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The Combating Terrorism Center is an independent educational and research institution based in the Department of Social Sciences at the United States Military Academy, West Point. The CTC Sentinel harnesses the Center's global network of scholars and practitioners to understand and confront contemporary threats posed by terrorism and other forms of political violence.

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Riyaz Bhatkal and the Origins of the Indian Mujahidin

By Praveen Swami



The aftermath of the German Bakery bombing in the Indian city of Pune in February 2010. - Photo by Barcroft Media via Getty Images

IN THE SUMMER of 2004, a group of young Indian Muslim men gathered for a retreat at one of the sprawling villas that line the cheerfully-named Jolly Beach, the pride of the small, south Indian fishing town of Bhatkal. They swam, went for hikes in the woods, honed their archery skills, and occasionally engaged in target practice with an airgun. Local residents recall occasionally hearing small explosions, but presumed the men were setting off fireworks. Nothing the men did gave Bhatkal's police cause for concern. The police, however, were unaware that the men on Jolly Beach composed the core team of the jihadist network that would soon be known as the Indian Mujahidin. Long before the network adopted that name, the men from Jolly Beach executed a succession of bomb attacks beginning in 2005, killing hundreds across India.¹

¹ Minutes before bombs exploded outside court buildings in the Indian cities of Lucknow, Varanasi and Faizabad on

Today, the Indian Mujahidin has been implicated in a number of attacks in India, and there are signs that the group could become increasingly dangerous due to its growing collaboration with Lashkar-i-Tayyiba (LT, or LeT) in Pakistan. The expansion of this network could pose a serious challenge to regional stability in South Asia.

November 23, 2007, the group e-mailed a manifesto to the media that for the first time identified itself as the Indian Mujahidin. The letter, reprinted in its exact form below, stated that the attacks were carried out to protest "the pathetic condition of muslims in India that idol worshipers can kill our brothers, sisters, children and outrage dignity of our sisters at any place and at any time and we can't resist them. AL-HUM-DU-LILLAH now we are prepared enough to retaliate... Only Islam has the power to establish a civilized society and this could be only possible in Islamic rule, which could be achieved by only one path JIHAD-FEE-SABILILLAH."

Prosecutors in New Delhi charge that the principal organizers of the Jolly Beach gathering were Riyaz Ismail Shahbandri (also known as Riyaz Bhatkal) and his brother Iqbal. Most of the men at Jolly Beach knew each other only by aliases, but Indian intelligence officials believe that the gathering included the Bhatkal brothers, Abdul Subhan Qureshi, and the key figures responsible for the physical execution of bombings in northern India, Mohammad Sadiq Israr Sheikh and Atif Amin. Documents filed in Indian courts allege that the men played a key role in recruiting operatives, sourcing bomb components and organizing attacks. Furthermore, according to recent statements attributed to Pakistani-American jihadist David Coleman Headley (also known as Daood Gilani),² the Shahbandri brothers now lead the “Karachi Project,”³ an alleged LT operation to train and equip Indian jihadists for attacks in India.⁴ The bombing of the German Bakery in Pune on February 13, 2010, for example, may have been part of this project; one of the suspected bombers was Riyaz Shahbandri’s lieutenant, Mohammad Zarar Siddi Bawa, known as Yasin Bhatkal, who was also present at Jolly Beach.⁵

This article provides an overview of Riyaz Shahbandri’s journey into India’s nascent jihadist movement, while also providing insight into the origins of the Indian Mujahidin and how its collaboration with the LT is a growing threat to the region.

2 David Coleman Headley was arrested in October 2009 in the United States. He faced a number of charges in the United States, from involvement in the November 2008 Mumbai attacks to plotting against employees at a newspaper in Denmark that published caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad. He pleaded guilty to multiple charges in March 2010 and is reportedly cooperating with U.S. authorities on providing intelligence information.

3 For more specific details on the Karachi Project, see Animesh Roul, “After Pune, Details Emerge on the Karachi Project and its Threat to India,” *CTC Sentinel* 3:4 (2010).

4 Shishir Gupta, “ISI, LeT Getting Indian Jihadis Together in Karachi for Attack,” *Indian Express*, February 1, 2010.

5 This information is based on police review of closed-circuit surveillance footage. For details, see “IM Leader Yasin Bhatkal Mastermind of Pune Blasts, Claims ATS,” *Daily News and Analysis*, April 8, 2010.

Riyaz Shahbandri’s Early Life

Riyaz Shahbandri’s father, Ismail Shahbandri, left Bhatkal approximately three decades ago, hoping to make his fortune in Mumbai. He established a successful leather-tanning business in Mumbai’s Kurla area, and eventually purchased an apartment in Kardar Building off the busy Pipe Road—an impossible dream for most city migrants.⁶ Ismail Shahbandri’s prosperity ensured that his son, Riyaz, who was born in 1976, was able to study at local English-medium schools, and later civil engineering at Mumbai’s

“The Jolly Beach meeting would serve as a key planning gathering before the group executed a series of increasingly lethal bombings.”

Saboo Siddiqui Engineering College. In 2002, Riyaz married a Bhatkal-area woman, Nashua Ismail, the daughter of an electronics store owner. By this time, however, Riyaz’s story had begun to diverge significantly from the trajectory his businessman father had likely mapped for him.

Shafiq Ahmad, Riyaz’s brother-in-law to be, lived in the family’s apartment as he pursued his studies in Mumbai. Shafiq, however, was also an activist in the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI), an Islamic youth organization, and eventually rose to become the head of the group’s Mumbai chapter. Set up in 1977 by the Jamaat-i-Islami Hind organization, the Indian branch of the largest Islamist grouping in South Asia, SIMI was the group’s student wing. SIMI, however, was disowned by its founders five years later due to its increasingly inflammatory rhetoric, which was viewed as pushing Jamaat-

6 Biographical details on the Shahbandri family derive in part from Riyaz Shahbandri’s police dossier: “Riyaz Ismail Shahbandri @ Riyaz Bhatkal,” Maharashtra Police Anti-Terrorism Squad, September 30, 2008. Material was also gathered by the author during interviews of relatives and friends of the family during multiple visits to Mumbai and Bhatkal between October 2008 and April 2010.

i-Islami Hind into confrontation with the Indian government.⁷ SIMI sought to re-establish the caliphate, without which it felt the practice of Islam would remain incomplete. Muslims comfortable living in secular societies, its pamphlets warned, were destined for hell. Ideologies other than Islam were condemned as false and sinful.⁸ After Hindu fundamentalists demolished a mosque in the north Indian town of Ayodhya in 1992, SIMI began to call for direct action. SIMI President Shahid Badr Falahi demanded that “Muslims organize themselves and stand up to defend the community.”⁹

Later in the decade, SIMI’s polemic became increasing venomous. In a 1996 statement, SIMI declared that since democracy and secularism had failed to protect Muslims, the sole option was to struggle for the caliphate.¹⁰ Soon after, it put up posters calling on Muslims to follow the path of the 11th century conqueror Mahmood Ghaznavi, and appealed to God to send down a latter-day avatar to avenge the destruction of mosques in India.¹¹ The organization was finally proscribed after the 9/11 attacks in the United States when SIMI activists organized demonstrations in support of al-Qa`ida chief Usama bin Ladin, hailing him as a “true mujahid.”¹²

Due to Shafiq’s SIMI activism, Riyaz began to spend time at SIMI’s offices in Mumbai around 2001 at the peak of the organization’s radical phase, associating with men who would play key roles in the development of the jihadist movement in India. Among them were: Abdul Subhan Qureshi and Mohammad Sadiq Israr Sheikh, who

7 For a superb account of SIMI’s history, see Yoginder Sikand, “Islamist Assertion in Contemporary India: The Case of the Students Islamic Movement of India,” *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 23:2 (2003). Also see Irfan Ahmad, *Islamism and Democracy in India* (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2010).

8 “Interview with [SIMI President] Shahid Badr Falahi,” *Afkar-i-Milli* [New Delhi], November 2000.

9 Sikand, “Islamist Assertion in Contemporary India: The Case of the Students Islamic Movement of India.”

10 Sayyed Abdul Bari, *Azad Hindustan Main Muslim Tanzimein* (New Delhi: Institute of Objective Studies, 2001), p. 305.

11 Anita Verma, “India Urgently Needs a Ghaznavi: SIMI Chief,” *The Asian Age* [New Delhi], March 29, 2001.

12 Sikand, “Islamist Assertion in Contemporary India: The Case of the Students Islamic Movement of India.”

would co-found the Indian Mujahidin along with Riyaz Shahbandri; Ehtesham Siddiqi, who is now being tried for his alleged role in the bombings of Mumbai's suburban train system in July 2006; and Rahil Sheikh, who recruited dozens of Maharashtra jihadists, most notably for an abortive 2006 terrorist strike in Gujarat to avenge the anti-Muslim violence that had taken place there four years earlier.¹³

In addition to his role in SIMI, Riyaz's worldview also appears to have been shaped by his brother, Iqbal. Iqbal's adult life took a rather different course from that of his brother. He studied Unani medicine, a form of traditional healing based on Greek, Arab and Indian practices that has some currency across South Asia.¹⁴ Yet Iqbal's primary interests were religious. Although it does not appear he received a formal education in theology, Iqbal was an enthusiastic participant in the activities of Tablighi Jama'at, a neo-fundamentalist Islamic proselytizing order whose annual gatherings at Raiwind in Pakistan are reputed to draw more followers than any Muslim congregation other than the Hajj pilgrimage.¹⁵

13 For details of the role of Abdul Subhan Qureshi, also known as Tauqir, and Sadiq Israr Sheikh, see "Final Form Report Under Section 173, Code of Criminal Procedure in the Court of Kaveri Baweja, Chief Metropolitan Magistrate," New Delhi Police Special Cell, November 2010. For background on the 2006 Mumbai train bombings, including the role of Ehtesham Siddiqi, see Prerana Thakurdesai, "How the Case was Cracked," *India Today*, October 16, 2006. For details on the Aurangabad case, its links to the 2008 Mumbai attacks, and the role of Rahil Sheikh, see Praveen Swami, "Investigators Put Face to Voice on Mumbai Attack Tapes," *Hindu*, February 10, 2010.

14 Biographical details on the Shahbandri family derive in part from Riyaz Shahbandri's police dossier: "Riyaz Ismail Shahbandri @ Riyaz Bhatkal," Maharashtra Police Anti-Terrorism Squad, September 30, 2008. Material was also gathered by the author during interviews of relatives and friends of the family during multiple visits to Mumbai and Bhatkal between October 2008 and April 2010.

15 For background on Tablighi Jama'at and its belief system, see Yoginder Sikand, *The Origins and Development of the Tablighi Jamaat, 1920-2000* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2002). Tablighi Jama'at is a non-violent organization, yet some of its members have been involved in terrorist operations, usually because they have had dual memberships in a more violent cell or group.

Later in his life, Iqbal appears to have been drawn to the work of the controversial neo-fundamentalist Mumbai-based doctor-turned-teleevangelist, Zakir Naik.¹⁶ Naik has never been found to be involved in violence, but his words have lit up the imagination of diverse jihadists—among them New York taxi driver Najibullah Zazi, who pleaded guilty in the United States in February 2010 for plotting to attack New York City's Grand Central Station, among other targets.¹⁷ Zazi reportedly "became enchanted" with Naik's preaching.¹⁸

Naik's Islamic Research Foundation (IRF), which was listed as an approved theological resource on the LT-affiliated Jama'at-ud-Da'wa website, has proved a magnet for LT operatives and many rank-and-file SIMI members. Rahil Sheikh, a key LT organizer who allegedly assembled a jihadist network that sought to execute terrorist strikes in the state of Gujarat, recruited cadre at the 2003 Srinagar convention of the Salafi Jamaat Ahl-e-Hadis, where Naik was a speaker.¹⁹ Sheikh's associate, Feroze Deshmukh, who is being tried on multiple terrorism-related charges in Mumbai, worked as a librarian at the IRF.²⁰

Naik has made various speeches that could result in radicalization. In one speech, he said, "If he [Bin Ladin] is fighting the enemies of Islam, I am for him. If he is terrorizing America the terrorist—the biggest terrorist—I am with him."²¹ Naik concluded, "Every Muslim should be a terrorist. The thing is, if he is terrorizing a terrorist, he is following Islam."²² When interviewed by reporters after Najibullah Zazi's arrest, Naik insisted, "I have always condemned

16 For example, inside Bhatkal-area Indian Mujahidin safehouses raided by the Karnataka Police in October 2008, investigators found an abundance of pro-Taliban videos and Naik speeches.

17 On Najibullah Zazi, see David Von Drehle and Bobby Ghosh, "An Enemy Within: The Making of Najibullah Zazi," *Time Magazine*, October 1, 2009.

18 Ibid.

19 Praveen Swami, "New Proof on Mumbai Blasts," *Hindu*, August 1, 2006.

20 S. Husain Zaidi, "First Clues from Chat Room," *Indian Express*, September 30, 2006.

21 Zakir Naik, "Every Muslim Should be a Terrorist," speech in English available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bxk5AAA5FbI, undated.

22 Ibid.

terrorism, because according to the glorious Koran, if you kill one innocent person, then you have killed the whole of humanity."²³ Nevertheless, ideas such as these were profoundly attractive to angry young Muslim men in the years after the anti-Muslim violence that tore apart the state of Gujarat in 2002. For

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Riyaz and the men who would form the Indian Mujahidin, their anti-India jihadist project represented a response to the political challenges confronting their communities, not an abstract global cause.

In 2001, Riyaz's SIMI links to ganglord Aftab Ansari brought him into contact with well-known organized crime figure Asif Raza Khan, a year before Khan was killed in a shootout with the Gujarat police.²⁴ Authorities believe that Riyaz looked to Khan to use crime to fund jihadist operations.²⁵ Following Asif Khan's death in 2002, his brother, Amir Raza Khan, set up the Asif Raza Commando Force, a jihadist group dedicated to the memory of his brother. Amir Khan, who is linked to a welter of jihadist operations including an attack on the U.S. Consulate in Kolkata, allegedly provided passports and funds to facilitate the training of several Indian Mujahidin members in Pakistan.²⁶ In

23 Drehle and Ghosh.

24 For details, see "Riyaz Ismail Shahbandri @ Riyaz Bhatkal," Maharashtra Police Anti-Terrorism Squad, September 30, 2008.

25 Ibid. Mumbai police records show criminal proceedings were first initiated against Riyaz in 2002 for the extortion-related attempt to murder Kurla businessman Deepak Farsanwalla.

26 "Final Form Report Under Section 173, Code of Criminal Procedure in the Court of Kaveri Baweja, Chief Metropolitan Magistrate," New Delhi Police Special Cell, November 2010, p. 48.

May 2003, Mumbai police investigators say that Riyaz and Ehtesham Siddiqi held the first of a series of meetings, some involving Khan, to discuss the prospect of using Nepal as a base to train jihadists.²⁷ Nothing came of this plan, but Riyaz is alleged to have used Khan's funds to send several operatives for training in Pakistan.²⁸

By 2004, Riyaz had succeeded in tapping diverse sources to put together an organization committed to jihadist violence within India. The Jolly Beach meeting would serve as a key planning gathering before the group executed a series of increasingly lethal bombings.

The Origins and Formation of the Indian Mujahidin

Information on the early years of the Indian Mujahidin has been drawn from Sadiq Israr Sheikh, the only founding member of the group in custody.²⁹ Like Riyaz and Iqbal, Sheikh was born in a family that had migrated to Mumbai.³⁰ Beginning in 1996, he began attending SIMI meetings near his home in Mumbai's Cheeta Camp area. Perhaps drawn by the sense of purpose, SIMI appeared to provide many young Muslims in Mumbai a calling when the relationship between Hindus and Muslims became increasingly strained due to communal violence. According to police, Sheikh grew tired of SIMI's polemics and was in search of a more effective medium to turn his beliefs into action.³¹

In April 2001, a relative of Sheikh set forth a process where Sheikh would

27 "Riyaz Ismail Shahbandri @ Riyaz Bhatkal," Maharashtra Police Anti-Terrorism Squad, September 30, 2008.

28 Ibid.

29 For Sadiq's story, see Praveen Swami, "The Indian Mujahidin and Lashkar-i-Tayyiba's Transnational Networks," *CTC Sentinel* 2:6 (2009). Also see "Final Form Report Under Section 173, Code of Criminal Procedure in the Court of Kaveri Baweja, Chief Metropolitan Magistrate," New Delhi Police Special Cell, November 2010, pp. 47-49.

30 Biographical details are drawn from interviews conducted with relatives and friends of Sheikh in Mumbai in March 2010, as well as from "Final Form Report Under Section 173, Code of Criminal Procedure in the Court of Kaveri Baweja, Chief Metropolitan Magistrate," New Delhi Police Special Cell, November 2010, pp. 47-49.

31 Personal interview, senior Mumbai police official, March 2010.

eventually meet Asif Raza Khan.³² Riyaz and Sheikh had known each other from their days as SIMI activists in Mumbai; however, they came together as partners in the Indian Mujahidin project through Asif Khan. After reportedly receiving training at an LT camp in Pakistan, Sheikh, on instruction from Amir Raza Khan, began to recruit cadre in Azamgarh, starting in late 2002. Key among them were Atif Amin, who was killed in an October 2008 shootout with New Delhi police, Arif Badar, and Mohammad Shahnawaz.

By 2005, after the gathering at Jolly Beach, the multiple Indian Mujahidin network components had fallen into place. Prosecution documentation filed in New Delhi suggests Atif Amin's Azamgarh cell was responsible

“The jihadist networks in India remain extremely fluid and consist of small groups of individuals who are loosely allied together.”

for providing manpower for the attacks. Sadiq Sheikh liaised between the Azamgarh cell and the Indian Mujahidin's Mumbai-based senior leadership. Iqbal Shahbandri raised operatives for a specialist computer-services cell. Riyaz Shahbandri and his cell sourced explosives and bomb components that were assembled into usable devices. Abdul Subhan Qureshi traveled nationwide, finding SIMI sympathizers to assist with cells.³³

During this period, parallel jihadist groups led by figures who knew the Indian Mujahidin leadership from their time in SIMI proliferated as well. For

32 Material in this paragraph is drawn from "Final Form Report Under Section 173, Code of Criminal Procedure in the Court of Kaveri Baweja, Chief Metropolitan Magistrate," New Delhi Police Special Cell, November 2010, pp. 47-49.

33 For more details on Qureshi's background, see Swami, "The Indian Mujahidin and Lashkar-i-Tayyiba's Transnational Networks." For other source material, see "Final Form Report Under Section 173, Code of Criminal Procedure in the Court of Kaveri Baweja, Chief Metropolitan Magistrate," New Delhi Police Special Cell, November 2010.

example, Rahil Sheikh formed cadre who attempted to stage an abortive attack on Gujarat in 2006—an operation the Maharashtra police claim involved assault rifles and grenades packed into computer cases and shipped across the Indian Ocean by the LT. Nevertheless, the leadership of each separate jihadist network appears to have maintained operational secrecy, despite their common political past.

Little is known about the precise state of play between the Indian Mujahidin and the Karachi Project, but it is clear that the Indian Mujahidin network itself is just part of a larger jihadist project across India.³⁴ The 2008 bombings in Bangalore, for example, were carried out by a jihadist cell that had supplied explosives to Riyaz, but had no knowledge of his operations.³⁵ In the Bangalore case, LT-linked SIMI operative Sarfaraz Nawaz funded a Kerala-based jihadist cell run by long-time Islamist activist Tandiyantavide Nasir that trained recruits to carry out bombings on a ginger plantation in the forests around Kodagu, in southern India. Nawaz, who had worked closely with Qureshi in SIMI, does not appear to have known of his role in the Indian Mujahidin.

The central point is that the jihadist networks in India remain extremely fluid and consist of small groups of individuals who are loosely allied together. In this sense, they bear little resemblance to the large, hierarchically-structured Pakistan-based jihadist groups such as the LT or Jaysh-i-Muhammad—although even in the Pakistani cases there appear to have been some recent splintering.

Conclusion

Riyaz Shahbandri's story is evidence that substantial political problems are driving jihadist mobilization within India. It also makes clear, however, that the LT's infrastructure in Pakistan is critical to these networks' reach and lethality. Key leaders such as Riyaz Shahbandri and Sadiq Israr Sheikh trained in Pakistan. Indian investigations into the Indian Mujahidin's bombings have not reached

34 Roul.

35 For a discussion of this case, from which the material in this paragraph is drawn, see Praveen Swami, "To Bangalore with Hate," *Hindu*, April 21, 2010.

closure because figures central to the network's functioning have sought safe haven in Pakistan.

Many in India's intelligence services fear that the recent bombings in Pune in February 2010, Bangalore in April 2010, as well as the abortive attack in Deloitte in Hyderabad in May 2010 herald the coming of a renewed wave of jihadist violence intended to undermine the country's economic progress and status in the run-up to the high-profile Commonwealth Games, which will be held in New Delhi in October 2010. Whether or not Riyaz Shahbandri's so-called Karachi Project is a new endeavor or simply a name for ongoing jihadist activity directed at India, the country clearly faces a growing problem from Indian Muslims who have become radicalized and are able to seek assistance from Pakistan-based militants.

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Salafi-Jihadi Activism in Gaza: Mapping the Threat

By Benedetta Berti

IN JUNE 2007, Hamas took control of the Gaza Strip. Since then, numerous reports have surfaced about Salafi-jihadi and al-Qa`ida activity in the Palestinian Territories. Despite these reports, there is relatively little information on the Palestinian Salafist community and its connection with Hamas and the international Salafi-jihadi movement. This article provides an overview of the characteristics of the Salafi-jihadi movement in Gaza, and it maps the existing groups that pursue this militant ideology in the Palestinian Territories.

The article finds that the Salafi-jihadi network in the Gaza Strip is largely a local phenomenon and it has thus far lacked concrete organizational and operational links with al-Qa`ida or other international jihadist groups. Nevertheless, the network admires al-Qa`ida's *modus operandi*, is ideologically aligned with al-Qa`ida, and in the past has attempted to strike foreign targets in Gaza.¹ These worrying factors demonstrate the importance of monitoring Salafi-jihadi activity in the Palestinian Territories.

Defining the Salafi-Jihadi Movement: A General Framework

Salafism, an Islamist revivalist movement within Sunni Islam, is not an entirely new phenomenon in Gaza. Non-violent Salafist organizations, focused on social work and proselytism, first emerged in the early 1980s under the guidance of clerics such as Shaykh Salim Sharab. Many of these clerics studied in Saudi Arabia before returning home to the Palestinian Territories. The movement continued to grow during the 1990s, but never became a mainstream faction within the Palestinian political arena.² Hizb al-Tahrir (also known as

Hizb-ut-Tahrir) is an example of this non-violent Salafist trend, advocating the establishment of an Islamic caliphate in Palestine while politically opposing the Hamas government.³

Violent Salafist groups, on the other hand, only developed in the Palestinian Territories in the past few years. These groups are focused on armed jihad and are globally referred to as Salafi-jihadis—this marks their distinction with non-violent Salafist groups. They mushroomed in the months leading up to and following the 2005 Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, and their presence additionally increased in the midst of the internecine struggle between Hamas and Fatah before Hamas' eventual takeover of Gaza in 2007.⁴ In conjunction with a process of fragmentation within Palestinian society, new Salafist-inspired groups were created both to challenge the internal distribution of power between Fatah and Hamas and to advocate for stronger links between the predominantly nationalist or statist Palestinian cause and the international jihadist network. These groups initially emerged in Gaza and gained strength because of the temporary situation of anarchy and the vacuum of power created by the struggle between Hamas and Fatah. They were, however, able to gain legitimacy due to the ongoing process of decaying secularism within Palestinian society and the rise of Islamist political forces—a trend that is tightly connected with a wider regional dynamic.⁵ Despite this phenomenon, the rise of Salafi-jihadi groups has occurred predominantly in Gaza, as the Fatah-controlled West Bank has mostly managed to contain the rise of new Islamist groups while cracking down on more established actors such as Hamas.

3 Reuven Paz, "Salafi-Jihadi Responses to Hamas' Electoral Victory," *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology* 4, November 1, 2006.

4 For some of the first reports, see Khaled Abu Toameh, "Al-Qaida-Linked Terrorists in Gaza," *Jerusalem Post*, February 6, 2005; "Al-Qa'idah Claims Attack on Palestinian Official," *al-Arabiya*, May 21, 2006; Khaled Abu Toameh, "Al-Qaida in Palestine Issues Death Threat Against Abbas. PA Foils Attempt To Kill Fatah Security Chief," *Jerusalem Post*, May 22, 2006.

5 Asher Susser, "The Rise of Hamas in Palestine and the Crisis of Secularism in the Arab World," *Crown Center for Middle East Studies, Brandeis University*, February 2010, pp. 1, 45-46.

1 See, for example, the July 2008 interview between Salafi-jihadi activist Abu Mustafa and *Der Spiegel*. On that occasion, Mustafa stated: "We have to fight—just like our brothers on Sept. 11... We feel just like al-Qaida and we think as they do." For the interview, see Ulrike Putz, "Compared to Us, Hamas is Islamism Lite," *Der Spiegel*, July 18, 2008.

2 Hasan Jabr, "Al-Ayyam Opens File on Salafi Groups in The Gaza Strip," *al-Ayyam*, May 17, 2007.