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CHADIAN OPPOSITION CLASHES WITH GOVERNMENT TROOPS

Reports have emerged of a pair of battles on April 24 and April 28 between Chadian government forces and those of the Front Populaire pour la Renaissance Nationale (FPRN), one of a number of rebel movements seeking to overthrow the government of President Idriss Déby. The fighting apparently took place close to the village of For Djahaname, near the border with Sudan's Darfur province. Fighting took place in December 2009 in the same region, which is home to the cross-border Salamat Arab tribe (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, May 1).

Government spokesmen claimed the army had killed 105 insurgents and captured another 80 in the two clashes. FPRN forces led by Adam Yacoub claimed to have defeated the government's troops on April 24, capturing a large quantity of weapons, but after the second battle it said only that large numbers of troops had been lost on both sides and that it was awaiting expected air raids by Chadian warplanes (AFP, April 24). The FPRN leadership later claimed the regime had been "caught lying red-handed," and that 64 wounded soldiers had been taken to French military facilities in Chad for medical treatment (AFP, May 1).

Unlike most of the Chadian opposition groups, which are based across the border in Darfur, the FPRN is based inside Chad. The usual pattern for such attacks is for N'Djamena to claim that those responsible were working for the Sudanese government, followed by retaliatory attacks by Chad's own proxies in Darfur. When the initial attack occurs in Sudan, the entire process is reversed. This time,

however, N'Djamena did not blame Khartoum, keeping instead to the reconciliatory path the two nations have been following since January (see *Terrorism Monitor*, January 21). Rather than recriminations, N'Djamena actually congratulated Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir on his "brilliant" victory in the recent Sudanese elections (Reuters, April 29). President Déby also did Khartoum a favor by denouncing the Southern Sudanese separatist movement, saying independence would harm both Sudan and the region at large. The Chad-Sudan border was reopened in mid-April for the first time in seven years (AFP, April 14).

The N'Djamena regime began negotiations with several opposition groups in April as part of the larger reconciliation program, but the FPRN was not involved in these talks (AFP, April 26). The movement consists mainly of rebels who left the umbrella UFR group because they opposed negotiations with the Déby regime. Another rebel movement, the Mouvement pour la démocratie et la justice au Tchad (MDJT), signed a ceasefire with the government on April 24 (PANA Online, April 24). MDJT fighters are scheduled to be integrated into Chad's military and security forces. Déby is said to be exhausted with never-ending negotiations with Chad's rebel movements, and has told the remaining rebels that he has "no money, no positions, or anything else to give" (*L'Observateur* [N'Djamena], April 14).

Unfortunately for Déby, the clashes came just as his government was attempting to persuade Europe and the United Nations that peacekeepers are no longer needed in eastern Chad, the site of the battles. N'Djamena has insisted on the departure of the U.N.'s Mission des Nations Unies en République centrafricaine et au Tchad (MINURCAT), a 5,000-man peacekeeping mission deployed in the Central African Republic and the eastern regions of Chad, the frontline of the conflict between Déby's regime and the insurgents. Without cooperation from N'Djamena, MINURCAT's Irish and Finnish contingents have decided to withdraw, while the mission as a whole will be drastically scaled back as heavy weapons and equipment are withdrawn from Chad. After May 16, the mission will consist of only 1,900 men, far short of the figure necessary to be effective. Déby has called the mission "a failure," suggesting the peacekeepers were unwilling to leave the safety of their fortified bases (AFP, April 23).

Across the border in Darfur, it appears that the peace accord between Khartoum and the rebel Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) is beginning to unravel.

JEM, which appears to have lost some degree of its former support from N'Djamena, has reported various low level clashes with government forces in recent days. JEM forces in West Darfur claim Sudanese MiGs and Antonov aircraft are flying reconnaissance flights over JEM deployments in West Darfur in preparation for a major government offensive using heavy weapons and local auxiliaries (Sudan Tribune, April 22).

JAPAN OPENS NAVAL BASE IN DJIBOUTI IN DEFIANCE OF PEACE CONSTITUTION

Japanese authorities have confirmed their intention to develop a Japanese naval base in the Horn of Africa nation of Djibouti, already home to large American and French military installations. The base will be Japan's first overseas since Japan's defeat in 1945 and the major political and military reforms that followed. The \$40 million base is expected to be ready early in 2011 and will provide a permanent port for ships of Japan's Maritime Self Defense Force (JMSDF).

The plans for a Japanese base in Djibouti were first announced last July, when Tokyo outlined its intention to build housing facilities and an airstrip for JMSDF Lockheed P-3C Orion surveillance aircraft. The decision followed a request by U.S. authorities for Japan to build facilities that would allow it to take a larger role in security operations in the Gulf of Aden (Kyodo News, July 31, 2009).

Japanese navy commander Keizo Kitagawa of the JMSDF's Plans and Policy section told reporters "We are deploying here to fight piracy and for our self-defense. Japan is a maritime nation and the increase in piracy in the Gulf of Aden through which 20,000 vessels sail every year is worrying" (AFP, April 23). According to Japanese authorities, 99% of Japanese exports rely on use of the shipping lanes off Somalia (Somaliland Press, April 29; Alshahid, April 29).

Japan sent teams of military experts to Yemen, Oman, Kenya and Djibouti to explore the possibilities of opening a naval base in one of these nations. Djibouti was chosen in April, 2009. Japanese personnel and material supporting the JMSDF deployment off Somalia are currently housed in rented space at the American base at Djibouti's Camp Lemonnier, a former French Foreign Legion base. French troops in Djibouti are engaged in anti-piracy operations, training French troops for action in Afghanistan and keeping an eye on the volatile Horn of Africa region (Radio France Internationale, April 18).

The largest warships in the JMSDF are Guided Missile Destroyers, Destroyers and Helicopter Destroyers. Japan has been deploying a pair of destroyers on a rotational basis in the Gulf of Aden since last year. The naval deployment includes members of the Special Boarding Unit (SBU), a Hiroshima-based Special Forces unit patterned after the U.K.'s Special Boat Service (SBS).

The creation of a Japanese military base in Africa would have been implausible only a few years ago, as such deployments are in clear violation of Japan's 1947 "Peace Constitution," which forbids the maintenance of a Japanese military, the deployment of Japanese military forces overseas and participation in collective military operations, regardless of their purpose. With American encouragement during the Cold War, Japan began a conscious evasion of the Peace Constitution by creating "Self-Defense" Forces rather than a Japanese military. Japanese troops began overseas deployments in the early 1990s with non-combatant peacekeeping operations in Cambodia and Mozambique. After 9/11, new anti-terrorism and anti-piracy laws eased the transition to offshore operations. The JMSDF provided support to American forces in Afghanistan from 2001 to January 2010 and Japanese Ground Forces joined Coalition operations in Iraq in a humanitarian capacity in 2004. Technically, all members of Japan's Self Defense Forces are classified as civilian civil servants and the naval deployment to the Horn of Africa is being characterized by the government as anti-crime operations rather than military operations.

Rashid Rauf and the New York City Subway Bombing Plot

By Raffaello Pantucci

As security agencies pursue ethnic Pakistani suspects in the attempted Times Square bombing, another New York City bomb plot with connections to Pakistan and the U.K. is working its way through U.S. courts. The case involves an aborted attempt by natives of Pakistan and Afghanistan to mount suicide attacks on the New York subway system in September 2009 to mark the eighth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks.

In November 2009, British newspapers broke the story that counterterrorism officers had been responsible for

the intelligence that had alerted the FBI to the cell around Afghan immigrant Najibullah Zazi, the plot's main conspirator. New Scotland Yard officers watching an email account connected to an investigation codenamed "Operation Pathway" noticed some new traffic in September that apparently provided instructions for a New York bomb plot and passed the lead onto their American counterparts (*Telegraph*, November 9, 2009). The tip provided American agents with a crucial break in the Zazi plot, and led to a series of arrests, followed by admissions of guilt from both Zazi and co-conspirator Zarein Ahmedzay related to an attempt to carry out a bombing campaign in New York City (alongside a third suspect, Adis Medunjanin) on September 14, 15 or 16, 2009. [1]

That the link came from the United Kingdom has in retrospect proved to be somewhat appropriate, given the centrality in the plot of Rashid Rauf, the mysterious British-born ethnic-Pakistani who has been repeatedly referred to as a key operative in a series of plots targeting the West. According to prosecutors, the suspects met with Rashid Rauf and al-Qaeda operative Saleh al-Somali in Pakistan in August, 2008. The suspects allegedly told Rauf and al-Somali that they wished to fight in Afghanistan, but as holders of U.S. resident's documents, the al-Qaeda operatives suggested it would be more valuable if they were to return to America to carry out mass casualty attacks in New York City (*Daily Times* [Lahore], April 24; Indo-Asian News Service, April 24). Saleh al-Somali is believed to have been killed in a December, 2009 missile attack by a CIA-operated drone (*Dawn* [Karachi], December 13, 2009). Rashid Rauf was similarly said to have been killed in a November, 2008 drone attack, but his death has never been confirmed and remains a subject of dispute (*Guardian*, November 25, 2008, September 8, 2009; Asia Times Online, August 11, 2009; *Telegraph*, September 10, 2009).

Rauf first came to notice in the wake of the August 2006 Transatlantic Airline plot in which a group of British nationals plotted to bring down eight or more airliners on transatlantic routes. After the plot was disrupted by British security services, Rauf was identified as one of the main planners. [2] Since then, Rauf has been connected to the July 7 and 21, 2005 plots against London's public transport system. More recently, he was the alleged contact for a 2008 plot in which British security services believe a group of individuals were sent from Pakistan to carry out a terrorist plot in the U.K. (*Telegraph*, September 8, 2009). [3]

In September 2008, Pakistani forces intercepted Bryant Neal Vinas, an American-Hispanic convert to Islam who had trained at al-Qaeda camps and fought alongside the Taliban in Afghanistan. Vinas revealed he had been in contact with Rauf and may have ultimately been the source for information which led to his possible death by a Predator strike. It would also appear as though information from Vinas may have set events in motion that led to the discovery of the New York City subway plot. In December 2008, Belgian police arrested a group of individuals around Malika al-Aroud, the former wife of one of the men who killed Northern Alliance leader Ahmad Shah Massoud in 2001 (Radio Télévision Belge Francophone, December 11, 2008). Vinas admitted having met some of these individuals at al-Qaeda training camps. An informer amongst this group warned investigators that Rauf had dispatched a number of cells throughout the West. This led in the first instance to Operation Pathway, and later to the New York City plot (*Sunday Times*, April 12, 2009).

According to information released after Ahmedzay's admission of guilt, Ahmedzay, Zazi, Medunjanin and a fourth conspirator (arrested in Pakistan in April, but as of yet unnamed) went to Pakistan in August 2008 (AFP, April 12). After being advised to carry out attacks in New York, the men underwent further training in Waziristan and discussed possible targets with al-Qaeda leaders. By July, 2009 they had returned to the United States and procured the necessary elements from beauty supply stores to build hydrogen peroxide-based bombs, similar to those used in the July 7, 2005 London bombings. By early September of the same year they were ready to carry out suicide operations. However, upon arriving in New York for the final stages, Zazi was alerted by a New York-based Afghan immigrant imam (Ahamad Wais Afzali) that he was under police surveillance (AFP, April 15). Realizing the FBI was alert to his activities Zazi quickly left the city to return to Denver. Soon afterwards, the FBI swooped in and the cell was rapidly rolled up. The revelations linked to Ahmedzay's confession show how close they had come to carrying out a major terrorist attack. [4]

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Notes:

1. Department of Justice Press Release, April 23, 2010, <http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/2010/April/10-ag-473.html>
2. For the ringleaders, see http://cms.met.police.uk/news/convictions/three_men_found_guilty_of_airline_bomb_plot; and for the support group: http://cms.met.police.uk/met/news/convictions/airline_bomb_plotter_jailed_for_life
3. See also Lord Carlile's report: <http://security.homeoffice.gov.uk/news-publications/publication-search/legislation/terrorism-act-2000/operation-pathway-report>
4. Department of Justice Press Release, April 23, 2010, <http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/2010/April/10-ag-473.html>.

The Succession Question: The Islamic State of Iraq Searches for New Leaders

By Rafid Fadhil Ali

The killing of the two top leaders of the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI - al-Qaeda's umbrella group in Iraq), Abu Omar al-Baghdadi and Abu Ayub al-Masri (a.k.a Abu Hamza al-Muhajir), came at a crucial time for the organization. The need for symbolic figures in the leadership of the group, and the important role played by al-Baghdadi, was one of the main issues dealt with in a document released last February by ISI sympathizers. Intended to suggest a new strategy for the ISI, the document indicated the necessity of having political symbols at the group's highest levels:

The symbolic status of the Amir al-Mumineen [i.e. al-Baghdadi] should be preserved and more effort should be dedicated to develop it in order to protect the jihadi project. [1] Therefore, we have to work to provide a suitable replacement, which is the deputy Amir, in case anything happened, God forbid, to Abu Omar al-Baghdadi. This would enable that deputy to smoothly precede the mission. He would not have to have the

hard start of al-Baghdadi. That could be done by letting him [the deputy] release some audio messages where he could take up some of the Amir's work. That would create acceptance for the deputy Amir among the people and the media" (Hanein.info, February 20).

Nevertheless, the ISI has not shown any sign of adopting that suggestion and when it announced the killing of its leaders there was no prompt succession process in place.

Knowing that al-Baghdadi and al-Masri were the only ISI figures that had material placed on the web under their names or had released audio-tape statements, the serious impact on the ISI of losing both these individuals at the same time appears obvious.

When the name Abu Omar al-Baghdadi was presented as the leader of the newly-established ISI in 2006, many insurgents and locals debated the significance and even the reality of this otherwise unknown individual. This was one of the reasons that the majority of the insurgent groups and the local Sunni community leaders did not recognize al-Baghdadi or his ISI. When the ISI adopted harsh measures in seeking obedience to al-Baghdadi these efforts had a negative impact on the Sunni community's acceptance of the ISI. The Sunni community, which was meant to be the host of al-Qaeda in Iraq, instead began to turn against it.

Due to its nature, the position of the head of the ISI cannot be vacant for long. The group might find itself forced to pick another unknown figure as its leader. This will add another complication to thorny relations between the ISI and Iraqi Sunnis. It is unlikely that such a nominee would be able to gain the support of any influential power within the community or the insurgency, resulting in the increasing isolation of the ISI.

The answer for the succession question might come from outside the structure of the ISI. One of the few leading Salafi-Jihadi figures to survive the conflict in Iraq so far is Abu Abdullah al Shafi'e. The ambition of this Kurd, who leads the Ansar al-Islam (AI) insurgent group, might be greater than his current role offers. A few days after the killing of al-Masri and al-Baghdadi, the A.I., which did not join the ISI, issued a condolence statement published in jihadi forums. Most of the comments on that statement called for unification between the ISI and the A.I.. Al-Shafi'e could have a chance for a leadership bid under these circumstances. However this would not

be easy, as the ISI was supposedly al-Qaeda's initiative to defend the Sunni Arabs in Iraq and shape their own political entity outside the occupation-approved government in Baghdad. Al-Baghdadi was the group's indigenous leader. Even though al-Shafi'e follows the Salafi-Jihadi path, as a Kurd he would not match the ISI leadership criteria without significant changes in the direction and ideology of the ISI (see alfaloja.net, April 28).

Another insurgent leader who might seek the position is Abu Muhammad al-Iraqi, the leader of another small Sunni insurgent group, the Jaysh Abu Bakr al-Siddiq al-Salafi (JABSS). Al-Iraqi's condolence statement was also published on prominent Salafi internet forums. It was interesting that al-Iraqi indicated in his statement that his group had not joined the ISI yet. The statement also attracted calls from forum members for a merger with the ISI (Hanein.info, April 26).

It is important to note that even with daunting strategic, logistical and structural difficulties, the ISI was still able to maintain its ability to launch massive attacks. Three days after the killing of its leaders, the group struck, killing and injuring 300 people in a series of bombings that targeted Shi'a mosques in Baghdad, a judge and police officers in the dominantly Sunni province of al-Anbar (Albaghdadia.com, April 23; *Assafir*, April 24). When al-Qaeda in Iraq lost its leader, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, in June 2006, its attacks did not stop. On the contrary, they increased significantly until the emergence of the Sunni tribal Awakening councils that fought al-Qaeda and drove them from many Sunni areas.

Al-Qaeda in Iraq might remain a security threat for sometime, even after the killing of its two leaders, but its project of establishing a radical state in the Sunni part of Iraq is struggling. Iraqi Sunnis turned out in significant numbers to vote in the recent elections, and their integration into the political system will make it even harder for the Salafi-Jihadi ideology to spread in Iraq.

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Notes:

1. In ISI literature al-Baghdadi carried the title of Amir al-Mumineen (The Leader of the Believers). It was the formal title of the Muslim Caliph, the head of the historical Islamic state.

Pakistan's Ongoing Azm-e-Nau-3 Military Exercises Define Strategic Priorities

By Arif Jamal

For the last few years, the Pakistan Army has been slowly but surely drifting away from fighting the war on terror and placing more stress on building its capabilities to fight its archrival, nuclear-armed India. The process was accelerated when General Ashfaq Pervez Kayani took over command of the Pakistan army in November 2007. His first major act as the new chief of the nuclear armed Pakistan Army was to declare 2008 the “Year of the Soldier”. He took this step to build the morale of the Pakistani soldiers who had become demoralized after fighting their co-religionists for several years in what is called “America’s War.” Later, he declared 2009 the “Year of Training,” ostensibly to prepare the Pakistan army to respond to the Indian “Cold Start” military doctrine of a limited war in the nuclear age.

Addressing India’s Military Planning

India’s defense policy and doctrines had been by and large defensive until it had to fight a limited war against Pakistan in Kargil in 1999. As a newly declared nuclear power, the Indian military started developing new war doctrines to respond to future Pakistani incursions into India. The need for such a doctrine was felt more acutely when Pakistani terrorists launched an attack on the Indian parliament building in December 2001 and the two countries nearly fought another war. The Indian army felt frustrated that it could not invade Pakistan—after a months-long mobilization—because of international intervention. The doctrine of Cold Start, which was announced in April 2004, is aimed at making “shallow territorial gains, 50-80 kilometers deep, that could be used in post-conflict negotiations to extract concessions from Islamabad.” [1] In other words, under this doctrine the Indian army would attack first and mobilize later. Thus, speed of both deployment and operations is a key element of the doctrine.

India has conducted a number of military exercises to test its military doctrine in the last decade. They include Divya Astra (Divine Weapon) in March 2004, Vajra Shakti (Thunder Power) in May 2005, Desert Strike in November-December 2005, Sang-i-Shakti (Joint Power) in March-May 2006, Shatrughna (Destruction

of Enemy) in May 2007, Ashwamedh (Valor and Intellectual Illumination) from January to May 2007 and Hind Shakti (Indian Power) in May 2009. Many of these exercises were Pakistan-centric and conducted along the Pakistani border. In most cases, the Indian Air Force was also part of these exercises, meant to test the efficacy of the Cold Start doctrine.

Since taking over the command of the Pakistan army, General Kayani has repeatedly emphasized the threat Pakistan faces from India rather than from a variety of Muslim extremists. In a policy statement, General Kayani said:

The Pakistan Army is fully alert and alive to the full spectrum of threat which continues to exist in conventional and unconventional domains. Pakistan is not oblivious to the unprecedented acquisition of sophisticated military hardware, synergized with an offensive military doctrine. However, as a responsible nuclear capable state, the Pakistan Army will contribute to strategic stability and strategic restraint as per the stated policy of the government of Pakistan. But at the same time we will continue to maintain the necessary wherewithal to deter and, if required, defeat any aggressive design, in any form or shape, i.e., a firmed up “proactive strategy” or a “Cold Start doctrine.”

More recently, General Kayani said, “We plan [according to] adversaries’ capabilities, not intentions” (*Dawn* [Karachi], April 5).

Pakistan’s Strategy and the Azm-e-Nau 3 Exercises

The ongoing Azm-e-Nau 3 (New Resolve 3) military exercises appear to be the validation stage of the Pakistani doctrine, developed over the last two years under General Kayani, to counter the Indian Cold Start doctrine (*Daily Times* [Lahore], April 10). This is clear from the fact that these exercises are taking place near Pakistan’s eastern border in Sialkot, Cholistan and the province of Sindh. In these exercises, the armies of two imaginary states, Blue Land (Pakistan) and Fox Land (India), fight in a war-like situation. In the Azm-e-Nau 3 scenario, the Fox Land army suddenly invades and occupies part of the Blue Land territory (in a “Cold Start” manner). An anti-tank battalion of the Blue Land uses what is called “dispersal tactics” (based on Pakistani military doctrine) to regain territory in an

equally swift way (Pakistan Times, May 4). A *Dawn* editorial summarizes the Azm-e-Nau-3 goals:

The message the army high command is sending could amount to this: whatever the importance of the fight against the Taliban inside Pakistan and on the western border, the threat posed by the military capabilities of the Indian armed forces remains uppermost in the minds of the generals here. This message will resonate in the American camp too. The generals appear to be reminding the world, especially India and America, that conventional threats — those posed by nation states as opposed to non-state actors — are the greatest long-term threat to peace and stability in the region” (*Dawn* April 20).

In India, the Azm-e-Nau-3 exercises are seen as the validation of their doctrine. India’s leading Pakistan expert, Sushant Sareen, says, “The Azm-e-Nau exercises really are a validation of the Cold Start doctrine of the Indian army. Clearly, the Pakistan army feels that the Cold Start doctrine as well as the concept of limited war under a nuclear overhang are not as outlandish and impractical as some strategists imagine them to be and that the Pakistan army thinks like this should actually work like a shot in the arm for the Indian army strategists.” [3]

However, a more political but no less important message of the Azm-e-Nau-3 seems to be the further distancing of the Pakistan army from the Americans and the government’s policy of collaborating with the U.S.-led global war on terror, at least as perceived by the public. Some of those who attended the concluding ceremony of the first phase of Azm-e-Nau-3 in southern Punjab were taken by surprise when a drone suddenly appeared in the sky. Within seconds, the anti-aircraft guns of the army shot it down. The pre-planned message was that the Pakistan army is capable of shooting down American drones in the tribal zone (*The News*, April 19; *The Express Tribune*, April 19). Although this was no secret to military experts, it raised the national stature of General Kayani in a country where anti-American feelings are rising, which was apparently the intended goal. General Kayani has criticized the drone attacks in the past as well. In what was interpreted as a rebuff to both the Americans and President Asif Ali Zardari, General Kayani strongly criticized America for drone attacks just one day after President Zardari took his oath of office by saying, “There is no question of any agreement or understanding with the coalition forces

whereby they are allowed to conduct operations on our side of the border.” He also vowed to defend Pakistan’s sovereignty “at all costs” (*Daily Times*, September 11, 2008). On other occasions, Pakistani generals have said that they cannot shoot down the intruding American drones without government orders.

Conclusion

Between 20,000 and 50,000 soldiers are taking part in the Azm-e-Nau-3 exercises, which began on April 10 and will finish May 13. They have been described as the biggest ever exercises since 1989, when military exercises codenamed “Zarb-e-Momin” were held. As the Americans were withdrawing from Afghanistan in the wake of the Soviet withdrawal, the then-chief of the Army Staff General Mirza Aslam Beg coined the doctrine of “Strategic Depth” for Pakistan in Afghanistan, under which the Pakistan army supported the mujahideen and later propped up the Taliban. If the past provides any indication, General Kayani may formulate another military doctrine in the light of the Azm-e-Nau-3 exercises in the coming months. The doctrine of Strategic Depth in Afghanistan has played a big role in the radicalization of the region. It is too early to say what kind of doctrine will emerge from these latest military exercises and how it will impact the region and the world beyond. However, taken together, the statements of General Kayani and the Azm-e-Nau-3 military exercises show that the civilian government in Pakistan might find it difficult to achieve a thaw in the region regardless of the sincerity of its efforts in the foreseeable future.

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Notes:

1. Walter C. Ladwig, “A Cold Start for Hot Wars,” http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/publication/17972/cold_start_for_hot_wars_the_indian_armys_new_limited_war_doctrine.html
2. Statement issued by Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), January 1, 2010, http://www.ispr.gov.pk/front/main.asp?o=t-press_release&date=2010/1/1
3. Author’s interview with Sushant Sareen May 1.