

promote an independent nation of Kashmir.

There are others, however, who believe that India is being subjected to these terrorist attacks because of its “economic success.” In a lecture hosted by the Singapore think-tank, Institute of Defense and Strategic Studies, the Indian External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha, who was in Singapore when the Mumbai bombs went off, said that Mumbai “was deliberately chosen because what these terrorists and their sponsors envy the most is India’s success in the economic field.”

Other observers similarly point out, that, like New York, Mumbai has remained a terrorist target since 1993. It is the financial and commercial capital, and the base of India’s off-shore oil industry. It is the Indian city that is most like any Western city, as the engine of national industrialization and modernization. It is the home of India’s largest stock market, and many multinationals have their corporate headquarters there.

As a result, many foreign investors tend to look at India through the prism of Mumbai. If internal security in Mumbai is sound, they see internal security in India as satisfactory. If it is bad in Mumbai, they tend to project Mumbai’s instability as a reflection of security problems in India. Hence destabilizing Mumbai would not only cause worry to India’s financial institutions, but also to foreign investors. This analysis, however, is no longer wholly accurate, with the emergence of Bangalore, Hyderabad, Chennai (formerly Madras), and Delhi itself, as significant engines of India’s growth.

Finally, the temple-mosque issue: The 1993 bombings occurred after the Babri Masjid was pulled down by fanatic Hindus. At the time, the terrorism was attributed to an irrational exhibition of anger by the Muslim radicals, with the sole objective of taking over the leadership of India’s Muslim community by showing its muscle. The Aug. 25 explosions this year, followed within hours after announcement by the government’s Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), of its discovery that the 16th-Century Babri Masjid—built by India’s Moghul—was built atop a huge 10th-Century structure. According to the ASI, which had been excavating the disputed site, the demolished and buried structure over which the mosque was built resembles a typical northern Indian temple. Assessing the implications of the report on the dug-out structure, major Muslim social and political organizations have quickly challenged ASI’s interpretation. It is a certainty that the Indian courts will have to deal with this in depth in the coming days.

At the same time, the bombings must be looked at as a provocation by a terrorist element operating internationally to provoke fanatic Hindus. Fresh Hindu-Muslim communal rioting, at this crucial juncture, may deeply undermine India’s important initiatives in the region, and throw up an obstacle to the Vajpayee Administration’s efforts to make India emerge as a major regional power, in cooperation with China and Russia.

## Sharon’s Maneuvers To Kill the Road Map

by Jeffrey Steinberg and Michele Steinberg

A review of crucial events since Aug. 21 reveals a systematic campaign by Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to kill the Road Map, just as he earlier killed the Oslo Accords, the Mitchell Plan, the Tenet Plan, and every other Israel-Palestine peace initiative. As the chronology below shows, the cease-fire was holding, and Sharon was coming under mounting pressure at home, over election financial fraud charges. At that point, Sharon’s government initiated assassinations of a Hezbollah leader and two leading Palestinian militants, thus breaking the cease-fire, which had also included a ban on Israeli targetted assassinations.

On July 31, after meeting with Vice President Dick Cheney, the leading pro-Sharon warmonger in Washington, Sharon told his intimate, *New York Times* reporter William Safire, “It should be very clear we will not return to the 1967 borders.”

The modus operandi employed by Sharon: Violate the Road Map with a series of targetted assassinations of Palestinian activists, to incite a terror retaliation, then use those attacks to justify freezing Road Map implementation and launching a new round of even more brutal invasions and assassinations, while denouncing the Palestinian Authority for failing to crack down on the terrorists.

The following summary time-line, beginning with Sharon’s trip to Washington, tells the tale:

**July 29:** Sharon met briefly with President Bush at the White House. The meeting lasted only 30 minutes, and reportedly, after a heated exchange between Sharon and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice on the night of July 28 over the Israeli wall, Sharon decided not even to present Bush with a petition to free Israeli spy Jonathan Jay Pollard, that had been signed by 112 Knesset members.

As Sharon was carrying around the Pollard petition, Pollard’s spymaster, “Dirty Rafi” Eytan, was covertly travelling around the United States and Mexico, on false passports, most likely organizing a new 9/11 terrorist attack.

What Sharon *did* present was a dossier, with maps, on the threat allegedly posed to Israel by Iranian and Syrian weapons of mass destruction programs, with the suggestion that if the United States does not stop the Iranian nuclear reactor from going online, Israel might do it—as they did with their attack on Iraq’s Osirak reactor in 1981.

**July 30:** Sharon met with Vice President Cheney. Al-

## Sharon Kills a Peacemaker

The Aug. 21 targeted assassination of Hamas leader Abu Shanab was another cynical move by Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to destroy any chance for peace, let alone a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Abu Shanab, as *EIR* reported on July 4, accepted a two-state solution, and was deeply involved in formulating the *hudna*, or cease-fire, negotiated between Palestinian Prime Minister Abu Mazen, and Hamas and other militant groups.

In a *Jerusalem Post* interview published on June 24, Abu Shanab said, “What is the point in speaking in rhetoric? Let’s be frank, we cannot destroy Israel. The practical

solution is for us to have a state along side Israel. . . . When we build a Palestinian state we will not need these militias; all the needs for attack [against Israel] will stop. Everything will change into a civil life. . . . [The future Palestinian state] is not one that is to take the place of Israel . . . but one that lives with it.”

The day following that June 24 interview, the Israelis carried out a targeted assassination of Palestinian militants in Gaza, attempting to *prevent* a cease-fire from being reached.

Asked by the *Post* whether Hamas would agree to a cease-fire, Abu Shanab replied, “In fact, Hamas wants to make a strong public declaration of cease-fire, if Israel will allow it to happen.”

—Dean Andromidas

though details of the meeting are scant, there was clearly a much closer “meeting of the minds” in this session than there had been with President Bush—even though Bush “wimped out” during his press conference with Sharon after their meeting.

**Aug. 2:** In a clear indication of Israel’s intent to provoke a confrontation with Syria and Lebanon, a powerful car bomb killed Hezbollah leader Ali Hussein Saleh in Beirut. Hezbollah is a legitimate political organization in Lebanon, which has not engaged in attacks on Israel, except in response to Israeli provocations. Following the Beirut assassination, which was attributed to the Israelis, Hezbollah units shelled northern Israel. In retaliation, Israel staged a series of bombing raids into Lebanese territory, targeting Hezbollah (see below).

**Aug. 4:** The *Washington Post* ran a front-page story claiming that Secretary of State Colin Powell and his Deputy, Richard Armitage, were going to leave the Bush Administration immediately after the January 2005 inauguration, if Bush were re-elected to a second term. This leak was widely read as indicating that Powell was delivering an ultimatum to the President: Either dump Cheney and the chicken-hawks, or he would leave, virtually assuring Bush’s re-election defeat. Bush subsequently gave Powell the green light to cut back U.S. loan guarantees to Israel if it continues to build settlements in defiance of the Road Map, and it was openly discussed that the State Department is considering deducting the funds spent on Israel’s “apartheid wall” from the loan guarantees.

Also that day, a scheduled meeting between Sharon and Palestinian Prime Minister Abu Mazen was cancelled.

**Aug. 9:** The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) assassinated Hamas leaders Abu Salam and Faizal Sadar at the Askar refugee camp.

**Aug. 9:** Lebanese reported Israeli air-raids into southern Lebanon.

**Aug. 10:** Hezbollah retaliated by shelling into northern Israel, killing a young boy.

**Aug. 10:** At an Israeli Cabinet meeting, the Sharon government decided to freeze implementation of the Road Map, according to the neo-conservative, anti-Road Map *New York Post*. However, the bombings the government would use to justify this action would not occur *until Aug. 12*—a day after the report in the *Post*. When the bombings occurred and the Israelis announced the freeze on the Road Map implementation, “in response,” the Israelis were caught in an embarrassing situation.

**Aug. 12:** Two suicide bombings were carried out in the West Bank, killing 2 Israelis, and injuring 13. The attacks occurred at a strip mall in Rosh Ha’ayin, and at a bus stop at the entrance to West Bank settlement of Ariel.

**Aug. 15:** Islami Jihad activist Mohammed Sidr was assassinated by the IDF in Hebron.

**Aug. 18:** Palestinian-born Reuters camera-man Mazen Dana—from Hebron—was killed in Baghdad by U.S. military tank fire.

**Aug. 19:** Huge suicide bombings occurred in Baghdad and Jerusalem. Up until this point, Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade had all maintained that they were adhering to the cease-fire agreement, which specifies that they can retaliate for specific Israeli attacks.

**Aug. 21:** Hamas leader Abu Shanab was assassinated by the IDF. He was known as one of the more important moderate Hamas leaders, who worked closely with the Egyptian government to secure the cease-fire agreement on the part of Hamas (see box). Following Abu Shanab’s assassination, the three Palestinian groups announced that the cease-fire was over.