

Russia Remains a Target of MI6-Aided Londonistan Terrorists

by Ramtanu Maitra

Nov. 25—On Nov. 16, Russian police charged nine men with organizing cells of a banned Islamist group, Hizb ut-Tahrir (HuT), and illegal possession of guns, explosives, and counterfeit euros and U.S. dollars. According to the Russian Interior Ministry, five of the nine men are leaders of the Russian cells of the U.K.-headquartered HuT, operating under protection of the British Secret Intelligence Service (BSIS), also known as MI6, to establish a Caliphate throughout the Islamic world and undermine nation-states.

The Russian Supreme Court officially outlawed HuT on Feb. 14, 2003, designating this organization as a terrorist group, along with 15 other organizations. Despite the ban, HuT remains active inside Russia. HuT's official website said that the police conducted searches on a much larger scale than was officially announced. According to the group, the police searched 40 locations in Moscow and Moscow Oblast (province), as well as 30 locations in the city of Ufa. In Russia, the group had long been active in the mainly Muslim regions of Bashkortostan and Tatarstan, where several men were convicted last year of belonging to the extremist organization and sentenced to lengthy prison terms.

So far, so good. But, a decisive blow against this terrorist capability requires that Moscow—is some elements in Pakistan have done—identify the British roots of this jihadi assault, as part of broader steps to shut down the London-based financial empire.

HuT: MI6's Long-Standing Assets

The HuT has been organizing Central Asian Muslims (who are generally not devoutly religious), for at least two decades, using the “peaceful” means of distributing free Qurans and food to the poor. This ground force, financed from the Persian Gulf, particularly by the Wahhabite Saudis, and trained in Britain and Pakistan, have created a segment within Central Asia which considers the governments to be corrupt, dictatorial, and anti-Islamic.

A number of terrorist groups, such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), Islamic Jihad Union, and the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), have made known their presence, since the collapse of the Soviet Union. The HuT, which uses the “peaceful” means of evangelism, is one of the major providers of fighters to these various terrorist groups. As a result, HuT is banned in most of the “stan” nations as it is in Russia, among some other nations, yet it continues to gain strength throughout Central Asia, particularly in the densely populated Ferghana Valley, where Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan meet.

In 2008, the U.S. State Department's annual report pointed out that the threat posed by Islamic militant groups in Central Asia, especially in the Kyrgyz and Tajik portions of the Ferghana Valley, appears to be growing. Over the last four years, as Afghanistan and Pakistan became more unstable, and the drug flow out of Afghanistan remained undisturbed, the terrorists have added quite a bit of muscle.

While these terrorists operate in Central Asia, Russia, Pakistan, and China to undermine sovereign nation-states, the British objective, which has been undersigned by the Obama-led United States, is to use these Islamist terrorists to keep Russia and China off-balance and prevent them from exerting their economic influence in Central Asia.

Does the HuT, besides providing the fighters, have an armed wing of its own? Many observers believe that it has begun to move away from its policy of non-violence, in order to accomplish its ultimate goal, which is to establish the Caliphate. HuT has made clear that it believes that the Central Asian countries will use force to protect themselves, and the HuT would respond under those circumstances with force as well.

The question has been raised whether, following the capture of armed HuT members en route to a planned attack on the U.S. military base in Kyrgyzstan, the BSIS

will lead HuT to form a military wing by further radicalizing itself.

There are indications that the process is well on its way in the troubled Arab lands. For instance, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, founded by Shaykh Assad Bayyoud Tamimi, a “former” HuT member, also founded a second splinter group in 1982, the Islamic Jihad Organization (also known as the al-Aqsa Battalions). Islamic Jihad poses a threat to Hamas in Gaza.

Another indication of such development is the formation of the Islamic Movement of Central Asia (IMCA): In 2002, the region’s Islamic radicals, ostensibly under orders from “Londonistan,” decided to unite under a new underground organization called the Islamic Movement of Central Asia, which would bring together the IMU, Kyrgyz, and Tajik radicals, and Uighur separatists from China, whose East Turkestan Islamic Movement had broadened to include Afghans, Chechens, Kyrgyz, Uzbeks, and Kazaks who share its new goal of forming an Islamic state in Central Asia.

Kyrgyzstani authorities expressed their belief that the IMCA was indeed formed in 2003, with the immediate goal of creating a Caliphate in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan, while reserving expansion to Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and northwest China for a second stage. The headquarters of the IMCA, which is led by Tohir Yuldashev, are believed to be located in Afghanistan’s northeastern Badakhshan province, bordering Pakistan and China. The main insurgent targets are the American bases in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, as well as the embassies in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan.

How would Britain’s intelligence services accomplish the seemingly impossible task of directing the Caliphate-seeking jihadis? To understand this, one has to reflect on Britain’s control over the Islamic nations during its imperial days. Following the physical collapse of the British Empire, Britain, because of its historical control over financial institutions, illicit drug trades, and various dissident groups deployed to undermine opposition to its colonial rule, set up a nest of terrorists which has been named by some analysts “Londonistan.”

Who Controls Londonistan?

Londonistan is a hydra-headed monster, fed and harbored by British intelligence. One of the major staging grounds for the terrorists had long been the barely governed Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) of Pakistan, bordering Afghanistan. Following the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan in 1989, most of the Arab and Central Asian mujahideen who had worked with al-Qaeda, and later with the Afghan Taliban who took over control in Kabul in 1995-96, growing Islamic militant groups, mainly located in Uzbekistan, under the leadership of Tohir Yuldashev begun to grow in numbers. These terrorists procured the support of a number of intelligence agencies, including the CIA, Pakistani ISI, British MI6, and Saudi Arabian intelligence.

However, MI6’s interest in unleashing HuT was not confined to undermining Central Asia, Russia, and China; but the HuT was also deployed to undermine what was Pakistan’s prime source of stability, its military. In June 2011, Dr. Jassim Taqui, writing in the *Pakistani Observer*, reported

that Pakistan’s Inter-Services Public Relations spokesman, Major. Gen. Athar Abbas, had disclosed the arrest of Brig. Ali Khan and four others. The report said, “They were detained for questioning on their links with London-based Islamist party Hizb-ut-Tahrir (HuT).”

Pakistan had banned the HuT in 2003, Taqui said; “however, experts believe that the party enjoys close ties with MI6, which stood with the party despite complaints from Arab and Central Asian countries about its link with the militant parties that seek to destabilize these countries. Former President Gen. Pervez Musharraf also complained to the British authorities that HuT was engaged in a propaganda drive against military leadership.”

On March 7, 2012, Pakistan’s news daily *The Express Tribune*, in an article titled, “Bigger plot: ‘HuT has formed a shadow govt for Pakistan,’” cited the BBC to point out that Brig. Ali Khan (ret.), one of the Pakistani military officials accused of plotting to topple the democratic government and mount attacks on the army headquarters, had met the chief of the HuT for the Palestinian Territory, while he was conspiring to overthrow the government and create an Islamic Caliphate.





The banned terrorist group Hizb ut-Tahrir (HuT), based in London, calls for the establishment of an Islamic Caliphate throughout the Muslim world, and even beyond. Shown: a HuT demonstration in Dhaka, Bangladesh, January 2011.

According to Brig. Amir Riaz, the head of the 111 Brigade, Ali had disclosed that the HuT has prepared a new constitution and a shadow government for Pakistan, and that the group was ready to take over any time. Pakistan's 111 Brigade is based in Rawalpindi and had played a pivotal role in almost all of the many coups in Pakistan that allowed the Pakistani military to wrest power from popularly elected governments.

"Brig Ali told me that HuT could establish a real caliphate which could also ensure good governance in Pakistan. He also told me that HuT has prepared an alternative constitution and a shadow government which could take over anytime," said Brig. Riaz, who has been named as a witness by the prosecution. In his statement, Riaz further said that Ali had told him that some elements in the Pakistan Air Force were part of the HuT conspiracy, and that they would mount an air raid on the General Headquarters with F-16 fighter jets during a corps commanders' conference, to eliminate the army brass. He claimed that Ali had asked him to take over key buildings in Islamabad following such an attack. But he said that he had turned down the offer to become part of the conspiracy and to cooperate with Ali.

Tony Blair and the HuT

While the Pakistani media, in particular, reported that the HuT works as an operational arm of the BSIS, it was never very difficult to discern this linkage. As

noted, the main goal of the HuT movement is to recreate the Caliphate, the Islamic state formally brought to an end in 1924, following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, and to use that pretext for committing violence in the Islamic world and beyond, for example, in Russia. Although it claims to be nonviolent, HuT acknowledges that violence may eventually be necessary to overthrow the regimes standing in the way of the Caliphate. It is viciously anti-Semitic and anti-American, and disseminates a radical Islamist ideology fundamentally opposed to democratic capitalism and to Western concepts of freedom. And yet, it flourishes in Britain as well as

some of the sheikhdoms of the Gulf.

Looking at the players who have helped Tony Blair and his wife Cherie to launder the HuT as a "peaceful" evangelical group, it becomes clear that the BSIS is not especially discriminating in whom they are dealing with. Take the Quilliam Foundation, for example: It was created by Blair & Co., when the British Prime Minister was under pressure to outlaw the HuT, which had already been banned in Germany, and all the Central Asian "stan" nations, among many others. Since HuT is an asset of Londonistan, Blair, and Gordon Brown later, hemmed and hawed about lack of evidence needed to brand it a terrorist outfit, and then set up Quilliam, run by "ex-HuT" senior members.

The key person at Quilliam is Norman Benotman, who was a senior figure in the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG), which had ties to al-Qaeda, and worked hand-in-glove with Blair-MI6 in the plot to assassinate Muammar Qaddafi of Libya in 1995. And, Bentoman was more than just a LIFG fighter. Wikileaks documents provided narratives from a detainee, al-Aghani, about how Osama bin Laden, surrounded by American troops, escaped from the Tora Bora area of Afghanistan in early December of 2001. In addition to this account, CNN terrorism analyst Paul Cruickshank said that he was given an account of this by Benotman, then, a senior figure in the LIFG. Benotman was in phone contact with Abu Leith al-Libbi, a Libyan al-Qaeda official

close to bin Laden, after 9/11. No matter how much filtering of this story has been done, it is evident that Benotman was involved in the effort to find a safe passage for Osama.

Benotman is a senior analyst of the Foundation, established by Maajid Nawaz, Ed Husain, and Rashad Zaman Ali. Both Ali and Nawaz are “former” members of the HuT, and Husain studied with the group or group members. The creation of the Quilliam Foundation by Blair & Co. was aimed at legitimizing the HuT. Now, the funds and donations to this foundation are surely finding their way to the HuT, and at the same time, Quilliam, an MI5/MI6 front, functions ostensibly as the watchdog, so that the HuT never gets blamed for any terrorist act.

What Are the HuT Plans for Russia?

It is unlikely that the HuT will be recruiting Russian military officers the way it did in Pakistan. According to the Russian human rights organization Memorial, Hizb ut-Tahrir did not perceive Russia as a country where Islamic rule should be established. However, it points out that hostile moves by the Russian authorities may force the leaders of the organization to review their

position, and declare Russian authorities to be their enemy, which will allow its members to go underground and act according to new rules.

The Russian Interior Ministry noted that HuT had caught the authorities’ attention back in 2010, when members of the group from the North Caucasus and Central Asia were connected to illegal activities, including calls to overthrow the Russian government and to establish an Islamic Caliphate. To strengthen the case against the Islamic organization, Russian news agencies further reported that its members had plotted to derail a train back in 2010 and had recently rented apartments “near transportation hubs.” The Russian media also connected this organization to the attempt on the life of Tatarstan’s mufti, Ildus Faizov, and the murder of his deputy, Valiulla Yakupov, on July 19.

Through the arrests of these activists, Moscow has officially recognized that Hizb ut-Tahrir al-Islami exists and operates inside Russia. The organization has not stopped its activities in the country since it was first designated a terrorist organization, but has even expanded its activities. “Five out of nine suspects are leaders of the Russian and Moscow cells of the Party of Islamic Liberation,” the police statement said.

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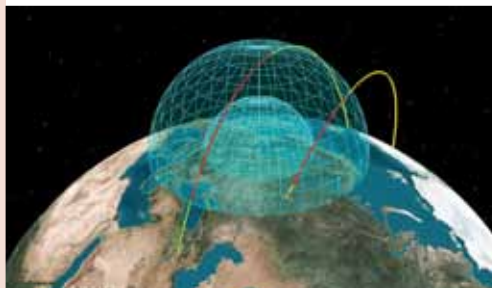
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