

What is Lashkar-e-Taiba?

A seminar presentation at NUPI on 10 December 2008; examining Lashkar-e-Taiba, a Pakistan-based extremist group, and its alleged involvement in the 26 November 2008 terrorist attack in Mumbai, India. (The manuscript has been updated to account for recent developments)

By Qandeel Siddique, Research Consultant, Norwegian Defence Research Est. (FFI)

Introduction

Lashkar-e-Taiba's spherical logo (below) boasts a black AK-47 rifle, placed against a sun, and protruding vertically from an open Quran. These images are set against a sky blue background.



Along the top curve of the logo reads a semi-circular Quranic phrase which translates to:

“And fight them on until there is no more tumult or oppression, and there prevails justice and faith in Allah.”

Below is white lettering against a red background that bears the group's original name: Markaz al-Dawa wal al-Arshad or "the Centre for Preaching and Guidance."

The Quran symbolizes the centrality of Islam to LeT's ideology. The blue represents Allah's mercy and wisdom and virtue are signified by the sun. The red colour speaks of strength and violence. The AK-47, along with the Quranic phrase, underlines the organization's belief in pursuing a violent jihad to establish a society based on Islamic principals.¹

Aliases

Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JD; alleged political front for LeT), Markaz Dawa-wal-Irshad (MDI), al-Mansoorien, Paasban-e-Ahl-e-Hadith, Paasban-e-Kashmir

Formation and Objectives

Established as a Pakistan-based Islamic fundamentalist organization and charity stemming from an opposition to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, Markaz Dawa-wal-Irshad was created in 1986 by three Pakistani university professors – namely, Hafiz Saeed, Zafaq Iqbal, and Abdul Rehman Makki – as well as a Palestinian named Sheikh Abdullah Azzam, who was purportedly linked to the Muslim Brotherhood, Maktab ul-Khidmat (Bureau of Services for Arab jihadis)² and Osama bin Laden³.

The Lashkar-e-Taiba evolved from the Markaz in 1990 in the Kunar province of Afghanistan,

¹ "Lashkar-e-Taiba," Anti-Defamation League (ADL)

² Mariam Abou Zahab, "I shall be waiting for you at the door of Paradise:" the Pakistani martyrs of the Lashkar-e-Taiba," 11 December 2006.

³ Abdullah Azzam is known to have been a mentor to Osama bin Laden.

intended as the militant offshoot of MDI. It allegedly held training centres in the Paktia and Kunar provinces of Afghanistan. According to Mariam Abou Zahab, the LeT presently operates four training centres in Pakistan-administered Kashmir (PAK) and one in the Sanghar district of Sind Province (in Pakistan).⁴

Objectives:

“Yabood [Jews] and the Hunood [Hindus] are two sides of the same coin” – Hafiz Saeed

Borne of the religiously-charged Afghan war against the "godless Soviets", the linchpin of the Lashkar ethos remains *holy cause*; the impetus to re-establish Islamic ideology in regions bereft of it, especially those perceived to be the “rightful” caretakers of Islam.

After the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, LeT shifted its attention to Kashmir. Since then the main objective of the LeT has been to wage jihad in Kashmir in order to “cleanse” the region of Indian security forces (SFs) and unite Kashmir with Pakistan. Thus, liberating Kashmir appears to be the front and foremost focus of LeT, followed by Islamizing India (starting with those Indian territories deemed principally Islamic), and then to spread jihad on a more global scale.

So, the anti-India and anti-West sentiments of the Lashkar find their practical and immediate translation in a regional conflict: fighting in Kashmir and India, fighting US and NATO forces in Afghanistan, as well as helping the Pakistani-Taliban confront the “puppets of the West” within Pakistan – that is, the Pakistani military and key political figures.

LeT made its debut in Kashmir in January 1990; attacking Indian Air Force personnel. From 1996 onwards, the organization had concentrated its activities on the border districts of Jammu which has a majority of non-Muslims. The intention, it would appear, is in accordance with the “ghazwa Hind” (see below) ethos of the group: target large numbers of the Indian “enemy.” After the Kargil war of 1999, in which the LeT participated, another area shift occurred: to attack Indian security forces in the Kashmir Valley itself.

LeT maintains that every Momin (“believer”) is obligated to defend the interests of Muslims the world over, especially areas where Muslims are perceived to be under attack from non-Muslim forces. Since LeT’s inception, its leaders have created a master-slave picture where Hindus, Jews and Christians, are seen “trying to enslave Muslims and destroy them.”

Actors and hierarchy

Hafiz Saeed was brought up in a highly religious family, and during the course of his own life he is seen to have authored a unidimensional direction by pursuing only religious interests. However he is not known to have attended religious seminaries; graduating instead from Government College in Sargodha and subsequently reading a Masters in Islamic Studies and Arabic Lexicon from the King Saud University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Later on, Hafiz Saeed would teach Islamic Studies at the Lahore University of Engineering and Technology in the capacity of a professor.

A November 2005 report by Rediff revealed that LeT cadres are organized at district levels and the leadership consisted of:

Hafiz Saeed: chief (Amir)

⁴ Since the Mumbai attacks, and under immense international pressure, Pakistan was made to clamp down on these training camps.

Zia-ur-Rahman Lakhvi, alias Chachaji: commander, Kashmir

A-B- Rahman-ur-Dakhil: deputy commander

Abdullah Shehzad, alias Abu Anas: chief operations commander, Valley

Abdul Hassan, alias MY: central division commander

Kari Saif-ul-Rahman: north division commander

Kari Saif-ul-Islam: (deputy commander)

Masood, alias Mahmood: area commander, Sopore

Haider-e-Krar, alias CI: deputy commander, Badipora

Usman bhai: (deputy commander, Lolab)

Abdul Nawaz: deputy commander, Sogam

Abu Rafi: deputy divisional commander, Baramulla

Abu Museb: deputy commander, Budgam

Yahya Mujahid: spokesman

Maulana Abdul Wahid: senior leader

Abdullah Muntazir: spokesman for international media/website editor

Hafiz Abdur-Reman Makki (Saeed's brother-in-law): head of JD's political affairs

Khalid Waleed (Saeed's son-in-law): LeT office in Lahore

Talha Saeed (Saeed's son): caretaker of LeT activity in the Muzaffarabad base camp

LeT/JD Publications

Al-Dawa, Zarb-e-Taiba (Urdu monthlies)

Ghazwa, Ghazwa Karachi, Jihad Times (Urdu weeklies)

Voice of Islam (English)

Al-Rabat (Arabic monthly)

Tayyibat (for women)

Al-Jihad (Urdu radio)

Ad-Dawa (radio online)

Roz al-Tafaal (bi-weekly for children)

Books in English are also available

Banned

LeT was banned by the Indian government in October 2001, and declared a foreign terrorist organization (FTO) by the US in December 2001. Britain had banned the group in March 2001. Pervez Musharraf (former President of Pakistan) banned LeT in January 2002.

The Department of State announced on 28 April 2008 the addition of the aliases Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JD) and Idara Khidmat-e-Khalq (IKK) to the Specially Designated Global Terrorist Designation (SDGT) of Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LET). In May 2008, the US froze the assets of four prominent Lashkar players - namely, Hafiz Saeed, Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi (chief of operations), Haji Muhammad Ashraf (chief of finance) and India-born Mahmoud Ahmed Bahaziq (main financier).⁵

In December 2008, the United Nations (UN) declared JD a front group for the LeT. In light of the 26 November 2008 terrorist act in Mumbai, and under international pressure, Jamat-ud-Dawa also came to be banned by the Government of Pakistan (GoP), and assets of nine of its leaders were frozen.⁶ And Hafiz Saeed was placed under house arrest.

Structure

After the 2002 ban of LeT by the Pakistani government, Hafiz Saeed ostensibly morphed the Markaz into a charity missionary organization called Jamat-ud-Dawa (JD). Its headquarters are based in Muridke, 30 kilometres from Lahore, in the Punjab province of Pakistan; a 200 acres sprawling complex, allegedly built with contributions from the Middle East, and in particular Saudi Arabia.⁷ The HQ houses a religious seminary (madrassa), a hospital, a market, residential area, agricultural tracts and a fish farm.

Its camps and recruitment centres are spread across PAK as well as Pakistan – namely in Lahore, Peshawar, Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Karachi, Multan, Quetta, Gujranwala, Sialkot, Gilgit, and so on. LeT also had training camps in Afghanistan until the fall of the Taliban regime in late 2001. It allegedly operates training camps in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir and Sind.⁸

According to JD's Urdu website, the group is essentially branched into five departments: taleem (education), khidm o khalq (social services), dawa (preaching), gunge behray (mute and deaf), and aurat (women).

It claims to operate up to 173 educational institutions across Pakistan, including 29 madrassas. In the 12 years following the formation of Markaz Taiba in Muridke, in 1992, branches have opened in Karachi, Patoki, Akora, Multan, Bahawalpur, Daska, Rawalpindi, Quetta, Muzzafarabad, Haiderabad, Kohat, Mianwali, Lahore, Qasor, Gujrat, Jehlum, Faisalabad, Farooqabad, and Jardawale, where 2,900 students are receiving Quranic education.

The welfare department is further diversified into a dispensary, hospital, medical camp, and ambulance services. Indeed JD's infrastructure in this field proved its mettle during the 2005 earthquake relief work where JD social workers showed great dedication and trustworthiness by delivering supplies to dangerous, faraway areas.

More recently, JD's relief work in Balochistan (after the October 2008 earthquake in the region) has been highlighted by the organization: the group promotes its activities by posting numerous pictures (on its websites, for example) of JD-marked ambulances and tents operating in the quake-hit area.⁹

JD's medical mission carries a dual function of performing a religious duty by coming to the aid of the needy, and also countering the spread and influence of NGOs who try to attenuate the faith of Muslims. In this respect, JD is not unlike the Jaish-e-Mohammad's al-Rehmat Trust

⁵ "Who are the Lashkar-e-Tayyiba," 3 December 2008, *Dawn*.

⁶ "Pakistan shuts down Jamat-ud-Dawa offices after UN ban," 12 December 2008, *The Indian News*

⁷ "Lashkar-e-Taiba," *South Asia Terrorism Portal*.

⁸ U.S. Department of State, *Patterns of Global Terrorism*, 2002, p. 113 j

⁹ Jamat-ud-Dawa Urdu website: www.jamatuddawa.org

which echoes a similar mission.

Furthermore, JD actively proselytizes its particular brand of Islam by holding conferences and reaching out to different sections of the society. JD's special efforts to attract under-represented groups in Pakistani society, like the handicapped and women, speak of the organization's commitment to appealing to the wider population, thus strengthening its support base.

Composition

The group is mainly composed of Pakistanis, as well as some Afghan war veterans. Recruits also include militants from Sudan, Bahrain, Central Asia, Turkey and Libya.¹⁰ The group's strength is expected to have augmented due to its collaboration with other terrorist outfits, local and international.

Having visited the JD facilities in Muzaffarabad (capital of Pakistan-controlled Kashmir), Steve Coll speaks of the "long bearded doctors from Karachi and Lahore" who make up the "mobile surgical unit."¹¹ This indicates that the Jamat has a vast pool from where it draws its manpower; and this could primarily be due to the fact that organization, with its wide social service wing, is not limited to behaving solely as a terrorist outfit

It is estimated that the number of LeT members runs in the hundreds in the Kashmir region, however the overall number of militants is unknown but likely to be in the thousands.

A study by Mariam Abou Zahab, where a randomized sample of circa 100 testaments and life stories of martyrs were analyzed, revealed that the sociological profile of a large portion of the LeT recruits consists of lower-middle class individuals from towns and cities in central and south Punjab, as well as their neighbouring villages. Most of them belonged to families who had migrated from India. On the whole, members appear to be more educated (having at the very least completed secondary education) as compared to other jihadi groups. This is not surprising given Hafiz Saeed's particular focus on education as complementary to the pursuit of jihad.

The group also recruits internationally, as evidenced by the Virginia indictment in 2003: FBI arrested 11 men in Virginia on charges of training with and supporting LeT.¹² Extremists from foreign countries - such as US, Canada, Australia, France, Britain, China, Maldives and Kuwait - have also reportedly received jihadi training from LeT camps. For instance, David Hicks from Australia, Jamaal James from Canada, and individuals involved in the "paintball" cell in Virginia, and Abdul Rahman from the Chinese province of Xinjiang.¹³

A Briton named Aabid Khan was purportedly one of those trained by the LeT: he was arrested in June 2006 and sentenced to twelve years in prison for "possession of articles for use in an act of terrorism and making records useful for terrorism."¹⁴ Aabid Khan had arranged to travel also to Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) training camps.¹⁵

This points to LeT's global agenda; efforts to attract international recruiters by advancing its propaganda in English and effectively using the Internet to this end.

Training and Tactics

¹⁰ "Lashkar-e-Taiba," *South Asia Terrorism Portal*.

¹¹ Steve Coll, "Lashkar-e-Taiba," 1 December 2008, *The New Yorker*

¹² "Lashkar-e-Taiba," *Global Security*

¹³ "Lashkar-e-Taiba: a global threat," SITE Intelligence Group, December 2008 Vol.1 (8)

¹⁴ "Pakistan militant group builds web of Western recruits," 8 December 2008, *Los Angeles Times*

¹⁵ *Ibid*

LeT cadres generally receive two months training in the handling of weapons. There is on offer a 21-day program, Daura-e-Aam, and a more specialized three months course, Daura-e-Khas. Baitur-Rizwan is an introductory course tailored for younger recruits.

Not all who have completed this training are “launched” into Kashmir. Until a leader feels that the recruit’s faith is “ripe enough for plucking”, he is made to perform menial functions in LeT offices or camps.

A young LeT member captured in 2002 after a terrorist act in Jammu’s Rajiv Nagar, confessed:

“I was sent for training to our main camp, Aska, near Muzaffarabad. During the first course, a 21-day programme called the Daura Aam, I was taught the basics of the use of weapons such as the Kalashnikovs and machine guns. Then, I was selected for the 10-week Daura Khaas, during which I learned the theory and principles behind the use of these weapons, as well as how to set off explosives and operate rocket launchers.”¹⁶

Violent jihad is considered to be a legitimate mode of strike so to protect the Muslim underdog. Both LeT and JeM praise jihad as the secret weapon to the historical successes of Muslims, and advocate it if Muslims want to regain their past glory. In most of his speeches and Friday sermons, Hafiz Saeed (head of LeT) extols the virtues of jihad as means of standing up against the kufr (“infidel”). Those who do not undertake jihad are cajoled into feeling guilty or hypocritical.

LeT employs the infamous *fidayeen* strategy in its attacks; this is divided into “jaan-e-fidai” (mature, gung-ho terrorists) and “ibn-e-tayamiah” (terrorists suffering from incurable diseases.) Normally, a 2-5 member fidayeen unit storms a target with the aim of unleashing as much violence as possible, and inflicting as many casualties as possible, until they attain martyrdom. These confrontations can last up to several hours. The humble hope of coming out alive is an inherent component of the Lashkar’s fidayeen operations and in that sense they cannot be labelled as suicide missions. Another strategy involves dressing up as SF personnel in order to penetrate security areas or round non-Muslims for massacre.

LeT is known to have used different firearms (especially AK rifle series), machine guns, anti-aircraft guns, anti-tank and anti-personnel mines, mortars, explosive devices, and rocket launchers, and grenades.

Journalist Steve Coll, well acquainted with the LeT infrastructure, testifies to the alleged “maritime capability” as he himself was a passenger on the Lashkar’s pontoon boat fleet. As part of its earthquake relief work, JD ferried emergency supplies to remote villages.¹⁷ It is also well-known that LeT openly practiced “amphibious operations” under the guise of “humanitarian relief operations.”¹⁸

Funding

Using its political front organizations, the LeT collects donations from Pakistani expatriates in the Persian Gulf and the United Kingdom, as well as from Arab sympathizers in the Middle East.¹⁹ The Kuwait-based Revival of Islamic Heritage Society (RIHS) allegedly provided financial

¹⁶ “I was not happy about killing children:’ interview with a Pakistani terrorist,” *Frontline Jammu and Kashmir*, September 14-27, 2002, Vol. 19 (19)

¹⁷ Steve Coll, “Lashkar-e-Taiba,” 1 December 2008, *The New Yorker*

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ “Terrorism: Questions and Answers: Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA),” The Council on Foreign Relations, [http://www.terrorismanswers.org/groups/harakat.html], accessed on July 25, 2003

and logistical aid to LeT; as of late 2007, it "sent money to LeT elements on a monthly basis."²⁰

Islamic Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Pakistani and Kashmiri businessmen also provide a bulk of financial reservoir for the group. In addition, the Pakistani external intelligence agency, Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), has long been suspected of funding and training LeT members.

The relatively pacifist outlook of the JD, reinforced by its social work, allows it to operate with ease in Pakistan. The group's bank account remain unmolested by the Pakistani state and it continues to tap various sources – locals as well as the Pakistani diasporas living abroad (especially in the United Kingdom, France and Netherlands, as well as the Middle East) – in order to raise money.²¹

Major suspected terrorist attacks inside J&K and India²²

- 22 December 2000 attack on the Cantonment section of the Red Fort in New Delhi
- January 2001 attack on Srinagar airport, Kashmir (claimed responsibility)
- April 2001 attack against Indian border security forces
- 13 December 2001 attack on India's Parliament in New Delhi
- 22 May 2002 attack on an Indian Army base in Kaluchak
- 25 August 2003 bomb blasts in Mumbai on temple and monument
- 28 July 2005 bomb explosion on the Shramjivi express train in Utter Pradesh state
- 29 October 2005 serial attacks on markets in New Delhi
- 28 December 2005 attack on the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore
- 7 March 2006 explosions at a railway station and Hindu temple in Varanasi
- 1 June 2006 abortive attempt on the HQ of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). right-wing Hindi organization, in Nagpur, Maharashtra
- 11 July 2006 serial rail bombings in Mumbai
- 16 August 2006 grenade cast into International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) temple in Manipur
- November 2006 two bombs exploded on a passenger train in West Bengal
- 18 February 2007 bomb explosion in Delhi-Attari train in Haryana
- 25 August 2007 bomb blasts in Hyderabad at park and restaurant
- November 2007 coordinated attacks in 3 cities in Utter Pradesh, and cinema in Punjab
- December 2007 attack on paramilitary facility in Utter Pradesh
- May 2008 bombing market and temple areas in Jaipur

Taliban links

A considerable overlap between the LeT and the Pakistani-Taliban has been reported in recent times. The mounting strength of the Pak-Taliban has part been attributed to the injection of well-trained militants, who had up till now remained operative in Kashmir, in the veins of the Taliban fighting in Western Pakistan and Afghanistan. According to a report by Syed Saleem

²⁰ "Kuwaiti charity designated for bankrolling al-Qaeda network," 13 June 2008, US Department of the Treasury website, <http://www.ustreas.gov/press/releases/hp1023.htm>, accessed 7 December 2008

²¹ Steve Coll, "Lashkar-e-Taiba," 1 December 2008, *The New Yorker*

²² For a more detailed list of attacks involving the Lashkar, see South Asia Terrorism Portal's "Incidents involving Lashkar-e-Taiba," http://www.satp.org/satporngtp/countries/india/states/jandk/terrorist_outfits/lashkar_e_toiba_lt.htm

Shahzad, a turning point for the jihad movement in Pakistan occurred when, in 2006-2007, Kashmiri jihadi organisations moved to North and South Waziristan – boosting the number and strength of militants in that area. The report maintains that the Kashmiri separatist groups brought with them a specific guerrilla strategy which has altered the dynamics of the Taliban:

“[it has] reorganised and regrouped the Taliban movement along the lines of a separatist guerrilla movement that has had a cascading affect in the region.”²³

The Daily Times reported on 27 November 2007 that a number of Punjabi veterans of the Kashmir jihad have shifted from their previous militant stance and are now fighting in Swat. One such jihadi interviewed by the Daily Times spoke of the fighting in Swat as a part of the grand al-Qaida strategy of “establishing small independent emirates” to be administered by them and their Islamist colleagues in Waziristan, Swat, Bajaur and in Afghanistan.”²⁴

Moreover, JD has developed an "HR policy" whereby its volunteers can take "leaves of absence" and "go West."²⁵

As recent as 5 December 2008, Hafiz Saeed in his Friday sermon dedicated to Eid-ul-Adha, praised the Pakistani Taliban leader Baitullah Mehsud and likened the purity of his faith with that of Ibrahim (who nearly sacrificed his own son for Allah). He also speaks of the "30 lakh" support of Baitullah each of whom will make a sacrifice on Eid; "Allah wants us to translate this jazbah to fight the enemy."²⁶

Previously, in a sermon dated 3 August 2007, delivered from one of the JD mosques, Hafiz Saeed speaks of the virtues of jihad against the “kufr,” in particular the US and its “agents” (Pakistan army) and enlists reasons it should be promulgated – one of which is to protect mosques. He also criticises the Pakistani military regime for being “extremists” who “want to destroy madrassas to show the international media that they’re a frontline state in fighting terrorism.” JD/LeT predominately operates in Kashmir and India but we hear Hafiz Saeed speak of jihad against the “US and its agents [Musharraf’s army]” as well.

Al-Qaida and international links

In March 2002, an al-Qaida leader, Abu Zubaydah, was captured in a LeT safe-house in Faisalabad, Pakistan. In September 2003, Indonesian and Malaysian students linked to the Jamaah Islamiyyah were arrested in Karachi from the Jamaat ul-Dirasat ul-Islamiya – a madrasa affiliated with JD. These examples echo of a possible synergy between LeT and international extremist groups.

Participation of LeT has been observed in conflicts in Bosnia, Chechnya, and the Philippines, further point to possible linkages between the group and various other radical organizations abroad.²⁷

During March-April 2004, arrests were made in Baghdad that shed light on possible links between the Lashkar and Islamist groups fighting the US forces in Iraq. Specifically, Dilshad

²³ Syed Saleem Shahzad, “The gathering strength of Taliban and tribal militants in Pakistan,” 19 November 2007, Pakistan Security Research Unit website, <http://www.newsline.com.pk/NewsAug2007/specrepaug2007.htm> accessed 3 October 2007

²⁴ Quoted in Kanchan Lakshman, “The sledgehammer in Swat”, 3 December 2007, *South Asia Intelligence Review* website, http://satp.org/satporgtp/sair/Archives/6_21.htm accessed 16 December 2007

²⁵ Steve Coll, “Lashkar-e-Taiba,” 1 December 2008, *The New Yorker*

²⁶ Hafiz Saeed’s Friday sermon, 5 December 2008, Jamaat-ud-Dawa Urdu

²⁷ Dan Rothen, “CDI Fact Sheet: Lashkar e Taiba,” *Center for Defense Information*, updated August 12, 2002

Ahmad, a commander of LeT's trans-Line of Control (LoC) operations from 1997-2001, was captured.

Oral and written messages emanating from the organization in recent times are decidedly anti US, Israel and India. LeT has been virulently opposed to the US, India and Israel; however recent rhetoric has started to include NATO and UN in this tirade.

The outfit's agenda also emphasizes the unification of all countries (with a Muslim population) surrounding Pakistan; its participation in parts of Central Asia are testimony to this aim.

Speculation can therefore be raised as to the role of LeT in the global network of militant Islamist organizations, including al-Qaida.

Having traditionally been absorbed with an anti-India jihad in Kashmir, LeT's anti-Western sentiments appear to be a relatively new development that has intensified in accordance with the rising star of Baitullah. Pakistan's domestic turmoil and the increasingly strenuous relationship between the tribal militants and Pakistani authorities and army, had helped to shift LeT's focus to the fight of the Pakistani Taliban. The Lashkar sympathizes with the plight of the tribal people, whom they view as victims of the Pakistani state. The Pakistani SF's and politicians are considered to be "puppets of the West", and so the resentment against the West is heightened. However, this does not imply that LeT has assumed a global agenda to target Western countries, instead it appears to be more involved (than in the past) to cleanse Pakistan of Western influences.

Ideology

The organization generally bases its religious philosophy on Wahhabism, the austere interpretation of Islam as practiced in Saudi Arabia. The Markaz Dawa-wal-Irshad, or Markaz, was strongly affiliated to the Ahl-e-Hadith or Salafi school of Islamic thought.

The spearheads of Ahl-e-Hadith - Maulana Nazir Hussain, Nawab Siddiq Bhopali, and Maulana Sanaullah Amritsar - had set out to purge Muslim practice of Hindu (as well as Sufi) influence, and other un-Islamic accretions. According to the Ahl-e-Hadith creed, Muslims should return to the original and literal teachings of the Quran and Hadith.²⁸

Jihad and dawa (preaching) are treated symbiotically; the two are said to work in tandem with one another, where academic training is given vital importance in the pursuit of jihad. According to the Jamaat, jihad is an "individual duty" or fard-e-ain (as opposed to fard kifaya or collective duty). Jihad is also viewed as being an end in itself; that is, realisation of goals is not as important as being aware of jihad and striving towards that end.

While claiming Islam to be a "religion of peace", Muslims are urged to take up violent jihad in order to liberate fellow Muslims who are currently suffering at the hand of the "oppressors" worldwide, and to continue with this struggle until Islam prevails as the dominant religion.²⁹

The ideological and emotional manipulation practiced by LeT, when luring young recruits to their cause, came to surface when a captured LeT activist in 2002 confessed to have been:

“... [attracted to] Lashkar-e-Toiba, because of the speeches of one of their members, Abu Masood, during school assemblies and physical training periods. He used to tell us that thousands of Muslims were being butchered in Kashmir, and that their homes were

²⁸ Yoginder Sikand, "Islamist militancy in Kashmir: the case of Lashkar-e-Taiba," 20 November 2003, Chapter 9 in *The Practice of War: Production, Reproduction and Communication of Armed Violence*

²⁹ Jamat-ud-Dawa websites

destroyed and their women were being raped. It made me very angry.”³⁰

Articles published in the various JD magazines deal with a diverse set of issues, but most emphatically discuss Afghanistan and Kashmir, as well as the "unfair" policies of US, Israel and India. It is worth mentioning that Abu Masood, mentioned in this young recruit's statement, was allegedly part of the group to have founded an Indian wing to the LeT (see below).

In his speeches, Hafiz Saeed occasionally praises the Taliban and Baitullah, using his example to demonstrate the "ideal Muslim" devoted entirely to the cause of Allah. However, unlike many other Islamist extremist groups, LeT's ideology seems to include a relatively modern educational training; Markaz Taiba, main HQ of the Jamaat, includes a science college as well as a girl's school.

Jamat-ud-Dawa, widely considered to be the political front of LeT, has been responsible for a considerable amount of charitable work across Pakistan. In addition to having a network of educational institutions spread across Pakistan, JD offers ambulance service, mobile clinics, and blood banks. Itself founded by highly educated university professors, JD appears to give emphasis to worldly education (outside of Quranic teachings) and its schools offer a broad spectrum of subjects.

Indeed its Amir, Hafiz Saeed, has pushed for compatibility between jihad and education; the two are not mutually exclusive as per the Markaz ideology. However, it is stressed that education would be rendered meaningless if not accompanied by military training: “when the Muslims gave up jihad, science and technology went into the hands of others.”³¹

The development of the al-Dawa chain of schools has been ongoing since 1994, where children receive Islamic and modern education, the aim being to “utilize modern technology to spread the message of jihad and prepare children from a young age to become mujahideen” and fully espouse the spirit of sacrifice.³²

With its magazines tailored for women, students as well as children - along with radio and online chat programs - and an English website, JD appears to be operating a vast media cell aimed at attracting a vast support base.

LeT in India

At an MDI rally in 1999, Hafiz Saeed said:

“Today, inshAllah, I announce the break-up of India... We will not rest until the whole of India is dissolved into Pakistan.” Saeed also declared a "mean enemy" and "the proper way to deal with him is the one adopted by our forefathers who crushed them by force. We need to do the same.”³³

On 6 February 2000, LeT's Abdul Rehman Makki declared that the group will campaign to liberate Hyderabad from Hindu rule. Again at a press conference on 11 August 2004, Makki stated that Pakistan will "only be complete when the Muslim-majority states of India become a

³⁰ "I was not happy about killing children: interview with a Pakistani terrorist," *Frontline Jammu and Kashmir*, September 14-27, 2002, Vol. 19 (19)

³¹ Hafiz Saeed. Interview in *Takbeer* (Karachi), 12 August 1999

³² Mariam Abou Zahab, ““I shall be waiting for you at the door of Paradise: the Pakistani martyrs of the Lashkar—e-Taiba,” 11 December 2006

³³ Quoted in Yoginder Sikand, "Islamist militancy in Kashmir: the case of Lashkar-e-Taiba," 20 November 2003, Chapter 9 in *The Practice of War: Production, Reproduction and Communication of Armed Violence*

part of it."³⁴

Hafiz Saeed himself stated in an interview that:

"Pakistan is a country for Muslims of the subcontinent. Therefore, it is incomplete without Kashmir... Pakistan is also incomplete without Hyderabad, Junagarh and Munabao ... it is our duty to free these states from Hindu subjugation and assure their Muslim population that they will become part of Pakistan. This is our agenda for Pakistan's completion. We will continue to propagate it in India through speech and writing and take these states back through jihad."³⁵

Furthermore, in their pamphlet entitled "Why are we waging jihad" LeT stresses the restoration of Islamic rule across India.

Ghazwa-e-Hind

Elements of LeT and Jaish-e-Mohammed, along with certain other groups, have been active proponents of "The Save Kashmir Movement." This is partly based on the Ghazwa-Hind philosophy which is essentially a conception that uses Quranic texts to justify a war against India.

An online "media center" has been dedicated to the topic of the "Hind jihad"; it includes books, speeches, articles, taranay and jihadi videos. "Ghazwa Hind", the book, can be found on this site, and was authored by Saifullah Khalid, linked to Harakat-ul-Mujahideen and the Jaish.³⁶ It explains texts from the Quran and Hadith that legitimize jihad against India, as well as other states.

The website also contains statements and speeches by both LeT and JeM leaders, including Maulana Masood Azhar, Hafiz Abdul Rehmad Makki, Hafiz Saeed, Commander Nasr Javed, and Hafiz Mohd. Abdullah Bahawalpuri (Saeed's maternal uncle and Ahl-e-Hadith scholar). It links to the various Jamaad-ud-Dawa websites.

LeT's Indian wing

According to SATP, LeT is the only Pakistani-based terrorist group with support base across India, and is reported to have networked with Islamist extremist organizations in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Gujrat.

It was presumably in the form of Azam Ghouri (from Andhra Pradesh), Abdul Kareem Tunda (from Uttar Pradesh) and Abu Masood (from West Bengal) that the LeT found its Indian counterpart.³⁷ Kareem traveled to Dhaka where he was received by Zaki-ur-Rahman, an LeT commander (see above); by 1996 Kareem was running a network throughout north India. Meanwhile, Ghauri allegedly traveled to Saudi Arabia and later, Lashkar-e-Taiba camp in Pakistan. He returned to India in 1998 and set up a network that enveloped local criminals and Lashkar affiliates.³⁸

The Indian wing of LeT came to be Tanzim Islahul Muslimeen or TIM ("Organization for the Improvement of Muslims.") Initially the TIM's activities were limited to reactionary riots in

³⁴ Parveen Swami, "Behind Bangalore: the origins of the long jihad," 9 January 2006, *The Hindu*

³⁵ Quoted in Bluma Zuckerbrot-Finkelstein, "India's terrorist challenges and their regional and international impact," 4 April 2008, Counterterrorism Watch, American Jewish Committee

³⁶ "Harakat-ul-Mujahideen: factsheet," 26 September 2001, *The Tribune India* Books on "Kabul and Baghdad" are also to be found.

³⁷ "Tunda nurtured terror groups in the city," 23 July 2006, *The Times of India*

³⁸ Parveen Swami, "Behind Bangalore: the origins of the long jihad," 9 January 2006, *The Hindu*

response to discrimination against Muslims in Mumbai. A most embittered recruit of the TIM was Jalees Ansari who, despite having graduated from medical school, grew involved in issues of communalism. 6 December 1992, when Hindu fanatics demolished the Babri Masjid, was a decisive time for Ansari, after which he started orchestrating a series of small bombings in Mumbai and Hyderabad.³⁹

Several Islamist extremist groups inside India have supposedly worked with LeT; for example the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI), which seeks an Islamic state in India.⁴⁰

Further research is required as to the nature and extent of links between the Lashkar and Islamist groups in India.

Mumbai attack

LeT has denied responsibility for the 26 November attacks in Mumbai, and accused India of a "propaganda war"; for wrongly accusing LeT and thus keeping India's own domestic problems neatly swept under the carpet.

Hafiz Saeed's Friday sermon dated 5 December 2008 revolved around his usual spiel aimed at inciting the jazbah ("passion") for jihad. With Eid-ul-Qurban just around the corner, Saeed concentrated his sermon on the virtues of sacrifice. He downplays the sacrifice of animals on this day by suggesting that "true sacrifice is that with Ibrahim made when willing to kill his own son for God."⁴¹ Saeed emphasized that all Muslims should aspire to this "pure passion" of Ibrahim, and that God has created such passion so that Muslims may fight the namrood ("Satan; enemy").

JD's Urdu website reported on 5 December 2008 that it's complex, Markaz Taiba in Muridke, was thoroughly searched by local and foreign investigators who were shocked to find that "no training centers or jihadis" existed. JD accuses India for reinforcing its "Bharati propaganda... and targeting Hafiz Saeed because he has successfully exposed their duplicitous designs."⁴²

However, while discounting LeT's involvement in the incident, Hafiz Saeed expressed explicit sympathy for the victimization of minority groups and people of low caste in India and implicated this discrimination (by the Indian state) as a cause behind the Mumbai attacks: "If India stops victimizing Christians, Sikh, Muslims and lower caste people, then such events will not occur."⁴³

This sentiment was again reiterated on 6 December 2008: "There are many freedom movements underway in India, that are finally lashing out against the Brahmin's crimes..." but the worst predicament is that of Indian Muslims who "don't have the right to live in India, however the international community is not bothered with the sufferings of Muslims in today's world."⁴⁴

Hafiz Saeed asserted that India "instead of making unfounded allegations, ought to get its own house in order." He further exclaimed: "where was the US when the Babri Mosque was made shaheed and Muslims were massacred in Gujrat?"

In its December issue, JD's monthly magazine for students, Zarb-e-Taiba, also wrote about the "propaganda against Pakistanis and Muslims;" the article traces previous attacks (in India) for

³⁹ Ibid

⁴⁰ Bluma Zuckerbrot-Finkelstein, "India's terrorist challenges and their regional and international impact," 4 April 2008, Counterterrorism Watch, American Jewish Committee

⁴¹ Hafiz Saeed, Friday Sermon, 5 December 2008, Jamaat-ud-Dawa

⁴² Jamaat-ud-Dawa Urdu, 5 December 2008

⁴³ Jamaat-ud-Dawa Urdu, 3 December 2008

⁴⁴ Jamaat-ud-Dawa Urdu, 6 December 2008

which the LeT was blamed and states that for certain incidences, such as the Samjhota Express bombing, it was "extremist Hindus" who were responsible.⁴⁵

Separately, the Mumbai attacks seemingly also opened a window of cooperation between the tribal militants in Pakistan and the GoP/army; facing a common enemy (India), these extremists made overtures to the GoP by calling for a union between the two parties and offering its support in case a war breaks out between the two nuclear armed countries. On 3 December 2008, for example, the JD Urdu website reported Hafiz Saeed as insisting that religious groups and GoP form a united front in order to tackle the ongoing "Bharati skulduggery."⁴⁶

JD's Al-Dawa monthly (December edition) mimicked these views with more aggression, claiming "Hindus" to be the "infidel in the East," and have been described thus in the Quran. Instead of becoming "America's sacrificial lamb," the article suggests that "Indians should use a cool head to deal with the situation... and acknowledge the growing tensions within its own borders, and the root causes... and tries to resolve them."⁴⁷

Some experts have postulated that the Lashkar might have conceived these attacks in order to pull the Pakistani army units and their attention away from the Pak-Afghan border and into the east.⁴⁸ However, a face-off between India and Pakistan is unlikely; US and NATO troops in Afghanistan rely (75%) on Pakistani supply routes, hence a shift of SFs from the western to the eastern Pakistani border would imply further disruption to these vital supply lines that are paramount to the coalition force.

As for the involvement of the ISI, Tariq Ali claims that it is "unthinkable" for "either the army or the Pakistani government ... to have been involved in this because it's just crazy, irrational and provocative. They are heavily involved in a war on the northwest frontier. They're dealing with the spillage from the Afghan war."⁴⁹

In light of the evidence raised by India – the fidayeen tactics used by the attackers, the marine capability with which the terrorist entered Mumbai, and not least of all the confession of the captured attacker (having been trained by the LeT) – suggest the Lashkar's involvement in this incident.

However, whereas some analysts like Steve Coll interpret the Mumbai attacks to expose clear signs of LeT tactics, others such as B. Raman (South Asia Analysis Group) understand it to be a unique modus operandi seen for the "first time in Mumbai." He calls it the "human cluster bomb tactic" where number of bomblets separate from a mother bomb and spread in different directions killing or maiming people in their path.⁵⁰

LeT has suffered the blame for at least four attacks in India in the past - namely, the Chattisinghpura massacre, the attack on the Indian Parliament on 13 December 2001, the Malagaon blasts and the Samjhota Express incident – where investigations were either refused or revealed that neither Lashkar-e-Taiba nor Pakistan but groups from within India were responsible.

⁴⁵ "Musalmano aur Pakistan ke khilaf sazish beniqaab," December 2008, *Zarb-e-Taiba*

⁴⁶ Jamaat-ud-Dawa Urdu, 3 December 2008

⁴⁷ Majallah al-Dawa, December 2008

⁴⁸ Hamir Mir, 7 December 2008, *Al-Jazeera English TV*

⁴⁹ Democracy Now! 1 December 2008

⁵⁰ B.Raman, "Mumbai: the human cluster bomb tactics," 5 December 2008, *South Asia Analysis Group* (SAAG)

It should also be noted that one of the terrorists responsible for the Mumbai terrorist attack at the train station was seen to be “wearing an orange-coloured wrist band very common among religious Hindus.”⁵¹

Also confusing is how the trawler managed to bypass the highly secure waters to enter Mumbai – an area heavily patrolled and where ships docking at Mumbai are thoroughly checked. Every year, both countries arrest hundreds of fishermen for illegal intrusion.

There is a need to consider the broader sociological framework within India that might cause home-grown Indian extremists to mount an attack like that witnessed in Mumbai on 26 November 2008. That is, more research is required to study the terrorist dynamics within India to assess if and how the Mumbai attack might fit into the agenda of one of those organizations.

As stated previously, exact links between Lashkar-e-Taiba and Islamist groups in India need to be studied. To what extent, and on what levels, is there cooperation between these organizations? If the Mumbai attack bears signs of LeT involvement, did LeT contract groups in India to carry out the assault. Or are there existing terrorist outfits in India who independently chose to copy the modus operandi of the Lashkar.

Closer attention also needs to be paid to LeT’s interest in the “plight” of Muslims and other groups considered to be victimized by the India state. This would give indication of LeT’s role in India, or the nature of its relationship with Islamist extremist groups inside India.

Recent Developments

The Pakistani government confirmed on 7 January 2009 that Muhammad Ajmal Kasab – the lone captured militant of the Mumbai terrorist attack – is a Pakistani and belonged to a village in Punjab.⁵² However the Pakistani High Commissioner to Britain stated in an interview with the Indian television news channel, NDTV, that Pakistani investigation into the Mumbai attacks have revealed that “Pakistani territory was not used” in the terrorist act.⁵³

On 10 January 2009 the government announced that the house arrest of Hafiz Saeed was extended to another sixty days.⁵⁴ And on January 15 five JD training camps were shut down, along with a banning of their websites and seven publications, including Mujalatur Dawa, Zarb-e-Taiba, Voice of Islam, Nanhay Mujahid, Ghazwa and Al Rabita. In addition, 20 offices, 87 schools, two libraries and seven religious seminaries linked to JD were closed down, and 124 members detained (including top level leaders such as Hafiz Saeed, Zaki-ur-Rehman, Mufti Abdur Rehman, Colonel retired Nazir Ahmed and Ameer Hamza).⁵⁵

The January 25 takeover of the JD headquarters in Muridke unleashed protests from hundreds of demonstrators who chanted “Death to America” and “Death to Israel and Jews,” as well as slogans against the GoP, and called for removal of the ban on the JD. The provincial government of Punjab had appointed an administrator to oversee the Muridke schools and medical facilities, while renaming the premises “Punjab Welfare Institute.”⁵⁶

The Pakistani Minister of State for Interior, Tasnim Ahmed Qureshi, stated on 3 February 2009 that a preliminary investigation report (by the Federal Investigation Agency, FIA) on the

⁵¹ “Signs of an attempted coup in New Delhi,” 30 November 2008, *Pakistan Daily*

⁵² “Ajmal Kasab is Pakistani: FO,” 8 January 2009, *The Daily Times*

⁵³ “India’s dossier could be fabricated: top Pak envoy,” 30 January 2009, *NDTV.com*

⁵⁴ “Hafiz Saeed’s house arrest extended,” 11 January 2009, *A Pakistani News* website, <http://www.apakistannews.com/hafiz-saeeds-house-arrest-extended-99912> accessed 11 January 2009

⁵⁵ “Pakistan: 124 held in crackdown over Mumbai terrorist attacks,” 16 January 2009, *ADNKronos International*

⁵⁶ “Government takes over Dawa offices in Muridke,” 26 January 2009, *Dawn*

Mumbai attacks had now been submitted and “will be made public at a suitable time, possibly within a week.”⁵⁷

The November 2008 terrorist attack in Mumbai remains a bitter bone of contention between India and Pakistan and has unsurprisingly strained relationship between the two, resulting in yet another curb to peace talks. The findings of the FIA, and the course of collaboration taken by Pakistan and India in light of these findings, will invariably effect future relations between the two countries.

⁵⁷ “Minister hints Mumbai plot not hatched in Pakistan,” 3 February 2009, *Dawn*