Terrorism Mumbai Attack

Name

Institutional Affiliation

# Terrorism Mumbai Attack

**Why the Event Is Considered a Terrorist Attack Instead Of an Act of Violence**

In November 26, 2008, militants attacked various high-profile targets in Mumbai, India, using explosives and automatic weapons. The attack continued for over 60 hours, killing 165 people and nine attackers, and hundreds injured in the process(Kronstadt, 2008). Some of the prominent sites attacked include the Taj Mahal Palace and Oberoi-Trident among locations like a Jewish cultural center, cinema house, two hospitals, and café, and railway terminal. The event qualifies as a terrorist group because of the nature of the attack, which officials believe was orchestrated by a terror group from Pakistan, the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT)(Kronstadt, 2008). Further, the coordinated nature of the attack, for instance, the use of assault weapons, sophisticated technology like Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) and satellite photos spoke to a level of organization and advanced planning of terrorist groups.

**The Ideology and Underlying Motivation of the Terrorist Organization Responsible For the Attack**

Indian officials linked the Mumbai attack to the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terror group, a Pakistani terror group. Using forensic evidence, for instance, phone records, officials were successful in identifying the 9 terrorists killed in the attack as Pakistani nations(Kronstadt, 2008). The LeT was outlawed by the Islamabad government and is designated as the Foreign Terrorist Organization in U.S. The LeT is based in Pakistani and seeks an only Islamic rule in the region of Kashmir, and is a proponent of anti-Western and anti-India struggles. The LeT is considered an armed wing of the anti-U.S. Sunni religious group which was created in 1989(Kronstadt, 2008). The group is affiliated with Taliban and Al Qaeda and has taken on a more expansive role and a jihadist perspective.

**Draw Connections between the Organizations’ Ideology and the Global Nature of the Attack.**

In the past, the LeT has been implicated in various attacks which had the features of coordinated movements by gunmen who took hostages. The sophistication and training that the attackers demonstrated in the Mumbai attack. Over the past, the Pakistani government using its military and intelligence services has been accused of using Islamist groups to promote regional policy objectives. There are reports which have connected the Inter-Services Intelligence agency in Pakistan and the radical Islamist groups in areas like Kashmir. Officials have linked Pakistan with sponsoring jihad against India. Indian analysts have shown how the attack was orchestrated by LeT with support from Pakistani intelligence(Rabasa, Blackwill, Chalk, Cragin, & Fair, 2009). The motives of the attack are not clear but most reports show how sentiments by radical Islamists played a role in the attack. Attackers have been concluded to have been seeking vengeance for attack on Indian Muslims. Al Qaeda’s global jihadi ideology is also shown as having played a role in the objective of the attackers.

**The Local And Global Impact Of The Attack With Regard To Who Became Involved In The Response.**

The attack elicited calls from the Indian and American counterterrorism units for cooperation which could be beneficial for both countries. The attack fueled concerns for the policies and capabilities of India with regards to counterterrorism. The attackers extensively used technology, which presented a challenge for Indian investigators. Reports have shown that warning was given to Indian authorities by their U.S. intelligence agencies (Kronstadt, 2008). The American regional policy aimed at promoting stability and precluding conflict between India and Pakistan and the threat of religious extremists. During the attack, the Bush administration responded by reaffirming the commitment of the United States to its relationship with India. Unfortunately, response by Indian authorities demonstrated various key weaknesses in the counterterrorism and threat mitigation strategies(Kronstadt, 2008). For instance, the country’s inability to effectively monitor its coastline, lack of specificity and certainty with the attack to employ preventive measures, and insufficient target hardening.

**The Impact Of The Attack On The Terrorist Organization Itself.**

The Mumbai attack demonstrated the ability of the LeT to internationalize its targets. The group has assumed a larger role in the jihadi landscape. Compared to other militant groups, LeT is believed to have a broader reach into populations in rural areas, and hence making them more dangerous for countries that have expatriate communities in Pakistani. Moreover, LeT forced India and other parties to create robust counterterrorism and law enforcement connection. In the future, LeT improved its position in the jihadi movement, offering training to individuals radicalized in other countries. The attack unfortunately solidified the position of LeT in the global landscape(Rabasa, Blackwill, Chalk, Cragin, & Fair, 2009). The attack demonstrated the capacity of the jihadist organization based in Pakistan to plan and orchestrate a terrorist operation in neighboring countries. In the context of the group’s attack in India, the attack showed a continuing and escalating campaign by LeT. Beyond India, the Mumbai attack demonstrated the presence of a strategic terrorist culture which identified objectives and how to achieve them (Rabasa, Blackwill, Chalk, Cragin, & Fair, 2009). The Mumbai attack proved the rhetoric of the LeT to make Kashmir a part of the jihad. In doing so, the group emerged as opposed to being a subsidiary of Al Qaeda, but as an independent part of the jihad movement. In fact, considering the reduced role of al Qaeda, the attack made LeT a global contender in the jihad movement.

References

Kronstadt, K. A. (2008, December). Terrorist attacks in Mumbai, India, and implications for US interests. Library of Congress Washington DC Congressional Research Service.

Rabasa, A., Blackwill, R. D., Chalk, P., Cragin, K., & Fair, C. C. (2009). *The lessons of Mumbai* (Vol. 249). Rand Corporation.