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Global Threat Assessment for 2011*

In this article, Professor Rohan Gunaratna, the Head of the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR), gives an assessment of preeminent security threat faced by key countries and regions in 2011.

**This is an excerpt of the article written by the author for INSITE Magazine, a service of the SITE Intelligence Group. The full article can be accessed at <https://insite.siteintelgroup.com/index.php>*



Image Credit: Free Vector World Maps Collection

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Transnational terrorism is likely to remain the most profound threat in 2011. Politically motivated groups that seek to legitimize their thinking and actions by using, misusing and misinterpreting the religious text, will continue to dominate the global threat landscape. While homegrown and group terrorism are likely to remain at the forefront, homegrown terrorism in particular will continue to be a formidable challenge for security. There will also be more pressure for Western military troops in Af-

ghanistan, both in combat and support roles, to return home due to the decreasing public support for the war and domestic political considerations.

Global terrorism will be driven and sustained largely by the geopolitical pressures and developments in the Middle East and Asia. In particular, four regions-Pakistan and Afghanistan, the Levant-Arabian Peninsula, the Horn of Africa, and the Maghreb-Sahel would be of concern.

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Image Credit: NBC 17

<http://www2.nbc17.com/news/2010/feb/16/nbc17-special-report-homegrown-terrorism-ar-278884/>

Threat Characterization

In the coming year, the Al Qaeda, its affiliate groups, and homegrown cells, are expected to continue to present a substantial threat to global security. The Al Qaeda may be planning to mark the ten year anniversary of the September 2001 attacks by instigating similar attacks through individuals, cells, and groups inspired by its ideologies. In keeping with trends in 2010, homegrown terrorist attacks are expected to surpass attacks from organized groups. With these developments, it is important that governments review their homeland security policies, strategies, and procedures.

With over 10,000 active Pakistani and foreign fighters in tribal Pakistan, especially in North Waziristan, the country is projected to remain as the ground-zero of terrorism. Both South Asia and the Middle East will continue to remain as enduring battlefields and staging pads for terrorist operations targeting the West. In addition to areas in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Somalia, and Yemen the traditional conflict zones of Algeria, Chechnya, Kashmir, Palestine, southern Philippines, and southern Thailand may suffer from significant incidents of violence. There is also the likelihood for low level violence in the Xinjiang province in China.

Terrorist groups will continue to utilize and disseminate propaganda using real and virtual communica-

tions platforms for indoctrination and recruitment. Muslim communities in Asia, Africa and the Middle East as well as migrant and Diaspora communities in North America, Europe and Australia have been susceptible to such propaganda. Countries such as Indonesia, Bangladesh, Maldives and countries with large to significant Muslim populations such as India, Nigeria, and parts of Central Asia would continue to experience high levels of radicalization and extremism.

Functional Trends

Ideologically and operationally, Al Qaeda is predicted to remain a key player. As terrorists are copycats, emerging and established groups can be expected to embrace Al Qaeda's philosophy of global jihad by carrying out spectacular attacks. The knowledge for mounting attacks in the aviation domain has now been shared by Al Qaeda not only with the Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), but also with other associated groups. Although aviation is the most protected domain, the terrorists will continue to target assets and services of the aviation sector.

Al Qaeda will not only seek to shape the operational agenda of jihadist groups but influence the thinking of the Muslim masses. Exposed to the Al Qaeda propaganda, indoctrinated groups and individuals will attempt to mount more suicide attacks. With the cult of martyrdom gaining in salience, suicide attacks can be expected to be favored by increasing numbers of groups. This may also drive an increase in *fedayeen* or "no surrender" attacks. As terrorists frequently attempt to copy from the template of successful attacks, a repetition of the 2008 "Mumbai-style attack" is likely in other parts of the world.

As Al Qaeda has become one of the world's most hunted terrorist groups, it can be expected to morph in both form and agenda. Rather than conduct the bulk of attacks, Al Qaeda will continue its transition into an ideological vanguard and training organization for likeminded groups. Having suffered gravely from combat and drone attacks, the Al Qaeda is likely to continue to outsource its operations to groups such as the

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AQAP, Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, Tareek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Islamic Jihad Union (IJU), Turkistan Islamic Party (TIP) and Al-Shabab Al-Mujahideen. With mounting pressure on, and attrition of Al Qaeda rank and file, other players infected with its ideology and methodology may step into its position and seek to present a comparable threat. Over time, the AQAP and TTP may emerge as greater threats to international security, especially to that of the West.

Threat Assessment

Ten years after the September 2001, the threat from insurgency, terrorism, and extremism has escalated. The recourse to predominantly lethal and kinetic operations by the West - especially the American invasion of Iraq - has led to a loss of Muslim public participation and the reluctance of Muslim governments to counter the threat posed by jihadist groups. The Western-led, US-centric global agenda has not been successful in decapitating insurgent and terrorist leadership, dismantling their infrastructure, disabling support and recruitment networks, and disrupting their operations. In the coming decade, the West, especially the United States, will need to rethink and re-strategize its approach to counterterrorism and counterinsurgency.

While military operations should remain an important pillar of counterterrorism policy, governments should seek to build partnerships with community leaders and organizations to prevent terrorism through community engagement, detect attacks through community sources, and rehabilitate those arrested through community participation.

Control Strategies

Ten years of kinetic operations against groups such as the Al Qaeda has highlighted the limitations of using military force to end extremism and terrorism. Excessive reliance on firepower, extraordinarily high collateral damage to property and people, and the failure to provide basic needs have protracted terrorism and insurgency.

The counterterrorism and counterinsurgency toolkits should be comprehensive, strategic in orientation and centered on both the population and the en-



File photo of the 9/11 attacks.
Photo Credit: US National Park Service

emy. While high-grade, high-quality intelligence and firepower determines operational success on the ground, political will is the most essential ingredient to ultimately ending a conflict. There is a need for a public-private partnership between the government and other sectors of society, especially the mass media, to win over the marginalized and the disaffected. As insurgent and terrorists seek to exploit new media technologies to disseminate propaganda, governments today need an effective media strategy to guide vulnerable territorial, migrant, and Diaspora populations away from extremism as well as to retain and generate the support of NGOs and the international community.

Impediments

To counter the threat effectively, a profound understanding of the political dimensions of the conflict, the support bases, leadership persona, and ideologies of the groups are necessary. At the heart of many insurgencies are geopolitical and strategic disputes. In the same way that the Palestinian cause has an indelible imprint on the psyche of Muslim groups worldwide, protracted disputes over Kashmir, Chechnya and others have a strong regional impact.

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The international community is ideologically and politically divided on the issue of appropriate strategies to fight insurgency and terrorism. Increasingly, non-Western nations see terrorism and extremism as a Western problem and a creation of the West. This is further compounded by the selective, and often biased reporting of some non-government organizations (NGOs). Reports of violations in conflict zones where Western forces participate, such as in Iraq and Afghanistan, versus conflicts in Xinjiang, Chechnya, Uzbekistan, Sri Lanka and Southeastern Turkey carries the tinge of bias. Furthermore, the non-Western world increasingly sees Western countries, especially the United States and Britain, as using human rights issues as a political tool.

Every conflict zone has produced civilian deaths and injuries. Insurgent and terrorist groups use civilian deaths and injuries – including those killed deliberately and accidentally-for propaganda. Insurgents and terrorists operate amidst civilian settlements and they use them as human shields. While government forces should strive to minimize civilian losses, there is a need to put collateral civilian casualties and damage to property in a proper perspective.

Conclusion

With the globalization of communications, insurgent, terrorist, and extremist groups will compete with governments to influence their territorial as well as Diaspora and migrant communities. By politicizing, radicalizing, and mobilizing their communities both in the real and cyber worlds, these groups seek advocacy, support, and participation in their political, diplomatic and militant campaigns. Furthermore, the threat groups will engage with human rights, humanitarian and charitable organizations and use them as fronts or covers to assist their causes and agendas.

As the threat spreads to population centers, governments working with their partners in civil society and in the community will need to educate the general population. Although intelligence-led counterinsurgency and counterterrorist operations are essential, greater investment is needed in community engagement. The

challenge is to prevent the radicalization of communities deemed vulnerable to the extremist narrative. This will mean a transformation of the strategy from the overwhelming use of force to winning the hearts and the minds of affected communities. Currently, law enforcement agencies are considered a tactically trained blue collar force. It must become a strategically trained partner capable of reaching out, engaging, and befriending the potential opponent and future adversary.

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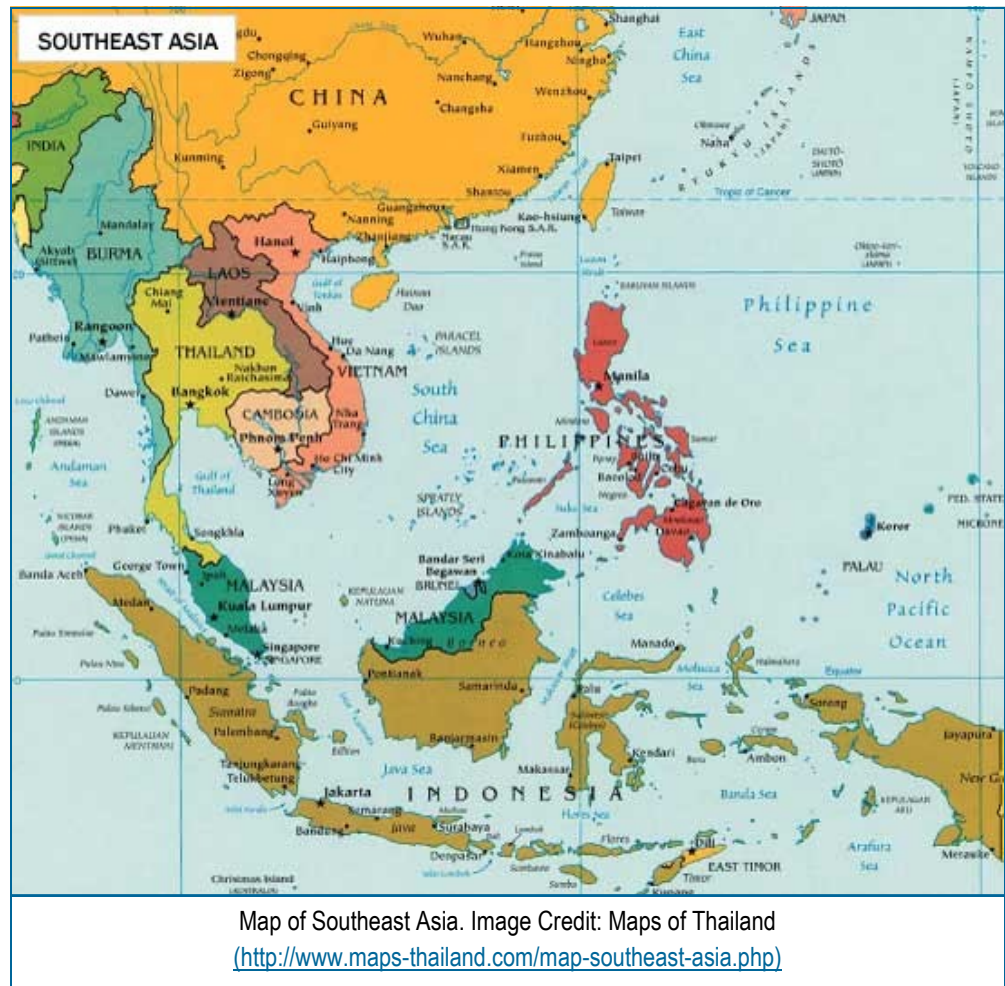
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Southeast Asia Country Assessments



Indonesia

In 2010, no major terrorist attacks took place in Indonesia. This was primarily due to the remarkable efforts of the Detachment 88, Indonesia's premiere counterterrorism unit. Around 100 terrorist suspects were arrested this year – possibly the highest recorded number in a year since the 2002 Bali bombings. A total of 16 people were killed, including Dulmatin, one of the most wanted Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) leaders with a reward of US\$10 million. Authorities also disrupted several plots including those

against the Indonesian President, ministries, foreign dignitaries, embassies, and police's headquarters. However, past experience has shown that the capture and deaths of terrorist leaders did not deter their supporters from launching attacks. So the government needs to use a more comprehensive and inclusive approach against radicalization and extremism. The terrorist threat in the country also remains high since the law does not allow the government to stop ongoing indoctrination and recruiting process of the jihadists.

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Shift in Targets

From 2002 to 2005, there was at least one major bombing in Indonesia. But from 2005 - 2009, no high-profile attacks occurred in the country. The lull was interrupted on 17 July 2009 with the bombing of the Ritz Carlton and JW Marriot Hotels in Jakarta. Nine people were killed, including two suicide bombers. Those major attacks since 2002 were masterminded by the hard-line faction of the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI). This faction was led by some JI members who were dissatisfied with the pragmatic stance of JI's central leadership which is more focused on religious outreach (*dakwah*) than jihad.

There are similarities in terms of the modus operandi and target types between five major attacks perpetrated by the JI hard-line faction – the 2002 and 2005 Bali Bombings, 2003 JW Marriot Bombing, 2004 Australian Embassy Bombing, and the 2009 Ritz Carlton and JW Marriot Hotels Bombings. All the attacks made use of suicide bombers and targeted Western assets and citizens. Dr. Azhari Husin – the deceased bomb making expert of the JI – believed that in order to attract international attention, a bomb attack targeting western interests should be launched either in Jakarta or Bali. The JI's hard-line faction also use small and dedicated teams to conduct attacks. It was noted that Noordin M. Top, the mastermind of the bombings and the leader of the faction, built small teams comprised of individuals either from or outside JI for every attack.

The wave of arrests in 2010 revealed that the terrorists have changed their choice of targets. Authorities uncovered plots which targeted President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and the Indonesian police headquarters. While embassies such as that of the United States and Australia are still attractive targets, the actual targets on the ground are the police. In 2010 alone, ten police officers were killed by the terrorists. Most of them were killed during the terrorists attack at a police station in Hamparan Perak, Deli Serdang, North Sumatera on 22 September 2010. Two of them were assassinated in Purworejo, Central Java on 10 April 2010. The rise in the number of confrontations between the police and the



7 March 2010 photograph of Indonesia Police displaying the firearms and ammunition seized from a terrorist training camp in Aceh.

Photo Credit: [http://www.militaryphotos.net/forums/](http://www.militaryphotos.net/forums/showthread.php?775559-TNI-in-Gallery-%28the-New-Photos%29/page282)

[showthread.php?775559-TNI-in-Gallery-%28the-New-Photos%29/page282](http://www.militaryphotos.net/forums/showthread.php?775559-TNI-in-Gallery-%28the-New-Photos%29/page282)

terrorists indicates the latter's increasing capability and resilience. As a result, for the first time since the 2002 Bali Bombings, police have asked help from the military – albeit in an ad-hoc basis – to hunt down the terrorists.

For the past eight years, the terrorists have targeted Western interests in Indonesia so there is a question as to why they are now attacking the police. Apparently, this is not an entirely new development for the terrorists groups because in 2005 and 2006 they attacked the police in Poso even after the Muslim-Christian communal strife has officially ceased. It is just that attacks against police and other government officials are not widely covered by the international media as compared to the bombings of Western targets.

There have been more attacks against the police following the discovery of a military training camp in Aceh on 24 February 2010 and the subsequent arrests and killings of leaders and participants of the training camp. The camp was run by Lintas Tanzim or the so-called Tanzim Al Qaeda Serambi Mekkah, a loose coalition comprised of, among others, members of the JI, Jama'ah Ansharut Tauhid (JAT), factions of Darul Islam

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File Photograph of JI ideologue Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. He remains to be a key personality on terrorism due to his links with the group behind the terrorist training camp in Aceh. Photo Credit: United States National Counter Terrorist Center

(DI), Action Committee for Crisis Response (KOMPAK), and Islamic Defender Front (FPI) Aceh branch.

Another factor which could have also contributed to the increase in attacks against the police was a statement made a few years ago by Lintas Tanzim's ideologue, Aman Abdurrahman. He said that anyone who obstructs the implementation of *sharia* – whether they are the police and Indonesian government officials – should be made their targets.

Overall, counterterrorism operations in 2010 resulted in a record number of arrests and terrorist fatalities. The police have reasoned that the high fatality rate could be attributed to the heavy resistance coming from the terrorists, which has forced the police to engage them in fire fights. However, there is a concern that the arrests and deaths would likely serve as a motivation for the jihadi community to retaliate (*qisas* or “eye for an eye”) against the police. This was already evident from an increase in the discourse on *qisas* in some prominent Indonesian jihadi websites and blogs in the last quarter of 2010.

In terms of tactics, there appears to be a shift to targeted assassination or shootings as against suicide bombings. This was evident from the recovery of more small arms and ammunitions than explosives/bomb-making materials, from the series of raids conducted this year. This is partly because the use of small arms and

shooting targets is more practical, less costly and less time-consuming in preparation than using a suicide bomber. Moreover, shootings have actually been used as a tactic by the terrorists in the past ten years although the faction headed by JI's leader Hambali and Noordin M. Top did not use it.

Increase in armed robberies

There were four armed robberies carried out by suspected terrorists in 2010. These armed robberies against non-Muslims, also known as *fa'i* have been a recurrent tactic used by terrorists in Indonesia to secure funds before an attack. For instance, there were two armed robberies before the 2002 Bali bombings, one took place before the 2003 J.W. Marriott Bombing and two robberies before the 2005 Bali Bombings. In 2010, four armed robberies were carried out against three banks and a money changer. All the incidents occurred in North Sumatra province. The increase in armed robberies would indicate the difficulties faced by terrorist groups to obtain funds from other traditional means. Members of the Jama'ah Ansharut Tauhid (JAT) – a jihadi organization established by Abu Bakar Ba'asyir – were implicated in these armed robberies. The terrorists carted away a total of US\$127,915 from these operations. It is believed that the money was to buy weapons as well as recruit new members.

Key Players

Abu Bakar Ba'asyir remains to be a key player in Indonesia as evidenced from his involvement with the Lintas Tanzim. He is alleged to be the group's *amir* and regularly received reports about funding, operations and arms supplies from his subordinates. He was arrested for the third time on 9 August 2010 for his links with the group and is now awaiting trial.

Dulmatin, who was killed in a police raid in Pamulang, Jakarta on 9 March 2010, had a crucial role in setting up the Lintas Tanzim. Dulmatin brought together leaders from various hard-line Islamist organizations, including Abdullah Sunata from KOMPAK.

Aman Abdurrahman, who was jailed in connection with the Cimanggis explosion near Jakarta in March 2004, serves as an influential ideologue for Lintas Tan-

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zim. He has successfully indoctrinated a number of people, including his fellow inmates and a police officer. Another key player is Mustofa alias Abu Tholut, a former commander of JI's *Mantiqi III*. He was released from prison in 2007 after he completed his sentence for illegal possession of explosives. He was re-arrested by authorities on 10 December 2010 as he was allegedly responsible for the series of armed robberies and the attack against the police post in Hamparan Perak, North Sumatra, on 22 September 2010. More than a dozen JAT administrators and members were also implicated in the Lintas Tanzim military training and armed robberies. Toni Togar – a JI figure convicted for his involvement in the Lippo Bank robbery in Medan prior to the 2003 J.W. Marriott Bombings, and Rois who is awaiting the death sentence for his role in the 2004 Australian Embassy Bombings – were also linked to the Lintas Tanzim. They were found to have used a mobile phone while in prison to remain involved in the activities of the Lintas Tanzim.

Outlook 2011

Despite the arrest of key leaders and members, the jihadi ideology continues to prevail and spread in Indonesia. This is due to the absence of legal provisions that would enable authorities to prosecute those who conduct recruitment and preach hatred. In Central Java alone, police have identified thousands of people who have linkages with terrorist groups. The terrorists also conduct paramilitary trainings in eight places in Central Java, and three in Banten, a province outside of Jakarta. However, the police could not arrest those who train or participate in those trainings because not all of them are equipped with weapons, and unarmed groups are not deemed illegal under current laws.

There is a possibility that the JAT will become more of a threat than the JI as the latter is seen to be more focused on *dakwah*. Compared to the JI which operates in a clandestine way, JAT is proven to be more dangerous because it has two faces. The JAT intensively focuses on *dakwah*, in terms of jihad and *qital* (battle). It openly states that Indonesia is not a legiti-

mate area of jihad and in this context, JAT has delegitimized *fa'i* and other forms of attacks. In doing so, it aims to generate sympathy from the general Muslim public and picture itself as the victim of a conspiracy against Muslims. It believes that this propaganda can serve as a means for recruitment as well as fund raising.

But at the same time, there is strong evidence that the money channelled to the JAT is being used to fund terrorist activities and that many of their members are involved in terrorist acts. Indonesia has not proscribed the JAT and as such its recruitment and indoctrination activities continue openly and without hindrance. This is in contrast with the JI and Darul Islam which also teach similar concepts of jihad, albeit in a much lower profile. In addition, the jihadi community in the country is also currently comprised of individuals, who are either independent or belongs to a group, which are not necessarily jihadi organizations. Despite the differences in their strategies, whether they are focused on religious outreach or terrorist attacks, there is a widespread belief that armed jihad will be eventually waged in Indonesia.

The Indonesian government has recently launched the National Anti-Terrorism Agency (BNPT). This is seen as a meaningful step to address the current threat from terrorism and extremism. Part of the BNPT's efforts is to safeguard the community from jihadi ideology. These are seen as positive initiatives amidst the lack of sufficient laws to prosecute perpetrators of terrorism from as early as the recruitment stage.

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Philippines

In his first formal address as the Philippines's new commander-in-chief, President Benigno Aquino III presented the peace framework of his administration – good governance, effective delivery of basic services, sustainable development, and security sector reform. Furthermore, he promised to meet the needs of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). This includes advancing its modernization program, providing sufficient benefits for the personnel, and doubling defense spending to equip the forces to combat terrorism and insurgency. The AFP has deployed personnel from the Marines, the elite unit of the Philippine Navy, to the provinces of Tawi-Tawi and Zamboanga considered strongholds of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG). But it is not certain if these measures are enough to quell decades-long insurgencies. The government has promised to settle religious conflicts, resume peace talks and review the structure of the process of negotiations. Such measures and efforts were taken in the past but have failed to bring peace.

There was an increase in violence in the first half of 2010 all over the country. This was not unusual, especially as the country had its national elections in



9 June 2010 photo of Benigno "Noy" Aquino being proclaimed by Congress and the Senate as the winner of the May 2010 Presidential Elections.

Photo Credit: Wikimedia Commons <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Presidentelectaquino.jpg>

May 2010. Although the government enforced ban on possession of guns went on as usual during the elections, it has never been able to stop poll-related violence, especially killing of candidates, supporters, and poll officials. The May 2010 elections were placed under intense scrutiny both by the citizens and the international community. There was enhanced vigilance due to the election related violence in Maguindanao province in November 2009 where 58 people, including 30 journalists, were killed, allegedly by scions of a prominent political clan.

In late October 2010, six Western countries, namely Canada, New Zealand, the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, and France, issued advisories for their citizens traveling to the Philippines due to continuing threats of terrorist attacks. The travel warnings were released after embassies received credible reports that terrorists were planning attacks against a range of targets in a variety of locations frequented by foreigners such as large shopping malls and convention centers. The Hong Kong government followed suit, and advised its citizens against visiting the country. This was the second travel advisory from Hong Kong in a span of four months. Hong Kong released a similar warning immediately after the 23 August 2010 hostage crisis in Manila, which killed eight of its citizens, even though the incident was not linked to terrorism.

Peace Talks

Peace talks between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) have been stalled since the Supreme Court stopped the GRP from signing the Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain (MOA-AD) in 2008. The MOA-AD would have expanded the existing Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) to an additional 712 villages. President Aquino has declared that the resumption of peace talks with the MILF is a "top priority" for his administration.

In early 2010 peace talks resumed in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. However, it was again stalled after the MILF rejected the power-sharing proposal of the

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22 December 2010 photograph of Chief Negotiator Marvic Leonen, with members of the Peace Panel of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP). Photo Credit: Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process

GRP. In the meantime, Dean Marvic Leonen of the University of the Philippines' College of Law was appointed as chief of the government's peace panel in July 2010 considering his expertise in Philippine indigenous law as well as natural resources law. In a related development, the term of the Malaysian-led International Monitoring Team (IMT) ended in December 2010. The IMT is credited for credible monitoring of the ceasefire between the MILF and government troops; there were only three recorded firefights between the two sides since 28 February 2010. The MILF leadership warned the GRP of certain repercussions if the IMT deployment is not renewed. There are already mounting fears that violence might erupt again once the IMT is pulled out. The two sides have yet to formally discuss the renewal of the IMT mandate. Another stalemate to the peace talks is that President Aquino wants the Malaysian facilitator, Datuk Othman Razak, removed. Razak is accused of being biased to the MILF.

Meanwhile, formal peace negotiations between the GRP and the National Democratic Front, the legal organization of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA), is set to resume in Norway in February 2011 after a five-year hiatus. NDF chief negotiator, Luis Jalandoni, met with the GRP panel head Alexander Padilla in Hong Kong to find a way to reopen the talks.

A New Strategy

In early November 2010, the Armed Forces of the Philippines started to redeploy Marines based in

Basilan to Central Mindanao as part of its new Fleet-Marine operational strategy in the region. The Marines, together with the Naval Forces in Eastern Mindanao, are to work to address maritime issues and potential terrorist threats. The new counterinsurgency plan is set to be implemented in January 2011.

The recent increase of kidnappings in Central Mindanao prompted the business community and other prominent locals in Cotabato City to request the placement of Marines in this area. A series of kidnappings of both local entrepreneurs and foreign personalities in Cotabato City has raised public concerns, and prompted some foreign countries, such as the United States, United Kingdom and Australia, to issue travel advisories against some areas in Mindanao. It should be noted that this is not the first time the Marines were deployed in Central Mindanao as they were deployed in this area in 2002 to carry out operations against the MILF. The Marines were later deployed to Basilan to conduct offensives against the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG). According to the AFP, the transfer of the Marines to Cotabato does not represent a shift in focus from the ASG. The Department of National Defense maintained that the move, which has the support of both government and religious leaders, was in response to the call for more security. There is a perception that the transfer of troops may be a way to gain leverage and pressure the MILF to revive peace talks with the government.

The transfer of the Marines to Cotabato City was possible due to the significantly reduced threat from the ASG in Basilan. This was the result of relentless, intelligence-driven, military operations against the group. Most of the ASG's leaders have either been killed or arrested. The group is now estimated to have 400 fighters, less than half of its membership at the height of its kidnapping activities in 2000-2002. One of the highlights of 2010's counterterrorism efforts was the arrest and extradition of a ranking member of the ASG from the U.S. Madhatta Haipe pleaded guilty in a US court to four counts of hostage taking. His conviction is seen to strengthen the working relationship of the US and the

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Philippines, especially on counterterrorism initiatives.

At the same time, the strength of the New People's Army (NPA) has been significantly reduced by continued military operations supported with intelligence information from the communities. This is most evident in the Samar, Bicol, Negros and provinces in Northern Luzon, Central Luzon and the CARAGA region. The NPA used to have a strong concentration in these areas.

The new counterinsurgency plan is an off-shoot of former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's stance on finishing the Abu Sayyaf and weakening the communist movement. The new strategy is not limited to military operations. As the commander of the AFP's Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom), Lieutenant General Raymundo Ferrer puts it, *"the military operation has been shifted to peace and development as a new strategy in addressing the remnants of the militants and the root causes of terrorism in the region."* The AFP is now working on the framework that peace and development should be secured to overcome the problem of insurgency and terrorism.

A prime example of this strategy is in Basilan where military operations are carried out alongside civil-military economic development programs designed to gain the support of the community and isolate the ASG. The involvement of U.S. forces has also helped tremendously in the campaign against the terrorists. The U.S. troops were sent to southern Philippines to participate in joint training exercises with Philippines troops and to provide support in noncombat missions.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) developed the new strategy with inputs from the civil society. This is much different from the old and much criticized *"Oplan Bantay Laya"* (Operation Guard the Freedom) which was associated with a wave of extra judicial killings. The new strategy calls for greater transparency, an end to human rights violations, and the promotion of good governance within local administrations and the AFP. The new strategy also entails the use of less combat operations in favor of more peaceful tactics such as

development and livelihood projects.

Conclusion

Six months into his term, it still remains to be seen whether President Aquino will be successful in bringing peace and stability to the country. However, there are high hopes that the peace framework of his administration will be accepted by the Filipino people. Throughout the country, the strength and number of leftist and terrorist members were reduced as a result of civil military operations and the implementation of active information drive. On the whole, the counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations of 2010 in the Philippines have achieved moderate gains.

Thailand

The number of attacks in Southern Thailand has decreased marginally in 2010 but it is still clear that military actions have not been able to curb the violence. The current government recognizes that the use of hard tactics alone will not end the insurgency. As part of the plan to win hearts and minds of the southern population, strategic developments of the region are in place. On the other hand, the Thai government continues to evade allegations of human rights abuses and the political grievances of Malay-Muslims.

The Insurgency in the South

Security personnel and government employees remain prime targets of insurgent attacks. The public continues to bear the brunt as most of the victims are civilians. Insurgents do not discriminate in the selection of soft targets by ethnicity or religious affiliation. Malay-Muslims who are perceived to support or are connected to the Thai state and military are also considered targets. Public school teachers have been continuously attacked as they are seen to represent the oppression of the Thai state and the propagators of ideas that threaten Malay-Muslim identity. Ethnic Malay-Muslims teachers of state-run schools as well as their Thai-Buddhist counterparts are also targeted by the insurgents. Teachers of Islamic schools who refused to cooperate with insurgents on radicalizing students with extremism are vulnerable to attacks as well.

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Drive-by targeted shootings and the use of improvised explosive devices (IED) continue to be the most frequently used tactics by the insurgents. The explosives normally weigh between five to twenty kilos and are either remotely detonated to target security forces, or are buried underground as improvised mines. The use of vehicle-bombs has declined. There were also several motorcycle bomb attacks wherein the explosives were hidden in the storage compartment underneath the seat.

The Response

The Thai government has recognized that the use of hard tactics alone will not end the insurgency. As part of its strategy to win hearts and minds in the southern provinces, it has put in place several projects to develop the economy and alleviate poverty. It remains to be seen if such initiatives will contribute towards the stability of the provinces.

One of the more significant developments this year was the bill endorsed by Parliament to imbue independent authority upon the Southern Border Provinces Administration Centre (SBPAC). The SBPAC will function outside the influence of any military bureau or existing ministry. It will be an empowered agency which reports directly to the Prime Minister with regards to administering the development of the southern provinces. An important responsibility of the SBPAC is to receive complaints and render assistance to civilians who were distressed by improper conduct of government officials. It also has the power to transfer delinquent government officials, including police personnel, on verified complaints of misconduct.

The emergency decree is still in place in the southern provinces since 2005. Consequently, there have been continued allegations of human rights violations of the detainees who have been imprisoned on security-related charges. In September 2010, Thai authorities dropped charges against a former paramilitary ranger with links to government-trained Buddhist militia for the killing of Muslims villagers in the 2009 Ai Bayae



Photograph taken at the site of a bomb site in Yala on 9 September 2010. Photo Credit: Associated Press (AP)

<http://islamizationwatch.blogspot.com/2010/09/muslim-insurgents-fighting-for.html>

mosque attack. The authorities said there was insufficient evidence to pursue the case. Such events only serve to fuel the feelings of injustice amongst Malay-Muslims and give rise to more grievances. Insurgent groups manipulate these resentments to further their recruitment activities. There are several incidents, such as the 2004 Tak Bai and Krue Se incidents, which are seen to be the symbols of injustice against the Malay-Muslim at the hands of the Thai-Buddhist state. To date, those involved in these attacks have yet to be accounted for and as such they are being used by the insurgents as part of their propaganda. The Thai government must face up to these issues if there is to be any meaningful recourse on reconciliation. Unfortunately, there is no indication that the Thai government will acknowledge the need for accountability of its security forces' past errors. What is foreseeable is that popular grievances symbolized by incidents of injustice, as well as allegations of human rights abuse will continue to be a hindrance to counterinsurgency actions.

The Thai government has not looked at political solutions to address the political grievances of the Malay-Muslims. Neither had it explored the possibility of en-

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gaging the insurgent groups in negotiations, nor considered administrative reforms to the current system of governance. There is a need for the Thai government to acknowledge the demand for recognition of the ethno-religious identity of the southern population to help curb the insurgency. This would entail the granting of political rights and a certain level of autonomy for Malay-Muslims.

The political unrest in Bangkok has diverted the Thai government's attention from the problem in the south. Until a certain level of political stability is achieved in Thailand, the insurgency in the southern provinces will remain at the periphery of the government's agenda. It could not be stressed enough how important it is for the government to lay the political groundwork for negotiations with the insurgent groups, as well as with the political opposition.

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Photograph taken at the site of clashes between the Red Shirts and Thai military troops in Bangkok on 10 and 11 April 2010.

Photo Credit: Pittaya Sroilong

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/56286862@N00/4510976657>

South Asia Country Assessments



Image Credit: Wikimedia Commons

[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:South_asia.jpg)

[File:South_asia.jpg](#)

Afghanistan

Six months to the scheduled withdrawal of the coalition troops, the war in Afghanistan is at a stage where chances of winning appear to be increasingly difficult. The conduct of the war continues to spin off differences between the United States (US), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Afghan government. It has also begun to wear out the patience of not only the Afghan people but also of the Western population. The failure of the US and NATO to accomplish tangible gains against the Taliban has spiraled anti-war postures in the West, and has cost the US and NATO the confidence of the Afghans and undermined their role as a stabilizing force in the country.

“Fragile and Reversible” Gains

US President Barack Obama’s strategy to fight the war in Afghanistan entailed mounting massive military offensives designed to reverse the Taliban’s momentum in 2010. Instead, the strategy ended in a few “fragile and reversible” gains for the coalition forces. More than 7,000 special counterterrorism operations were conducted across Afghanistan between May and December 2010, which culminated in the death or capture of more than 600 Taliban leaders and over 6,000 cadres. Although hailed as success against the Taliban, these casualties, as seen in the previous years, do not necessarily ensure a strategic progress for the US and NATO troops in the war. The number of Taliban casualties in 2009 and in the years before were also in the thousands; yet the group proved itself to be resilient. This was evident from an increase in the number and intensity of attacks which rendered 2010 the bloodiest year for the coalition troops in terms of casualties. In the meantime, areas cleared of the Taliban in 2010 continued to experience a considerable level of violence. The Taliban was able to reverse the gains of Operation Moshtarak which was launched in the southern Helmand province in February 2010. Though the Operation Moshtarak succeeded in forcing Taliban fighters out of Marjah, the success was short-lived as there was a failure to deliver development and install a competent and corruption-free local government.

Following Operations Moshtarak, Operation Dragon Strike was launched in September 2010 in Kanda-

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har province. At this stage, it is still too early to evaluate the outcome of the Operation Dragon Strike as it was launched just before winter, a time when the Taliban lay low in their attacks. Given the strategic importance of the Kandahar province, there is a high likelihood that the Taliban would stage more violent attacks in the coming summer months to reverse losses if any. The Taliban knows that losing ground to US and NATO troops in the Kandahar province will be a strategic blow to their operations in the restive south and also in other regions of Afghanistan. Kandahar is the capital of the southern region and the hometown of many Taliban leaders including the supreme leader Mullah Mohammad Omar. It provides Taliban with a major route and has a shared border with Quetta city of Pakistan where the Taliban leadership council has its headquarters.

Differences between Afghan Government and US and NATO

The US and NATO countries are aware that a supportive partner in Afghanistan is crucial to attaining progress in the war. But the differences between the Afghan government and the US and NATO forces continue to crop up as the war goes on. Afghan President Hamid Karzai has recently been vocal in criticizing the US and NATO's counterinsurgency approach. He believes that the coalition troops have failed to achieve any progress as was being expected. In a recent interview with the Washington Post, President Karzai called for espousing a "light-footprint" approach by the US and NATO. He also demanded an immediate end to the night raids by coalition troops. He argued that these are crucial to normalize the situation on the ground and control the further disillusionment of the Afghan people. However, the US and NATO has argued that the coalition night raids proved to be an effective tactic against the Taliban as it helped target many of the group's commanders. The raids have raised public anger due to a rise in civilian casualties. A recent poll conducted by BBC and ABC news reports showed that the number of Afghans supporting Taliban attacks on foreign troops increased threefold in 2010; from 8 percent in 2009 to



16 February 2010 photo of a patrol team of the Afghan National Army in Helmand province. The team is part of Operation

Moshtarak. Photo Credit: ISAF Media

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/isafmedia/4361248235/>

27 percent in 2010. This is largely due to the collateral damage caused by the coalition operations including the night raids.

Another finding was that 73 percent of Afghan people support a negotiated settlement with the Taliban. This shows the increasing inclination of the Afghan people towards reconciliation, which is believed to be the only way to end the war. It also marks the decrease in confidence on the military measures of the US and NATO against the Taliban.

However, on reconciliation, the Afghan government and the US and NATO are not on the same page. The ISAF is trying to force the Taliban towards reconciliation by intensifying military operations. But the Afghan government is offering peace overtures to the Taliban and is trying to build confidence through measures like removing the names of their leaders from the United Nations (UN) black list and the launch of initiatives like the Consultative Peace Jirga (assembly) and High Peace Council.. The US and NATO's and Afghan government's contradictory approaches to reconciliation led the Taliban to declare the reconciliation process ineffec-

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tive and called the initiatives of the Afghan government as merely symbolic and not independent. The Taliban argued that the Afghan government has no authority to negotiate and that the reconciliation process is not a sincere initiative and is merely a strategy of the U.S and NATO to fragment the group.

Similarly, the reintegration process, handled by the Afghan government and supported by the US and NATO, has not shown any progress either. The reintegration process is deemed to attract Taliban fighters who have joined the insurgency for monetary reasons. But as the withdrawal of the coalition troops draw near, many of the financially-motivated Taliban fighters may choose not to defect. Defection at this stage for many Taliban fighters would mean putting their lives at risk. The Taliban has already issued warning letters threatening to kill anyone who defects. Moreover, this strategy is almost entirely ineffective against the ideologically-motivated rank and file members of the Taliban who are believed to be the backbone of the insurgency. It is driven by monetary incentives, which would not attract the ideologically motivated members of the Taliban to the government side.

The issue of Taliban sanctuaries outside of Afghanistan is another source of friction between the Afghan government and the US. The Afghan government has long reiterated that the center of gravity of the Taliban insurgency is the group's sanctuaries in Pakistan without dismantling of which, it would not be possible to break Taliban's momentum in Afghanistan. The sanctuaries in Pakistan serve as the launching pad of attacks, not only by the Afghan Taliban and Pakistani Taliban, but also by foreign militants, against Afghan troops and US and NATO forces. For example, members of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) based in the North and South Waziristan Agencies of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan continue to carry out attacks in the northern provinces of Afghanistan. Once a stable region of Afghanistan, northern Afghan provinces are now suffering from continuous deterioration in security. Recently Taliban assassinated the

provincial governor of northern Kunduz province and targeted the Afghan army recruitment center in the same province with suicide bombers which killed eight Afghan security officers and wounded another 20.

Ten years into the war and with an increase in US and NATO manpower, there has not been any perceptible improvement in the situation in Afghanistan. The Taliban still stands invincible, their sanctuaries remain intact, and there is an increase in the presence of foreign militants in the country. At the same time, the differences between the Afghan government and the coalition forces continue to increase which is undermining the overall efforts to stabilize the country. It is unclear if in the next four years the US and NATO will be able to make up for all that they have lost in the last nine years or whether it will continue to worsen further and claim thousands of combatant and civilian lives.

Bangladesh

2010 saw the continuation of Bangladesh's counterterrorism efforts these recent years. Authorities arrested a number of major terrorist personalities and a significant number of terrorist plots were uncovered and disrupted.

The arrest of Maulana Saidur Rahman and Bhagina Shahid, leaders of the Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), is an example of Bangladesh's success against terrorist groups. The crackdown on the JMB and the arrest of its members and senior leadership played a key part in degrading the group's operational capabilities to a certain extent. However, it is also important to note that despite the government's sustained efforts, the JMB continues to pose a major threat to Bangladesh's security and stability.

Some important trends were observed over the course of the last twelve months. The terrorist groups, especially the JMB, favored the acquisition and use of small firearms, instead of explosives, in their operations. This was evident for attacks on security forces in which small arms were used. The terrorists did not use sophisticated weapons in their attack and the proliferation of small arms could be a matter of grave concern. There

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have also been some changes observed in the recruitment pattern of terrorist organizations. Groups have attached more emphasis to the use of kinship and family ties in recruiting their cadres.

The presence of foreign groups in Bangladesh further compounds the existing challenge faced by Bangladeshi authorities. Several members of regional terrorist groups such as Lashkar-e-Tayeba (LeT), Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) were arrested in Dhaka in 2010. While their intentions and capabilities in Bangladesh are still a subject of conjecture. Available evidence suggest that these groups have intentions to use Bangladesh as a transit point to operate within the region. Such a possibility presents major security challenges for other countries in the region, particularly India. On the other hand, the presence of such lethal terrorist outfits indicates that they are able to maintain operational as well as ideological collaboration with their counterparts in Bangladesh. There is a possibility that Bangladeshi groups would try to embolden their operational capabilities using this opportunity. Furthermore, some of the arrested LeT members were found to be involved in currency counterfeiting and other organized criminal activities. Bangladeshi authorities have cracked down on such activities which is an emerging problem for the country.

In the strategic realm, several major initiatives were undertaken in 2010. A major awareness campaign was initiated by the Bangladesh government to sensitize the youth about the problem of terrorism. Streets of Dhaka and other major cities saw new billboards emerge with the slogan '*Jubo Shomaj Milao Haat, Ar Noi Jongibaad*' ("No more militancy") urging the youth to renounce terrorism and militancy. In addition to that, the authorities also looked at terrorist rehabilitation and deradicalization activities at the grassroots level. Countering the financing of terrorism has been identified as a key priority area especially after the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) highlighted the risk from terrorist financing in Bangladesh. In concert with its international partners, Bangladesh, initiated several capacity building

initiatives to enhance its counter terrorism capabilities.

The proscription of Hizbut Tahrir Bangladesh (HT-B), the local chapter of the pan-Islamic movement, was an important development in 2010. The proscription came at the wake of various nefarious activities undertaken by HT-B. While proscription has made it difficult for the group to operate with impunity like in the past, their activities continue on the internet. This shows that while a major challenge exists from terrorist groups such as JMB, it is important not to lose sight of the activities of extremist groups such as HT-B, as they also possess the capacity to endanger security and stability of the country.

Thus in 2010, the government was able to contain the terrorist and extremist threat to Bangladesh through various efforts. However, it is also important to note that the absence of a terrorist attack is not the absence of the terrorist threat. There is therefore a need to continue to remain proactive in countering the threat. While kinetic counter terrorism efforts at multiple levels must be continued with full vigor, it is imperative to undertake measures to co-opt the community, especially the youth to reduce the appeal of extremist ideologies. The terrorist threat to Bangladesh is also dependent on the overall security and stability of the South Asian region and the developments in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region may have an imprint. A well-calibrated, multi pronged strategy is essential in countering the threat of terrorism and violent extremism in the context of Bangladesh.

India

With two major attacks on urban centers, a strengthening of the Maoist insurgency, and widespread political unrest in the Kashmir valley, security was at the forefront of several political discussions, policies, and strategies in India for 2010. There were approximately 1866 casualties of terrorist/insurgent violence in 2010 out of which 746 were civilians, 360 security personnel, and 760 militants.

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On 13 February 2010, a bomb exploded at the German bakery, a popular café in Pune city. Nineteen people were killed and 60 others were wounded in what was the first major attack on an urban center after the terrorist attack on Mumbai in November 2008. The Indian Mujahideen, which has claimed responsibility for several attacks in 2007-08, is believed to have been responsible for this attack. The attack came a few days before the scheduled Indo-Pakistan peace talks on 25 February 2010. The talks proceeded in spite of the attack. The Maharashtra Anti-Terror Squad (ATS) and the National Investigation Agency (NIA) have been investigating the attack and have made a few arrests.

In April 2009, the trial of the lone surviving gunman of the 2008 Mumbai Attacks, Mohammad Ajmal Amir Kasab began at the Mumbai High Court. The trial concluded on 31 March 2010 and on 3 May, 2010, Kasab was pronounced guilty of murder, conspiracy, and of waging war against India. On 6 May, 2010, Kasab was sentenced to death by hanging. The death penalty however needs to be confirmed by the High Court for which proceedings are in progress. Even as Pakistan has filed a charge sheet against militants of Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT), there is a growing resentment in New Delhi vis-à-vis Islamabad's insufficient action to bring the Pakistan-based perpetrators of the Mumbai attacks to justice.

On 19 September 2010, a mere fortnight before the XIX Commonwealth Games, two motorcycle-borne gunmen from the outfit Indian Mujahideen, opened fire at a tourist bus near Gate 3 of the Jama Mosque in old Delhi, injuring two Taiwanese tourists. The incident provoked fears about the security during the Games. Security and intelligence measures were strengthened after this incident. CCTV cameras were installed at all venues and over 100,000 security personnel, including those from the Delhi police and commandos from the elite National Security Guards (NSG) were deployed during the event. Army personnel were placed on standby during the Games, and Air force and helicopters as well as Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN)



File photograph of the attack at the German Bakery in Pune on 13 February 2010. Photo Credit: The Indian Express
http://static.indianexpress.com/m-images/Wed%20Sep%2008%202010,%2013:36%20hrs/M_Id_171539_Pune_blast.jpg

teams of the Army were deployed. During the Games, intelligence reports revealed that militants from the Lashkar-e-Toiba were planning an attack in New Delhi on 12 and 13 October, 2010. Additional security personnel were deployed, hotel-security was tightened and heavy security checks were placed at all entrances to the Games' venues. The Games proceeded without any security breaches and incidents.

Later in the year, on 7 December 2010, the Indian Mujahideen attacked the Hindu holy city of Varanasi, triggering a bomb blast at one of the main *Ghats* or the river banks where religious rites are performed. The blast took place during evening prayer, when the *Ghats* are crowded with devotees and foreign tourists. A baby girl died in the attack and more than 38 people were injured. The attack came a day after the anniversary of the demolition of the Babri Mosque on 6 December 1992 by Hindu fundamentalists. The Uttar Pradesh Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) are currently investigating the attack.

Insurgency and Political Unrest in the Kashmir Valley

Since 2005-06, the insurgency in the Kashmir Valley has been on the decline. 2010 witnessed the

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same trend, with a total of 371 casualties, including 266 militants neutralized in encounters across the valley. On 6 January 2010, Srinagar witnessed a *fidayeen* attack, reminiscent of the November 2008 Mumbai attacks. Two militants, who were aiming to attack a Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) picket in the Lal Chowk area of downtown Srinagar, ran into the Hotel Punjab, and begun firing and throwing grenades at the police and paramilitary forces outside the hotel. The siege, which lasted for 22 hours, claimed the life of one policeman and wounded 40 others. After the attack, border security was stepped up to deter infiltration attempts. Infiltration into the valley remained in-check throughout 2010.

While, insurgent attacks in Kashmir have been in decline in recent years, the valley has been gripped with political unrest, political mobilization, protests, and protest-linked violence since May 2010. Resentment has built up in the valley because of cases of disappearances, custodial deaths and allegations of torture, extrajudicial killings, and sexual harassment. In May 2010, death of a teenage boy, Tufail Matoo, during protests against a staged encounter in Kupwara district in April 2010, led to widespread political mobilization. Since June 2010, curfew has been clamped in Kashmir on

most days, with large groups of protestors taking to the streets, pelting stones at the police and army, and burning and attacking government buildings. The campaign is called for and supported by separatist leaders Syed Ali Shah Geelani and Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, who demand the withdrawal of the military from the state. Since June 2010, more than 104 protestors have been killed in this unrest, leading to allegations of the excessive use of force by the security forces which had further enhanced the sense of alienation of the people of Kashmir.

In September 2010, a 36-member delegation appointed by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh announced several measures to defuse the tension in the valley. The measures included the release of all the students arrested during the protests, reopening of schools, discussions on reducing the number of security forces in Kashmir and appointment of a group to begin sustained dialogue with the Kashmiris. In addition financial compensation of US\$11,000 to the families of each of those killed was announced.

Prime Minister Singh has asserted that dialogue was the only way towards peace in Kashmir. However, it is to be noted that dialogue without concrete measures on the ground will provide a lasting solution to the tensions in the valley.

The Maoist Insurgency

In 2009, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh termed the Maoist (or Naxal) insurgency as “the biggest security threat to India.” The year 2010 witnessed the further spread of the insurgency, which now affects 223 districts across 20 states, out of a total of 626 districts and 28 states across India. The insurgency claimed 1152 lives in 2010 with the Maoists launching attacks against security forces, public and private infrastructure, as well as civilians. While Maoist strongholds, namely, the states of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, West Bengal, and Orissa witnessed most of the attacks, violence also escalated in Bihar during the six phase legislative assembly elections held across the state from 21 October to 20 November, 2010.



11 December 2010 file photograph of women protesters in Srinagar, Kashmir. Photo Credit: The Hindu

http://static.indianexpress.com/m-images/Wed%20Sep%2008%202010,%2013:36%20hrs/M_Id_171539_Pune_blast.jpg

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On 15 February 2010, around 100 insurgents ambushed Indian security forces in Silda (approximately 30 km from Midnapore) in West Bengal, killing 24 paramilitary personnel. Following the Silda attack, in late March 2010, the government launched Operation Green Hunt. On 6 April, 2010, immediately after, the rebels, in their biggest attack to-date, ambushed a CRPF unit in Dantewada, Chhattisgarh, and killed 76 paramilitary personnel and injured several others. On 17 May 2010, Maoists triggered an improvised explosive device (IED), targeting a private bus traveling from Sukma to Dantewada, Chhattisgarh. The blast occurred at an area that had been demined four days before the attack and claimed the lives of 31 people, including 15 civilians and 15 Special Police Officers (SPOs). On 28 May 2010, a sabotage of railways tracks by Maoist rebels led to the derailment of the Kolkata-Mumbai Gyaneshwari Express and its subsequent collision with an oncoming goods train. 141 civilians were killed and over 200 were injured.

The May 2010 attack on a private bus and the sabotage of railways tracks are significant not only because they targeted and claimed civilian lives, but also because they demonstrated the sophistication of the information and structural networks of Maoists in their strongholds. At the same time, the aforementioned attacks on paramilitary personnel in Silda and Dantewada highlighted the limitations of the government's counter-Maoist operations, inadequate training, resources, weapons, arms, and ammunition, as well as intelligence gathering, sharing, and communication among those involved in these operations. Poor exchanges and cooperation between the intelligence, state police, and the paramilitary, as well as tactical errors arising from an inaccurate understanding of the adversary were highlighted during the April 2010 Maoist ambush on the CRPF. Moreover, attempts to address root causes of the insurgency by socio-economic and development projects were largely met with failure due to mal-governance and corruption.

In addition to these major attacks, the Maoists

also enforced several shutdowns (*bandhs*) in their stronghold states. During and prior to these shutdowns, Maoist violence rose significantly with attacks on police stations, railway tracks, telecommunication infrastructure, businesses, and even schools and hospitals. A number of cities within the "envisioned" Red Corridor (such as Raipur, Ranchi, Dhanbad etc.) were directly affected by these shutdowns and the violence which followed. It was also established that Maoist networks and support structures have developed a presence in other urban centers (including New Delhi, Mumbai) in 2010. This highlights the exponential spread of the insurgency across India, and reinforces the urgent need to develop an appropriate and holistic counter-strategy.

Insurgency in Northeast India

Insurgency in India's northeast has been on a significant decline in the last few years, and the trend continued in 2010. With a total of 318 casualties, Assam and Manipur remained the centers of violence, while outfits in Tripura, Nagaland, and Mizoram remained largely inactive.

In December 2009, the arrest and subsequent deportation of United Liberation Front of Asom's (ULFA) leaders Arabinda Rajkhowa and Anup Chetia significantly eroded the group's capability. However, ULFA's Commander-in-Chief, Paresh Baruah, still remains at large and throughout 2010, efforts to bring the group to the negotiating table were largely unsuccessful.

Following the signing of three Indo-Bangladesh accords addressing security issues and counter-terrorism cooperation, Dhaka intensified its operations against insurgent outfits from India's northeast that had been using Bangladesh as an organizational, financial, and operational base for decades. Dhaka disbanded several of these structures and hideouts and arrested several militants from insurgent outfits hailing from Assam and Tripura. This included the arrest of National Democratic Front of Bodoland's (NDFB) chairman Ranjan Daimary in May 2010, which was a significant blow to the outfit's capabilities.

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While Dhaka's crackdown as well as the administration of several surrender and rehabilitation schemes in India's northeast contributed to the decline of insurgency in the region in 2010, two issues need to be urgently addressed. After crackdown by Dhaka, many northeastern groups are now beginning to establish structures, training camps, and hideouts in Myanmar. As India shares a long and often porous border with Myanmar, cooperation between Yangon and New Delhi is an imperative to prevent the creation of this alternate insurgent sanctuary in India's northeast. While, counter-terrorism cooperation was discussed during Myanmar's junta chief General Than Shwe's visit to New Delhi in July 2010, concrete measures remain to be initiated. Additionally, while violence in India's northeast has definitely decreased, issues of socio-economic and institutional underdevelopment in the region remain to be adequately addressed.

In summary, India currently faces a multifaceted threat from terrorism and insurgency. New Delhi needs to strengthen its domestic security apparatus and intelligence capabilities. To this end, the Indian Home Minister P. Chidambaram has already announced the establishment of the National Counter Terrorism Centre in 2011. He also set a deadline for the completion of NATGRID, a programme that will integrate a large number of databases, collating data and providing it to security agencies by 2011.

Additionally, New Delhi needs to engage its neighbors, especially, Islamabad, Dhaka, and Yangon to prevent militant outfits from using their territories to launch attacks against India. At the same time, initiatives to address the root causes of insurgency and terrorism need to be taken. Effective governance, infrastructural development, and more attention to measures that induce social and religious cohesion are urgently required on a nationwide scale to arrest alienation and formation of grievances which are often the catalysts for socio-political unrest leading to violence in India.

Pakistan

Pakistan remains in the eye of the storm, with the country facing a multitude of challenges involving political instability, economic downturn and pervasive insecurity, which is aggravated due to instability in neighboring Afghanistan. While the Taliban and its associated militant outfits continue to conduct terrorist attacks in Pakistan, there was an overall decrease in violence in 2010 as compared to 2009. A total of 2,240 terrorist attacks were recorded in 2010 compared to 2,586 attacks in the previous year. There was a 35 percent decrease in suicide attacks in 2010 with 52 recorded suicide attacks compared to 80 in 2009. However, suicide attacks spread into newer areas with the Sindh province witnessing five deadly attacks for the first time in its history. There was also an increase in the number of suicide attacks in the Punjab Province, especially in its capital city, Lahore.

The decrease in terrorist attacks could be attributed to the ongoing military operations conducted by Pakistani security forces. These operations, which have been in place since 2008, are now being carried out in six of the seven Agencies of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Province (KP). These operations are at varying stages; some involve full-scale onslaughts to dismantle Taliban strongholds, while others are in the initial phase and are confined only to air-raids against militant bases. Similarly, other operations, such as those in Malakand and South Waziristan Agency (SWA), are presently focused on stabilization and search-and-destroy missions only.

Outcome of Pakistan's Military Operations

The Pakistani security forces were able to achieve quick successes in dislodging the Taliban from their strongholds in the entire FATA region and northern parts of KP during the first phase. However, the fighting also displaced around one million people from the FATA region, who continue to live as internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the adjoining KP.

A sustained pressure by the Pakistani security forces, coupled with a declining popularity of the Paki-

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stani Taliban among the population saw the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) – a conglomerate of over two dozen Taliban groups operating across FATA and KP – gradually losing its momentum and organizational cohesiveness. Pakistan's military operation "Rah-e-Rast" (Urdu for The Right Path) conducted in the Malakand Division in May 2009 witnessed the capture or killing of two-thirds of the leadership of the TTP-Malakand Chapter, including its deputy head, Shah Dauran, and military head, Commander Ibne Amin. The Swat Taliban seems to be in complete disarray and faced with extreme difficulties in reorganizing and regrouping.

Ever since the death of Baitullah Mahsud, the founder of the TTP in August 2009, the alliance among various constituents of the group has already been under pressure. This is due to serious differences between the central leadership of the TTP over issues, such as leadership positions and control over financing of the group. Additionally, ideological and operational differences have surfaced, resulting in infighting between its various components, such as in Kurram, Orakzai, Darra Adamkhel, Khyber and Bajaur Agencies. The infighting significantly weakened the TTP at both the organizational and operational level.



File photo of an unmanned aerial vehicle or "drone"

Photo Credit: US Air Forces

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Twuav_13_02.jpeg

The displacement of civilians from FATA, uprooting of terrorist infrastructure, including training camps, and targeting of financial networks of the Pakistani Taliban by law enforcement actions throughout Pakistan has severely affected the operational capability of the Taliban outfits. By losing contact with local population in FATA, the Taliban, have been denied the opportunity to induct new recruits and undertake terrorist training. Their dwindling finances also have a demoralizing impact on the rank and file members of the Taliban.

Apart from Pakistan's military operations, a campaign of drone strikes by the United States (US) has resulted in the killing of top and middle tier leaders of both local and foreign militants belonging to the Al Qaeda, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), and the Islamic Jihad Union. The US conducted a total of 118 drone strikes in Pakistan's FATA region in 2010 as compared to 53 drone strikes in 2009. It is believed that there will be a further intensification of drone attacks in order to eliminate terrorist elements in the Afghanistan-Pakistan (Af-Pak) border region. At present, 96 percent of the drone strikes have focused on the twin Agencies of Waziristan. It is projected that other areas will also be targeted in the coming months as evident from the three drone strikes in the Khyber Agency in December 2010.

New Trends and Tactics

The Taliban and its associated outfits seem to be focused more on the use of remotely detonated roadside improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Similarly, there has been an increase in targeted killings of senior government officials and political activists, especially those belonging to secular nationalist political parties, like the Awami National Party (ANP) and Pakistan People Party (PPP). There is also a likelihood of deployment of more female suicide bombers by the Taliban to avoid detection by the security forces. The first such attack by a female took place on a distribution camp of the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) in Bajaur in December 2010, which killed around 50 people.

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Similarly, terrorist outfits, such as Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP), Jamiatul Furqan and others, which are operating in Pakistan Administered Kashmir, Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan Provinces, and are linked to the TTP and Al Qaeda are increasing their activities in order to deflect government's pressure on the militant outfits based in FATA and KP. The increase of suicide bombings in Punjab in 2010, and the introduction of this deadly tactic in the Sindh Province was a step in this direction. Similarly, while Muslim Shia minority has been targeted in the past, a new trend has been attacks by the Taliban and its associated outfits belonging to the conservative Sunni Deobandi school on the shrines, religious personalities and congregations of Sufi Brailvi sect of Sunni Islam. The aim was to destroy the religious harmony and social fabric of the Pakistani society. Similarly, attacks on other religious communities, such as Qadianis/Ahmedias and Christians were also reported for the first time in 2010.

In Balochistan, there has been an intensification of attacks by Baloch militants. These attacks intensified amidst the slow progress of the "Aaghaz-e-Haqooq Balochistan", an economic package that the government announced in 2008 to address the Baloch people's grievances. There is a failure on the part of the federal government to engage the alienated Baloch leadership in a meaningful dialogue. Apart from attacks on security and law enforcement personnel, the militants have intensified targeted killing of non-Balochs as well as pro-government political activists in the province.

Challenges Ahead

Serious challenges remain for the Pakistani government which would prove decisive in the final outcome of the entire campaign against terrorism in the country. While the military operations in FATA has allowed the security forces to wrest control of the territory from the Taliban, the group's rank and file have evaded getting captured or killed, and have fled to other parts of FATA as well as to Afghanistan. This allows the Taliban



22 April 2010 file photo of the view at the Combat Outpost Spera in eastern Afghanistan which is only half a mile from the Pakistan border. Photo credit: US Army SFC Matthew Chlosta, ISAF PAO/ISAF Media <http://www.flickr.com/photos/isafmedia/4547517378/>

an opportunity to regroup and stage a comeback in the future. Similarly, the intervention of the Afghan Taliban from across the border to aid the Pakistani Taliban in their fight against the Pakistani security forces, especially in Bajaur and Mohmand Agencies of FATA, makes the security gains fragile.

Similarly, drone strikes by the US in North and South Waziristan Agencies, although useful in the short run in terms of killing the leadership of Al Qaeda and other militant groups, has the deleterious effect of antagonizing the locals, while also forcing the militants to move to other parts of FATA and Afghanistan. This compounds the task of containing the Taliban and foreign militants in a specific geographical area, such as the Waziristan region, and eliminating them.

Additionally, the rehabilitation of the IDPs, the reconstruction of the war-ravaged FATA and KP, the reestablishment of governing structures in these areas, and the development of local economy have encountered grave difficulties due to lack of resources. This is further compounded by the havoc caused by massive floods in Pakistan in the summer of 2010. The floods affected the fertile areas of KP, Punjab and Sindh Prov-

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inces, which are also the growth engines of the Pakistan's economy. The rehabilitation of flood victims and the reconstruction of the damaged areas, including the resuscitation of agriculture and communication infrastructure in the region, require the injection of massive resources which Pakistan is unable to arrange due to the worsening economic situation. This could also mean that plans to develop infrastructure and economy in FATA and KP would receive lesser attention than previously envisaged. The repatriation of IDPs and their resettlement also requires massive assistance, which is not forthcoming. Inability of the government to resettle the IDPs would not only be a grave humanitarian crisis, but would also affect its efforts at winning the "heart and minds" of the population in FATA, which is crucial for the success of Pakistan's operations against the Taliban.

The security situation in Pakistan is also inextricably linked to the situation in Afghanistan. The military operations in Afghanistan have implications on Pakistan's security since it would mean a continuation of war in the Af-Pak region, and pressure on Pakistan to "do more", while at the same time increasing the intensity and scope of drone strikes in the country.

There is also insistent pressure on Pakistan to dismantle alleged Taliban sanctuaries in Pakistan and conduct military operation in North Waziristan Agency (NWA) targeting the Haqqani Network. The network is headed by Maulana Jalaluddin Haqqani, a Soviet-era mujahideen commander who is presently fighting NATO forces in Afghanistan. While Pakistan agrees in principle to undertake such operations, it remains hesitant to open a new front until the ongoing operations in other parts of FATA are concluded. The Pakistani government is also apprehensive that opening of a new front in NWA would allow the myriad of Pakistani Taliban groups operating across FATA, who are currently divided on ideological and operational basis, to join ranks against the Pakistani security forces. This could complicate Pakistan's efforts to cleanse the territory of both local and foreign militants and stabilize areas in western areas of Pakistan.

Similarly, a steep decline in the popularity of the current Pakistan People Party (PPP)-led government in Pakistan due to bad governance is leading to political instability. Continuous political wrangling between coalition partners in the government, confrontation between the government and the opposition parties, as well as other state institutions, such as superior judiciary, could divert Pakistan's focus on the war against terrorist elements in the coming days.

The Way Forward

Pakistan requires a multi-prong strategy to overcome the Taliban menace and dismantle terrorist infrastructure in the country. This necessitates focused counter-terrorism efforts, while highlighting emphasis on provision of good governance in the conflict-affected areas. This would also require massive economic and technical inputs which is not possible without the support of the international community. Moreover, peace and security in Pakistan is inseparable from the stability in Afghanistan. A concerted effort based on improved coordination and synchronization of political, military and economic initiatives by the stakeholders remains the key to ensure durable peace in the region.

Sri Lanka

Even though the Sri Lankan government successfully defeated the Liberation Tigers of the Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in 2009, the country continued to face challenges in its effort towards the resettlement of internally displaced persons (IDPs), the rehabilitation of ex-combatants and a political solution to the Tamil conflict. While the government has focused on economic development of the LTTE-held areas, new organizations – the Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam (TGTE) and its affiliates – have emerged that continue to pursue the demand for an independent Tamil homeland in the North and East provinces of Sri Lanka.

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The Three R's: Reconciliation, Rehabilitation and Resettlement

When the conflict ended in May 2009, there were an estimated 285,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs), most hailing from Jaffna, to be resettled. By the end of December 2010, almost about 265,000 IDPs have gone back to their native places with only about 20,000 remain at the Menik Farm camp. Although, the resettlement rate has been remarkable, it has also been delayed by demining operations, especially in the district of Mullaitivu. Demining operations are being carried out with the involvement of the Sri Lankan army, various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international aid groups. So far almost about 300,000 mines have been recovered and deactivated. But much more remain to be done before the areas could be made ready for the civilian population to settle down.

There were approximately 11,000 LTTE cadres who were in rehabilitation centres across the country. In 2010, the Sri Lankan government released around 5,000 disabled, women, children and male cadres, after these persons went through the rehabilitation program. Apart from the rehabilitation program, the government also facilitated the mass marriages of 53 couples in June 2010. However, as much as these initiatives strive



2009 file photo of IDP camps in Vavuniya district, Sri Lanka.

Photo credit: Indi Samarajiva

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/indi/3587890713/>

towards full reconciliation, there are still some measures taken by the Sri Lankan government which are perceived to have the opposite effect.

First, the continuation of emergency regulations and the PTA (Prevention of Terrorism Act) which allows for the detention of individuals suspected of links to terrorism can be a contradiction to winning the "hearts and minds" of the Tamil population, especially the former LTTE cadres. The continuation of these heavy handed measures leads to the perception that the Sri Lankan government remains uncompromising and non-committal to a political solution to the Tamil issue. Although it may be argued that any complacency on the part of the Sri Lankan government in lowering their defences may, at the extreme, lead to the re-grouping of the LTTE, it is difficult to understand how such measures could contribute to reconciliation.

Second, the government is yet to initiate any concrete measures to introduce a federal structure in or grant autonomy to the North and East provinces. Instead, for all practical purposes, the 18th constitutional amendment sought to strengthen the political disposition of President Mahinda Rajapaksa. The amendments to the constitution were made by the ruling party which obtained a majority in the April 2010 Parliamentary elections. Prior to the Parliamentary elections, President Rajapaksa secured a second term at the presidential election in January 2010, defeating his main opponent former army commander General Sarath Fonseka. Shortly after the presidential election Sarath Fonseka was arrested and indicted with a myriad of charges including politicking while in uniform and harboring army deserters. In court-martial, he was found guilty of breaching arms procurement guidelines and was stripped of his rank, and the parliamentary seat he obtained in the April 2010 Parliamentary elections. He was sentenced to 30 months of imprisonment. Appeals against these rulings are pending adjudication.

Third, there is wide-spread concern about the efforts to discontinue the Sri Lankan national anthem in Tamil. Although the Sri Lankan government has con-

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firmed that it is not going ahead with the discontinuation, the fact that it was even debated in the Parliament is a serious setback for the reconciliation efforts, which has also put a dent on the credibility the government in the international fora.

The TGTE

International pressure on Sri Lanka has not ceased. In December 2010, the British government reiterated its call for an independent investigation into war crimes and humanitarian violations in Sri Lanka. Prior to this, the General Secretary of the United Nations (UN), Ban Ki-Moon organized an advisory panel to enquire about human rights violations in Sri Lanka and submit its report within four months. The panel began its work in September 2010 after much resistance from the Sri Lankan government. In response to the UN Panel, the Sri Lankan government formed its own reconciliation panel, called the LLRC (Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission). The LLRC's mandate is to report on the lessons learnt from February 2002 to May 2009 and propose recommendations to prevent a recurrence of the conflict. The commission's initial mandate was for six months beginning in May 2010, but has been extended to May 2011. While there have been high-profile civilian testimonies at the hearings, the proceedings of the hearing thus far have been largely considered a whitewash.

In the meantime, new groups and configurations have emerged, especially involving the Tamil Diaspora, aiming to champion the cause of the Tamils in Sri Lanka. At the forefront is the TGTE (Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam), which seem to be growing in strength and prominence in the international forum. What started out as merely a small group has developed into an organized body with an "elected Parliament" consisting of a Prime Minister and other ministerial posts, in addition to national branches in various countries. The "Prime Minister" of the TGTE is the one time head and LTTE legal advisor V. Rudrakumaran. The TGTE, much like the Sri Lankan government, also busied itself with elections throughout the 2010, with representative bod-

ies elected by the Tamil Diaspora in countries from Canada to Australia. In October 2010, the TGTE met in New York where it ratified its "constitution" and elected the prime minister and formed other ministerial positions. In addition to the TGTE, there is the Global Tamil Forum (GTF) which had its inaugural conference in London in February 2010, with the participation and attendance of UK Foreign Secretary David Miliband and Prime Minister Gordon Brown. Since then, the GTF has strengthened its propaganda against the Sri Lankan state and has received media coverage from Channel 4 in the UK and international media networks such as Al Jazeera.

Sustainable Peace, For Whom?

The threat of violence from the remnants of the LTTE, or groups such as the TGTE, GTF and its affiliate organizations, is very weak. Sri Lanka has not faced a terrorist attack since the LTTE was defeated in May 2009 and it is likely that the security conditions in the country will remain stable. The concerns are more focused on the country's political leadership – how it addresses the concerns of the Tamils and allegations of human rights violations. While the resettlement of the IDPs have progressed by leaps and bounds and must be commended along with the rehabilitation programs, the issues highlighted such as the continuation of the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) and emergency regulations preserve a sense of insecurity mainly amongst the Tamil population in Sri Lanka. Thoughtless comments and initiatives, such as the issue about the discontinuation of the Tamil version of the Sri Lankan national anthem, provide fodder for groups such as the TGTE and GTF. It also reflects badly on the reconciliatory efforts of the Sri Lankan government. It is extremely important that Sri Lankan government practices what it preaches.

Over all, the biggest threat to Sri Lanka would be the governments' policies and initiatives especially in enabling ethnic harmony and reconciliation. The government needs to ensure that its actions reflect neutrality irrespective of ethnicity, language and religion. Failure to do so had already created the conditions for the con-

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flict in the past.

In sum, despite the military victory over LTTE, peace and security eludes Sri Lanka at least in the immediate future. While the resettlement of the displaced civilians, the promotion of a tri-lingual nation and even the LLRC would be conducive to establishing lasting peace, there is a lot more that remains to be done. There is no doubt that the Sri Lankan government is keen towards achieving durable peace. What is needed at this stage is the political will and perseverance on the part of all stakeholders to ensure that the momentum towards lasting peace is sustained.

Contributors

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GLOBAL PATHFINDER II

The ICPVTR Terrorism Database – Global Pathfinder - is a one-stop repository for information on the current and emerging terrorist threat. The database focuses on terrorism and political violence in the Asia-Pacific region – comprising of Southeast Asia, North Asia, South Asia, Central Asia and Oceania.

Global Pathfinder is an integrated database containing comprehensive profiles of terrorist groups, key terrorist personalities, terrorist and counter-terrorist incidents as well as terrorist training camps . It also contains specific details and analyses of significant terrorist attacks in the form of terrorist attack profiles.

In addition to providing the latest information on terrorist attacks and pronouncements, Global Pathfinder also includes over a hundred terrorist training manuals, counter terrorism legislations and conventions, analytical papers on terrorist ideologies, commentaries on terrorist trends and patterns, transcripts of landmark cases, interviews with terrorists as well as photographs from different conflict zones across the world. Further, Global Pathfinder also has a huge collection of jihadi websites, the contents of which are routinely translated and analysed by our analysts. This analysis helps develop an understanding of the developments in the ideological spectrum and trajectory of the terrorist threat, in both in tactical as well as strategic space.

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Central and East Asia Country Assessments



Map of China with Xinjiang province marked in red. Image Credit: International Committee of the Fourth International www.wsws.org

China

Ethnic tensions and terrorism have been the focus of the Chinese government since the riots broke out in the country's Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (East Turkistan), specifically in the regional capital Urumqi on 5 July 2009. The group spearheading the fight for the Uighur cause today is the East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM), also known as Turkistan Islamic Party (TIP). The group has conducted a number of terrorist attacks in China since 2001, including two deadly attacks in Xinjiang during the Beijing Olympic Games in 2008.

There have been several major developments in respect of the group in 2010. In January and February 2010, the ETIM suffered a significant loss of its key cadres due to counterterrorism operations within and outside China. On 16 January 2010, fifteen ETIM militants were killed in a US air strike in Afghani-

stan's Balamirghab province. This was followed by the arrest of ten members of an ETIM cell in late January 2010 in China's southwestern province of Yunnan. On 15 February 2010, the head of ETIM, Abdul Haq al-Turkistani was killed in a US drone attack in Pakistan's North Waziristan. With these killings and arrests, the ETIM's operational capability was greatly diminished. There was only one major attack in Xinjiang in 2010; on 19 August, two Uighur men drove an electric tricycle into a group of policemen and local auxiliary civilians who were conducting foot patrols in the suburbs of Aksu city. The attackers threw an explosive device at the patrol and detonated another one onboard the vehicle. The attack killed eight people, including the two attackers, and injured fourteen others. Unlike in previous attacks, this incident was not extensively reported by the Chinese media, and authorities did not link it to the ETIM or any other Chinese militant group. What is notable about this attack is that it bore a striking resemblance to an attack in city of Kashgar on 4 August 2008 where two Uighur men drove a truck into a group of armed police officers and attacked them with explosives and knives, causing sixteen deaths and sixteen injuries. These attacks suggest a growing pattern of violence against police officers and paramilitary forces in Xinjiang.

The terrorist plot by ETIM cells in Dubai and Norway manifested an expansion of its networks outside its immediate area of operations. On 29 June 2010, the State Security Court of Dubai

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sentenced two Chinese Uighurs to ten years imprisonment for their involvement in a plot to bomb a shopping centre which sells Chinese-made products. This was the first identified plot against Chinese interests in the Middle East. On 8 July 2010, the Norwegian police announced the arrest of Mikael Davud, a 39-year-old Norwegian citizen of Chinese Uighur origin who led an Al Qaeda-linked terrorist cell and plotted to attack Chinese targets in the country. Davud was reportedly trained in a militant camp in Pakistan's tribal areas between 2008 and 2009 and is suspected of meeting the ETIM ex-leader, Abdul Haq, as well as Salah al-Somali, one of Al Qaeda's key leaders who were killed in December 2009. According to US intelligence services, the mastermind behind this plot is probably Al Qaeda's new head of external operations, Adnan Shukrijumah. The plot shed light on Al Qaeda's intention and ability to direct terrorist activities against Chinese interests, which have not been a major target for the group in the past. This also highlights the problem of ideological radicalization in certain Uighur migrant communities abroad, which could pose a more serious threat to China and its citizens and interests overseas.

The 2010 arrests and neutralization of ETIM operatives have shown that the group has a growing multiethnic composition. This is also consistent with the organizational trends noted in other terrorist groups such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and Islamic Jihad Union (IJU). In the case of the Oslo cell, Davud was arrested along with two cell members of Uzbek and Iraqi-Kurdish origins. The most recent video released by the ETIM showcased two of its operatives, one Turkish and one Kurdish, who were among the fifteen militants killed by the US drone attack in Afghanistan on 16 January 2010. It can be seen that the ETIM's close connection with Al Qaeda and its affiliates, especially the IMU, has resulted in the increased involvement of Islamist militants from Central Asia, South Asia, Middle East and even Europe in its armed struggle. The multinational character of the ETIM raised the specter of the threat faced by China from international terrorism.

Terrorism cannot survive without supporters

and sympathizers. The emergence of Uighur home-grown cells suggests that radicalization and the international terror networks affiliated with Al Qaeda are on the rise. This trend should be seen as a dangerous sign for China, as well as Western countries. The deadly ethnic clash in 2009 has demonstrated that a small number of radicals have the capability to trigger instability on a large scale. It is not unlikely that the Uighur extremists would seek to manipulate the existing mistrust and grievances between the Uighur Muslims and Han-Chinese and recruit more supporters to wage "jihad" against China.

Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan has maintained a high alert against the influx of radical and pseudo-religious individuals into its territory. New checkpoints were established and existing ones were strengthened this year along the country's borders with Russia, Kyrgyzstan, and China. Kazakh security forces effectively mobilized their resources to thwart the infiltration of bandits and criminals in the months following the mass violence in neighboring Kyrgyzstan in June 2010. The country is also retooling its security mechanisms as it held the 2010 chairmanship for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

As part of its campaign against religious fundamentalism, several illegal mosques were banned in the first few months of 2010. In November 2010, the arrest and prosecution of six individuals belonging to an Islamist cell ensured that their plan to carry out bombings against Kazakh security agencies as well as key symbolic targets in Astana was disrupted. It should be noted that the jihadist cell was founded by a Kazakh national who was indoctrinated in recent years in Tatarstan, Russia by Islamists linked to violent separatist movements in the North Caucasus.

Despite these measures, Kazakhstan needs to be on its guard to prevent the infiltration of extremist elements from China's Xinjiang-Uyghur Autonomous

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Region, Russia's North Caucasus and Turkic-speaking regions, and other Central Asian countries. The country should also guard against arms and drugs-trafficking, especially coming from Afghanistan.

Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan is considered to be the most vulnerable country in the region. The country has undergone a turbulent regime change in April 2010 which triggered instability and culminated in mass violence in the country's southern provinces. The violence, which occurred in June 2010, left over 300 people dead and thousands homeless. Hundreds of people affected by the violence left and took refuge in Russian cities. The tragic turnout in multiethnic Kyrgyzstan could very well be the result of the policies of its ex-President Kurmanbek Bakiyev. It was alleged that the ex-President benefited from the infiltration of local criminal elements in country's political structures.

In July 2010, dozens of Christian tombs in the south of the country were destroyed by Islamist bandits and a synagogue in Bishkek was bombed in September 2010. Kyrgyzstan's security forces have arrested dozens of high-level Hizb ut-Tahrir activists in north-eastern regions, including Bishkek city, apart from the southern provinces. In November 2010, Kyrgyz security forces discovered a cell of Islamic militants who were attempting to conduct bombings across the country. This demonstrated the capability of the security forces to deal with the estimated 800 Hizb ut-Tahrir members active in the country, although more prudent political measures would also be helpful and are needed in this direction.

Tajikistan

Between August and October 2010, the Tajikistan military and the Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan were engaged in a fierce battle in the Rasht Valley. The hostilities were the culmination of the years of friction

between the two sides. The decision of the government to send poorly-trained troops to this region in the first few days of the operations resulted in the deaths of dozens of young soldiers.

The Tajikistan government has arrested and put to trial members of the Jamaat Tabligh, Hizb ut-Tahrir and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), as well as adherents of Salafist jihadism. In January 2010, five members of the Salafi movement were tried for their involvement in unauthorized gatherings while 146 others were put under regular police watch. In March 2010, 56 members of the Jamaat Tabligh were sentenced and fined on similar charges. Several Hizb ut-Tahrir members were also prosecuted throughout the year. Tajik security agencies are in collaboration with their Russian counterparts to facilitate the extradition of dozens of IMU members based in Russia. The Tajikistan government has expressed its concerns on radicalisation, especially among the youth. In this regard, the government arranged for the return of about 400 young Tajik nationals back from semi-official religious institutions in Saudi Arabia, Iran, Pakistan and other Middle Eastern countries.

Turkmenistan

Turkmenistan is perceived to be the most politically neutral country in the region. It has raised its concerns against the threat of terrorism and narcotics from nearby Afghanistan. Turkmenistan initiated and hosted the Regional Disarmament Conference in June 2010 and also offered to host the inter-Afghan Peace Dialogue.

The issue of drugs trafficking is considered to be the most important security issue for Turkmenistan; several military drills were conducted throughout the year to address this issue. Police and national security forces arrested and disarmed drug-trafficking groups operating in Balkan and Lebap provinces in August 2010.

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Uzbekistan

The imminent threat to the internal stability of Uzbekistan in 2010 came from jihad-oriented Islamic fundamentalism. The Hizb ut-Tahrir attempted to recruit more individuals in Tashkent and other parts of the region, mainly through women activists. In May 2010 security forces detained some individuals who were involved in the assassination of high-ranking Islamic clerics and counterterrorism police in 2009. In August 2010, eleven members of a home-grown Islamist cell based in Tashkent were charged in court and tried for organizing illegal gatherings on a regular basis. In October 2010 authorities imprisoned 14 members of a new jihadist cell who were operating in the Surkhondaryo region in south Uzbekistan. In November 2010, a sleeper cell of a group of Islamic fundamentalists called "Shohidiylar" was discovered by the authorities - nineteen members of the group which were operating clandestinely in the Andizhan province were imprisoned. The discovery of "sleeper" cells and the significant number of arrests of individuals exposed to radical ideas highlights the need on the part of the government to initiate appropriate countermeasures.

The death of the founding leaders of the Islamic Jihad Union and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan in 2009 meant that the groups are in the midst of a recovery period. At the same time, they are making attempts to recruit amongst Diaspora communities in Russia and other countries in the Eurasian region. The threat posed by this can be prevented with improved bilateral or multi-lateral security cooperation between the Central Asian states. The current situation has made it imperative that governments should exercise proactive political tools in implementing the rehabilitation of the religiously-radical individuals and "sleeper cells." The states should also give priority to measures that would strengthen national identities across the region.

Terrorism Analyst Study Awards

A number of Terrorism Analyst Study Awards will be offered from AY2011/12. Students enrolled in any of the MSc programmes are eligible to apply, subject to selection by the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS). Terrorism Analysts will conduct research at ICPVTR while studying part-time for their degree over two Academic Years. Singaporeans are strongly encouraged to apply.

Counter-Terrorism Leadership Program

ICPVTR is offering the Counter Terrorism Leadership Programme (CTLP) open for those from the counter terrorism services of government ministries and agencies. During their three month attachment the participants are required to attend all classes being offered during a given trimester on the Counterterrorism Certificate Track (CTS) in addition to any agreed upon assignments while attached to ICPVTR.

For more information on these two programs please contact Kelvinder Singh at iskelvinder@ntu.edu.sg

Contributors

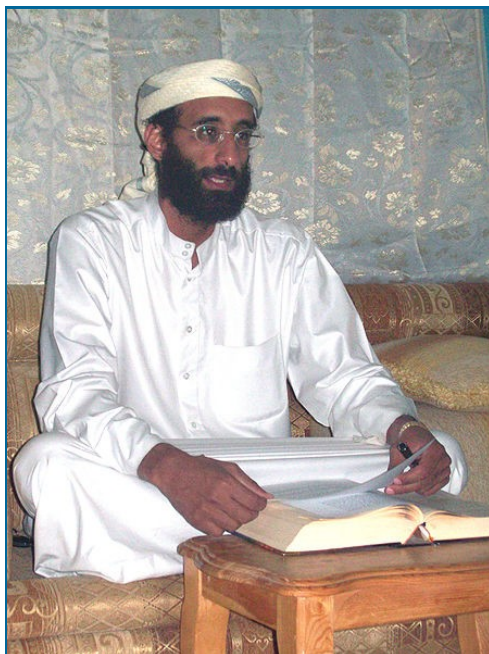
China Country Assessment

Wang Peng Xin

Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan Country Assessments

Sherali Yadgarov

Middle East and North Africa Country Assessments



File photo of Anwar al-Awlaki, believed to be the regional commander of the AQAP in Yemen.

Photo credit: Wikipedia Commons

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Anwar_al-Awlaki_sitting_on_couch_lightened.jpg

Yemen

The Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) continued to directly target the United States (US) as it had done with the Christmas Day plot in 2009. Two suspicious packages were intercepted on 29 October 2010, which consisted of ink toner cartridges packed with the chemical explosive PETN (Pentaerythritol Tetranitrate) and placed inside computer printers. The packages were sent from the UPS and FedEx offices in Sanaa, but were intercepted in Dubai and in England, after Saudi intelligence officials provided the tracking numbers for the packages to the United States government. Reports suggested

that American-born cleric Anwar al-Awlaki may have played a significant role in the attempted attack. The parcel bomb plot highlighted security gaps in cargo shipment screening procedures and also reinforces US concerns that AQAP is a growing threat.

Since the failed 2009 Christmas Day plot, US and Yemeni authorities have stepped up efforts to combat Al Qaeda organization in Yemen. In 2010, the US committed around \$150 million to build Yemeni counterterrorism capacity, more than doubling the previous year's total. Despite an increased airstrike and raid campaign in 2010, there are no signs of the group becoming weaker. Though its primary sights are set in the Arabian Peninsula; that is to remove the "apostate regime" in Saudi Arabia and Yemen and create an Islamic caliphate, it has shown that it has global ambitions in waging jihad against the US and the West. Since the unification of disparate Saudi and Yemeni terrorist cells under the banner of AQAP in January 2009, the group seems to have taken advantage of the deteriorating security situation in Yemen and carved out a safe haven for its operations. Many observers have pointed out that AQAP appears to have built a relationship with the tribes in the Marib region and operates in relative comfort in Yemen.

The list of major operations conducted by AQAP in 2010 suggests that AQAP is growing in strength since its inception. In April 2010, there was an attempted suicide bomb attack on the convoy of British envoy Tim Torlot in

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Sana'a. In June 2010, AQAP gunmen attacked the Yemen's intelligence headquarters in Aden, killing 10 security officers and freeing several detainees in the complex. In July 2010, the AQAP again targeted the intelligence apparatus of the Yemeni government, this time in the Shabwa province, resulting in 11 security officers killed.

It has become evident that the United States (US) cannot rely on purely counterterrorism measures alone to combat AQAP. The US must understand that Yemen does not suffer primarily from a terrorism problem but also the repercussions of a dysfunctional state. Further instability is expected if Yemen's underlying problem is not addressed; such as corruption, poverty, deep popular dissatisfaction, booming population, diminishing water and oil reserves. In addition to Al Qaeda, the Yemeni government also faces two different violent movements; the Shia rebels known as the Al Houthis and the Southern separatist movement. The onus therefore is on the US, the Yemeni government, and the international community to address the larger set of problems in Yemen so as to effectively counteract AQAP.

Israel/Palestine

In 2010, the incident borne out of the Israel-Palestine conflict that gained the most international attention took place in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). On 19 January 2010, a group of at least 11 professional assassins killed Mahmud al-Mabhuh, a senior Hamas military commander, at his hotel room in Dubai. The assassins fled the country afterwards on fraudulent European passports. Mahmud al-Mabhuh was alleged to have had played a role in the kidnapping and deaths of two Israeli soldiers in 1989, and was involved in supplying Iranian weapons to Hamas. While Israeli officials would not confirm or deny the accusations, it is widely believed that the Mossad was behind the operation.

In May 2010, Israeli commandos raided a freighter that was part of a flotilla seeking to breach Is-

rael's blockage of Gaza. The six ships of the "Gaza Freedom Flotilla" were carrying humanitarian aid. The activists attempted to defy a blockade imposed by Israel after Hamas took power in Gaza in 2007. During the raid, nine of the activists on board were killed. Their deaths led to widespread protests and calls for an end to the blockade. Israel defended its blockade as crucial to preventing missiles and weapons from flowing into Gaza. But analysts pointed out that the closure of legitimate commerce has been counterproductive as Hamas was able to tighten its authority. The blockade has allowed Hamas to take control of the underground economy by regulating and taxing its extensive smuggling tunnel system from Egypt. In the process, the traditional and largely pro-Western business community was sidelined. The embargo, which was imposed in 2007 in an attempt to weaken Hamas and drive it from power, was an obvious failure of policy as Hamas still has control over Gaza. Amidst increasing international criticism, Israel announced its decision to relax its policy of blockade. In June 2010, it was announced that Israel would ease up on the entry of building supplies and other goods into Gaza by land while maintaining its naval blockade.

United States President Barack Obama sought to revive Israeli-Palestinian peace talks in 2010. Both the US and Israel proceeded with peace talks with the Fatah-dominated West Bank government of Mahmud 'Abbas. Hamas was sidelined in the talks as both the US and Israel regard it as a terrorist group. There was a hopeful start to the peace talks which took place in early September 2010 but was stalled later that same month when an Israeli partial moratorium on settlement construction in the West Bank expired. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu refused to extend the freeze, and the Palestinian leadership refused to continue negotiations until Israel does so.

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Iraq

The level of violence in Iraq followed the trend of 2009 and has steadily declined throughout 2010. The *Iraq Body Count* online database revealed that in 2010 there was an overall 8 percent decrease in deaths from suicide attacks and a 2 percent decrease in deaths caused by gunfire. These took place amidst the preparations for the withdrawal of United States military troops in the country in August 2010.

Majority of the violence was a result of the deadlock created by an election held in March 2010 which failed to return a clear winner. Sunni extremist groups, some affiliated with Al Qaeda, was the primary faction that took advantage of the political vacuum. Modes of intimidation and private attacks were also carried out by Sadrist extremists - followers of the prominent anti-US Shia cleric Muqtada al-Sadr (MaS). The attacks escalated when MaS had a dispute with Nuri al-Maliki over the latter's position as prime minister. During the political deadlock, there was a noted shift in the attack targets by Sunni groups. At the beginning of the year, the primary target was the Sahawat al-Iraq (Iraq Awakening/Sons of Iraq), the anti-Al Qaeda faction, but they have shifted to carrying out attacks on political figures, community leaders, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and other advocates of the ruling regime.

A major event took place in July 2010 when the United States Forces (USF) transferred the control of internment facilities, which houses captured terrorists, to the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF). However, the local security forces failed to observe the strict measures that were put in place by the USF. The security lapses resulted in the escape of four Al Qaeda militants from the internment facility in Camp Cropper in Baghdad. There were allegations that the terrorists escaped with the help of security guards. It should also be noted that the escape occurred only a week after the ISF took control of the internment camps. Even though the USF reassumed jurisdiction over the Cropper internment facility there were still doubts in the capability of the Iraqi government



25 October 2010 photo of Iraqi Army soldiers during a live fire exercise in Tealeaf Island, Basra. Photo Credit: DVIDSHUB
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/dvids/5186864671/in/set-72157606205308510/>

to assume full control. This was further dampened when four more Al Qaeda inmates escaped from Camp Cropper on 8 September 2010 under joint US and Iraqi control.

2010 ended with the Iraqi public still skeptical of the government's ability to fulfill its promises of improved essential services and improvements in security and stability. It is very likely that for 2011, insurgent groups will target any effort that the government puts forth to improve Iraq's infrastructure and governance. While many Iraqis have welcomed the US ending of combat operations and the withdrawal of its troops, they too believe it is happening too soon and that the country is not ready to manage its own security. This view was also echoed when the Iraqi freely elected government came together on 21 December 2010. The government clearly understood that bringing together the main ethnic and religious groups would not be easy. The fragile balance the government has achieved thus far could make it difficult to rebuild a nation devastated by war as American troops prepare for their final withdrawal. In fact, one of the government's first priorities will be to decide whether to ask the Obama administration to keep thousands of

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Middle East and North Africa Country Assessments

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US soldiers in Iraq after their scheduled departure in December 2011.

But ever since the announcement of Nouri al-Maliki's as the Prime Minister, attacks have escalated, especially when Maliki began to select members of his cabinet. Overall, stabilizing Iraq and achieving security will remain a challenge. The government's efforts to mitigate violence would depend on its political will and the continued dedicated and attentive efforts of the Iraq Security Forces.

Somalia

In the early part of 2010, Al-Shabaab, one of Africa's most fearsome militant Islamist groups succeeded in controlling much of southern Somalia. It has waged an insurgency against Somalia's transitional government and its Ethiopian supporters since 2006. It was originally the militant wing of the Islamic Courts Union, the group that controlled Somalia prior to the country's invasion by Ethiopian forces. Al-Shabaab publicly aligned itself with both Yemeni Islamist rebels and Al Qaeda as it embarked on an aggressive fight to capture Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia. In May 2010, the threats from both Al-Shabaab and pirate groups in Somalia prompted the United Nation Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, to call for international support to help stabilize the nation. There was a serious lack of international interest and enthusiasm for Somalia, triggered mainly by the fact that nothing has worked for its government these past few years. This notion resulted in the loss of support that President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmad brought with him when he took office in early 2009. The dramatic disregard for Somalia's well-being suggests that al-Shabaab have the upper-hand in strategy and the capability to maneuver a capture of Mogadishu.

The "Battle of Mogadishu" erupted on 23 August 2010 after al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the twin suicide blasts in Kampala, Uganda in July 2010. The battle was a result of the group's second declaration of

war against the Somali government and the African Union Mission for Somalia (AMISOM) in a period of two months.

There was very little headway for stability in Somalia in 2010. The number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) has increased due to the unsystematic defense against the rebellion and the government is fast losing external support. There were reports which showed a slight increase in civilian deaths in Mogadishu. Hospitals estimated that approximately 2,200 civilians died and 5,800 were wounded in 2010 or roughly 100-150 more than those killed in 2009. The majority of those who were wounded are women and children. The peace keepers are walking a fine line to ensure that they are targeting militants who are an acknowledged threat and not civilians in populated areas. It is apparent that the AMISOM still lacks the proper and necessary training to combat al-Shabaab extremists. In view of the current situation and the strong possibility for it to continue into 2011 the security situation in Somalia looks bleak.

Contributors

Yemen and Israel/Palestine Country Assessments

Aaron Ng

Iraq and Somalia Country Assessments

Ginga Eve Elbel

Letter from the Editors

With this issue the Counter-Terrorist Trends and Analysis (CTTA), produced by the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research completes 2 years of publication. The CTTA which provides insights on trends and issues that are emerging in specific countries and in particular areas of terrorism research has so far leveraged on the research potential of the ICPVTR staff. Over the years, the readership of CTTA has grown and has now reached almost 11000 with request for subscriptions pouring in from all over the world.

We wish to thank all our readers and subscribers as well as our analysts who helped CTTA to mature into a piece of critical study in terrorism and counterterrorism research.

We now take this opportunity to solicit contributions from researchers and practitioners in the field of terrorism research which we would like to consider for publication in CTTA. Topical areas of interest are terrorism and political violence, terrorism and organized crime, homeland security, religion and violence, internal conflicts and terrorism and all other areas of security, broadly defined. Article length could be anywhere between 800-1500 words and must be submitted before the 15th of every month, for editing purposes and for inclusion in the next month's edition. Please submit the electronic copy of the article (MS Word) to Miss Diane Russel Ong Junio at the following email address: isdiane@ntu.edu.sg. Please contact the Editors for further information about this and other inquiries about the CTTA.

We look forward to receiving your contributions and more support from you all in the years to come.

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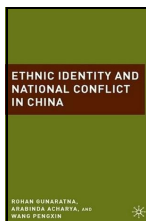
Website: www.pvtr.org

The International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR) is a specialist centre within the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.

ICPVTR conducts research, training, and outreach programs aimed at reducing the threat of politically motivated violence and at mitigating its effects on the international system. The Centre seeks to integrate academic theory with practical knowledge, which is essential for a complete and comprehensive understanding of threats from politically-motivated groups.

The Centre is staffed by academic specialists, religious scholars, as well as personnel from the law enforcement, military and intelligence agencies, among others. The Centre is culturally and linguistically diverse, comprising of functional and regional analysts as well as Muslim religious scholars from Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Europe and North America.

Events and Publications



- Ethnic Identity and National Conflict in China (Palgrave Macmillan 22 June 2010)
by Dr. Rohan Gunaratna, Dr. Arabinda Acharya and Mr. Wang Pengxin



- Targeting Terrorist Financing: International Cooperation and New Regimes
(Routledge 2009) by Dr. Arabinda Acharya



- International Aviation and Terrorism: Evolving Threats, Evolving Security
(Routledge 2009) by Dr. John Harrison