



Terror in Bombay

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On Tuesday evening, eight bombs, carefully arranged to explode in sequence, exploded along the commuter railroad system of Bombay (now commonly known as Mumbai), killing at least 147 people and wounding hundreds more. The Prime Minister of India, Manmohan Singh, said that "terrorists" were behind the attacks. [Intelligence agents said](#) that the jihad terrorist group Lashkar-e-Taiba, or Army of the Righteous, coordinated the attacks, along with the Students Islamic Movement of India. Lashkar-e-Taiba is closely allied with Al-Qaeda, from which it receives financial support.

Indian intelligence officials had been aware that an attack was in the offing: jihadists had been stockpiling explosives and weapons. However, Indian Home Minister [Shivraj Patil said](#) that officials knew the jihadists were planning to strike, "but place and time was not known."

Bombay is India's financial center. The bombings, according to the [Hindustan Times](#), were "methodically executed to shock the country's financial capital and hurl it into chaos." Most of the bombs went off in the first-class sections of the trains, where businessmen would be congregated. All the stations in which bombs exploded were located in Bombay's wealthy suburbs. Besides wresting Kashmir from Indian rule and establishing Islamic Sharia law there, Lashkar-e-Taiba has as one of its long-term goals the establishment of an Islamic state in India, and the subjugation of the Hindus. (One of the group's mottos is "[Killing Hindus is the way forward.](#)") The Indian financial class is overwhelmingly Hindu; the plotters clearly were well aware that Muslims in India generally don't travel in first-class compartments.

While the Lashkar-e-Taiba jihadists hoped to strike a deadly blow to India's economy with the Bombay bombings, the group apparently has

numerous allies among Muslims in Western countries, who are supporting the jihad financially and in other ways. In May 2005, [two men and a woman were arrested in Britain](#) for conspiring to provide Lashkar-e-Taiba with money and weapons. Five weeks ago, on June 6, Ali Asad Chandia, a Pakistani Muslim who has lived in the United States for twelve years and who taught third grade at an Islamic school in Maryland, [was convicted](#) of providing support to Lashkar-e-Taiba as a member of the "Virginia jihad network" – a group of young Muslims who were training to go to Afghanistan to wage jihad against American troops there. He faces up to 45 years in prison.

Nor has Lashkar's involvement in Western countries been only financial. Lashkar operatives sent a French convert to Islam, Willie Brigitte, to Australia, [allegedly to target military bases in Sydney](#). Brigitte also seems to have recruited Faheem Khalid Lodhi, [a jihadist recently convicted](#) on terror charges related to his possession of bomb-making materials and maps of Australia's electricity grid. In January 2003, a young Pakistani Muslim in Australia named Izhar ul-Haque, "fed up with Westerners," [made his way to a Lashkar training camp](#), but later had a change of heart.

Of course, the support for Lashkar-e-Taiba doesn't come only from the West. In November 2003, the [Daily Times of Pakistan reported](#):

LAHORE: Tehrik Khuddamul Islam Ameer Maulana Masood Azhar on

Friday was given millions of rupees by businessmen from Lahore's posh and industrial areas for Kashmiri mujahideen. Maulana Azhar said he would personally deliver the donations to the mujahideen. "He took four sacks full of rupees with him," a TKI source told Daily Times. He met with businessmen after the Friday prayers and asked them to give zakat to mujahideen. He also visited the industrial areas of Lahore on Sheikhpura Road and addressed people at an iftar dinner at a factory.

Support for Lashkar-e-Taiba is quite widespread in Pakistan. At one fundraising rally for Lashkar, [a woman came up to a Lashkar representative with her two-year-old son](#). "I am donating him for jihad!" she exclaimed; the Lashkar operative politely turned her away, saying, "We appreciate your donation. But he is too young. Keep him with you as our trust. When he would be a grown up boy, we will train him for jihad and he will earn a good name for you." The woman responded, "I am the mother of four sons. What happens if I donate one son for jihad, he embraces martyrdom and earns heaven for all of us!"

With such attitudes quite alive and well in Pakistan, the immediate condemnation of the Bombay bombings by the Pakistani government Tuesday evening is welcome, but is not nearly enough. Pakistani and Western officials need to watch the financial trail of the jihad closely – despite the best efforts of the *New York Times* -- for Tuesday's bombings show the end point of that trail. The sophisticated planning of the

Bombay attacks and the global reach of Lashkar-e-Taiba indicate that Western authorities underestimate such a group at their own peril. Moreover, the continued proliferation of the jihad ideology that fuels Lashkar's activities as unmistakably as does the money that pours into its coffers from Pakistan and the West also cannot be ignored indefi-

nitely. The Bombay bombings may well establish Lashkar-e-Taiba in the public consciousness as a fearsome terror group; we may hope that this will move anti-terror officials to shed more light on its international terror-recruitment and terror-financing activities also, and move to end them.

Robert Spencer is a scholar of Islamic history, theology, and law and the director of [Jihad Watch](#). He is the author of five books, seven monographs, and hundreds of articles about jihad and Islamic terrorism, including [Islam Unveiled: Disturbing Questions About the World's Fastest Growing Faith](#) and [The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam \(and the Crusades\)](#). He is also an Adjunct Fellow with the Free Congress Foundation.