

compound with their wives. They acted as couriers for bin Laden. One of the wives was from Swat!

The Seals had shot bin Laden in the head and his body had been flown out by helicopter. It didn't sound as though he had put up a fight. The two brothers and one of bin Laden's grown-up sons had also been killed, but bin Laden's wives and other children had been tied up and left behind and were then taken into Pakistani custody. The Americans dumped bin Laden's body at sea. President Obama was very happy, and on TV we watched big celebrations take place outside the White House.

At first we assumed our government had known and been involved in the American operation. But we soon found out that the Americans had gone it alone. This didn't sit well with our people. We were supposed to be allies and we had lost more soldiers in their War on Terror than they had. They had entered the country at night, flying low and using special quiet helicopters, and had blocked our radar with electronic interference. They had only announced their mission to the army chief of staff, General Ashfaq Kayani, and President Zardari after the event. Most of the army leadership learned about it on TV.

The Americans said they had no choice but to do it like that because no one really knew which side the ISI was on and someone might have tipped off bin Laden before they reached him. The director of the CIA said Pakistan was 'either involved or incompetent. Neither place is a good place to be.'

My father said it was a shameful day. 'How could a notorious terrorist be hiding in Pakistan and remain undetected for so many years?' he asked. Others were asking the same thing.

You could see why anyone would think our intelligence service must have known bin Laden's location. ISI is a huge organisation with agents everywhere. How could he have lived so close to the capital – just sixty miles away? And for so long! Maybe the best place to hide is in plain sight, but he had been living in that house since the 2005 earthquake. Two of his children were even born in the Abbottabad hospital. And he'd been in Pakistan for more than nine years. Before Abbottabad he'd been in Haripur and before that hidden away in our own Swat Valley, where he met Khalid Sheikh Mohammad, the mastermind of 9/11.

The way bin Laden was found was like something out of the spy movies my brother Khushal likes. To avoid detection he used human couriers rather than phone calls or emails. But the Americans had discovered one of his couriers, tracked the number plate of his car and followed it from Peshawar to Abbottabad. After that they monitored the house with a kind of giant drone that has X-ray vision, which spotted a very tall bearded man pacing round the compound. They called him the Pacer.

People were intrigued by the new details that came every day, but they seemed angrier at the American incursion than at the fact that the world's biggest terrorist had been living on our soil. Some newspapers ran stories saying that the Americans had actually killed bin Laden years before this and kept his body in a freezer. The story was that they had then planted the body in Abbottabad and faked the raid to embarrass Pakistan.

We started to receive text messages asking us to rally in the streets and show our support of the army. 'We were there for you in 1948, 1965 and 1971,' said one message, referring to our three wars with India. 'Be with us now when we have been stabbed in the back.' But there were also text messages which ridiculed the army. People asked how we could be spending \$6 billion a year on the military (seven times more than we were spending on education), if four American helicopters could just sneak in under our radar? And if they could do it, what was to stop the Indians next door? 'Please don't honk, the army is sleeping,' said one text, and 'Second-hand Pakistani radar for sale . . . can't detect US helicopters but gets cable TV just fine,' said another.