

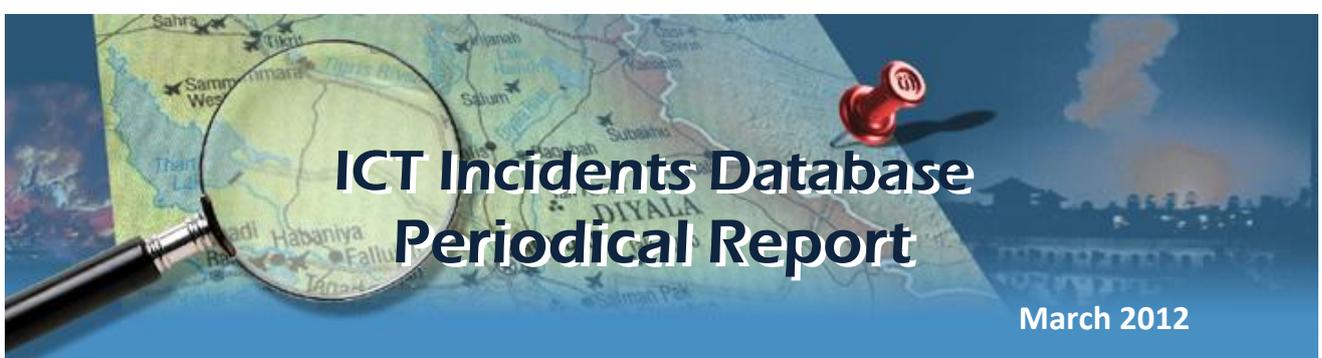


ICT Incidents Database Periodical Report

March 2012

The following is a summary and analysis of terrorist attacks and counter-terrorism operations that occurred during the month of March 2012, researched and recorded by the ICT database team. Among others:

- On 3 March, The Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MOJWA) claimed responsibility for carrying out their first suicide car bombing that wounded 23 people, in Tamanrasset, Algeria.
- On 3 March, Betim Kaziu was sentenced to 27 years in prison for plotting to kill US soldiers and attempting to provide material support to al-Shabaab.
- On 5 March, a group of 50 gunmen disguised as police officers raided checkpoints and homes in Haditha, Iraq, killing 27 members of the security forces and wounding three others.
- On 6 March, Indian journalist Syed Mohammed Kazmi, 50, was arrested for his alleged role in the 13 February 2012 bombing of an Israeli diplomat's car in Delhi, India.
- Between 9 March and 18 March, more than 200 rockets were fired from Gaza into Israel, injuring five civilians. In response, the IDF launched two air strikes in Gaza, killing three Islamic Jihad members.
- On 10 March, a court of appeal increased the sentences for eight militants responsible for the 2011 Argana café bomb in Marrakech, Morocco.
- Between 11 and 19 March, seven people were killed and five injured in a series of shooting attacks in Toulouse and Montauban, France. The perpetrator was identified as Mohamed Merah, 23; he was killed on 21 March by armed police, after a national manhunt that resulted in a 30 hour siege on his apartment. On 25 March, his brother, Abdelkader Merah was arrested and charged as an accomplice.
- On 17 March, 27 people were killed and 140 injured when two car bombs exploded simultaneously in front of government buildings in Damascus, Syria.
- On 19 March, five suspected Jemaah Islamiah militants were shot and killed by counter-terrorist officers in Bali, Indonesia.
- On 19 March, Ahmad Wali Siddiqui, a German-Afghan man went on trial in Koblenz, accused of being a member of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and al-Qa'ida.
- On 28 March, Adlene Hicheur, a Franco-Algerian nuclear scientist, went on trial on suspicion of plotting terror attacks on behalf of al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).
- On 29 March, Muhammad Adawayat, 30, was sentenced at the Jerusalem District Court to seven and a half years in prison following his conviction for Hamas membership.
- On 31 March, 10 people were killed and 340 injured in three coordinated bomb attacks in Yala, Thailand.



EUROPE

France

Between 11 and 19 March, seven people were killed and five injured in a series of shooting attacks that targeted French soldiers and Jewish civilians in the cities of Toulouse and Montauban.¹ Police initially thought the first attack was an isolated incident but soon linked the attacks due to the modus operandi used in all three cases.

The attacks took place as follows:

- On 11 March, Master Sergeant Imad Ibn-Ziaten, 30, was killed when he was shot in the head outside a gym in Toulouse. The suspect escaped and remained at large. Interior Minister Claude Gueant said that Ibn-Ziaten, who was a French paratrooper of north African origin, had advertised a motorcycle for sale and was shot at an appointment he set up to show the bike to a potential buyer. Ibn-Ziaten had been in email contact with the suspect.² A computer IP address linked to this email was a key factor in locating the suspect on 21 March.³
- On 15 March, Corporal Abel Chennouf, 24, and Private Mohamed Legouad, 23, both of North African origin, were killed, and Corporal Loïc Liber, 28, was seriously injured, while withdrawing money from a cash machine outside a shopping centre in Montauban, around 50 km north of Toulouse. They were all from the 17th Parachute Engineer Regiment but were off duty at the time of the attack. Footage from security cameras showed the gunman with a motorcycle helmet and black clothing.⁴
- On the 19 March, three children and one adult were killed and two seriously wounded at the Hozar Hatorah Jewish School in Toulouse. Witnesses said the attacker arrived at the school's entrance on a black motorcycle, as parents were taking their children to the school at approximately 08:00. The assailant shot the children and parents with a heavy-calibre firearm and a pistol and then escaped on a motorcycle.⁵ The victims were identified as Yonathan Sandler, 30, a teacher and rabbi from Jerusalem; his two children Aryeh, 6, and Gavriel, 3; and Miriam Monstango, 8, the daughter of the school's principle. Witnesses said the attacker grabbed the girl by her hair and shot her at point-blank range.⁶

French Interior Minister Claude Gueant ordered increased security at Jewish schools throughout France fearing further attacks and President Nicolas Sarkozy travelled to

¹ Haaretz, "TIMELINE / Serial attacker terrorizes southwestern France", 21 March 2012;

² BBC, "Shootings in Toulouse and Montauban: What we know", 19 March 2012;

³ BBC, "Obituary: Toulouse gunman Mohamed Merah", 22 March 2012;

⁴ CNN, "Timeline: France killings; suspect killed", 22 March 2012;

⁵ Jerusalem Post, "France shooting: Toulouse Jewish school attack kills four", 19 March 2012;

⁶ Telegraph, "Toulouse shooting: heartbreaking detail of attack that shocked France and Israel", 20 March 2012;



Toulouse to oversee the police investigation.⁷ Police identified the suspect as Mohammed Merah, 23, a French citizen of Algerian origin. Police said Merah had used the same pistol in all the attacks and that he had used a Yamaha T-MAX motorcycle to flee the scene of the attacks.⁸ The owner of a Yamaha garage in Toulouse contacted police after a man believed to be Merah's brother asked him how to repaint a motorbike and remove a GPS tracking device. They also reportedly identified Merah from a list of mobile phone calls made in the area around the Jewish school at the time of the attack.⁹

Merah was known to the French authorities, having served time in prison for theft, He had been under surveillance and was a member of Forsane Alizza, or Knights of Glory, a militant group that the French government had banned in January 2012. In 2011, Merah travelled to Afghanistan and Pakistan, claiming to be a tourist but was arrested in Khandar and later deported to France, suspected of militant activity.¹⁰

On 21 March, police investigators traced Merah to an apartment in the neighborhood of Cote Pavee, not far from the scene of the school shooting. Approximately 300 French police officers from the RAID unit surrounded the apartment in order to arrest Merah. However Merah, who was armed with an AK-47, an Uzi, and several handguns, opened fire wounding two officers. . Several hours before the police raid, Merah contacted the French TV channel France 24, telling a journalist that he had filmed the murders and had posted the footage online. He said the attacks were motivated by the killings of Palestinian children in Gaza and to protest French intervention in Afghanistan, as well as the banning of the full Islamic veil in France.¹¹ He said that he was connected with al-Qa'ida, said claimed to be a "mujahideen", and that he had planned to kill two other soldiers. Merah said that his only regret was not having been able to execute these other killings.¹² Merah had initially said he would negotiate with police, but later told them he would resist arrest and kill anyone who tried to

⁷ New York Times, "Toulouse Killer's Path to Radicalism a Bitter Puzzle", 29 March 2012;

⁸ BBC, "Obituary: Toulouse gunman Mohamed Merah", 22 March 2012;

⁹ Guardian, "Toulouse shootings: French police in standoff with Mohamed Merah", 22 March 2012;

¹⁰ New York Times, "French slaying suspect dead after police raid hideout", 22 March 2012;

¹¹ Haaretz, "TIMELINE / Serial attacker terrorizes southwestern France", 21 March 2012;

¹² BBC, "Shootings in Toulouse and Montauban: What we know", 22 March 2012;



take him into custody. After a 30-hour siege, Merah was shot and killed on 22 March as he attempted to jump out of a window of the apartment whilst still firing at the officers.¹³

On 25 March, Abdelkader Merah, 29, the brother of Mohamed Merah was charged with complicity in seven murders and two attempted murders. He was also charged with conspiracy to prepare acts of terrorism and group theft. He was suspected of providing logistical support to his brother, although he denied knowing his brother's plans. Police said they found explosives in Abdelkader's car. He was known to security services for smuggling militants into Iraq in 2007.¹⁴

On 28 March, Adlene Hicheur, who previously worked as a researcher at the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) in Switzerland, went on trial accused of plotting terror attacks on behalf of al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). He was arrested in October 2009 in south-eastern France after police intercepted email messages he wrote to an alleged contact who was suspected of links to al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). Court documents said the emails proposed targets and suggested Hicheur was willing to be part of an active unit. Hicheur faces 10 years in prison if found guilty.¹⁵

On 30 March, French police arrested 19 suspected Islamist militants and seized weapons in a series of dawn raids in Toulouse, Lyon, Marseille, Paris, Nice, Rouen and Le Mans. Mohammed Achamlane, leader of Forzanne Alisa, was amongst those arrested. Police said that three Kalashnikovs, a Glock pistol, and a grenade were seized at his home.¹⁶ The funds of the members of the cell were frozen.¹⁷ Although the arrests were not directly linked to the Toulouse attacks earlier in March, French President Nicolas Sarkozy ordered a crackdown on radical Islamists in France.¹⁸

Germany

On 19 March, Ahmad Wali Siddiqui, a German-Afghan man went on trial in Koblenz, on suspicion of being a member of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and al-Qa'ida. Under

¹³ Washington Post, "Mohammed Merah, French shootings suspect, trades gunfire with police in standoff", 21 March 2012;

¹⁴ Jerusalem Post, "French shooter's brother charged as accomplice", 25 March 2012;

¹⁵ BBC, "French Cern scientist goes on trial for 'al-Qaeda plot'", 29 March 2012;

¹⁶ BBC, "France arrests 19 suspected Islamist militants in raids", 30 March 2012;

¹⁷ AFP, "France: Islamist detainees planned abduction", 1 April 2012;

¹⁸ CSM, "Sarkozy crackdown on 'radical Islamists': A campaign move?", 30 March 2012;



German law, no pleas were entered and Siddiqui did not immediately address the charges against him. He was arrested by US troops in Afghanistan in July 2010. During questioning he revealed details of an alleged al-Qa'ida plot targeting European cities, that prompted terrorism warnings across Europe. However, no tangible attacks materialized. Authorities claimed Siddiqui was part of a group of militants from Hamburg who left Germany in 2009 to pursue jihad in Afghanistan. Some of the group were captured or killed.¹⁹ Siddiqui said that two of his accomplices, Rami Makanesi and Naamen Mezich, flew from Vienna to Tehran to avoid arrest. Authorities said the trial was likely to reveal an intricate network among al-Qa'ida members, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and other Islamic terrorist groups operating in Europe, Afghanistan and Pakistan.²⁰ Siddiqui faces 10 years in prison if convicted.²¹

Italy

On 15 March, a 20 year-old Moroccan man, whose identity was not released to the public, was arrested at his apartment in Brescia on suspicion of planning to attack a synagogue in Milan. Authorities became suspicious of his activities from Internet traffic, including a Facebook page that he set up that discussed methods to assemble explosives. Police were also suspicious of his use of a Google maps application, which located the area surrounding the synagogue. When searching the suspect's apartment, police discovered detailed instructions of how to build a car bomb and a plan of the synagogue on his computer but, no explosives were found. Several USB drives were confiscated as well as two flags adorned with Nazi swastikas.²² As part of the investigation, British police detained a woman, 40, who had been in contact with the suspect, but police did not confirm if she had a direct role in the plot.²³

Netherlands

Dutch authorities arrested a man, 20, in Amsterdam on 16 March, on suspicion of involvement in terror-related activities. Police did not reveal whether the suspect had planned an actual attack and what the intended target was but said they seized a kilogram of aluminum powder and a large collection of DVDs containing Salafist propaganda from the

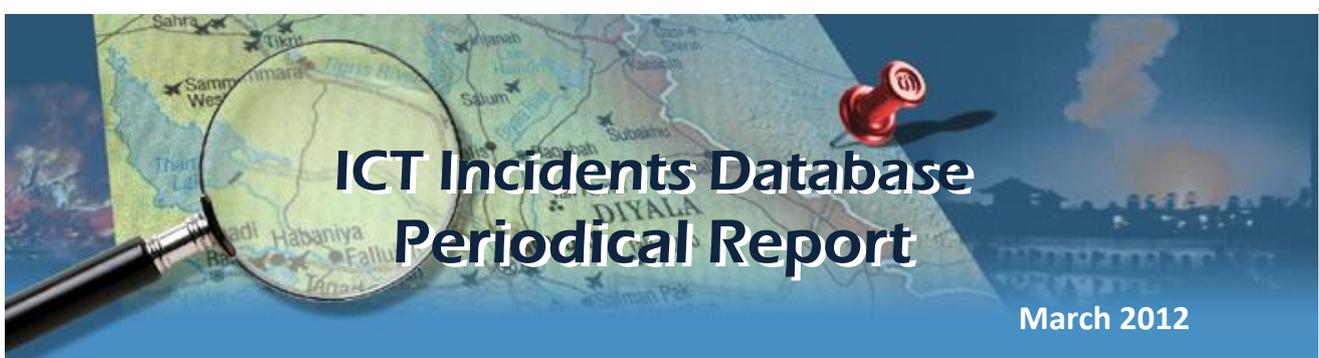
¹⁹ AP, "German-Afghan man captured by Americans goes on trial on charges of al-Qaida membership", 19 March 2012;

²⁰ Jerusalem Post, "German-Afghani terror suspect links Iran to al-Qaida", 28 March 2012;

²¹ AP, "German-Afghan man being tried on al-Qaida charges", 19 March 2012;

²² BBC, "Italy arrests man over Milan synagogue 'plot'", 15 March 2012;

²³ Sky news, "Woman Held In London Over 'Milan Terror Plot'", 15 March 2012;



ICT Incidents Database Periodical Report

March 2012

man's apartment. The suspect had also allegedly been searching the internet for instructions on how to make a bomb. A magistrate at the court in Rotterdam ordered the suspect to remain in custody for at least two weeks while the investigation continued.²⁴

Spain

On 27 March, a suspected al-Qa'ida militant, identified only by his initials M.H.A. and known, as "the librarian", was arrested at his home in Valencia. He was charged with broadcasting videos on the Internet to incite militant attacks.²⁵ Authorities said he worked full time recruiting new militants for al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). He allegedly arranged for potential militants to travel to Afghanistan. The arrest was made as a result of an investigation that started in February 2011 and was made under the orders of a magistrate in Madrid.²⁶

United Kingdom

On 9 March, Shabaaz Hussain, 28, was sentenced to five years and three months in prison, for funding terrorism in Somalia. Hussain admitted to seven counts of fundraising for terrorists but denied four counts of providing funds for terrorism and engaging in the preparation of terrorism. He said in court that in 2010, he gave £9,114 to Muhammed Jahangir, Tufual Ahmed, and Mohammed Shahim, known as the as "The Somali Three". These men had left the UK allegedly to become involved in terrorism in Somalia. When police searched Hussain's apartment, they discovered extremist material. They had secretly recorded conversations he had with the associates in his car.²⁷

AFRICA

Algeria

On 3 March, 23 people were wounded when a suicide car bomber attacked a paramilitary base in Tamanrasset. Casualties included 15 paramilitary police, five members of the civil protection service, and three civilians who were passing by when the attack took place.²⁸ Several hours after the attack, a statement sent to the AFP news agency, and signed by the

²⁴ AP, "Dutch police arrest terror suspect", 16 March 2012;

²⁵ Reuters, "Spain arrests Qaeda suspect for inciting attacks", 27 March 2012;

²⁶ AP, "Spanish police arrests al-Qaida suspect, says he distributed videos urging terror attacks", 27 March 2012;

²⁷ BBC, "Shabaaz Hussain: Somalia terrorism funder jailed", 9 March 2012

²⁸ Reuters, "Suicide bomber attacks Algerian security base", 3 March 2012;



Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (Jamaat Tawhid Wal Jihad Fi Garbi Ifriqiya-MOJWA) claimed responsibility for the attack. This was the first time the group carried out a suicide car bombing. MOJWA surfaced in December 2011, when it claimed to be holding three Westerners kidnapped from a Western Sahara refugee camp in Algeria in October 2011.²⁹

Kenya

On 10 March, six people were killed and 68 injured when three grenades were thrown from a moving vehicle into a crowd of people gathered at the Machakos bus station in Nairobi.³⁰ No group claimed responsibility for the attack, but Kenyan authorities blamed al-Shabaab.³¹

Morocco

On 10 March, eight militants responsible for 28 April 2011 Argana café bomb in Marrakech, had their sentences increased in a court of appeal. They were originally convicted in October 2011. Adel al-Othmani, the leader of the cell, was charged with planting and detonating the bomb; the others were charged with membership in a criminal organization and having knowledge of the attack. The appeals court upheld the death sentence for al-Othmani, and increased the sentence of Hakim Dah from a life sentence to capital punishment. Six other defendants convicted of being associated with the attack had their prison sentences of two and four years increased to 10 years. Abdel-Fattah Dehaj was the only defendant who kept his two-year sentence. Mohammed Najimi, who had originally been given a two-year suspended sentence for providing evidence for the prosecution against al-Othmani had his sentence increased to 10 years. Police originally believed the cell were directly linked to al-Qa'ida, but later concluded that while al-Othmani was inspired by al-Qa'ida, he led this cell alone.³²

Nigeria

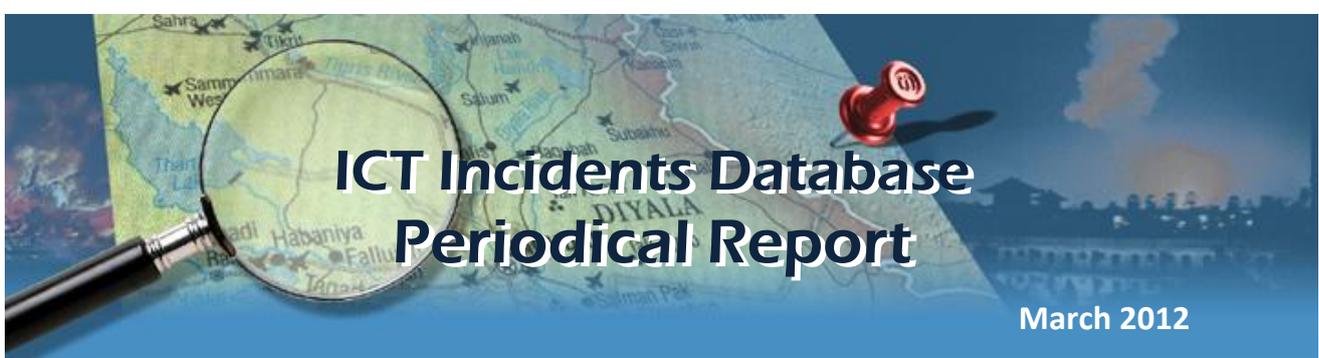
On 8 March, two hostages who had been held in north-west Nigeria since 12 May 2011 were killed, when a rescue attempt to free them from their captors failed. The hostages were identified as Chris McManus, 28, a UK citizen, and Franco Lamolinara, 48, an Italian. Two

²⁹ AFP, "Al-Qaeda offshoot claims Algeria attack", 3 March 2012;

³⁰ Guardian, "Nairobi bus station attack kills six", 11 March 2012;

³¹ BBC, "Kenya blames al-Shabab for deadly Nairobi grenade attack", 11 March 2012;

³² AP, "Moroccan appeals court stiffens penalties for defendants in Marrakech bombing", 10 March 2012;



militants were killed in the operation.³³ McManus and Lamolinara were working for Italian construction firm B Stabilini and were captured by gunmen who claimed to be from 'al-Qaida in the land beyond the Sahel'. In December 2011, the militants released two videos showing McManus and Lamolinara pleading for their lives while under armed guard. Following the arrest of a Boko Haram militant in Kaduna on 1 February 2012, authorities discovered the location of the hostages in Sokoto.³⁴ British Prime Minister David Cameron authorized the rescue mission. However; the hostages were shot and killed as members of the Special Boat Service and Royal Marine commandos approached the hideout.³⁵

MIDDLE EAST

Iraq

On 5 March, 27 members of the Iraqi security forces were killed and three others injured in Haditha, when a group of approximately 50 gunmen shot them. The attacks began at 02:00 when two senior police officers were kidnapped from their homes and shot dead. The gunmen then shot police guards stationed at several checkpoints throughout the town. A police curfew was imposed and all exits to the town were sealed off.³⁶ The attackers were disguised in military uniforms and drove cars painted to look like Iraqi Interior Ministry vehicles.³⁷ No group immediately claimed responsibility for the attack but Associated Press reported that an al-Qa'ida flag was raised at one of the targeted checkpoints.³⁸ On 16 March 2012, the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) claimed responsibility for attacks in a statement posted on Islamist websites.³⁹

On 20 March, a series of car bombings and roadside bombings across several cities in Iraq killed 50 people and wounded 250 others. The most serious attack occurred in Karbala where 13 people were killed, including five Iranian pilgrims. In Kirkuk, a car bomb exploded near a police headquarters, killing 13 people and wounding 30 others. In Baghdad, three people were killed and nine wounded in a suicide car bombing targeting the foreign ministry

³³ Guardian, "Kidnapped Briton killed in Nigeria as PM sends in special forces", 8 March 2012;

³⁴ Telegraph, "British hostage murder: timeline of how the kidnap of Chris McManus and Franco Lamolinara by al-Qaeda unfolded", 8 March 2012;

³⁵ BBC, "Nigeria deaths: Italy demands UK answers on hostage rescue bid", 9 March 2012;

³⁶ Reuters, "27 policemen killed in an attack in western Iraqi city", 25 March 2012;

³⁷ AP, "Gunmen kill 25 police, raise al Qaeda battle flag", 25 March 2012;

³⁸ BBC, "Iraq attacks in Haditha 'kill 27 policemen", 5 March 2012;

³⁹ Reuters, "Islamists claim Iraq attack that killed 27", 16 March 2012;



building. Explosions were also reported in Baiji, Samarra, Tuz Khurmato, Daquq and Dhuluiya, all north of Baghdad, and Hilla and Latifiya in the south. In Baquba, police said they had discovered and defused eight bombs. Two other people were killed and 11 wounded in a car bomb in Ramadi and a coordinated shooting and bombing took place in the Salaheddin province, killing two people.⁴⁰ Authorities suspect the motivation behind the attack was to derail the stability in the region ahead of a meeting of the Arab League due to take place in late March, in Baghdad.⁴¹

Israel, West Bank and Gaza Strip

Between 9 March and 18 March, approximately 200 rockets were fired from Gaza into Israel. On 9 March, over 40 rockets were fired from the Gaza strip into towns in southern Israel; six rockets were intercepted by the “Iron Dome” system. Three people were injured directly from the rocket fire. In response, the Israeli Defense Forces launched two air strikes in Gaza, killing three Islamic Jihad members, including Zuhir Qaisi and Ahmad Hanini. Qaisi was the Secretary General of the Popular Resistance Committee (PRC) and Ahmad Hanini a senior member.⁴² The IDF said Qaisi was planning a terror attack on Israel from the Sinai and that the Israeli strike was carried out to prevent the terror attack from taking place. Israeli officials claimed that Qaisi was responsible for the August 2011 attacks on Southern Israel.⁴³ On 11 March, two Grad missiles hit Be’er Sheva, damaging a school and a car and on 12 March, two civilians were injured by further rocket fire. The IDF continued throughout this period to respond to the rocket attacks by targeting terrorist cells and facilities within Gaza.⁴⁴

On 29 March, Muhammad Adawayat, 30, was sentenced at the Jerusalem District Court to seven and a half years in prison following his conviction for Hamas membership. He was also found guilty of grievous bodily harm and carrying and producing weapons. According to the indictment, Adawayat joined Hamas in 2003, where he was trained in bomb making. In March 2011, he prepared a bomb and detonator hidden in a loaf of bread, designed to be triggered using a mobile phone. He intended for the device to detonate at a bus stop on the Jerusalem-Gush Etzion road. However, Adawayat changed his mind last minute and discarded the device near the Gilo neighborhood in Jerusalem. The device was later

⁴⁰ AP, “Attacks kill 46 across Iraq ahead of Arab summit”, 20 March 2012;

⁴¹ al-Jazeera, “Dozens dead in string of Iraq blasts”, 20 March 2012;

⁴² Jerusalem Post, “IDF strikes Gaza targets following rocket barrage”, 10 March 2012;

⁴³ Haaretz, “Gaza militants fire rockets at Israeli south; casualties, damage reported”, 10 March 2012;

⁴⁴ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “ Israel under fire-March 2012”, 18 March 2012;



discovered by two Jerusalem municipal employees. One of them picked up the loaf of bread containing the device, and it exploded in his hand causing serious injuries. Adawayat was ordered to pay NIS 200,000 in compensation to the worker.⁴⁵

Syria

On 17 March, 27 people were killed and 140 injured, when two car bombs exploded simultaneously in front of the air intelligence and criminal security headquarters in Damascus. The attacks severely damaged the buildings and surrounding areas. Since November 2011, attacks in Syria have become increasingly more sophisticated, mainly targeting the Syrian regime's military and police infrastructure.⁴⁶ The Al-Nusra Front to Protect the Levant claimed responsibility for the attack in a video posted online. The group first surfaced in February 2011, when they claimed responsibility for the 10 February Aleppo bombings and 6 January Damascus car bomb.⁴⁷ The Syrian state media website blamed opposition forces for the attacks and aired images of the carnage caused by the bombings. The Free Syrian Army (FSA) rebels denied any role in the bombings, and claimed that the government itself had staged the bombings to undermine support for the opposition.⁴⁸

Turkey

On 1 March, 15 policemen and one civilian were moderately injured when a remote-controlled bomb detonated near the ruling Justice and Development Party headquarters in Istanbul. Police said the bomb was mounted on a motorcycle that was left by the side of the road and contained plastic explosives.⁴⁹ The device exploded as a police van, with 21 officers on board, passed the motorbike. No group claimed responsibility but police suspected PKK rebels.⁵⁰

Yemen

On 5 March, suspected al-Qa'ida militants detonated two car bombs at an army base located between Aden and Zinjibar, killing 90 soldiers and kidnapping 50 others.⁵¹ The militants also stole the majority of weapons stored at the base. Yemeni medical and army officials said 20

⁴⁵ Jerusalem Post, "Court sentences e. J'lem Hamas man to 7.5 years", 29 March 2012;

⁴⁶ CNN, "Explosions rock Syrian capital", 17 March 2012;

⁴⁷ AP, "Syrian capital Damascus hit by car bomb attacks, at least 27 dead", 17 March 2012;

⁴⁸ Reuters, "Twin bombings in Damascus kill at least 27, almost 100 hurt", 17 March 2012;

⁴⁹ WSJ, "Bomb Attack Injures Turkish Police", 1 March 2012;

⁵⁰ CNN, "Remote-controlled blast hits Istanbul police officers, injuring 16", 1 March 2012;

⁵¹ New York Times, "Death Toll Rises in Attack on Yemeni Army Base", 5 March 2012;



militants were killed in a firefight that followed the ambush.⁵² No group claimed responsibility for the attack.⁵³

SOUTH AMERICA

Colombia

On 18 March, 11 Colombian soldiers, including an officer, were killed and two injured, when they were ambushed whilst on patrol in Arauquita. The military said in a statement to the media, that the soldiers were killed when suspected FARC rebels fired gas cylinders at their patrol.⁵⁴

On 26 March, a military operation, that targeted a jungle base in the central Meta region of Colombia, killed 35 Revolutionary Forces of Colombia (FARC) rebels. The army said that several other militants were captured but did not release any details. The operation formed part of a new military strategy to fight the FARC by destroying their key armed and financial units, marking a shift from the previous focus of tracking down and killing their leaders.⁵⁵ The new strategy focused on using intelligence to track down specific battle units and interrupt sources of financing, which include drug trafficking, illegal metals mining, and extortion.⁵⁶

NORTH AMERICA

USA

On 3 March, Betim Kaziu was sentenced to 27 years in prison for plotting to kill US soldiers and attempting to provide material support to al-Shabaab. Authorities believed that Kaziu became radicalized by online speeches by the late Anwar Al-Awlki and propaganda videos produced by al-Qa'ida and al-Shabaab. In July 2011, he was found guilty of conspiring to commit murder overseas, conspiring to provide material support to terrorism, attempting to provide material support to a foreign terrorist organization, and conspiring to use a machine

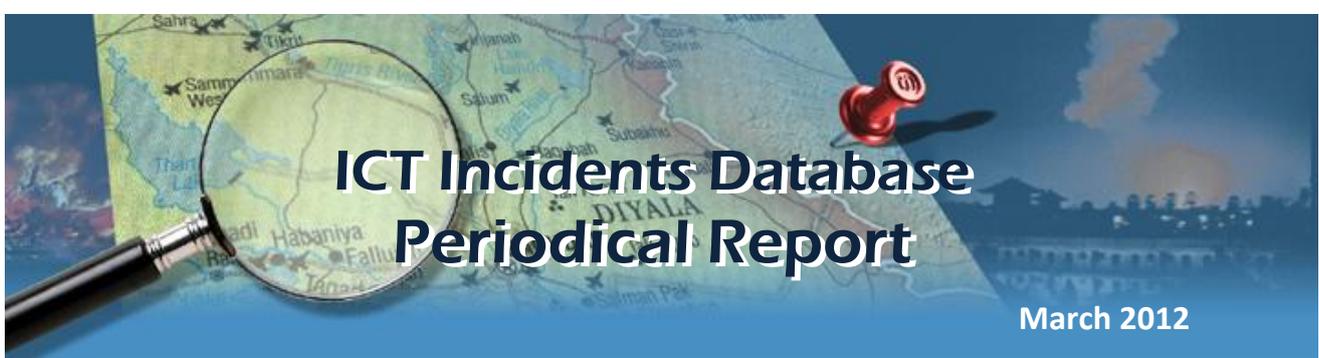
⁵² Wall Street Journal, "Raid Kills 80 Soldiers in Yemen", 5 March 2012;

⁵³ New York Times, "Death Toll Rises in Attack on Yemeni Army Base", 5 March 2012;

⁵⁴ Colombia Reports, "FARC kill 11 soldiers in northeast Colombia attack", 18 March 2012

⁵⁵ Reuters, "Colombian troops kill 35 rebels in new blow to FARC", 27 March 2012

⁵⁶ BBC, "Colombia forces 'kill 35 Farc rebels' in Meta", 26 March 2012;



gun. In February 2009, Kaziu traveled with his friend Sulejah Hadzovic to Cairo where they attempted to buy weapons. Hadzovic returned to the US after having second thoughts about waging jihad, and eventually became the primary witness in Kaziu's trial. Kaziu continued his travels with the aim of joining al-Shabbab in Somalia but ended up travelling to Kosovo, where he planned to attack US troops stationed there. However, he was arrested by local authorities in Kosovo and then handed over to the FBI.⁵⁷

On 27 March, Patrick Nayar, 48, was found guilty in Manhattan federal court of five counts related to supporting Hizballah. He was convicted of conspiring and attempting to provide material support or resources to a foreign terrorist organization; conspiring to make or receive a contribution of funds, goods or services to Hezbollah, and conspiring to traffic in firearms and ammunition.⁵⁸ Authorities said that between July 2009 and September 2009, Nayar and another man identified as Conrad Stanislaus Mulholland, agreed to provide weapons, ammunition, and vehicles to Hizballah. On several occasions they met with a man who they believed was a Hizballah operative, but in fact was an undercover FBI agent. In these meetings, the men agreed to sell the weapons to the confidential informant. Nayar and Mulholland also provided the undercover FBI agent with a handgun, a box of ammunition, and a pick-up truck, believing that he would deliver the items to Hizballah in Lebanon.⁵⁹ Nayar, an Indian national living illegally in the US, was arrested at his home in New York in September 2009 on a separate charge and in October 2009 charged with the offences. In total, he faced a maximum sentence of 75 years in prison.⁶⁰ He was scheduled to be sentenced on 25 September 2012. Charges against Mulholland, 45, were pending, and he was presumed innocent until proven guilty. He remains at large.⁶¹

⁵⁷ AP, "Betim Kaziu Gets 27 Years In Homegrown Terror Case", 2 March 2012;

⁵⁸ FBI, "Queens Man Found Guilty in Manhattan Federal Court for Conspiracy and Attempting to Provide Material Support to Hizballah", 28 March 2012;

⁵⁹ Indian Express, "Indian immigrant in US found guilty of supporting Hezbollah", 29 March 2012;

⁶⁰ New York Daily News, "Queens man on trial for supporting Hezbollah", 29 March 2012;

⁶¹ FBI, "Queens Man Found Guilty in Manhattan Federal Court for Conspiracy and Attempting to Provide Material Support to Hizballah", 28 March 2012;



ASIA

India

On 1 March, two Lashker-e-Taiba (LeT) militants were arrested at the main station in Dehli, following an intelligence tip. The men were believed to be planning to carry out a terror attack in the city.⁶² Police seized five mobile phones from the suspects, including one that contained a memory card with footage of terror training camps, information about IEDs, and instructions about firing AK-47s. Police did not release the identity of the suspects but did say they were Indian citizens, one of whom was trained in Pakistan in 2011 in bomb-making and weapons use. Authorities said that the suspects were not linked to the February 2012 attack on Israeli Diplomats in Dehli.⁶³

On 6 March, Indian journalist Syed Mohammed Kazmi, 50, was arrested for his alleged role in the 13 February 2012, bombing of an Israeli diplomatic car in New Delhi.⁶⁴ Indian media reported that Kazmi had held telephone conversations with one of the Iranian terrorists and his phone number was found on a piece of paper in the apartment used by the Iranian terror cell.⁶⁵ On 16 March, arrest warrants were issued for three other Iranian men, identified as Houshang Afshar Irani, Seyed Ali Sadr Mehdiyan, and Mohammad Reza. Authorities said the men arrived in Delhi two weeks before the attack and fled soon after the attack.⁶⁶

Indonesia

On 5 March, Pepi Fernando alias Muhammad Romi aka Ahyar, was sentenced to 18 years in prison, for leading a 16-person cell that carried out a series of terrorist attacks between 2010 and 2011, including two attempts to assassinate President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono.⁶⁷ One of his accomplices received a three year sentence, for concealing information about the attacks.⁶⁸ In 2010, the cell planted a bomb in a thermos flask near a traffic light on a road in Cawang, East Jakarta, intended to assassinate President Yudhoyono. The militants waited nearby with a remote control detonator, but the president never passed by and after four days, the militants gave up. A second attempt to assassinate President Yudhoyono failed in

⁶² AFP, "New Delhi attack plot foiled", 1 March 2012;

⁶³ PTI, "Major terror plot foiled; 2 LeT agents held", 1 March 2012;

⁶⁴ AP, "Indian journalist arrested in bomb attack on Israeli diplomat blamed on Iran", 7 March 2012;

⁶⁵ Ynet, "Journalist arrested in New Delhi bomb attack", 7 March 2012;

⁶⁶ CNN, "India issues arrest warrants for 3 Iranian suspects in bombing", 16 March 2012;

⁶⁷ BBC, "Jail term for Indonesia militant Pepi Fernando", 5 March 2012;

⁶⁸ Jakarta Post, "Mail bomb leader sentenced to 18 years in prison", 5 March 2012;



2011, when the bombers noticed a police patrol and changed their plan. In addition to plotting against the president, the group planted bombs in the Center for Science and Technology Research in South Tangerang, as well as a church in Kranji, Bekasi on Good Friday. The cell was also responsible for a series of book bombs that they sent to several public figures including Ahmad Dani, a singer; Japto and Ulil Abshar Abdalla, both political and religious commentators; and Gories Mere, a former official in the police's anti-terror squad, Densus 88. The cell failed to injure their intended targets but killed a garbage collector when a bomb detonated on a bridge. They also caused a police officer to lose part of an arm after he tried to defuse one of the book bombs without waiting for the specially trained and equipped bomb squad.⁶⁹

On 19 March, five suspected Jemaah Islamiah militants were shot and killed by counter-terrorist officers in Bali. Armed officers raided the Lhaksmi Hotel on Jalan Danau Poso where they killed three militants. Two other militants were then killed at a second location in Jalan Gunung Soputan, Denpasar. Police suspected the militants were planning to attack the La Vida Loca nightclub in the Seminyak beach resort, close to where the 2002 Bali attacks took place. Police said the militants were planning robberies to fund their activities. Weapons and ammunition were confiscated from the militants.⁷⁰ Police believe the suspects arrived in Bali on 17 March. It was not clear how advanced the preparations for attacks were or when the militants intended to stage them. National police spokesman Saud Usman Nasution said some members of the cell remained at large.⁷¹

Thailand

On 21 March, Atris Hussein, 47, pleaded not guilty to charges of illegally possessing explosive materials and having links to Hizballah.⁷² Hussein, a Swedish citizen of Lebanese origin, was accused of possessing nearly 3,000 kilograms of ammonium nitrate intended to be used to make explosives. He was arrested on 12 January 2012, at Bangkok's international airport. The arrest led police to a warehouse that contained more than four tons of fertilizer and other materials that can be used to make bombs. The US had warned of a "serious" threat of a terrorist attack on tourist areas in Bangkok several days prior to his arrest. Hussein faces

⁶⁹ Jakarta Globe Online, "Indonesian Book Bomb Mastermind Gets 18 Years in Jail", 5 March 2012;

⁷⁰ Jakarta Globe, "Militants Killed in Bali Raid Plotted Tourist Attack: Police", 20 March 2012;

⁷¹ AAP, "Five killed in Bali counter-terrorism raids", 19 March 2012;

⁷² BBC, "Suspect pleads not guilty to Thailand explosives charge", 21 March 2012;



five years in prison if found guilty. Thai police said the case was unrelated to the Iranian plot to target Israeli diplomats in mid February 2012.⁷³

On 31 March, 10 people were killed and 340 injured in three coordinated bomb attacks in Yala. Police said that two of the bombs were hidden in motorcycles and the third in a car.⁷⁴ The attacks targeted a commercial centre in Yala city and the Lee Gardens Plaza Hotel, a high-rise hotel popular with foreign tourists. Three people were killed and 230 injured, the majority suffering from smoke inhalation. Approximately 20 minutes later, a second car bomb exploded, killing 11 people and wounding 110.⁷⁵ No group claimed responsibility for the attacks, but authorities blamed Muslim separatists.⁷⁶

⁷³ AP, "Lebanese suspect in Thailand denies terror link", 21 March 2012;

⁷⁴ BBC, "Three deadly explosions hit Yala in southern Thailand", 31 March 2012;

⁷⁵ AP, "Bombs in Thailand kill 14, wound 340", 31 March 2012;

⁷⁶ WSJ, "Deadly Thai Blasts Follow Tense Weeks", 31 March 2012.