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By: Alexander Sehmer

Government forces in Somalia claim to have killed more than 100 al-Shabaab fighters in a major clash in Puntland, located in the country's northeast. A further 59 fighters were captured—among them, several foreign fighters including three Kenyans ([Daily Nation](#), April 7). The attack is a blow to the Somali militant group and will be celebrated by Kenya, which suffered severe casualties in a devastating al-Shabaab attack on its forces in January ([Daily Nation](#), January 16). However, it should be a cause for concern that fighting is moving north.

Among the militants AMISOM claimed it to have killed was a Yemeni bomb-maker identified as “Abu Islam” and—more significantly—Hassan Ali Dhoore, a leader with the group’s Amniyat intelligence arm. Dhoore is thought to have played a key role in the 2014 Christmas Day attack on AMISOM forces at Mogadishu airport. Dhoore’s killing was also claimed by the U.S. in its announcement that he had been killed in U.S. drone strike on March 31 ([India.com](#), April 5). The Pentagon later confirmed Dhoore’s death. Al-Shabaab maintains the others claimed by AMISOM are merely propaganda.

India remains skeptical of the UJC's claim and instead blames JeM, which has a wider field of operations than the UJC and appears a more likely candidate to have been behind the attack. A series of attacks on Indian assets around the same time as the Pathankot attack—including an attempt to storm the Indian consulate in Mazar-e-Sharif in Afghanistan—likewise suggested

regional militant groups were receiving some direction from the Pakistani intelligence services who were unhappy with political developments ([Al Jazeera](#), January 3).

Soon after the Pathankot attack—likely based on intelligence supplied by India—Pakistan arrested Azhar. But it remained equivocal on India's claims against JeM, with Punjab Law Minister Rana Sanaullah referring to the arrest as “protective custody” ([Dawn](#), January 15). Meanwhile, China's move to keep Azhar off the UN sanctions list is a use of its UN Security Council position to contain Indian power in the region, and has occurred despite the fact that JeM as an organization has been under UN sanctions since October 2001.

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1111 16th St. NW, Suite #320, Washington, DC 20036
Phone: 202.483.8888 / Fax: 202.483.8337 / pubs@jamestown.org