



Pakistan - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 8 March 2010

Information on Lashkar-e-Taiba, particularly their recruitment techniques and their treatment of those who refuse to join.

A profile of the Lashgar-e-taiba organization from the *Council on Foreign Relations* states:

“The Indian government has often accused the group Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) of terrorist attacks, including the November 2008 deadly assault in Mumbai that killed nearly two hundred people and injured more than three hundred. LeT is among several banned Pakistani militant groups that experts say received backing from Pakistan's intelligence agency, the ISI, to fight in Indian-administered Kashmir. Analysts say the group continues to operate freely inside Pakistan under a different name and has now become a global terrorist organization” (Council on Foreign Relations (14 January 2010) *Profile: Lashkar-e-Taiba (Army of the Pure) (a.k.a. Lashkar e-Tayyiba, Lashkar e-Toiba; Lashkar-i-Taiba)*)

An article on Lashkar-e-Taiba from *Newsweek* states:

“Taking on LeT may be even tougher than countering Al Qaeda. If Pakistan is reluctant to go after (or allow the U.S. to go after) Al Qaeda in the border regions, it is less eager to go after LeT's base in the Pakistani heartland. Unlike Al Qaeda, LeT has a large charity arm that is popular in both Punjab and Kashmir, where it runs schools, an ambulance service, mobile clinics, and blood banks. It earned tremendous good will in Kashmir for providing humanitarian assistance after a devastating earthquake in 2005. Moving against it could provoke serious civil unrest—or even civil war. LeT and the Pakistani Army draw many recruits from the same poor Punjabi areas, often from the same families. LeT's humanitarian wing worked alongside the Pakistani military to help civilians displaced during the Army's campaign to retake the Swat Valley from the Taliban. Zarate describes Is-lama-bad as being in "a delicate dance with a Frank-enstein of their own making" when it comes to LeT. He says that many Islamabad officials realize that the group has become a liability, but want to avoid provoking LeT into turning on the state.” (Newsweek (26 February 2010) *The Next Al Qaeda? Terror group Lashkar-e-Taiba is now focusing on foreigners and the West*)

An entry regarding from the *South Asia Terrorism Portal* states:

While the primary area of operations of the Lashkar-e-Toiba is Jammu and Kashmir, the outfit has carried out attacks in other parts of India, including in New Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Varanasi, Kolkata, Gujarat, etc. It reportedly has cells in many cities/towns outside Jammu and Kashmir.

The LeT has been able to network with several Islamist extremist organizations across India, especially in J&K, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Gujarat. LeT is actively engaged in subversive activities in the States of Maharashtra, West Bengal, Bihar, Hyderabad, Delhi, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh at the instance of ISI to expand the frontier of violence outside J&K by subverting fringe elements. Of all the Pakistan-based terrorist groups, the LeT is the only group with support bases across India.

The Lashkar-e-Toiba has training camps spread across Pakistan and Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK). Its camps, recruitment centres/offices are spread across the length and breadth of Pakistan and PoK in Muzaffarabad, Lahore, Peshawar, Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Karachi, Multan, Quetta, Gujranwala, Sialkot, Gilgit (in the Northern Area of PoK), etc. LeT reportedly has 2,200 offices across Pakistan.) (South Asia Terrorism Portal (undated) *Lashkar-e-Toiba 'Army of the Pure'*)

A 2008 article from *The Guardian* notes:

“For the moment little is known about the three men named yesterday or their accomplices. But their place of origin comes as no surprise to experts. Both Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed draw the majority of their recruits from the southern Punjab. Last week The Observer travelled to the twin towns of Multan and Bahawalpur, the centres of the region, to investigate the reality of the groups' power on the ground, their relations with the Pakistani intelligence services and the factors which drive young men, possibly including the Mumbai gunmen, to join them.” (The Guardian (30 November 2008) *India, Pakistan: "Mumbai: Behind the attacks lies a story of youth twisted by hate"*)

A report from the *BBC News* states:

“Militant groups banned in Pakistan are expanding operations and recruitment in Pakistani-run Kashmir, according to a government report seen by the BBC.

The observations are from a detailed secret report submitted to the region's government on the groups' activities in the city of Muzaffarabad and elsewhere.

Pakistan banned the groups in 2002 after an attack on India's parliament brought the two states close to war.” (BBC News (29 June 2009) *Pakistan: "Banned Pakistani groups 'expand"*)

The same report adds:

“A copy of the report, which was submitted by regional police to Pakistan-administered Kashmir's cabinet on 25 March, was obtained by the BBC in Islamabad.

It finds that three banned groups - Harkatul Mujahideen, Jaish-e-Mohammad and Lashkar-e-Taiba - are active in Muzaffarabad.” (ibid)

An article from the *New York Times* reports:

“The membership of Lashkar-e-Taiba extends to about 150,000 people, according to a midlevel officer in Pakistan’s premier spy agency, the Directorate for Inter-Services Intelligence. Together with another jihadi group, Jaish-e-Muhammad, the Lashkar loyalists could put Pakistan “up in flames,” the officer admitted.

Despite that risk, the jihadis “were good people” and could be controlled, the officer said, speaking on the condition of anonymity in keeping with the agency’s custom.

Obama administration officials say they continue to press the Pakistanis to guarantee prevention of a sequel to November’s Mumbai attacks, in which more than 160 people were killed in a rampage across two five-star hotels, a Jewish center and a busy train station.

A surprise confession last week of the sole surviving attacker made clear that Lashkar-e-Taiba has the capacity to quickly and inexpensively train young men from villages into intensely driven, proficient killers, a senior Obama administration official said.

The attacker, Ajmal Kasab, 21, has described receiving training in camps in Muzaffarabad, the capital of Pakistani-held Kashmir, and in Manshera, a northwest town.

His account has been largely discounted in Pakistan as being forced by Indian investigators, but many details conform to descriptions of Lashkar operations offered by two former members. The members, who said they had friendly relations with Lashkar-e-Taiba, said that at least one Lashkar training camp was still operating in the hills around Muzaffarabad.” (New York Times (27 July 2009) *Terror Ties Run Deep in Pakistan, Mumbai Case Shows*)

Freedom House in its annual report on Pakistan states:

“Tension between Islamist, pro-Pakistan groups and the pro-independence Kashmiri groups—as well as some local residents—has reportedly intensified in recent years. In June 2007, a land dispute broke out between villagers in Azad Kashmir and the Islamist organization Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JUD), an alternative name for the regrouped Lashkar-e-Taiba that was identified by the United States as a terrorist organization. Following the alleged torture of two men and the killing of a 17-year-old boy by JUD members, a mob burned down a temporary hospital the group had established after the 2005 earthquake. Sporadic instances of terrorist attacks and sectarian violence continued in 2008.” (Freedom House (16 July 2009) *Pakistan: “Freedom in the World 2009”*)

A 2009 report from *The Guardian* newspaper states:

“A banned jihadi charity accused of links to November’s Mumbai attacks has resurfaced in north-western Pakistan, where it is running an extensive aid programme for people fleeing fighting in Swat.

The Falah-i-Insaniat Foundation (FIF) offers food, medical care and transport to villagers fleeing into Mardan district, where authorities are struggling to cope with an influx of more than 500,000 people.

But the charity, according to experts, officials and some of its own members, is the renamed relief wing of Jamaat-ud-Dawa, a group the Pakistani government banned last December after the UN declared it a terrorist organisation.

Jamaat-ud-Dawa is considered to be the public face of Lashkar-e-Taiba, the militant group accused of orchestrating the Mumbai attack on hotels and cafes that killed at least 173 people." (The Guardian (13 May 2009) *Pakistan: "Banned jihadi group running aid for Swat refugees"*)

A 2008 profile of the group from the *BBC News* states:

"Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (Soldiers of the Pure) is one of the most feared groups fighting against Indian control in Kashmir.

Pakistan's then president, Pervez Musharraf, banned Lashkar-e-Taiba, along with four other Islamic groups, in January 2002 amid pressure that followed the 11 September, 2001 attacks in the US.

Until then Lashkar, with its reputation for being purely focused on fighting India in Kashmir, was able to operate openly inside Pakistan, raising funds and recruiting members.

Almost every shop in the main bazaar of every Pakistani town, large or small, had a Lashkar collection box to raise funds for the struggle in Kashmir." (BBC News (4 December 2008) *Profile: Lashkar-e-Taiba*)

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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