



## Lashkar-e-Taiba



Lashkar-e-Taiba is one of the largest and most active terrorist organizations in South Asia, operating mainly from Pakistan.

It was founded in 1990 by Hafez Saeed, Abdullah Azzam and Zafar Iqbal in Afghanistan. With its headquarters based in Muridke, near Lahore in Punjab province of Pakistan, the group operates several training camps in Pakistan-administered Kashmir.

Lashkar-e-Taiba has been accused by India of attacking military and civilian targets in India, most notably the 2001 Indian Parliament attack and the 2008 Mumbai attacks. Its stated objective is to introduce an Islamic state in South Asia and to "liberate" Muslims residing in Indian Kashmir.

The organization is banned as a terrorist organization by India, the United States, the United Kingdom, the European Union, Russia and Australia. Though formally banned by Pakistan, the general view of India and the Western countries, including of experts such as former French investigating magistrate Jean-Louis Bruguière and New America Foundation president Steve Coll believe that Pakistan's main intelligence agency, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), continues to give LeT help and protection. The political arm of the group, Jamatud Dawah, was banned in Pakistan. However, Jamaat-ud-Dawa still continues to work openly as Lashkar-e-Taiba's charitable wing.

## Ideology:

While the primary area of operations of LeT's militant activities is the Kashmir Valley, their professed goal is not limited to challenging India's sovereignty over Jammu and Kashmir.

LeT sees the issue of Kashmir as part of a wider global struggle. The group has repeatedly claimed through its journals and websites that its main aim is to destroy the Indian republic and to annihilate Hinduism and Judaism. LeT has declared Hindus and Jews to be the "enemies of Islam", as well as India and Israel to be the "enemies of Pakistan". In a pamphlet entitled "Why Are We Waging Jihad?" the group defined its agenda as the restoration of Islamic rule over all parts of India and declared India, Israel and the United States as existential enemies of Islam.

The LeT believes that violent jihad is the duty of all Muslims and must be waged until eight objectives are met: ending persecution against Muslims, establishing Islam as the dominant way of life in the world, forcing infidels to pay jizya, fighting for the weak and feeble against oppressors, exacting revenge for killed Muslims, punishing enemies for violating oaths and treaties, defending all Muslim states, and recapturing occupied Muslim territory.

In the wake of the November 2008 Mumbai attacks, investigations of computer and email accounts revealed a list of 320 locations worldwide deemed as possible targets for attack. 20 of the targets were locations within India. Analysts believed that the list was a statement of intent rather than a list of locations where LeT cells had been established and were ready to strike.

In January 2009, LeT publicly declared that it would pursue a peaceful resolution in the Kashmir issue and that it did not have global jihadist aims, but the group is still believed to be active in several other spheres of anti-Indian terrorism. The disclosures of Abu Jundal, who was extradited to India by the Saudi Arabian government, however, revealed that LeT is planning to revive militancy in Jammu and Kashmir and conduct major terror strikes in India.

## Organization:

- ❖ Hafiz Muhammad Saeed – Living in Pakistan – Founder of Lashkar-e-Taiba and aamir of its political arm, Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD). Shortly after the November 2008 Mumbai attacks Saeed denied any links between the two groups: "No Lashkar-e-Taiba man is in Jamaat-ud-Dawa and I have never been a chief of Lashkar-e-Taiba." On 25 June 2014, United States of America declared Jamaat-ud-Dawa an affiliate of Lashkar-e-Taiba.
- ❖ Abdul Rehman Makki – Living in Pakistan – second in command of Lashkar-e-Taiba. He is the brother in law of Hafiz Muhammad Saeed. US has announced a reward of \$2 million for information leading to the location of Makki.
- ❖ Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi – Released on bail from custody of Pakistan military – Senior member of LeT. Named as being one of the masterminds of the Mumbai attack. On 18 December 2014 (two days after the Peshawar school attack), the Pakistani anti-terrorism court granted bail to Lakhvi against payment of surety bonds worth Rs. 500,000.
- ❖ Yusuf Muzammil – Senior member of LeT. Named as a mastermind of the November 2008 Mumbai attacks by surviving gunman Ajmal Kasab.
- ❖ Zarrar Shah – in Pakistani custody – one of Lashkar-e-Taiba's primary liaisons to the ISI. An American official said that he was a "central character" in the planning behind the Mumbai attacks in 2008. Zarrar Shah has boasted to Pakistani investigators about his role in the attacks.
- ❖ Muhammad Ashraf – LeT's top financial officer. Although not directly connected to the 2008 Mumbai plot, he was added to the U.N. list of people that sponsor terrorism after the attacks. However, Geo TV reported that six years earlier Ashraf became seriously ill while in custody and died at Civil Hospital on 11 June 2002.
- ❖ Mahmoud Mohamed Ahmed Bahaziq – The leader of LeT in Saudi Arabia and one of its financiers. Although not directly connected to the Mumbai plot, the U.N. added him to its list of individuals that sponsor terrorism after the 2008 Mumbai attacks.
- ❖ Nasr Javed – A Kashmiri senior operative, is on the list of individuals banned from entering the United Kingdom for "engaging in unacceptable behaviour by seeking to foment, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs."

## Financing:

Pakistan began to fund the LeT during the early 1990s and by around 1995 the funding had grown considerably. During this time the army and the ISI helped establish the LeT's military structure with the specific intent to use the militant group against India. The LeT also obtained funds through efforts of the MDI's Department of Finance.

Until 2002 the group collected funds through public fundraising events usually using charity boxes in shops and mosques. The group also received money through donations at MDI offices, through personal donations collected at public celebrations of an operative's martyrdom, and through its website. The outfit also collected donations from the Pakistani immigrant community in the Persian Gulf and United Kingdom, Islamic Non-Governmental Organisations, and Pakistani and Kashmiri businessmen. Lashkar-e-Taiba operatives have also been apprehended in India, where they had been obtaining funds from sections of the Muslim Community.

Although many of the funds collected went towards legitimate uses, e.g. factories and other businesses, a significant portion was dedicated to military activities. According to U.S. intelligence, the LeT had a military budget of more than \$5 million by 2009.

LeT assisted victims after the 2005 Kashmir earthquake. In many instances, they were the first on the scene, arriving before the army or other civilians.

A large amount of funds collected among the Pakistani expatriate community in Britain to aid victims of the earthquake were funneled for the activities of Lashkar-e-Taiba although the donors were unaware. About £5 million were collected, but more than half of the funds were directed towards LeT rather than towards relief efforts. Intelligence officials stated that some of the funds were used to prepare for an attack that would have detonated explosives on board transatlantic flights. Other investigations also indicated the aid given for earthquake victims was directly involved to expand Lashkar-e-Taiba's activities within India.

On 2 August 2012 Lashkar-e-Taiba hired two teenage boys aged 12 and 13 years to lob grenades at a police post in Sopore town in return of 16\$. The two children were caught on the CC camera pushing a handcart. They took cover while throwing the grenade and then melted away into a narrow lane. This was reported as the first incidence of Lashkar-e-Taiba using poor children from weaker section of the society for terror acts.

## Campaign of violence:

The group conducts training camps and humanitarian work. Across Pakistan, the organization runs 16 Islamic institutions, 135 secondary schools, an ambulance service, mobile clinics, blood banks and seminaries according to the South Asia Terrorism Portal.

The group actively carried out attacks on Indian Armed Forces in Kashmir and Jammu.

Some breakaway Lashkar members have been accused of carrying out attacks in Pakistan, particularly in Karachi, to mark its opposition to the policies of former president Pervez Musharraf.

The Lashkar-e-Taiba training camps are presently located at a number of locations in Pakistan. These camps, which include its base camp, Markaz-e-Taiba in Muridke near Lahore and the one near Manshera, are used to impart training to militants. In these camps, the following trainings are imparted:

- the 21-day sectarian religious course (Daura-e-Sufa)
- the 21-day basic combat course (Daura-e-Aam)
- the three-months advanced combat course (Daura-e-Khaas)

26/11 mastermind, Zabiuddin Ansari alias, Abu Jundal arrested recently by Indian intelligence agencies is reported to have disclosed that paragliding training was also included in the training curriculum of LeT cadres at its camps in Muzaffarabad. These camps have long been tolerated by the Pakistan's powerful Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency because of their usefulness against India and in Afghanistan although they have been instructed not to mount any operations for now. A French anti-terrorism expert, Jean-Louis Bruguière, in his *Some Things that I Wasn't Able to Say* has stated that the regular Pakistani army officers trained the militants in the LeT training camps until recently. He reached this conclusion after interrogating a French militant, Willy Brigitte, who had been trained by the LeT and arrested in Australia in 2003.

## Notable Incidents

- ❖ 1998 Wandhama massacre: 23 Kashmiri pandits were murdered on 25 January 1998.
- ❖ In March 2000, Lashkar-e-Taiba militants are claimed to have been involved in the Chittisinghpura massacre, where 35 Sikhs in the town of Chittisinghpura in Kashmir were killed. An 18-year-old male, who was arrested in December of that year, admitted in an interview with a New York Times correspondent to the involvement of the group and expressed no regret in perpetrating the anti-Sikh massacre. In a separate interview with the same correspondent, Hafiz Muhammad Saeed denied knowing the young man and dismissed any possible involvement of LeT. In 2010, the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) associate David Headley, who was arrested in connection with the 2008 Mumbai attacks, reportedly confessed to the National Investigation Agency that the LeT carried out the Chittisinghpura massacre. He is said to have identified an LeT militant named Muzzamil as part of the group which carried out the killings apparently to create communal tension just before Clinton's visit.
- ❖ The LeT was also held responsible by the government for the 2000 terrorist attack on Red Fort, New Delhi. LeT confirmed its participation in the Red Fort attack.
- ❖ The group claimed responsibility for an attack on Indian security forces along the border.
- ❖ The Indian government blamed LeT, in coordination with Jaish-e-Mohammed, for a 13 December 2001 assault on parliament in Delhi.
- ❖ 2002 Kaluchak massacre 31 killed 14 May 2002. Australian government attributed this massacre to Lashkar-e-Taiba when it designated it as a terrorist organization.
- ❖ 2003 Nadimarg Massacre 24 Kashmiri pandits gunned down on the night of 23 March 2003.
- ❖ 2005 Delhi bombings: During Diwali, Lashkar-e-Taiba bombed crowded festive Delhi markets killing 60 civilians and maiming 527.
- ❖ 2006 Varanasi bombings: Lashkar-e-Taiba was involved in serial blasts in Varanasi in the state of Uttar Pradesh. 37 people died and 89 were seriously injured.
- ❖ 2006 Doda massacre 34 Hindus were killed in Kashmir on 30 April 2006.
- ❖ 2006 Mumbai train bombings: The investigation launched by Indian forces and US officials have pointed to the involvement of Lashkar-e-Taiba in Mumbai serial blasts on 11 July 2006. The Mumbai serial blasts on 11 July claimed 211 lives and maimed about 407 people and seriously injured another 768.
- ❖ On 12 September 2006 the propaganda arm of the Lashkar-e-Taiba issued a fatwa against Pope Benedict XVI demanding that Muslims assassinate him for his controversial statements about Muhammad.

- ❖ On 16 September 2006, a top Lashkar-e-Taiba militant, Abu Saad, was killed by the troops of 9-Rashtriya Rifles in Nandi Marg forest in Kulgam. Saad belongs to Lahore in Pakistan and also oversaw LeT operations for the past three years in Gul Gulabghash as the outfit's area commander. Apart from a large quantity of arms and ammunition, high denomination Indian and Pakistani currencies were also recovered from the slain militant.
- ❖ 2008 Mumbai attacks In November 2008, Lashkar-e-Taiba was the primary suspect behind the Mumbai attacks but denied any part. The lone surviving gunman, Ajmal Amir Kasab, captured by Indian authorities admitted the attacks were planned and executed by the organization. United States intelligence sources confirmed that their evidence suggested Lashkar-e-Taiba is behind the attacks. A July 2009 report from Pakistani investigators confirmed that LeT was behind the attack.
- ❖ On 7 December 2008, under pressure from USA and India, the Pakistan Army launched an operation against LeT and Jamat-ud-Dawa to arrest people suspected of 26/11 Mumbai attacks
- ❖ In August 2009, LeT issued an ultimatum to impose Islamic dress code in all colleges in Jammu and Kashmir, sparking fresh fears in the tense region.
- ❖ In September and October 2009, Israeli and Indian intelligence agencies issued alerts warning that LeT is planning to attack Jewish religious places in Pune, India and other locations visited by Western and Israeli tourists in India. The gunmen who attacked the Mumbai headquarters of the Chabad Lubavitch movement during the November 2008 attacks were reportedly instructed that "Every person you kill where you are is worth 50 of the ones killed elsewhere."
- ❖ News sources have reported that members of LeT were planning to attack the U.S. and Indian embassies in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on 26 November 2009, to coincide with the one-year anniversary of the November 2008 Mumbai attacks. At least seven men have been arrested in connection to the plot, including a senior member of LeT.
- ❖ Two Chicago residents, David Coleman Headley and Tahawwur Hussain Rana, were allegedly working with LeT in planning an attack against the offices and employees of Jyllands-Posten, a Danish newspaper that published controversial cartoons of Muhammad. Indian news sources have also implicated the men in the November 2008 Mumbai attacks and in LeT's Fall 2009 plans to attack the U.S. and Indian embassies in Bangladesh.

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