

Scenario 91

For ***The Conspiracy Killers***

*This chapter is to pay respects, regards and tribute to Pakistan's Army Chief **Gen Raheel Sharif** who is fighting at various internal and external sectors with an undying determination, audacity and fortitude – keeping the visionary nationalist approach in sight.*

***Gen Raheel Sharif**, with the help of his commanders' team, successfully restrained the terrorists of all sorts including political, criminal, economic and sectarian etc, where the civil governments in succession had miserably failed to deliver; rather the political elite remained implied partners to the menace.*

*This chapter is here to salute **Gen Raheel Sharif** that how he tackled the dissident voices within the armed forces – to which phenomenon the India and US, in the garb of friendship, tried to label as '**mutiny in Pak-Army**' during the previous decade.*

***Gen Raheel Sharif's** effective leadership coupled with the forces' morale helped the establishment to redress those orthodox dissenting elements from ranks and files of the Pakistan Army.*

This chapter would give an insight to the historians to keep their records straight while pondering that how some media persons' misconception or misuse of their narrative abilities can harm the state – half truth is more dangerous, we all know.

*The ending lines of this chapter contains briefs of an Indian Intelligence columnist **Vinod Sharma, published in Indian media** – directly admitting that ISI is, and has been, the most professional, proficient and nationalistic corps of the Pakistan Army.*

[DEADLY] INTERVIEWS OF 2011:

On 9th October 2009, a high-level meeting at the Presidency of Islamabad between Pakistan's civil and military leadership endorsed a military operation against the Pakistani Taliban and al-Qaeda in the South Waziristan tribal area.

At the same time, al-Qaeda was seriously implementing its game plan against its main targets, the United States and its ally Pakistan; in that context the militant activity in Pakistan had expanded manifolds.

A week earlier, a car loaded with explosives had rammed into the compound wall of the Indian Embassy in Kabul, killing at least 17 people. Just three days after that Kabul episode, the militants staged a daring attack on the Pak-Army's GHQ in Rawalpindi. Two days after, a suicide bomber detonated a bomb in market town in the Swat Valley region, killing 41 people and injuring 45 others – chaos all around.

Pakistan was at critical juncture, with around 60,000 armed troops deployed in South Waziristan to flush out the Pakistan Tehrik e Taliban (TTP), al-Qaeda and their allies from the Pakistani tribal areas.

ILYAS KASHMIRI WANTED – DEAD OR ALIVE:

During the same tense times, an al-Qaeda related leader Ilyas Kashmiri, released much threatening messages to Pakistani military through certain media members. It was because during the past few months, certain leading figures of the TTP had been killed in drone attacks including Osama al-Kini, a Kenyan national and Chief of al-Qaeda's External Operations; Khalid Habib, the Commander of the *Lashkar al-Zil* [al-Qaeda's fighting force]; Tahir Yuldashev, an Uzbek leader of al-Qaeda; TTP leader Baitullah Mehsud, and many more. A little background of Ilyas Kashmiri:

On 26th February 2000, Ilyas had conducted a guerrilla operation against the Indian army in Nakyal [AJ&K] sector after crossing the LoC with 25 fighters of 313 Brigade. [*It was retaliation to an Indian attack in which they had killed 14 civilians a day earlier*] They kidnapped an Indian army officer who was later beheaded - his head was paraded in the bazaars of Kotli back in Azad Jammu & Kashmir [AJ&K].

Ilyas Kashmiri, was a fighter since Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. He learnt his military skills from those turbulent days while roaming around in

the Pak-Afghan border regions but later engaged in militant activities in Kashmir after the Afghan war. He was a member of Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (HuJI) but disagreements with its leader Qari Saifullah Akhtar in 1990s led Kashmiri to establish his own new unit [within HuJI] known as ***the 313 Brigade***.

During the mid-1990s, Kashmiri was near **Poonch** when he was seized by the Indian Army and sent to prison, where he spent two years before escaping and returning to Pakistan.

Ilyas Kashmiri was named and arrested in late 2003 in an attempt to assassinate President Gen Musharraf but was released in February 2004. Until the 2007 he apparently did little, but later returned to the 313 Brigade which, till then, had been closely tied to al-Qaeda. Kashmiri rebuilt its strength while collaborating with the Taliban and he moved to Waziristan along with his personnel from his Kotli (Kashmir) training camp. Till then he was in regular contact with *al Qaeda* high command through Mustafa Abu al Yazid....

Ilyas Kashmiri was also named in 2008 Mumbai attacks, the 2010 Pune bombing, the assassination of Benazir Bhutto and the killing of Ameer Faisal Alavi. Kashmiri was also once named behind a 2008 plan to assassinate Gen Kayani while the General stepped out of his car during daily visits to a gym; however, the al-Qaeda leadership had rejected the claim. In early 2010, Kashmiri became the new leader of al-Qaeda's ***Lashkar al Zil***, [*Shadow Army*], following the death of its former leader Abdullah Said al Libi by an American drone.

On 6th October 2009, Ilyas Kashmiri, the Al Qaeda Commander, called a media person named Saleem Shehzad at Mir Ali in North Waziristan. Next day he reached there after travelling for seven hours, where he was kept confined for two days and then briefed that:

"The commander [Ilyas Kashmiri] is alive; the news of his death in a drone attack [on 7th & 14th September] was not true."

Ilyas Kashmiri had himself once divulged that in 1994, he launched the al-Hadid operation in the Indian capital, New Delhi, to get some of his *jihadi* comrades released. His group of 25 people included Sheikh Omar Saeed [*named for abduction of US reporter Daniel Pearl in Karachi in 2002*] as his deputy.

The group abducted several foreigners, including American, Israeli and British tourists and took them to Ghaziabad near Delhi. They then de-

manded that the Indian authorities should release their colleagues, but instead they attacked the hideout. Sheikh Omar was injured and arrested. Ilyas escaped unhurt and Omar was later released in a swap for the passengers of a hijacked Indian aircraft.

In reply to a question about the then upcoming South Waziristan operation [June – October 2009], Ilyas Kashmiri had said:

'Those who planned this battle actually aimed to bring the world's biggest Satan [US] and its allies into this trap and swamp [Afghanistan]. Afghanistan is a unique place in the world where the hunter has all sorts of traps to choose from.

It might be deserts, rivers, mountains and the urban centres as well. This was the thinking of the planners of this war who were sick and tired of the great Satan's global intrigues and they aimed for its demise to make this world a place of peace and justice.

This was the illusion on which a great alliance of world powers came to Afghanistan, but due to their misplaced conceptions they gradually became trapped in Afghanistan.

*Today, **they have lost the war in Afghanistan. Now, when they realized their defeat**, they developed an emphasis that this entire battle is being fought from outside; from the two Waziristans. To me, this military thesis is an illusion; a daydream to create reactions and counter - reactions.'*

Why this all bloodshed?

"Because the entire game was in the hands of USA; organs like the UN and countries like India and Israel were simply the extension of its resources. The defeat of American global hegemony is a must if I want the liberation of my homeland Kashmir, and therefore it provided the reasoning for my presence in this war theatre.

The RAW [India's Research and Analysis Wing] has detachment command centres in the Afghan provinces of Kunar, Jalalabad, Khost, Argun, Helmand and Kandahar. The cover operations are road construction companies.

For instance, the road construction contract from Khost city to the Tanai tribe area is handled by a contractor who is actually a current Indian army colonel. In Gardez, telecommunication compa-

nies are the cover for Indian intelligence operations. Mostly, their men operate with Muslim names, but actually the employees are Hindus."

Answering a question that **'what impressed you to join al-Qaeda'**; Ilyas Kashmiri had replied that:

'We were both victims of the same tyrant. Today, the entire Muslim world is sick of Americans and that's why they are agreeing with Mullah Omar or Sheikh Osama.'

When asked that if it was so then **why you were against the Pakistani military establishment**; to which Ilyas comprehended:

"Pakistan is my beloved country and the people who live there are our brothers, sisters and relatives. I cannot even think of going against its interests. It was never the Pakistan army that was against me, but certain elements who branded me as an enemy to cover up their weaknesses and to appease their masters."

On 13th February 2010 at 7:15 pm, a bomb exploded at the German Bakery in **Pune** town of Maharashtra, India; 17 people were killed and 60 injured including an Italian woman, two Sudanese and one Iranian student. The German Bakery was located near the Jewish *Chabad* House and the Osho *ashram*, an international meditation resort in Pune. The ashram and the bakery were frequently visited by foreigners, tourists and locals alike. It was then believed that Ilyas Kashmiri had planned it or controlled it while sitting back – but during investigations his name had not surfaced up.

Next day, the Indian Home Minister stated that responsibility for the blast had not yet been determined, but that Indian authorities were making attempts to interview *David Headley*, accused of involvement with terrorism who was then undergoing trial in the United States.

On 18 April 2013, a Pune court awarded death sentence to one Indian Mujahideen operative Himayat Baig, for his involvement in the blasts.

ILYAS DECLARED DEAD:

On 3rd June 2011, Ilyas Kashmiri, the head of al-Qaeda's Operation Wing, was killed in a drone attack in Pakistan's FATA, the most wanted man in the Pak-Afghan region those days. Aged 46, born at village Sa-

The Living History of Pakistan Vol-I

mahni of Bhimber AJK, the Commander of its 313 Brigade of the banned *Harkat ul Jihad e Islami* [HuJI], was reportedly killed in a drone attack near Wana in the South Waziristan Agency at Pak-Afghan border, along with his nine companions leaving three seriously injured.

Ilyas Kashmiri's legendary 313 Brigade had grown into the most powerful group in South Asia and its network was once strongly knitted in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Kashmir, India, Nepal and Bangladesh. According to CIA, the footprints of 313 Brigade were also seen in Europe and other countries too. **On 31st August 2011**, *Asia Times Online* reported that a well known Taliban commander named Shah Sahib had replaced Kashmiri as commander of the Brigade 313.

Despite what some reports claimed, Ilyas was never a part of Pakistan's SSG unit, nor even of the army. Nearly 30 years ago when he joined the Afghan jihad against the Soviets from the platform of the HuJI, he developed expertise in guerrilla warfare and explosives.

This highly trained militant had twice been reported killed previously, on 7th & 14th September 2009. Kashmiri was reported killed along with Hani-fullah Janikhel and Kaleemullah in Machikhel, North Waziristan on 7th September 2009 when they were hit by a drone attack. However, in mid-October Kashmiri was reported to have survived the air strike and granted an interview to Saleem Shahzad. He was outside for a while when the house he was staying at was hit by drone thus he survived.

Reportedly, he was also wanted in connection with a number of major terrorist attacks in Pakistan and India, including an attack on Mumbai on 26th November 2008 in which 163 people were killed.

Ilyas Kashmiri was the mastermind of the barefaced attack on the naval air base in Karachi **on 22nd May 2011**. Kashmiri, the only known Pakistani militant to have raised high into al-Qaeda's ranks, was appointed 'Acting Chairman' by Saif Al Adel, the Egyptian Chief Military Strategist of al-Qaeda and Deputy of Osama bin Laden.

Kashmiri, an expert in guerrilla warfare, had lost a finger and an eye during the fight against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan in the 1980s. He was once a hero of the Kashmir movement, but when Islamabad, under pressure from the United States, wound down operations in Kashmir, he went underground.

He had left the Kashmir region in 2005 after his second release from detention and he headed for North Waziristan. He had previously been arrested by Indian forces, but he broke out of jail and escaped. He was

The Living History of Pakistan Vol-I

then detained by the ISI as the suspected mastermind of an attack on President Gen Musharraf [in 2003] but was cleared and released.

The ISI then picked up Ilyas again in 2005 after he refused to close down his operations in Kashmir. Kashmiri was declared as 'most dangerous' due to his training skills and commando expertise; the US had placed a bounty of US\$5 million on his head.

His death news was aired on all private Pakistani channels; Express TV & Sama TV released special features on him. Federal Interior Minister Rehman Malik told the media: *'All ground intelligence shows that he is dead; 98% chance he is dead.'*

On 27th October 2009, the US Department of Justice declared Ilyas Kashmiri as a conspirator with whom an American citizen from Chicago named David Headley [later arrested on terrorism related charges] reportedly had deep contacts.

The US government noted that Kashmiri had issued a statement the same month that he was alive and working with al Qaeda. He was in regular contact with Headley for some time. Headley was reportedly distraught at news of Kashmiri's death, but after receiving confirmation that he was still alive, set off for Pakistan, at which time he was arrested by the FBI.

Kashmiri was officially indicted on two counts, for ***"conspiracy to murder and maim against the newspaper Jyllands - Posten and conspiracy to provide material support to terrorism in Denmark"***. During court testimony **on 31st May 2011**, Headley indicated that he had conducted preliminary research for Kashmiri in a plot targeting Robert J Stevens, the CEO of Lockheed - Martin and the defence contractor.

On 6th August 2010 the United States labelled Kashmiri a ***"Specially Designated Global Terrorist"*** while the United Nations added him and his group HUJI to its blacklist established under UN Security Council Resolution 1267. The label allowed the United States to freeze any of his assets in US jurisdiction and to *"prohibit US persons from engaging in any transactions with him."* The UN resolution required UN member states to freeze assets, ban travel and ban the sale of arms to Kashmiri and HUJI by or through any means.

However, **on 10th May 2012**, the United Nations Security Council officially labelled Kashmiri as "reportedly deceased" on the Al Qaeda Sanc-

tions list and made it clear that they would treat him as dead until it could be proven otherwise.

MUNIZAE'S DREADFUL INTERVIEW:

One PAUL JAY, the Senior Editor of '***the Real News Network***' at Washington had once approached veteran TV reporter of Pakistan media named Munizae Jahangir; the very next day when the news about one Saleem Shahzad's death reached the outer world. Paul Jay's ***Interview*** with Munizae Jahangir ***dated 1st June 2011*** is placed here verbatim:

PAUL JAY: On Tuesday in Pakistan, the journalist Syed Saleem Shahzad was brutally murdered in Islamabad. Saleem was the bureau chief for Asia Times Online. He was also an often contributor to The Real News Network. Now joining us from Pakistan talk about the murder of Saleem Shahzad is Munizae Jahangir. Munizae is a journalist and a host of a show on Express Media Group Television, which is the second largest television network, English network, in Pakistan. Thanks for joining us, Munizae.

MUNIZAE JAHANGIR: *Thank you for having me.*

JAY: So, first of all, what do we know about what happened?

MUNIZAE: *Well, what we do know is that Saleem Shahzad was working on certain stories which were related to al-Qaeda and al-Qaeda's involvement with the army. Now, he had written several stories on al-Qaeda, one of them being on al-Qaeda number two Mullah Baradar, who was taken into custody in Karachi by the army.*

He wrote a story saying that Mullah Baradar was taken into custody by the Pakistan army so that he could be offered for negotiations with the Americans. After that, apparently, he was called in by the ISI, the intelligence agency of Pakistan, the secret intelligence, and he was questioned, after which he wrote a long email to Human Rights Watch saying that he is being threatened by the ISI.

And he said that several times and confided several times to the HRW, Human Rights Watch, here in Pakistan, to the local representative here in Pakistan. And he said that if I disappear or something happens to me, please release an email. So he actually did send out an email saying that his life was under threat.

Recently there was an attack on PNS Mehran early in May, the Navy attack on PNS Mehran and -- in Karachi. He wrote a story saying that basically there were people within the Navy who were in some ways -- I wouldn't say collusion, but they were arrested by the Navy for having some links with al-Qaeda, after which al-Qaeda reacted and they launched an attack on PNS Mehran air-base.

That was the first part of his story. The second part of his story was going to be published.

Meanwhile, he was on his way to a local TV station when he went missing. His family went and lodged an FIR. They found his car close to Islamabad with his ID card and an ID card of another person. They found his body floating in the river yesterday. And there was this organization, nongovernmental organization that actually found the body and buried it, because nobody came forward to claim it.

So today, when his photograph started appearing on television, they realized that this was the man that people are looking for, Saleem Shahzad. And that's when his family was brought to identify the body.

JAY: Now, there's been some kind of report that the ISI had actually picked him up and that Human Rights Watch in Pakistan had received some information from them. What is that?

MUNIZAE: *Yes, absolutely. When he was picked up, the Human Rights Watch received a call from his wife. And he had told his wife that if I go missing, the first person that you must call is the local representative of the Human Rights Watch here in Pakistan, called Ali Dayan Hassan, which his wife did.*

And that's when Ali Dayan Hassan remembered that he had written him an email saying that in case I go missing or something happens to me, please release the email. And in that email he suggested that he had been called in by the ISI many times for questioning on the stories that he was writing. There were also suggestions that he had been picked up by the ISI.

Now, Saleem Shahzad has also had a history. He was actually kidnapped by the Taliban back in 2006, and some reports suggested he was taken to Helmand. So he was somebody who knew the whereabouts of the Taliban; how the network worked inside out. We don't know what happened after he was kid-

napped. You know, this is all very murky. But he was a journalist who was working on these kinds of stories.

JAY: Now, was he the only one doing this kind of reporting? Or were other people doing similar things?

MUNIZAE: *Well, there were certainly a lot of suggestions. I, in fact, in my own show, raised the question of whether there was a split within the army, simply because chief of army staff General Kayani had already admitted to the Americans that they need to do some soul-searching, that they need some introspection, that they need to clean their own house, quote-unquote.*

And the Americans had suggested that it is a time--in fact, we heard from Admiral Michael Mullen just yesterday saying that we've had very frank discussions with the Pakistan army, that they realize that they will have to do some soul-searching that they will have to do introspection that they will have to clean out their own house.

So these are statements that were coming suggesting that there was in fact a split in the army. It was very clear that there was an insider in the army who had actually squealed and had given the kind of information that had been given on the PNS Mehran air-base, because the attackers knew exactly where to go and they were very focused in their attack.

We also saw the bin Laden attack. And, you know, if you go to Abbottabad, where bin Laden was found, it's a garrison town. There are training centres, army training centres all around. And we had one of our former DG ISI, General Ziauddin, saying that at the time of Musharraf, there were several raids made in Abbottabad.

In fact, in January, early January of this year [2011], there was a senior al-Qaeda leader who was picked up from -- Umar Patek, who was picked up from Abbottabad. And, in fact, he was trying to get a meeting with bin Laden. So they obviously knew that there was some kind of activity in Abbottabad, where bin Laden was eventually discovered and shot down.

There were indications that there were people who were going there -- that Abbottabad was a town where high-level al-Qaeda

leaders would go [snip] baffling that the Pakistan army did not really find bin Laden.

Several news reports suggest that in fact General Kayani said that I find it very strange also, it also came as a rude shock to me that bin Laden was found in Abbottabad.

JAY: Now, what Saleem had told us in the interview he did with The Real News just a few days before he was killed was that there was this serious splits developing in the Pakistan military, that after the killing of bin Laden, that the Americans had greatly increased their pressure on the Pakistan military to collaborate with the US, and that this was driving a wedge in the Pakistan military, people who were more sympathetic to the Taliban or al-Qaeda or Islamist ideology. Do you think that's true? And what are the signs of that?

MUNIZAE: *Well, there are certainly signs of it, because after bin Laden was shot down, the first thing that the chief of army staff, General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, did, that he went on a kind of a tour into all the garrison towns that he has, meeting all his troops, as to say, and, you know, having frank discussions with him.*

And we saw one of the reports quoting him saying that, you know, the morale of the troops is down, that there is a lot of anti-American sentiment within the troops.

And at the same time, there is a lot of public condemnation of the Pakistan army as such, because it is seen as a usurper of power and it's seen as somebody that is a government-in-waiting that wouldn't think twice before toppling democratic governments, which they have done in the past, which wouldn't think twice before--they're called sometimes -- they're called by hard critics plunderers of this country.

So they have lost that kind of credibility as well. And then to have something like Osama bin Laden found in Abbottabad, this completely made them lose their credibility. And followed just within a month, there was an attack on PNS Navy airbase, which is one of the most sensitive installations.

And just the day before, we heard General Kayani say that, you know, all our nuclear installations are safe. In fact, even before the bin Laden attack, he went to Kakul Academy in Abbottabad and said that we have broken the back of the Taliban. And then comes, emerges Osama bin Laden after Abbottabad.

So the army faces, let's say, a huge credibility issue. There's a huge question mark on their credibility at this time. Their image has never taken the kind of beating that it has in the country. And there is a general resentment amongst people against the army, who they see as a self-serving army.

JAY: Tell me about the situation facing journalists in Pakistan. Saleem is certainly not the first journalist to be killed. What is the atmosphere for a working journalist? How is it for you? I mean, you're speaking quite courageously right now.

MUNIZAE: *Well, there are certain no-go areas in our country for journalists. Physically there are no-go areas. There is a whole strip where the war against militancy is being fought where journalists are not allowed to go. If they do go, they're sent back, you know, dead. Body bags are found.*

So we have to tread our way very softly. And if you're reporting on conflict areas, it becomes very frustrating not to be able to go there. So when we do go there, we are working on the fringes. We go in the mornings; come back, you know, before the sun comes down.

JAY: Saleem was in Islamabad when he was killed.

MUNIZAE: *Absolutely. Saleem was in Islamabad when he was killed. But I'm talking about there are threats from all sides. **There's not just threats from intelligence agencies. There's also threats from the Taliban, there are threats from al-Qaeda, there are threats from criminal gangs, there are threats from -- in Karachi, you know, from political parties who have criminal gangs.***

We are dealing with various forms of violence in Pakistan. We don't know who is going to come at us, you know, whose feathers we are going to rub the wrong way. So it's a very difficult situation for us. We have to be very careful in what -- we have to weigh our words very carefully. We have to constantly look back.

And ten of our colleagues have died last year, just last year. And according to international agencies, the media networks are perhaps one of the most dangerous places for journalists to work. But at the same time, this is also a place where you find the sto-

ries that you do. And so it gets that kind of media attention as well.

JAY: Now, is there going to be an inquiry? There's already been calls for a public inquiry. Is there likely to be one? And if there is one, do you think that it's likely to come to anything?

MUNIZAE: *Well, just this evening, the prime minister of Pakistan, Yousaf Raza Gillani, strongly condemned the murder of Saleem Shahzad. And at that time, we had the advisor to the prime minister come on to my show and asked to her the same question: can we expect a clean and a transparent inquiry?*

*But then I felt almost silly asking her that question, considering that their own leader, Benazir Bhutto, was killed in broad daylight, you know, and by all witness accounts and in front of live television camera, the evidence was washed down, hosed down. **They are in government today. They make claims, they say that they know exactly who killed her, and yet they don't have the strength, the guts to actually bring the perpetrators to justice.***

*So what hope do I have of Saleem Shahzad killers being brought to justice? I don't know. If they can't bring the -- you know, they owe everything to that woman. **They came into power, you know, on the strength of Benazir Bhutto. But they still can't find her killers.** What hope do we have?*

JAY: Thanks very much for joining us, Munizae.

MUNIZAE: *Thank you so much.*

JAY: Syed Saleem Shahzad left behind his wife and three small children. Everyone at The Real News and on behalf of all our viewers, we send our condolences to the family.

ISI: Pakistan's Formidable Force Multiplier:

by **VINOD SHARMA** at www.centreright.in of **19th AUGUST 2013**

One has got to admire Pakistan. Is there any other example in history where a small nation has simultaneously taken on two much bigger countries.....[including] one super power..... that they have created the Inter Services Intelligence [ISI]. This covert arm of the military has been developed and honed..... to become a huge force multiplier that has almost re-written the rules of war.....It is this institution alone that has given Pakistan the luxury of playing game on battlefields of its choosing in a manner that it wants, without exposing its troops to danger and its culpability to the enemy.....Pakistan sees ISI as its first line of defence.....for the Pakistani establishment—both military and civil— the ISI is not engaged in any hostile or offensive actions there, like the Americans and the Indians believe.

When the US invaded Afghanistan after 9/11, it probably thought it was going for a stroll in a park bombed flat by it..... it would have..... but it failed to factor in Pakistan's tenacity.....[then] expanding the war was not an option.....the Pakistanis assessed the situation far more accurately than the Americans thought they were capable of..... US is being defeated by a very clever and determined Pakistan. The divided *Pashtuns* were trounced by the ISI after the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, without a bullet being fired.

Despite the serious challenge posed by the presence and pressure of the Americans in Afghanistan, the ISI has not significantly let up its campaign in Kashmir.....should have made the Indians realise that they are dealing with an exceptionally clever, ruthless and never-say-die leadership.....but, just as the Americans failed to learn the right lessons from what Pakistan

was doing to India, the Indians seem to have failed to learn too from it has done to the Americans in Afghanistan...

...that the 26/11 attack [***alleged as 'Bombay Attacks'***] was controlled and coordinated by the ISI from start to finish, the sort of information that Pakistan would have twisted with a knife in India's gut....what did Pakistan do?.....actually demanded that any progress on 26/11 investigations be linked to progress on Siachen, Sir Creek etc. Yet, leading establishment intellectuals like Ram Guha want to mislead India into believing that the ISI is a non-state actor and is no worse than VHP or Bajrang Dal.

India's own covert operations outfit, rightly named RAWhas singularly failed to nail the ISI, despite being on this very job for decades, with a huge budget to boot.....This is further proof that the ***ISI, whose DG reports to the Army Chief, conducts its many dangerous businesses with clinical professionalism***, and knows how to keep them under wraps from amateur Indian eyes. [whereas] RAW is a poorly-led-by-police-officers and driven-by-babu-culture set up that lacks the political direction, professionalism, commitment and motivation required facing, tackle and defeat a fanatic force multiplier like the ISI.

.....Once Pakistan achieves the primacy it is on its way to in Afghanistan, all but drives India out from there, and makes full use of the infrastructure that India's much touted 'soft power' has created in that country, the ISI's energies, spurred by its spectacular success in Afghanistan, will focus almost wholly on India.

Does India have a plan to defeat the challenges that it is almost certain to face?the way some of our leaders brainlessly dismiss any other option, no matter what Pakistan does, by invoking the fear that Pakistan is a nuclear powered state. Much of the ***credit for the fact that Pakistan has fearlessly bled India.... given to the one outstanding creation of Pakistan's military, the ISI***. This covert military outfit is an innovative and powerful instrument of war, an invisible and formidable force multiplier.

To counter it, India has not been able to find an answer is unlikely to do so in future too. Much as India's ineptitude hurt me as an Indian, I have to admire what Pakistan – a nation that is 1/6th India's size and with 10th India's GDP – has achieved through the ISI, whose successes have been nothing short of spectacular.

Wish we could learn what it has been trying to teach us.