

# Safe Havens: The Emerging Terror Hubs in South Asia

Reshmi Kazi

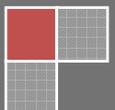
October 13, 2014

- *Al Qaeda is attempting to expand into new territories in South Asia, "suitable" for safe housing themselves and their illicit activities.*
- *Fragile political situation in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh provide conducive atmosphere to Al Qaeda to secure their bases in these regions.*
- *The situation in South Asia raises further concerns over the fact that India and Pakistan are nuclear weapons nations.*
- *Terror groups must be exterminated from the region to prevent them from unleashing catastrophe in the region.*



Society for the Study of Peace and Conflict

<http://www.sspconline.org/>



The Al Qaeda terrorist group, which was believed to be considerably redundant after the death of its leader Osama bin Laden in 2011, has resurfaced again. Ayman al-Zawahiri, the present emir of Al Qaeda has recently announced the formation of a South Asian branch of the terror organization. The objective of the terror group is to wage jihad in the region, revive the Islamic Caliphate and impose Sharia in the Indian sub-continent. The creation of the new group named Jamaat Qaedat al-jihad fi'shibhi al-qarrat al-Hindiya or the Organisation of The Base of Jihad, hereafter Al Qaeda in Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) was announced by Al Qaeda's official media outlet, As Sahab, in a lengthy video and was posted on the social media, including You Tube. The group is said to be dedicated to defend the "vulnerable in the Indian subcontinent, in Burma, Bangladesh, Assam, Gujarat, Ahmadabad, and Kashmir... from injustice, oppression, persecution, and suffering."

The AQIS as disclosed in the video took more than two years to congregate the mujahedeen in the Indian subcontinent into a single entity and to ally to the main group, Al Qaeda. The group is now looking for safe havens for recruits, funding and ideological appeal amongst supporters to strengthen their forces. Their latest focus is the Indian sub-continent.

### **What are safe havens?**

The term safe haven can have both positive and negative connotation. In a positive sense, it refers to an asylum or a sheltered place for refugees or displaced people or group(s) of people seeking protection from natural calamity, war crimes or genocide. According to the United Nations, an estimated 200,000 new refugees sought sanctuary recently in the Kurdish north from Islamic extremists.<sup>1</sup> Those displaced are looking for protection from the ongoing atrocities committed on the civilians in the war-torn Iraq and Syria.

But in the negative terms, safe havens implies sheltered bases for terrorists and other perpetrators of crimes wherefrom they can plan, communicate, organize, recruit cadres, train them, raise funds, house their terror equipment, operate, transit and conduct their malicious agendas. Tribal regions of Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province, Balochistan and some parts bordering Afghanistan remain safe havens for terrorist groups seeking to conduct regional and global attacks. This paper reflects on the negative concept of safe havens that are exploited by terrorists for their horrid intentions.

---

<sup>1</sup> Martin Chulov, "Iraq's largest Christian town abandoned as Isis advance continues," The Guardian, August 7, 2014, [www.theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/07/isis-offensive-iraq-christian-exodus](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/07/isis-offensive-iraq-christian-exodus).

Safe havens can be categorized under two heads: “virtual” safe havens and “real” or “physical” safe havens. Virtual safe havens, as the term suggests, are not found in any real sense. They are independent of any space. “Virtual safe havens exist not in the physical sense, but in the literal sense, whereby real humans exploit physical, political, social, economic and religious infrastructure to operate.”<sup>2</sup> Even though virtual safe havens exist in non-physical areas, they are not imaginary and non-state actors use them effectively for malevolent purposes. Virtual safe haven includes sophisticated technological systems that operate irrespective of any geographical terrain and immensely help terrorist groups to facilitate their operations. They do so “through physically diffused networks” like the internet, chat rooms, media, cell phones, information dissemination techniques, digital imagery, emails, websites spreading radical teachings, banking and the *hawala* system. The unprecedented digital advancement has provided technologically capable illicit actors to conduct their operations without the compulsions of physically meeting each other. Digital communication network systems reduce the probabilities of illicit actors getting detected by counterterror groups. Simultaneously, it provides added leverage to terrorist groups to operate obscurely, yet effectively.

The advantages of virtual safe havens are several but perhaps the most important is that it is independent of any fixated command and control systems. This element provides non-state actors sufficient flexibility to form sleeper cells in several parts of the globe that can operate autonomously without any formal hierarchical control mechanisms. This augments the functional aspects of terror groups enabling them to extend and multiply their operational bases globally. Portable digital devices like flash drive, CDs, DVDs, and websites serve as virtual laboratories to terrorist organizations for purpose of recruitment and training new members. Recently, a laptop recovered from the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) hideout revealed that the “hidden files” section contained 146 gigabytes of material, which included documents on ideological justifications for jihadi organizations and practical training on how to carry out the Islamic State's deadly campaigns.<sup>3</sup> The documents also suggested that the laptop's owner was teaching about the use of biological weaponry, probably preparing for a potential deadly attack.<sup>4</sup> Virtual safe havens thus facilitate easy and faster coordination among terrorists and groups affiliated to them and provide relative security from exposure.

On the other hand, physical safe havens provide non-state actors with sanctuary that is relatively less vulnerable to attacks from government authorities. This is because such safe havens are relatively secure since they escape being detected by counter-terror

<sup>2</sup> Michael Judy, “Terrorism’s “Virtual” Safe Haven and the Effects on Terror Operations,” *Global Security Studies*, Vol. 2 (1), Winter 2011, <http://globalsecuritystudies.com/Judy%20Virtual.pdf> p. 36.

<sup>3</sup> Harald Doornbos and Jenan Moussa, “Found: The Islamic State's Terror Laptop of Doom,” *Foreign Policy*, August 28, 2014, [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/08/28/found\\_the\\_islamic\\_state\\_terror\\_laptop\\_of\\_doom\\_bubonic\\_plague\\_weapons\\_of\\_mass\\_destruction\\_exclusive](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/08/28/found_the_islamic_state_terror_laptop_of_doom_bubonic_plague_weapons_of_mass_destruction_exclusive).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

groups. This provides opportunities to illicit actors to conduct their nefarious operations with impunity. These areas are utilized by terrorists as refuge for their planning and operational purposes.

According to the *Country Reports on Terrorism 2013*, “terrorist safe havens include ungoverned, under-governed, or ill-governed physical areas.”<sup>5</sup> Physical safe havens for terrorist groups primarily refer to ungoverned safe havens which should be assumed to include under-governed, misgoverned and contested areas.<sup>6</sup> A place where the state or the central government is unable or unwilling to extend control, effectively govern or influence the local population, and where a provincial, local, tribal or autonomous government does not fully or effectively govern due to inadequate governance capacity, insufficient political will, gaps in legitimacy, the presence of conflict, or restrictive norms of behavior.<sup>7</sup> Notable troubled regions that constitutes ideal safe havens for terrorists are the African regions of Somalia, Mali, Trans-Sahara; remote areas in Mindanao in the Southern Philippines; Iraq, Lebanon, Yemen and Libya in the Middle East; and the tribal regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan in South Asia. In recent times, the ISIS has seized the city of Mosul and “now controls territory the size of the UK.”<sup>8</sup>

### Conditions for physical safe havens

There are four specific conditions that assist the formation of physical safe havens: geographic features, weak governance, history of corruption and violence, and poverty.<sup>9</sup>

All planning and organization that is required in carrying out any act of terrorism has to be shrouded in extreme secrecy. Thus terrorists prefer to operate from a base that has rugged geographical terrain. Rough terrain provides formidable benefits to terror groups to carry out their illicit activities. Rugged landscape enables terrorist groups to establish essential training grounds for new recruits. Several video clips available on the YouTube show how recruits are given training in firing and other combat exercises in barren and rugged terrain. Rough and inhabitable terrain makes such areas unappealing to the locals and hence impregnable. Uninhabitable and inaccessible terrain provides a convenient hideout for terrorists that enable them to carry out their operations without being easily

<sup>5</sup> “Terrorist Safe Havens,” *Country Reports on Terrorism*, 2013, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/225886.pdf> p.236.

<sup>6</sup> Robert D. Lamb, “Ungoverned Areas and Threats from Safe Havens,” Final Report of the Ungoverned Areas Project, [http://www.cissm.umd.edu/papers/files/ugash\\_report\\_final.pdf](http://www.cissm.umd.edu/papers/files/ugash_report_final.pdf) p. 16.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ian Johnston, “The rise of Isis: Terror group now controls an area the size of Britain, expert claims,” *The Independent*, September 3, 2014, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/the-rise-of-isis-terror-group-now-controls-an-area-the-size-of-britain-expert-claims-9710198.html>.

<sup>9</sup> Cristiana C. Brafman Kittner, “The Role of Safe Havens in Islamist Terrorism,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 19 (3), 2007, pp. 307.

detected. In such places, terrorists can successfully hide and don a cloak of anonymity.<sup>10</sup> The border areas between Afghanistan and the FATA region encompass extremely difficult and rough mountainous terrains. It is severely inhospitable, sparsely populated and sparingly irrigated and underdeveloped. Deep ravines and extreme temperature makes it inaccessible and thus under-governed. Such conditions make this region an ideal safe haven for terrorists. Pakistan's FATA provides safe haven for the Taliban guerrillas and Al Qaeda terrorists who have sown seeds of Islamist militancy and terror inside Pakistan. FATA remains most dangerous as the failure of governance and the rise of militancy is affecting Afghanistan and Pakistan jointly.<sup>11</sup>

In addition, porous borders lower natural physical barriers and augments easy mobility of people and weapons. For example, Al Qaeda has a network of safe houses in Turkey, through which foreign jihadists wanting to go to Syria – or back home – are funneled.<sup>12</sup> The 300-mile Turkish border with Syria has proven to be porous throughout the Syrian civil war, with weapons, rebel fighters and jihadists being regularly smuggled across.<sup>13</sup> These routes allow Western jihadists to enter the country without getting their passports stamped, thereby making it difficult for the country's intelligence agency to identify that they have been to Syria.<sup>14</sup> According to the CIS Anti-Terrorism Center (ATC), Central Asia may be used by terrorists as a transit point for supply of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction.<sup>15</sup> Globalization has increased mobility of goods, capital and labor and has enormously reduced the challenges of detection of prohibited activities by government authorities; it has facilitated mobility of illicit actors and weapons across borders.

Weak governance is the second factor that helps to breed ideal conditions for terrorists' safe houses. Weak governance is the result of the failure of the state to ensure central authority over its territory and citizenry and government inability to ensure security of its citizens, provide the necessary basic public services for the needs of its population, maintain political legitimacy domestically and/or internationally, administer functioning

<sup>10</sup> Peter Finn, "Hamburg's Cauldron of Terror," *The Washington Post*, September 11, 2002 as stated in Cristiana C. Brafman Kittner, "The Role of Safe Havens in Islamist Terrorism," *op.cit.*, p. 309.

<sup>11</sup> Shuja Nawaz, "Fata A Most Dangerous Place: Meeting the Challenge of Militancy and Terror in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan," Center for Strategic and Inter-National Studies, January 2009, p.42. [http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/081218\\_nawaz\\_fata\\_web.pdf](http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/081218_nawaz_fata_web.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Ruth Sherlock, Gaziantep, and Tom Whitehead, "Al-Qaeda training British and European 'jihadists' in Syria to set up terror cells at home," *The Telegraph*, January 19, 2014. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/syria/10582945/Al-Qaeda-training-British-and-European-jihadists-in-Syria-to-set-up-terror-cells-at-home.html>

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Donat Sorokin "Terrorists may use Central Asia for nuclear weapons transit," ITAR-TASS/News Agency, <http://en.itar-tass.com/world/748702>

institutions, and control a working economy.<sup>16</sup> Weak governance leads to politically unstable circumstances that are in turn exploited by the terrorist groups.<sup>17</sup>

However, the political nature of weak states is characterized as a failing state where though political instability is rampant, the state machinery has not completely collapsed. Failing states are of particular interest to terrorists since such governments have *de jure* status and are not disintegrated. This prevents the international community to intervene in the political affairs of a presumably sovereign state while providing opportunities to terrorist organizations to use the soil as a safe house. For instance, in 2013, large areas of territory throughout Somalia provided safe haven for Al-Shaba terrorists<sup>18</sup> as the political situation remained fragile there.

High level of corruption that further destabilizes a state is another characteristic of weak governments. This assists non-state actors to develop a dirty entanglement<sup>19</sup> of crime and corruption which exacerbates the terror activities. The *Corruption Perceptions Index 2013* shows that two-thirds of the countries surveyed scored below 50 points indicating a serious, worldwide corruption problem.<sup>20</sup> There is a strong link between terrorism and corruption. Continued corruption and bribery affects the economy and subsequently the law and order situation of a state, which further lowers its political stability. Such a situation facilitates illegal movement and transit of arms, drugs, recruits and money. This gives perfect safe houses for terrorist operations. In his Annual Threat Assessment for 2010, the then-Director of National Intelligence, Dennis Blair, noted that government, organized crime, intelligence services, and big business houses are growing increasingly close in their interactions.<sup>21</sup> He underscored that “criminally-linked oligarchs [powerful Eurasian businessmen who rose to power in the immediate post-Soviet period] will enhance the ability of state or state-allied actors to undermine competition in gas, oil, aluminium, and precious metals markets.”<sup>22</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Jonathan Schanzer, *Al-Qaeda's Armies: Middle East Affiliate Groups & the Next Generation of Terror*, Specialist Press International, Washington, DC, 2004, p.27.

<sup>17</sup> Loretta Napoleoni, *Modern Jihad: Tracing the Dollars Behind the Terror Networks*, Pluto Press, London, 2003 p. 139.

<sup>18</sup> “Terrorist Safe Havens (Update to 7120 Report),” Country Reports on Terrorism 2013, <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2013/224828.htm>

<sup>19</sup> See, Louise I. Shelley, *Dirty Entanglements Corruption, Crime, and Terrorism*, Cambridge University Press, London, July 2014.

<sup>20</sup> “Corruption Perceptions Index 2013,” Transparency International at <http://cpi.transparency.org/cpi2013/results/>

<sup>21</sup> Dennis C. Blair, Director of National Intelligence, “Annual Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence,” Office of the Director of National Intelligence, February 2, 2010, p. 44.

<sup>22</sup> Jerome P. Bjelopera and Kristin M. Finklea, “Organized Crime: An Evolving Challenge for U.S. Law Enforcement,” Congressional Research Service, January 6, 2012 at <http://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41547.pdf>, as stated in Dennis C. Blair, Director of National Intelligence, “Annual Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence,” op.cit., p.25

Violence is a catalyst for political transformation. A persistent history of corruption inevitably leads to instability and domestic/civil violence. This affects the political authorities' ability to exercise control over its sovereign territory. Lack of effective state control to maintain law and order and widespread violence erodes the trust of the population. When the political legitimacy is undermined, the terrorists find it an attractive opportunity to target such disturbed zones as suitable safe havens. For example, continuous violence in the Sahel region of West Africa and the presence of Al Qaeda rebels raises apprehension of radical Islam in this region.

Economic underdevelopment and stagnation are the logical consequences of weak governance. Lack of employment, food and shelter provides windows of opportunities to terrorist organizations who exploit these social evils for furthering their vitriolic agenda. Terror outfits often look for fresh recruits from those sections of population that are demoralized by poverty and weak governments that cannot provide for their well-being.

### **Safe havens in the Indian sub-continent**

South Asia has a continuous history of all the ills illustrated above. With Zawahiri's declaration of extending Al Qaeda "operations" into India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, it is amply clear that the terror organization is attempting to expand into new territories "suitable" for safe housing themselves and their illicit activities. Al Qaeda's aim is to establish Islamic Caliphate wherein they seek to establish their influence and acquire territorial space wherefrom they can conduct their actions without impunity.

Fragile governments characterize the political situations in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh. In recent times, these states have undergone political transition, which has left them politically unstable. Further, these states are marred by recurrent violence and high degree of corruption that has virtually crippled their economy. Poor economy has aggravated poverty levels in the countries. Afghanistan is one of the poorest nations in Asia. With 36 per cent of its population living below the poverty line, Afghanistan is only second to Bangladesh as Asia's poorest country.<sup>23</sup> According to the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), which is funded by the United Nation Development Program (UNDP), about 58.7 million people in Pakistan are living in multidimensional poverty, with 46 per cent of rural population and 18 per cent of urban

---

<sup>23</sup> Jordan Klin, "Poverty in Afghanistan," The Borgen Project, June 21, 2013, <http://borgenproject.org/poverty-in-afghanistan/>

households falling below the poverty line.<sup>24</sup> Poverty in India is widespread with 29.8 per cent of its population living below poverty line as of January 1, 2012.<sup>25</sup>

These fragile democracies frequently face civil unrests, which impedes the law and order situation in these states. Additionally, the geographical terrain of these states are marked by rugged mountains, caves and dense forests that makes them attractive for Al Qaeda to base their camps with relative assurance against detection. An added advantage to the Al Qaeda is the overwhelming Muslim population in Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. Recently, the ISIS has exhorted Muslims from Pakistan and India to join the cause of the insurgents in establishing Islamic Caliphate. There is a large chunk of population in these countries despaired by poverty and lack of trust in their governments and are thus seemingly vulnerable to radical influence inspired by terror groups like ISIS and Al Qaeda. This provides an opportunity for terror groups to look for new recruits from within these vulnerable sections.

The situation in South Asia raises further concern because India and Pakistan are nuclear weapons nations. There are several reports and authoritative accounts detailing that terror outfits like Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD) and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) are looking for nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.<sup>26</sup> JuD/LeT chief Hafiz Saeed is known for his assertion that he has “no problem” with a nuclear war between India and Pakistan over Kashmir.<sup>27</sup> These Pakistan-based terror groups are operating with impunity. The South Asian region with its persistent social problems and the presence of nuclear weapons is a strikingly suitable safe house for terrorists. Hence, the situation demands an immediate assessment to combat the terror forces and deny them safe havens in the region. The governments of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan – the most vulnerable to terrorists’ safe havens -- must undertake cooperative measures to combat the terror forces and exterminate them from the region. In addition, they must:

- Develop a joint assistance program to deal with the problem of terrorism in the Indian sub-continent
- Undertake cooperative measure to shutdown all safe havens existing in the region
- Develop a joint intelligence coordination centre to hunt down terrorists and destroy their shelters
- Strengthen cyber defense through joint coordination security centre

<sup>24</sup> Anwer Sumra, “SDPI report: 58.7m Pakistanis living below poverty line,” The Tribune Express, February 25, 2014, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/675805/sdpi-report-58-7m-pakistanis-living-below-poverty-line/>

<sup>25</sup> Country Comparisons, “Population below poverty line,” Index Mundi <http://www.indexmundi.com/g/r.aspx?v=69>

<sup>26</sup> See, Arif Jamal, Call for Transnational Jihad: Lashkar-e-Taiba 1985-2014, Avant-garde Books LLC, 2014; also see Rolf Mowatt-Larssen, Al Qaeda Weapons of Mass Destruction Threat: Hype or Reality,” Belfer Centre for Science and International Affairs, (2010), <http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/files/al-qaeda-wmd-threat.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> “JuD leaders chant 'jihad', would not mind Indo-Pak N-war,” The Economic Times, February 6, 2011 at [http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2011-02-06/news/28430018\\_1\\_kashmir-issue-hafiz-saeed-jihad](http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2011-02-06/news/28430018_1_kashmir-issue-hafiz-saeed-jihad)

- Undertake efforts to hold quadrilateral meeting between officials of all the vulnerable states to discuss the security situation
- Strengthen border security
- Coordinate with the local authorities for obtaining crucial information inputs
- Encourage the establishment of stable democracy and intra and inter-state economic cooperation

After the ISIS broke away from the mother group challenged its supremacy in pioneering the establishment of global jihadist movement, the Al Qaeda will leave no stone unturned to re-consolidate its influence worldwide. The Al Qaeda will resist every attempt by the ISIS to get unseated by its former ally. After its announcement of formation of its chapter in the Indian Subcontinent, the new group has already claimed responsibility for at least two attacks in Pakistan. The first attack was reportedly carried out in the form of an assassination of ISI/ Pakistan army Brigadier Fazal Zahoor Qadri at Astana-e-Fazal in Sargodha (Punjab province) on September 7, 2014.<sup>28</sup> AQIS reportedly claimed the attack on Zahoor whom it accused of killing innocent women and children in Waziristan and termed Pakistan as US puppet. It also threatened Pak army to stop violence against innocent Pakistanis or else face the wrath of AQIS. The group also took responsibility of the attack on Pakistan's Naval Dockyard on September 6, 2014 (on Pakistan's Defence Day).<sup>29</sup> The attack confirms that AQIS has infiltrated into the Armed forces, as many Naval personnel were involved (with AQIS) in this attack. AQIS said that many officers have quit their jobs, gone through radicalization process and joined the militants. The target was PNS Zulfiqar, a Chinese built frigate of the Pakistan Navy and the plan was to hijack the ship and then carry out attacks against a US supply ship.

## Conclusion

Safe havens are the new terror labs posing critical challenges to the security of the Indian-continent. The terrorists are looking for safe houses and mostly with utmost conviction as was evident from Osama's confidence to find a base for his compatriots on the Pakistani soil. A document dated August 27, 2010, has highlighted Laden's concerns for the safety of his fighters and followers in Pakistan, not because they might be arrested or detained by the authorities, but because of the torrential rains and flooding that were then affecting that country badly.<sup>30</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup> Amir Mir, "Al-Qaeda claims slaying of ISI brigadier," The News, September 20, 2014 at <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-2-273917-Al-Qaeda-claims-slaying-of-ISI-brigadier>

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Bin Laden's letter is indicative of his reliance on the Pakistani government to provide them safe havens. See "SOCOM-2012-0000003-HT," p.1, <http://assets.nationaljournal.com/pdf/OBL1.pdf>; as stated in "The Future of Al- Qaeda: Results of a foresight project," op. cit., p.28.

If safe havens are allowed to multiply, they may provide increasing assurance to the illicit actors to operate in an environment relatively safe against detection and characterized by the existence of conflicting nuclear weapon nations. It gives them an ideal situation to form bases in the absence of effective counter- terrorism collaboration measures between the vulnerable countries of the region. The situation is more worrisome with terrorists using sophisticated systems like the Internet and other digital technology to further their cause of “jihad”. The lack of counter-terrorism coordination between the targeted nations coupled with advanced technology gives the terrorist organizations a qualitative edge. The consequences of such emerging terror bases can spell disaster not only in the Indian-subcontinent but also in the entire world. With terrorist groups and their leaders<sup>31</sup> ranting about revenge and vengeance against India lately, it is imperative to take stock of the situation and develop appropriate combat measures against these illicit actors. The international community and the South Asian states must make every effort to dismantle all Al Qaeda-based safe havens as the emerging terror labs in South Asia.

---

<sup>31</sup> Raj Shekhar, “ISIS-linked terror group vows to avenge Batla House encounter,” Times of India, September 20, 2014, [http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/ISIS-linked-terror-group-vows-to-avenge-Batla-House-encounter/articleshow/42944960.cms?utm\\_source=facebook.com&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_campaign=india](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/ISIS-linked-terror-group-vows-to-avenge-Batla-House-encounter/articleshow/42944960.cms?utm_source=facebook.com&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=india); “Al-Qaida announces India wing, renews loyalty to Taliban chief,” Times of India, September 4, 2014 <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/south-asia/Al-Qaida-announces-India-wing-renews-loyalty-to-Taliban-chief/articleshow/41640746.cms>.

**Reshmi Kazi (Ph.D)** is Associate Fellow in the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi. She specializes in areas of nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear terrorism and nuclear disarmament issues. She completed her doctorate from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Her doctoral thesis is on 'Evolution of India's Nuclear Doctrine: A Study of Political, Economic and Technological Dimensions.' Her latest monograph is "Nuclear Terrorism: The Grand New Terror of the 21st Century" (IDSA Monograph Series, No. 27, October 2013). She regularly writes for the 'South Asian Voices' portal at the South Asia Program of the Stimson Center, Washington DC.

***The views expressed in this article are solely that of the author.***

The Society for the Study of Peace and Conflict (SSPC) is an independent, non-profit, nonpartisan research organization based in New Delhi, dedicated to conduct rigorous and comprehensive research, and work towards disseminating information through commentaries and analyses on a broad spectrum of issues relating to peace, conflict and human development. SSPC has been registered under the Societies Registration Act (XXI) of 1860. The SSPC came into being as a platform to exchange ideas, to undertake quality research, and to ensure a fruitful dialogue.

Copyright © Society for the Study of Peace and Conflict, New Delhi

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

Published by:

Society for the Study of Peace and Conflict.

Post Box: 10560,

JNU Old Campus, New Delhi-110067.

Website: [www.sspconline.org](http://www.sspconline.org)

<https://www.facebook.com/sspconline>

<https://twitter.com/sspconline>

We welcome your feedback. Email your comments at [sspconline@gmail.com](mailto:sspconline@gmail.com)

Designed and typeset by Excel Solutions