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High-Profile Assassinations on the Rise in Afghanistan

By Jason Ditz

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The assassination of [Mayor Hamidi of Kandahar City](#) has dramatically weakened US influence in the nation's turbulent south, which was already compromised by the other high profile assassinations [over the past two weeks](#).

But if the assassination of Wali Karzai in Kandahar was a shock, the follow-up death of Hamidi points to the killings as a growing tactic among the Taliban leadership, [with a number of experts predicting more to come](#).

Afghan Gen. Abdul Khalid said the killings have “multiple benefits” for the Taliban leadership, both paring away what little experienced leadership exists and underscoring the Afghan government's inability to defend even itself.

It also seems to be effectively getting out a message which the Taliban leadership has been repeating to little success – that they are not interested in peace talks or a negotiated reconciliation with the Karzai government, at least not at the terms currently being offered.