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By B.Raman

When Abu Zubaidah, who was reportedly No.3 of Al Qaeda at the time of 9/11, was ultimately traced to his rabbit-hole and arrested, it was not in the tribal belt. It was in the house of a local office-bearer of the Lashkar-e-Toiba (LET) in Faisalabad, a city of Pakistani Punjab.

2. When Ramzi Binalshib, another top gun of Al Qaeda, was ultimately traced to his rabbit-hole and arrested, it was found to be in Karachi.
3. When Khalid Sheikh Mohammad, who co-ordinated the 9/11 strikes in the US on behalf of Osama bin Laden and who slit the throat of Daniel Pearl, the US journalist, was ultimately traced to his rabbit-hole and arrested, it was found to be in the house of a women's wing leader of the Jamaat-e-Islami (JEI) in Rawalpindi right under the nose of the General Headquarters of the Pakistan Army.
4. When Osama bin Laden himself was ultimately traced to his rabbit-hole and killed, it was found to be in Abbottabad near the training academy of the Pakistan Army.

5. The US is now looking for the rabbit-holes of Ayman al-Zawahiri, who has taken over the leadership of Al Qaeda, Jallaludin and Serajuddin Haqqani of the so-called Haqqani network, Mulla Mohammad Omar of the Afghan Taliban, and Hakimullah Mehsud of the Pakistani Taliban.
6. Their rabbit-holes are likely to be in areas outside the reach of the Drones. While continuing the Drone strikes to keep the jihadi top guns running for cover, the US should also look for other Abbottabads strewn across Pakistan.
7. It was good human intelligence that led the CIA to the rabbit-hole of OBL. The Navy SEALs followed later. It is good human intelligence which will again lead the CIA to the rabbit-holes of others badly wanted.
8. The US should seek allies in this hunt. Those allies could come from the Mohajirs of Karachi, the Balochs of Karachi and Balochistan and the Shias of the Kurram Agency and Gilgit-Baltistan. They are as fed up with the jihadis and their ISI master as the US.
9. The US should constitute them into a Southern Alliance against terrorism and give them the capability and the resources to hunt effectively. They will expect a quid pro quo in the form of political support for their grievances. The US should not hesitate to give them the support they want.
10. It is time to think strategically of a future dispensation in Pakistan that would help in achieving final and durable victory against jihadi terrorism with ISI's characteristics. A Southern Alliance of non-radical elements of the present Pakistan, which are as unhappy about jihadi terrorism and the ISI as the US, has to be the linchpin of such a strategy.
11. Start thinking, start acting.

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