

# Leader-Led Jihad in Pakistan: Lashkar-e-Taiba and the 2008 Mumbai Attack

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## INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines leader-led Islamist militancy (a.k.a. “jihad”) in Pakistan. Perhaps unlike some other chapters in this volume, until the post-9/11 period, the Pakistan state raised and mobilized numerous so-called jihadi groups to secure external as well as internal security objectives.<sup>1</sup> Ashley J. Tellis, a leading expert on South Asian security, wrote on this point that “In fact, of all the Pakistani- sponsored Deobandi [sic] terrorist groups operating against India in Kashmir and elsewhere, only one entity— the Hizbul Mujahedeen— began life as an indigenous Kashmiri insurgent group; the others, including the most violent organizations such as the Lashkar- e-Toiba [sic], the Jaish- e- Muhammad, and the Harkat- ul- Mujahedeen, are all led, manned, and financed by native Pakistanis.”<sup>2</sup>

While it is often believed that Pakistan’s utilization of militants dates to the anti-Soviet jihad in Afghanistan, in fact Pakistan began doing so in the founding months of the state.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, Pakistan’s militant groups have been active in and from Pakistan for decades and represent a long-standing facet of national power, whose deployment has been increasingly enabled by Pakistan’s nuclear umbrella.

A comprehensive assessment of “leader-led” jihad in Pakistan is beyond the modest length of this present effort. The empirics of the Pakistan comprise a case of state-led jihad as a form of leader-led jihad. Most of the jihadi leaders and groups in Pakistan are themselves—to varying

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<sup>1</sup> Pakistan has long tolerated anti-Shi’a groups and even Shi’a pogroms at different parts of its history. This in part due to efforts of Zia al Haq to promote Sunni Islam and to contend with a militarized Shi’a response sponsored by Iran. While Pakistan has episodically cracked down on these groups, because they have overlapping membership with key Deobandi religious institutions and with groups fighting in India/Kashmir and Afghanistan, Pakistan has been reluctant to put them down decisively. See inter alia Vali R. Nasr, “International Politics, Domestic Imperatives, and Identity Mobilization: Sectarianism in Pakistan, 1979-1998,” *Comparative Politics* 32, (2000): 170-91; International Crisis Group. *The State of Sectarianism in Pakistan: Crisis Group Asia Report no. 95* (Brussels, Islamabad; International Crisis Group, 2005), 12, 19-20. Also see A.H. Sorbo, “Paradise Lost”, *The Herald*, June 1988, p. 31; Muhammad Qasim Zaman, “Sectarianism in Pakistan: The Radicalization of Shi’i and Sunni Identities, *Modern Asian Studies* 32, (1998):689-716.

<sup>2</sup> See Ashley J. Tellis, *Pakistan and the War on Terror: Conflicted Goals, Compromised Performance* (Washington D.C.: CEIP, 2008), p. 5. Tellis makes a factual error in attributing all of these groups to the Deobandi interpretive school, however. Also see among numerous other sources Ahmed Rashid, *Descent into Chaos: The U.S. and the Disaster in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia* (New York: Penguin, 2009); See Husain Haqqani, *Pakistan Between and Military* (Washington D.C.: CEIP, 2005); Hassan Abbas and Jessica Stern, *Pakistan's Drift Into Extremism: Allah, then Army, and America's War Terror* (New York: M.E. Sharpe 2004).

<sup>3</sup> Praveen Swami, *India, Pakistan and the Secret Jihad: The Covert War in Kashmir, 1947-2005* (London: Routledge, 2007).

degrees—led, mobilized or supported by the Pakistani state. Ostensibly, the “leadership” lending strategic guidance and direction to Pakistan’s militant groups is Pakistan’s intelligence agency, the Interservices Intelligence Directorate (ISI), and the Pakistan Army. These agencies may be more important than any given individual leader, who serves at the behest of these agencies, because these agencies provide important resources for arming, recruiting, training and ultimately conducting operations.

This chapter will focus upon one of the most lethal and effective militant group operating from Pakistan: the Lashkar-e-Taiba or LeT. (LeT regrouped under the name of Jamaat-ul-Dawa when LeT was banned in 2002. For this reason, after 2002, I use the terms JuD and LeT interchangeably). Because LeT differs substantially from other groups operating in Pakistan, this chapter first briefly lays out the key features of the contemporary militant landscape in Pakistan. Next, this chapter provides key details about the organization and leadership. Third and most important, this chapter provides an account of what is perhaps LeT’s most audacious attack to date: the November 26, 2008 coordinated attack on numerous targets throughout Mumbai, which lasted some 60 hours and killed 172 people while receiving full media coverage on Indian and international media. The chapter concludes with a discussion the policy implications that emerge from this analysis.

## PAKISTAN’S CONTEMPORARY MILITANT LANDSCAPE<sup>4</sup>

At present, there are several kinds of militant groups operating in and from Pakistan. Drawing from the vast descriptive literature of Pakistan’s militant group, groups can be meaningfully disaggregated across several dimensions, beginning with their sectarian background (e.g. Ahl-e-Hadith, Deoband, Jamaat Islami, etc).<sup>5</sup> They can also be distinguished by their theatres of

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<sup>4</sup> This section draws from C. Christine Fair, “Pakistani Attitudes Towards Militancy and State Responses to Counter Militancy,” written while the author was a Luce Fellow at the University of Washington in 2009. See also C. Christine Fair, “Militant recruitment in Pakistan: Implications for Al-Qa’ida and Other Organizations,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 27 (2004).

<sup>5</sup> This taxonomy is deduced from author fieldwork in Pakistan from 2002 to 2009. See C. Christine Fair, “Who are Pakistan’s Militants and Their Families?” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 20 (2008): 49-65. See also, inter alia, Arif Jamal, *Shadow War: The Untold Story of Jihad in Kashmir* (Hoboken: Melville House, 2009); Muhammad Amir Ranan (trans. Saba Ansari) *The A to Z of Jehadi Organizations in Pakistan* (Lahore: Mashal, 2004); See Amir Mir, *The True Face of Jihadis* (Lahore: Mashal Books, 2004), Amir Mir, *The Fluttering Flag of Jihad* (Lahore: Mashal Books, 2008). For an excellent synthesis of the sprawling Pakistani literature on the varied militant groups based in and from the country, see Nicholas Howenstein, “The Jehadi Terrain in Pakistan: An Introduction to the Sunni Jehadi Groups in Pakistan and Kashmir,” Pakistan Studies Research Unit, Bradford University, February 2008. [http://www.humansecuritygateway.info/documents/PSRU\\_JihadiTerrain\\_Pakistan.pdf](http://www.humansecuritygateway.info/documents/PSRU_JihadiTerrain_Pakistan.pdf); Jane’s World Insurgency and Terrorism, “Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP),” July 1, 2009. [www.janes.com](http://www.janes.com) (by subscription only); Manzair Zaidi, “Pakistan’s Taliban Warlord: A profile of Baitullah Meshud,” *The Long War Journal*, September 30, 2008. [www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2008/9/pakistans\\_taliban\\_wa.php](http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2008/9/pakistans_taliban_wa.php); Jane’s Terrorism and Security Monitor, “Pakistan’s Most wanted: Baitullah Mehsud,” February 8, 2009. [www4.janes.com](http://www4.janes.com) (available to subscribers only); Rahimullah Yusefzai, “Profile: Nek Mohammed,” *BBC News Online*, June 18,

operation (e.g. Afghanistan, India, Pakistan), by the makeup of their cadres (e.g. Arab, Central Asia, Pakistani and ethnic groups thereof), and by their objectives (e.g. overthrow of the Pakistan government, seize Kashmir, support the Afghan Taliban, etc.) among other characteristics. Employing these characteristics, the following clusters of Islamist militant groups can be discerned (summarized in Table 1):

- Al Qaeda (in Pakistan): Al Qaeda operatives who are based in Pakistan are largely non-Pakistani. However, they work with and through networks of supportive Pakistani militant groups. The strongest ties are with the Deobandi groups such as the Pakistani Taliban, Jaish-e-Mohammad, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, etc. From sanctuaries in the tribal areas and from key Pakistani cities, al Qaeda has facilitated attacks within Pakistan and has planned international attacks.<sup>6</sup>
- Afghan Taliban: While the Afghan Taliban operate in Afghanistan, they enjoy sanctuary in Pakistan's Baluchistan province, parts of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), the Northwest Frontier Province, and key cities in the Pakistani heartland (e.g. Karachi). The Afghan Taliban emerged from Deobandi madaris (p. madrassah) in Pakistan and retain their nearly exclusive ethnic Pashtun and Deobandi sectarian orientation.<sup>7</sup>
- "Kashmiri groups": Several groups proclaim to focus upon Kashmir. These include the Jamaat-e-Islami Hizbul Mujahedeen and related splinter groups; several Deobandi groups (Jaish-e-Mohammad (JM), Harkat-ul-Jihad-Islam (JUJI), etc.); and the Ahl-e-Hadith group Lashkar-e-Taiba (Let, renamed Jamaat ul Dawa (JuD)). With the notable exception of Hizbul Mujahedeen, most of these groups claim few ethnic Kashmiris and most came into being as surrogates of the ISI.
- "Sectarian groups": While in the past, notable anti-Sunni Shia groups existed with support from Iran, sectarian groups today are mostly Sunni. Those Sunni groups targeting Shia are almost always Deobandi (Sipah-e-Sahaba-e-Pakistan (SSP), Lashkar-e-

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2004. [news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/3819871](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/3819871); Hassan Abbas, "A Profile of Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan," *CTC Sentinel* 1 (2008): 1-4; Jane's Terrorism and Insurgency, "Tribal Tribulations: The Pakistani Taliban in Waziristan," January 13, 2009. [www.janes.com](http://www.janes.com) (available to subscribers only).

<sup>6</sup> See comments made by National Intelligence Director John Negroponte cited in "Al-Qaeda 'rebuilding' in Pakistan," BBC News Online, January 12, 2007. [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/6254375.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/6254375.stm); K. Alan Kronstadt, *U.S.-Pakistan Relations* (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 2008). <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/115888.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> See, inter alia, Senator Carl Levin, "Opening Statement of Senator Carl Levin, Senate Armed Services Committee Hearing on Afghanistan and Pakistan," February 26, 2009. <http://levin.senate.gov/newsroom/release.cfm?id=308740>; Ian Katz, "Gates Says Militant Sanctuaries Pose Biggest Afghanistan Threat," *Bloomberg News*, March 1, 2009. <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601087&sid=aehtmlRXgKi2o&refer=home>; Barnett R. Rubin. "Saving Afghanistan," *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2007. <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20070101faessay86105-p0/barnett-r-rubin/saving-afghanistan.html>.

Jhangvi (LeJ)). In addition, there is considerable intra-Sunni violence with Ahl-e-Hadith and Deobandi targeting Barelvis (a heterodox Sufi order).<sup>8</sup>

- The Tehreek-e-Taliban-e-Pakistan (TTP, Pakistani Taliban). Groups self-nominating as “Pakistani Taliban” appeared in Waziristan as early as 2004 under the leadership of Waziristan-based, Deobandi militants who fought with the Afghan Taliban in Afghanistan. By late 2007, several militant commanders at least nominally organized under the leadership of South Waziristan-based Baitullah Mehsud under the moniker “Tehreek-e-Taliban-e-Pakistan.” There is no serious evidence of coordination among the varied leaders operating under this nom de guerre, rather there are reports of considerable disagreement among local commanders.<sup>9</sup> In late February 2008, two dissident commanders, Mullah Nazir and Hafiz Gul Bahadur, appeared to temporarily set aside their differences with Baitullah Mehsud and forged the Shura Ittehad-ul-Mujahdeen, though this alliance may have been more style than substance.<sup>10</sup> Baitullah Mehsud was killed in a U.S. drone strike in August 2009. After considerable speculation about the TTP’s fate, it re-emerged under the vehemently sectarian Hakimullah Mehsud. After a brief interlude from violence, the TTP has sustained a bloody campaign of suicide bombings both precipitating Pakistani military activities against their redoubt in South Waziristan and in effort to punish the state for launching the campaign.<sup>11</sup>

There are a number of refinements to this gross disaggregation. First, Deobandi groups often have overlapping membership with each other and with the Deobandi Islamist political party,

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<sup>8</sup> Vali R. Nasr, “International Politics, Domestic Imperatives, and Identity Mobilization: Sectarianism in Pakistan, 1979-1998,” *Comparative Politics* 32 (2000): 170-91; International Crisis Group. *The State of Sectarianism in Pakistan*: Crisis Group Asia Report no. 95 (Brussels, Islamabad; International Crisis Group, 2005), 12, 19-20. Also see A.H. Sorbo, “Paradise Lost,” *The Herald*, June 1988, p. 31; Muhammad Qasim Zaman, “Sectarianism in Pakistan: The Radicalization of Shi’i and Sunni Identities,” *Modern Asian Studies* 32 (1998):689-716.

<sup>9</sup> Jane’s World Insurgency and Terrorism, “Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP);” Manzair Zaidi, “Pakistan’s Taliban Warlord: A profile of Baitullah Meshud;” Jane’s Terrorism and Security Monitor, “Pakistan’s Most wanted: Baitullah Mehsud;” Rahimullah Yusefzai, “Profile: Nek Mohammed;” Hassan Abbas, “A Profile of Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan;” Jane’s Terrorism and Insurgency, “Tribal Tribulations: The Pakistani Taliban in Waziristan.

<sup>10</sup> See Hassan Abbas, “Increasing Talibanization in Pakistan’s Seven Tribal Agencies,” *Terrorism Monitor*, 5 (September 27, 2007): 1–5; Hassan Abbas, “A Profile of Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan” *CTC Sentinel* \* January 2008): 1-4; Syed Shoaib Hasan, “Profile: Baitullah Mehsud,” *BBC News*, December 28, 2007. [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/7163626.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7163626.stm). Pakistan has considered Maulvi Nazir an ally because he helped oust or kill numerous Uzbeks in South Waziristan. He is considered to be a dedicated foe of U.S. and NATO forces as he dispatches fighters to Afghanistan. Gul Bahadar has had a number of differences with Baitullah Mehsud. It is not clear what this alliance means for Pakistan or for the U.S. and allies in Afghanistan. See Saeed Shah, “Taliban rivals unite to fight US troop surge,” *The Guardian*, March 3, 2009. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/mar/03/taliban-pakistan-afghanistan-us-surge>.

<sup>11</sup> Declan Walsh, “Pakistan Sends 30,000 Troops for All-out Assault on Taliban,” *The Guardian*, October 17, 2009. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/oct/17/pakistan-sends-troops-against-taliban>.

Jamiat-e-Ulema Islami (JUI). Thus, a member of JM may also be a member of LeJ or even an office holder at some level with the JUI. Second, Deobandi groups have in recent years begun operating against the Pakistani state following Pakistan's participation in the U.S.-led global war on terrorism. JM and LeJ for instance have collaborated with the TTP by providing suicide bombers and logistical support, allowing the TTP to conduct attacks throughout Pakistan, far beyond the TTP's territorial remit.<sup>12</sup> Both LeT and several Deobandi militant groups have also been operating in Afghanistan against U.S., NATO, and Afghan forces.<sup>13</sup> In contrast, other Kashmiri groups are operating under the influence of the Islamist political party Jamaat-e-Islami, such as al-Badr and Hizbul Mujahedeem, which tend to be comprised of ethnic Kashmiris and have retained their operational focus upon Kashmir.

There are several factors that distinguish LeT from the myriad other groups operating in and from Pakistan. First, LeT (along with the Jamaat-Islami based organizations) has never targeted the state. This is further evidence of the tight linkages between these groups and the Pakistani security establishment. Second, unlike all of the aforementioned groups, the LeT has never split. In contrast, the ISI has engineered or fomented dissent among the other militant groups to ensure enhanced control over them. LeT is the only group that has been allowed to remain intact without significant cleavages at the apex body of decisions makers. (As with all organizations, some discord has been observed among local commanders.) Finally, whereas the state has taken on several of the Deobandi groups, including the TTP, and al Qaeda through inept and not always efficacious military operations, it has taken only the most marginal and cosmetic steps in the wake of the Mumbai 2008 attacks. While LeT—along with several other jihadi groups—was banned in 2002, all of them regrouped under other names with their financial assets largely intact.<sup>14</sup> JuD escaped a second round of bans in 2003 prompted by complaints lodged by U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Nancy Powell that these militant outfits had reformed without consequence. This enabled JuD to continue to expand its overt as well as covert actions with preferential state treatment.<sup>15</sup> In fact, Pakistan was extremely reluctant to ban JuD after the Mumbai attack and did so only after the U.N. Security Council proscribed the organization and identified its leadership.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Author fieldwork in Pakistan in February and April 2009.

<sup>13</sup> See C. Christine Fair, "Antecedents and Implications of the November 2008 Lashkar-e-Taiba Attack Upon Mumbai," testimony presented before the House Homeland Security Committee, Subcommittee on Transportation Security and Infrastructure Protection on March 11, 2009.

<sup>14</sup> Stephen Phillip Cohen, "The Jihadist Threat to Pakistan," *The Washington Quarterly* 26 (2003): 7-25.

<sup>15</sup> Stephen Tankel, "Lashkar-e-Taiba: From 9/11 to Mumbai." *Developments in Radicalisation and Political Violence*, April/May 2009. [www.icsr.info](http://www.icsr.info).

<sup>16</sup> Jay Solomon, "U.N. Security Council Sanctions Lashkar Members," December 10, 2008. <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122895332614496341.html>.

## LASHKAR-E-TAIBA: FOUNDATION AND LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE<sup>17</sup>

The LeT has focused the attention of U.S. policy makers in following the November 2008 terrorist attacks in Mumbai. The attack laid to rest prevailing ambivalence whether LeT represented a threat to India or the international community. This insouciance about the LeT threat is somewhat puzzling. Prior to 2008, the LeT had long established a presence in Pakistan and South Asia. Since 2001, it has increasingly expanded well beyond the South Asian region. The LeT originally emerged as the military wing of the Markaz Daawat ul Irshad (MDI), headquartered in Muridke near the Punjabi city of Lahore. MDI was founded in 1986 by two Pakistani Engineering professors, Hafiz Muhammad Saeed and Zafar Iqbal. Abdullah Azzam, a close associate of Bin Laden who was affiliated with the Islamic University of Islamabad and the Maktab ul Khadamat (Bureau of Services for Arab mujahedeen), also provided assistance. He was killed in Peshawar two years after the Markaz was founded. MDI, along with numerous other militant groups, was involved in supporting the mujahudin in Afghanistan from 1986 onwards, and established militant training camps for this purpose. One camp was known as Muaskar-e-Taiba in Paktia and a second known as Muaskar-e-Aqsa in the Kunar province of Afghanistan.<sup>18</sup> (Kunar is known to be home to numerous Ahl-e-Hadith adherents in Afghanistan, which overall has few followers in that country. For this reason, Kunar has been an attractive safe-haven for Arabs in Afghanistan.) Pakistan-based analysts note that MDI/LeT's training camps were always separate from those of the Taliban, which hosted Deobandi militant groups such as HUJI and Harkat ul Mujahedeen. This has led some analysts to contend that LeT has not had the sustained and organic connections to Al Qaeda as enjoyed by the Deobandi groups, many of which became "out sourcers" for al Qaeda in Pakistan.<sup>19</sup>

In 1993, MDI divided its activities into two related but separate organizations: MDI proper continued the mission of proselytization and education while LeT emerged as the militant wing.

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<sup>17</sup> This section draws in part from C. Christine Fair, "Antecedents and Implications of the November 2008 Lashkar-e-Taiba Attack Upon Mumbai," testimony presented before the House Homeland Security Committee, Subcommittee on Transportation Security and Infrastructure Protection on March 11, 2009.

<sup>18</sup> See Yoginder Sikand, "The Islamist Militancy in Kashmir: The Case of the Lashkar-e-Taiba," in *The Practice of War: Production, Reproduction and Communication of Armed Violence*, eds. Aparna Rao et al. (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007):215-238; Mariam Abou Zahab, "I Shall be Waiting at the Door of Paradise: The Pakistani Martyrs of the Lashkar-e-Taiba (Army of the Pure)," *The Practice of War: Production, Reproduction and Communication of Armed Violence*, eds. Aparna Rao et al. (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007):133-158; Saeed Shafiqat, "From Official Islam to Islamism: The Rise of Dawat-ul-Irshad and Lashkar-e-Taiba," in *Pakistan: Nationalism without a Nation*, ed. Christophe Jaffrelot (London: Zed Books, 2002), pp. 131-147.

<sup>19</sup> In 1998, the United States bombed several al Qaeda/Taliban training camps in retaliation for the al Qaeda attacks on U.S. embassies in Africa. Militants of several Pakistani Deobandi groups were killed including operatives of HUJI and HuM among others. See Barry Bearak, "After The Attacks: In Pakistan; Estimates Of Toll In Afghan Missile Strike Reach As High As 50," *The New York Times*, August 23, 1998. Also see Dexter Filkins, "'All of Us Were Innocent,' Says Survivor of U.S. Attack on Camp," *The Los Angeles Times*, August 24, 1998. <http://articles.latimes.com/1998/aug/24/news/mn-16045>.

The ISI is believed to have funded the LeT and analysts continue to believe that the present-day LeT is a close proxy of Pakistani intelligence agencies.<sup>20</sup> After the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan, LeT/MDI shifted focus to Indian-administered Kashmir. It staged its first attack (against a jeep carrying Indian air force personnel) in Kashmir in 1990. The vast majority of LeT operatives are Pakistanis (often Punjabis) and the organization has spawned a vast training infrastructure throughout the country to support its dual mission of training militants and converting Pakistanis to the Ahl-e-Hadith interpretative tradition. For much of the 1990s (with few exceptions), LeT operations were restricted to Indian administered Kashmir.

LeT's 200-acre headquarters is in Muridke (Punjab) located some 30 kilometers from Lahore.<sup>21</sup> However, the organization maintains offices in most of the major cities throughout Pakistan.<sup>22</sup> These offices undertake recruitment as well as funds collection. In addition to overt offices open to the public, JuD/LeT maintains covert training camps throughout Pakistan.<sup>23</sup> Hafez Saeed is the Amir (supreme commander) of the organization. LeT has a spokesperson named Yahya Mujahid (with whom the author has met on several occasions) as well as a spokesperson for international media, Abdullah Muntazer, who also edits JuD's website.<sup>24</sup>

JuD has a quasi-military structure with a Chief Commander, Divisional Commander, District Commander, Battalion Commander with sub-structures organizing cadres along army-like lines. As of 2005 (more current information is not available in the public domain), A. B. Rahman-Ur-Dakhil was the organization's Naib Amir (Deputy Supreme Commander). In addition there are commanders and deputy commanders assigned to key operational areas. Notably, Zia-Ur-Rehman Lakhvi is the Supreme Commander for Kashmir. Lakhvi was the mastermind of the 2008 Mumbai attacks. The apex policy making body for the JuD is headed by the Amir, the Naib Amir among others (e.g. Finance Chief).<sup>25</sup> Operations tend to be conducted

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<sup>20</sup> See Sikand, "The Islamist Militancy in Kashmir: The Case of the Lashkar-e-Taiba;" Abou Zahab, "I Shall be Waiting at the Door of Paradise;" Shafqat, "From Official Islam to Islamism."7.

<sup>21</sup> According to the South Asia Terrorism Portal, the Muridke Markaz (center) is comprised of a "Madrasa (seminary), a hospital, a market, a large residential area for 'scholars' and faculty members, a fish farm and agricultural tracts. The LeT also reportedly operates 16 Islamic institutions, 135 secondary schools, an ambulance service, mobile clinics, blood banks and several seminaries across Pakistan." See South Asia Terrorism Portal, "Lashkar-e-Toiba 'Army of the Pure,' no date, available at [http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/states/jandk/terrorist\\_outfits/lashkar\\_e\\_toiba.htm](http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/states/jandk/terrorist_outfits/lashkar_e_toiba.htm) (last accessed July 25, 2009).

<sup>22</sup> Business card of Yayha Mujahid, spokesperson of JuD, provided to the author during a meeting at the Pearl Continental in Lahore Pakistan in 2005.

<sup>23</sup> The author has visited the Lahore office in Char Burji.

<sup>24</sup> South Asia Terrorism Portal, "Lashkar-e-Toiba 'Army of the Pure.'"

<sup>25</sup> For more detailed information about LeT/JuD leadership, see South Asia Terrorism Portal, "Lashkar-e-Toiba 'Army of the Pure.'" This source suggests the following structure: "the LeT leadership consisted of: Hafiz Mohammed Saeed (Supreme Commander); Zia-Ur-Rehman Lakhvi alias Chachaji (Supreme Commander, Kashmir); A. B. Rahman-Ur-Dakhil (Deputy Supreme Commander); Abdullah Shehzad alias Abu Anas alias Shamas (Chief Operations Commander, Valley); Abdul Hassan alias MY (Central Division Commander); Kari Saif-

with a relatively small unit of few than a dozen.<sup>26</sup>

JuD's cadres come largely from Pakistan and Afghanistan, as well as small numbers from the Middle East and Africa. There is no publically available—much less accurate—accounting of the organization's end-strength. But the State Department estimates that it has “several thousand” members in Pakistan Administered Kashmir, Pakistan, in the southern Jammu and Kashmir and Doda regions (in Indian Administered Kashmir), and in the Kashmir Valley.<sup>27</sup> In contrast, the Delhi-based South Asia Terrorism Portal estimates that, with some fluctuation, it has more than 750 cadre in Jammu and Kashmir, which comprise the overwhelming bulk of the foreign militants in the Kashmir valley.<sup>28</sup>

A perusal of LeT literature demonstrates a commitment to targeting Indian Hindus, Jews, Americans and other infidels and apostate Muslims; stoking larger Hindu-Muslim discord in India; and liberating all of India and establishing a caliphate.<sup>29</sup> MDI claims that it has had a leading role in armed struggles across the Muslim world, first in Afghanistan, then in Bosnia, Chechnya, Kosovo, the Philippines, and Kashmir, among other venues.<sup>30</sup> There is no independent verification of these claims. However, in recent years, LeT operatives have appeared in small numbers in other theatres. For example, British force captured two Pakistani LeT operatives in Iraq and rendered them into U.S. custody in February 2004.<sup>31</sup> A number of Australians, including apparent converts to Islam, have been trained in LeT camps, discomfiting Australian authorities.<sup>32</sup> Reports persist that a wide array of American, Canadian and British nationals have

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Ul-Rahman (North Division Commander); Kari Saif-Ul-Islam (Deputy Commander); Masood alias Mahmood (Area Commander, Sopore); Hyder-e-Krar alias CI (Deputy Commander, Bandipora); Usman Bhai alias Saif-Ul-Islam (Deputy Commander, Lolab); Abdul Nawaz (Deputy Commander, Sogam); Abu Rafi (Deputy Divisional Commander, Baramulla); Abdul Nawaz (Deputy Commander, Handwara); Abu Museb alias Saifulla (Deputy Commander, Budgam).”

<sup>26</sup> For more information about this see, Muhammad Amir Ranan (trans. Saba Ansari) *The A to Z of Jehadi Organizations in Pakistan* (Lahore: Mashal, 2004).

<sup>27</sup> See U.S. Department of State, Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, “Chapter 6 -- Terrorist Organizations,” in *Country Reports on Terrorism 2007*, April 30, 2008. <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2007/103714.htm>. Note that many other details in the State Department write up do not accord with knowledgeable sources on the organization. For example, it claims that most of the recruits come from madrassahs, which is not confirmed by analysts with deep familiarity of the organization who are cited throughout this article.

<sup>28</sup> South Asia Terrorism Portal, “Lashkar-e-Toiba 'Army of the Pure.’”

<sup>29</sup> The author has collected LeT poster work and written materials since 1995.

<sup>30</sup> Sikand, “Islamist Militancy in Kashmir,” P. 219. Also see discussion of LeT in Ranan, *The A to Z of Jehadi Organizations in Pakistan*, pp. 324.

<sup>31</sup> Richard Norton-Taylor, “Britain aided Iraq terror renditions, government admits,” *The Guardian*, February 26, 2009. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/feb/26/britain-admits-terror-renditions>.

<sup>32</sup> Recently, during a trial of several men plotting to attack the United States from Sydney, a participant (a Korean-American Muslim convert) alleged that an Australian citizen known as Abu Asad trained with Lashkar-e-Taiba at a camp in Pakistan in 2001. See Geesche Jacobsen, “Australian in training camp named,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, January 13, 2009. <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/australian-in-training-camp-named/2009/01/13/1231608682540.html>. For information on another collective of Australians trained in LeT camps,



also trained in LeT camps.<sup>33</sup>

LeT has a hallmark modus operandi, which has often been misconstrued as simply “suicide operations.” In fact, the LeT does not do suicide operations, per se, in which the goal of the attacker is to die during the execution of the attack. Rather, LeT’s “fidayeen” missions are more akin to high-risk missions in which well-trained commandos engage in fierce combat during which death is preferable to capture. While martyrdom is in some sense the ultimate objective of LeT operatives, the LeT selects missions where there is a possibility, however slim, of living to kill more enemy operatives. The goal of LeT commandos therefore is not to merely to commit suicide attacks; rather, they seek to kill as many as possible until they ultimately succumb to enemy operations, barring their ability to survive enemy engagement.

Zahab has described a typical LeT encounter in the following way:

the fighters are well trained and highly motivated and they engage the enemy on its own territory. Small groups of fedayeen...storm a security force camp and kill as many soldiers as possible before taking defensive positions within the camp and engaging security force personnel till they attain martyrdom. Battles often last twenty hours, if not more.<sup>34</sup>

She further notes that these spectacular and well-planned attacks bring the LeT maximum publicity, expands recruiting and donations, and demoralizing the enemy--which must resort to heavy fire, destroying their own buildings, and causing substantial collateral damage in the process of responding. While LeT claims that it has only assaulted hard targets, their record demonstrates an absolute willingness to kill civilians.

Consonant with the rigor of a typical LeT mission, LeT recruits do not predominantly draw from Pakistan’s madaris (pl. of madrassah). Rather, LeT recruits are generally in their late teens or early twenties and tend to be better educated than Pakistanis on average, or even than other militant groups such as the Deobandi SSP or JM. A majority of LeT recruits have completed secondary school with good grades and some have even attended college. This reflects both the background of LeT’s founding fathers who were engineering professors and MDI commitment to technical and other education. This stands in sharp contrast to the madrassah-based networks of many of the Deobandi groups including the Afghan Taliban.<sup>35</sup> In fact, many LeT operatives likely came into contact with LeT through [proselytization](#) programs

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see Ashok Malik, “Lashkar link in Aussie terror net,” *Indian Express*, June 12, 2004.

<http://www.indianexpress.com/oldstory.php?storyid=48832>. Perhaps the most famous Australian to train at a LeT camp is David Hicks who was recently freed from Guantanamo. See “David Hicks: 'Australian Taleban,” BBC News, May 20, 2007.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/3044386.stm>.

<sup>33</sup> See for example “Lashkar training in US, Canada, UK, Australia,” *Rediff.com*, December 10, 2008. <http://www.rediff.com/news/2008/dec/10mumterror-lashkar-training-in-us-canada-uk-australia.htm>.

<sup>34</sup> Zahab, “I Shall be Waiting,” p. 138.

<sup>35</sup> For a more throughout discussion of the connections between militancy and education, see C. Christine Fair, *The Madrassah Challenge: Militancy and Religious Education in Pakistan* (Washington D.C.: USIP, 2008).

on college campuses, which in turn lure the potential recruits to the large “ijtema” (congregation) held annually in Muridke. The fraction of madrassah-educated LeT operatives is believed to be as low as ten percent.<sup>36</sup> LeT also actively targets women both to expand their recruitment base of males, and reportedly, to recruit women for militant operations.<sup>37</sup>

The early connection between the MDI/LeT to Abdullah Azzam, along with the organization’s Salafi-jihadi outlook, have fostered beliefs that LeT and al Qaeda enjoy tight linkages. These beliefs have been further nurtured by the arrests of al Qaeda operatives in LeT safe houses. Pakistan-based analysts of LeT tend to discount this rationale and note that al Qaeda operatives have been arrested in Jamaat Islami safe houses as well and note that LeT infrastructure in Afghanistan, as described above, was separate from that of Al Qaeda and their patrons, the Taliban.<sup>38</sup> Thus the actual degree to which LeT is allied to al Qaeda remains an important empirical question for this author despite popular claims advanced by others on this point.

Since the late 1990s, LeT has continued to develop its operational reach into India. While Indian citizens were always required for facilitating LeT and other militant groups’ actions within Indian-administered Kashmir and the Indian hinterland, LeT has successfully cultivated active cadres and figures preeminently in founding of the Indian Mujahedeen. In 2002, at least 14 young men from Hyderabad left for Pakistan for training, reportedly motivated by the massacre of Muslims in Gujarat in 2002. (Praveen Swami reports that even as early as 1992 some Indian Muslims sought training in Pakistan in response to the demolition of the Babri Masjid by Hindu extremists.) The Hyderabad operatives received training in LeT and JM camps and enjoyed operational assistance from Bangladesh-based Harkat-ul-Jihad-Bangladesh (HUJI-B). This cell was responsible for the May 18, 2007 terrorist attack in Hyderabad’s Toli Chowki area.<sup>39</sup> LeT has moved Indian personnel into and out of Pakistan via Bangladesh and other countries through criminal syndicates as well as other Islamist and militant groups such as the Students Islamism Movement of India (SIMI) and Harkat-ul-Jihad-Bangladesh (HUJI-B) among others.<sup>40</sup>

Despite the rhetoric surrounding the horrific events in Mumbai on November 26, 2008, there were important antecedents of that attack. In July 2006, LeT working with local operatives, detonated seven explosions across Mumbai’s commuter rail system. That 2006 assault was even more lethal than the 2008 carnage, killing at least 187 people. While that attack focused the public’s attention upon LeT’s ability to strike deep within India, LeT had reportedly established networks in Mumbai as early as August

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<sup>36</sup> Zahab, “I Shall be Waiting,” p. 140, Shafqat, “From Official Islam to Islamism,” p. 142.

<sup>37</sup> Farhat Haq, “Militarism and Motherhood: The Women of the Lashkar-i-Tayyabia in Pakistan,” *Signs* 32 (2007): 1023-1046.

<sup>38</sup> See Sikand, “The Islamist Militancy in Kashmir,” Shafqat, “From Official Islam to Islamism.”

<sup>39</sup> Praveen Swami, “Terror Junction,” *Frontline* 24 (2007).  
<http://www.hindu.com/fline/fl2411/stories/20070615002303500.htm>.

<sup>40</sup> Praveen Swami, “Lashkar-trained Indian Terrorists Pose Growing Threat,” *The Hindu*, December 19, 2008. <http://www.hindu.com/2008/12/19/stories/2008121956141200.htm>.

1999. India's intelligence Bureau disrupted a pan-India network led by LeT-operative Amir Khan who was tasked with recruiting from India's communal-violence afflicted communities. In 2000, Indian authorities intercepted three Pakistani LeT cadres who had planned to kill Bal Thackeray, leader of a Hindu nationalist group called the Shiv Sena.<sup>41</sup>

In 2004, another LeT cell was disrupted that aimed to attack the Bombay Stock Exchange. (The Bombay Stock Exchange had been previously hit in 1993 by Pakistan-based terrorists working with the then Indian-based mafia syndicate led by Dawood Ibrahim.) In June 2006, the Maharashtra police arrested an 11-member LeT cell that shipped some 43 kilograms of explosives, assault rifles and grenades to India using sea routes. Several of those militants had ties to SIMI. Indian analysts believe that LeT, working with SIMI and smuggling rings, have been able to successively move large amounts of explosives and weapons by sea along the Gujarat coast.<sup>42</sup> The movement of explosives through the Maharashtra and Gujarat coastlines was reminiscent of logistical routes used to supply explosives for the 1993 Bombay Stock Exchange.<sup>43</sup> Needless to say, these are only illustrative –not exhaustive—examples of LeT's penetration of India and cultivation of Indian networks to conduct terror operations.

## **THE NOVEMBER 26, 2008 MUMBAI ATTACK**

While LeT has conducted dozens—if not hundreds—of attacks throughout India (including Mumbai) since its inception, none have received the attention and coverage of the 60-hour killing spree perpetrated by ten Pakistani operatives who reached Mumbai by sea in late November 2008. In this attack, the LeT targeted significant numbers of international civilians, prompting the United States in particular to reconsider its assessment of the organization's intentions, if not capabilities. (Admittedly, LeT is suspected targeting international tourists in Kashmir but these attacks have had few fatalities and have not drawn the attention of the international media.) This section will document the incident, provide a detailed account of the perpetrators, the motivations and goals of the attack; and analysis of the outcome.

### ***The Plot***

Ten LeT Pakistan terrorists, who had trained in camps in Muzaffarabad and later in

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<sup>41</sup> Praveen Swami, "Road to Unimaginable Horror," *The Hindu*, July 13, 2006.  
<http://www.hindu.com/2006/07/13/stories/2006071303420800.htm>.

<sup>42</sup> In May of 2006, Mohammad Iqbal, a LeT activist from Bahawalpur (a city in southern Punjab in Pakistan), was shot dead by Delhi Police. Iqbal had worked through mafia-linked traffickers to ship a consignment of explosives through Gujarat that was used in the February 2006 attack on an Ahmedabad (Gujarat) train platform. See Praveen Swami, "Road to Unimaginable Horror," *The Hindu*, July 13, 2006.  
<http://www.hindu.com/2006/07/13/stories/2006071303420800.htm>.

<sup>43</sup> See Praveen Swami and Anupama Katakam, "Investigators Shut Down Terror Cells Tasked with Executing Strikes in Gujarat, but the Threat Remains," *Frontline* 23 (2006).  
<http://www.thehindu.com/fline/fl2310/stories/20060602006109700.htm>.

Sindh, departed Karachi on a small boat and transferred to a larger vessel, the al-Hussaini where they slept. By some accounts, the militants began training for the operation in mid-2007 with reconnaissance on targets in early 2007, which Indian authorities believed was conducted by two Indian nationals, Faheem Ansari and Sabauddin Ahmed.<sup>44</sup> On November 22 or 23, the terrorists hijacked an Indian fishing trawler and murdered its crew.<sup>45</sup> They arrived in two small inflatable boats at two different points in the southern part of Mumbai. Incredibly, the terrorists navigated the complex mega-city without Indian guides having studied the city's geography using maps and the internet. Each terrorist was heavily armed, made all the more incredible given that they came into the city via inflatable boats. Each militant carried an AK-56 assault rifle (a Chinese version of the Russian AK-47) with numerous magazines of ammunition. They also carried 9-mm pistols with two clips of ammunition as well as 8-10 grenades per attacker. In addition, the attackers had mobile phones and at least five improvised explosive devices, comprised of a military-grade explosive (RDX), ball bearings (for shrapnel), a digital timer and a 9-volt battery. Once they reached shore, the militants formed four attack teams, one with four men and three with two.<sup>46</sup>

One two-man team was comprised of the lone survivor Mohammed Ajmal Amir (aka Qasab, alias Abu Mujahid from Okara)<sup>47</sup> and his partner Ismail Khan (alias Abu Ismail from Dera Ismail Khan). (Ajmal was sentenced to death in an Indian court in early May 2010.) Amir and Khan took a taxi to the Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (CST), Mumbai's main train station. Considerable detail is now known about this attack team because Amir was arrested and in late July 2009 he made a lengthy confession about the team. According to assembled accounts, once they reached CST station, they began firing on commuters. The police at the train station were ill-equipped for such a contingency and the attackers managed to terrorize commuters for 90 minutes before better-trained and equipped police arrived, forcing them to leave the station.<sup>48</sup>

The team next fled led to the Cama and Albless Hospital where they fired on crowds and deployed their grenades. They then escaped in a police car they had ambushed, until they were

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<sup>45</sup> According to Amir, the lone-surviving militant, the assault was originally scheduled for September 27 but was postponed. The group of ten stayed in Karachi until November 23 under strict observation.

<sup>46</sup> Angel Rabasa, Robert D. Blackwill, Peter Chalk, Kim Cragin, C. Christine Fair, Brian A. Jackson, Brian Michael Jenkins, Seth G. Jones, Nathaniel Shestak, Ashley J. Tellis, "The Lessons of Mumbai," RAND Occasional Paper, 2009. The inventory of weapons of the team varies in different accounts. According to the lone survivor, "each man was carrying an AK-47, two magazines, eight grenades and a mobile phone. Some also carried explosives." See "Mumbai gunmen identified – Kasab's Pak nationality confirmed," *Indian News Online*, December 15, 2008. <http://news.indiamart.com/news-analysis/mumbai-gunmen-identi-20605.html>.

<sup>47</sup> He is most frequently referred to as Ajmal Kasab which is not technically correct. Kasab refers to his caste (which means literally butcher) not his family name. Thus the author uses his family name—not his caste name.

<sup>48</sup> Rabasa et al. "The Lessons of Mumbai."

recognized. They next hijacked another vehicle and proceeded to towards the Metro cinema hall, from there to Nariman Point, and finally to Chowpatty where Khan was shot dead and Amir was injured and captured.<sup>49</sup> This team accounted for nearly one third of the civilian casualties. Amir, in his confession, claims that they had been instructed to take hostages and escape to nearby buildings where they were supposed to contact their operational commander, Zaki-ur Rehman Lakhvi. Lakhvi was supposed to provide media contact numbers to place their demands. However, this seems to have been a ploy to garner more media attention, as the ultimate objective, according to Amir's testimony, was to blow up the target buildings.<sup>50</sup>

A second team (Nasir, alias Abu Umar from Faisalabad and Babar Imran, alias Abu Akasha from Multan) proceeded to Nariman House-- a center run by the international Jewish Lubavich movement. (This is often referred to as "Chabad House" in Indian media.) Their team threw grenades at a nearby gas station, opened fire upon the building, and entered the complex firing. They took thirteen hostages as they prepared for the siege. Five hostages were killed in addition to the terrorists following an airdropping of National Security Guard commandos.<sup>51</sup>

A third two-man team (Abdul Rehman, alias Abdul Rehman Chhota, from Multan and Fahadullah, alias Abu Fahad, from Okara) travelled from the landing site to the Trident-Oberoi Hotel where they too began killing indiscriminately. The siege at this hotel lasted for some 17 hours before the attackers were killed, by which time they had killed 30 people.<sup>52</sup>

The fourth team was the largest and was comprised of Hafeez Arshad (alias Bada Abdul Rehman from Multan) ; Javed (alias Abu Ali from Okara); Shoaib (alias Abu Soheb from Sialkot); Nazeer (alias Abu Umer from Faisalabad). The team briefly entered the Leopold Café, a popular sidewalk restaurant, where they killed ten people with automatic weapons. The team next moved to the rear entrance of the nearby Taj Hotel. They cut a lethal swathe through the ground floor of the hotel to the upper floors where they set fires and moved constantly to confuse security forces. Due in part to the delayed arrival of the National Security Guards' Commandos, the siege at the Taj ended some sixty hours later when all of the attackers were at last killed by the commandos.<sup>53</sup>

Several questions about the plot persist, with varying degrees of uncertainty. One of the key questions is whether or not the attackers intended to lay siege or slaughter. The surviving

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<sup>49</sup> "The Confession," *The Indian Express*, July 24, 2009, p. 9; "Kasab's confession - how the LeT trained Mumbai attackers," *NewKerala.com*, July 20, 2009. <http://www.newkerala.com/nkfullnews-1-77027.html>.

<sup>50</sup> See "Mumbai gunmen identified – Kasab's Pak nationality confirmed."

<sup>51</sup> Rabasa et al. "The Lessons of Mumbai;" "Mumbai gunmen identified – Kasab's Pak nationality confirmed."

<sup>52</sup> Rabasa et al. "The Lessons of Mumbai;" "Mumbai gunmen identified – Kasab's Pak nationality confirmed."

<sup>53</sup> The commandos, based in Agra, had no dedicated air assets and took nearly half a day to arrive. NSG commandos had (and indeed have) no presence throughout India. See Rabasa et al. "The Lessons of Mumbai."

attacker indicated that they were instructed to take hostages. However, there appears to have been no political objective to this course of action. Rather it appears to have been a ploy to garner as much media attention as possible while engaging in maximum death and destruction. Indeed, this was most highly televised series of terror attacks in India. This may explain why this attack has had profound effects upon the Indian citizenry and government even though it is by far not the most deadly attack in the country. Second, it is unclear whether the LeT anticipated that the siege would last as long as it did. The question remains whether inelegant Indian operations, coupled with a vibrant (and sensationalist) domestic and international media delivered an operational and media success that the LeT had not anticipated.

### *Targets*

LeT selected Mumbai as the venue for this audacious attack. Mumbai is a significant arena for LeT—and other militant groups—for a number of reasons. First, Mumbai is target rich as it is India's most populated city with an estimated 14 million inhabitants and is likely to be the world's third largest city. Second, Mumbai is India's financial hub. Third, it is also home to India's massive film industry and is known for its inhabitants' liberal and westernized lifestyle. Mumbai is backdrop for the glamorous lifestyles of India's glitterati. Mumbai is also a thoroughly international city populated by foreigners who flock to Mumbai's opulent hotels. And, Mumbai is burgeoning with media coverage as India's private media continues to proliferate.

Mumbai is also home to the Hindu nationalist organization Shiv Sena. While the Shiv Sena began as a "sons of the soil" movement to promote the interest of ethnic Marathas in the state of Maharashtra in the mid 1960s, in recent decades it has joined the Hindu nationalist movement. The name of the organization references not the Hindu god, Shiva, but rather Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj who laid the foundations of the [Maratha empire](#) in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Shivaji is revered for his opposition to Muslim rule in his area. The Shiv Sena stands accused of engaging in organized violence to achieve its political ends, sustaining alliances with criminal syndicates, and propagating an anti-Muslim agenda.<sup>54</sup>

Mumbai was also the site of anti-Muslim violence between December of 1992 and January of 1993 when as many as 900 persons were killed. These anti-Muslim riots came in the wake of the destruction of an ancient mosque in Ayodhya by Hindu zealots who contend that the mosque was built on the birthplace of Lord Ram, a Hindu deity. The twin disasters are believed to have motivated Muslim gangster Dawood Ibrahim to support Islamist terrorism. Ibrahim, with help from Pakistan's ISI and militant organizations, facilitated the 1993 attack on Mumbai's stock

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<sup>54</sup> See inter alia Julia M Eckert. *The Charisma of Direct Action: Power, Politics, and the Shiv Sena* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

exchange.

For all of the above reasons, Mumbai as a venue for terrorist attacks is endowed with multiple layers of significance. However, there are significant practical aspects that likely guided LeT's selection of Mumbai as a target. First, LeT had operated in Mumbai and environs on several occasions. The sea route had long been used to move men and materiel into the area to stage for attacks. Mumbai's police are riven with corruption and tied to the underworld. Mumbai—like the rest of India—has poor sea-based security and a largely undefended shoreline. Mumbai is home to important mafia organizations, including that of Dawood Ibrahim.

LeT's planned for several primary targets, including the Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (CST), the Cama & Albles Hospital, the Leopold Café, the Chabad Center, the Trident-Oberoi Hotel, and the Taj Mahal Palace Hotel. It appears as if the LeT attacked other places along the way as targets of opportunity.<sup>55</sup>

In some ways, these resembled those of previous LeT attacks. All were soft targets, with little or inadequate security and were explicitly civilian, with the exception of the security forces killed in the course of engagement. The luxury hotels are owned by Indian firms and represent therefore symbols of Indian wealth and prestige. They are frequented by wealthy Indian and foreign guests. The Leopold Café is a popular sidewalk restaurant frequented by tourists and young Indian customers. The train station, named after the above-noted Shivaji, is used by largely lower and middle class commuters making their way to and from their homes often far away from the city's center.

However, other targeting aspects of this attack were unprecedented. First, while LeT has been operating against U.S., NATO and Afghan forces in Kunar and Nuristan and LeT operatives went to fight allied forces in Iraq, this was the first significant LeT assault upon American and international *civilians*.<sup>56</sup> (Second, in this assault, the LeT targeted the Chabad Center, which was distinctive because it was not merely Jewish, but also associated with Israelis and international Jewish adherents. Mumbai, among other cities, hosts a historical albeit shrinking Jewish population and boasts many historical synagogues and Jewish cultural facilities. Despite the decades of Islamist violence perpetrated by a range of groups espousing an anti-Semitic agenda, no Islamist militant group had ever targeted India's Jewish community.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Rabasa et al. "The Lessons of Mumbai."

<sup>56</sup> Author fieldwork in Afghanistan between June and October 2007; Kathy Gannon, "Pakistan militants focus on Afghanistan: Jihadist groups are increasingly attacking U.S., NATO forces in Afghanistan," Associated Press, Web site, July 14, 2008.

<sup>57</sup> Yair Ettinger, "Mumbai attack sends shock waves through Chabad community worldwide," *Haaretz*, November 29, 2008. <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1041785.html>; Anshel Pfeffer, "9 dead in Mumbai Chabad house attack; Israel to help identify bodies," *Haaretz*, November 30, 2008. <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1041834.html>.

## *The Perpetrators*

As noted above, Lakhvi was the mastermind of this operation, without any shadow of a doubt.<sup>58</sup> Lakhvi's role does not eliminate the possibility that the plot was coordinated at some level with the ISI, given their historical involvement with the LeT. Particularly, as apart from the identity of the lone survivor and his attack partner, very little is known about the attackers except for their operational aliases and their Pakistani home town. In eight of nine cases, the faces of the slain attackers have been published. The body of the tenth was burnt beyond recognition.<sup>59</sup> Amir knew very little about the other militants, likely for operational security reasons. Based upon published accounts of Amir's trial proceedings and confession, Ajmal had a fourth grade education and worked for a decorator, suggesting that Ajmal is substantially less educated than LeT operatives in general. Dissatisfied with his meager earnings, a coworker named Muzaffar, suggested that they could augment their income through theft and dacoity (banditry). While visiting Rawalpindi, they approached LeT activists in Raja market (in the old city of Rawalpindi) and expressed their desire to become a "jihadi." After a brief period of vetting, they were given money, and told to board a bus to LeT's headquarters in Muridke. At Muridke, Ajmal began studying Quran and Hadith. (This is common as LeT also has a proselytization mission as most of its recruits are not Ahl-e-Hadith adherents.) He then travelled to an LeT camp in Battal where he trained in using AK-47s.<sup>60</sup>

He performed so well that he was selected for advanced training "Duara-e-Khaas" and thus remained in Battal where he was instructed to engage in mundane affairs of the camp such as cooking. In the advanced training, he continued working with AK-47s, rocket launchers, grenades, pistols, mortars. He was there for a total of three months after which he was sent home for one week. Per instructions, he returned to an LeT office where he stayed for some ten days for evaluation. He was among fifteen boys selected for the operations. After another month, they were taken to Karachi where they learned to swim, navigate a boat at sea, and how to use a fishing net. They were again taken back to Muzaffarabad. By this point, the group of fifteen was

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<sup>58</sup> On December 10, 2008, the United Nations Security Council placed financial sanctions on four members of LeT (Muhammad Saeed, whom the UN names as the group's leader; Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi, described as LeT's chief of operations; Haji Muhammad Ashraf, its finance chief; and Mahmoud Mohammad Ahmed Bahaziq, described as a financier for the group). The four face an assets freeze, a travel ban, and an arms embargo. In addition, the Security Council amended its 2005 blacklisting of LeT to include the charitable foundation JuD after Pakistan banned LeT. Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari said that he would ban JuD if given conclusive evidence of its links to the Mumbai attack. Jay Solomon, "U.N. Security Council Sanctions Lashkar Members," *The Wall Street Journal*, December 10, 2008.

<sup>59</sup> "Faces of Terror," *OutlookIndia.com*, December 9, 2008, <http://www.outlookindia.com/article.aspx?239184>.

<sup>60</sup> "The Confession," *The Indian Express*, July 24, 2009, p. 9; "Kasab's confession - how the LeT trained Mumbai attackers," *NewKerala.com*, July 20, 2009. <http://www.newkerala.com/nkfullnews-1-77027.html>; "Mumbai gunmen identified – Kasab's Pak nationality confirmed."



now seven strong, as apparently six members were sent to Kashmir and two ran away. In a revelation to Indian authorities, he also studied Hindi from an Indian national Abu Jundal at Muzaffarabad. (Hindi grammatically is the same as Urdu. However, it uses a Sanskrit-based script rather than the Perso-Arabic Script of Urdu. It also has a somewhat different vocabulary from Urdu.)<sup>61</sup>

Within a few days, three other “boys” (or “bacce” as jihadis are known in Pakistan) arrived to complete their team of ten men. Abu Hamza was one of the principle instructors. He called the boys in pairs of two into his room. Amir was already paired with Khan by this point. They were shown pictures of CST on Abu Hamza’s laptop twice, after which they returned to the forest for more military training. Upon returning to Muzaffarabad, they obtained identity cards, trousers and t-shirts (as opposed to Pakistani national dress of salwar kameez). They again went to Karachi. Abu Hamza was there and gave them strict orders not to leave the house. As the men set off for their mission, they were accompanied by Abu Jandal, Zaki-ur-Rehman (the master mind of the operation), Abu Hamza, and Abu Khafa. These four assigned the men into teams and targets--Amir’s team was assigned to CST--where they were instructed to kill, take hostages to the upper floor, and make contact with Zaki-ur-Rehman. Having completed their training, they then transferred to the al Hussaini, where their bags with weapons had been placed before they boarded to commence the operation.<sup>62</sup>

### ***Motivations and Goals***

The attack likely advanced several goals. If the LeT remains an extension of the state through the ISI, the attack appears to have served—successfully—several strategic goals. First, it exacerbated tensions between India and Pakistan and disrupted the ongoing peace process. As of July 2009, the Indian political leadership now opposes any renewed dialogue with Pakistan due to dissatisfaction with Pakistan’s meager efforts to tackle Pakistan-based terrorism. Second, the attack was likely expected to precipitate some form of calibrated militarized conflict. (Given that the more egregious December 2001 attack on the Indian parliament precipitated a near-war crisis, and that the 2006 LeT attack on the commuter rail system did not garner even a modest military response, it is doubtful that LeT expected this attack to bring about a war between the two states.) Indeed, India began mobilizing its troops along the eastern border. This provided Pakistan a convenient opportunity to move forces from the west, where it is engaging the TTP, to the east. This suggests a fourth, if ancillary, goal of providing the Pakistan army some respite from the internal enemy and refocus international and national attention upon the “conventional”

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<sup>61</sup> The Confession,” *The Indian Express*, July 24, 2009, p. 9.

<sup>62</sup> The Confession,” *The Indian Express*, July 24, 2009, p. 9; “Kasab's confession - how the LeT trained Mumbai attackers,” *NewKerala.com*, July 20, 2009. <http://www.newkerala.com/nkfullnews-1-77027.html>; “Mumbai gunmen identified – Kasab’s Pak nationality confirmed.”

Indian threat. Fifth, the attack demonstrates—to the military and intelligence organizations—that attacking India remains a state ambition of their organizations. This may have had the effect of invigorating organizations which have grown wary of the “distraction” of conducting internal security operations away from the preferred theatre of India. Sixth, the attack may have been intended to politically embarrass Pakistan’s civilian leadership. However, this seems unlikely given the planning timelines. (The civilians returned to power in February 2008.) Finally, the attack may have intended to create space between the United States and the Pakistan army, which bridles under U.S. dictates to target Pakistanis.<sup>63</sup>

While many of the soft targets shows continuity with previous LeT actions, the choice of Chabad House is a decisive departure from previous efforts and seems to have served novel strategic goals. While LeT, in its leadership’s speeches and in its varied publication since the late 1980s, has often posited and railed against the “Brahmanic-Talmudic-Crusader” alliance, it had never acted per this agenda until the Mumbai 2008 attack. Possible explanations for targeting the Chabad house include the growing Indo-Israeli military, counterterrorism and intelligence relationship which has long irritated Pakistan and the animated rhetoric of Islamist militants across the region.<sup>64</sup> Moreover, the Israeli lobby apparatus in the U.S. has nurtured India’s own emergent lobbying organizations and is rightly or wrongly associated with helping India achieve the Indo-U.S. nuclear deal.<sup>65</sup> Thus the selection of the Chabad center—rather than any of India’s domestic Jewish institutions—may have sought to undermine the Indo-Israeli important bilateral relationship. This is supported by transcripts of the phone calls between the militants and their handlers in Pakistan during which the attackers were instructed to kill their Jewish hostages to “spoil relations between India and Israel.”<sup>66</sup>

Organizationally, the attack served several goals. First, it demonstrated to cadres disillusioned with Pakistan’s “moderated jihad” strategy that both the organization and the anti-

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<sup>63</sup> See the author’s discussion of “Implications,” in Rabasa et al. “The Lessons of Mumbai,” pp. 13-19.

<sup>64</sup> Military and intelligence ties have in many ways formed the backbone of the Indo-Israeli relationship and Israel is now India’s pre-eminent arms supplier. For an early account of the emerging relationship see [P.R.Kumaraswamy](http://meria.idc.ac.il/journal/1998/issue2/jv2n2a6.html), “Strategic Partnership Between Israel and India,” *MERIA Journal* 2 \*1998). <http://meria.idc.ac.il/journal/1998/issue2/jv2n2a6.html>. See Embassy of Israel, New Delhi, “Indo-Israel Relations,” n.d. <http://delhi.mfa.gov.il/mfm/web/main/document.asp?SubjectID=2010&MissionID=93&LanguageID=0&StatusID=0&DocumentID=-1>; P R Kumaraswamy, “Indo-Israeli military ties enter next stage: A US\$2.5 billion Indo-Israeli defense project marks a new phase in the two countries' relations,” *ISN*, August 3, 2007. <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Current-Affairs/Security-Watch/Detail/?ots591=4888CAA0-B3DB-1461-98B9-E20E7B9C13D4&lng=en&id=53611>; Efraim [Inbar](#), “The Indian-Israeli Entente,” *Orbis* 48 (2004):89-104.

<sup>65</sup> This judgment is based upon numerous visits to Pakistan since the discussion of the deal emerged.

<sup>66</sup> Andrew Buncombe and Omar Waraich in Islamabad, “Mumbai siege: 'Kill all the hostages – except the two Muslims' Phone conversations between Mumbai attackers and their 'Pakistani handlers' cast chilling new light on massacre,” *The Independent*, January 8, 2009. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/mumbai-siege-kill-all-the-hostages-ndash-except-the-twomuslims-1232074.html>.

India agenda remains relevant.<sup>67</sup> The attack also reminded audiences within and without South Asia that LeT is the pre-eminent militant group in the region and therefore enhanced LeT recruitment and fundraising. Moreover, since LeT appears to have been cooperating with more proximity with al Qaeda in Afghanistan, the attack against Israeli and international targets puts LeT more squarely within the operational goals of al Qaeda, even if the organization remains formally un-aligned to al Qaeda.<sup>68</sup>

### *Analysis of the Outcomes*

Based on the aforementioned potential goals, the LeT seems to have successfully advanced many of the posited objectives. The Indo-Pakistan peace process has been suspended for the indefinite future. The brief military build provided some temporary respite to the Pakistani forces that swung east. However, it resuscitated the relevance of Pakistan's conventional conflict against the backdrop of enduring internal security operations and provided continued justification for Pakistan's conventional expense purchases rather than investments in equipment and training (as well as doctrinal reorientation) for counterinsurgency operations. The operation jettisoned LeT out of its regional moorings, due to the selection of the targets, and has firmly rooted LeT as an al Qaeda ally—even if it is not true. Whether or not embarrassing the civilian leadership and reminding them of their vulnerable (and subordinate) position vis-à-vis the army and the ISI was the purpose of the attack, it certainly had this effect. Prime Minister Geelani and President Zardari were both held responsible for a policy they could not control.

The attack, while advancing several strategic goals, has imposed several negative outcomes as well. Whereas LeT was, according to one US official, a “niche specialty” within the U.S. government, it is now a major concern.<sup>69</sup> Second, the proximity of the LeT to the ISI, along with continued revelations about ISI assistance to the Afghan Taliban, remind the United States and others that the Pakistan government continues to fight a selective war on terror, while preserving those militant groups that service the state's foreign policy goals. This has catalyzed widespread cynicism about Pakistan's role and the sense of continued U.S. military support. This has been no doubt been facilitated by the rise of the effective and well-resourced Indian lobby in Washington D.C. as well as the electoral pressure of influential Indian-American. The attack has also rendered many within India's official establishment and across India's polity that Pakistan cannot be trusted and will remain a constant threat to the state. As one prominent Indian journalist explained to the author, many of the Indians scarred by partition are growing old and

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<sup>67</sup> C. Christine Fair and Peter Chalk, “United States Law Enforcement Assistance to Pakistan,” *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 17 (2006); NoC. Christine Fair and Peter Chalk, *Fortifying Pakistan: The Role of U.S. Internal Security Assistance* (Washington D.C.: USIP, 2006).

<sup>68</sup> See the author's discussion of “Implications,” in Rabasa et al. “The Lessons of Mumbai,” pp. 13-19.

<sup>69</sup> Conversations with officials in the US Embassy in New Delhi in July 2009.

dying. However, the new generation of Indians do not recall partition. Rather, they know Pakistan only as a state dedicated to killing Indians.<sup>70</sup> While this appears to advance the goal of sustaining tensions between the two states, it undermines the goals of the political establishment in Pakistan to secure some *modus vivendi* with India to advance commercial and other ties beneficial to the populace and to over time reduce the influence of the Pakistan army. It has also given a boon to those within India's defense and political establishments who argue for a more offensive military capability to emerge with an ever-more reckless and dangerous Pakistan. This attack, coming upon the heels of dozens of others, has motivated the Indian armed forces to generate new doctrine and operational concepts that will allow India to impose costs upon Pakistan through limited military action that will not prompt a conventional military response or threaten escalation to the nuclear threshold.<sup>71</sup>

## CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Pakistan's insouciance towards the LeT/JuD and the threat the organization poses strongly suggests that while the Pakistani state may have joined the fight against al Qaeda and prosecutes a selective fight against elements of the Pakistani Taliban, the LeT/JuD remains a tool of the state. Indeed, Pakistan seems confident that it can rely upon these elements safely under its nuclear umbrella. With the United States nearly completely dependent upon Pakistan for the conduct of the war in Afghanistan for logical supplies and given the paramount interest in remaining engaged in Pakistan to obtain maximal visibility into the military and evolution of strategic systems, the U.S. government has been loath to exert punitive pressure upon Pakistan to persuade it to abandon terrorism as a tool of foreign policy. Indeed, as India continues to consolidate its national power and exert its influence in the areas surrounding Pakistan, Pakistan is likely to become more reliant—not less—upon militancy as a tool of foreign policy. India too seems to have few disincentives to render such asymmetric more costly given the nuclearization of the subcontinent.<sup>72</sup>

Since Pakistan is unlikely to determine that the LeT/JuD and like groups are no longer useful in advancing its strategic interests, and neither India nor the United States has the space or tools to compel Pakistan to do so, the only likely option is a well-crafted strategy to contain the militant threat emanating from Pakistan.

For India—the principal target thus far—this means it will have to invest much more

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<sup>70</sup> Conversations with this journalist in New Delhi in July 2009.

<sup>71</sup> Ladwig III, Walter C., "A Cold Start for Hot Wars? The Indian Army's New Limited War Doctrine," *International Security* 32 (2008).

<sup>72</sup> Ashley J. Tellis, C. Christine Fair, Jamison Jo Medby, *Limited Conflicts Under the Nuclear Umbrella—Indian and Pakistani Lessons from the Kargil Crisis* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2001); C. Christine Fair, "Time for Sober Relations: US-Pakistan Relations," *The Washington Quarterly* 32 (2009).

financial, human and political capital to tackle its deficient internal security apparatus. Such capabilities should allow Indian authorities to eliminate militants once they enter, detect cells that have been established, and even deter their entry in the first instance. The challenges to fortifying India are numerous. Its state police forces are to varying degrees rife with corruption, infiltrated by mafia and militant groups, and have been politicized to serve the interests of the political class. India lacks a federal investigative agency of any consequence and intelligence moves awkwardly—if at all—between external and internal intelligence agencies and law enforcement agencies. While defending India’s massive coastline may be a heroic effort, virtually all agree that more resources on protecting the coast is critical. Indian officials are well aware of the state’s numerous internal security deficits but few leaders seem able to muster the political will to make important changes. However, with a dedicated threat from Pakistan-based groups, India’s failure to protect its citizenry with modern internal security structures is a serious shortcoming.<sup>73</sup>

For others—including the United States—a more robust threat containment strategy needs to be conceptualized and implemented. As containing Pakistan per se is not feasible, the United States, India, the United Kingdom and other states victimized by LeT and similar groups should forge closer cooperation on intelligence and counter-terrorism initiatives. Greater contacts must be forged with immigration, treasury and other government agencies in those states used by LeT/JuD for logistical purposes. Currently, LeT moves people and funds through the Gulf, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, among other states and it has a robust fund-raising network throughout the Pakistani diáspora. This will not be an easy task; however, other more feasible options do not appear to be available.

While India struggles with fortifying its internal security and while the international community attends to erect a robust containment strategy for Pakistani-based terrorism, national and multi-lateral institutions (e.g. the U.S. Department of Treasury, the United Nations Security Council, the European Union) should work to target specific individuals within the militant organizations in question, as well as individuals within the Pakistani state found to be supporting these groups. Admittedly, the latter may be awkward. In the case of the UN Security Council (UNSC), this may mean working to forge coalitions with Pakistan’s key supporter on the UNSC:

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<sup>73</sup> After the 1999 limited war in the Kargil-Dras sector, the Kargil Review Committee Report produced a number of important recommendations to enhance India’s domestic and external security. Nearly ten years later, few if any have been implemented. For a critical discussion of this, see K. Subrahmanyam, “Report of the Kargil Review Committee: An Appraisal,” *CLAWS Journal* (Summer 2009): 18-27. Since the attack, the Indian government has announced a number of reforms aimed at addressing these various shortcomings. See Rama Lakshmi, “Indian Official Unveils Plan to Strengthen Security,” *Washington Post*, December 11, 2008. However few security analysts in India interviewed by this author in July 2009 have any optimism that these will be operationalized either. See full discussion in Rabasa et al. “The Lessons of Mumbai.”

China. More generally, the United States will have to reach out to Pakistan's friends—as well as foes—to forge a consensus on the best way to help Pakistan help itself. Indeed Washington will need to develop broad-based engagement strategy of all countries relevant to Pakistan (e.g. Iran, Saudi Arabia, UAE, China) to help forge a parallel if not convergent threat perception of Pakistan and develop policies to best address them. All of these options seem inordinately difficult given the political priorities of the United States and other critical countries. However, such engagement is necessary to increase the transaction costs of using terrorist organizations as proxies for the state. Until such an effective strategy is developed, neither the Pakistani state nor individuals within it face any serious disincentive to pursue this policy.

**Table 1. Summary of Militant Groups Operating in and From Pakistan**

<b>Group Name</b>	<b>Sectarian Background</b>	<b>Regional Activities</b>	<b>Overlapping Membership</b>
Al Qaeda (in Pakistan):	Salafist	Facilitated attacks within and without Pakistan and has planned international attacks from safe havens in Pakistan.	TTP, Afghan Taliban, other Deobandi militant groups
Afghan Taliban	Deobandi	Wages insurgency in Afghanistan, enjoys safe havens in Pakistan.	TTP and other Deobandi militant groups, Al Qaeda
Jaish-e-Mohamed (Harkat-il-Jihad-Islam (JUJI), Harkat-ul-Ansar/Harkat-ul-Mujahedeen etc.)	Deobandi	Traditionally focused upon Indian-administered Kashmir, has operated in Afghanistan and continues to do so, factions have targeted the Pakistani state.	Al Qaeda, TTP, Afghan Taliban, Deobandi sectarian militant groups as well as JUJI.
Sipha-e-Sahaba-Pakistan/ Lashkar-e-Jhangvi	Deobandi	Historically anti-Shia, has operated in Afghanistan for decades, currently targeting the Pakistani state with the TTP and allied groups.	TTP, Afghan Taliban, Al Qaeda, other Deobandi militant groups and JUJI.
Hizbul Mujahedeen and al Badr	Jamaat-e-Islami	Indian administered Kashmir.	Jamaat-e-Islami
Tehreek-e-Taliban-e-Pakistan (TTP, Pakistani Taliban)	Deobandi	Targeting the Pakistani state with some commanders mobilizing fighters in Afghanistan	Afghan Taliban, Deobandi militant groups in Pakistan and possibly al Qaeda.
Lashkar-e-Taiba	Ahl-e-Hadith	Fights in Indian administered Kashmir and the Indian hinterland, limited out	Historical links with al Qaeda. Al Qaeda members have been detained in LeT safe

		of theatre operations.	havens. Organizational ties to Al Qaeda remain controversial.
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