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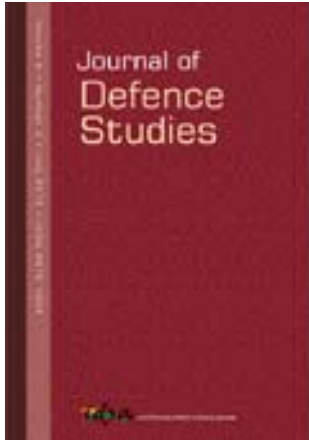
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The Students Islamic Movement of India
The Story So Far

*Anshuman Behera**

The Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) continues to pose serious threats to the national security of India. Despite having been banned for 12 years, SIMI, it has been alleged, works through radical outfits like the Popular Front of India (PFI) and its front organizations. It has also been charged with having links with terror outfits such as the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Harkat-ul-Jihad-al Islami Bangladesh (HuJI-B), and the Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) of Bangladesh. At the same time, the government's decision to ban SIMI has been questioned by one section of its members. It is thus necessary to examine issues such as the factors leading to the formation of SIMI and its radicalization, whether SIMI as an organization can exist peacefully, in order to better understand and analyse the ways and means of dealing with it.

SIMI hit the headlines once again after the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) issued a notice extending a two-year ban on it on February 2, 2012. Such a notification came from the MHA after the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), chaired by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, approved the proposal of extending the ban on SIMI. The Special Tribunal which upheld the ban imposed by the MHA confirmed in its report that the SIMI has links with Pakistan-based terror outfits and with the Indian Mujahideen (IM).[1] The news vis-à-vis SIMI refuses to die even after the organization has been banned for more than a decade now. The Andhra Pradesh (AP) state intelligence has reportedly

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* The author is a Research Assistant with the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi.

claimed that several members of SIMI have joined the PFI.[2] PFI,[3] as the AP state intelligence claims is very active in Kurnool District and allegedly played a role in the Adoni communal riots in 2011. Similarly, the Government of Kerala submitted before the High Court of Kerala that Susan Nathan, a British-born Jewish writer, has close connections with SIMI.[4]

There have been reports relating to the re-grouping of SIMI in different parts of the country. In this regard, the MHA issued an alert to Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala and Madhya Pradesh based on an intelligence report mentioning that SIMI cadres are trying to re-group.[5] This followed a countrywide search for some 80 members of SIMI belonging to different districts of Uttar Pradesh (UP) as the intelligence report also cautioned that these cadres were missing from their native places since the ban on SIMI came into force on 27 September 2001. The abovementioned intelligence report was complemented with a report released by a television network on 2 November 2010[6], claiming to have learnt from the Intelligence Bureau (IB) that the PFI is trying to forge links with the SIMI. A similar report in *The Hindu* on 22 January 2008 stated that SIMI is believed to be operating under the cover of at least 12 organizations in Kerala. The report further stated that the SIMI organizers periodically change the name of their front organizations to avoid police surveillance. Quoting intelligence sources, the report said that SIMI activists are operating under the cover of religious study centres, rural development and research centres, and institutions for developing personal effectiveness.

In what appears to be a matter of concern for the government, as reported by the IB, some of the kingpins of SIMI moved to Kerala to re-group. Some of the ex-cadres of SIMI, including Iqbal Bhatkal, Asadullah Akthar, Abdul Kareem, Karman, Akthar Kareem Amil Parwai, Alla Baksh, Sageer, Mohamad Sadiq, Irshad Khan, Sadiq Anwar and Hafiz Asif, as suspected by the IB as playing an important role in the possible merging together of SIMI and IM. These cadres are originally from UP and are suspected by the IB to have sneaked either into Karnataka or Kerala.[7] It is, however, important to mention here that the cadres mentioned above belong to the Safdar Nagori faction of SIMI, which broke away from SIMI following the ban in the year 2001 and believes in 'armed jihad'. The other faction has not been active since the ban

came into effect and has been fighting against the ban in the court of law.

SIMI is an outlawed organization with charges like 'sedition', 'creating hatred', 'engineering communal violence', etc., levelled against it. There are, however, sections of society who defend the position of SIMI and criticize the ban imposed by the government stating that the sanction imposed on it is extra-judicial. They argue the ban goes against the fundamental right, as provided by the Indian Constitution, to have freedom of expression and the freedom to form associations. One of the major criticisms came from *Tehelka Magazine* in August 2008, which came out with a number of writings in defence of the SIMI activities.[8] The stories went on to argue that, in spite of all the charges against SIMI, the police across different states of India have failed to establish a single charge of sedition and terrorism against the organization; and that the police have not been able to provide evidence of terror links in any of the courts that have heard SIMI cases. The *Tehelka* report also questioned why SIMI was banned i n 2001.[9]

When there are binaries and disagreements among the intellectuals and the people concerned with SIMI pertaining to its status, it is important to know whether SIMI as an organization can exist lawfully in this country or does it have links with terrorist outfits and poses a threat to national security, as stated by the state machinery.

FORMATION

SIMI is reported to have been formed as the students wing of the Jammat-e-Islami-Hind (JIH), which is the Indian counterpart of the Jammat-e-Islami (JeI),[10] founded by Maulana Mawdudi in the 1940s. Formed in 1977, SIMI was required to re-energize its older students' wing, the Students Islamic Organization (SIO). Reportedly, SIMI was formed in the city of Aligarh with Professor Mohammad Ahmadullah as its founding president. SIMI could continue with the JIH cordially only till 1981. Along with many ideological differences, symbolically, the SIMI separated from JIH (many say that JIH distanced itself from the SIMI) in 1981 when the two organizations disagreed on Palestinian President Yasser Arafat's visit to India. For the standpoint of JIH, the visit was considered as a welcoming development and considered Arafat as a champion of Islamic causes. On the other hand, Arafat was vehemently

criticized by SIMI cadres who termed him a puppet in the hands of the western countries, and was greeted with black flags by its activists in New Delhi. Another factor that was believed to have brought discomfort between SIMI and JIH was the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979. The apprehension of JIH was that the radical behaviour of SIMI would bring bad repute to it; hence, the detachment from SIMI and JIH tried to focus and rely on its older students' front—SIO.

There is one school of thought, consisting of scholars like Yoginder Sikand, that provides an understanding of the main objectives behind the JIH's initiative to get students into the 'Islamic movement'. According to Sikand,[11] as early as 1950, the JIH could understand that indoctrination of radical Islamic ideas in the minds of the young students would definitely help in shaping up for an Islamic state as these students would grow to be potential leaders in future. Accordingly, it opened schools known as *halqas* in several universities and colleges where the Islamic teachings were stressed upon and the basic teaching of Qur'an, and the holy text was introduced.[12] For the first time, it established a school at Rampur, in UP, where the Islamic education was imparted to graduate students in order to train them as the volunteers for the Islamist movement. As cited by Sikand, for better consolidation of its activities among the students the JIH formed, for the first time, a student's organization called Students Islamic Organization with its headquarters at Aligarh.[13]

When the activities of JIH was gaining momentum among the students and the SIO was established, there were instances of sporadic outbreak of communal violence in India, most prominently in the northern states. For JIH, the Muslim community was the worst effected as result of all the communal violence. At this point of time there was need, as conceived by JIH activists, for the promotion of 'Islamic Consciousness' among the students. The Muslim students were motivated to work for the spread of the faith among the believers of Islam as well as non-believers. By 1971, SIO was successful in establishing as many as 40 branches and had contacted like-minded people in the states of Kerala, AP, Bihar, and West Bengal (WB), etc., whose works were conducted by local Jammat activists. In 1975, various Islamic groups met at a gathering at Aligarh where an All-India committee was established to co-ordinate the works of the Islamist movement among the students. That coincided with the emergency imposed by the Indira

Gandhi government; like other organizations, JIH and SIO were also banned. The JIH could revitalize itself only after the Emergency was lifted in 1977. And, as discussed above, this was the year when SIMI was formed by JIH.

As SIO already had 40 branches in UP and had established links with various Islamic groups in other states. Moreover, JIH was in constant touch with various Muslim groups to propagate its ideas. Then why was the need felt to form a new students' wing to carry out similar activities as assigned to SIO? In addition to this, a number of other questions also come to mind: Why was the SIO sidelined? Was there any radical plan of JIH for which it formed SIMI? Was there a plan to form SIMI in 1975 itself?

The SIO, as the name suggests, was an 'organization' intended to spread the Islamic faith among students. SIMI, however, is a 'movement' as the name clearly suggests. Therefore, one would ask whether the term 'movement' in this context carries a radical connotation. Moreover, in spite of SIMI being formed as a students' wing of JIH, what made it go radical whereas the SIO did not. Is the break-up between SIMI and JIH for real? Or do they still have a tacit understanding?

IDEOLOGICAL ORIENTATION

SIMI shares the belief of JIH, which derives its understanding of Islam from the ideas of Maulana Mawdudi, the founder of JeI. SIMI understands the role of the Prophet Mohammad as someone who led a movement to establish *Tauhid* (monotheism) which necessarily propagates not only the *worship* of one god and, hence, one belief system, but the *rule* of one god and one belief system. As described by Mawdudi himself,[14] SIMI also believes that the capture of political power is the main point of struggle in the Islamic Mission. 'All man-made systems of law are condemned as "false", even satanic, and Muslims are reminded that unless they actively struggle to be ruled in accordance with the *Shari'ah* their commitment to and the faith in Islam is not complete and remains suspect.'[15] SIMI maintains that the salient features of the Constitution of India—such as the concepts of secularism, democracy and nationalism—are anti-Islam. Parallel to SIMI's rejection of secularism, democracy and nationalism is its oft-repeated objective of restoration of the *Khalifat* (Islamic caliphate/ state), emphasis on *ummah* (Muslim brotherhood), and the need for an armed jihad to establish the supremacy of Islam.[16]

OBJECTIVES

In the context of India, SIMI stresses more on the establishment of the Khalifat and believes that though Muslims are a minority in India, they should strive hard for the implementation of *Shari'ah,* failing which Muslims living with un-Islamic ways would be consigned to Hell. So the principal task of the Indian Muslims, according to SIMI, is seen as working for the establishment of an Islamic polity in the state of India.[17] For SIMI, Islam is the only religion that is considered to be complete in nature and provides solutions to all the affairs of life, from the personal realm to statecraft and international issues. 'Nationalism' for SIMI is un-Islamic in nature. It does not believe in state boundaries and thinks that all Muslims are meant to be part of one nation, *Qaum*, or *Millat,* and sees state boundaries are being constructed to divide Muslims through the world. Similarly, the social disparity on the basis of language, race, region and identities are considered by SIMI to be acts of 'ignorance' or *Jahiliyat.* SIMI does not hesitate to advocate a violent jihad if there will be any sort of hindrance to the establishment of a *khalifat.* Its slogan is:

> *Allah* is our Lord
> Mohammad is our Commander
> The *Qur'an* is our Constitution
> *Shahadat* (martyrdom) is our Desire.[18]

Commenting on the military element in its acts, former SIMI president Shahid Badr Falahi said that, 'the *Qur'an* itself says that the *Kafirs* (non-believers of Islam) will naturally oppose the Muslims. If through any of our actions the *Kafirs* are agitated this is a proof that what we are doing is right…. We have deliberately adopted the policy of the Prophet Mohammad in this regard. If this drives the enemies of Islam to anger we cannot help it.'[19]

The aforementioned ideological orientations of SIMI indicate that it adhered to a radical approach in order to establish what it terms as an Islamic polity in the state of India, the *Khalifat.* Scholars like Yoginder Sikand may well argue that such hardline ideological orientation of SIMI is not necessarily a blueprint of its action, and that it is reduced to mere act of sloganeering in order to attract the young mass to join the movement or, at least, to give a sense a sign of strength and a belief that they have been deprived. The 'mere act of

sloganeering' as analysed by Yoginder Sikand, can be contradicted by some activities of SIMI. It organized its 'Ikhwan Conference' on 29–30 October 1999 in Kanpur (UP). The conference was able to gather over 20,000 people and was addressed from long-distance, telephonically, by *Hamas* founder Sheikh Yaseen, head of the Jammat-e-Islami-Pakistan, Qazi Hussain Ahmed, and the *Imam* of the Al Aqsa mosque, Jerusalem. It also went on to say that, 'Islam ka ghazi, butshikan/Mera sher, Osama bin Laden (The warrior of Islam, the destroyer of idols/ My lion, Osama bin Laden)'.[20] Similarly, in 2001, SIMI was able to gather 25,000 Muslim youths in Mumbai where it urged them to launch an armed jihad in India with the establishment of caliphate as the ultimate aim.

There have been many interpretations of the factors that led to the radicalization of SIMI. One of the most important factors, as viewed by scholars,[21] was the sense of alienation and insecurity that was injected into the minds of its members. The demolition of the Babri Masjid by Hindu fanatics in 1992 was interpreted by radical Muslims as a conspiracy against Muslims. Secondly, as Irfan Ahmad rightly argues,[22] SIMI as an organization was young as those above the age of 30 were not eligible to be its members. Unlike SIO, SIMI functioned without any guardian (since 1981) and emotionalism played an important role in its going radical. Thirdly, as was told to Irfan Ahmad, in course of time, SIMI developed links with Jihadi groups in Pakistan and played into the hands of the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI).[23]

SUPPORT BASE AND FUNDING

In India, SIMI has its base in states like UP, AP, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, WB, Gujarat, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir. SIMI is also suspected of being involved in recruiting young Muslims for terrorist groups like HuJI-B from UP's Jaunpur, Allahabad, Kanpur, Lucknow, Ambedkar Nagar, Aligarh, Azamgarh, Sonauli, Ferozabad and Hathras areas. In Maharastra, SIMI is believed to be active in areas like Aurangabad, Malegaon, Jalgaon and Thane. In Kerala, SIMI has a strong base in Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi, Malappuram, Kondotty and Ernakulam.

In Madhya Pradesh, SIMI is active in areas like Indore, Ujjain, Khandwa, Bhopal before making its base in Burhanpur, Guna, Neemuch

and Shajapur. The former General Secretary of SIMI, Safdar Nagori, is from Ujjain.

There have also been reports of SIMI operating via unusual channels. SIMI cadres were believed to have operated under the cover of 'Islamic Siksha Shivirs' (Islamic Educational Camps) in Mograhat in the North 24 Parganas district in WB in 2003.[24] A two-day 'workshop' organized in the district between August 31 and September 1, 2001 had, in fact, finalized the outfit's infiltration plans.[25] Sources indicate that in August 2003, one Jamaluddin Chaudhory of the ICS had taken seven SIMI activists from Assam and WB to residential madrassas in Chittagong, Rangpur and Dhaka for higher Islamic studies. This indicates SIMI's link with ICS.

Outside India, SIMI has developed links with JeI, ISI and some jihadi groups like Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) in Pakistan. The Ikhwan conference at Kanpur in 1999 gives a testimony of SIMI's link with Hamas since its founder addressed the gathering telephonically. An arrested ex-financial secretary of SIMI, Salim Sajid, has revealed that the Hamas was one of the major sources of funds for SIMI.[26] Sajid also revealed that SIMI had links with Saudi Arabia's Jamayyatul Ansar (JA) and Bangladesh's ICS, and got financial help from them.[27] JA is primarily comprised of expatriate Indian Muslims working in Saudi Arabia and is suspected of channeling funds to SIMI. Other sources of funding have included the World Assembly of Muslim Youth in Riyadh, the International Islamic Federation of Students Organizations based in Kuwait, and the US-based Consultative Committee of Indian Muslims.[28]

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

As far as the organizational structure of SIMI is concerned, Article 15 of its constitution[29] states: 'SIMI shall have a *Shurai* organizational structure (consultative structure) and will be organized at central, zonal and local levels.'

Central Structure

At the central level, the organization of SIMI is known as Central Representatives Council (CRC). The CRC consists of representatives of the *Ansars* (full-time workers), the Central Advisory Committee of SIMI, and the president and general secretary. Article 21 of SIMI's constitution

recommends the election process for the CRC representatives. Accordingly, the representatives of CRC shall be elected from each electoral constituency, which has 20 or less *ansars.* In a constituency where the number of *ansars* is more than 20, one representative will be elected from every 20 or more than half thereof.[30] According to Article 22, the term of the CRC will be one year.

Apart from the CRC, at the central level, there shall be a Central Advisory Committee (CAC). The role of the CAC shall be to advise and help the president. According to Article 31 (a), the CAC will have nine members who shall be elected from among the *ansars* of the organization by the newly-elected CRC, the president, existing CAC and the secretary general.[31] The tenure of the CAC continues till the new CAC is elected. The task of the CAC is to discuss a six-monthly report of the organization and financial report in the light of the six months budget, to pass budget for next six months, and to consider and take decision on the proposals of president.

Zonal Structure

The zonal structure shall consist of the zonal president and a Zonal Advisory Committee (ZAC), which was to be elected by the *ansars* through postal votes. The term of the zonal president is for one year. The zonal president shall have the same duties as that of the president in the centre.

Local Structure

Article 45 (a) of SIMI's constitution prescribes that a unit of organization shall be established at each place where there are two or more *ansars.* It also recommends forming a female wing if there are two or more female *ansars.* Every unit/circle shall have a president who will be elected by *ansars* of the unit.

According to available sources, before the ban SIMI claimed to have some four hundred *ansars* (full-time workers) and about 20,000 *Ikhwans* (supporters, known as the brothers of SIMI). In addition to this, there used to be a *Shahin Force* (white falcon), which was given the task of enlisting the children between the ages of seven years to 11 years. This body of SIMI received help from *Tehrik-e-Tulaba-i-Arabia*, whose primary work was to reach out to the students of the madrassa (an Islamic religious school) and the *Ulema* (Islamic religious teacher).[32]

CURRENT STATUS OF **SIMI**

SIMI is currently a 'banned organization'. It was first banned on 27 September 2001 for two years under the Provisions of Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Prevention Act (TADA), the Maharashtra Control of Organized Crime Act (MCOCA), and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967. The second ban on SIMI was imposed on 27 September 2003 and continued till 27 September 2005. SIMI was banned for a third time on 8 February 2006 for a further two years. In August 2008, however, a special tribunal of the Delhi High Court lifted the ban on SIMI. The ban was subsequently re-instated by the Supreme Court of India on 6 August 2008, which expired on 7 February 2010. The ban on SIMI was furthered for a further fifth time and extended for two years till 7 February 2012; this too has been extended for another two years.

With regard to the actual position of SIMI, there are many versions.. From arrested SIMI activists like Safdar Nagori, it has been revealed that one faction of SIMI (led by him) is very much active and is planning future attacks. According to a media report, Nagori gave an insight into a potent and subtly growing female cadre which is managed by wives or family members of top SIMI activists wanted in serial blasts across the country.[33] Similarly, there are also reports which tell that the SIMI cadres who are at large are keeping themselves busy in organizing the cadres and planning for a future course of action.[34]

The hardline faction led by Safdar has been involved in recruiting youth into terror outfits, organizing training camps, engineering terror attacks, and other military activities. Some important terror attacks and militant activities which Nagori has been charged with and suspected to be involved in are the Ahmedabad Serial Blast of 2008, his association with Harkat-ul-al Jihadi Islami (HuJI) militant Hraun Rashid, plotting a training camp in Vikarabad, etc. At the same time, there is a 'moderate faction' of SIMI which apparently wants come into the mainstream. The moderate faction also wants the ban imposed on it to be lifted. According to the moderate faction, the activists with militant mindset are a minority and the majority of the banned SIMI activists are willing to surrender.[35]

This stand of the moderate faction of SIMI was made clear by Humam Ahmad Siddiqui, UP SIMI President, in an affidavit filed before Justice Sanjiv Khanna of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention)

Tribunal on 5 June 2010.[36] The affidavit denied all the allegations made by Government of India against SIMI. It claimed that the SIMI never had anything to do with the terror and was never opposed to the Constitution of India, nor does it believe in the establishment of *Khalifat*. It further stated that SIMI cannot be held responsible for the actions of individuals, its current or erstwhile members and sympathizers.[37]

According to a Leave Petition filed in the Supreme Court (SC) of India in 2008,[38] SIMI continues with its activities and has been able to manage to keep its network alive. It has revived its organization through front organizations, clandestine meetings, and circulation of leaflets, posters and magazines. The petition also stated that SIMI activists have been traveling far and wide to raise funds, especially from Muslim festivals. Focusing on the front organizations, the petition said that the SIMI had front organizations like Tahreek-e-Ehyaa-Ummat (TEU), Tehreek-Talaba-e-Arabia (TTA), Tehrik Tahaffuz-e-Sha'aire Islam (TTSI), and Wahadat-e-Islami. These front organizations have been used to carry out the activities of collection of funds and circulation of literature, etc.

The repeated extension of the ban against SIMI by the Government of India is indicative of the fact that it continues to be a threat to India. At the same time, as mentioned earlier, one section of SIMI has been fighting the case in the court of law against the sanction. However, available sources and intelligence reports suggest that former SIMI members are operating through various radical groups like the PFI. These radical groups are suspected to be using the large network and resources of SIMI in radicalizing the youth. There are also reports which suggest that many of these groups are constantly changing their names in order to avoid police surveillance. There is little available information about the activities of the front organizations of SIMI, like the TEU, TTA, TTSI and Wahadat-e-Islami. These organizations are, however, suspected to be working clandestinely for the cause of SIMI.

While the threat perception from SIMI continues, it is also important to mention that not a single case against SIMI has been proved by in a court of law. Rather, many SIMI members charged with terror activities have been acquitted by the courts. Though the cases against SIMI have not been proved, its association with other known militant organizations

gives the impression that it is a radical outfit. The investigation reports by security agencies reveal the fact that SIMI had established contacts with many radical outfits like the ICS of Bangladesh, Jamayyatul Ansar of Saudi Arabia, and Hamas of Palestine. It has reportedly also received funds from the World Assembly of Muslim Youth in Riyadh. The slogans it used to raise (mentioned earlier) are radical in nature. Such slogans not only go against the social ethos of India but also create communal tensions. Given the involvement of SIMI in radicalizing the youth, creating hatred and communal divisions, it would be difficult for it to exist lawfully in India. In so far as its affiliation with JIH is concerned, it can be said that SIMI might be enjoying the sympathy of the later.

SIMI and IM, for all intent and purposes, are suspected to be same organization as many of SIMI's old cadres are believed to have morphed into IM.[39] They have the potential to radicalize the youth into their fold. The IM's integrated function with SIMI would enhance its footprint and capabilities to challenge the state. SIMI has achieved popular support and has its support base in a number of states, and the possibility of enlarging this base cannot be ruled out. At the same time, irrespective of agendas, various militant organizations may use the members of SIMI against the state to further their goals. SIMI is also suspected to have established links with terrorist groups like the LeT and HuJI-B.[40]

Given the security challenges posed by the SIMI, the state can take following measures to deal with the threat:

- De-radicalization programme to be launched in SIMI hubs.
- An alternate moderate view from within the Muslim community needs to be encouraged to highlight reality.
- There is an urgent need to find out the factors which led to recruitment of youth into organizations like SIMI. Such factors, including sense of alienation, feeling of deprivation, and feeling of domination by another community have to be addressed effectively by the state.
- The law enforcement agencies should find out from arrested SIMI cadres the reasons behind their joining SIMI, and what the organization aims at achieving, and act accordingly.
- Groups and non-governmental organizations supporting SIMI need to be brought under greater scrutiny, including their

funding, trustees, annual expenditure reports, and linkages with foreign countries.

- The *modus operandi* of SIMI cadres should be made public to create awareness.
- There is a need for better co-ordination among law enforcement agencies and intelligence to share information about SIMI.
- Dispose cases against SIMI to ascertain whether the ban imposed on them is legitimate.
- Fast-track courts should be established to ensure faster disposal of cases.
- Investigate funding sources, if at all, of SIMI and track alleged linkages.

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NOTES

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1. See 'Tribunal Upholds SIMI Ban', *The Hindu*, 4 August 2012, available at http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article3723854.ece, accessed on 6 August 2012.

2. See 'SIMI Men Now in Social Activists' Garb', *The Times of India*, 8 March 2012, available at http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-03-08/hyderabad/31135491_1_pfi-muslims-karnataka-forum, accessed on 8 March 2012.

3. The PFI, which came to the national prominence when its activists chopped the hand of a Christian Professor in Kerala in June 2010, was formed in 2006. As its website and leaflets claim, the PFI works for social empowerment of the people and is a confederation of Muslim organizations in India, especially in southern India. Some of the organizations that it has links to are Karnataka Forum for Dignity (KFD), the National Development Front (NDF), and Manitha Neethi Pasarai (MNP), which are active in Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, respectively.

4. See 'Israeli Writer Has SIMI Links, Kerala Tells Court', available at http://www.asianage.com/india/israeli-writer-has-simi-links-kerala-tells-court-010, accessed on 3 March 2012.

5. See http://www.indianexpress.com/news/after-mha-alert-hunt-begins-for-80-simi-men-from-state/756476/2, accessed on 15 April 2011.

6. See 'Islamic Fundamentalism Gaining Ground in Kerala', available at http://ibnlive.in.com/news/islamic-fundamentalism-gaining-ground-in-kerala/134213-3.html, accessed on 3 November 2010.

7. Nanjappa, Vicky, 'Will SIMI's New Avatar Emerge From Kerala?', available at http://www.rediff.com/news/report/is-kerala-the-new-hub-for-simi-vicky-nanjappa/20110304.htm, accessed on 10 May 2012.

8. Sahi, Ajit, 'A Doubtful Crime, and Years of Unfair Punishment', *Tehelka*, Vol. 5, No. 32, 16 August 2008, available at http://www.tehelka.com/story_main40.asp?filename=Ne160808adoubtful_crime.asp, accessed on 20 April 2011.

9. Ibid.

10. The JeI was founded by Maulana Mawdudi in 1941 to engender an Islamist movement in the South Asian region. During Partition, Mawdudi migrated to Pakistan and headed the original form of the JeI which merged with the political affairs of the state of Pakistan. However, the JIH took a contrary position to JeI-Pakistan: it preferred to get into missionary activities instead of joining active politics. However, it did not believe in the constitutional and parliamentary democracy of India. For the JIH, a democratic set-up is against a true Islamic state and it preferred to work for the Muslims through missionary activities in order to establish a true Islamic state. It is important to mention here that recently JIH has got involved in the parliamentary political system as it launched its political party—the Welfare Party of India—on 18 April 2011.

11. Sikand, Yoginder, 'Islamist Assertion in Contemporary India: The Case of the Students Islamic Movement of India', *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs,* London, Vol. 23, No. 2, October 2003, pp. 338–39.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

14. Jackson, Roy, *Mawlana Mawdudi and Political Islam: Authority and the Islamic State*, New York: Routledge, 2011, p. 202.

15. See Sikand, n. 11, p. 336.

16. See 'Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI)', available at http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/terroristoutfits/simi.htm, accessed on 2 March 2012.

17. Ibid.

18. Sikand, Yoginder, 'Countering Fundamentalism: Beyond the Ban on SIMI', *Economic and Political Weekly,* Vol. 36, No. 40, October 6–12, 2001, p. 3803.

19. Interviews of Shahid Badr Falahi, cited in Sikand, 'Islamist Assertion in Contemporary India: The Case of the Students Islamic Movement of India', n. 11, p. 337.

20. Anand, Javed, 'Suspect SIMI? Of Course, available at http://www.indianexpress.com/news/suspect-simi-of-course/349496/0, accessed on 2 March 2012.

21. Curtis, Lisa, 'After Mumbai: Time to Strengthen US-India Counterterrorism Cooperation', Backgrounder No. 2217, 9 December 2008, The Heritage

Foundation, available at http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2008/12/after-mumbai-time-to-strengthen-us-india-counterterrorism-cooperation, accessed on 23 August 2011. Also see Irfan Ahmad, *Islamism and Democracy in India*, New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2010.

22. Ahmad, Irfan, *Islamism and Democracy in India*, New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2010, p. 236.

23. Ibid.

24. See 'SIMI Operating Via Unusual Channels', available at http://www.tribuneindia.com/2008/20080828/main5.htm, accessed on 2 March 2012.

25. See 'Student Islamic Movement in India', n. 15.

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