

Balancing act

derly migration for the benefit of all,” 4 million euros (\$5.1 million) to develop two northern Ukrainian detention centers, which one IOM official described as “sanatoriums.” According to Human Rights Watch, work on the project was eventually suspended because of difficulties IOM encountered when trying to establish governmental partners in Ukraine.

Julia Hall, a Human Rights Watch researcher who closely monitors IOM’s work, says the EU’s decision to turn to the IOM is troubling because its new activities are a far cry from its original mandate to aid the voluntary return of migrants to their home countries. According to Hall, when Human Rights Watch asked EU officials in Ukraine why they decided to fund detention centers in a country that has no laws enabling migrants to challenge their detention, they argued that the “currently existing centers were so bad that they felt it was the best option they had.”

Meanwhile, back on the Canary Islands, the situation went from bad to worse by summer’s end. Spanish authorities estimated that the number of migrants who arrived there during the first eight months of 2006 had grown to nearly 20,000—some 5,000 arriving in August alone. There is also an alarming increase in the number of drowning deaths. The Spanish government claims about 600 migrants died by August, though advocacy groups placed the figure closer to 3,000.

Spain’s frustrations led to more talks in Europe in late August, during which it pleaded for more help. Yet its neighbors have been noncommittal. An EU spokesperson told the *International Herald Tribune*, “We are already doing a lot, what we can at this moment. But we unfortunately cannot stop the arrival of the illegal immigrants immediately.” ❄

Michael Flynn is a Switzerland-based writer and the lead researcher of the Global Detention Project based at the Graduate Institute of International Studies, Geneva.

THE 7.6-MAGNITUDE EARTHQUAKE that struck Pakistan last October killed 75,000 people. But the deaths did not end there. In May, the Pakistan Army forced out most foreign relief workers from the still-devastated region of Azad Kashmir, the Pakistan-controlled part of the disputed province. Days later, 38 people in villages of southern Azad Kashmir had their throats cut or were beheaded. The youngest victim was 4 months old.

The last killing I heard of occurred on June 10 in the town of Gulpur. I had to cut short my investigation when ISI agents began to follow me and interrogate my hosts, asking about my interest in the *chura* (“daggers,” meaning the killings) and “camps” (meaning the activities of jihadi groups). While no direct evidence links the ISI to the killings, many native Kashmiris I talked to and most nationalists—banned from elections, since they advocate

Some Kashmiris think the killings in their earthquake-devastated region were intended to incite public turmoil and stop Pakistan’s peace process with India—an objective shared by jihadi groups and their sympathizers within the army.

The army blamed infiltrators from India. But on the morning of May 17, two men said to be armed with Sten submachine guns and knives accosted girls on their way to school in the village of Sanghola. Alerted by the girls’ screams, villagers surrounded the school and captured the men. The assailants claimed to be road workers, but body searches revealed ID cards of the kind carried by the Pakistan Army’s Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). Around noon, villagers escorted the two men, on foot, to the local police station at nearby Rawalakot. At 11:30 p.m., six army officers, including a colonel and a brigadier, took the captured men at gunpoint from the station.

I traveled to Azad Kashmir in June to survey earthquake relief efforts. But upon my arrival, I was immediately confronted by reports of these attacks from terrified Kashmiris.

a Kashmir independent from Pakistan *and* India—believe it to be so. Two troubling facts support this belief: First, there have been no reports of the incidents in the mainstream Pakistani press. If there had been any evidence of Indian involvement in the incidents, as the army says, it would have made the national news. Second, while the army initially promised an investigation, they have done nothing.

Kashmiris suspect that the violence was a way to divert people’s attention from the fact that very little of the international relief money for the earthquake had made its way to the people. Most of it remains in the hands of the army, which dominates economic as well as political life in Azad Kashmir. Indeed, from what I saw in June, little relief money went to the villages. Basic services were still lacking, and schools and hospitals



A treacherous path: Earthquake refugees in Azad Kashmir cross into the Neelum Valley in November 2005.

that were completely destroyed were still rubble. The Pakistani government had promised 175,000 rupees (\$2,900) to every earthquake victim; only some survivors had received 25,000 rupees (\$413) each, though a bit more money is now scheduled to be paid out.

Some also think the killings were intended to incite public turmoil and stop Pakistan's peace process with India—an objective shared by jihadi groups and their sympathizers within the army and ISI. To be sure, Pakistan's president, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, now appears committed to a rapprochement with India and is trying to rein in the jihadi groups after their repeated attempts on his life. But he has not always been inclined toward reconciliation; in 1999, he instigated the Kargil attacks across the International Line of Control, bringing India and Pakistan to the brink of nuclear war. Senior army commanders told me that they believe the peace process with India is a nonstarter because India will only come to the negotiating table and give up Kashmir if forced to do so.

The army's dangerous double game was apparent in repeated public announcements before and just after the earthquake, from the presidential level on down, that jihadi groups had been banned from Azad Kashmir. In fact, they were operating freely in the region, brandishing guns from army vehicles, promising relief only to people who understood as Hafiz Saeed, leader of the jihadi group Lashkar-e-Toiba ("Army of the Pure"), put it—that "the earthquake is the result of the rulers' sinful policies" and God's punishment for neglecting a particular, radical view of Islam.

But after international relief workers began getting word out about the prominence of jihadi groups in the early stages of the relief effort, Musharraf began to seriously curtail their freedom of operation. Today, for example, the jihadi banners are largely gone from Azad Kashmir's capital, Muzaffarabad, and the Lashkar-e-Toiba mosque just outside of Rawalakot stands empty. According to Kashmiri sources, the principal jihadi camps have relocated to outside of the province and to the

more remote areas of Azad Kashmir. The army is also telling the jihadis that they can no longer cross the border at will into Indian-held Jammu and Kashmir, with or without weapons.

Larger jihadi groups with outside financing and manpower, such as Jaish-e-Mohammed ("Army of Mohammed," which has been linked to those arrested for the August 2006 London plane bombing plots), maintain an active propaganda and recruiting campaign in Azad Kashmir's main cities. Sometimes these groups operate under the umbrella of a "charitable organization," such as Jamaat ul-Dawa, which Lashkar-e-Toiba's Saeed heads. But other groups that are smaller or

locally composed are being squeezed by dwindling financial and logistical support.

Army hardliners, particularly in the ISI, are unhappy about this partial demobilization of jihadi forces and nod to former ISI chief Hamud Gul's contention that "the decisions of General Musharraf do not necessarily reflect the point of view of the entire army." Mirrored in that resentment is the conundrum of Pakistani politics: The army sees the jihadi groups as a means of pressuring India and as a way of counterbalancing the opposition of Muslim civilian parties to the military regime's rule. Yet Musharraf's decision to more closely align his nation with the United States in its war against terror compels him to occasionally rein in those very same organizations. It's a balancing act that doesn't get easier with time. ❄

Scott Atran is a research scientist at the National Center for Scientific Research in Paris, as well as at the University of Michigan and at the John Jay School of Criminal Justice in New York City.

Copyright of Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists is the property of Educational Foundation for Nuclear Science and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.