
Articles

Al-Qaida and the Pakistani Harakat Movement: Reflections and Questions about the pre-2001 Period

by Don Rassler

Abstract

There has been a modest amount of progress made over the last two decades in piecing together the developments that led to creation of al-Qaida and how the group has evolved over the last 30 years. Yet, there are still many dimensions of al-Qaida that remain understudied, and likely as a result, poorly understood. One major gap are the dynamics and relationships that have underpinned al-Qaida's multi-decade presence in Pakistan. The lack of developed and foundational work done on the al-Qaida-Pakistan linkage is quite surprising given how long al-Qaida has been active in the country, the mix of geographic areas - from Pakistan's tribal areas to its main cities - in which it has operated and found shelter, and the key roles Pakistani al-Qaida operatives have played in the group over the last two decades. To push the ball forward and advance understanding of this critical issue, this article examines what is known, and has been suggested, about al-Qaida's relations with a cluster of Deobandi militant groups consisting of Harakat ul-Mujahidin, Harakat ul-Jihad Islami, Harakat ul-Ansar, and Jaish-e-Muhammad, which have been collectively described as Pakistan's Harakat movement, prior to 9/11. It finds that each of these groups and their leaders provided key elements of support to al-Qaida in a number of direct and indirect ways.

Keywords: al-Qaida, Harakat ul-Jihad Islami, Harakat ul-Mujahidin, Harakat ul-Ansar, aish-e-Muhammad, Osama bin Laden, Masood Azhar, Maulana Fazl Rahman Khalil

Introduction

Before venturing into Afghanistan to assist the Afghan mujahidin during their conflict with the Soviets, Osama bin Laden reached out to leaders of the Pakistani Islamist party Jamaat-e-Islami to get a sense of the landscape and how he could help. Close to two decades later the architect of the 9/11 attacks, a Pakistani by the name of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, monitored news of the dramatic plot he had planned in his operational home base in Pakistan's port city of Karachi. More than a decade after that, bin Laden's Pakistani courier - who used the nom de guerre Abu Ahmed al-Kuwaiti - led the Central Intelligence Agency to the al-Qaida chief's compound in Abbottabad, the same town that is home to Pakistan's military academy. Despite these data points, and al-Qaida Core's continued presence in Pakistan over multiple decades, the Pakistani dimension of al-Qaida is a phenomenon that remains understudied and poorly understood.

A number of factors help to explain why this is the case. First, the scale, complexity, and ever-evolving nature of Pakistan's fractious Sunni militant landscape, and the lightly documented histories of many Pakistani militant groups, can make study of the issue seem daunting. The sensitivity associated with researching an issue that touches on sensitive Pakistani state intelligence matters, like the country's historical and in some cases on-going support for various militant proxies that have ties to al-Qaida, also means that - at least for some researchers, especially those who live in the region - the task is not without its share of risk.[1] The likely diversity of al-Qaida's ties to different types of actors in Pakistan, from military and intelligence officials (or third parties entities who intentionally work on their behalf) [2] to private citizens, militant group leaders [3], and members of religio-political groups [4] compound these problems and enhance the scope of the issue to be studied. In sum, investigations into the Pakistani dimension of al-Qaida can both be complicated and quite messy.

To manage some of these challenges and provide insight into the topic, the present effort examines the ties al-Qaida had with one type of actor (Sunni militant groups) prior to September 11, 2001. Scaling down even further, it specifically focuses on examining the relations al-Qaida had with four Pakistani militant groups that

emerged as breakaway factions or splinter entities from the same parent group. This collection of groups, which are referred to throughout this paper as the Pakistani Harakat movement, are Harakat ul-Jihad Islami (HuJI), Harakat ul-Ansar (HuA), Harakat ul-Mujahidin (HuM), and Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM). These groups were intentionally selected as a locus of study because collectively they constitute one major faction of Pakistan's Sunni jihadist militant milieu. These four groups also have shared histories and ideological orientations, and overlapping and integrated ties. All at one point or another, similar to the militant group Lashkar-e-Taiba, have also enjoyed patronage from the Pakistani state.[5] And, as this article will show, over the course of their respective histories each of these entities, or key members of these groups, have provided support to al-Qaida in a variety of ways. At times, this support has been visible, but mostly it has occurred quietly in the background. Thus, in addition to placing various data points that speak to the nature of pre-9/11 al-Qaida Pakistani Harakat ties in one place, this article aims to form an initial impression of those ties, and raise questions about them.

Foundations and Battlefield Bonds

Throughout the 1980s the battlefields of Afghanistan were key to the early operational development of HuJI, HuM, and al-Qaida, as well as other militant groups. Throughout that decade, and during the one that followed, Afghanistan functioned as a veritable melting pot where a diversity of interests, individuals, and networks intermingled, cooperated, and competed with one another. And while the early histories of HuJI, HuM, and al-Qaida are in many ways a complex - and in the case of HuJI and HuM a poorly understood - affair, enough is known to state that the battlefields of southeastern Afghanistan were key to the early and continued operational development of each of these three groups.

The foundation stories of each of these organizations, however, demonstrate how even though these three groups had similar experiences and emerged out of the same general orbit in Afghanistan, the conditions and partnerships that led to their creation and early operational development, were also quite different. HuJI, for example, was founded in 1979 by Maulana Irshad Ahmed, and over the course of the 1980s-1990s the group maintained a relationship with Harakatul Inqalab Islami, an Afghan mujahidin party led by Maulvi Mohammed Nabi Mohammedi.[6] Not much is known about HuJI's early operational ties, but the group is believed to have operated in partnership with Arslan Khan Rehmani - one of Mohammedi's commanders. [7] Some noteworthy HuJI commanders, like Maulana Fazl Rahman Khalil, also had close relations with Jalaluddin Haqqani and Maulvi Yunis Khalis.[8] HuM was created in 1984, as a result of a leadership dispute that emerged after Maulana Irshad was killed in Afghanistan earlier that year.[9] As noted by Muhammad Amir Rana, "Maulana Qari Saifullah [Akhtar] was made the new Ameer [of HuJI] but some groups did not agree to his leadership." [10] This included Maulana Masood Alvi, who founded HuM along with Maulana Fazlur Rehman Khalil and Saifullah Shaukat.[11] It is believed that HuM "commenced jihadi activities under the leadership of Jalaluddin Haqqani." [12] Al-Qaida was founded in 1987, and prior to that date the individuals who would go on to militarily lead the group also participated in key battles in southeastern Afghanistan, many also in partnership with Jalaluddin Haqqani.[13]

One early glimpse into the operational collaboration that was taking place at the time between Jalaluddin Haqqani, HuM, and small Arab fighting groups comes from an article published by *The Times* in March 1988. The article describes a 12 hour-long assault commanded by Jalaluddin Haqqani against an outpost defended by Afghan forces near Khost that occurred that month.[14] Remi Favret, a French journalist who participated in the assault and recounted the tale to *The Times*, noted how Haqqani's fighters were "aided by Saudi, Egyptian, and Pakistani fighters." [15] And how "it was a very daring attack... the Arabs played a very important part in it. The Pakistanis too were very good. They were mostly Pakistanis of the Harakat al-Mujahidin, and they led the assault." [16]

While al-Qaida's participation in the historic 1991 battle for Khost in southeastern Afghanistan "appears to have been minimal," [17] several HuM commanders were killed during the assault.[18] HuM fighters also participated in the mujahidin's assault on Gardez later that year [19], a battle which involved more substantial al-Qaida participation.[20]

The alliances that al-Qaida and Harakat groups had with the Taliban facilitated the direct military and operational support that both groups would provide to the Taliban during the latter part of the 1990s, as the Afghan group sought to expel and defeat Ahmed Shah Masood, as well as other anti-Taliban elements. [21] Internal al-Qaida documents point to the support al-Qaida provided to the Taliban during this period, and the specific roles played by individuals like Abd al-Hadi al-Iraqi, who served as al-Qaida's Kabul front commander.[22] The military assistance Harakat groups provided to the Taliban prior to 9/11 is reflected in the background and organisational affiliation of prisoners held by the Taliban's primary battlefield rival - the Northern Alliance. For example, during the 1999-2000 period Julie Sirrs conducted interviews in Afghanistan with 113 prisoners held by the Northern Alliance.[23] Ninety-two percent of those prisoners were Pakistanis, and 46 percent of those who provided an organisational affiliation said that they were associated with one of the main Pakistani Harakat groups.[24] The gravestones of Pakistani Harakat fighters who died in Afghanistan during the late 1990s similarly substantiate Harakat military participation with the Taliban.[25] The presence of Harakat members on the Taliban's front lines is also confirmed by the number of Harakat member deaths that occurred during the initial days and months after the US invasion of Afghanistan. According to Imtiaz Gul, "HuJI lost as many as 340, HuM lost 79, JeM [Jaish-e-Muhammad] 36, and LeJ [Laskhar-e-Jhangvi] 27 in the coalition attacks." [26]

An internal al-Qaida document from November 1997 speaks of battlefield cooperation between al-Qaida's Kabul front and Harakat groups on the Taliban's front lines. As noted by Anne Stenersen, in the document Abd al-Hadi al-Iraqi "discusses withdrawing the Arabs from Murad Beg and concentrating all the forces in Bagram. He says, if the Arabs and Harakat ul-Jihad ul-Islami (HuJI) put their forces together they can form "an appropriate sized group (its number is expected to be around 20 brothers." [27] The same document, however, also speaks to "petty day-to-day challenges" and points of frustration between al-Qaida and Harakat fighters, as they sought to work out the mechanics of their operational partnership.[28] As other evidence revealed in this article will show, those frustrations were not enough to limit the more strategic forms of assistance that HuM and HuJI would provide to al-Qaida in the years that would follow.

The International Network and Extra-Regional Affairs of Harakat Entities

The withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan at the close of the 1980s led to the further fracturing and radicalisation of the local and regional Sunni militant scene. A key point of debate and friction revolved around the question of 'what comes next', and specifically what territories and countries should be defended or targeted by campaigns of political violence. For the state of Pakistan, this meant continuing strategic, operational, and logistics support for select Afghan mujahidin parities/leaders; leveraging the skills and know-how gained by Pakistani militant groups - and re-directing that energy towards the fight in Kashmir; and maintaining training facilities in Afghanistan so those bases could be used to support the country's regional and strategic objectives. The decisions made by Pakistan in this regard had a direct impact on HuJI and HuM, which were supported by Pakistan and functioned throughout the 1990s as its proxies. And while Afghanistan and the conflict in Kashmir have always been primary areas of focus for HuJI and HuM, the actions and behavior of the Pakistani Harakat entities during the 1990s also showed the other extra-regional ambitions of these groups, and how their interests and operational footprint extended well beyond Afghanistan, Pakistan and Kashmir.

This specifically included the involvement of HuM and HuJI operatives in Bosnia, the Philippines, Chechnya, and Tajikistan [29], and the recruitment of, and training provided for, foreign volunteers from around the globe, to include Westerners, by these groups. For example, HuJI activists "fought in Bosnia arriving in 1992 and in Tajikistan." [30] The group also had Amirs for Burma and Uzbekistan, and a leader designated for Chechnya too.[31] Further, as noted by Amir Mir, "In the 1990s, many members of the HuM travelled to the southern Philippines as preachers and trained the cadres of the Abu Sayyaf and the MILF [Moro Islamic Liberation Front], and participated in their operations against the Philippine security forces." [32] The potential for these types of HuM 'deployments' to Philippines was certainly plausible, as there is evidence that during the 1990s HuM hosted and trained Philippine fighters at its camps in Afghanistan.[33] It is also worth noting that HuM's presence and investment in the Philippines, and the support it is believed to have provided to Abu Sayyaf and

the MILF, transpired during a period when Bin Laden and al-Qaida were also interacting with, and providing support to, these two groups.[34]

Now to be clear, just because HuJI and HuM had established relationships and footprints abroad - some of it in locations that overlapped with areas in which al-Qaida had connections or was active - does not mean that there was organizational or operational overlap between Harakat groups and al-Qaida outside of the Afghanistan-Pakistan region. But, there are areas where HuJI's and HuM's international activity - and the activity of its group members - raises some questions, and where broader cooperation between al-Qaida and the Harakat groups might have taken place.

Azhar's African Adventures – Signs of a Deeper Partnership?

In addition to potential operational overlap between HuM and al-Qaida in the Philippines, one questionable area revolves around Masood Azhar, and the trips and role he is alleged to have played in Africa, principally in Somalia, during the early 1990s. Primary source evidence places Azhar in Somalia during the same period when al-Qaida deployed key operatives such as Saif al-Adl, Abu Hafis al-Masri, and Saif al-Islam to seek out safe-haven areas and to train local Somali units.[35] While not a definitive link, reports received by the United Nations at the time spoke to the presence of advisors and fighters from around the globe and how Osama bin Laden had been seen at the "Ali-Jihad base...established at Ras Kiamboni... along with "many Afghans and Pakistanis." [36] Data points like this suggest, but do not prove, that al-Qaida and Harakat operatives might have been cooperating with one another locally in the country.

According to Indian government interrogation files of Azhar and a diary the Pakistani militant leader penned while in Indian custody (from 1994-1999), Azhar "traveled to Nairobi, Kenya, in 1993 to meet with leaders of the Somalian group Al-Ittihad al-Islamiya. Azhar said the Somalis asked for assistance and got recruits and money from the ranks" of Harakat ul Ansar.[37] Azhar had reportedly been sent to the country on the orders of Maulana Fazlur Rehman Khalil, who after the merger of HuJI and HuM to form Harakat ul-Ansar (HuA) in June 1993 would serve as HuA's leader.[38] Indian intelligence officials also believed there was a connection between Azhar and the Yemen-based al-Qaida-affiliated militant Tariq Nasir Fadhli, who was a suspect in "two December 1992 hotel bombings in Yemen that targeted U.S. Marines headed for Somalia." [39]

Ahmed Rashid also claims that: "After President Clinton deployed troops to Somalia in 1993, Azhar was credited with teaching Somalian warlords how to trim the fins on their rocket propelled grenades so they would explode in midair and bring down US helicopters." [40] American helicopter pilots who flew missions in Somalia during Operation Restore Hope have corroborated that Somali fighters used this tactic, but there are a lack of details that tie Azhar - and the potential instruction he provided - to the incident.[41] The roles Azhar has played throughout his career, and the reputation he has developed as being an orator, writer, and ideologue, and much less of an operational tactician or experienced fighter, does not lend credence to the view that Azhar personally provided this type of tactical advice.[42] If Azhar was involved in this type of tactical knowledge transfer, it seems more plausible that he might have been the individual who oversaw or facilitated the effort.

Even more speculative and less well-sourced accounts suggest that Masood Azhar's interaction with al-Qaida was deeper during the early 1990s, and extended beyond cooperation taking place in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and overlapping presence in Somalia. For example, as noted by Mariam Abou Zahab and Olivier Roy, there "is also an unsubstantiated rumor that Masood Azhar followed Bin Laden to the Sudan." [43] According to Muhammad Amir Rana, "two secret meetings between Maulana Masood Azhar and Osama bin Laden" occurred around this time: "The first was held in Kenya and the second in Masjid-e-Nabvi (Prophet's Mosque in Saudi Arabia) in 1994, where the two went in disguise." [44] Two secondary sources also suggest that the interaction between Bin Laden and Azhar at this time revolved around there being an interest in bringing "the mujahdeen of Harkatul Ansar directly under al Qaeda network." [45] That potential interest leading to that outcome has never been established, however. Details that Bin Laden shared with Robert Fisk during an interview conducted in 1997 in Afghanistan suggests that such an arrangement, or a more formal alliance,

between al-Qaida and JeM might not have been so far-fetched, as while being interviewed Bin Laden made it a point to stress “how he had now secured the support of thousands of Pakistanis for his jihad - holy war - against US troops in the Gulf.”[46] Given the lack of sources that speak to the issue, it is hard to evaluate whether Bin Laden’s statement is a reference to the support Pakistani clerics provided for Bin Laden’s 1996 fatwa or if Bin Laden actually had the support of thousands of Pakistani militants as a result of some type of operational arrangement.

Targeting and the Legacy of Harakat’s Diverse Membership and Open

Infrastructure

Another area that raises questions was the intentional recruitment and training of citizens from countries outside South Asia, especially Western nations, by Harakat entities - and operations that targeted Westerners, which Harakat groups, Harakat members, or Harakat splinter groups, conducted prior to 9/11. HuJI’s and HuM’s open door approach to recruitment and training helped to internationalize the Kashmir jihad and further globalize the conflict in Afghanistan during the 1990s. These dynamics largely transpired in plain sight and occurred during a period when Harakat groups were supported by Pakistan’s state institutions. In the decade that followed HuM’s and HuJI’s international approach to recruitment and the accessibility of its training infrastructure would also be tied to key terror events that targeted or otherwise impacted the West.

A leaked interrogation transcript of Azhar reveals how the Binori Town seminary in Karachi served as a key feeder and place of recruitment for HuM and HuJI, including foreign students studying there. As noted by Azhar, “Jamia Islamia had on its rolls Arab nationals, Sudanese and Bangladeshis, apart from Pakistanis. All of them believed in the Deobandi ideology, and many were recruited for the Afghan jihad.”[47] Other sources confirm the diverse nature of HuJI’s and HuM’s membership rosters, and how the groups trained recruits from around the world to fight in Afghanistan and against Indian security forces in Kashmir. For example, HuJI’s publications claimed that prior to 2004 at least 650 of its fighters “were killed in battle against the Indian army: 190 belonged to both sides of Kashmir, nearly 200 belonged to Punjab, 49 to Sindh, 29 to Balochistan, 70 to Afghanistan, 5 to Turkey, and 49 collectively to Uzbekistan, Bangladesh and the Arab world.”[48] An article written by Masood Azhar for the December 1991 issue of *Sada-e-Mujahid* provided an overview of a trip that Azhar made to Afghanistan along with several accomplices from France, including Umar Farooq, who was described as the leader of HuM’s French contingent.[49] An investigative report based on interviews with HuM members that was published by the Pakistani media outlet *The News* in February 1995 also claimed that the group had trained sixteen African American Muslims from various cities across the United States.[50]

A look back at the personal journey of famed terrorist Omar Saeed Sheikh, a British national of Pakistani heritage, and others helps bring the spillover effects associated with HuM’s and HuJI’s accessibility into sharper focus. After spending time at university in the United Kingdom, Sheikh traveled to the Balkans to try and participate in the jihad in Bosnia, and while there he met Abdur Rauf, a Pakistani HuM fighter, who invited him to Pakistan to receive training.[51] To facilitate Rauf provided Sheikh with “a letter of recommendation for HuM” and “the name of a London imam who was a HuM sympathizer.”[52] After spending some time in Britain, Sheikh traveled to Lahore, Pakistan. His journey then took him to Miran Shah in Pakistan’s tribal areas, “then into Afghanistan to [the] Khalid bin Waleed camp” located between Khost and Zhawar Kili, where he arrived in late 1993.[53] At the time “many of Sheikh’s instructors were from the Pakistani Army’s elite Special Services Group.”[54]

Not long after Sheikh joined HuA, Masood Azhar was arrested by Indian authorities in February 1994.[55] In an attempt to free him, HuA engaged in a campaign of kidnappings that targeted Westerners in India and Indian-administered Kashmir, starting in June 1994.[56] Sheikh was a key figure in one of those kidnapping operations, as during the months of September and October 1994 Sheikh and several accomplices kidnapped three British tourists and later one American in Delhi, India.[57] Ilyas Kashmiri, who would later go on to lead HuJI and serve as a key nexus point between al-Qaida and Harakat entities - and later join al-Qaida - managed

the operation.[58] The four hostages were eventually recovered outside India's capital and Sheikh was sent to prison.[59]

These attempts were followed by a similar kidnapping incident of six Western tourists that occurred in Kashmir in July 1995, by a small splinter group called al-Faran.[60] Blame fell on "Maulana Fazlur Rahman Khalil for masterminding the kidnappings as the two commanders who set up Al-Faran [Mohammad Sikander and Abdul Hameed Turkey] were from his group." [61] The kidnapping was seen as a way for HuA to apply additional pressure on the Indian government to secure Azhar's release. "Under intense pressure, Maulana Khalil simply disowned Al-Faran and dubbed it a creation of India's Research and Analysis Wing. Commanders Sikander and Hameed were killed soon afterwards, making it easy for Khalil to distance himself from Al-Faran." [62] While it still a matter of debate whether al-Faran was a legitimate HuA splinter group, or just acted as a convenient, organizational cut-out, a declassified Central Intelligence Agency cable from August 1996 cable revealed that the CIA believed al-Faran and HuA were one and the same.[63]

In October 1997, the United States government designated HuA as a Foreign Terrorist Organization. The designation amplified existing fractures in the group.[64] To side-step sanctions, and address internal differences amongst leaders, the group devolved back into its two main factions – HuJI and HuM. These two groups also reverted back to using their old names.

In August 1998, after al-Qaida's operation against the US embassies in East Africa and the US attacked several training camps in Afghanistan in response, including Harakat facilities, two members of HuA/HuM were arrested for the killing of an Italian army officer working with the United Nations in Kabul.[65] Given the timing, this attack could have been conducted in retaliation for, or been motivated by, the US cruise missile strikes. It is not clear whether the two individuals arrested were acting in their own capacity, or under orders from a Harakat leader.

Since HuA's kidnapping efforts did not lead to the release of Azhar, HuM tried a different approach to secure his release later in the decade: the hijacking of a commercial airliner. In late December 1999 five Pakistani members of HuA took control of Indian Airlines flight IC-814 while it was en route from Kathmandu, Nepal to Delhi, India.[66] One of the hijackers was Ibrahim Athar, Masood Azhar's elder brother.[67] Some analysts believe that Amjad Farooqi, a member of HuA who after 9/11 would go on to function as a "lynchpin of the Al Qaeda network in Pakistan"[68] was also a hijacker.[69] After the plane finally landed in Kandahar, Afghanistan, Sheikh, Azhar, and Mushtaq Ahmad Zargar (chief of Al-Umar Mujahideen militant group) were released in exchange for the 154 passengers who were still on board.[70]

According to an interview with Nasser al-Bahri (known more commonly by his kunya Abu Jandal), who served as a bodyguard to Bin Laden during the late 1990s, "Bin Laden had wanted Azhar freed and... had ordered al Qaeda to plan the Indian airlines hijacking with Harkat." [71] This was reportedly done because "Bin Laden admired Azhar and needed his help. Bin Laden threw a lavish party for Azhar when he was freed in Kandahar." [72] Not much evidence exists to support this claim. But looking back, the IC-814 hijacking and the kidnapping of Westerners in India and Kashmir were an early warning sign of the internationalist direction of where things were headed.

Not long after being freed, Azhar founded JeM. Omar Saeed Sheikh is believed to have played an important role in helping Azhar to set up and build the organization.[73] Several months after the 9/11 attacks Sheikh would be in the spotlight again - this time for having kidnapped *Wall Street Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl in Karachi. After holding Pearl for a temporary period, Sheikh handed him over to 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Muhammad – who executed the reporter. Pearl's body was later found in a shed on property owned by a Pakistani businessman who also served as a financier of Al Akhtar Trust International, a humanitarian relief agency established by JeM.[74] In an interview Sheikh conducted after his arrest, he acknowledged that at some point prior to Abu Hafsa al-Masri's death in Afghanistan in November 2001, that al-Qaida's military commander gave him one million rupees for an undisclosed purpose.[75]

The HuM, HuA, HuJI and JeM network had other spillover effects during the 1990s and early 2000s, which

helped to shape and provide opportunities for al-Qaida operatives and other aspiring foreign militants. While still a matter of debate, some claim that “it was Azhar, a Pakistani cleric, who was the first to spread the seeds of modern jihadist militancy in Britain - and it was through South Asian mosques belonging to the Deobandi movement that he did it.”[76] It is more likely, however, that the drivers of modern jihadist militancy in Britain were and are multi-faceted, as other key figures such as Abu Qatada, Abu Hamza, and Omar Bakri Mohammed have also played important roles in Britain in this regard.[77]

The story of Asif Sadiq (also known by his nom de guerre, Mohammed Bilal) from Birmingham speaks to this dynamic and how the networks between Azhar and other influential figures who have shaped jihadism in Britain overlapped. Sadiq was a member of Omar Bakri’s Al-Muhajiroun network, an organization that was banned in the United Kingdom in 2005.[78] Omar Bakri is believed to have facilitated Sadiq’s travel to Pakistan, and during his time in the country Sadiq stayed for a period at an Al-Muhajiroun safe house.[79] After spending several years with HuA and HuM, Sadiq was “one of the first recruits to [join] Azhar’s new militant group” – JeM – after it was created in 1999. Not long after, Sadiq “blew himself up outside an army barracks in Srinagar, killing six soldiers and three students in December 2000.”[80] That attack is believed to have been the first suicide bomber attack that occurred in Kashmir. The event is also noteworthy in that it was both an early sign of trouble and a leading indicator of other suicide attacks that would involve British Muslims of Pakistani descent. For example, less than five years after Bilal’s attack, Mohammed Siddique Khan, the ringleader for the al-Qaida-linked 7/7 attacks in the United Kingdom, killed himself while serving as a suicide bomber. Prior to the multi-pronged operation, which killed 52 people, Khan and his attack accomplice Wahid Ali trained at a HuM camp in Pakistan.[81] It was easy for Khan to make contact with HuM, as he was introduced to the group through his uncle.[82] HuM even reportedly sent a van to pick him at the Islamabad airport.[83]

While the spillover effects associated with JeM’s, HuM’s, and HuJI’s accessibility helped to foster key terrorist events that would take place close to and after 9/11 - their legacy and impact also reaches back further in history. For example, when Tanzanian al-Qaida operative Khalfan Khamis Mohamed, “who was involved in the bombing of the American Embassy in Dar es Saleem in 1998, was asked by the FBI where he had trained, he told them... that he had been taught bomb-making in 1994 and 1996 in camp run by ‘Har Qatar’, meaning ‘Harkat ul Ansar’, the name HuM were using at the time.”[84] Mohamed did not make the bombs used in those attacks, but the specialized training that he received by HuA speaks to the flow of individuals between al-Qaida’s and Harakat’s training facilities during the 1990s.[85]

Facilitation and Overlap: Media Events, the Embassy Bombings, and US Cruise Missile Strikes

During the period between the Harakat-linked kidnapping operations and the hijacking of IC-814, HuM and HuJI leaders were working behind the scenes to help al-Qaida facilitate key events and spread its global jihadist message to the world.

When Bin Laden and al-Qaida began to give more interviews to the press during the latter part of the 1990s, individuals like Maulana Fazl Rahman Khalil served as key interlocutors between Bin Laden and journalists. For example, when Hamid Mir went to Afghanistan in early 1997 to interview Bin Laden, he traveled with Maulana Fazlur Rahman Khalil and Maulana Allah Wasaya Qasim, who was also associated with HuA.[86] Then, when Bin Laden and other jihadi group leaders held their famous May 26, 1998 press conference to announce the release of a statement by the “World Islamic Front for Jihad against the Jews and Crusaders”, the members of the press who attended “were escorted across the border into Khost from North Waziristan by members of Harakat ul-Ansar.”[87] (The Front was formally announced by Bin Laden in February 1998, in an article he had published in *al-Quds al-Arabi* in February 22, 1998.) A number of Pakistani journalists attended the May event, as did representatives of HuM and HuJI.[88] Pakistani journalist Imtiaz Gul recalls how two days before the event, on May 24, 1998, he was invited by a deputy, “a trusted longtime aide and veteran of the Afghan war, code-named Allah Wasaya,” to Maulana Fazl Rahman Khalil to attend a meeting with Bin Laden in Afghanistan along with other Pakistani journalists.[89] (Gul backed out shortly before the trip and did not

attend the event.)

Less than three months later, on August 7, 1998, al-Qaida conducted its dual-pronged attack against the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, killing more than 200 people. Close to two weeks later, in retaliation for the attacks, the United States fired more than 50 cruise missiles at several training camps in eastern Afghanistan around Zhawara. Beyond sending a signal, these strikes aimed to kill Bin Laden and destroy a number of training camps that were either run by al-Qaida or by affiliated groups. The camps that were targeted, and the mix of individuals who died as a result of the strikes, speaks to the collaboration across groups that was taking place at the time. As noted by Anne Stenersen, the camps of “Al-Faruq and al-Siddiq were partly destroyed in the strikes, whereas al-Qaida’s administrative headquarters at Jihad Wal was almost completely destroyed.”[90] According to Mustafa Hamid, six of seven Arabs were killed at those facilities.[91] The cruise missiles also destroyed two camps run by HuM where five ISI agents and between nine and 21 HuM fighters were killed.[92] Jalaluddin Haqqani has also claimed that a base managed by him was destroyed and that a sizeable number of his men were killed by the strikes as well.[93]

At an event not long after the strikes, Maulana Fazl Rahman Khalil used language identical to that found in al-Qaida’s 1998 fatwa to describe how HuM planned to respond: “The US has struck us with Tomahawk Cruise missiles at only two places, but we will hit back at them everywhere in the world, wherever we find them. We have started a holy war against the US and they will hardly find a tree to take shelter beneath.”[94] While it is hard to know if this statement was just bluster, the actions that HuM and Maulana Fazl Rahman Khalil would take in the years to follow would demonstrate how even if HuM was not operating openly in support of al-Qaida, the group and some of its members would continue to provide background support for al-Qaida, and Bin Laden in particular.[95]

This appears to have included support HuM provided to help al-Qaida members escape and hide after the US invasion of Afghanistan. For example, according to Terry McDermott and Josh Meyer, “Even before the [9/11] attacks, KSM [Khalid Sheikh Muhammad] had helped organize a collection of safe houses in Karachi and elsewhere in Pakistan, many of them operated by jihadi groups like Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, Harkat ul Mujahideen, Jaish e Mohammed, Sipah e Sahaba Pakistan, and Lashkar e Taiba, with whom KSM had had relations for years. He wanted al Qaeda to be ready for the US response.”[96] An article released by *Dawn* in April 2002 also detailed the arrest of an Iraqi al-Qaida suspect in Quetta who was carrying an authority letter from HuM, which appears to have been provided to aid his travel.[97]

Ideological Backing: al-Qaida, Shamzai, and the Binori Town Madrassah

Connection

While individuals like Maulana Fazl Rahman Khalil were facilitating the travel of Pakistani journalists to meetings with Bin Laden in Afghanistan during the latter part of the 1990s, the head of the madrassah that trained the majority of early Harakat group leaders was providing important ideological backing to Bin Laden’s outfit. The collection of groups that constitute the Pakistani Harakat orbit emerged from the same place of learning: the Binori Town madrassah in Karachi (also referred to as Jamia Uloom al Islamia in Binori Town). [98] The seminary, its leadership, and a collection of noteworthy graduates have been central to the foundation, development, and sustainment of the four main Pakistani Harakat orbit groups. Veteran Pakistani journalist Khaled Ahmed has characterized “Jamia Banoria... as the ideological headquarters of the Deobandi terrorist outfits, although much lowered in profile” more recently.[99]

In many ways, the seminary has played a role similar to the role Darul Uloom Haqqania in Akora Khattak plays as a center of learning for senior leaders, as well as rank and file members, of the Afghan Taliban and Haqqani network.[100] For example, noteworthy figures who are either graduates of, or have been affiliated with, Binori Town have included two founders of HuJI - Maulana Irshad Ahmad and Maulana Abdus Samad Sial; former leader of HuJI - Qari Saifullah Akhtar; the founder of HuM - Maulana Fazl Rahman Khalil; the founder and leader of JeM - Masood Azhar; the founder of al-Rasheed Trust - Maulana Mufti Rasheed Ahmad [101]; and

the current leader of Al-Qaida on the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) - Asim Umar [102], as well as others.

During the late 1990s and early 2000s, the Binori Town madrassah has also served as a key place of ideological support for al-Qaida in Pakistan. This support was principally rooted in the personalities of Nizamuddin Shamzai, the Binori Town chancellor who was killed in 2004, and Maulana Fazl Rahman Khalil.

Although still a matter of speculation, “some say that Osama bin Laden met Mullah Omar” at the Binori Town madrassah “under the benign gaze of Mufti Shamzai.”[103] John K. Cooley claims that “bin Laden used Shamzai’s Banori Town seminary as his base in Karachi for some time” during the 1990s.[104] After al-Qaida released its famous 1996 and 1998 war declarations against the United States, Shamzai endorsed them.[105] (Maulana Fazl Rahman Khalil and Sheikh Mir Hamzah, secretary general of the Jamiat e Ulema Pakistan, were the two Pakistanis who officially signed the 1998 version.) The language Shamzai used in 1998 stated that the “killing of any American was “legal and Islamic.””[106] This perspective was reinforced by a fatwa Shamzai issued one year later, in 1999, which argued that “the shedding of American blood” was permissible because “Washington was in a “state of war” with Muslims.”[107] Shamzai’s choice of words in these texts mirrored the language used by al-Qaida in its 1998 text.[108]

Another indication of Shamzai’s standing amongst both Bin Laden and the Afghan Taliban was the role that he played in mediating a conflict between Mullah Omar and Bin Laden in early 1999. Shamzai’s stature as the leader of the Binori Town seminary, as “highly respected among the Taliban’s most important allies in Pakistan; the political party Jamiat-e-Ulema-Islam (JUI), the charity organization al-Rashid Trust, and the Deobandi militant outfits that directly supported the Taliban’s fight against the Northern Alliance” gave him enormous credibility to play such a role.[109] In addition to being a vocal Taliban supporter, Shamzai was also a friend, admirer and spiritual advisor to Mullah Omar.[110] But, as Anne Stenersen points out, the public support that Shamzai had already provided to Bin Laden “put Mullah Omar in a delicate situation.”[111] And it appears that Bin Laden used that to his advantage, as such top cover likely limited the options Mullah Omar could pursue in dealing with the al-Qaida leader.[112]

A lengthy interview conducted with Ayman al-Zawahiri provides an insider perspective on the dynamics of Shamzai’s relationship with Bin Laden, and how he served as a friend and advisor to the Saudi al-Qaida leader. In the interview, Zawahiri mentions how “Bin Ladin had a very strong relationship with Pakistani ulema.... Among the most well-known names that I remember is Mawlawi Nizam Din Shamzai.”[113] Zawahiri goes on to add that Shamzai:

[W]as among the beloved ones to Shaykh Usama and always visited Shaykh Usama Bin Ladin when he came to Afghanistan and stayed with him. They exchanged advice and discussed issues together....

In one of [these] meetings Shaykh Usama was explaining the Western Crusader aggression against the Islamic ummah. The shaykh [Bin Ladin] ... had drawn a big map on the wall and Shaykh Abu-Hafs al-Masri...was using this map to explain the extent of the Crusader occupation of the Islamic world. He explained how the Western Crusaders were controlling the Islamic world, imposing a siege on it, and strangling it with their bases, fleets, and soldiers, and that all important land, sea, or air passageways were controlled by them. Shaykh Nizam Din Shamzai was very touched by this lecture and when he returned to Pakistan he gave an important lecture in one of the known hotels of Islamabad and invited people to attend. He also brought a map of the Islamic world and explained the same idea. When he returned to the shaykh [Bin Ladin] the second time, he told him: I went to Islamabad and gave them the same lecture that you gave me in Kandahar.”[114]

The early 2000s provide a number of other data points about the relationship between Shamzai and Bin Laden and other al-Qaida members. For example, Shamzai was personally invited to and attended the marriage of Bin Laden’s son in Kandahar prior to 9/11.[115] According to a eulogy released by *Jamia Hafsa* of deceased al-Qaida ideologue Abu Yahya al-Libi, the young Libyan al-Qaida member received “permission and tradition” to quote the Prophet’s sayings from Mufti Nizamuddin Shamzai.[116] If the claim made by *Jamia Hafsa* is true, it would demonstrate how Shamzai also potentially served as an advisor to an al-Qaida figure who would end up playing a central ideological and operational role for the group in the mid-to-late 2000s.

The relationship between Shamzai and Bin Laden was not always straight forward, however, as according to some sources Shamzai condemned the 9/11 attacks.[117] It appears that Shamzai did not support the operation as he believed that it led to the death of innocent people.[118] The 9/11 operation was certainly more controversial from an ideological perspective, and Shamzai's objection demonstrated that the Pakistani cleric was not just an al-Qaida pawn, and that his support for Bin Laden had limits.[119] But, when it came to ideological issues where there was more widespread and widely accepted agreement amongst Islamist thinkers and jihadist ideologues, like the need to provide support for defensive jihad, Shamzai would readily offer support.[120] For example, not long after Shamzai articulated his lack of support for the 9/11 operation, he traveled to Afghanistan as part of an official Pakistani contingent which hoped, at least on paper, to convince Mullah Omar to give up Bin Laden.[121] Instead, Shamzai, and the Pakistani general who led the delegation, reportedly encouraged Mullah Omar to wage war against the United States if they attacked.[122] And after the United States invaded Afghanistan, Shamzai issued another fatwa, which argued that it was permissible to retaliate and conduct defensive jihad against U.S. forces there.[123] Shamzai and other leaders of the Binori Town madrassa similarly issued a joint statement that said jihad against the United States had become an obligation for Muslims around the world after the United States invaded Iraq in March 2003.[124] When looking across Shamzai's support for Bin Laden, the most interesting and intriguing cases are the ideological issues that fell somewhere in between the 'more accepted' and 'more controversial' poles, or that skewed towards more controversial issues, such as Shamzai's support for Bin Laden's broad 1998 declaration of war against the United States.

According to Ahmad Zaidan, an al-Jazeera journalist who has long reported on al-Qaida, the assassination of Shamzai outside the Binori Town complex in May 2004 reportedly hit al-Qaida hard.[125] Over the years that followed Bin Laden and Zawahiri both honored Shamzai in official statements released by al-Qaida.[126] This included a statement Bin Laden released in response to the Pakistani government's assault in 2008 on the *Lal Masjid* (Red Mosque) complex in Islamabad, a seminary which served as a hub (and later a rally point) for radical Deobandi elements. In the message Bin Laden quoted a fatwa Shamzai delivered that called for action against Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf, given the level of post 9/11 cooperation Pakistan's leader had extended to the United States.[127] As presented by Bin Laden:

'If any ruler of an Islamic state provides aid to an infidel state in its aggression against the Islamic states, it is the legal obligation of the Muslims to remove him from power and consider him to be legally a traitor to Islam and Muslims.' People of Islam in Pakistan: Mufti Nizamuddin Shamzai, may Allah have mercy on him, discharged a great duty which was upon him, and declared the word of truth and didn't care about the anger of the creation. He endangered himself and his wealth and made clear the ruling of Allah regarding Pervez: that he is a traitor to Islam and Muslims and must be removed. This Fatwa enraged Pervez and enraged his masters in America, and it is my opinion that the murder of the Mufti - may Allah have mercy on him - was at their hands.[128]

In this case, Bin Laden used the words of his former friend Shamzai, a famous and well-respected ideologue, to help make the case, and bolster support, for armed jihad against the Musharraf government and those state entities - like the Army and intelligence services - cooperating with the United States. Bin Laden's blunt accusation that Pakistani authorities killed Shamzai was also likely to have helped to stir up anger and support for armed rebellion against the state.[129]

Regional Tensions and a Strategic Distraction

Another important example that speaks to the helpful alliance-like support that JeM provided to al-Qaida at the turn of the century, is the attack that JeM conducted against India's Parliament on 13 December 2001. This attack killed at least 12 people. While the attack did not result in a high number of deaths, three factors - the timing of the incident, the target hit, and the response elicited - all contributed to the attack being one that was incredibly strategic. For example, the attack occurred during the Battle for Tora Bora - a key battle that took place shortly after the US invasion of Afghanistan. The battle was a seminal event as US forces were hunting and trying to capture Bin Laden and other al-Qaida members who were making their "last stand" in the Tora Bora

mountains of Afghanistan, before fleeing into Pakistan. When viewed in retrospect, it seems quite coincidental that the last radio message Bin Laden gave to his fighters before fleeing Tora Bora occurred one day after JeM's attack.[130] The target selected for JeM's attack was also quite strategic, as given the historical tensions between India and Pakistan, an attack against India's Parliament - in the heart of that country's capital New Delhi - conducted by militants from Pakistan was surely an event that would elicit a strong Indian response. Indeed, almost any nation would view an attack against their main legislative body by armed militants deployed by a known proxy of a neighboring country as an act of war.

Since India and Pakistan both have nuclear weapons, choosing how to respond was an important consideration. India's response would have to be strong, but it would also have to be limited, so conflict escalation and a nuclear exchange could be avoided. To send a signal and prepare for war, India deployed a massive amount of troops to the contested region of Kashmir late that December. The size of India's deployment, as noted by Steve Coll, "looked like the largest military mobilization in Indian history." [131] Pakistan followed suit and redeployed "more than seventy thousand troops and their equipment - two full corps, or four divisions.... away from the Afghan border." [132] The forces that Pakistan redeployed in the east were supposed to act as the "anvil" to fight and block the flow of al-Qaida fighters being pushed across the Afghan border by the United States' "hammer" operations, as typified by US actions in Tora Bora.[133] So instead of seventy thousand additional Pakistani forces being positioned to capture and detain the al-Qaida fighters flowing across its Western border, the bulk of Pakistan's military was focused elsewhere.

Given what was occurring at the time in Afghanistan, the timing of JeM's Parliament attack was rather coincidental. The timing of the event, and the dynamics that followed, raises questions about the attack's real purpose, and - given JeM's historic relationship with Pakistani state entities - what parties were involved. Unfortunately, due to the lack of evidence and primary sources that speak to this episode, it is difficult to properly evaluate whether the attack was a randomly timed coincidence or a more calculated and well-thought out affair, designed to support al-Qaida, even if only indirectly. What can be stated, however, is that even if JeM's Parliament attack was not conducted to directly support or benefit al-Qaida, the operation and the state responses it set in motion benefited al-Qaida at a critical time.

Conclusion

During the pre-2001 period, al-Qaida and the four main Pakistani Harakat groups have pursued and been involved in similar efforts, in similar places, at similar moments of time. The overlap is there, but it still is not clear what drove collaboration between these entities, how meaningful it was, and if that collaboration was ad hoc, limited, or more structured and enduring. The data reviewed for this article hints at there being a deeper, and potentially more encompassing, alliance between the Pakistani Harakat entities - and the leaders of those groups - and al-Qaida prior to and closely after 9/11. Given the level of interaction that the Pakistani Harakat groups had and continue to have with Pakistani state institutions, and the support they have received, such a revelation, if true, would be quite remarkable.

Based on the sources reviewed above, from the 1990s up to 2002, cooperation was most visible between al-Qaida and HuM, and, after 1999 with JeM. Key drivers of the relationship with al-Qaida from the Pakistani Harakat side have been Masood Azhar, Maulana Fazl Rahman Khalil, Qari Saifullah Akhtar, Ilyas Kashmiri, Maulana Allah Wasaya Qasim, and Omar Saeed Sheikh, as well as others. Some of these individuals are ideologues, while others are field commanders. This reinforces the view that cooperation between al-Qaida and Pakistani Harakat entities occurred both on the ideological and the military level. During the pre-2001 period, some of the personalities who helped to coordinate al-Qaida's interaction with these groups included Abd al-Hadi al-Iraqi, Khalid Sheikh Muhammad, and likely Abu Zubaydah. Yet, the sources do not provide much fidelity regarding how the relations the various Pakistani Harakat groups had with al-Qaida were substantially different from one another. There is also a paucity of data to explain potential points of tension in al-Qaida's relations with these groups and areas where cooperation between them was limited, or where al-Qaida might have been in direct competition with them.

Despite overlapping areas of investment and co-location in the same conflict zones far from the Afghanistan-Pakistan region, it also remains an open question how the Pakistani Harakat groups might have influenced al-Qaida, or been influenced by Bin Laden's group. The data reviewed for this article also raises questions about the roles played by individuals like Masood Azhar, and the important and potentially more influential role he might have played in developing links between militant networks in Pakistan and key countries around the globe, actions which might have shaped - and had a more profound impact - on the direction of various forms of militancy than has thus far been recognized.

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Notes

[1] An important case in point is the mysterious death of Pakistani journalist Syed Saleem Shahzad, who was killed in May 2011 after writing about links between members of Pakistan's military and al-Qaida. See Dexter Filkins, "The Journalist and the Spies: The Murder of a Journalist who Exposed Pakistan's Secrets," *New Yorker*, September 11, 2011.

[2] Thomas Joscelyn, "Osama bin Laden's Files: The Pakistani Government Wanted to Negotiate," *Long War Journal*, March 9, 2015; URL: <https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2015/03/osama-bin-ladens-files-the-pakistani-government-wanted-to-negotiate.php>.

[3] Ibid.

[4] See details on Nizamuddin Shamzai provided below.

[5] The author has decided to focus on exploring al-Qaida's ties to Pakistani Harakat groups instead of Lashkar-e-Taiba, which also has known ties to al-Qaida operatives, because less developed scholarly work has been done on the histories and connections of the Pakistani Harakat groups. The Pakistani Harakat groups and Lashkar-e-Taiba are differentiated by their histories and the schools of Islamic jurisprudence that they follow (the Pakistani Harakat groups are Deobandi in orientation while Lashkar-e-Taiba follows the Ahl-e-Hadith school). They are also some important geographic distinctions between the Pakistani Harakat groups and Lashkar-e-Taiba in terms of where these various organizations are headquartered and have historically operated.

[6] Muhammad Amir Rana, *A to Z of Jehadi Organizations in Pakistan*, (Mashal: Lahore, Pakistan, 2006), p. 263.

[7] Muhammad Amir Rana, *A to Z of Jehadi Organizations in Pakistan*, pg. 263; Muhammad Amir Rana, *Jihad and Jihadi*, pp. 38, 124.

[8] Muhammad Amir Rana, *Jihad and Jihadi*, p.32.

[9] Muhammad Amir Rana, *A to Z of Jehadi Organizations in Pakistan*, p. 244.

[10] Ibid.

[1] Ibid.

[12] See Karachi 01617: U.S. Consulate Karachi, Cable, "The Harakat-ul-Ansar - The Pakistan Dimension [Excised]," March 29, 1995, <http://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB389/docs/1995-03-29%20-%20Karachi%20HUA%20and%20Haqqani.pdf>; Muhammad Amir Rana, *A to Z of Jehadi Organizations in Pakistan*, p. 244; Muhammad Amir Rana, *Jihad and Jihadi*, pp. 32, 68-69.

[13] For context see Vahid Brown and Don Rassler, *Fountainhead of Jihad*, pp. 21-83; al-Qaida also received some support from Abdul Rasul Sayyaf and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, as well as other local commanders. For background, see Anne Stenersen, *Al-Qa'ida in Afghanistan*, pp. 13-31, 35. For a discussion of al-Qaida's founding year, see Leah Farrall's article elsewhere in this Special Issue. Prior estimates have also suggested that al-Qaida was founded in 1988.

[14] Edward Gorman, "Khost Outpost Falls to Mujahidin Led by Foreign Fighters," *The Times*, March 21, 1988, p. 7.

[15] Ibid.; the report also mentions an Egyptian specialist who aided the effort. It is not known if this is a reference to Mustafa Hamid

or some other individual.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Anne Stenersen, *Al-Qaida in Afghanistan*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), p. 28.

[18] For background see Muhammad Amir Rana, *A to Z of Jehadi Organizations in Pakistan*, p. 245; "Martyrs of Khost," *al-Irshad* (in Urdu), Vol. 28, Iss. 5, May 1991, pp. 29-40; Muhammad Masood Azhar, "Glimpses of Khost Conquest," *Sada-e-Mujahid* (in Urdu), Vol. 2, Issue 5, July 1991, p. 5.

[19] For example see, "Remembrance of Akhtar Shaheed," *Sada-e-Mujahid* (in Urdu), Vol. 3, Issue 3-4, March-April 1992, pp. 5-9.

[20] Anne Stenersen, *Al-Qaida in Afghanistan*, pp. 29-30.

[21] The nature of HuJI's partnership with the Afghan Taliban likely benefited from the alliance HuJI had with Nabi Mohammedi's Harakat party, as a number of famous Taliban, including Mullah Omar, also fought under Nabi Mohammedi. The author thanks Anne Stenersen for pointing this out.

[22] Ibid, pp. 130-141.

[23] For additional background on HuM's operational support for the Taliban during the late 1990s see Muhammad Amir Rana, *Jihad and Jihadi*, p. 36, and on HuJI's see pp. 39-40.

[24] As cited in Mariam Abou Zahab and Olivier Roy, *Islamist Networks: The Afghan-Pakistan Connection*, (New York, Columbia University Press, 2004), pp. 57-58; Julie Sirrs, "The Taliban's International Ambitions," *Middle East Quarterly*, Summer 2001, pp. 61-71; One hundred ten out of the 113 prisoners interviewed mentioned an organizational affiliation.

[25] For example, see Dexter Filkins, "For Taliban Fighters, A Fading Memorial," *New York Times*, November 9, 2009.

[26] Imtiaz Gul, *The Most Dangerous Place: Pakistan's Lawless Frontier*, (New York: Penguin: 2009), p. 20.

[27] Anne Stenersen, citing AQ-MSLF-D-001-424, see Anne Stenersen, *Al-Qaida in Afghanistan*, p. 137.

[28] Anne Stenersen, *Al-Qaida in Afghanistan*, pg137.

[29] Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil & Islamic Fundamentalism in Central Asia*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), p. 92.

[30] Mariam Abou Zahab and Olivier Roy, *Islamist Networks: The Afghan-Pakistan Connection*, p. 28.

[31] Muhammad Amir Rana, *A to Z of Jehadi Organizations in Pakistan*, p. 266; As noted by Rana, according to a document published by the group in 2000, "Agile mujahideen of Harakat-ul-Jihad Al Islami were making history of valiant deeds in Kashmir, Burma, Tajikistan, Chechnya, Palestine, and the Central Asian republics. Harakat-ul-Jihad is the first organization to assemble mujahideen under the green flag in India, Bangladesh, Burma, Iran, Philippines, Malaysia, Africa, Britain, Ireland, Fiji, the United States, most of the Arab countries, and the Central Asian republics." Muhammad Amir Rana, *Jihad in Kashmir and Afghanistan*, no date, p.139.

[32] Amir Mir, *The True Face of Jehadis: Inside Pakistan's Network of Terror*, (Delhi: Roli Books, 2006), p. 103.

[33] Jason Burke, *Al-Qaeda: The True Story of Radical Islam*, (London: I.B. Taurus & Co Ltd., 2004), p. 96.

[34] For context, see Michael Scheuer, *Through our Enemies' Eyes: Osama bin Laden, Radical Islam, and the Future of America*, (Washington, DC, Potomac Books, 2006), pp. 191-193; Ali Soufan, *The Black Banners: The Inside Story of 9/11 and the War Against al-Qaeda*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2011), pp. 40-41.

[35] For background on al-Qaida's activity in Somalia at the time see *Al-Qa'ida's (Mis)Adventures in the Horn of Africa*, pp. 5-6; Harmony document AFGP-2002-6000104; Ali Soufan, *The Black Banners*, pp. 41-42.

[36] *Al-Qa'ida's (Mis)Adventures in the Horn of Africa*, p. 140.

[37] Paul Watson and Sidhartha Barua, "Somalian Link Seen to al-Qaeda," *Los Angeles Time*, February 25, 2002.

[38] Paul Watson and Sidhartha Barua, "Somalian Link Seen to al-Qaeda"; for details about Maulana Fazl Rahman Khalil and on the creation of HuA see Muhammad Amir Rana, *Jihad and Jihadi*, pp. 32-37.

[39] Paul Watson and Sidhartha Barua, "Somalian Link Seen to al-Qaeda"; for additional context see John F. Burns, "Yemen Links to bin Laden Gnaw at F.B.I. in Cole Inquiry," *New York Times*, November 26, 2000, URL: <http://www.nytimes.com/2000/11/26/world/yemen-links-to-bin-laden-gnaw-at-fbi-in-cole-inquiry.html>; for additional background on Fadhli and the role he played in helping Bin Laden and al-Qaida to open a jihad front in Yemen in the early 1990s, see Gregory Johnston, *The Last Refuge*, pp. 16-34.

- [40] Ahmed Rashid, *Descent into Chaos: The United States and the Failure of Nation Building in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia*, (New York, Viking: 2008), p. 113.
- [41] “Black Hawk Down: An American War Story,” Philadelphia Inquirer, November 1996-December 1997; URL: <http://inquirer.philly.com/packages/somalia/sitemap.asp>.
- [42] For example, see “The Meadow,” *South Asia Journal*, July 2, 2012; URL: <http://southasiajournal.net/meadow/>.
- [43] Mariam Abou Zahab and Olivier Roy, *Islamist Networks: The Afghan-Pakistan Connection*, p. 30.
- [44] Muhammad Amir Rana, *Jihad in Kashmir and Afghanistan*, p. 103.
- [45] Muhammad Amir Rana, *A to Z of Jehadi Organizations in Pakistan*, p. 220. Khaled Ahmed, *Sectarian War: Pakistan’s Sunni-Shia Violence and its Links to the Middle East*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 134.
- [46] Robert Fisk, “Muslim Leader Warns of a New Assault on US Forces,” *The Independent*, March 22, 1997.
- [47] Praveen Swami, “Masood Azhar in His Own Words,” *Frontline*, Vol. 18, Issue 21, October 13-26, 2001; URL: <http://www.frontline.in/static/html/fl1821/18210190.htm>.
- [48] “Terrorists or mujahideen?,” *Daily Times*, March 22, 2004; a similar analysis of a ten year period of HuM’s and HuJI’s fallen fighters conducted by Muhammad Amir Rana found that in the decade prior to 9/11 18 Arab fighters, 32 Afghan fighters, 4 European / other fighters died while deployed with HuM, and that 14 Arab fighters, 120 Afghan, 10 European / other fighters were killed on missions for HuJI. Muhammad Amir Rana, *Jihad in Kashmir and Afghanistan*, p. 14.
- [49] Muhammad Masood Azhar, “Muhammad Akhtar’s Journey in the Land of Jihad,” *Sada-e-Mujahid* (in Urdu), vol. 2, issue 12, December 1991, pp. 26-28.
- [50] Amir Mir, *The True Face of Jihadis*, p. 103.
- [51] Jason Burke, *Al-Qaeda: Casting a Shadow of Terror*, pg. 88; see also Muhammad Amir Rana, Jihad and Jihadi, pp. 53-56; Marc Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), pp. 7-8.
- [52] Marc Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad*, p. 8; According to Nick Fielding, imam was “Maulvi Ismail, imam of the Clifton mosque in north London.” See Nick Fielding, “The British Jackal,” *Sunday Times*, April 21, 2002.
- [53] Jason Burke, *Al-Qaeda: Casting a Shadow of Terror*, p. 88.
- [54] Ibid.
- [55] Paul Watson and Sidhartha Barua, “Somalian Link Seen to al-Qaeda”.
- [56] For background see Stephen Tankel, *Storming the World Stage: The Story of Lashkar-e-Taiba*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 56; for background on the June 1994 incident see Kim Housego, “Who Took Me Hostage?,” *Independent*, February 4, 1997; URL: <http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/who-took-me-hostage-1276790.html>.
- [57] John Johnson, “American Recalls His 1995 Abduction,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 9, 2002; URL: <http://articles.latimes.com/2002/feb/09/news/mn-27168>.
- [58] Seth Nye, “Al-Qa`ida Key Operative: A Profile of Mohammed Ilyas Kashmiri,” *CTC Sentinel*, September 1, 2010; for background on the Al-Hadid operation see Alex Strick van Linschoten and Felix Kuehn, *An Enemy we Created: The Myth of the Taliban/Al-Qaeda Merger in Afghanistan, 1970-2010*, (London: Hurst & Company, 2012), pp. 460-461.
- [59] “In a prison diary on file in an Indian court, Sheikh also admitted to kidnapping Californian Bela Josef Nuss and three British backpackers in October 1994 in a failed bid to spring Azhar from jail.” John Johnson, “American Recalls His 1995 Abduction”; see also John F. Burns, “Indian Police Free 3 Britons Held Hostage,” *New York Times*, November 2, 1994; URL: <http://www.nytimes.com/1994/11/02/world/indian-police-free-3-britons-held-hostage.html?mcubz=0>.
- [60] [] “Exhumed Body is of British Hostage, India Confirms,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 6, 2000, <http://articles.latimes.com/2000/jan/06/news/mn-51354>; Muhammad Amir Rana, *A to Z of Jehadi Organizations in Pakistan*, pp. 246-247; Amir Mir, *The True Face of Jihadis*, p. 77;
- [61] Amir Mir, *The True Face of Jihadis*, p. 77; prior to his membership in HuA Commander Sikander was affiliated with HuJI, see Muhammad Amir Rana, Jihad and Jihadi, p.127.
- [62] Ibid.
- [63] See DI TR 96-008 Central Intelligence Agency, “Harakat ul-Ansar: Increasing Threat to Western and Pakistani Interests,” August

1996; URL: <http://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB227/10.pdf>.

[64] Muhammad Amir Rana, *A to Z of Jehadi Organizations in Pakistan*, p. 272.

[65] For background see “After the Attacks: In Afghanistan; UN Officer Shot in Kabul After Bombing Dies; 4 Held,” *New York Times*, August 23, 1998; URL: <http://www.nytimes.com/1998/08/23/world/after-attacks-afghanistan-un-officer-shot-kabul-after-bombing-dies-4-held.html>; Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban*, p. 75; Olivier Roy, “Islamic Radicalism in Afghanistan and Pakistan,” United Nations WRITENET Paper No. 06/2001, January 2002, p. 16; URL: <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.634.6949&rep=rep1&type=pdf>.

[66] Ahmed Rashid, *Descent into Chaos*, p. 112.

[67] “Three get life term for hijacking Indian plane,” *Dawn*, February 6, 2008; URL: <https://www.dawn.com/news/288127/three-get-life-term-for-hijacking-indian-plane>.

[68] “Security forces kill Amjad Farooqi,” *Dawn*, September 27, 2004; URL: <https://www.dawn.com/news/371810>; “Profile: Amjad Farooqi,” *BBC*, September 27, 2004; URL: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/3692882.stm; B. Raman, “Amjad Farooqi: The Untold Story,” South Asia Analysis Group, Paper No. 129, September 29, 2004; URL: <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/paper1129>.

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