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Non-Responsive

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NON-RESPONSIVE

Saudi Arabia

Shootings of Saudi Officials

The shootings of two Saudi diplomats in a week may be the continuation of a campaign by pro-Iranian Shi'as. An unidentified gunman shot and injured a vice consul at the Saudi Consulate in Karachi, Pakistan, on 27 December 1988. A group calling itself the Soldiers of the Right claimed responsibility and accused the victim of working for the United States and Israel. On 4 January another gunman, allegedly Arab in appearance, shot and killed a third secretary at the Saudi Embassy in Bangkok, Thailand; the Soldiers of the Right again took credit. The two incidents follow the assassination of another Saudi diplomat in Ankara, Turkey, on 25 October 1988, for which the Islamic Jihad of the Hijaz—believed to be a pro-Iranian Shi'a group—claimed responsibility. (S NP)

If the three incidents are related, pro-Iranian Shi'as—possibly acting with the approval of radical elements in the Iranian Government—would be the most likely suspects. Resentment over Riyadh's execution of Saudi Shi'a terrorists last September or disapproval of the recent warming of Iranian-Saudi relations could have motivated the attacks. The name of the group claiming the Karachi and the Bangkok attacks, the Soldiers of the Right, suggests, however, that Palestinian extremists may have been involved. The group first surfaced in December 1988 when it took credit for the kidnaping last May of Belgian relief worker J in Cools in Lebanon and an arson attack against a Jewish synagogue in Denmark. (S NP)

South/East Asia

Japan

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