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## Regional spy networks seen behind attack on Khalid

12/16/2012

Some political experts have characterised a recent assassination attempt on Afghanistan's National Directorate of Security (NDS) chief as part of covert operations by regional intelligence networks.

The view was aired by participants of this week's radio and TV programme, "Your Voice", a joint initiative of the Killid Media Group and its partners -- Pajhwok Afghan News and Saba Media Organistaion -- within the newly-created Afghanistan Media Consortium.

Asadullah Khalid, the Afghan spymaster, was wounded in a suicide bombing at an NDS guesthouse in Kabul on Dec. 6, when a man posing as a Taliban peace messenger approached him and detonated the explosives hidden in his underwear.

President Hamid Karzai, speaking to journalists after the incident, claimed the assassination attempt was planned in Pakistan's northwestern city of Quetta. But Pakistan rejected the allegations and asked the Afghan government to provide evidence.

Defence analyst Gen. Abdul Wahid Taqat believed the raid was too sophisticated to be planned and executed by local insurgents. Some Pakistani officials, particularly the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), did not want to see peace in Afghanistan, he alleged.

On Taliban prisoners' release by the neighbouring country, Taqat claimed they would join the Afghan government at some point in time and promote Pakistan's interests. Before giving the released Taliban any role, the government should keep them surveillance for a year or two.

A member of Afghanistan's Academy of Sciences, Akbar Jan Polad, said a new great game was ongoing in the region and the attack on Khalid was part of it. In a bid to exploit its natural resources with cooperation from regional countries, major powers had invested in Afghanistan, he said, adding they would eliminate anyone trying to hinder their interests.

Polad said: "Each high-profile killing in Afghanistan is part of the ongoing intelligence war." Afghan spy agencies should also conduct similar operations to foil foreign plans for destabilising the country, he suggested.

Another political commentator, Fahim, remarked the Afghans would soon forget the attack on Khalid, like other incidents. The government had been unable to come up with a strong reaction to such incidents, he insisted.

Stressing the need for understanding the motive behind one person ending it all to kill another, he said Afghanistan's problems had political, economic and strategic dimensions.

Journalist and writer, Ismail Jahangir, accused President Hamid Karzai of following a soft line on Pakistan's role in Afghanistan. Over past few years, the president had been changing his position on Pakistan, calling it a brother