National Security Studies Program Policy Paper

Lashkar-e-Taiba

Past Operations and Future Prospects

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Introduction

Lashkar-e-Taiba (the Army of the Pure or LeT) is one of Pakistan's oldest and most powerful jihadi groups. Yet despite its long and bloody history, LeT only began generating significant attention outside South Asia after launching a multi-target attack on the Indian city of Mumbai in November 2008. The 10-man assault team, which LeT dispatched, killed 166 people in the course of striking two world-class hotels, a café popular with foreign tourists, one of the busiest railway stations in the country, and a community center run by the Jewish Chabad organization.[1] Although LeT began contributing to al-Qaeda's global jihad against the United States and its allies after 9/11, the group was (and remains) strongly influenced by regional dynamics, and India has been its primary enemy since the early to mid-1990s.

The boldness of the Mumbai attacks and target selection suggested LeT continued to prioritize jihad against India, but was moving deeper into al-Qaeda's orbit. Approximately one year after Mumbai, U.S. President Barack Obama wrote a letter to his Pakistani counterpart, President Asif Ali Zardari, in which he specifically mentioned LeT as one of the militant groups against which the government should act.[2] A chorus of U.S. diplomats, security officials and military officers reiterated this call for action, pressuring Pakistan publicly as well as privately to move against LeT. Yet LeT's position remains relatively secure. There are two main reasons. First, the country is facing a serious insurgency and the group remains one of the few militant outfits that officially refrain from launching attacks in Pakistan. The security establishment has determined that to avoid additional instability it must not take any action that could lead LeT to change this position. Second, the Pakistani army and its powerful Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI) have long considered LeT to be the country's most reliable proxy against India and the group still provides utility in this regard as well as the potential for leverage at the negotiating table. Thus, the consensus is that, at least in the short-term, taking steps to dismantle the group would chiefly benefit India, while Pakistan would be left to deal with the costs.

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This paper seeks to explain how LeT became so powerful, as well as to address the evolving nature of the threat that LeT poses and, more broadly, to provide a general overview of the group. It argues that to understand LeT, one must recognize the two dualities that define it. The first is that it is a missionary and a militant organization that for most of its history has placed an equivalent emphasis on reshaping society at home (through preaching and social welfare) and on waging violent jihad abroad. The second is that its military activities are informed both by its pan-Islamist rationale for jihad and its role as a proxy for the Pakistani state. LeT was able to grow into a powerful and protected organization in Pakistan as a result of its ability to reconcile these dualities. Jihad against India to liberate Muslim land under perceived Hindu occupation aligned with LeT's ideological priorities and also with state interests. This enabled the group to become Pakistan's most reliable proxy, which brought with it substantial benefits including the support needed to construct a robust social welfare apparatus used for missionary and reformist purposes. However, this approach also necessitated trade-offs and compromises after 9/11, since preserving its position vis-à-vis the state sometimes forced the group to sublimate its pan-Islamist impulses. As the decade wore on, internal tensions over the type of jihad LeT should be waging increased. India remains its primary enemy, but the group expanded its involvement in the global jihad in recent years. The Mumbai attack marked an acceleration of this trend and was intended to generate momentum for LeT, which by the time of the attacks was in danger of being eclipsed by other outfits deemed more committed to confronting America and its allies. The group's integration with these other outfits has deepened in the past two years and the scope of its jihad has expanded, but internal tensions remain. As a result, the threat comes both from the organization and from factions within it.

The first part of this paper discusses LeT's ideology and strategic approach. In the course of doing so, it also briefly surveys the group's evolving relations with the state and with other Pakistani jihadi outfits. Part two details LeT's non-violent activism in Pakistan, recounting the growth of its social welfare activities and propaganda operations, the use of training for missionary activism, and the benefits that accrued from maintaining a legal, above-ground wing during this decade. The third part of this paper focuses on the group's military activities outside Pakistan and explores how the group expanded its operations in Kashmir while building transnational networks that today threaten India and the West, its increased focus on terrorist attacks against India during this decade, the group's growing involvement in al-Qaeda's global jihad after 9/11, and the calculus behind the Mumbai attacks. The fourth entails a discussion of LeT's post-Mumbai activities, which signal an expansion of the group's jihad in terms of both an increased focus on the United States and its allies and a concomitant widening of its geographic footprint. However, there are indications the group has not expanded enough to suit some of its more extreme members. As a result the threat to America and its allies (in some cases including Pakistan) comes from LeT proper as well as from factions within it and elements connected to it that are able to leverage the organization's capabilities for attacks the leadership might not approve. The paper concludes with a brief look ahead toward what the future might hold for LeT.

Part 1: Ideology and Approach

In 1984, Zaki-ur Rehman Lakhvi, currently on trial in Pakistan for his role in the 2008 Mumbai attacks, formed a small group of Ahl-e-Hadith Muslims from Pakistan to wage jihad against Soviets forces in Afghanistan.[3] The Ahl-e-Hadith are Salafist in orientation, meaning they believe Muslims must return to a pure form of Islam and advocate emulating the Prophet Muhammad and his companions in all areas of life.[4]A year later, Hafiz Mohammed Saeed and Zafar Iqbal, two teachers at the University of Engineering and Technology (Lahore) Pakistan, formed the Jamaat-ul-Dawa (Organization for Preaching, or JuD). This was a small missionary group primarily dedicated to preaching the tenets of Ahl-e-Hadith Islam. In 1986, Lakhvi merged his outfit with JuD to form LeT's parent organization, the

Markaz al-Dawa-wal-Irshad(Center for Preaching and Guidance, or MDI).[5] The group had 17 original founders, Abdullah Azzam being the most famous of them. Azzam was Osama bin Laden's first mentor and the man most responsible for the influx of foreign fighters into Afghanistan during the 1980s. He headed the Maktab al-Khidmat (Services Bureau), the primary conduit for foreign volunteers and typically considered a precursor to al-Qaeda.

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MDI had three functions: "Jihad in the way of Allah, preaching the true religion, and the training of [a] new generation on Islamic lines."[6] LeT was launched as its military wing around 1990, after which the former was technically responsible for dawa and the latter for jihad.[7] However, as a former member explained, "If you know their philosophy, then you cannot differentiate between MDI and Lashkar."[8] Hafiz Saeed, the emir of MDI and LeT, encapsulated this philosophy when he said: "Islam propounds both dawa and jihad. Both are equally important and inseparable. Since our life revolves around Islam, therefore both dawa and jihad are essential; we cannot prefer one over the other."[9] The group outlined eight reasons for waging violent jihad, and asserts all Muslims are required to wage or support violent jihad until these objectives are met: eliminating Muslim persecution; achieving the dominance of Islam as a way of life throughout the entire world; forcing disbelievers to pay jizya (a tax on non-Muslims); fighting those who oppress the weak and feeble; exacting revenge for the killing of any Muslim; punishing enemies for violating their oaths or treaties; defending Muslim states anywhere in the world; and recapturing occupied Muslim territory. Further, LeT considers any state that has ever experienced Muslim rule to be Islamic territory.[10] In short, it embraces a pan-Islamist rationale for military action. Although the group views the ruling powers in Pakistan as hypocrites, the group does not support revolutionary jihad at home because the struggle in Pakistan "is not a struggle between Islam and disbelief."[11] According to the LeT tract *Why We Do Jihad*, "if we declare war against those who have professed Faith, we cannot do war with those who haven't."[12] Instead, the group seeks gradual reform through dawa. The aim is to bring the people of Pakistan to LeT's interpretation of Ahl-e-Hadith Islam and, by doing so, to transform the society in which they live.[13]

In keeping with the group's pan-Islamist ideology, some of its militants joined the jihadi caravan after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989 and fought on multiple open fronts during the 1990s, including in Tajikistan and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Most importantly, however, LeT militants began fighting in Indian-administered Kashmir as early as 1990. LeT leaders viewed Kashmir as the most legitimate open front and the group joined the Kashmir jihad before it became Pakistan's most favored proxy. Its leaders argued Indian-administered Kashmir was the closest occupied land, and observed that the ratio of occupying forces to the population there was one of the highest in the world, meaning this was among the most substantial occupations of Muslim land. Thus, LeT cadres could volunteer to fight on other fronts but were obligated to fight in Indian-administered Kashmir.[14] However, it would be a mistake to suggest the group's leaders viewed this simply as a territorial struggle. Rather, they claimed (with no regard for the historical record) that the Kashmir conflict was the latest chapter in a Hindu-Muslim struggle that has existed ever since the time of the Prophet Muhammad. Once Kashmir was liberated, they argued, it would serve as a base of operations to conquer India and restore Muslim rule to the Indian subcontinent.

The former princely state of Jammu and Kashmir (hereafter Kashmir) has been contested territory since the partition of British India in 1947, when the newly formed countries of

India and Pakistan fought the first of three wars over it.[15] Fighting ended on January 1, 1949 when a ceasefire was signed, by which time Pakistan controlled roughly one third of Kashmir and India the other two thirds. A ceasefire line, which separated their respective territories, was transformed into the Line of Control (commonly known as the LoC) in 1972. Small pieces of land have changed hands since 1949, but the division at the time remains roughly the case today.[16] Pakistan controls Azad (free) Kashmir, or Pakistan-administered Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan, previously called the Northern Areas. Indian-administered Kashmir includes Jammu, Ladakh and the Kashmir Valley. Pakistan periodically attempted to sow the seeds of rebellion in Indian-administered Kashmir through covert activities in the years after 1949, culminating in a second war in 1965. Companies of irregulars, into which soldiers from paramilitary units were integrated, infiltrated across the LoC in the belief that local forces would rise up and rebel against Indian rule. A conventional invasion was intended to follow, ostensibly in response to the uprising. Little local help was forthcoming, but the army invaded anyway.[17] India and Pakistan fought a third war in 1999 when Pakistani troops executed a daring incursion into the Kargil district high up in the Himalayas.[18] As after 1965, no territory had changed hands by the time the Kargil Conflict was brought to a diplomatic resolution several months later. By this time (1999) Indian-administered Kashmir had been in the throws of a Pakistan-supported insurgency for a decade.

Years of misrule by New Delhi triggered an indigenous uprising in 1989, though according to some reports the ISI had been working to lay the foundation for a Pakistan-supported insurgency since as early as 1983.[19] Nevertheless, this was initially a homegrown insurgency and one that was sparked by local grievances. The indigenous Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), which favored independence from India and not accession to Pakistan, initially led the fight. Indeed, Islamabad was caught flat-footed when the conflict erupted. The Pakistan army and ISI quickly moved to reshape the insurgency in order to shift the ultimate goal toward accession as well as to use the conflict as a means to 'bleed India.' By the early 1990s, the ISI had sidelined the JKLF in favor of outfits favoring accession. The Pakistan army, through the ISI, sponsored numerous militant groups in Indian-administered Kashmir during the 1990s with estimates ranging as high as 180 different outfits, though most were minor players.[20] Some of these were indigenous to Indian-administered Kashmir, others were Pakistani groups like LeT comprised of what locals called 'guest mujahideen' to denote their foreign status.

Pakistan began providing support to LeT in the early 1990s and was escalating it significantly by roughly 1995. Several factors contributed to this. First, its militants shared similar ethno-linguistic traits with the population in the districts of Rajouri and Poonch in Indian-administered Kashmir. The conflict had been primarily confined to the Kashmir Valley, located between the Himalayas and the Pir Panjal range, until the middle of the decade. As the insurgency there began to stagnate, the ISI sought to expand the conflict to Rajouri and Poonch, which are located in Jammu. One purpose of expanding to those areas was to increase the targeting of Hindu civilians living there, both as a means of regenerating the conflict and to increase the Muslim majority in the region.[21] The Muslims in Rajouri and Poonch are not ethno-linguistically identical to the Valley's population and this made operating there more difficult for the Valley Kashmiris who provided much of the manpower for the insurgency. Further, militants indigenous to those areas were, on the whole, less enthusiastic about civilian massacres than their Pakistani counterparts. Because the populations in Rajouri and Poonch had ties to Pakistan-administered Kashmir and parts of Punjab province in Pakistan, which were LeT's prime recruiting grounds, the group was well positioned among Pakistani jihadi outfits to operate there. Nor was LeT reluctant to engage in the slaughter of innocent civilians, particularly Hindus. In short, it was operationally well suited to the task at hand.

Second, the ISI believed LeT would be more obedient than other Pakistani proxies. Its composition matched that of the army, as the two recruited from similar areas in Pakistan, which it was assumed would make the group easier to control. So too would the fact that it was an Ahl-e-Hadith outfit. As mentioned earlier, the Ahl-e-Hadith have a Salafist orientation and recognize only the Qur'an and the Hadith as legal sources in Islam, favoring a literal interpretation of those texts. Although the Ahl-e-Hadith movement in Pakistan has grown in recent decades, its followers constitute a very small minority, and its infrastructure pales in comparison to that of those who follow the Deobandi school of thought to which most of Pakistan's jihadi groups adhere. These Deobandi outfits were tied to the Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam (JUI), a political party that became part of the ruling coalition after aligning itself with the victorious Pakistan People's Party (PPP) in the 1993 elections. In addition to its vigorous political involvement, JUI also controlled a vast number of mosques and madrassas from which the various Deobandi groups were able to recruit. Not only did the Ahl-e-Hadith have a much smaller infrastructure and power base, LeT was alienated from the mainstream Ahl-e-Hadith movement because of its conception of jihad as a military obligation for all Muslims. This made it difficult for the group to recruit from most Ahl-e-Hadith mosques or madrassas and limited its fund-raising abilities as well. With no natural allies or major funding flows of its own, the ISI presumed LeT would be a more pliable proxy than other outfits. This proved an accurate assessment.

Although a nucleus of militants already existed, the army and ISI essentially built LeT's military apparatus from the mid-1990s onward specifically for use against India. The training primer used by the group at the time read as if it had been co-authored by the army. It called for a drawn-out war with India to deplete the country's manpower, exhaust its security forces and diminish their morale, and exploit weaknesses in the government's supply chain.[22] Army and ISI personnel were present at LeT's training camps, where they helped to develop the training regimen designed to realize these objectives and to train the trainers.[23] According to one former member, coordination was so close that representatives from the army, ISI and LeT would sit at the table together to plan attacks and strategy.[24]

Financial and organizational support from the state also enabled the group to build an infrastructure in Pakistan to pursue its missionary objectives via non-violent activism. LeT devoted significant resources to building additional mosques and madrassas, as well as providing social welfare and educational services. Its growing reputation as a jihadi force fighting to liberate Indian-administered Kashmir enhanced its standing among sections of the Pakistani populace, heightening its ability to raise money for missionary outreach and to recruit members from other sects, who were promptly converted upon joining. In other words, its military and missionary activities reinforced one another.

Pakistan's practice of supporting militant proxies stretches back to the earliest days of the country's history and increased significantly during the 1990s.

Pakistan's practice of supporting militant proxies stretches back to the earliest days of the country's history and increased significantly during the 1990s. The state supported jihadi outfits for nationalist, rather than Islamist purposes, but so long as this support remained extant, official policy aligned with jihadi objectives. When the government of President Pervez Musharraf allied with America against al-Qaeda and the Taliban after 9/11, it fractured this alignment. Though Musharraf received no guarantees from the United States, his decision to ally with America was predicated in large part on the supposition that by doing so he could insulate some of Pakistan's proxies from the war against al-Qaeda. The Musharraf regime subsequently divided militant outfits into "good

jihadis" and "bad jihadis" based on their perceived controllability and utility against India. This was not a purely binomial division, and treatment existed on a spectrum. Categorization was based on the threats that a group posed to the state and the utility it continued to offer. LeT was the most reliable in Islamabad's eyes and fared the best. Unlike the Deobandi outfits, it had no strong allegiance to the Taliban and therefore was viewed as less of a threat to the state. In addition, it had a robust social welfare infrastructure (described in the following section), which provided the state with leverage. Finally, LeT was the most India-centric of Pakistan's proxies, meaning its priorities aligned most closely with those of the Musharraf regime. All these reasons help to explain why the group reacted with more restraint than the Deobandi outfits after 9/11 and, hence, why it was treated better.

Pakistan's policy of playing a double game has proved to be an unsustainable model.

Pakistan's policy of playing a double game has proved to be an unsustainable model. By the end of the decade it was facing a jihadi-led insurgency, making it both a supporter and victim of jihadi violence. LeT's leaders also tried to have it both ways after 9/11. They continued to view liberating Kashmir as the most legitimate jihad and placed a premium on protecting the group's infrastructure in Pakistan. As a result, LeT remained focused primarily on the fight against India and on expanding the group's social welfare infrastructure in Pakistan. However, the global jihad was impossible to ignore, and LeT also began contributing to the fight against America and its allies. Tensions emerged after 9/11 over the leadership's adherence to the Musharraf regime's agenda, and a coterie of commanders left in 2003 when the group reaffirmed its willingness to accept state oversight in exchange for the right to continue operating relatively openly. The dynamics of this agreement are explored in the following section. Important here is that these tensions were exacerbated during the middle of the decade when state support for the Kashmir jihad slowed as a result of a burgeoning India-Pakistan peace process, as well as international pressure on the Musharraf regime following the July 7, 2005 attacks in London, in which four suicide bombers (two of whom had trained in Pakistan) blew themselves up on three underground trains and a bus.

The Taliban-led insurgency against America and its allies in Afghanistan was gaining strength in 2005-2006, precisely the same time that LeT's ability to wage jihad in Kashmir was being seriously constrained. The group began facilitating access to the Afghan battlefield for its members, some of whom were already heading there unilaterally. Fighting in Afghanistan necessitated an increased presence in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas and greater integration with the militants based there, many of whom were fighting not only in Afghanistan but also against Pakistan. As the insurgencies in Afghanistan and Pakistan accelerated, LeT's leaders came under increasing pressure to expand their participation on both fronts, according to current and former members.[25] The group maintained its policy of abjuring attacks in Pakistan, making it one of the few jihadi outfits to do so. Then in November 2008 it launched the Mumbai attacks. This signaled an expansion of its jihad, which has since appeared to continue broadening. Before turning to the evolution of LeT's militant activities, this paper first recounts the development of the group's domestic infrastructure in Pakistan.

Part 2: Above-Ground Operations

Markaz al-Dawa-wal-Irshad was a hierarchical commander-cadre organization, with LeT as its military wing. A shura council comprising different department heads and others in leadership positions was established to oversee all operations. This Pakistan-based policy-making body made all major decisions about the group's missionary and military activities. Hafiz Saeed was the emir of MDI as well as LeT, and installed some of his relatives in top positions

to ensure an added layer of control. The group began seriously building its domestic infrastructure around 1994, a time when state support was increasing. By the turn of the century, it operated more than 70 district offices and a plethora of smaller ones. Its departments included the Department of Dawa, the Department of Education, the Department of Construction of Mosques and Madrassas, the Department of Finance, the Department of External Affairs, the Department of Media and Propagation, the Dar-ul-Andalus Department of Publishing, the Department of Social Welfare, the Doctor's Wing, the Teachers' Wing, the Students' Wing, the Women's Wing, and the Farmers' and Workers' Wing.[26] All of these technically came under the MDI umbrella. The group's formal headquarters was and remains a complex called Jamiat al-Qadsia in Lahore. But since the early 1990s, its nerve center has been located on a sprawling compound in nearby Muridke, which houses a mosque, a madrassa, the Dawa Model School and Science College, and the al-Aziz Hospital, as well as dormitories for students and teachers.

The al-Dawa Medical Mission was formed to provide health care to the sick as well as those wounded in the Kashmir jihad. By 2001 it offered a host of services, all free of charge, including 10 dispensaries in Muzaffarabad (the capital of Pakistani-administered Kashmir), Lahore, and in Sindh Province, all of which offered check-ups and medication. MDI also established medical camps in remote areas that lacked dispensaries or hospitals, and built a hospital in Muzaffarabad.[27] In one example of the way in which LeT blended its social welfare offerings with its jihadi activities, the group proselytized among doctors in the hopes of convincing them to volunteer their time at Medical Mission facilities and as medics for the mujahideen in the Kashmir theater. It also selected students from its schools who distinguished themselves in the sciences and trained them as paramedics, embedding them as medics with LeT militants in Indian-administered Kashmir.

The Department of Education quickly became the group's most profitable and powerful department. Many of those who passed through its schools went on to work in a non-martial capacity for MDI in Pakistan.[28] The first two al-Dawa schools were established in 1994, one in Lahore and the other at Muridke. More schools opened rapidly throughout the country, and by 2001 MDI claimed to have established 127 schools with 15,000 students and 800 teachers. Their success was a result of the quality and breadth of instruction provided, as well as the group's willingness to subsidize tuition for those who could not afford it. All al-Dawa schools taught subjects such as mathematics and the sciences, with a particular emphasis on information technology.[29] This contributed to MDI's technological prowess, which it used for military and missionary purposes, and also created a network of people within Pakistan's scientific community with ties to the organization.

The group's objectives for the al-Dawa schools included purifying the society through the teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, preparing students for the proclamation of the faith of Islam, connecting religious and contemporary knowledge, removing the destructive effects of secular education, and enabling students to play an active role in the society.[30]A fair proportion of the curriculum also focused on jihad. For example, an Urdu textbook used by the classes in their second year of primary education featured the final testaments given by mujahideen before they went into battle.[31] Secondary school primers were modified such that "C is for cat and G is for goat" became "C is for cannon and G is for gun." Teachers also had to have taken part in at least one jihad campaign or gone for military training.[32] Schooling entailed a significant physical element, including swimming, mountaineering, wrestling, and martial arts. This curriculum was intended to prepare students for jihad and to imbue them with the concept that it was an obligation for all Muslims, even though the group never intended to send most of them to fight.[33] In addition to its al-Dawa schools, the group also opened madrassas through the Department of Construction of Mosques and Madrassas to promote its interpretation of Ahl-e-Hadith Islam.

Military training was and remains separate from the group's schools and madrassas. A student graduating from an MDI school or madrassa who wished to join the Kashmir jihad still needed to enter LeT's training program. LeT's four major training centers were the Mu'askar-e-Taiba, Mu'askar-e-Aqsa, Mu'askar-e-Umm al-Qurra and Mu'askar-e-'Abdullah bin Ma'sud. To process and house trainees, it opened the Bait-ul-Mujahideen (House of the Mujahideen) in Pakistani-administered Kashmir. [34] In addition, LeT operated a host of smaller training centers elsewhere in Pakistan. Training was intended to do more than prepare people to fight. Because LeT aimed to spread the Ahl-e-Hadith faith in Pakistan, the centers were also used as a means to recruit and indoctrinate people in LeT's interpretation of Islam. The basic training regimen included the Daura-e-Aama and Daura-e-Suffa. The first was a three-week introductory course consisting primarily of prayer and physical training, with some rudimentary weapons drills. The main purpose was to teach the principles of LeT's interpretation of Ahl-e-Hadith thought, to convert those who belonged to other sects, and to motivate trainees to become involved in LeT's various activities.[35] The second was implemented to teach recruits how to invite people to Islam and covered Khitaab (oratory or readings of the Qur'an), information about the Hadith, Tarjumah (translation of the Qur'an), and Salaat (prayers). It initially lasted for 15 days at, after which participants were sent for a week of hands-on proselytizing to invite people to LeT's interpretation of Ahl-e-Hadith Islam.[36]

LeT offered the Daure-e-Aama and the Daura-e-Suffa to anyone, regardless of sect, and used them to convert people to the Ahl-e-Hadith faith. Not everyone who completed these two programs progressed to the Daura-e-Khasa, which provided three months of military training offered to select individuals. Those who wished to do so needed a recommendation from a senior functionary and typically did not progress directly from the previous stage of training. Instead, they often performed other supervised tasks that entailed proselytizing or performing service at one of the group's offices or elsewhere.[37] Once accepted into the Daura-e-Khasa, a recruit would learn guerrilla warfare tactics, survival techniques, and how to fire different types of light weapons, as well as how to use hand grenades, rocket launchers and mortars. After completing this training, the recruit adopted a kunya (nom de guerre) and was ready for battle. However, many were required to undertake additional proselytizing first, while others might graduate to other specialized military courses that were offered on an even more selective basis. These could include further training in guerrilla warfare, instruction in the use of heavy arms, or explosive training with a focus on making improvised explosive devices. Some members, particularly those who might operate inside India as recruiters or covert operatives, went through the Daura-e-Ribat. This program included training on how to collect intelligence, handle agents, engage in sabotage and surveillance, conduct briefings and debriefings, and communicate in code. It also featured lectures about India, its security agencies including the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), and how to evade security personnel. Even after completing these myriad training activities, some members were given management roles in the organization as opposed to deploying into Indian-administered Kashmir.

State support enabled many jihadi outfits to develop powerful propaganda machinery that reflected aspects of the modern media.

State support enabled many jihadi outfits to develop powerful propaganda machinery that reflected aspects of the modern media. This "jihadi journalism" employed the same printing systems, approaches to layout, and marketing strategies as normal newspapers in Pakistan. Their sales and circulation were comparable to competing mainstream publications, and low prices meant they were easily affordable.[38] The MDI Department of Media and Propagation and its Dar-ul-Andalus Department of Publishing combined to print the widest range of propaganda offerings of any jihadi group in Pakistan, the

flagship of which was a monthly Urdu magazine, *al-Dawa*, which LeT claimed enjoyed a circulation of 100,000 by the end of the 1990s.[39] This was the largest circulation among jihadi monthlies, according to Amir Rana, a researcher who conducted an assessment of jihadi propaganda in Pakistan. The group's weekly *Ghazwa Times,* also in Urdu and later in Sindhi as well, gave the latest news about LeT's military activities as well as reporting on other jihadi fronts and national affairs. It had the second-largest circulation among weeklies.[40] The group published a magazine for students called *Zarb-e-Taiba* and one for women called *Taibat*, both also in Urdu. The media department also published *al-Ribat* in Arabic and *Voice of Islam* in English. By 2001, the Dar-ul-Andalus Department of Publishing was printing over 100 booklets a year in Urdu, English, Arabic, and Persian.[41] The group also built a robust Internet presence, maintaining Web sites in Urdu, Arabic and English.

The Department of Media and Propagation managed the group's public events as well as liaising with the media. In addition to the routine issuing of press releases, this department arranged programs and conferences at Muridke and at local offices. These included Ijtemas, or congregations, of varying size. Many were small, local affairs, but MDI's annual Ijtemas held at Muridke were reported to have drawn between 500,000 and 1 million people by the late 1990s.[42] The Urdu newspaper *Jang* reported that mujahideen from over 50 countries attended LeT's 1998 Ijtema.[43] This may be an exaggeration, but even if half that number were present it still demonstrates an impressive transnational appeal. According to Ahmed Rashid, a Pakistani journalist and author who attended several of LeT's annual Ijtemas, attendees to these events came from locations including Chechnya, Tajikistan, China, Afghanistan, Sudan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and elsewhere in the Middle East.[44] Many of these foreign connections were forged via MDI's Department of External Affairs. U.S. and European officials believe that, through this department, LeT established close ties with more than a dozen jihadi groups in the Middle East, Southeast Asia and parts of the former Soviet Union.[45] Its operations wing also managed many of LeT's transnational operatives, overseeing activities ranging from reconnaissance for terrorist attacks to the provision of support or equipment for the group's military operations.

In addition to serving missionary and training purposes, LeT used its infrastructure in Pakistan to recruit and raise money.

In addition to serving missionary and training purposes, LeT used its infrastructure in Pakistan to recruit and raise money. Unlike the Deobandi jihadi groups, which recruited heavily from madrassas, most of LeT's recruits were educated at regular – or what are called government – schools.[46] LeT often sought to recruit Barelvis and Deobandis, and converted anyone who joined to its interpretation of Ahl-e-Hadith Islam. It was able to overcome its sectarian disadvantage in part because recruits were drawn to militant outfits "mostly due to dynamics in the Indo-Pakistan security competition."[47] LeT's propaganda about its Kashmiri exploits, its growing prowess there, and support from the ISI enabled the group to draw from beyond the Ahl-e-Hadith ranks. A sociological profile of 100 LeT martyrs found their backgrounds were similar to those of low-ranking officers in the army. Most came from lower middle-class families, and many were more educated than the average Pakistani or recruits to other militant groups, having completed at least secondary education and in some cases attended university.[48] According to LeT's own records, as of 2001 the majority of its martyrs came from Punjab, with the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) contributing the second-highest number.[49]

Although the group received significant financial assistance from the army and ISI, it also developed an independent financial network managed by MDI's Department of Finance. Fund-raising mechanisms included placing donation boxes in countless shops throughout Pakistan;

collecting money at MDI offices, through personal solicitations and at public gatherings to celebrate a fighter's martyrdom; and soliciting funds online via the group's Web site (which listed its address, phone number and bank details so that donors could deposit money directly).[50] The group also raised money by soliciting the hides of animals sacrificed for the Muslim holy festival of Eid al-Adha and then selling them for profit. Its Farmers and Labor Wing collected Ushr, an Islamic land tax that obligates farmers to donate 10 percent of their harvest or income to charity for the provision of social services.[51] According to one former member, merchants associated with the group also sometimes added an additional 5 to 10 Pakistani rupees "for the jihad" to the bill when selling various goods.[52] MDI also charged fees for its schools and for various jihadi publications. Finally, the group raised significant amounts of money from Europe and the Persian Gulf. Members of the Pakistani diaspora in both regions contributed heavily, as did individuals and NGOs in the Gulf interested in promoting Salafism. Indeed, Lashkar benefactors in Saudi Arabia had supported Lashkar since its earliest days as a result of its Salafi identity and several of its leaders' connections to the Kingdom.[53] The group invested some of the money it raised in legitimate enterprises, including factories and other businesses.[54] It also poured funds back into developing its domestic infrastructure and, of course, dedicated a hefty amount for military operations. According to information from the U.S. intelligence community that was shared with the government of Pakistan in 2009, LeT's annual military operations budget by that time totaled more than $5 million per year.[55]

LeT's interest in protecting this infrastructure contributed to its restraint following the Musharraf regime's decision to side with the United States in the wake of the 9/11 attacks.

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side with the United States in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. This decision was influenced in large part by Musharraf's attempts to insulate Kashmir-centric groups like LeT from America's war against al-Qaeda. An attack by Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), another Pakistani jihadi group, on India's Parliament in December 2001 made formal distinctions more difficult. While it is possible LeT or operatives associated with it provided support for this assault, all of the attackers belonged to JeM and the attack is considered a Jaish operation. Nevertheless, India held both groups accountable and under heavy pressure from Washington and New Delhi, the Musharraf regime banned LeT and JeM, as well as several other outfits. The groups were warned of the coming ban, however, and took steps to protect their assets.[56] LeT engineered a split with MDI in advance of the ban, and the latter was dissolved and replaced by the Jamaat-ul-Dawa (JuD). Hafiz Saeed resigned as LeT's emir and assumed control of JuD, which was ostensibly only an "organization for preaching of Islam, politics, [and] social work."[57] Yahya Mujahid, who was one of the original founders of MDI and became a spokesman for JuD, asserted at the time: "We handed Lashkar-e-Taiba over to the Kashmiris in December 2001. Now we have no contact with any jihadi organization."[58] In reality, the separation was entirely cosmetic, as was the name change. Both were intended to remove the state's legal ability, and hence its legal obligation, to go after the organization's assets. A high-ranking JuD official close to Saeed admitted the separation was undertaken at the ISI's direction to create this loophole.[59]

In late 2003, the U.S. ambassador to Pakistan, Nancy Powell, complained publicly that LeT, JeM and others had reconstituted themselves under new names. Musharraf responded by banning six groups, including Khuddam-ul-Islam (formerly Jaish-e-Mohammed), Millat-e-Islamia Pakistan (formerly Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan) and Jamiat-ul-Ansar (formerly Harkat-ul-Mujahideen). [60] JuD escaped this second round of bans, leaving LeT with a legitimate front organization in Pakistan. As alluded to in the previous section, this was the result of the leadership's agreement to

continue acting in accordance with state oversight. Their willingness to do so was influenced primarily by the desire to avoid a crackdown on the organization's operations in Pakistan, though external factors may have contributed to the desire to take this more conservative approach as well. One member of Pakistan's Anti-Terrorism Force told the author that in exchange for the LeT leadership's commitment to adhere the state's guidelines, the group received assurances it would be able to "keep its supply lines open."[61] A source inside the organization admitted as much, saying the government decided not to ban JuD after the group agreed to keep a low profile "in line with Pakistan's needs."[62] This amounted to pursuing a controlled jihad against India as well as refraining from overtly attacking the U.S. and its allies or otherwise assisting al-Qaeda. Notably, 2003 was also the year that al-Qaeda's affiliate in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) initiated military operations in Saudi Arabia. This triggered a crackdown by the Kingdom's security services that threatened the flow of money to the wider jihadist movement, and also led to blowback among members of the Saudi clerical establishment and Saudi-based private sponsors of jihadism abroad.[63] LeT has longstanding ties to Saudi-based clerics and other independent financial supports. According to one journalist with sources inside the organization, some of these men pressed the group to distance itself from al-Qaeda and the global jihad, at least publicly, while Saudi-based LeT operatives also came under pressure from the security services to do likewise.[64] In other words, the potential threat to external support networks may have contributed to LeT's decision to continue abiding state oversight in Pakistan.

The group's networks in Saudi Arabia remained active while JuD's continued legality in Pakistan meant the group could raise funds more openly than other outfits and that money deposited in its bank accounts was secure. It still asked for people's sons for jihad, but increasingly said "If you want to save the Islamic umma, then give us money."[65] As the group expanded its social services offerings in Pakistan, many people who had never given money to finance the jihad began donating to the group to support its welfare activities.[66] It also expanded its international fund-raising efforts, particularly in Europe.[67] In addition to leveraging JuD's legality for financial purposes, the group continued to use its domestic infrastructure for missionary purposes as well as to recruit openly.[68] During this decade, LeT purchased real estate throughout the country to open new offices and had more than 1,500 offices operating full time across Pakistan by the middle of the decade.[69] Finally, the group's propaganda operations also remained intact through JuD. Although other outfits continued to put out propaganda, they could not do so as overtly or on such a grand scale as they had before the bans, because in many cases what they were doing was technically illegal. All of LeT's existing propaganda offerings migrated from MDI to JuD, and ultimately increased to nine print publications as well as enhanced virtual offerings. A number of the author's Pakistani interlocutors also pointed out that Saeed and other JuD preachers enjoyed far more freedom of movement than leaders of other organizations. This enabled them to travel around, promote LeT's jihad, and raise money. What Pakistanis saw in terms of its public behavior was not militancy as much as social work and religious activism. When LeT did participate in military activity, it was seen to do so only against India. One former member claimed that despite "belonging to the Salafi sect, Lashkar has [the] sympathies of people from all sects [in Pakistan] because of its social work and because it has kept a limited objective against India and does not kill innocent people in Pakistan."[70]

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late 2001 and this trend increased after JuD was allowed to remain legal in 2003. The medical mission grew, and by the middle of the decade claimed to have 143 dispensaries discharging medical care for a nominal fee, six hospitals and 66 ambulances.[71] According to the emir of JuD for Rawalpindi, whose job it was to oversee all of the group's operations in that area, by 2009 it had the second-largest ambulance fleet in the country.[72] The al-Dawa system of schools also expanded, and by the latter part of the decade the group said it boasted 173 educational institutions with approximately 20,000 students.[73] As a result, it not only consolidated and expanded its support base among the populace, but also increased its non-military utility to the state. In turn, this strengthened the government's case for refusing to ban JuD even as the group leveraged its legality to support militant activities.

The organization's Social Welfare Department was renamed the Humanitarian Relief Department, or Idarah Khidmat-e-Khalq (IKK), and introduced a host of new services. IKK played a major role in the provision of relief aid following the earthquake that struck the region in October 2005, for which it received accolades from the population as well as members of the government.[74] According to the U.S. Treasury Department, IKK also exploited the earthquake to raise a vast sum of money to support LeT's militant activities.[75] British investigators suspected LeT, or elements within it, funneled some of the money raised for earthquake relief to plotters of the thwarted attempt to use liquid explosives to bomb transatlantic airline flights en route from the United Kingdom to the United States and Canada in 2006.[76] Police in Pakistan also alleged that several suspected terrorists traveled to work in JuD relief camps after the earthquake before making their way to militant training camps run in Waziristan.[77] This was not the first or the last time that LeT was believed to have acted as a gateway organization to al-Qaeda. It is an article of faith among the American and British security establishments that the group has played this role on numerous occasions.[78] Nor is this the only way in which LeT's above-ground operations have been used to support militancy, as this section has endeavored to illustrate. Yet before turning to the next section, which examines the group's military activities, it is worth reiterating that these above-ground operations serve an important missionary purpose.

Part 3: Military Operations

By the end of the 1990s, Indian forces considered LeT to be the best trained of all the militant groups operating in Kashmir. It primarily struck Indian military, security and governmental targets as well as attacking Hindu civilians, in some instances mutilating them, as a means of ethnically cleansing certain areas, to provoke reprisals and to fuel communal tensions in India.[79] Doing so was not only a means of regenerating the conflict in Kashmir, but also of making it harder for moderates in India to pursue peace as a result of the outrage these massacres caused. Over time LeT became well known for these massacres, but it was the introduction of so-called fidayeen attacks for which it is most famous. The group launched its first Ibn Taimiya Fidayeen mission on July 12, 1999, when two fidayeen stormed an Indian Border Security Force camp in Bandipore, a town in the northern Kashmir Valley, firing automatic rifles indiscriminately and hurling grenades.[80] Additional attacks followed, and generally entailed groups of 3 to 5 men assaulting security camps where Indian soldiers or police were located. The objective of LeT's fidayeen attacks was not to be martyred right away, but to inflict as much damage as possible on the enemy and to inspire fear by fighting to the death. These battles often lasted many hours and sometimes more than a day, which at times led security forces to employ heavy firepower that destroyed their own installations. The attacks were intended to escalate violence and contributed to reversing a three-year decline in militant activity in Indian-administered Kashmir.[81] They also cemented LeT's reputation as the premier militant group fighting in Kashmir. However, the operations were criticized in some religious circles as suicide missions because militants often besieged superior forces with no intention of escaping. LeT scholars argued

that there was a crucial distinction, namely that "no fidayee ever killed himself." If he died, then death would come at the hands of an infidel.[82] In other words there were high prospects of martyrdom, but the fidayeen tried to survive as long as possible during an attack. On a number of occasions, fidayeen returned alive from a mission. The ultimate intention was martyrdom, however, and many of those who undertook fidayeen attacks returned to combat repeatedly until they achieve it.[83]

On the night of December 22, 2000, LeT launched a brazen fidayeen attack against the historic Red Fort in Delhi, the first such attack outside of Indian-administered Kashmir. When interviewed by Pakistani journalist Zahid Hussein a month after the attack, Hafiz Saeed declared, "The action indicates that we have extended the jihad to India."[84] In reality, LeT began exporting its jihad into India during the early 1990s. According to one Indian security analyst, the Indian security services were arresting Pakistanis as early as 1992 who were tied to LeT, but at the time they did not know what LeT was since it was not big enough to register on their radar.[85] That year Hindu chauvinists demolished the Babri Mosque, which had been constructed in the Indian city of Ayodhya by the first Mughal emperor of India, Babur, in the 16th century. Many hundreds of Muslims were killed in communal riots that followed. Not long before the riots, Hafiz Saeed had dispatched Mohammad Azam Cheema, a former colleague from the University of Engineering and Technology, to spearhead LeT's recruitment drive inside India. He arrived just before these communal tensions erupted into violence.[86]

A small number of Indian Muslims had already come together to fight what they viewed to be the threat from Hindu chauvinism. Three of them – Jalees Ansari, Azam Ghouri, and Abdul Karim –joined LeT and helped it begin building a network in India. The three of them executed the first LeT-supported attacks in India in December 1993, launching coordinated bombings in several cities on the one-year anniversary of the Babri Mosque's destruction.[87] Ansari was arrested not long after, while Ghouri and Karim fled to Saudi Arabia and Bangladesh, respectively, where each contributed to building up the group's networks. Indians linked to LeT who had not fled or been arrested began a recruitment drive and maintained a low-level bombing campaign.[88] By the mid-1990s, Cheema was believed to have been running more than a dozen LeT operatives across India.[89] Initially, Indians were executing attacks, with LeT assigning Pakistani operatives to help build the bombs and provide other expertise. As Indian militants became more capable, they assumed greater responsibility for operations.[90] This trend accelerated from 2002 onward, as did LeT's support for terrorist attacks against the Indian heartland, during which time the group also became involved in the jihad against America and its allies.

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The Musharraf regime clamped down on infiltrations across the Line of Control dividing Kashmir after the December 2001 attack on India's Parliament, but by early spring 2002 it had once again begun encouraging militant activity in Indian-administered Kashmir. The ISI encouraged attacks there to "resuscitate morale among the jihadi groups and to show that the army had not abandoned them."[91] In May 2002, LeT militants attacked a passenger bus and an Indian army barracks in the town of Kaluchak. Once again, the Musharraf regime halted cross-LoC activity in the face of intense U.S. pressure and the threat of war with India. Infiltration into Indian-administered Kashmir

resumed not long after, but violence began declining after 2002.[92] Although not the only cause for this decline, Pakistan's efforts to calibrate the tempo of operations in response to international pressure were a key driver. The ISI began sending smaller groups of fighters across the LoC and became more selective about the militants with whom it worked.[93] This favored LeT, which was the state's most reliable proxy, and its militants are reported to have begun operating in smaller groups as befit a more calibrated jihad.[94] It also relied increasingly on cadres already in Indian-administered Kashmir, where the group had an estimated 1,500 militants by 2002. This amounted to roughly half of the total number of militants from Pakistani jihadi groups in the Kashmir theater at the time.[95] In addition, LeT began enhancing its local networks, which enabled the group to increase its operational capabilities and thus to step into the breach throughout the region when other outfits' capacity to carry out attacks declined.[96]

In January 2004, Musharraf met Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in Islamabad for what was intended to be a courtesy visit. Instead, the two men agreed to begin a new round of formal negotiations geared toward achieving peace between their countries. To this end, India and Pakistan initiated a composite dialogue process to settle bilateral issues. Afterward, the army began attempts to demobilize some militants as a means of thinning their ranks in accordance with the country's needs, while others were kept in reserve. By early 2004, many jihadi leaders in Muzaffarabad were "idling away their time in their almost empty offices. Yet some outfits remained active. According to a commander who belonged to Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (HuJI), "Lashkar-e-Taiba, Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, and some other [smaller] groups are still busy with their business as usual -- but on a smaller scale, and these are being imposed on us as the role models."[97]

Although Pakistan was clamping down on militancy, it showed no intention of dismantling the militant infrastructure on its soil. Indeed, training camps outside of the Tribal Areas, and therefore in areas under state control, reportedly reopened in May and early June 2005.[98] Two Western officials who were tracking cross-LoC infiltrations at the time assert incursions were rising, as they normally did during the spring and summer.[99] Then, on July 7, 2005, four men in London exploded themselves on three underground trains and a bus. The shock waves reached all the way to Pakistan, where two of the bombers had trained. In the aftermath the Musharraf regime faced enormous international pressure to show that it was really cracking down on the terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan. After the London attacks, the army and ISI put pressure on all of the jihadi groups, including LeT, to scale back their activities further. The security services closed down several LeT camps, though not all of them, and threw some of the foreigners in them out of the country.[100] But the most visible indicator of official action, and hence the easiest way to show results to the international community, was to reduce militant activity in Indian-administered Kashmir to a greater degree.

According to a Pakistani journalist who reported from Pakistani-administered Kashmir at the time, LeT cadres who infiltrated across the LoC without permission risked arrest upon their return, as well as physical harm to themselves and their families.[101] A member of the Pakistan Anti-Terrorism Force confirmed this based on his own interrogation of LeT cadres. He asserted the ISI told militants that if they did not toe the line as directed, when they returned from Indian-administered Kashmir they would find their families dead.[102] Both interlocutors agreed the ISI put significant pressure on LeT's leadership to keep its cadres in line as well. The ISI also put pressure on the guides and porters who helped militants to infiltrate, and according to one LeT militant, the group was forced to rely more heavily on its support infrastructure in Indian-administered Kashmir after 2005.[103] Once again, local factors also contributed to a further reduction in violence, but this did not negate the importance of Pakistan's efforts. By 2006 even the Indian defense minister acknowledged Pakistan's contribution to the reduction in violence in Kashmir.[104]

Yet Pakistan remained unprepared to abandon the Kashmir jihad entirely. Doing so would have robbed it of leverage over India and accelerated the integration of Kashmir-centric groups with the jihadi nexus in the Tribal Areas, a trend examined in greater detail in the following sub-section. The army and ISI continued to encourage small numbers of militants to cross the LoC and directed others to use alternative routes to reach Indian-administered Kashmir. Meanwhile, LeT's leaders continued to prioritize Kashmir as the most legitimate open front on which to fight. However, by this time the group was doing the majority of its damage to India by supporting that country's indigenous jihadi movement.

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According to one member of the Indian security services, based on intelligence gathering and information provided by captured operatives, LeT leaders are believed to have met in 2002 or early 2003 and determined it was necessary to accelerate the pace of attacks inside India.[105] While this decision may have been influenced by the deceleration of the Kashmir jihad, the increase in terrorist attacks in India during the past decade was largely a result of endogenous factors. Indian Muslims' grievances continued to fester as a result of economic and political injustices. These were exacerbated by the rise of the Hindu nationalist movement in India and, specifically, the 2002 Gujarat riots in which 790 Muslims and 254 Hindus were killed, according to official statistics[106]; unofficial estimates put the death toll as high as 2,000. It was also widely alleged that officials from the Gujarati state government, led by the Hindu-nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), encouraged and assisted Hindus' involved in the violence.[107] Soon thereafter more young Muslim men, already prone to radicalization as a result of economic deprivation and political alienation, began seeking military training in Pakistan.[108] Because LeT had been building its Indian assets since the 1990s, and maintained the most robust training infrastructure in Pakistan, it was well placed to take advantage of this situation. Although the factors driving Indian jihadism were domestic, this external support undoubtedly contributed to its lethality.

A terrorist network known as the Indian Mujahideen was the primary vehicle, though by no means the only one, through which LeT escalated its involvement in terrorist attacks against India. The key players in this network did not coalesce until 2004, and it did not identify itself as the Indian Mujahideen until November 2007. However, several of the key leaders were active as early as 2001, either training with LeT themselves or deploying cadres to do so. Bombings in India increased in frequency and geographic spread after 2003, the time period when these trainees were returning from Pakistan, and LeT is suspected of playing a key role in planning or otherwise supporting a number of these attacks. The most lethal example to date is the 2006 bombing of seven commuter trains in Mumbai, which killed more than 200 people. LeT is believed to have recruited, trained and financed some of the operatives responsible.[109] The bombing campaign, led by the Indian Mujahideen and supported by LeT, escalated thereafter and reached its apex in 2007-2008.

It is important to note that the Indian Mujahideen was part of a larger jihadi project in India to which LeT gave support. Further, just as LeT does not view itself as an instrument of Pakistan, even though it often acts in this capacity, most Indian militants did not perceive themselves as proxies for LeT. Nor was LeT the only external outfit providing support for the jihadi movement in India, though it was the most prolific one. LeT was the primary training provider and

financier, as well as the most active in terms of moving operatives between India and Pakistan via third countries such as Bangladesh, Nepal, or the Persian Gulf states, often supplying false documents for these trips.[110] ISI agents are suspected of abetting these efforts.[111] LeT operatives based in the Gulf also recruited Indian Muslims living there, sending them to Pakistan for training. The Bangladeshi branch of Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (HuJI-B) is known to have furnished local actors with explosive material as well as facilitating the transit of weapons and other material across the Bangladeshi border.[112] Sometimes LeT and HuJI-B worked in tandem, other times they worked independently. As LeT expanded its presence in Bangladesh over the course of the decade, the development of surrogate bases there and in Nepal enabled it to act more independently in terms of moving men, money and material into and out of India. LeT also made periodic attempts at sea-borne infiltration of operatives and weapons into Mumbai.

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In addition to supporting and promoting attacks by indigenous militants, LeT continued to launch its own fidayeen assaults against Indian targets. In September 2002, approximately six months after the Gujarat riots, two fidayeen stormed the Akshardham Temple in Gandhinagar, the Gujarat state capital.[113] Approximately 600 worshippers and tourists were inside at the time, over thirty of whom were killed in the attack. The Akshardham assault was intended to avenge the pogroms that took place in Gujarat, though moving forward the group also focused increasingly on economic targets. In December 2005 two fidayeen – one Pakistani and one Indian – launched an assault on the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore. Sabauddin Ahmed, the Indian operative, was arrested in 2008. He told police the group chose Bangalore because it was enjoying an economic boom. This fact, coupled with the city's growing reputation as a hub for IT businesses, meant an attack would harm India economically and attract international attention.[114] Notably, Sabauddin also told investigators the ISI prepared a Pakistani passport and other documents for him, which he used to travel to Bangalore via Katmandu, Dhaka, Colombo and the United Arab Emirates.[115] On December 31, 2007, he became the first Indian operative to command Pakistani fighters during an LeT fidayeen attack, when a team of fighters assaulted a Central Reserve Police Force camp in Rampur in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. All of these fidayeen assaults were high-profile operations, but they were also relatively small-scale affairs in which no more than a few attackers were involved. This made the Mumbai attacks in 2008, executed by a 10-man squad, all the more striking. So too did the inclusion of Western and Jewish targets, since many continued to view LeT as a purely India-centric outfit. Yet in reality the group began participating in the jihad against America and its allies almost immediately after 9/11.

As al-Qaeda operatives fled Afghanistan in the wake of the U.S. counter-attack, LeT's leadership directed its members to provide safe haven in Pakistan for some and to facilitate emigration to the Middle East or other safe destinations for others. The group arranged fake passports, safe houses, guards and fixers, and provided medical support for Arabs wounded during the U.S. invasion.[116] Local jihadi groups were running most of the safe houses in Pakistan in which al-Qaeda members were caught in the years immediately after 2002. According to both the Pakistani journalist and author Ahmed Rashid and to Gary Schroen, who led the first CIA team into Afghanistan after 9/11, many of these safe houses belonged to LeT.[117] Abu Zubayda, a jihadi logistician who vetted recruits for al-Qaeda camps before 9/11, remains the most notable operative captured at a LeT safe house. He was found in an upscale house in Faisalabad, an LeT stronghold. A number of suspected LeT members were also captured during the raid, but according

to media reports, Pakistani authorities released 16 of them a month later despite American protests.[118]

In addition to forcing al-Qaeda and other jihadi groups to flee Afghanistan, the U.S. invasion also destroyed the training infrastructure there. The major Pakistani groups were able to maintain some instruction capacity within Pakistan, but their capabilities varied. LeT continued operating larger camps more overtly than other groups in Mansehra and Pakistani-administered Kashmir. It also ran smaller ones in the Tribal Areas, mainly in the Waziristan and Mohmand agencies, not far from where al-Qaeda was establishing some of its training bases.[119] In the early years after 9/11, while al-Qaeda and the Taliban were reestablishing their training capacity, LeT picked up some of the slack. This included training local militants as well as foreigners who pre-9/11 would have trained in al-Qaeda camps. For example, a stream of militants from Indonesian militant groups began passing through LeT's induction program after 9/11. Some of them belonged to al-Qaeda's Indonesian ally Jemaah Islamiyah (Islamic Organization), which was responsible for the 2002 Bali bombings.[120] The closing of al-Qaeda's camps also meant that its freelance trainers needed to find new places to set up shop, and some of them gravitated to LeT. This cut both ways, and as al-Qaeda reestablished its infrastructure in Pakistan, some LeT trainers began working at its camps as well.[121]

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LeT was a particularly appealing training provider for would-be Western jihadis, as well as a useful gateway to al-Qaeda. Its above-ground JuD infrastructure remained legal, meaning Westerners could use these offices, mosques or madrassas as initial entry points, while LeT's training camps received less scrutiny than those of other groups. Members of the Pakistani diaspora were and remain particularly well placed to use what has been termed the "Kashmir Escalator." This term is used to explain the process by which members of the Pakistani diaspora became radicalized in their home countries and then traveled to Pakistan, where they initially connected with Kashmir-centric militant groups like LeT or JeM. Some of them trained with these outfits. Others took advantage of grass-roots connections among foot soldiers, as well as organizational linkages to access al-Qaeda operatives in the Tribal Areas.[122]

After 9/11, LeT also used its transnational networks to support terrorist attacks outside South Asia. A French prosecutor asserted that LeT's representative in Paris served as a "compass" for Richard Reid, who attempted to detonate explosives hidden in his shoes while aboard a flight bound for the United States from France in December 2001.[123] French investigators suspected that LeT's representative provided logistical and financial support to Reid in Paris as well as facilitating contact for him with a person or persons in Pakistan.[124] However, the evidence gathered was circumstantial. Ultimately, French authorities convicted LeT's representative and two trainees for "participation in an association of criminals with a view toward the preparation of an act of terrorism."[125] This is an umbrella charge under which various different activities can fall. In this case the conviction stemmed from the association the three men had with LeT, rather than from their dealings with Reid.[126]

Members associated with the group's networks in France played a more definitive role in a terrorist plot against Australia that evolved over the course of two years from 2002 to 2003. Much of what we know about LeT's involvement comes from Willie Brigitte, a convert to Islam. Brigitte trained with the group from late 2001 through early 2002, at which point he was directed to return to France, where he previously had lived. Sajid Mir (a.k.a. Sajid Majid), a commander responsible for managing LeT's overseas operatives, became Brigitte's handler and directed him to act as a point of contact for any LeT operative

transiting through France.[127] Roughly a year later, Sajid ordered Brigitte to travel to Australia and arranged for members of the group's network in Paris to provide him with money for the trip.[128] Brigitte was dispatched to assist Faheem Khalid Lodhi, who had trained with the group on multiple occasions.[129] Both men remained in contact with Sajid, who an Australian court later found was endeavoring to coordinate a liaison between them so that "the prospect of terrorist actions in Australia could be explored."[130] Australian security officials said the two men intended to select a suitable target and purchase the chemicals necessary to build a large bomb, but that they were planning to bring in a foreign explosives expert to assemble it. There were reports that this explosives expert worked in LeT's camps, but whether he was a member of the group or a freelancer who contracted out his services is unknown.[131] Both Brigitte and Lodhi were arrested before the plot was brought to fruition; the former was deported to France and convicted for his involvement in the Australian plot, while the latter was convicted in Australia of planning to blow up the Sydney electricity grid.[132] Australia's troop presence in Afghanistan and Iraq is believed to have been the motivation for the plot.

There were divisions within LeT after 9/11 over whether to wage jihad against America in Afghanistan.[133] Ultimately the leadership chose not to commit cadres openly to the Afghan theater, a decision that rankled some within the organization who formed small splinter outfits to fight there.[134] An LeT financier and facilitator, Arif Qasmani, supported one of them.[135] Notably, Qasmani never quit LeT, and some of those from the group who fought with this new outfit later returned to the LeT fold. This raises questions as to whether it was a true splinter or something more akin to a spin-off formed by a faction within LeT as a means for those militants who prioritized the Afghan jihad to participate in it without breaking their ties to the group. Whether or not this was a true splinter, it was a low-key endeavor.

LeT leaders were more overt about their efforts to recruit for the jihad in Iraq, doing so through JuD offices in 2003 and 2004.[136] However, many of those who enlisted under the auspices of fighting in Iraq were told after completing their training that they could volunteer to go to Iraq but were obliged to go to Kashmir. Some of them agreed; others split from the group.[137] Despite the apparent use of Iraq as a recruiting tool for the Kashmir jihad, LeT leaders did send money along with a small number of members to the Iraqi theater in 2003 and 2004, two of whom were captured in the spring of 2004.[138] Doing so was most likely a means of promoting LeT's international reputation as well as a means for it to link up with additional foreign outfits and to bring "best practices" from the Iraqi jihad back home. This contradicted the leadership's decision to adhere to state oversight and constituted a public display of participation in the global jihad. Participating in the Iraq jihad would not necessarily have been problematic vis-à-vis the desire to protect its external support networks in Saudi Arabia, as there was a split within the jihadist movement there between AQAP and those most involved in recruitment and fundraising for Iraq.[139] In Pakistan, the Musharraf regime reportedly came down hard on LeT when its members were discovered in Iraq, though this infraction clearly did not fracture the group's alliance with the state.[140]

By this time, the group's activities in Indian-administered Kashmir were being curtailed to a greater degree than before, and more members began heading to Afghanistan in search of an open front on which to fight. Most of them turned up in Kunar and Nuristan provinces in northeastern Afghanistan, where LeT had historical connections. One of the group's first training camps during the anti-Soviet jihad was established in Kunar, and its leadership had close relations with the Afghan Salafis based there. The migration of LeT fighters to the Afghan front grew from mid-2005 onward, after the Musharraf regime increased its efforts to rein in the Kashmir jihad. This downturn coincided with an acceleration of activity in Afghanistan, where the insurgency exploded in 2006. Attacks against Coalition forces in Afghanistan jumped to more than 5,000

that year, more than a threefold increase from 2005.[141] This made the Afghan front impossible to ignore at a time when the Kashmir jihad was declining and an increasing number of LeT members were motivated by anti-Americanism.[142] The group began sending a small number of its fighters to the Afghan front and recruiting additional militants to fight there. Although it was no secret that LeT militants were participating in the insurgency, the group's leadership continued to deny a presence in Afghanistan. Some fought with LeT-linked groups based in Kunar or the Tribal Areas. Several interlocutors believe that Hafiz Saeed used his connections to help to facilitate this, essentially creating a supply line of money and recruits to like-minded outfits.[143] Others took what essentially amounted to a sabbatical and fought with other more Afghan-centric outfits. In certain instances this was done with LeT's blessing to obscure its involvement, but militants also left the group or took leave out of frustration with its unwillingness to break with the state and fully commit to the Afghan jihad.[144]

Fighting in Afghanistan necessitated an expanded presence in the Tribal Areas and NWFP at a time when a proto-insurgency was developing there, and by 2007 some of the actors with which LeT or its individual members were collaborating in Afghanistan were also actively at war with Pakistan.

Fighting in Afghanistan necessitated an expanded presence in the Tribal Areas and NWFP at a time when a proto-insurgency was developing there, and by 2007 some of the actors with which LeT or its individual members were collaborating in Afghanistan were also actively at war with Pakistan. Collaboration included the joint recruitment and infiltration of fighters into Afghanistan; sharing safe houses and resources, including weapons, explosives and information; and joint training and fighting in Afghanistan.[145] The group's bomb-makers are known to be among the best in the region and became responsible for building some of the improvised explosive devices used in Afghanistan. Some of LeT's trainers and explosives experts are believed to have begun working with al-Qaeda to provide instruction to would-be Western terrorists, though whether they were doing so with the permission of the leadership or in a freelance capacity remains unclear.[146] The bulk of LeT members who participated in the Afghan jihad during this time fought in and around Kunar and Nuristan provinces. Although the group did not have a substantial footprint in terms of manpower, its members were among the most proficient in terms of small-unit tactics, so even a small number of men could have an impact. At attack on U.S. Combat Outpost Wanat in mid-July 2008 is among the most notable operations in which LeT cadres are known to have participated since entering the Afghan theatre.[147] One of its members was also reportedly responsible for driving an explosives-laden vehicle into the Indian embassy in Kabul six days before the attack on Wanat. The Haqqani Network planned the Indian embassy attack, but a recruit from JuD's Gujranwala chapter is believed to have executed it.[148] American officials later accused the ISI of helping to plan the operation.[149]

Though collaboration with other outfits was centered on the jihad in Afghanistan, increased integration with actors launching attacks in Pakistan inevitably led some LeT members to become involved in anti-state violence. This included facilitating the movement of suicide bombers and other terrorists from the NWFP and Tribal Areas to Punjab, building or supplying explosive materials for attacks and helping to move this material through the country, providing safe houses and false identity papers to would-be terrorists, and conducting target surveillance.[150] It is difficult to decipher when this cooperation took place at the organizational level and when individuals were freelancing. Moreover, because debates existed within the group about whether to cooperate on attacks against the state, organizational involvement could amount to factions deciding to collaborate. Indeed, during the same period of

time when some LeT members were working with militants from other outfits threatening the state the ISI is believed to have been using other members to eliminate militants from those same outfits.[151] Thus, different cliques co-existed within LeT, which in turn existed in a space where various actors with overlapping and competing agendas were present. Most interlocutors agreed that LeT members who provided manpower (as opposed to facilitation) to other entities (chief among them the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan or TTP, which was leading the insurgency in Pakistan) for anti-state violence were freelancing. This did not mean they split from the group, though in addition to those who engaged in freelancing there were splinters believed to be active in the Tribal Areas by this point as well.[152] Although LeT leaders were not above informing on their own members in order to keep them in line, which they did at times, there was only so much they could do to control the entirety of the rank-and-file because the exploding array of opportunities for collaboration meant actors could shop around for like-minded allies. It was amid this atmosphere that the 2008 Mumbai attacks took shape.

LeT had been gathering surveillance material for an attack against the Taj Mahal Hotel in Mumbai since 2006.

LeT had been gathering surveillance material for an attack against the Taj Mahal Hotel in Mumbai since 2006. Initial plans called for one or two fidayeen to storm an annual software conference held there and then to flee the country. According to David Headley, the Pakistani-American operative originally named Daood Gilani who conducted surveillance for the 2008 attacks, the surging jihad in Afghanistan and eruption of violence in the Tribal Areas led to fierce ideological debates among militant outfits regarding where to focus their violence. Headley described how the aggression and commitment of those fighting in Afghanistan influenced some fighters to leave Kashmir-centric groups like LeT, which he believed contributed to LeT's decision to "consider a spectacular terrorist strike in India." Who initially floated the idea of upping the ante is uncertain, but between early 2008 and the summer of that year the planned one- or two-person operation expanded into a 10-person assault against multiple targets.[153] Several of those targets were added as late as the summer – a month before the attacks were originally scheduled to occur. One of them was the Chabad House, chosen because of the credibility that would come from killing Israeli and American Jews, the most common visitors.

According to Headley, every major LeT operative had an ISI handler and all of the group's major operations were conducted in coordination with these officers. His hander was allegedly one Maj. Iqbal, who Headley said provided approximately $25,000 for surveillance trips to India and, Headley believes, additional funding for a boat that sank during an aborted attempt to strike Mumbai in September 2008.[154] Headley told investigators that Iqbal was aware of the decision to pursue a maritime insertion, taken by the LeT leadership after the operation expanded to a 10-person assault, and contemplated using it as an opportunity to smuggle weapons into India as well. Headley also asserted that a man whom he understood to be from the Pakistani navy helped to plan the maritime insertion, instructing him to explore the position of naval vessels and possible landing sites during subsequent surveillance trips.[155] Finally, he stated that his handler was aware of the targets chosen and of the LeT's leadership need to keep their jihadist credibility in order to retain control over elements within the organization.[156]

If Headley is to be believed and every major LeT member had an ISI handler, then it is reasonable to assume others in the ISI were also aware of the operational details given that a number of the group's senior leaders were involved in planning the attacks.[157] Security officials familiar with the case say they believe a small coterie of serving and retired officers played a role in or had knowledge of the attacks, though that knowledge may not have been

uniform.[158] Indeed, Headley told investigators that the director general of the ISI, Lt. Gen. Ahmad Shuja Pasha, visited Zaki-ur Rehman Lakhvi in prison in the aftermath of Mumbai to understand how it evolved into a terrorist spectacular.[159] Pasha had become director general in late September and this visit, as Headley describes it, suggests the new ISI leadership was out of the loop, at least with regard to the scope of the plot. Lashkar's handlers may not have passed information all the way up the chain of command, or the change in command at ISI may have disrupted communications. In either case, LeT was allowed to operate openly, and its ability to execute the Mumbai attacks owed partly to the state support the group continued to receive. Moreover, despite the outcry following Mumbai, Pakistan took no significant steps to degrade LeT's military capabilities.

Part 4: The Evolving Threat

Headley claims to have met with Sajid Mir, the LeT commander responsible for transnational operatives, a month before Mumbai to discuss a terrorist attack in Denmark. According to Headley, his ISI handler, Maj. Iqbal was also present. The three discussed launching an attack against *Morgenavisen Jyllands-Posten,* the Danish newspaper responsible for printing cartoons in 2005 that depicted the Prophet Mohammed.[160] The two met again in early November, at which point Sajid gave Headley a computer memory stick containing information about Denmark as well as pictures of the editor and cartoonist at *Morgenavisen Jyllands-Posten.* Sajid instructed him to conduct surveillance on the newspaper's offices in Copenhagen and Aarhus, and provided 3,000 euros to cover his travel and expenses.[161] Headley claims to have met with Sajid again in December before making his first reconnaissance trip, at which time Sajid directed him to survey a synagogue in Denmark in addition to the newspaper's offices.[162] Headley traveled to Denmark for the first time in January 2009, after which he returned to Pakistan and provided surveillance footage to Sajid.

Unbeknownst to his LeT handlers, Headley also had discussed the plot with a former member of the group, Abdur Rehman Syed.

Unbeknownst to his LeT handlers, Headley also had discussed the plot with a former member of the group, Abdur Rehman Syed. Syed had quit LeT because he perceived the leadership as too conservative and beholden to the ISI. In 2008 he floated his own outfit under the command of Ilyas Kashmiri, a former HuJI commander who was close to al-Qaeda's leadership.[163] Upon his return to Pakistan, Headley provided surveillance footage to Syed as well. Syed then took him to North Waziristan to meet Kashmiri, who claimed that he could provide the manpower for the operation and that therefore LeT's participation was unnecessary.[164] Headley asserts he did not tell Sajid about his meeting with Kashmiri, suggesting this was not a case of sharing resources.[165] Rather, it appears Kashmiri was attempting to poach LeT's operative and its operation. This became much easier when LeT postponed the operation as a result of heavy pressure from the ISI to lay low following the Mumbai attacks.[166] In response, Headley began working closely with Kashmiri and through him with al-Qaeda to launch the attack. To this end, he traveled to the United Kingdom to meet with members of Kashmiri's network, several of whom were under surveillance by the British security services. "David the American," as Headley was known, was now on their radar.[167] U.S. authorities arrested Headley several months later at O'Hare International Airport in Chicago on a flight bound for Pakistan via Philadelphia. They also arrested an alleged accomplice of Headley's who also was based in Chicago and stands accused of providing him with logistical support for surveillance in Mumbai and Denmark.[168]

That LeT's leadership contemplated an attack against Denmark is significant, but so too is the fact that it remained susceptible to ISI pressure. However, Headley was able to find operational support for the Danish plot

elsewhere because of the interconnectedness of jihadi networks in Pakistan by 2008. Finally, it is also important to note that not long after Sajid advised Headley of the need to postpone the Danish plot, he also communicated to him that conditions enabled moving forward on target surveillance in India. This suggests both that the ISI continued to allow attack planning against India (while attempting to rein in operations against the West) and that the group's leaders remained preoccupied with striking targets there.

In March 2009 LeT launched its first major offensive inside Indian-administered Kashmir since the Mumbai attacks, but the insurgency remained torpid. Civilian fatalities and terrorist incidents continued to decline.[169] Meanwhile the insurgency in Afghanistan remained robust, and LeT's members were fighting there in greater numbers in Afghanistan by late 2009 and early 2010, though the group remained a secondary player on that front. The flow of LeT fighters increased into Kunar and Nuristan provinces in eastern Afghanistan, which remained the primary focal points for the group's operations.[170] The integration of the group's members with the Taliban and Haqqani Network also accelerated, enabling LeT fighters to expand their presence beyond those provinces.[171] The group also increased its focus on Indian targets inAfghanistan, participating in several joint attacks on them in late 2009 – early 2010. Among the most notable was a February 2010 assault on two guest houses in Kabul frequented by Indians. Eighteen people were killed, among them nine Indian nationals of whom two were army doctors.[172] The attack is believed to have been a joint venture by militants from LeT and the Haqqani Network. According to Afghan intelligence officials, some of the attackers spoke Urdu and searched specifically for Indians during the assault, demanding, "Where is the head Indian doctor?" As with Mumbai, handlers outside Afghanistan coordinated the attack via cell phone.[173]

February 2010 also witnessed the first successful terrorist attack in India since Mumbai.

February 2010 also witnessed the first successful terrorist attack in India since Mumbai. Indian jihadis used a mobile phone alarm to set off a bomb that ripped apart the German Bakery in the city of Pune, killing 17 people and injuring many more. The city has a diverse population as well as a growing IT sector, and the German Bakery was known as a frequent haunt for foreigners living there. According to Indian authorities, Mirza Himayat Baig, LeT's top operative in the state of Maharashtra, where Pune and Mumbai are located, hatched the plot.[174] He is said to have been in constant contact with handlers in Pakistan while planning and preparing for the attack, and to have relied on operatives associated with the Indian Mujahideen for help executing it.[175] Indian officials viewed the Pune bombing as evidence that networks belonging to LeT and the Indian Mujahideen were being reengaged to execute a fresh round of terrorist attacks.[176]

Taken together, the Danish plot, the growth of LeT's footprint in Afghanistan and its target selection there, and the German Bakery bombing in India point to several trends that characterized the evolving nature of the threat in the wake of Mumbai. The first was the geographic expansion of its operations and the integration of global jihadi targets with Indian ones. The second is the fungible nature of its networks and military capabilities, which increasingly were used to strike Afghan, Indian, and Western targets. The third, highlighted by the Headley case, is the possibility that personal connections might enable individuals or factions to use these networks for freelance operations. As a result, by this time the threat came not only from LeT as an organization, which was expanding the scope of its jihad, but also from elements within it who could use the group's capabilities if they believed the leadership was not expanding aggressively enough.

Conclusion

When contemplating LeT's future, it is worth considering that after making a serious attempt to restrain the Kashmir jihad, Pakistan would have a difficult time regenerating the insurgency there: first, because of the threat of international condemnation; second, because the population has little interest in a return to the days of violent conflict; and third because the Indian security forces have succeeded in suppressing the remaining militant threat to a great extent. Thus, while the political grievances that sparked the insurgency in 1989 remain, the prospects for a return to the days of 'bleeding India' in Kashmir appear dim. LeT will not disappear from the Kashmiri scene in the near-term – the group continues to attempt to push militants across the LoC, and its members continue to engage in low-level violence in Indian-administered Kashmir. But a return to its glory days on that front is unlikely. Barring a decision to turn on the Pakistani state, this leaves LeT with four areas on which to focus: fighting in Afghanistan; launching terrorist attacks against India; participating in the global jihad via terrorism against the U.S. and its allies; and non-violent activism in Pakistan, primarily through the provision of social services.

LeT members continue to integrate into the Afghan jihad, though as mentioned the group remains a secondary player there. It is impossible to predict the course of that conflict in two years' time, but worth noting that of the main players supported by Pakistan – the Afghan Taliban, the Haqqani Network and LeT – LeT is the only one without a major constituency in Afghanistan, and it came late to that game. Further, despite the contribution of its members to the Afghan jihad, LeT's primary military utility remains as a potential terrorist proxy against India. With the exception of the Pune bombing, neither LeT nor its Indian affiliates have staged another notable attack in India since Mumbai. This is not necessarily for a lack of trying, and Indian counter-terrorism efforts certainly have contributed to this fact, in particular when it comes to degrading the capabilities of LeT's Indian affiliates. Yet Western and Pakistani interlocutors also suggest the ISI has sought to rein in LeT in order to avoid another terrorist spectacular as such an attack could lead to war with India. The extent of official pressure on the group and whether this is merely another tactical pause remains unclear. Two points are worth making in this regard: the ISI still retains the ability to influence, if not control, LeT vis-à-vis its operations against India; and the group remains primed to play the role of spoiler between the two countries, be it in a sanctioned or unsanctioned capacity.

At the time of writing, the U.S. government considers LeT a threat to Western interests in and beyond South Asia. In particular, numerous security and military officials have conveyed to the author an increasing concern about the possibility of LeT involvement in strikes against Europe. As already discussed, the organization is becoming more enmeshed in the global jihad. Once again, the army and ISI are believed to be putting pressure on LeT to contain its anti-Western activities for fear of inviting retribution from the US. However, there is cause for concern that, unlike the case of strikes against India, this presumes a level of influence that is at odds with the ground reality. Moreover, should opportunities fade on other fronts or Pakistani pressure grow too severe, the risk exists that LeT or factions within it will travel further into the global jihadi orbit. Meanwhile, the recent episode involving Raymond Davis, a CIA contractor who killed two Pakistanis he asserted were attempting to rob him, highlights the level of U.S. concern about the group and the lack of domestic action against it. Davis is believed to have been providing security for a CIA cell tracking LeT, a unilateral action that also speaks to the mistrust between the CIA and ISI when it comes dealing with the group.[177] This is symptomatic of a wider breach between the two intelligence agencies, one in which divergent agendas vis-à-vis LeT has been an important factor.

Pointing to ongoing military operations in the Tribal Areas and terrorist violence savaging the country, Pakistani officials assert they do not have the capacity to deal with LeT at present and are loathe to risk drawing the group

further into the insurgency by moving against it. It would be naïve to suggest Pakistan should not first focus on the militants currently attacking its people, but fear of acting against LeT is not the only reason for this lack of effort. The group's members have forged relationships with personnel in the army and ISI, which continue to wield disproportionate clout in Pakistan. A number of former officers joined its ranks, which further strengthens these bonds. Because LeT and the army both recruit heavily from Punjab, familial and friendship ties exist too. The above-ground JuD's work as a provider of social services and relief aid has also led to relationships with people in other arms of government at the national and provincial levels. Further, although the group has had only limited success at converting people to its interpretation of Ahl-e-Hadith Islam, the JuD has developed into a formidable political-religious force. Even those officials who may not sympathize with the group nevertheless fear its political clout. Finally, it is impossible to escape the fact that LeT continues to have utility against India and is unlikely to be dismantled absent a political payoff.

Interlocutors within and close to the Pakistani security establishment have suggested to the author that if the Kashmir issue is settled "appropriately" then over time LeT could be steered toward non-violent activism. In other words, the above-ground JuD and its array of social welfare activities provides a possible means for demobilizing its militants. The leadership's commitment to dawa and hence to protecting its social welfare infrastructure suggests this path deserves exploration, an opinion shared by a number of U.S. officials with whom the author has spoken. Yet three important caveats are in order. First, absent some way of guaranteeing and certifying that JuD is not being used to support militancy, this approach risks legitimizing a terrorist organization. Second, empowering JuD further even as a purely non-violent actor will have political and social repercussions within Pakistan given its Islamist agenda. Third, while some militants might accept a glide path from LeT to JuD, others almost certainly would fight on – either against Pakistan or in pursuit of a wider global jihadi agenda. In particular, the younger generation of commanders appears less enamored with dawa and with the Pakistani state than the old guard. A pronounced fissure, which is already possible, could become more likely in the event the senior leadership seek to transition completely toward non-violent activism. For all of these reasons, dismantling the group must be a gradual process to avoid provoking a major backlash and one which takes account not only of LeT's infrastructure in Pakistan, but also its networks abroad, as these could unleash violence on the countries in which they exist. Yet there is no indication that such a process has been put in motion or that the groundwork for doing so has been laid. In the meantime, LeT and the threats it poses continue to evolve.

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3 Author interview with Mohammad Amir Rana, director of the Pak Institute for Peace Studies, December 16 & 18, 2008, Pakistan.

4 Roel Meijer, "Introduction," in Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement, ed. Roel Meijer (London: Hurst, 2009), 3-4.

5 Author interview with Abdullah Muntazir, international spokesman for Jamaat-ul-Dawa, December 30, 2008, Pakistan.

6 "Education: al-Dawa System of Schools," Markaz al-Dawa-wal-Irshad Web site, undated. Author's collection.

7 The year of its formation is given as both 1990 and 1993 by LeT's literature. One of the original MDI founders, who was a member of the Jamaat-ul-Dawa senior leadership at the time the author intervewed him, confirmed the date was 1990. A former LeT member, who belonged to the group in 1990, also confirmed that date. Author interview with member of Jamaat-ul-Dawa senior leadership, name withheld upon request, May 2009 in Pakistan. Author interview with former Lashkar-e-Taiba member, name withheld upon request, January 2009 in Pakistan.

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10Hafiz Abdul Salam bin Muhammad, Why We Do Jihad? (Muridke: Markaz al-Dawa-wal-Irshad, May 1999).

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13 Author interview with Abdullah Muntazir, December 30, 2008 in Pakistan.

14 Author interview with Jamaat-ul-Dawa official, name withheld upon request, May 2009 in Pakistan.

Author interview with second Lashkar-e-Taiba member, name withheld upon request, May 2009 in Pakistan. Author interview with former Lashkar-e-Taiba member, name withheld upon request, January 2009 in Pakistan.

15 The two countries fought a fourth war in 1971 when India interceded in Pakistan's civil war, which led to the creation of Bangladesh (formerly East Pakistan).

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17 Praveen Swami, India, Pakistan and the Secret Jihad: The Covert War in Kashmir, 1947-2005 (London: Routledge, 2007) ch. 2-3.

18 The official Pakistani storyline at the time held that only non-state militant outfits were involved and were acting of there own accord, but even then Chief of Army Staff Pervez Musharraf, who orchestrated the invasion, has admitted this was a Pakistani military operation. Non-state militants, including LeT, were responsible for only a small percentage of the overall force that launched the invasion. Pervez Musharraf, In the line of fire: A memior (New York: Free Press, 2006), Ch. 11. See also: Arif Jamal, Shadow War: The Untold Story of Jihad in Kashmir, (Brooklyn, N.Y.: Melville House, 2009) 191-201. Husain Haqqani, Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military, (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005) 249-250.

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