



# CLAWS

No. 3, 2008

KARTIKEYA PAPER

## THE AL QAEDA IN INDIA

Rahul K Bhonsle

---

Kartikeya — in Indian mythology,  
Lord Kartikeya is known as the God of War.

---

# The Al Qaeda In India

Brig Rahul K Bhonsle (Retd)



KW Publishers Pvt Ltd  
New Delhi

in association with



Centre for Land Warfare Studies  
New Delhi



A KW Publishers Book  
[www.kwpublishers.com](http://www.kwpublishers.com)

© 2008, Centre for Land Warfare Studies(CLAWS), New Delhi.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN 10: 81-87966-91-2

ISBN 13: 978-81-87966-91-3

Published in India by

Kalpana Shukla  
KW Publishers Pvt Ltd  
5A/4A, Ansari Road, Daryaganj, New Delhi 110002  
email: [knowledgeworld@vsnl.net](mailto:knowledgeworld@vsnl.net) / [online.kw@gmail.com](mailto:online.kw@gmail.com)

Typeset by Black Innovation, New Delhi and Printed at Chaman Offset Printer, New Delhi

# The Al Qaeda In India

BRIG RAHUL K BHONSLE (RETD)

## INTRODUCTION

The Al Qaeda has subsumed the security paradigm of the 21st century. While it came on the global terror centre-stage in September 2001, in what is popularly known as 9/11, the epochal event which targeted the World Trade Centre (WTC) in New York, the Al Qaeda has been active over the years, with West Asia and Afghanistan being the centres of gravity. The warped appeal of the organisation lies in employing religion to fan violent political dissent. The vast network of Islamic religious institutions across the globe has been used to acquire ready and willing youth as sacrificial 'martyrs' in a political battle coloured as one between Islam and the Rest. Asymmetric terrorism is an ideal foil used to broaden influence far in excess of acceptance of ideology by a majority of peace loving Muslims across the globe. Adaptation of information and communication technologies has provided the organisation an extended reach, employing the internet, satellite telephones, video cameras, CDs, DVDs, web cams and television channels, to a network of cells and affiliate terrorist groups as well as to the global audience at large.

India could be considered an ideal ground for the Al Qaeda. North India of the early 20th century has been the matrix of Deobandi and Salafi strains of Islam espoused by the organisation. On the other hand, with the second largest Muslim population, spread across the country, yet being a minority, provides the likes of Osama an ideal target group. Yet India's secular ethos, which has permeated the society for many centuries, has not been penetrated by the Al Qaeda despite its presence in South Asia on the Pakistan-Afghanistan borders.

There are, however, many indications of ideological linkages, support, training, fighters and networking with terror groups operating in Kashmir and other parts of the country which have led the security establishment to believe that the Al Qaeda operates in India albeit vicariously. Liberals fiercely contest this assessment. A research view of the issue is, therefore, felt necessary, as being an organisation with enormous potential for destruction, including possibly nuclear terrorism, the threat potential of the Al Qaeda in India needs to be categorically and not generically identified.

## **AIM AND SCOPE OF PAPER**

The aim of the paper is to carry out an in-depth review of the Al Qaeda to include the ideological, physical, social, and psychological underpinnings with a view to assess the footprint of the organisation in India.

The paper covers the following related issues

- (a) Understanding — The Al Qaeda — A backgrounder on the organisation and functioning.
- (b) The Al Qaeda — Ideology
- (c) The Al Qaeda In India — Incident and network analysis
- (d) The Al Qaeda in Kashmir.
- (e) Post-Lal Masjid Al Qaeda — A brief overview of the Al Qaeda's emerging strategy in Pakistan and implications for India.
- (f) An Assessment — Summing up of definitive indications of the Al Qaeda's presence.

## **UNDERSTANDING — THE AL QAEDA**

### *An Overview*

Al Qaeda Al Sulbah or the “solid base” was founded by Abdullah Azzam, a

Palestinian academic and funded by Bin Laden in the wake of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in 1979. The organisation provided a core for the large number of Mujahideen groups to coagulate in the fight against Soviet incursion in Kabul. Literally meaning, “The Base”, the Al Qaeda, has become the symbol of Islamic fundamentalist terrorism with a global expanse and internationalist vision. The core Al Qaeda was joined by many smaller groups such as the Al Jihad led by the Egyptian doctor Ayman Al Zawahiri. While initially the Al Qaeda was not fundamentalist in outlook, in 1989, there was a significant shift in the organisation’s approach to a puritanical and heretical form of Islam. This continues to be the core philosophy of the Al Qaeda today. The Al Qaeda’s initial centre of attention comprised the regimes in Egypt and Saudi Arabia, but after the Gulf War, 1991, it has had a single focus, the United States of America and the states aligned to it. Thus, US targets, allies and activities have been in the Al Qaeda cross-hairs over the years.<sup>1</sup>

The Al Qaeda’s initial base was in Sudan. With the establishment of the Taliban in Afghanistan, the base shifted there. There was nothing in common between the Al Qaeda and the Taliban or Osama Bin Laden’s group and the Afghan people except for religion and kinship network. But Afghanistan under the Taliban provided Bin Laden a safe sanctuary for the spread of anti-Americanism and Islamic fundamentalism. The Taliban was a group fostered by the external intelligence agency in neighbouring Pakistan which enabled Islamabad to influence the policies and government in Kabul. That it had no common ground with welfare of the Afghan people was more than evident as its policies proved potently regressive. But the Afghan people lacked rational choice, energy and organisation to resist the Taliban and were forced to accept the inevitable.

The Al Qaeda shrewdly exploited the network established by the Taliban by creating a fraternal relationship. This is the strategy it has been using con-

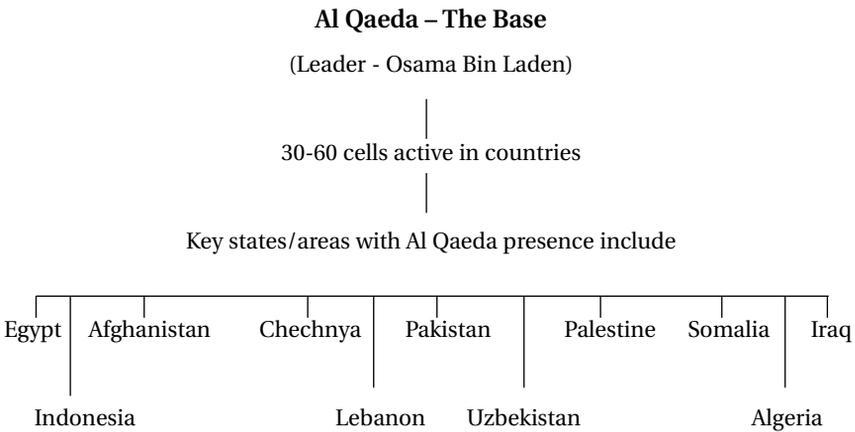
stantly thereafter in other parts of the world, be it Iraq or North Africa. It is the model network form of organisation where the Al Qaeda provides an overarching umbrella under which a large number of subsidiary units or honeycombs flourish. These auxiliary units depend on the mother base for ideology, leadership, training and financial support till they establish their primacy in the area of interest. These identify with the Al Qaeda nominally such as Al Qaeda in Iraq or may continue to be denoted by their original names such as Harkat ul Jihadi Islam (HUJI). An understanding of this organisational form is relevant while considering the possibility of existence of the Al Qaeda in India.

The Al Qaeda was effectively evicted from Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom launched post-9/11. The leaders including Osama Bin Laden were hounded into the Tora Bora caves in eastern Afghanistan but succeeded in escaping beyond the reach of US led forces into Pakistan. Yet, today, the organisation has rebounded and has succeeded in spreading its influence across the world, some say in several countries which span all the continents. The Al Qaeda cells, varying from 30 to 60, have been identified in Canada, the USA, Paraguay, Uruguay and Argentina in North and South America, the UK, France, Spain, Germany, Italy, Bosnia and Russia in Europe, Algeria, Lebanon, Sudan, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Somalia in Africa, and the Middle East and Afghanistan, Pakistan, Philippines, and Indonesia in Asia. Presently, large groups owing direct allegiance to the Al Qaeda are active in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Somalia and Algiers

At the lower level, the Al Qaeda follows a cellular structure. Each cell is generally independent of each other and only interacts through an intermediary. This ensures that even if one cell is compromised, others continue their activities unhindered. However, for operational purposes, one or more cells can be linked by the leadership without knowing each other's plans or objectives. This was the loose manner in which Atta and the 9/11 operatives

were able to plan a strike on the WTC in New York, with very limited chances of detection. The cells can also be dormant, semi-active or active depending on operational requirements. Contact is maintained with the cells through varied means, the internet being the most popular. Here again, apart from modern tools of encryption, steganography is used effectively to send messages in codes through sports and pornography sites.<sup>2</sup> Chat rooms accessed through internet cafes rather than personal computers are preferred, thereby maintaining relative anonymity.

The global network of the Al Qaeda is as given below (Fig 1):



### ***Organisation and Functioning***

The Al Qaeda structure has four basic components which are seamlessly linked. At the apex is the highest political body which provides strategic direction and also suggests the tactical course. Thus, Al Qaeda deputy, Ayman Al Zawahiri, indicated that the Pakistan Army was the prime target after the Lal Masjid operations in Islamabad in July 2007 and also offered the

means for attack—suicide strikes. The series of suicide attacks in Pakistan thereafter, mainly targeted at the military, could, thus, be traced back to this instruction. In military terms, this could be denoted as the directive style of command at the strategic level, but given the reduction in the number of layers of hierarchy, denotes impact at the tactical.<sup>3</sup>

The Al Qaeda thinks and operates strategically. Thus, the organisation can consider a revolt against a state and the government which will comprise collective actions at a large number of points and with maximum intensity. As Abu Haris, a Pakistani member of the *Shura* says, “It [*khuruj*] will be different from isolated attacks; rather, it will be collective actions of revolt throughout Pakistani cities. This is what *khuruj* is by strategy and according to the demands of *Sharia*.” On the other hand, a catastrophic event may also be considered a *khuruj*.

Selection of the target is carefully carried out to have the biggest impact on the society or state being attacked. In the case of the United States, it was the World Trade Centre, at the heart of the American dream. In Pakistan, it was the army and President Musharraf, considered by many as unshakable in crisis, who have been the centre of gravity. This was possibly done after a shrewd analysis of vulnerabilities assessed, with the poor performance of the army in counter-militancy operations in 2006-07. Thus, at one stroke, the Al Qaeda challenges the society as well as the state.

The highest body of the terrorist group is divided into various sub-structures. At the top is the *Shura Majlis* or consultative council headed by Osama Bin Laden and comprises other key members, including Ayman Al-Zawahiri. Elevation to the *Shura* is based on close filial ties between Osama and the members as well as within the large body. Of late, it is apparent that there is a shift in the organisation's Arab focus. A recent report by Saleem Shahzad of *Asia Times* quoted a Pakistani source, nicknamed as Abu Haris and part of the Lashkar-e-Taiyyeba, as a member of the *Shura*. In addition to Abu, there

are a number of Pakistanis who are stated to have been given responsible positions in the Al Qaeda hierarchy and are focussed on waging terrorism in Pakistan. The military, finance, *fatwa* and Islamic studies, and media and publicity committees operate below the *Shura*.<sup>4</sup> These carry out tasks indicated by their names. It is believed that post-9/11, the organisation was severely disrupted but has since been reestablished, though the extent to which it has been rejuvenated is not clear.

The next level of organisation is the global terrorist network which is spread across the world and comprises over 60 active and sleeper cells. These cells of the Al Qaeda emanate as spokes from the hub established in an area which is not governed by the state. These arms of the outfit today spread from Afghanistan to the east towards Pakistan and Southeast Asia to North Africa and to Southern Europe. That the Al Qaeda cells operate independently and are not fully aware of each other's locations and precise tasks was evident when its operatives succeeded in evading the dragnet of Pakistani intelligence agencies after the recent capture of members of the Jundullah, an Al Qaeda affiliate in Karachi. Thus, penetration of the organisation is extremely difficult. The main influence of this network at present is in Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia and Algeria, areas which are raging in conflict. The global organisation is supported by a base, a training -cum -motivational foundation through which all recruits generally pass after being initiated into the organisation, and are imbibed in the ideology as well as broad methodologies of conduct. The present base is commonly believed to be in Pakistan in the unruly western areas of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and some of the outlying agencies of the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP), though the government has been consistently denying the same. The final tier in the organisation is that of like-minded transnational terror groups loosely linked with the Al Qaeda. This is the most significant facet of the organisation in as much as India is concerned, where

the presence of the Al Qaeda is denoted by such groups.

The Al Qaeda leadership structure is also highly flexible. While the overall leadership rests with Osama Bin Laden who controls through a loosely defined communication chain which is virtual rather than physical, given that this is being constantly tracked, succession is smooth as denoted by the takeover by the Palestinian member, Abu Zubaydah, from Mohammed Atef after 9/11, without a hitch. Communication to the Al Qaeda community at large is through public messages by Osama or his deputy, Ayman Al Zawahiri, aired on Al Qaeda affiliated web sites and television networks. These messages indicate broad directions to the cadres. The manner in which the leadership succeeded in targeting the Pakistan Army, including the military headquarters in Rawalpindi, post the Lal Masjid storming, has been indicated hithertofore.

The various processes of the organisation have been institutionalised over the years. The training manual, "Encyclopaedia of Jihad" has two formats, a CD Rom and a hard copy with 11 volumes and 7,000 pages. A detailed profile of attacks is indicated in the manual, including use of bio-terror, physical bombs and bomb-making techniques.<sup>5</sup> Conduct of-hand-to-hand combat, surveillance of targets, letter and helmet bombs and detailed use of explosives has been covered, which could put another similar document of yesteryears, Carlos Marighella's "Mini Manual for the Guerrilla" to shade.

For a more handy purpose, the Al Qaeda has a 200 page manual called, "Military Studies in the Holy War Against the Tyrants." It comprises 18 chapters and covers various facets of a terrorist's trade, including kidnapping and assassinations, bomb-making and hostage taking. The psyche of the terrorist is also explored in detail as "tranquillity and calm personality that allows coping with psychological traumas such as those of the operations of bloodshed and mass murder."<sup>6</sup> The Al Qaeda mode of induction includes motivat-

ing new recruits to join the group, mergers or networking with other terror groups. It also encourages second and third generation fighters to form their own groups across the world.

The Al Qaeda does not rely on purely conventional terrorist techniques and is reported to have attempted to acquire nuclear weapons through a Pakistani atomic scientist. Greg Miller, in the *Los Angeles Times*, has indicated that Sultan Bashirrudin Mahmood and Chaudhry Abdul Majeed, two Pakistani nuclear experts, reportedly under house arrest in Pakistan, are known to have met Osama Bin Laden in 2001, weeks before the 9/11 attacks. The Al Qaeda acquiring a rudimentary dirty bomb from such operatives in the future, thus, cannot be ruled out.<sup>7</sup> In October 2001, *Arms Control Today* indicated that the organisation was attempting to acquire fissile materials from civilian facilities to try and manufacture a simple Hiroshima type of bomb.<sup>8</sup> Some recent scenarios also indicate that the organisation could take advantage of the flux in politics and militancy in a nuclear armed state such as Pakistan, subvert the chain, and acquire a nuclear weapon. These claims have been strongly refuted by the Pakistani establishment and a detailed review of the checks in place there may denote a reasonable degree of assurance against such an event.<sup>9</sup> But a 'wild card' episode of acquiring a dud warhead or a 'dirty' bomb for blackmail or securing release of some of its leaders may not be too far-fetched.

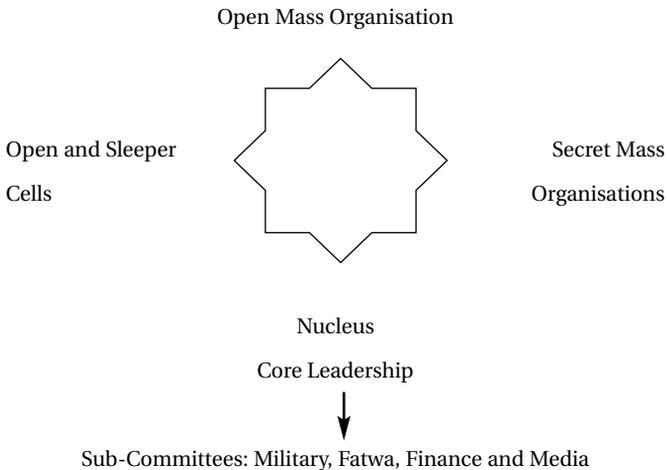
### *Analysis of the Organisation*

The Al Qaeda is a network rather than a classic conventional organisation. It functions as a series of interlinked nodes which are provided command guidance through the most unusual means of public videos, periodic sermons, logs on the internet and programmes selectively aired by television channels such as the As Sahab, downloaded on CDs and circulated. Steganography, a highly sophisticated technique for encrypting messages

while transmitting on the internet, is used. High value instructions are passed through personal couriers. Given the proliferation of communication networks, the organisation does not necessarily require a formal command and control structure and attains redundancy from any attempt to target the command network which explains its survival for over six years after 2001. However, the Al Qaeda's reliance on this unusual means of communication has generated intense interest in the counter-terrorism and intelligence community in tracking videos and other transmissions. This has also become one of the early indicators for launching operations.

The Al Qaeda's organisation may in many ways represent a modern day multinational corporation spreading business across the world, merging and acquiring like-minded local groups, yet not establishing full ownership. Networking provides synergy as groups are loosely linked with greater autonomy to the local leadership. This provides them enough initiative to pursue their agenda suiting atypical conditions within yet remain in consonance with the larger goals of the organisation. The Al Qaeda not only pro-

**Fig. 2 Networked Cellular Organisation**



vides them a 'brand' image but also the desired degree of terror expertise which enhances their destructive potential. Moreover, in a practice which seeks to breed mass hysteria through the fear factor, association with the Al Qaeda provides greater credibility to even lowly and non-existent outfits such as the one that evoked alarm in Kashmir in 2007. A typical network, as denoted in Fig. 2, indicates an open mass organisation, a secret mass organisation, and open and sleeper cells controlled by the nucleus of a core leadership.

The functioning of the organisation denotes a high level of dependency on modern means of public sources of communication such as the internet, low level open source encryption and elaborate measures to cover tracks. Yet the processes of command and control, of training, finance and other support are in place for coopting a group with a common goal or purpose with ease.

### AL QAEDA – IDEOLOGY

The Al Qaeda uses religion as a tool to foster political goals as well as a binding factor for its organisational proliferation. Gradually, a new form of "ism" seems to be emerging which has been called Al Qaedaism. by Maj Gen Afsir Karim(Retd).India's National Security Adviser (NSA) M K Narayanan, confirming this trend, says, "Today, the Al Qaeda's mindset, even more than the Al Qaeda network, provides the most pervasive threat to Asian and international stability." Within the larger dogmatic interpretation of Islam, the Al Qaeda follows the ideology of *Tafkir wal Hijra* or Anathema and Exile.<sup>10</sup> Thus, the activists are known as Tafsiris. A notable feature of the ideology is that activists are not required to maintain any external form of dress or demeanour such as a beard. Nor are they required to follow the rigid practices of the faith incumbent on followers of the Tablighi Jamaat. Thus while the Tablighis often get erroneously typ-

ified as extremists in the West, the Al Qaeda operatives can live normally without raising any suspicion even amongst their closest neighbours. The Al Qaeda effectively uses a warped interpretation of the Islamic ideology of *jihad*. While *jihad* is seen as purification of the self or waging war with one's own self for exorcising the ghosts within, organisations like the Al Qaeda denote it as a political instrument to spread global Islamic rule with a view to establish a Caliphate.

When specifically related to India, there are many indications that the Al Qaeda is not above exploitation of socio-political and religious fault lines within the country to advantage. Kashmir continues to be a core issue which provides sufficient ideological fuel. Hypothetically, the large Muslim population provides the organisation enough demographic mass to disaffect a portion of the same. Osama is personally interested in exploiting this large base to effect and has not lost any opportunity to do so. Thus, in May 1998, immediately after the Shakti nuclear tests, he asked the Pakistan Army to prepare for a nuclear *jihad* with India.<sup>11</sup> Ironically, it is the same army which is now his prime target, indicating that the group has just permanent interests and no enduring friends.

India could be considered an ideal ground for the Al Qaeda. The country's large Muslim population and perceived sense of inequity has been heightened from time to time due to communal rioting, most notably in Mumbai in 1993 and Gujarat in 2002. Thus, the Al Qaeda finds India a suitable target for proliferation of its ideology. Over the years, the following issues have formed the core of the Al Qaeda's anti-India platform:

- Kashmir is harped upon by the Al Qaeda to focus on alleged exploitation of Muslims by non-Muslims in the state.
- Injustice and inequity purportedly suffered by Indian Muslims, and their supposedly inferior role in society.
- India's cooperation with the USA and Israel.

### *Analysis of Ideology.*

In as much as India is concerned, the Al Qaeda's lack of understanding of Indian social and cultural values which fit most appropriately into syncretism has led it to believe that it can create dissension in the country. Syncretism is the antithesis of the monotheist absolutism practised by the terror network. By simplistically placing the context of Kashmir into a religious paradigm or the disaffection of Muslims in some parts of the country as exploitation by the majority community, it seems to have derived quite speciously that India is an ideal target to spread its ulterior motives. The leaders have perhaps not been able to gauge that minority violence in the country is episodic and is supported by a miniscule minority. Yet, this should also serve as a warning to the Indian state, where such occurrences cannot be allowed to provide ideological fodder for the likes of Osama. On the other hand, the depth of pluralism and the outrage that has followed such incidents in India would lead to the belief that there is a shield of pluralism against penetration by such extremist ideology.

## THE AL QAEDA IN INDIA?

### *General*

The opinion in India over the presence of the Al Qaeda is divided. The intelligence community led by the NSA has been harping on the existence of various strands of the organisation in the country. The NSA is reported to have stated in a conference of the police chiefs in New Delhi on October 3, that the Al Qaeda poses a threat to India.<sup>12</sup> Liberals, on the other hand, strongly oppose this point of view. "People have every right to be sceptical of the official line that Al Qaeda is about to launch murderous terrorist attacks in India," says Kamal Mitra Chenoy, of the Jawaharlal Nehru University. "The government has produced no documentary evi-

dence to back its assessment. In the past, it proved wrong on numerous occasions.”<sup>13</sup>

### *Indian Arms of Al Qaeda Network*

The Al Qaeda's network is geographically distributed and has a regional rather than central profile. Thus, each theatre of operation such as Iraq or Afghanistan has a separate leader who controls the activities. The central headquarters is also located based on availability of a permissive environment for survival. For this purpose, ungoverned spaces or failed states are ideal for the Al Qaeda. Thus, from 1991 to 1996, it was based in Sudan and shifted to Afghanistan in May 1996. Post-9/11, the Al Qaeda command structure dissipated into small groups and scattered astride the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. Today, it is widely believed to be in FATA or NWFP of Pakistan.<sup>14</sup> From this base of operations, the Al Qaeda central leadership can influence rather than control operations in detail.

While examining the Al Qaeda's presence in India, it is important to understand its operational philosophy. FATA-NWFP provide the base for operations in South Asia, including Afghanistan. While operations in Afghanistan and Pakistan are controlled from this area, those in India are sub-allotted to affiliated groups operating in the country. These organisations have been nurtured over the years, with many of them having participated in the anti-Soviet campaign in Afghanistan. These groups primarily include the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM), Harkat-ul-Jihadi Islam (HUJI), Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) and Lashkar-e-Taiyyeba (LeT), along with its political wing, Jamaat-ud-Dawa.<sup>15</sup> The HuM, HUJI, LeT and JeM are members of the International Islamic Front (IIF) which is led by Osama Bin Laden, and have been under his influence since the 1990s. These are all based in Pakistan and support the militancy in Kashmir. Notably, the most prominent terrorist group comprising indigenous Kashmiri youth, the

Hizbul Mujahideen, does not support the Al Qaeda. The reason for the same may not be far to seek and could be placed in the context of India's cultural roots in syncretism covered earlier.

The linkage is also through the common ideology of these groups with the Al Qaeda. The Harkat-ul-Ansar, a group which was formed with the merger of the HuM and HUJI, is linked with Osama. The HUJI's Bangladesh arm, commonly known as the HUJI (B), which was implicated in the Mecca Masjid blast in May 2007 in India and the subsequent Gokul Chat mayhem, both in Hyderabad, is also a member of the IIF. There are also personal linkages between the leadership, with Osama having deep friendship with Harkat leaders such as Fazl-ur-Rehman Khalil.<sup>16</sup> Mullah Masood Azhar, head of the JeM, a breakaway faction of the Harkat, is regarded as a close associate of Osama and Mullah Omar, the Taliban chief.<sup>17</sup> The JeM is the second most active terrorist organisation in Kashmir and is also active in other parts of India. A recent report indicated that three JeM operatives were plotting to kidnap a prominent Indian political leader, with a view to facilitate the release of 42 hard core terrorists lodged in Indian jails. Some reports indicated that Rahul Gandhi, scion of India's first political family, the Nehru-Gandhi family, was the most likely victim.<sup>18</sup>

The JeM and the LeT, which primarily operate in Kashmir, also have operational congruity with the Al Qaeda, as their main option is suicide attacks. The JeM was involved in a suicide attack on April 19, 2000, on HQ 15 Corps in Srinagar which was the first such major strike in the country. Subsequent attacks, including that on the Indian Parliament on December 13, 2001, have also been traced to these outfits.<sup>19</sup> The Al Qaeda is also said to be having a support network with criminal groups as that of Dawood Ibrahim, mastermind of the Mumbai bomb blast of 1993. While this fits in with the overall span of the organisational and operational flexibility of the organisation, direct linkages have not been traced so far.

At another level, the Al Qaeda is actively involved in providing training to terrorists operating in Kashmir through camps established for the war in Afghanistan. Terrorists interrogated from time to time have referred to these camps, with many claiming that they were addressed by Osama personally. With a tendency of most such individuals to give patently exaggerated statements, the veracity of such reports needs corroboration.<sup>20</sup> But the ability of the Al Qaeda to provide moral as well as material support in terms of arms, training and ammunition to terrorists and organisations operating in Kashmir is reasonably confirmed.

### *Incidents Denoting Al Qaeda Linkage to India*

Suffice to say, direct linkage between terrorist activity in India and the Al Qaeda has not been established. Yet such clear-cut identification is difficult and well nigh impossible, with even the 9/11 WTC attack remaining surmised, rather than directly attributable, to the Al Qaeda for many years. An analysis of incidents in India would reveal that there are enough indications which may lead to the conclusion that the Al Qaeda has attempted a larger role for strategically directing operations in the country but has not been able to succeed. This could be due to lack of sympathy for its ideology among Indian Muslims who follow a highly tolerant form of Islam or because the Pakistani establishment did not allow it to hijack its own agenda. But the organisation continues to support the networks in various ways, be it through funds, training support or fighters, from time to time.

A relative incident and reference analysis to Kashmir and India in the Al Qaeda's pronouncements and activities is chronologically summarised, as given below

1. In Osama's edict in August 1996, Kashmir is linked with other areas where Muslims are persecuted, including Assam. The edict or *fatwa* is a declaration of war, first published in *Al Quds Al Arabi*, a London-based news-

paper. The excerpt indicates, "It should not be hidden from you that the people of Islam had suffered from aggression, iniquity and injustice imposed on them by the Zionist-Crusaders alliance and their collaborators; to the extent that the Muslims' blood became the cheapest and their wealth as loot in the hands of the enemies. Their blood was spilled in Palestine and Iraq. The horrifying pictures of the massacre of Qana, in Lebanon, are still fresh in our memory. Massacres in Tajikistan, Burma, Cashmere, Assam, Philippine, Fatani, Ogadin, Somalia, Eritria, Chechnia and in Bosnia-Herzegovina took place, massacres that send shivers in the body and shake the conscience."<sup>21</sup>

2. A fax received by Voice of America on December 21, 1999, purportedly from Nazeer Ahmed Mujjaid, who is said to be military adviser to the Al Qaeda, stated that India, along with the United States of America and Russia, were the main targets of the organisation.<sup>22</sup> The Russian reference could be based on the involvement of the Al Qaeda in Chechnya.
3. The Al Qaeda's famed 055 Brigade is reported to have despatched 200 terrorists in June 1999 to fight in Kashmir. These were highly experienced fighters with exposure to combat in Afghanistan.<sup>23</sup> This induction of additional fighters could also be linked with the setback suffered by Pakistan during Operation Vijay in Kargil and, thus, the necessity to provide the flagging insurgency a boost.
4. An increase in suicide attacks immediately after this is also evidence of a new phase which would support the thesis of the Al Qaeda's involvement in the Valley. The first suicide attack occurred in July 1999 and the phase continued till the end of 2002, after which there have been only sporadic strikes. A total of 55 suicide attacks was launched in the three and half year period.<sup>24</sup> This link between the Al Qaeda and Kashmir may be derived but the high degree of motivation and tactical acumen demonstrated by the fighters during this period in the Valley provides ample proof.

5. An Al Qaeda member from Sudan was reportedly inducted in New Delhi in 2001 to target the US embassy but was arrested.
6. A video released on October 14, 2001, by Sulaiman Abu Ghaith of the Al Qaeda provides reference to support needed by the Muslims in Kashmir against the Hindus.
7. Some reports also indicate that the December 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament was the result of years of prospective targeting by groups linked with the Al Qaeda.<sup>25</sup> Two teams of pilots were reportedly organised as per the Tactical Interrogation Report of Muhammad Afroz arrested on November 28, 2001. One of the targets allotted to these could possibly be the Parliament.<sup>26</sup> Afroz is said to have been part of an Al Qaeda team tasked to carry out attacks in India as well as other countries.<sup>27</sup> As per a news report by the BBC, he confessed that the Al Qaeda was planning to strike Australia, and Britain as well as the Indian Parliament, using India as a base.<sup>28</sup>
8. A report in the January 05, 2002, issue of *Frontline* by Praveen Swami denotes that Quamar Ayub, a HuM militant had reported of an Al Qaeda operative located in Delhi whose code-name and cell number was provided to the HuM by their controllers. He also mentions the arrests in August 2001 of two Al Qaeda operatives by the Delhi police. This cell is alleged to have been plotting reprisals against US citizens in Paharganj as a retribution for bombing the Al Qaeda.<sup>29</sup>
9. A leader arrested in March 2002, Abu Zubaidah, reportedly No. 3 in the Al Qaeda hierarchy, had taken computer training in Pune before joining the organisation. Similarly, Khalid Sheikh, a detainee in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, is reported to have stated in a military tribunal in the US that he had planned an operation for an attack on the Israel Embassy in India.<sup>30</sup> Again, the credibility of these confessions has to be fully established.
10. In a video recording on the Al Arabiya TV channel on August 09, 2005,

some militants claimed that they seeking revenge for the killing of Muslims in India.<sup>31</sup>

11. There are also reports of Osama's speeches on CDs with English subtitles being available in Patna, Bihar, urging Muslims to join the *jihad* or holy war. These CDs have also been seen in rural areas of Patna and Bhojpur. In July 2006, two suspects of the Mumbai train blasts were arrested from Madhubani in Bihar, thus, exploitation of the disaffected population, with the rampant poverty and underdevelopment in the state, cannot be ruled out.<sup>32</sup>The Al Qaeda is hopeful of tapping this to fan fundamentalism and spread its tentacles in the country.
12. An advisory issued by the US Embassy in New Delhi in August 2006 stated, "The embassy has learned that foreign terrorists, possibly including Al Qaeda, allegedly intend to carry out a series of bombing attacks in and around New Delhi and Mumbai in the days leading up to India's Independence Day on August 15, 2006." It was later clarified that this was not based on any specific input but was a security advisory for US citizens in India. At the same time, it was reported that Indian intelligence agencies have been tracking the Al Qaeda and have been providing satellite telephone numbers of Osama Bin Laden to US authorities. The source for this input as quoted by noted terrorism expert Gunaratna is an Indian intelligence officer.
13. Dhiren Barot Al Hindi, a Hindu of Indian origin from East Africa, who migrated to the United Kingdom, is said to have been used by the Al Qaeda for intelligence collection. The details of this incident are hazy though he is reported to have visited New York, Malaysia, and Thailand as well as India. He has been convicted by a UK court and is undergoing imprisonment.<sup>33</sup> Another report about Dhiren Barot indicated that he was part of a group of eight personnel arrested by the British intelligence agencies in the UK in August 2004 for conspiracy.<sup>34</sup> Here again, the link is

diffused as the individual has never stayed permanently in India and, thus, could not be associated to any direct disaffection amongst the Indian Muslim community.

14. There were also reports that Yemen-based Al Qaeda operatives had infiltrated into Mumbai which could possibly be corroborated by what the National Security Adviser, M K Narayanan has been stating of Al Qaeda operatives having carried out dummy runs in the country.<sup>35</sup>

### *Analysis of Incidents*

The 14 reports outlined above vary from mention of India as a cause and a target of attack to preparation, training and rehearsals to possible actual conduct of strikes by elements of the Al Qaeda network. Viewed from the minimalist point of view, these clearly establish the Al Qaeda's intent to establish a base of operations in India, while at the upper end of the scale, the activities of the fighters of the 055 Brigade in Kashmir from 1999 to 2002 bear proof of its attempt to actively penetrate the country. For the purist who follows a counter-terrorism strategy of denial, the manifestation of threat is in pure shades of black and white. Suffice to say that those charged with the onerous responsibility of protecting the nation against terror cannot preclude even presumptive reports and need to follow up each thread till it comprehensively obfuscates the threat.

## **THE AL QAEDA IN KASHMIR**

### *General*

The Al Qaeda's presence in Kashmir is mainly through organisations like the LeT and JeM which are networked with it. These linkages had developed in the early 1990s. The HuM is said to have been the first organisation operating in Kashmir linked to the Al Qaeda. The US Office of Foreign Assets

Control (OFAC) had blocked funds for this organisation in September 2001. Some fighters of the 055 Brigade were also reported to have been deployed during the peak of militancy in Kashmir in the 1990s, as has been seen earlier. The ideological reasoning of these militant organisations in Kashmir fits in well with the Al Qaeda's overall philosophy of global *jihad*. The theme also suits the overall purpose of linking Kashmir with Palestine and other areas to highlight that Muslims are discriminated against. Also, a number of terrorists apprehended who have been in Kashmir, have roots that could be indirectly traced back to the organisation. The only direct link so far, however, is a cell claiming to be of the Al Qaeda which has come up in the Valley, though its credentials are extremely low.

On the other hand, the Al Qaeda has not found any favour with Kashmir's largest and indigenous militant organisation, the Hizbul Mujahideen. This is primarily due to ideological reasons. The *Wahhabi* ideology is the antithesis of Sufi Islam followed by the Kashmiri people, thus, it does not find any sympathy amongst them. This also denotes its overall reliance on Pakistan-based terrorist groups such as the LeT for making its presence felt in the state. However, reports indicate that the *Wahhabi* school has made some inroads in Kashmir over the past few years. Kashmiri terrorist groups also have a large number of sympathisers in the diaspora in the United States and are, thus, chary of losing their support in case they side with the Al Qaeda. It can, therefore, be presumed that the Al Qaeda is not likely to gain major support in Kashmir in the future while it may continue to operate indirectly through its networked organisations such as the LeT and the JeM.

### *Al-Qaeda Fil Hind or Al Qaida in India*

In July 2006, a mysterious person identifying himself as Abu al-Hadeed, claiming to be an operative of the Al Qaeda, congratulated the group which

had carried out the blasts on July,11 2006, in local trains in Mumbai which had resulted in over 187 casualties. A terror cell of the Al Qaeda headed by Abu Abdul Rahman al-Ansari was also said to have been set up in Kashmir, according to the message. The familiar call enjoining Indian Muslims to join the fight against atrocities by the majority community accompanied these statements.<sup>36</sup>

Abu Abdul Rehman al-Ansari, who claimed to be the chief of the Al Qaeda Fil Hind or Al Qaeda in India, surfaced once again on Friday, June 8, 2007, when Current News Service in Srinagar received a tape in which a masked man was reported to have stated, "We declare righteous holy war against India on behalf of God, the great, in which Jammu and Kashmir will be the launch pad for holy war in India." This was accompanied by a written statement signed by Ansari. The wording bears an uncanny resemblance to other Al Qaeda documents which have linked the struggle in Kashmir to movements in Somalia, Chechnya, Afghanistan and Iraq for the overall aim of establishing an Islamic Caliphate.<sup>37</sup>

Though a deeper analysis of the document revealed that there were many errors such as clubbing together of Chief Minister, Ghulam Nabi Azad, former Chief Minister and People's Democratic Party (PDP) leader Mufti Mohammad Sayeed and National Conference leader Farooq Abdullah with separatist leaders such as the All Parties Hurriyat Conference leaders Syed Ali Shah Geelani, Mirwaiz Moulvi Omar Farooq, Abdul Gani Bhat or pro-independence leaders such as the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front's (JKLF's) Yasin Malik and Syed Salahuddin, the Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK) based United Jihad Council leader of the Hizbul Mujahideen, as traitors of Islam.<sup>38</sup> The Al Qaeda operates with far greater sophistication and its organisation today is said to be bolstered by retired Pakistan Army officers, though this report needs to be confirmed.<sup>39</sup> Thus, a well planned strategy generally precedes such state-

ments which are rehearsed and possibly brainstormed to perfection to create the right impact. Abu Al Hadeed's assertions, on the other hand, were rejected after a preliminary examination. In all probability, the tape was the handiwork of a local disgruntled group attempting to gain publicity through the Al Qaeda brand.

### POST-LAL MASJID AL QAEDA

A defining event in the Al Qaeda's presence and support in Pakistan was the Lal Masjid incident in July 2007. Here militants of groups linked to the Al Qaeda such as the HUJI and Taliban were said to be in the forefront of resistance to the Special Services Group commandos of the Pakistan Army. Mohammad Fida of the Pakistan Taliban and Abu Zar of the HUJI were identified as leading the siege.<sup>40</sup> The operation, which led to eviction of the militants who had besieged the mosque in the heart of the Pakistani capital, caused a fissure between the Al Qaeda and the Pakistani forces, leading the organisation to target the army. Describing the post-Lal Masjid Qaeda focus on Pakistan, Abu Haris, a Pakistani member of the Al Qaeda indicated that Osama Bin Laden personally appointed an *amir* (chief) for *khuruj* (revolt) in Pakistan. Thereafter an organisation was set up to span the various Pakistani cities.<sup>41</sup>

At the same time, the organisation has undergone a number of shifts which may be of concern. The first and foremost is the ability of the network to operate independent of support provided by a state. That it has survived and may have even thrived over the past eight months is an indication of its robust and independent network in FATA and NWFP. The focus now seems to be on Pakistan, for which it is not hesitating to use the elite terrorist network which is based in the country to include the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Islamic Jihad Group, LeT, JeM and HUJI, the latter three being focussed on India as well.<sup>42</sup>

In Pakistan, the Tehreek Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is its foremost partner in the conflict against the state and is looking after the tribal belt of North and South Waziristan, while the other areas are being targeted by the LeT and JeM. The Al Qaeda divides its area geographically and appoints separate leaders for each region. Thus, in Pakistan, Abu Haris (nickname) has been looking after the operations after July 2007, less the tribal areas.<sup>43</sup> In the tribal areas, a different leader is operating. This is also evident in the lack of connection between operations in these areas. It is suspected that the LeT is active in the non-tribal areas in Pakistan, and the TTP in the tribal areas. The current wave of suicide attacks in Pakistan is no doubt a part of this grand design against the state.

In as much as India is concerned, a major area of concern is the widening geographical ambit of the higher strata of the organisation. While initially the *Shura* did not have any non-Arab member, a recent report indicates induction of operatives of the LeT from Pakistan in the council.<sup>44</sup>

Information is also available of terror training camps of the organisation in and around the NWFP capital, Peshawar. A recent report in the influential Pakistani daily, *Daily Times*, quoted a government official stating, "The fact of the matter is that some of the groups, such as Lashkar-e-Taiyyeba, Jaish-e-Muhammad and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, are very active around Peshawar and Kohat district, especially in areas close to the Kohat-Rawalpindi Highway."<sup>45</sup> Suffice to say, redirection of these assets primarily formed to operate in Kashmir, may be just a logistical exercise.

## AN ASSESSMENT

A survey of the incidents covered in the earlier part with statements by prominent personalities who should be in the know of terror networks in the country indicates that there is no proof of a major presence or primary organisational footprint of the Al Qaeda in India. Home Minister Shivraj

Patil has categorically denied Al Qaeda's presence in India. Lt Gen H S Panag, GOC in C Northern Command, also indicated in a Press report in June 2007, "Much has been said by the print and electronic media about the Al Qaeda's presence in Jammu and Kashmir but nothing has been established so far to corroborate these reports."<sup>46</sup> The Al Qaeda Fil Hind which has been making statements claiming to be from the Al Qaeda from time to time does not have any credibility.

A more rigorous analysis of the presence of the Al Qaeda based on six factors— base, cells, network, support, criminal links and fighters —has not provided any different result. There are no bases of the Al Qaeda in India and there are no fears of establishment of the same in the near future. However, there are strong indicators of cells, networks with other organisations, support structure, fighters and linkages with criminals inimical to interests of the country.

The involvement of the Al Qaeda supported or networked group such as the Harkat, LeT, JeM and HUJI (B) in fostering terrorism in a major way in Kashmir and sporadic strikes in the Indian hinterland has been firmly established. There is enough evidence to denote that the Al Qaeda has nurtured these outfits through ideological impetus and training and has even inducted fighters to support their effort when they were unable to sustain the militancy. Another issue of concern is the expansion of the base of terrorism from Kashmir to other parts of the country, including the northeast which is in line with the greater goal of the Al Qaeda philosophy outlined as early as in August 1996 by Bin Laden, where he mentions Assam in his edict. Such a pan-Indian vision could be forthcoming only from the central Al Qaeda leadership or the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan.

A general alignment of interests between these two organisations also needs consideration. While there is some ease in the Indian mindset of a

tactical pause in the support to terror in Kashmir by the ISI, the Let and the JeM are now autonomous organisations shored up by respective parent bodies such as the Jamaat-ud-Dawa. The Jamaat recently organised a conference on “Kashmir Solidarity Day” in February 2008 in which noted Kashmiri separatist leaders, Shabir Shah and Syed Geelani, are reported to have participate, thus, indicating continued need for caution. The reports of a new Al Qaeda employing the Let and JeM extensively in Pakistan after the declaration of war against the army post-Lal Masjid are also alarming. This is likely to enhance the capability of these organisations which will be able to train their guns on India with greater firepower and effectiveness. Thus, a careful watch, and neutralisation of partner groups such as the LeT, HuM and HUJI (B) has to be ensured. Is the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) the next target of assimilation by the Al Qaeda? Reports of youths from Bangalore and Hyderabad linked to SIMI being ensnared in terrorism cannot be brushed aside and need to be taken to conclusive investigation.

The second strand of the Al Qaeda involvement in India needing investigation is that of motivating and using individuals of Indian origin such as Dhiren Barot. Recently, there were allegations of links of the Ahmed brothers, implicated in the UK terror plot of July 2007. Though these have now been rejected, the ideological linkages provided by the organisation to the disaffected youth in the country should be a matter of concern. This is also reflected in the Osama CDs recovered in Bihar. India's large Muslim population is largely impervious to such propaganda, but even if a miniscule minority is affected, it can cause havoc, as the Mumbai serial train blasts have demonstrated. It is the danger of a deviant ideology taking roots in the minds of individuals which should be a matter of concern—the “Al Qaedaism” which Maj Gen Afsir Karim talks about.

The ideological threat from the Al Qaeda is the biggest challenge being

faced today and needs as much focus as manifestations of physical attacks being launched across the globe. As Mr M K Narayanan said at the Munich Conference on Security Policy recently, “The ideological narrative, from Maulana Madudi, Syed Qutb, Abdullaha Azam to Osama bin Laden and Zawahiri today, spawns not merely a multi-cell structure that is sublimating suicide terrorism into a legitimising force, but is throwing up new leaderships across many countries.” The Al Qaeda network’s commonality lies in its funding, training and sourcing of equipment, weapons and explosives. Defeating such networks which are largely invisible, grey and hide behind the liberal face of a democratic and so-called “soft” state such as India is certainly a challenge. Profiling of society at large is not desirable. However, social network analysis of deviants cannot be avoided and should be undertaken rigorously and diligently. This will lead to identification of individuals falling into the trap of “Al Qaedaism”.

To summarise, it could be said that there is no need for immediate panic, yet a watchful eye over the groups supported by, and owing allegiance to, the Al Qaeda such as the LeT, JeM and HUJI, as well as fringe activists, needs to be maintained. For, like all asymmetrically capable organisations, even one-off attacks by it can cause extensive damage to human lives, national morale and prestige.

### ***Notes***

1. Some of the basic issues covered are based on the author’s book, *Asymmetrical Challenges to India’s National Security* (New Delhi: USI of India/ Knowledge World. 2002).
2. Mark Hosenball, et al. “Danger: Terror Ahead,” *Newsweek*, February 19 2001, p. 16.
3. Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda* (New Delhi: Roli Books, 2002), p.56.
4. Gunratna, *Ibid.*, p. 57.
5. Nick Fielding, “From the Bloody Pages of Al Qaeda’s Killing Manual,” November 4.

- available at <http://www.papillonsartpalace.com/encyclop.htm>
6. David Leopard, "Seized Manual Gives Lesson in Deadly Tactics," *The Times of India*, September 17, 2001, p. 3.
  7. Greg Miller, *LA Times* Report, November 09, 2007, available at [www.latimes.com/.../la-fg-nukes8nov08,1,3301346.story?coll=la-headlines-world&ctrack=1&cset=true](http://www.latimes.com/.../la-fg-nukes8nov08,1,3301346.story?coll=la-headlines-world&ctrack=1&cset=true)
  8. *The Times of India*, News Report, "Buying Lethal Weapons a Religious Duty For Osama," *The Times of India*, November 6, 2001, p. 9.
  9. Zeeshan Haider, "Pakistan Tests Missile, Rejects Nuclear Safety Worry," Reuters report available at [http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20080125/ts\\_nm/pakistan\\_nuclear\\_dc](http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20080125/ts_nm/pakistan_nuclear_dc).
  10. Michael Elliott, "Hate Club," *Time* Special Report, *Time*, November 12, 2001, p. 39.
  11. Peter L Bergen, *Inside the Secret World of Bin Laden* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 2001), p. 109.
  12. Krishnan, Murali, "India Continues to be Al Qaeda's Target: NSA," available at <http://www.indiaenews.com/india/20071004/73462.htm>.
  13. Praful Bidwai, "Has Al Qaeda Landed?" available at <http://www.antiwar.com/bidwai/?articleid=9536>
  14. *Daily Times* Editorial, "Dire Smoke Signals From Washington," *Daily Times* (Pakistan), Internet Edition, November 17, 2007.
  15. Gunaratna, n. 3, p. 206.
  16. Gunaratna, *Ibid.*, p. 209.
  17. *Ibid.*
  18. Pervez Iqbal Siddiqui, "Plot to Abduct Rahul Foiled," *The Times of India*, November 17, 2007, p.1.
  19. Gunaratna, n. 3, p. 210
  20. Gunaratna, *Ibid.*, p. 207.
  21. Bin Laden's *Fatwa*, "Declaration of War Against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places," available at [http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa\\_1996.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa_1996.html)

22. Gunaratna, n. 3, p 218
23. Gunaratna, Ibid., p. 207.
24. Sumantra Bose, *Kashmir – Roots of Conflict, Path to Peace* (New Delhi: Vistaar Publications. 2003), p.141.
25. Gunaratna, n. 3, p. 219.
26. Tactical Interrogation Report of Muhammad Afroz, p.1. Quoted in Gunaratna, n.3, p. 110.
27. Gunaratna, Ibid., p. 120.
28. “Al-Qaeda Planned More Attacks,” available at [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/1694918.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/1694918.stm)
29. Praveen Swami, “Al Qaeda in India,” *Frontline*. January 5 - 18, 2002.
30. Swami, Ibid.
31. B Raman, “Al Qaeda & India,” *SAAG Paper No. 1498*, dated August 13, 2005.
32. “Osma CDs in Patna, Bihar,” *South Asia Security Trends* (New Delhi), May 2007. p. 78.
33. B.Raman, “Why Should Al Qaeda be Interested in India?” available at <http://in.rediff.com/news/2007/jul/04braman1.htm>
34. HS. Rao, “Dhiren to Father, Abu Musa to al Qaeda,” available at <http://www.rediff.com/news/2004/aug/18guj1.htm>
35. *Daily News Analysis Report*, August 10, 2007, available at [http://www.ipcs.org/August\\_07\\_terrorismGeneral.pdf](http://www.ipcs.org/August_07_terrorismGeneral.pdf).
36. Amelia Gentleman, “Qaeda Claim of Kashmir Link Worries India,” *International Herald Tribune*, July 13, 2006.
37. Bin Laden's *Fatwa*, n. 21.
38. Animesh Roul, “Al-Qaeda's Shadowy Presence in India?” available at [http://counterterrorismblog.org/2007/06/alqaedas\\_shadowy\\_presence\\_in\\_i.php](http://counterterrorismblog.org/2007/06/alqaedas_shadowy_presence_in_i.php).
39. Saleem Syed Shahzad “Revolt in Pakistan's Tribal Areas, Part 2. Al Qaeda Sets Sight on the Next Battlefield,” *Asia Times Online*, available at [http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South\\_Asia/JB12Df01.html](http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/JB12Df01.html) on February 13, 2008.
40. “Pakistan at the Edge of a Radical Precipice,” *Report South Asia Security Trends*,

- August 2007, p. 62.
41. Shahzad, n. 39.
  42. M K Narayanan, "Asia : Building International Stability," address at the Munich Conference on Security Policy, February ,10 2008, available at <http://www.securityconference.de/konferenzen/rede.php?sprache=en&id=219&>
  43. Shahzad, n. 39.
  44. Shahzad, Ibid.
  45. Iqbal Khattak, "Six Key Militant Outfits Operating in Darra," available at, [http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008%5C01%5C29%5Cstory\\_29-1-2008\\_pg1\\_8](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008%5C01%5C29%5Cstory_29-1-2008_pg1_8).
  46. "Presence of Al Qaeda in Kashmir Ruled Out," *South Asia Security Trends*, July 2007, p.77.





An Army veteran with 32 years military service, **Rahul Bhonsle** is now pursuing a second career in research and knowledge management and heads an independent research agency, Security-risks.com which has established a niche for fast track research projects, papers, round tables, security advisories and briefings to military, academia and the corporate sector. His areas of interest include South Asia, future warfare and human security. He is a regular contributor to leading mainstream and professional newspapers, Web sites and Journals. He is presently working on Net Assessment of the Indian Armed Forces and Political, Security and Terrorism Trends in South Asia.

The Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS), New Delhi, is an autonomous think-tank dealing with national security and conceptual aspects of land warfare, including conventional and sub-conventional conflict and terrorism. CLAWS conducts research that is futuristic in outlook and policy oriented in approach.

Website: <http://landwarfareindia.org>

Contact us: [landwarfare@gmail.com](mailto:landwarfare@gmail.com)



**KW PUBLISHERS PVT. LTD.**

5A/4A, Ansari Road, Daryaganj

New Delhi 110 002

[www.kwpublishers.com](http://www.kwpublishers.com)

ISBN 978-81-87966-92-0



Cover Design **Black Innovation**