

# I-POST

## *Quarterly*

### IPCS PROGRAM ON SUICIDE TERRORISM

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## INTRODUCTION

2006 saw a number of studies and accounts attempt to identify a trend or pattern with regards to suicide attacks carried out in Afghanistan. Unfortunately, as Marc Herold rightly pointed out in his *Frontline* report, these studies and comparisons are “sorely inadequate” in their analyses.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, a few exceptions such as “How to Curb Rising Suicide Terrorism in Afghanistan,” by Hekmat Karzai and Seth G. Jones, and a recent article by Brian Glyn Williams and Cathy Young entitled, “Cheney Attack Reveals Taliban Suicide Bombing Patterns,” have identified useful patterns that form the basis of this current venture.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the objective of this paper is to analyse prevalent, emerging and evolving trends in the patterns of suicide attacks in Afghanistan in order to supplement the aforementioned studies and thereby contribute to scholarship.

## LIMITATIONS OF THE PAPER

This paper makes use of data collected from international and Afghan print-media sources. The majority of attacks reported in the media are those which have caused civilian or military casualties. But before this paper proceeds to elucidate trends, it is imperative that the limitations of this study be mentioned.

First, the IPCS data-set is by no means exclusive or exhaustive, thus restricting the possibility of a comprehensive analysis of trends.

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<sup>1</sup> Herold, Marc W, “Suicide car bombs vs. ‘precision’ bombs,” in *Frontline*, Vol. 23, Iss. 19, September – October 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Karzai, Hekmat and Jones, Seth G, “How to Curb Rising Suicide Terrorism in Afghanistan,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 18 July 2006, available at, <http://www.csmonitor.com/2006/0718/p09s01-coop.html>; Williams, Brian Glyn and Young, Cathy, “Cheney Attack Reveals Taliban Suicide Bombing Patterns,” *Terrorism Monitor* (Jamestown Foundation), Vol. 5, Iss. 4, March 2007.

Second, in contrast to Iraq where motives behind suicide attacks – whether against US/Iraqi military convoys and installations or at mass gatherings and public places – *can* be deduced (and profiles of perpetrators established) from a political-religious or sociological-psychological perspective, such an understanding is more difficult to achieve in Afghanistan. The uncertainty attached to incidents of suicide attacks in Afghanistan such as the dearth of reporting and a lack of information pertaining to the identity and profile (*vis-à-vis* motives) of attackers renders any analysis difficult.

Nevertheless, a study of recent trends in suicide attacks in Afghanistan may reveal important characteristics that help *predict*, *combat*, and most importantly *prevent* such acts of terror. The methodology of such a project is simple: a chronology of suicide attacks from 2005 to the present was compiled and the data was analysed to ascertain a rationale behind the choice of targets, success rates (death toll), frequency of attacks, claims of responsibility made following attacks, the sociological particulars of perpetrators, and regions targeted.

## CHOICE OF TARGETS

Suicide bombing is not a precise technique, and statistics compiled for this present study prove Afghanistan’s ineffective bombers to be better at killing themselves and Afghan civilians than foreign troops. While the low number of deaths certainly testify to the Taliban bombers’ general ineptitude, part of the answer also lies in their targeting patterns, which differ from those elsewhere in the world.

Suicide attacks in Iraq are typically carried out in civilian-rich areas. This hypothesis, however, cannot be attributed to Afghanistan. While the objective of Iraqi insurgents/militants is to cause as much

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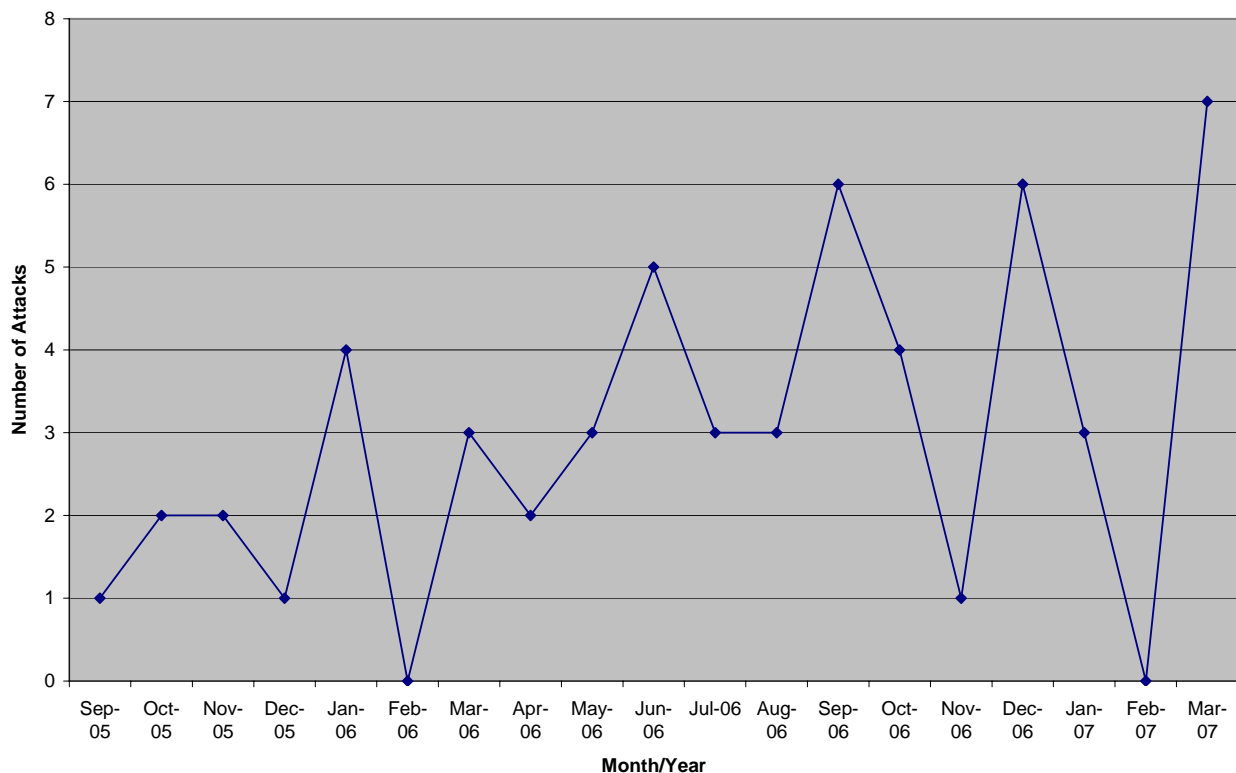
bloodshed as possible, thereby inciting sectarian violence and attempting to scuttle the reconstruction process of the state, Afghan suicide bombers appear to have different objectives and have focused almost exclusively on hard targets such as Afghan Government personnel, police, and Afghan and coalition military recruits.

The choice of targets in Kabul and Qandahar prior to the parliamentary elections held in September 2005 was predominantly of a civilian nature, with mosques being targeted

and Kabul exemplify opposite poles of the crisis in Afghanistan. For while the former is a trouble spot having no semblance of law and order, the latter is the stronghold of the coalition forces. One reasonable postulation could be that the attacks in Kabul served to undermine the authority of the Afghan Government, while those in Qandahar were meant to dissuade and discourage the local populace from supporting coalition forces.

This trend, however, shifted significantly following the September 2005 elections.<sup>5</sup> The

**Number of Suicide Attacks (Sept 2005 - Mar 2007)**



most of all.<sup>3</sup> While it is uncertain as to why mosques were the initial targets,<sup>4</sup> Qandahar

<sup>3</sup> The site of the 14 November 2005 suicide attack was also a mosque – the famous Blue Mosque of Afghanistan’s northern Balkh Province. This attack is not cited in the IPCS data-set.

<sup>4</sup> The 30 May 2005 bombing at a mosque in Kabul, for instance, claimed the life of Kabul’s Police Chief. Interestingly, on that day, the mosque was hosting the funeral for a slain anti-Taliban cleric. Other attacks at mosques, however, do not suggest the explicit targeting of anti-Taliban people or government officials. This raises questions pertaining to the ‘strategic logic’ of suicide terrorism, with reference to Taliban’s insurgency tactics.

last quarter of the year witnessed an escalation in suicide attacks, the targets of which were mostly Western military installations and convoys. This indicates that al-Qaeda and the Taliban consider suicide attacks more effective than other tactics in killing Afghan and coalition forces. In addition, the shift can be explained as a Taliban effort to win the battle for the ‘Hearts and Minds’ of ordinary Afghans. Taliban commanders are

<sup>5</sup> 2005 witnessed 21-25 suicide attacks in Afghanistan. No more than 6 attacks were reported prior to September 2005.

conscious of the fact that civilian casualties will lead to their organisation's alienation from the wider populace, and could, at worst, force locals to seek security in the arms of the Karzai Government.

The new trend amplified in scope and intensity in 2006. Non-US targets included NATO troops and convoys, Afghan military and police (including checkpoints), Afghan officials, offices and ministries (including Provincial Governors) as well as markets and bazaars.

Analysing the choice of targets reveals an additional trend that the target of the suicide attacker is often a high profile Afghan or foreign official. On 12 March 2006, a suicide attack in Kabul succeeded in wounding the target, former Afghan President Sibghatullah Mujaddedi. The recent February 2007 attack on Bagram Air Base, which was hosting US Vice-President Dick Cheney at the time, is another high-profile example.

### **SUCCESS RATES (DEATH TOLL)**

As has already been mentioned, the Taliban prefer to implement the strategy of suicide attacks against Afghan and foreign troops and officials rather than against civilians. In several instances, however, suicide bombers targeting foreign military convoys or Afghan troops succeeded in killing more innocent bystanders than soldiers. Data available for this study attributes 209 civilian casualties and 56 military or police casualties (of Afghan and/or foreign origin) to suicide attacks since 2006. Military and police deaths therefore account for a mere 21 percent of all fatalities. From a Taliban perspective, such figures would be expected to denote a tactical failure. Indeed, the high civilian death count may well prove counterproductive for the Taliban, especially since they are trying to win the battle for 'Hearts and Minds'.

### **FREQUENCY (TIMING) OF ATTACKS**

Suicide attacks in Afghanistan were rare until August 2005. The first half of 2005 witnessed a handful of scattered attacks in mosques and against ISAF soldiers. Up until then, however, the tactic lacked support. As mentioned previously, there was an escalation in attacks shortly after parliamentary elections were

held in September. The attacks in October (Oct. 5 and 10) and November (Nov. 16 and 22) of 2005 took place within one week of each other, indicating a certain degree of organisation and planning. This new trend continued into the New Year of 2006 with suicide attacks in the month of January recording a high of four. The remainder of the year witnessed successive (and possibly coordinated) attacks.

It must be mentioned that out of 139 suicide attacks in 2006 as claimed by the US military, 43 (31 percent of total attacks) of them occurred between 1 January and 28 August. The remainder of the attacks, a total of 96 (69 percent of total attacks) and a whopping 38 percent increase over the previous eight months, took place in the space of just four months between September and December 2006. A perusal of statistics compiled for this present study reveal September and December to have suffered the most number of attacks, claiming 80 lives with many more injured. It is this sudden increase in intensity that this section will now proceed to account for.

It was during the summer of 2006 that ISAF ventured into the southern and eastern provinces of Afghanistan for the first time. Outnumbered, the Taliban retreated. The loss of Taliban strongholds in Uruzgan and Helmand probably forced the Taliban to modify and evolve their tactics, resulting in an increase in suicide attacks during the last quarter of the year. September and December 2006 each encountered six reported attacks, with the former month witnessing 56 fatalities, the latter 24.

In addition, the so-called 'peace' agreement between the Pakistani Government and pro-Taliban fighters and tribal elders in Pakistan's North Waziristan province in September 2006, may have led to an escalation in Taliban insurgency, especially vis-à-vis suicide attacks in border provinces such as Paktika and Paktia. Not surprisingly, Paktika, Khost and Paktia witnessed an 85 percent increase in the number of suicide attacks following the truce.

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The escalation and subsequent fall in attacks can also be attributed to the change in weather. It is interesting to note that Afghanistan witnessed a marked increase in suicide attacks just prior to the advent of winter. Perhaps the Taliban and its allies wanted to step up their insurgent activities before being forced to recede during the winter months. January 2007 witnessed

### CLAIMS OF RESPONSIBILITY

In his seminal work, *The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism*, Robert Pape observed that 95 percent of suicide attacks are planned by some sort of structured organisation, generally to achieve a political goal (for example, the ejection of foreign forces from a particular territory).<sup>6</sup> The strategic logic of suicide terrorism is therefore designed to coerce an



Source: National Geographic. <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/landincrisis/ethnic.html>.

sporadic incidents but nothing that could be considered as a large-scale phenomenon. Conversely, the advent of spring 2007 witnessed a re-escalation in suicide attacks. March 2007 has thus far been the year's worst with seven attacks claiming 23 lives and injuring 75. This increase in suicide attacks can be viewed as a prelude to the Taliban's own 'Spring Offensive'. One can assert with a fair bit of confidence that the above trend will be followed in the months and years to come – Taliban summer offensives increasing in intensity prior to the harsh winter months, followed by a re-escalation of activities in the following spring.

'enemy' into making significant concessions. Laying *claim* to such attacks subsequently becomes the crucial 'next step' for the realisation of political goals.

In 2006, the Taliban laid claim to most suicide attacks in Afghanistan. Such attacks considerably increased the sense of insecurity among the Afghan population. This heightened sense of insecurity not only caused

<sup>6</sup> Pape, Robert, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism, in *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 97, No. 3, August 2003.

some Afghans to question the Karzai Government's ability to protect them, but also destabilised the authority of local government institutions.

In addition, although the Taliban commander Mullah Hayat Khan's recent statement that the organisation had over 2000 suicide bombers ready for deployment is in all probability mere propaganda, it serves to demonstrate the organisational responsibility behind the incidence of such attacks. Taliban propaganda aims to acquire psychological advantage not only over coalition forces but also over Afghan civilians who would not like to see a reversion to Taliban rule. In essence, such propaganda aims to dissuade the Afghan populace from reaching out to Karzai's rule and his coalition supporters whilst simultaneously creating fear and skepticism in states contributing troops to the ISAF.

As mentioned above, while most attacks were indeed claimed by the Taliban, several others were not. In Afghanistan, what is being referred to as Taliban or neo-Taliban does not only consist of the remnants of the Taliban proper. Al Qaeda members are also part of this category, as are mujahideen belonging to the two Hezb-e-Islami factions of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and Yunis Khalis. In addition, the organisation called Saif ul-Muslimeen constitutes another insurgent force in today's Afghanistan. This raises a gamut of questions: Is there a co-ordination problem within the Taliban? Are other religious or political groups (like Saif ul-Muslimeen) responsible for these attacks? Are ordinary frustrated and embittered citizens turning to retaliatory suicide bombings?

### **SOCIOLOGICAL PROFILE OF PERPETRATORS**

It needs be understood that verifying the identity of perpetrators of *each* incident is a tricky business, making it difficult to analyse trends and factors responsible for the attacks. Many journalists and commentators have attempted to distinguish perpetrators along ethnic lines. However, such a formula is precarious at best and suggests a limited understanding of the crisis and its various meta-level complexities.

An ethno-linguistic map of Afghanistan indicates a majority Pashtun population that mostly resides in southern and southeastern Afghanistan. The provinces of Farah, Nimruz, Helmand, Qandahar, Zabol, Ghazni, Paktika, Paktia, Lowgar, Nangarhar, Laghman and Konarha are all predominantly Pashtun. Enter the Taliban variable. The Taliban is largely a Pashtun-dominated organisation. The ethnic make-up of the Taliban ranks has often led to the assumption that perpetrators committing acts of terror in the above-mentioned regions (many of which are Taliban strongholds) are ethnic Pashtuns.

A Colonel in the Afghan Army (who agreed to an interview with IPCS staff under conditions of anonymity) offered an alternative and insightful explanation into the sociological particulars of suicide attackers and terrorists in general. The Colonel is of the opinion that a majority of suicide attackers in Afghanistan are youth recruited by the Taliban. He mentioned two distinct and not mutually exclusive methods by which such recruitment takes place.

First, the Taliban abduct children or teenagers, especially orphans, and condition them in *madrassas* operating in the south near the Pakistani border. While receiving spiritual and religious schooling, these young men are also trained to become suicide attackers. The final stage of the process involves the deployment of the attackers on tangible missions. This line of reasoning is of importance since these children, especially orphans, after years of conditioning, lose their sense of identity; they no longer remember their pasts and are unaware of their once filial relations, let alone ethnic identity. Consequently, with no name and ethnic affiliation, identifying the sociology of suicide attackers becomes next to impossible.

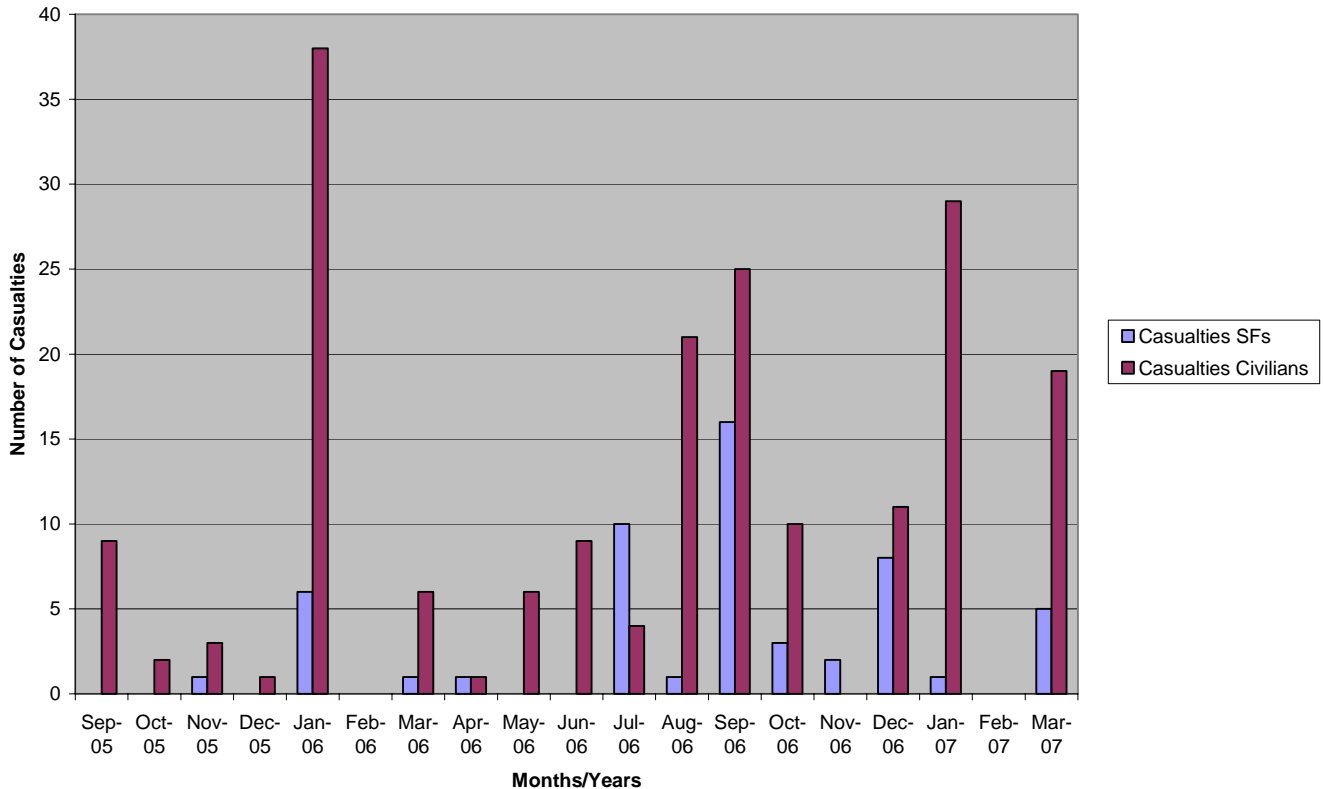
Second, terminally sick Afghani youths working in factories (or refugee camps) in Pakistan are sent back to Afghanistan as attackers. The conditioning process is similar to the first approach, whereby spiritual fervor is instilled in potential attackers, sometimes coupled with possible monetary compensations for surviving relatives.

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Major Bismullah, the acting police chief in Khost, substantiates both assertions above.

The supposition that foreign elements are involved in masterminding and perpetrating

**Casualties per month (September 2005 - March 2007)**



According to the Major, potential attackers who do not have families are being recruited by Al-Qaeda and other rogue elements who train them, and then send them back over the Durand Line on missions.

In a recent interview with Carnegie Endowment's *Foreign Policy* magazine, Said T. Jawad, Afghanistan's ambassador to the United States, mentioned how most Afghan people consider suicide to be contrary to the teachings of Islam, and as such, a sin.<sup>7</sup> He believes religious reasoning to be the principal factor that prohibits Afghans from perpetrating acts of suicide terrorism. Such a perspective appears to hold foreign elements accountable for incidents of suicide attacks in Afghanistan.

suicide terror acts has gained veracity over the years. For instance, militants of suspected Arab and Yemeni origin carried out the initial wave of attacks in 2005, with the Taliban claiming responsibility for most. The direct relationship between suspected Arab perpetrators and the Taliban was substantiated when Afghan authorities and intelligence officials gathered credible evidence that indicated the presence of al Qaeda's suicide squad (Fedayini Islam) in the country. Indeed, in a recent report to the UN Security Council, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon claimed that four out of twelve attackers in January 2007 were identified as foreigners.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Jawad, Said T., "Seven Questions: Saving Afghanistan," Interview with *Foreign Policy*, June 2006, available at, [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story\\_id=3515](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id=3515)

<sup>8</sup> Report of the Secretary-General, "The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security," A/61/799-S/2007/152, 15 March 2007, available at, <http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/sgrep07.htm>

## REGIONS TARGETED

A cursory glance at the data available on suicide attack incidents in Afghanistan suggests the country has experienced a regional shift in trends over the years. While 2005 witnessed the majority of attacks in Qandahar and Kabul cities, the onset of spring 2006 saw suicide attacks spread to contiguous provinces, such as Helmand and Paktika. Suicide attacks in Herat and Ghazni provinces in May 2006, and Farah and Konduz provinces in June 2006, made it apparent that such attacks would no longer be restricted to Kabul and Qandahar.

It is now apparent that most incidents of suicide attacks have been concentrated along the southern and eastern borders adjacent with Pakistan. Since August 2006, and following the deployment of ISAF forces to the southern districts, incidents of suicide attacks have almost exclusively been reported in the contested provinces with only sporadic episodes reported in the north. The scarcity of suicide attack incidents in the north can be explained from a dual perspective: First, the north is *not* a Taliban stronghold and has thus largely been left unscathed. Second, the mountainous topography of central and northeastern Afghanistan limits insurgent operations to the southern provinces. The geographical restrictions, however, may well be the very factor that compels the Taliban and other organisations to consider employing strategic suicide attacks beyond Taliban controlled areas.

An in-depth analysis, therefore, exposes the Taliban strategy as one that aims to disrupt the Afghan Government's efforts to bring security to contested provinces such as Paktia, Paktika, Khost, Helmand and Qandahar. The Taliban are aware that NATO's reconstruction and infrastructure-building efforts represent the greatest threat to their movement. Consequently, they have commenced an insurgent campaign which aims to disrupt ISAF's efforts to stabilise the south and bring security to the people. At present, the Taliban have succeeded in disrupting coalition efforts

to interact with local populations, thereby widening the distance between the Afghan Government and the local population.

## CONCLUSION

The suicide bombing campaign in Afghanistan is now in its second year proper. On some levels, the campaign has been successful. The plethora of possibly coordinated and frequent attacks, especially in contested provinces, confirms that the Taliban and its allies have not been defeated entirely. The Taliban (in Qandahar for instance) have managed to instill fear and skepticism in states contributing troops to the ISAF as a majority of their attacks have been carried out against NATO and US-led troops.

Additionally, the Taliban's concentration on hard targets may help them garner a measure of support from the larger populace who do not envisage benefits in foreign military occupation, or who have lost confidence in President Karzai's Government. Patterns in suicide bombings therefore indicate that the Taliban and its allies will continue to use such tactics more frequently and possibly in coordinated attempts. The southern provinces will be targeted incessantly, with occasional incursions into the north to infuse an appearance of political instability. An analysis of available data predicts that future bombings will intensify during the months immediately preceding the onset of winter.

While the Taliban have experienced limited success with their suicide bombing campaign, kill ratios reveal a failure in the tactics employed. The success rate of suicide bombings, have fortunately been lower than the Taliban would have appreciated. Civilian casualties are the norm but keeping in mind the fact that the Taliban are locked in a battle to win the 'Hearts and Minds' of Afghans, the coming months may observe the Taliban issuing denials or even apologies for attacks that claim civilian lives. Consequently, the Taliban will continue to claim most attacks, especially those carried out against hard targets that claim foreign or government lives.

## Suicide Attacks in Afghanistan between 2005-March 2007: A Chronology

Date	Month	Year	Place	Location	Casualties			Injured	Terrorist Group	Modus Operandi
					SFs	Civilians	Total			
20	January	2005	Kabul	Mosque				22		Bomber
31	May	2005	Qandahar	Mosque	1	19	20	52	Taliban	Bomber
28	September	2005	Kabul	Kabul Military Training Centre		9	9	28	Taliban	
5	October	2005	Qandahar	Security forces convoy		2	2	1		Car bomber
10	October	2005	Qandahar	British convoy				4		Car bomber
16	November	2005	Qandahar	Military convoy		3	3			Car bomber
22	November	2005	Uruzgan	Military convoy	1		1		Taliban	
4	December	2005		US military convoy		1	1	3		
2	January	2006	Qandahar	US Army	5		5	3	Taliban	Car bomber
5	January	2006	Uruzgan	US Ambassador		10	10	50	Taliban	Bomber
15	January	2006	Qandahar	Canadian diplomat	1	2	3	12	Taliban	Bomber
16	January	2006	Qandahar	Local Function		26	26	20	Taliban	Bomber
3	March	2006	Qandahar	Canadian troops						
12	March	2006	Kabul	Ex-PMs convoy		4	4			Bomber
19	March	2006	Qandahar	US Army	1		1			Bomber
28	March	2006	Qandahar	Afghan Government office		2	2			Bomber
7	April	2006	Helmand	US Army		1	1	5	Taliban	Bomber
9	April	2006	Paktika	Army check-post	1		1	5		Bomber
17	May	2006	Heart	Market		2	2			Bomber
17	May	2006	Ghazni	US Army		2	2			Bomber
21	May	2006	Kabul	US Army		2	2	8		Car bomber
1	June	2006	Farah	US Army			1			Car bomber
2	June	2006	Qandahar	Canadian Army		3	3			Car bomber

Date	Month	Year	Place	Location	Casualties			Injured	Terrorist Group	Modus Operandi
4	June	2006	Qandahar	Governor's convoy		4	4	8		Car bomber
26	June	2006	Kabul	US Army				2		Car bomber
27	June	2006	Kunduz	German NATO force		2	2			Bomber
3	July	2006	Qandahar	Government guest house	1		1	3		Bomber
17	July	2006	Gardez	Government office	1	3	4			Bomber
23	July	2006	Qandahar	Security forces convoy	8	1	9			Car bomber
3	August	2006	Panjwai	Bazaar		21	21	14		Bomber
6	August	2006		Military convoy				1		Truck Bomb
11	August	2006	Qandahar	NATO forces	1		1			Car bomber
8	September	2006	Kabul	US Military vehicles	2	16	18	30		Car bomber
10	September	2006	Paktia	Governor of Paktia			4			Bomber
17	September	2006	Qandahar	ISAF Military convoy				6		Bomber
18	September	2006		Canadian NATO troops	4		4			Bomber
26	September	2006	Lashkar Gah (Helmand)	Provincial Governor	9	9	18			Bomber
30	September	2006	Kabul	Interior Ministry			12	50		Bomber
6	October	2006	Khost	Police HQ	1		1	3		Bomber
13	October	2006		NATO convoy	1	8	9			Car bomber
19	October	2006	Helmand	British NATO force		2	2	3		
20	October	2006	Khost	Afghan soldier	1		1	7		Bomber
28	November	2006	Qandahar	Canadian NATO force	2		2		Taliban	Car bomber
5	December	2006	Qandahar	NATO convoy				11		Car bomber
6	December	2006	Qandahar	Canadian PRT		7	7			Bomber
8	December	2006	Qandahar	NATO convoy		2	2			Car bomber
12	December	2006	Helmand	Governor's compound	6	2	8			Bomber
15	December	2006	Qandahar	Afghan soldiers	2		2	3		Bomber
15	December	2006	Qalat	President's security guards			5			Car bomber

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Date	Month	Year	Place	Location	Casualties			Injured	Terrorist Group	Modus Operandi
19	January	2007	Paktika	Market	1		1	5		Bomber
24	January	2007	Khost	NATO base		10	10	14	Taliban	Bomber
27	January	2007	Bagram	US Military base		19	19	11	Taliban	Bomber
4	March	2007	Nangarhar	US convoy		8	8	22		Car bomber
13	March	2007	Lashkar Gah (Helmand)	British convoy		1	1	1	Taliban	Bomber
13	March	2007	Lashkar Gah (Helmand)	Afghan Army base			1		Taliban	Bomber
15	March	2007	Khost	Bazaar	1	4	5	38		Bomber
17	March	2007	Qandahar	Canadian convoy		1	1	4		Car bomber
20	March	2007	Kabul	US Embassy convoy		1	1	5	Taliban	Car bomber
28	March	2007	Lashkar Gah (Helmand)	Afghan Police HQ	4		4			Bomber
29	March	2007	Kabul	Afghan intelligence official		4	4	12	Taliban	Motorcycle bomber



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Suicide terrorism in Iraq began with the US-led invasion in March 2003 and has subsequently acquired a frequency and lethality unprecedented in other similar campaigns. While the campaign was initially employed by insurgents against the occupation forces in Iraq, it is now predominantly being used against Iraqi civilians and security forces and Shia enclaves. From January 2005 to March 2007, at least 275 suicide attacks have taken place killing scores of Iraqi civilians. The present study attempts at drawing broad trends in the campaign since 2005, based on data compiled by the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies although the possibility of variance in data compiled by other sources should be kept in mind. The report deliberately focuses on the period after 2005 due to the intensity of the suicide-bombing campaign since then.

### CHOICE OF TARGETS

At the outset, it is important to lay down certain qualifications on the basis of which this analysis has been put forward. Firstly, this work takes a police convoy to mean Iraqi police forces; takes army checkpoints to mean coalition forces unless specified otherwise; does not include statistics on Security Forces casualties that do not provide the break up of the SF; and takes civilian casualties as members of the general public unless specified as an attack in a predominantly Shia area.

The Suicide campaign in Iraq covers a wide spectrum of targets including coalition forces, Iraqi forces, Shia enclaves, public areas, government officials and installations and international organisations and embassies. However, a clear trend is visible in the choice of targets of suicide attacks: while according to reports, coalition occupation forces were the main target at the inception of the campaign following the US invasion in 2003, today a high proportion of the attacks are on Iraqi police and security forces. The period from February to July 2005 witnessed the

highest number of suicide attacks on Iraqi police and security forces with a total of at least 550 recruits killed through suicide attacks alone. Conversely, the proportion of suicide attacks on coalition forces fell during the same period with a meagre 31 killed. This trend was accompanied by an increase in attacks in public areas such as market places, public buses, funeral sites, mosques and university grounds, with the period from April to September 2005 recording the highest number of casualties - a total of at least 596 civilians killed. A significant development from 2005 onwards has been a phenomenal increase in the number of attacks on Shia enclaves that have only grown in lethality over the past few months.

The frequency of attacks against Iraqi forces and civilians picked up with the formation of the new Iraqi government in April following the 30 January elections. Attacks on Shia areas increased following the setting up of Shia dominated government lead by Shiite leader Ibrahim Jaafari as PM. In 2007, as the US implemented a new security plan and increased US troops by 21,500, the majority of suicide attacks have targeted mainly public areas and Shia centres. This could reflect an improved ability of the coalition forces to incapacitate suicide attacks against coalition and Iraqi security forces, even as they continue to fail with regards to preventing attacks against civilians.

An observation of these trends suggests the following conclusions: *one*, the unfolding of the political process in Iraq and the power-sharing arrangement of the new government has created conditions for a civil war-like situation within Iraq, even as attacks on coalition forces continued. The new government mirrors the insecurities of the Sunnis in a country with a majority of Shiites, a mostly Shia government and Shia dominated Iraqi security forces. *Second*, the involvement of Iraqi's, in the form of police and security forces, was seen by the insurgents as a cover to allow the perpetuation of US rule over

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Iraq. It was seen by insurgents as a way for the US to reduce the loss of their forces to a bare minimum (this is clear from their policy of fortifying US checkpoints with concrete barriers which, according to one source, was largely responsible for reducing the suicide attacks against US forces in Iraq) while maintaining control of the country through co-opted Iraqi clients.

### MODUS OPERANDI

The study also reveals that suicide attacks are carried out mainly through either car bombs or explosive belts. With a shift in targeting by the insurgents from coalition forces to softer targets, there has been a heavy reliance on car bombs driven by suicide bombers. The reason behind this is simple: the damage caused by car bombs exceeds that of a human-based explosion, and therefore their use in crowded areas has proved to be particularly effective for insurgents.

Two noticeable developments have taken place in the modus operandi of the insurgents: *One*, there has been a rise in the use of multiple bombs across Iraq, and they all have been found to be used in different Shia areas at the same time. This is clearly evident from a survey by the Brookings Institute of multiple attacks during the month of February. This revealed that the number of attacks increased from 18 in February 2005 to 54 in February 2007. The reason behind the use of multiple bombing is its ability to confound the security forces and, at the same time, create a deeper impact. *Second*, a new tactic of using chlorine gas has been used at least three to four times in Iraq lately. However, the damage caused by the use of chlorine gas has not been found to be very lethal yet.

The following developments indicate the level of sophistication and planning achieved by the insurgents over the years. This is likely to play a crucial role as the new security doctrine of the US pushes their forces out of their fortified barracks and into the general population.

### GEOGRAPHY OF ATTACKS

The majority of suicide attacks in Iraq have taken place in and around Baghdad, the capital city and Iraq's largest province. A

survey of suicide attacks since 2005 reveals that a high proportion of attacks on Shia have taken place in the north eastern parts of Baghdad in places such as Sadr city (the stronghold of Shia rebel cleric Moqtada Sadr's Mahdi Army militiamen) and Tal Afar city. On the other hand, other severely affected Shiite regions including Najaf, Kerbala and Kadhimiyah are located in the south western parts of Baghdad. This suggests that while sceptics have argued that the scourge of sectarian violence in Baghdad has virtually divided it into a Sunni west and a Shiite east with the broad Tigris River running in the middle, Baghdad is still a long way from taking this definitive sectarian shape as Shiite and Sunni enclaves remain on both sides of the river.

The focus on the capital illustrates in clear terms the objective of the insurgents to undermine confidence in the government and destabilise the centre of the new Iraqi regime in Baghdad. However, other badly hit provinces, including Ninawa, Diyala, Salah ad-Din and Babil, indicate that the insurgents garner at least some societal support in the central and western parts of the country.

A notable development in recent months has been the resurgence of violence in the city of Tal Afar, Ninawa province, North of Iraq. This city was formerly touted as a success story of the coalition forces' counterinsurgency tactics owing to the relative peace in the province. However, a resurgence of violence in this city can be understood as a reaction to the recent crackdown by the coalition forces and throws doubt on the new security doctrine implemented by the US army.

### PERPETRATORS OF SUICIDE ATTACKS

A striking feature of the suicide campaign in Iraq is the lack of clarity on the origin and nationality of the suicide bombers. The proportion of unclaimed suicide attacks increased significantly only after September 2004 with the disappearance of claims by Ba'athist regime loyalists. The reason behind this could vary from a lack of attention being paid to suicide attacks in the initial months of the invasion, to the phenomenon of loyalists merging with other groups newly-emergent in Iraq. Since 2005, a fair number of attacks

have been claimed by foreign militants such as al-Qaeda in Iraq (Mujahideen Consultative Council), and Ansar al-Sunna Army (formed in September 2003 comprising of foreign jihadi salafists). According to one source, both these groups have claimed responsibility for suicide attacks through their own brigades committed to 'martyrdom operations'. The Mujahideen Consultative Council has the Bara Bin-Malik Battalion whereas the Ansar al-Sunna Army has the Martyrs Brigade of Ansar al-Sunna.

Given the fact that since 2005 a large number of attacks have been on predominantly Shia enclaves, there is a strong suggestion that al-Qaeda in Iraq and the Ansar al-Sunna Army see their goal in Iraq as more than a mere expulsion of occupation forces and the annihilation of the newly formed Iraqi security forces. These forces are stressing the Shia-Sunni divide as a tool to establish a genuine Islamic state. Keeping this in mind, it is possible that the reason behind maintaining anonymity could quite simply be to avoid the cost of being blamed for massacring their own people and the concurrent risk of losing local support.

It is worth noting that the foreign origin of a large number of bombers in Iraq stands out as a unique characteristic of the suicide campaign in Iraq. The use of suicide terrorism by other groups such as the LTTE in Sri Lanka or Hizbollah in Lebanon has tended to include bombers from the aggrieved national community within their respective countries. In Iraq, most of the known perpetrators are non-Iraqis. However, this factor could prove to be crucial in bringing an end to the campaign itself, for the use and training of local citizens, and particularly the youth poses the formidable threat of suicide terrorism becoming permanently entrenched into the societal build up.

### **FREQUENCY OF ATTACKS**

While the suicide terrorism campaign began in Iraq soon after the invasion in March 2003, it entered a new phase of frequency and lethality in 2005. While the total number of attacks fell in 2006 to 101 from over 150 in 2005, there was a phenomenal increase in 2007 with close to 50 attacks in the first three months alone.

The timing of the attacks suggests that the campaign tends to accelerate in response to two developments: major political initiatives and the launch of counter-insurgency operations. For example, a hike in attacks was observed following the 30 January elections for an assembly, the forming of an interim government in April, the endorsement of the draft constitution in August 2005 and the holding of elections for the new Iraqi parliament in December 2005. On the other hand, the increase in attacks in 2007 can be seen as a response to the launch of fresh counter-insurgency operations by US forces as part of the new security doctrine of the Bush administration. Nonetheless, other factors must also be considered such as the intent of the insurgents to demonstrate their ability to fight the coalition forces, their desire to capture media attention following a major development in Iraq, and a plan to intimidate the Iraqi civilians and undermine the support of the newly formed government.

### **CONCLUSION**

By way of summary, the suicide terrorism campaign in Iraq has grown in lethality and frequency with the development and transformation of the insurgency beyond a liberation war to a civil war-like situation. The insurgents have relied heavily on car bombs and explosive belts in order to target areas covering a wide geographic space but centring on the capital city of Baghdad. Their targets have included coalition forces, Iraqi security forces, physical and economic infrastructure, Shia civilians, political parties and other perceived supporters of the foreign occupation and the new Iraqi regime. Notwithstanding the uncertainty regarding the origin of the bombers, a large number of them are reported to be non-Iraqis and foreign jihadists.

The success of the campaign in Iraq is evident not least because of the consistency of the attacks over the years and the failure of the security forces to halt its advance. It has successfully managed to create an atmosphere of panic within Iraq, to destroy efforts by the coalition forces and the Iraqi government in maintaining law and order, fostered a sectarian divide within Iraq to

further compound efforts at bringing stability, and undermined the faith of the people in the ability of the government to protect them. In doing so, the campaign can be argued as

constituting a new phenomena in the history of warfare.

**BOOK  
REVIEW**

**Suicide Terrorism: An Organisational Approach**

**Srinjoy Bose**  
*Research Assistant, IPCS*

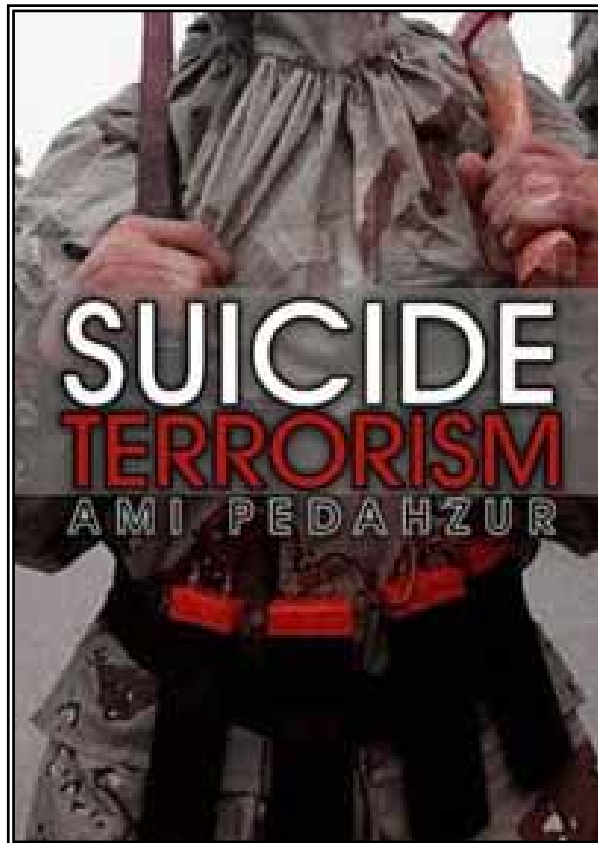
The back cover of Ami Pedahzur's *Suicide Terrorism* (Polity Press, December 2005, 261 pages, US\$ 24.95) carries a number of blurbs by noted scholars and experts in the field of Political Science, especially terrorism studies. One such blurb (summing up Pedahzur's attempt) reads: "*Suicide Terrorism* is essential reading for anyone wanting to understand the emergence and growth of this tactic and the best means to counter it."

In *Suicide Terrorism*, Ami Pedahzur does not display an innate flare for writing and his work does not boast an eloquence of language. However, Pedahzur does possess an extensive knowledge of his subject and an incisive understanding of the core issues that encompass the phenomenon of suicide terrorism. In fact, it is the first book since Robert Pape's seminal text, *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism*, to offer an in-depth and up-to-date analysis of the phenomenon of contemporary suicide terrorism. Pedahzur's comprehensive approach derives a complex analytic framework that involves interactions with and between cultural, political, organisational and socio-psychological dimensions. In addition, the book contains an

extremely detailed dataset of suicide attacks, a response to the much decried problem concerning the absence of statistical data in recent studies of suicide terrorism. Indeed, the work not only makes compelling reading, but 'essential reading' for both specialists and students alike and it would be a surprise if Pedahzur's work is not immediately cited on various university reading lists. By reading the book, students' understanding of the phenomenon of suicide terrorism and its complexities and dynamics will be greatly enriched.

The emergence of the phenomenon of suicide bombing in the Middle East and Asia in the 1980s and 1990s compelled social scientists to examine the role of cultural factors in both the growth and dissemination of a 'culture' of suicide terrorism, and its corollary – the seeming widespread legitimacy accorded to suicide terrorists. In this regard, recent scholarship has exposed the inaccuracy inherent in exclusively associating the phenomenon of suicide

terrorism to Islam. Pedahzur's study shows that there are many reasons to question the central role assigned to religion, and more specifically Islam, when explaining suicide terrorism. He does contend, however, that under certain political, social, or economic conditions, certain societies reveal more of a



pre-disposition towards supporting and committing acts of suicide terrorism (pgs. 23-24). In contrast to previous psychology-based studies conducted by researchers, Pedahzur's book seeks to offer an alternative, intermediate-level explanation for the phenomenon of suicide terrorism. At the outset, following a brief explanatory introduction to the phenomenon of suicide terrorism, Pedahzur proceeds to explain its emergence in the contemporary world by introducing his *organisational* model. Through such an approach, the author raises (and challenges) epistemological questions of importance.

Pedahzur assumes suicide terrorism, like other types of terrorism, to be a "product of an organisation's political strategy after it has defined its goals, clarified the options it has in order to realize these goals and checked the price label attached to each operational method." (pg. 27). As such, he seeks to expand on theories propounded by experts like Ariel Merari, who view suicide attacks as rational acts and not as individual phenomena. Pedahzur asserts that most terror organisations recruit individuals who display exceptional qualities that may be of use to the organisation, or hire people specifically for suicide missions. Pedahzur considers this feature as indicative of the rationality of terrorist leaders.

Pedahzur, while underscoring the rational process in the decision-making of the

organisational elite, seeks to emphasise the various stages that take place in the frame of the organisational process. Some of the many questions and issues addressed by the author are: What brings leaders of terrorist units to initiate campaigns of suicide attacks? To what degree are local (vis-à-vis external) motives involved in the dispersion of suicide terrorism? What is the recruitment process for potential bombers and how are they trained for missions? What role does the surrounding community play in the process of training and dispatching suicide attackers?

Chapters III – V deserve special mention for they offer an in-depth analysis of the motivations and operational methods of various organisations that utilise suicide attacks, namely Hezbollah, various Palestinian organisations, the PKK, the LTTE, and al-Qaeda and its affiliates. Here, Pedahzur focuses on the factors that have led terrorist organisations the world over to initiate and end suicide campaigns. Pedahzur relies on statistics to buttress his assertions although other scholars conducting independent research and offering alternative explanations, will no doubt challenge the accuracy of the dataset compiled by Pedahzur.

Overall, the book is conceptually and structurally consistent, clarifying in the process many issues addressed in the recent past by other scholars of the subject.

## PROFILE

### Suicide Attacks in January-March 2007

#### 16 January 2007, Baghdad, Iraq

Sixty-five people, including several women students and teachers, were killed and 110 injured on Tuesday in a devastating twin suicide bombing at the gates of a university in Baghdad, marking a surge in violence in the embattled city. The bloodbath witnessed comes a day after two close associates of the

former Iraqi President, Saddam Hussein, were hanged.<sup>1</sup>

#### 18 January 2007, Paktika, Afghanistan

Suicide bomber detonated his explosives next to Afghan soldiers in an eastern Afghan market Thursday, killing one soldier and wounding three, an official said. The bomber,

<sup>1</sup> "65 killed in Baghdad varsity attack," *The Hindu*, 17 January 2007.

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who struck at a market in Paktika province's capital, Sharan, also wounded two civilians, said Akram Akhpehwak, Paktika's governor.<sup>2</sup>

### 23 January 2007, Khost, Afghanistan

More than 30 people were killed in Taliban-linked violence in Afghanistan on Tuesday, including 10 Afghans caught up in a suicide blast among laborers queuing for work at a NATO base. A suicide bomber detonated explosives strapped to his body while he was standing in a crowd of people waiting to pass security checks to enter an International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) base near Khost. There were no ISAF casualties, spokeswoman Lieutenant Colonel Angela Billings said in Kabul. The Taliban reportedly claimed responsibility for the attack.<sup>3</sup>

### 26 January 2007, Islamabad, Pakistan

A suicide bomber killed a security guard and himself in an attack outside the Marriott Hotel here on Friday, hours before an Indian high commission function to celebrate Republic Day was due to be held there. At least six people were wounded but there were no foreigners among them, officials said.<sup>4</sup>

### 29 January 2007, Eilat, Israel

A Palestinian suicide bomber blew himself up in a bakery in Israel's Red Sea resort of Eilat on Monday, killing three people in the first militant attack in the Jewish state in nine months. The bombing came amid tentative attempts to jumpstart the Middle East peace process and was condemned by the European Union and the White House.<sup>5</sup>

### 1 February 2007, Baghdad, Iraq

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<sup>2</sup> "Suicide Bomber Kills 1 Afghan Soldier," *The Indian Express*, 19 January 2007.

<sup>3</sup> "Over 30 killed in Afghan violence," *Daily Times*, 24 January 2007.

<sup>4</sup> "Blast at R-Day function venue in Islamabad," *The Times of India*, 27 January 2007.

<sup>5</sup> "Suicide bomber kills 3 in Israel," *DAWN*, 30 January 2007.

A pair of suicide bombers detonated explosives Thursday among shoppers in a crowded outdoor market in a Shiite city south of Baghdad, killing at least 45 people and wounding 150, police said.<sup>6</sup>

### 3 February 2007, Baghdad, Iraq

A suicide truck bomber struck a market in a predominantly Shiite area of Baghdad on Saturday, killing at least 121 people and wounding scores among the crowd buying food for evening meals, the most devastating strike in the capital in more than two months. The attacker was driving a truck carrying food when he detonated his explosives, destroying stores and stalls that had been set up in the busy outdoor Sadriyah market, police said.<sup>7</sup>

### 7 February 2007, Islamabad, Pakistan

A suicide attacker tonight detonated a bomb in a parking area at the international airport that serves Pakistan's capital Islamabad, wounding at least two policemen and killing himself. Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz was returning from Gwadar at the time of the attack. Officials were trying to figure out whether the militant was acting on inside information.<sup>8</sup>

### 11 February 2007, Dour, Iraq

A suicide bomber driving a truck packed with explosives killed at least 15 people on Sunday when he attacked a police station north of Baghdad, police said. Police said they were caught off-guard by the bomber, who ignored the main gate to the station and instead rammed the poorly guarded entrance to an adjoining municipal building. He then drove across open ground and smashed his vehicle into the police station, which is in the

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<sup>6</sup> "At Least 62 Killed in Iraqi Violence," *Indian Express*, 1 February 2007.

<sup>7</sup> "Suicide Bomber Kills 121 in Baghdad," *Guardian*, 3 February 2007.

<sup>8</sup> "Suicide bomber strikes airport in Islamabad, PM Aziz likely target?" *Indian Express*, 7 February 2007.

town of Dour near Tikrit, 175 km north of Baghdad.<sup>9</sup>

### 13 February 2007, Baghdad, Iraq

A suicide bomber driving a small truck rigged with explosives blew up near a Baghdad college on Tuesday, killing 18 people in an attack that came just a day after bomb blasts destroyed two crowded city markets. Police said the bomber detonated in a parking lot between the College of Economic Sciences, a private university in western Baghdad's residential Iskan district, and a large foodstuff warehouse belonging to the Trade Ministry. The blast, which police said destroyed one house and severely damaged others, followed bombings at two markets on Monday that killed at least 77 people and maimed scores.<sup>10</sup>

### 17 February 2007, Quetta, Pakistan

Sixteen people, including a judge and six lawyers, were killed and 35 others injured when a suicide bomber blew himself up inside the court of a senior civil judge here on Saturday. Three police constables and several lawyers were among the injured.<sup>11</sup>

### 18 February 2007, Baghdad, Iraq

A string of bombings killed at least 15 people Monday in the Baghdad area. Five people were killed when a suicide attacker detonated a bomb-rigged belt on a public bus headed for the mostly Shiite area of Karradah in central Baghdad, police reported.<sup>12</sup>

### 19 February 2007, Baghdad, Iraq

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<sup>9</sup> "Suicide car bomber kills 15 near Baghdad," *Daily Times*, 12 February 2007.

<sup>10</sup> "Suicide truck bomber kills 18 in Baghdad," *Daily Times*, 14 February 2007.

<sup>11</sup> "Judge, 14 others killed in Quetta suicide attack," *DAWN*, 17 February 2007.

<sup>12</sup> "String of Bombings Kill 15 in Baghdad," *Guardian*, 19 February 2007.

Two days after Prime Minister Nuri Kamal al-Maliki called the opening steps of a security crackdown here a dazzling success, two car bombs tore through a crowded market and killed at least 60 people on Sunday. The blasts occurred in the mostly Shiite neighborhood of New Baghdad, devastating an open-air market, setting dozens of cars ablaze and causing the partial collapse of a two-story building that housed several electronics stores. Survivors tried to rush the more than 131 people wounded in the attack to the hospital.<sup>13</sup>

### 20 February 2007, Baghdad, Iraq

A suicide bomber struck a funeral in Baghdad on Tuesday, killing at least seven people as militants show increasing defiance to a major security operation in the capital. The attacker, wearing a belt packed with explosives, followed a funeral procession into a tent before detonating the blast in a mostly Shi'ite district of eastern Baghdad, police said.<sup>14</sup>

### 20 February 2007, Baghdad, Iraq

A suicide attacker drove a bomb-laden car into a vegetable market near a Shi'ite enclave in southern Baghdad. At least five people were killed and seven injured, police said. The same market in the mostly Sunni Dora district was targeted last month by three car bombs that killed 10 people.<sup>15</sup>

### 21 February 2007, Baghdad, Iraq

A truck bomb that combined explosives with chlorine gas blew up in southern Baghdad on Wednesday, and officials said it might represent a new and deadly tactic by insurgents against Iraqi civilians. The bomb

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<sup>13</sup> "2 Car Bombs Explode in Busy Baghdad Market, Killing at Least 60 People," *New York Times*, 19 February 2007.

<sup>14</sup> "Suicide bomber strikes funeral on bloody day in Iraq," *Associated Press*, 20 February 2007.

<sup>15</sup> "Suicide bomber strikes funeral on bloody day in Iraq," *Associated Press*, 20 February 2007.

killed at least two people and wounded 32 others.<sup>16</sup>

### 24 February 2007, Habaniya, Iraq

A fuel tanker rigged with explosives has killed at least 35 people and wounded 64 more after it blew up near a Sunni mosque in western Iraq. The truck bomb exploded on Saturday in a market in Habaniya, a town where US forces are battling Sunni Arab armed groups, including al-Qaeda in Iraq. Local police, who believe the mosque was the target, said the market was destroyed and 64 people were wounded. Women and children were among the dead, they said.<sup>17</sup>

### 26 February 2007, Baghdad, Iraq

Radical Iraqi Shi'ite cleric Moqtada Al Sadr withdrew his support for a security crackdown in Baghdad yesterday, hours after a female suicide bomber wearing a vest packed with explosives killed 40 and injured 55 in a college.<sup>18</sup>

### 27 February 2007, Bagram, Afghanistan

A suicide bomber killed 19 people and wounded 11 outside the main U.S. military base in Afghanistan on Tuesday during a visit by Vice President Dick Cheney, officials said. The Taliban claimed responsibility and said Cheney was the target.<sup>19</sup>

### 28 February 2007, Baghdad, Iraq

A car bomb ripped through a bustling shopping district in a religiously mixed neighborhood of western Baghdad on Wednesday, killing at least 10 people and wounding about 20 as the U.S.-Iraqi security

operation entered its third week. A car bomb ripped through a bustling shopping district in a religiously mixed neighborhood of western Baghdad on Wednesday, killing at least 10 people and wounding about 20 as the U.S.-Iraqi security operation entered its third week. The midmorning blast in Baiyaa, a Sunni-Shiite neighborhood, sent flames and debris shooting two stories high, witnesses said.<sup>20</sup>

### 28 February 2007, Baghdad, Iraq

Hours after the Baiyaa attack, police said guards outside the Bab al-Sheik police station in central Baghdad fired on a suicide truck bomber as he approached them. The bomber changed course and crashed into a cement barrier, detonating his explosives. Two civilians were killed and two policemen and another civilian were wounded in the blast and exchange of gunfire, police said.<sup>21</sup>

### 1 March 2007, Falluja, Iraq

A car bomb that was apparently aimed at a policeman's wedding party in Falluja, west of Baghdad, killed seven guests on Thursday and wounded six, the local police said.<sup>22</sup>

### 4 March 2007, Nangarhar, Afghanistan

A suicide car bomber attacked an American convoy in eastern Afghanistan on Sunday, and up to eight Afghans were killed and 22 injured in the blast or by subsequent gunfire from U.S. soldiers, officials said. The suicide bomber hit the American convoy with an explosives-packed minivan, said Noor Agha Zawok, the spokesman for the governor of Nangarhar province.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> "The reach of war; Iraq insurgents employ chlorine in bomb attacks," *New York Times*, 22 February 2007.

<sup>17</sup> "Bomb attacks kill dozens in Iraq," *AlJazeera*, 24 February 2007.

<sup>18</sup> "College bomber kills 40 in Iraq," *Gulf Daily News*, 27 February 2007.

<sup>19</sup> "Bomber Kills 19 Outside U.S. Base in Afghanistan," *New York Times*, 27 February 2007.

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<sup>20</sup> "Car Bombing Kills 10, Hurts 20 in Iraq," *New York Times*, 1 March 2007.

<sup>21</sup> "Car Bombing Kills 10, Hurts 20 in Iraq," *New York Times*, 1 March 2007.

<sup>22</sup> "7 at a Baghdad Wedding Are Killed by a Car Bomb," *New York Times*, 1 March 2007.

<sup>23</sup> "Bomber Hits U.S. Convoy; 8 Afghans Dead," *Guardian*, 4 March 2007.

### 5 March 2007, Baghdad, Iraq

The book market along Mutanabi Street was a throwback to the Baghdad of old, the days of students browsing for texts, turbaned clerics hunting down religious tomes and cafe intellectuals debating politics over backgammon. Somehow it survived the war, until Monday, when a powerful suicide car bomb hit the market, slicing through the heart of the capital's intellectual scene. It killed at least 20 people and wounded more than 65.<sup>24</sup>

### 6 March 2007, Baghdad, Iraq

Suicide bombers who lured unsuspecting pilgrims with cakes, and gunmen firing out of passing cars, turned preparations for a Shiite Muslim religious celebration into a day of carnage on Tuesday. At least 109 Shiite pilgrims were killed and more than 200 wounded with the death toll continuing to rise. The back-to-back [suicide] attacks killed at least 77 people and wounded 127 more, the Iraqi authorities said. State-run television reported a death toll closer to 100, with twice as many wounded.<sup>25</sup>

### 7 March 2007, Baghdad, Iraq

A suicide attacker blew himself up in a cafe northeast of the capital Wednesday, killing 30 people as a wave of violence left 90 Iraqis dead throughout the country.<sup>26</sup>

### 7 March 2007, Baghdad, Iraq

12 police commandos and 10 civilians died Wednesday in a car bombing at a checkpoint in southern Baghdad set up to protect pilgrims, the U.S. military said. An Iraqi TV cameraman working for a Shiite-owned

station was among the civilian dead, his station said.<sup>27</sup>

### 10 March 2007, Casablanca, Morocco

A man with explosives hidden on his body blew himself up in an Internet cafe after the owners prevented him from looking at terror Web sites, the Interior Ministry said Monday. The man was killed and four people were injured in the Sunday night blast in a Casablanca slum, said ministry spokesman Abderrahman Achour.<sup>28</sup>

### 11 March 2007, Baghdad, Iraq

A suicide car bomber barreled into a flatbed truck packed with Shi'ite pilgrims yesterday, touching off a giant fireball that left charred bodies strewn through a street in the heart of Baghdad. At least 32 persons were killed.<sup>29</sup>

### 13 March 2007, Lashkar Gah, Afghanistan

Three bombs, two of them carried by suicide bombers, exploded in southern Afghanistan on Tuesday, killing four people and wounding at least 10. The two suicide bombers struck in Lashkar Gah, the capital of Helmand. A Taliban spokesman claimed responsibility for all three attacks, according to Reuters. The first bomber targeted a British convoy passing by, but succeeded only in killing himself, and killing one Afghan and wounding another who were working nearby, said a police officer who identified himself by only one name, Almaz. Fifteen minutes later, the second bomber approached an Afghan National Army base on foot and blew himself up, wounding the battalion commander, the police officer said.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> "Baghdad Car Bomb Kills 20 on Booksellers' Row," *New York Times*, 6 March 2007.

<sup>25</sup> "Attacks across Iraq Kill at Least 109 Shiite Pilgrims," *New York Times*, 7 March 2007.

<sup>26</sup> "Bomber Kills 30; 3 Soldiers Die in Iraq," *New York Times*, 8 March 2007.

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<sup>27</sup> "Bomber Kills 30; 3 Soldiers Die in Iraq," *New York Times*, 8 March 2007.

<sup>28</sup> "Man Blows Himself Up in Internet Café," *Associated Press*, 12 March 2007.

<sup>29</sup> "Suicide bomber kills 32 Shi'ite pilgrims," *The Washington Times*, 12 March 2007.

<sup>30</sup> "3 Bombings Raise Fears of New Effort by Taliban," *New York Times*, 13 March 2007.

**14 March 2007, Tuz Khormato, Iraq**

A suicide bomber struck a market in northern Iraq on Wednesday, killing at least eight people and wounding 25, police said. The explosion occurred just before noon as the market was crowded with shoppers in Tuz Khormato, 130 miles north of Baghdad.<sup>31</sup>

**14 March 2007, Khost, Afghanistan**

A suicide bomber detonated explosives strapped to his chest in a bazaar in the eastern province of Khost, killing five people and wounding 38, officials said....Four civilians and a police officer were killed, and the wounded included nine police officers and two children.<sup>32</sup>

**15 March 2007, Baghdad, Iraq**

Car bombings - the hallmarks of Sunni insurgents - struck the Baghdad area Thursday, killing at least 14 people. More than half of them died when a suicide driver detonated his explosives as a convoy carrying the head of the Baghdad City Council was passing an Iraqi military checkpoint in the central Karradah neighborhood.<sup>33</sup>

**16 March 2007, Baghdad, Iraq**

A suicide car bomber killed 20 people Saturday in Baghdad's notorious Shiite militia stronghold of Sadr City. The blast ripped through an Iraqi army checkpoint at a southern entrance to the district, and six of the dead were soldiers, the U.S. military said in a statement. U.S. military officials at the station said 20 people were killed, and Iraqi police said nearly 50 were hurt.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> "8 killed in suicide bombing in Iraq," *Associated Press*, 14 March 2007.

<sup>32</sup> "An Explosion and a Bomb Kill at Least 11 in Afghanistan," *New York Times*, 15 March 2007.

<sup>33</sup> "4 soldiers killed in Baghdad; car bombs kills 14," *Associated Press*, 16 March 2007.

<sup>34</sup> "Car bomb rekindles Baghdad violence," *Associated Press*, 17 March 2007.

**16 March, 2007, Fallujah, Iraq**

A suicide bomber driving a tanker truck detonated his explosives in a line of cars waiting to enter Fallujah, killing at least six people and wounding dozens, police said Saturday. The blast occurred Friday evening on the edge of the village of Amiriyat, just outside Fallujah, 40 miles west of Baghdad. Police said the six people killed included two policemen and that 75 people were wounded, including women and children.<sup>35</sup>

**17 March 2007, Qandahar, Afghanistan**

A suicide bomber targeting a Canadian military convoy killed a child and wounded a NATO soldier and three other people Saturday in southern Afghanistan, officials said. The bomber rammed his explosives-packed vehicle into a passing military convoy on the main highway linking the southern city of Kandahar with Herat in the west, said Ghulam Azrat, a regional police officer.<sup>36</sup>

**17 March 2007, Anbar, Iraq**

Three suicide bombers driving trucks loaded with explosives and tanks of chlorine gas detonated their payloads in Anbar Province on Friday, killing at least two Iraqi police officers and wounding or sickening more than 350 people, the American military command said Saturday.<sup>37</sup>

**19 March 2007, Kabul, Afghanistan**

A convoy from the United States Embassy was hit by a suicide car bomb on a busy road here on Monday, killing a 14-year-old Afghan bystander and seriously wounding an American security guard in the convoy, officials said. A Taliban spokesman, Qari

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<sup>35</sup> "Suicide Bomber Kills 6 in Fallujah," *Associated Press*, 17 March 2007.

<sup>36</sup> "Canadian convoy targeted in Afghan blast," *Associated Press*, 17 March 2007.

<sup>37</sup> "Suicide Bombers Using Chlorine Gas Kill 2 and Sicken Hundreds in Western Iraq," *New York Times*, 18 March 2007.

Yousef Ahmadi, said in a telephone call that a Taliban militant from Khost Province had carried out the attack, The Associated Press reported.<sup>38</sup>

#### 24 March 2007, Baghdad, Iraq

A suicide bomber driving a truck carrying explosives hidden under construction materials on Saturday was waved through a checkpoint at a heavily fortified police compound in southern Baghdad, where he detonated his payload, killing at least 20 people, an Interior Ministry official said.<sup>39</sup>

#### 24 March 2007, Anbar, Iraq

In Suhada, a village in western Anbar near the Syrian border, three suicide car bombers attacked police posts in a seemingly coordinated triple attack. One detonated himself outside a police station, and the other two struck police checkpoints, according to Col. Ahmad Jeedan, an Iraqi Army commander in Qaim. At least eight people were killed and 20 wounded, he said.<sup>40</sup>

#### 24 March 2007, Haswa, Iraq

A suicide bomber driving a truck with boxes of new shoes destroyed a Shiite mosque in Haswa, about 40 miles south of Baghdad, killing 11 people and wounding 45, according to an Iraqi Army officer and a police official in Haswa.<sup>41</sup>

#### 24 March 2007, Tal Afar, Iraq

At least eight people were killed and another eight wounded in the northwestern town of Tal Afar when a suicide bomber wearing an

explosives belt blew himself up inside a food store, the chief of the city's main hospital said.<sup>42</sup>

#### 27 March 2007, Tal Afar, Iraq

Two truck bombs shattered markets in Tal Afar on Tuesday, killing at least 63 people and wounding dozens in the second assault in four days on a predominantly Shiite Muslim city. Brig. Abdul Karim al-Jubouri, a spokesman for the provincial police, said the first blast killed at least 62 people and wounded 150. The other bomb killed one person and wounded four, he said.<sup>43</sup>

#### 27 March 2007, Tal Afar, Iraq

U.S. soldiers foiled two suicide truck bombings aimed at their base in a small town 50 miles west of Baghdad and killed as many as 15 attackers, the military reported. It said eight soldiers suffered wounds, all but one of them slight, during the firefight in Karmah.<sup>44</sup>

#### 27 March 2007, Batticaloa, Iraq

Security Forces fired at an explosives-laden tractor driven by an LTTE suicide cadre when it was about to storm the Chenkaladi Army camp yesterday. Three soldiers and five civilians were killed and 18 others including a soldier were injured when the tractor exploded after being fired at by a group of soldiers. Children of a nearby orphanage were among the injured.<sup>45</sup>

#### 28 March 2007, Lashkar Gah, Afghanistan

A suicide bomber dressed as an Afghan soldier detonated the explosives strapped to his body at the entrance of the police

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<sup>38</sup> "Bombing of U.S. Embassy Convoy Kills Afghan," *New York Times*, 20 March 2007.

<sup>39</sup> "47 Are Killed in Iraq Bombings, 20 in Baghdad," *New York Times*, 25 March 2007.

<sup>40</sup> "47 Are Killed in Iraq Bombings, 20 in Baghdad," *New York Times*, 25 March 2007.

<sup>41</sup> "47 Are Killed in Iraq Bombings, 20 in Baghdad," *New York Times*, 25 March 2007.

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<sup>42</sup> "47 Are Killed in Iraq Bombings, 20 in Baghdad," *New York Times*, 25 March 2007.

<sup>43</sup> "Truck Bombs Kill Dozens at Iraqi Markets," *Guardian*, 27 March 2007.

<sup>44</sup> "Truck Bombs Kill Dozens at Iraqi Markets," *Guardian*, 27 March 2007.

<sup>45</sup> "Troops foil suicide attack on Chenkaladi camp," *Daily News*, 28 March 2007.

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headquarters in Lashkar Gah, the capital of Helmand Province, and killed four policemen.<sup>46</sup>

### 28 March 2007, Kabul, Afghanistan

Taliban suicide bomber on a motorcycle detonated a bomb yesterday near the car of a senior Afghan intelligence official in a central Kabul business district, killing four civilians. The target of the attack, Kamaluddin, who heads an intelligence department, was among 12 wounded in the attack. Mullah Dadullah, the main Taliban military commander, claimed responsibility.<sup>47</sup>

### 29 March 2007, Kharian, Pakistan

A suicide bomber blew himself up Thursday in a military training area in Punjab Province, killing a soldier and wounding seven others, military officials said. The attack took place in the garrison town of Kharian, but was not inside the garrison. There were no immediate claims of responsibility.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> “Afghanistan: 4 Policemen Killed in Southern Suicide Attack,” *New York Times*, 28 March 2007.

<sup>47</sup> “Taliban suicide bomber kills four civilians,” *Gulf News*, 29 March 2007.

<sup>48</sup> “Bomber Kills Pakistani Soldier in Training Area,” *New York Times*, 30 March 2007.

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**CHRONOLOGY**

**Suicide Attacks in 2007 (Jan-March)**

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Date	Month	Country	Place	Location/Target	Casualties			Injured	Terrorist Group	Modus operandi
					SFs	Civilians	Total			
16	January	Iraq	Baghdad	University		65	65	110		Bomber (2)
18	January	Afghanistan	Paktika	Market	1		1	5		Bomber
23	January	Afghanistan	Khost	NATO base		10	10	14	Taliban	Bomber
26	January	Pakistan	Islamabad	Marriott Hotel	1		1	6		Bomber
29	January	Israel	Eilat	Bakery		3	3	3		Bomber
1	February	Iraq	Baghdad	Market		45	45	150		Bomber (2)
3	February	Iraq	Baghdad	Market		121	121			Truck Bomber
7	February	Pakistan	Islamabad	Airport parking area				2		Bomber
11	February	Iraq	Dour	Police station			15			Truck bomber
13	February	Iraq	Baghdad	College parking area		18	18			Truck Bomber
17	February	Pakistan	Quetta	Court		16	16	35		Bomber
18	February	Iraq	Baghdad	Market		60	60	131		Car bomber (2)
19	February	Iraq	Baghdad			5	5			Bomber
20	February	Iraq	Baghdad	Funeral		7	7	15		Bomber
20	February	Iraq	Baghdad			11	11			Car bomber
21	February	Iraq	Baghdad			2	2	32		Truck bomber
24	February	Iraq	Habaniya	Market		35	35	64		Truck Bomber
26	February	Iraq	Baghdad	College		40	40	55		Bomber
27	February	Afghanistan	Bagram	US Military base		19	19	11		Bomber
28	February	Iraq	Baghdad			2	2	3		Truck bomber
28	February	Iraq	Baghdad	Baiyaa neighbourhood		10	10	20		Car Bomber

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Date	Month	Country	Place	Location/Target	Casualties			Injured	Terrorist Group	Modus operandi
					SFs	Civilians	Total			
1	March	Iraq	Falluja	Wedding party		7	7	6		Car bomber
4	March	Afghanistan	Nangarhar	US convoy		8	8	22		Car bomber
5	March	Iraq	Baghdad	Book market		20	20	65		Car bomber
6	March	Iraq	Baghdad	Shia worshippers		77	77	127		Bombers (2)
7	March	Iraq	Baghdad	Café		30	30			Bomber
7	March	Iraq	Baghdad	Iraqi checkpoint	12	10	22			Car bomber
10	March	Morocco	Casablanca	Café			4			Bomber
11	March	Iraq	Baghdad	Shia worshippers		32	32			Car Bomber
13	March	Afghanistan	LashkarGah	British convoy		1	1	1		Bomber
13	March	Afghanistan	Lashkar Gah	Afghan Army base				1		Bomber
14	March	Iraq	Tuz Khormato	Market		8		25		Bomber
14	March	Afghanistan	Khost	Bazaar	1	4	5	38		Bomber
15	March	Iraq	Baghdad	Iraqi Army checkpoint		14	14			Car Bomber
16	March	Iraq	Falluja		2	4	6	75		Truck Bomber
16	March	Iraq	Anbar		2		2	350		Truck bombers (3)
17	March	Iraq	Baghdad	Iraqi Army checkpoint	6	14	20	50		Car bomber
17	March	Afghanistan	Kandahar	Canadian convoy		1	1	4		Car bomber
19	March	Afghanistan	Kabul	US Embassy convoy		1	1	5	Taliban	Car bomber
24	March	Iraq	Baghdad	Police compound		20	20			Truck bomber
24	March	Iraq	Anbar	Police posts		8	8	20		Bomber
24	March	Iraq	Haswa	Shia mosque		11	11	45		Truck bomber
24	March	Iraq	Tal Afar	Food store		8	8	8		Bomber
27	March	Iraq	Tal Afar	Market		152	152	347		Truck bomber

Date	Month	Country	Place	Location/Target	Casualties			Injured	Terrorist Group	Modus operandi
					SFs	Civilians	Total			
27	March	Iraq	Tal Afar	Market		1	1	4		Truck bomber
27	March	Sri Lanka	Batticaloa	Chenkaladi Army camp	3	5	8	18		Tractor bomber
28	March	Afghanistan	Lashkar Gah	Police HQ	4		4			Bomber
28	March	Afghanistan	Kabul	Afghan intelligence official		4	4	12	Taliban	Motorcycle bomber
29	March	Pakistan	Kharian	Military training area	1		1	7		Bomber