factions of AQIM operating in the Sahel are competing against each other to gain power and prestige within the overall organization. The kidnapping of foreigners is a favored tactic since it can provide money to the faction if a ransom is paid, or “jihadi prestige” if the hostages are killed.

When the hostages are French, there is also another dimension to take into account. Paris is the most highly involved external power in the region, for strategic and historical reasons. A French failure, therefore, is a success for AQIM. Fostering divisions between France and its regional allies – as is the case now with the tensions between Paris and Niamey – is another aim of AQIM, which fights France because of its colonial past in the region. AQIM still holds five French hostages kidnapped in September from the Niger town of Arlit. The men are workers of the Areva and Satom companies involved in uranium operations there. In the Niamey case, the abduction of de Léocour and Delory seems to be a random event. However, French hostages are the most valuable among different Western nationalities for AQIM. Moreover, the kidnapping of foreigners is a formidable means of damaging tourism in the region, one of the major sources of income for Sahelian nations (*Terrorism Monitor*, October 28, 2010). In AQIM’s calculations, affecting the economic stability of the chronically poor and unstable nations of the Sahel should weaken these countries while driving them away from France.

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Note:

1. Mirco Göpfert, “Security in nocturnal Niamey. Preliminary reflections and conceptual outlook”, *Sociétés politiques comparées*, n°18, October 2009, p. 14, available at: <http://www.fasopo.org/reasopo/n18/article.pdf>.

Defeating the “Forces of Paganism”: Former Military Intelligence Chief Hamid Gul Blends Pakistani Nationalism and Islamic Revolution

By Andrew McGregor

The retired former chief of Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence agency (ISI), Lieutenant General Hamid Gul, is one of the most controversial political figures in Pakistan. Despite his once extremely close ties with the American Central Intelligence Agency during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, Gul has since become one of Pakistan’s harshest critics of American foreign policy in South and Central Asia. Speaking at a recent Sufi ceremony in the northeastern Punjab town of Gujranwala, Gul, who was director of the ISI from 1987 to 1989, suggested that conflicts in

Afghanistan have historically been a catalyst for massive change in South Asia and that “this change is knocking at our door... The forces of paganism have faced the worst defeat in Afghanistan and Iraq, but these forces are reluctant to accept their defeat. By 2012, these forces will be totally exhausted.” In Pakistan, however, Gul says what is needed is not a bloodbath, but rather a “soft Islamic revolution” (Nawa-i-Waqt, Rawalpindi, January 17).

General Gul is certainly one of the most talkative former intelligence directors in the world, constantly seeking the spotlight through provocative remarks presented in a seemingly endless series of television and print interviews. While the United States has regularly claimed Gul is a supporter of al-Qaeda and Taliban forces, Gul counters that his activities are strictly based on morality, Pakistani sovereignty and the struggle of Muslims to free themselves from foreign occupation and manipulation:

The Americans sent my name to the UN Security Council to put me on a sanctions list and declare me an international terrorist. But they failed because the Chinese knew the truth well and blocked that move. Basically, the Americans have nothing against me. I saw the charges and I replied to them in the English-language press in Pakistan. I said if they have anything against me to bring it forward, put me on trial. Tell me what wrong I have done. I have been taking moral stands. The Americans talk of freedom of speech, but apparently my speech hurts them because it counters their excesses... I do not support terror at all, but jihad is our right when a nation is oppressed. According to the United Nations Charter, national resistance for liberation is a right. We call this a jihad (al-Jazeera, February 17, 2010).

Pakistan's Relations with the United States

In his capacity as Director General of Military Intelligence (DGMI) under General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq and later ISI director under Benazir Bhutto, Gul worked closely with American intelligence agencies in coordinating and supplying the Afghan mujahideen's struggle against Soviet occupation. This relationship began to suffer when Gul observed that American funding and interest in Afghanistan declined rapidly after the expulsion of the Soviets in 1989. Sanctions related to Pakistan's secret nuclear program further

inflamed Gul, who tried to rally Muslim opposition to the U.S. led “War on Terrorism.” According to Gul: “The Muslim world must stand united to confront the U.S. in its so-called war against terror which is in reality a war against Muslims. Let us destroy America wherever its troops are trapped” (Daily Times [Lahore], August 30, 2003).

Gul continues to view the United States as the adversary of the Islamic world, telling a Rawalpindi daily that America will never be Pakistan's friend – in fact, it is an even greater enemy than India (Nawa-i-Waqt [Rawalpindi], January 17). The former ISI chief claims U.S. military contractors (read Blackwater/XE) and CIA-directed drone attacks are actively working to destabilize Pakistan from within.

The former ISI chief continues to maintain the 9/11 attacks were part of an American plot to seize the resource-rich Muslim states, a plot that later instigated the Lal Masjid (Red Mosque) siege in 2007 as a means of bringing the Muslim mujahideen and the Pakistan Army into confrontation (South Asian News Agency, January 19). He cites as proof of American intentions the fact that U.S. forces did not quickly withdraw from Afghanistan after dispersing al-Qaeda elements in late 2001 and claims the Obama administration is now working to replace U.S. government troops with American mercenaries as a means of deflecting negative public opinion: “This is a very dangerous trend if we are to believe that mercenaries can win wars and carry forward the political objectives of the country. This means that whoever has more money can employ more mercenaries, win wars, win territories, etc.” (al-Jazeera, February 18, 2010).

Gul was consistent in his response to recent news of the death of his long-time associate and former ISI Colonel (ret'd) Sultan Amir Tarar (a.k.a. Colonel Imam) while in the hands of the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). Colonel Imam was kidnapped in March 2010 while on a mysterious mission to North Waziristan along with two other men, one of whom was murdered last year. Though the Taliban's demands for the release of prisoners in government prisons were never met, the group is claiming Colonel Imam died of heart failure. Gul insists that his former colleague did not suffer from heart problems, but was instead killed by Indian intelligence and agents of private military contractor Blackwater/XE under a U.S. contract (Express Tribune [Karachi], January 23; The News [Islamabad], January 27).

Wikileaks Controversy

General Gul's name appears in 92,000 of the U.S. diplomatic cables leaked to Wikileaks, most often in connection to his alleged ties with the Taliban, the Haqqani Network and al-Qaeda operatives. While the cables represent only raw, unanalyzed intelligence reports, the sheer volume of those mentioning Gul in connection with militant groups is nevertheless alarming. Included in the documents are reports of Gul obtaining arms and munitions for the Taliban, orchestrating the abduction of United Nations personnel in Afghanistan and bragging about his role in ordering suicide bombings, all of which remain unverified.

Gul's response to the allegations contained in the cables was emphatic: "These documents are nonsense. They are ironic, wrong and stupid. I deny every single word in them... It is all rubbish." For once, Gul did not blame the United States, saying the allegations were more likely the work of Afghan and Indian intelligence services (Der Spiegel, July 26, 2010).

Despite his alleged connections to Afghanistan's Taliban, Gul sees a different motivation behind the activities of Pakistan's own Taliban: "The Pakistani Taliban are being sponsored by the Indian intelligence and the Mossad, by the way, to carry out their attacks in Pakistan. Mossad is very active in Pakistan and they are providing all the guidance and technical support to the Indian intelligence. So, Pakistan has to have its back covered - no country can fight on two fronts." These remarks run contrary to the belief of Western governments that Pakistan's ISI has close ties to the Pakistani Taliban.

Dueling Court Cases

This month a Brooklyn-based U.S. court summoned current ISI Director Lieutenant General Ahmed Shuja Pasha, his predecessor, Lieutenant General Nadeem Taj (current Adjutant-General of the Pakistan Army), and two other Pakistan Army officers in connection with a suit brought by two Israeli-Americans who lost relatives in the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks.

The summons threatens to be another major blow to American-Pakistani relations, with the Islamabad government promising to resist all attempts to make serving officers of its military appear before an American court. Just in case the government's will falters, Islamist political parties have been issuing threats of insurrection if the government fails to resist. According to Jamaat-

ud-Dawah official Professor Hafiz Abdur Rehman Makki: "The Americans are the most foolish people in the world. They think that Pakistan is like an article in a cupboard and they will order it the way they like. It is due to our rulers only" (Nawa-i-Waqt, January 19). Many of the Islamists view the court case as a conspiracy engineered by Indian and Israeli intelligence agencies.

The case seems ready made for one of Gul's appeals to Pakistani nationalism. The former ISI chief told an American periodical, "The United States [doesn't] care about any international law or the sovereignty and dignity of any country. [The] United States of America is the violator of all the international rules and laws." Gul further claimed the court might give a biased verdict that would slander Pakistan in the eyes of the international community (New American, January 24).

The case appears to have already had repercussions after the name of the CIA's Islamabad station chief was leaked to a Pakistani journalist who has filed a murder case against CIA station chief Jonathan Banks, with other notices being served on CIA director Leon Panetta and U.S. secretary of defense Robert Gates in relation to the death of journalist Karim Khan's brother and son in a December 2009 drone attack in North Waziristan. Gul suggests the ISI may have leaked Banks' name as revenge for the summons issued on its director, General Shuja Pasha, in the Brooklyn Mumbai trial (Newsweek Pakistan, January 10).

The Benazir Bhutto Assassination

Though Gul was frequently named as a suspect in Bhutto's assassination, he was largely cleared of involvement by the Pakistan government in April 2010. It was Bhutto who replaced Gul as ISI director in 1987. The rift between Bhutto and Gul reached a critical point when Bhutto named Gul as one of four prominent Pakistanis she claimed were behind the October 18, 2007, bombing of her motorcade in Karachi, which killed 139 people and left hundreds injured.

Gul has frequently claimed Washington was behind Bhutto's murder, but more recently has set his sights on former Pakistan president Pervez Musharraf as a main suspect, saying Musharraf was responsible for Bhutto's death and should be subject to investigation and questioning (The Nation [Islamabad], December 27, 2010; The News [Islamabad], January 5; Times of India, December 27, 2010).

Conclusion

It is difficult to assess Gul's importance in the ongoing struggle for Pakistan's future. There seems little doubt that Gul maintains extensive contacts within the shadowy and dangerous world of covert operations in South Asia. However, the seriousness of the Western allegations leveled at the former ISI chief seem incompatible with his accessibility to the press, leading some to dismiss his importance. Nevertheless, General Gul presents an attractive mix of Islamic revolution and Pakistani nationalism that finds a ready audience inside Pakistan. His claims that allegations of ties to terrorism are an American/Israeli/Indian conspiracy to deny him his role as a "credible critic" of Western intervention in the region likewise reverberate favorably with the Pakistani public. Gul's importance stands primarily in the extent to which he represents a pro-Islamist, anti-American trend in Pakistan's military and intelligence agencies, organizations which will ultimately have far more to do with the future direction of Pakistan than Taliban gunmen.

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