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Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

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Responses to Information Requests

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23 October 2006

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Pakistan: Information on the murder of Dr. Ibne Hassan on 16 August 2003 in Karachi; whether anyone has been charged or claimed responsibility; whether there are suspects; whether there is a trial pending
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

On 16 August 2003, unidentified gunmen shot and killed Dr. Ibne Hassan [also spelled Ibn-e-Hasan (AP 17 Aug. 2003) and Ibn-e-Hassan (*Asian Affairs* Nov. 2003)] in the Karachi neighbourhood of Malir (AFP 16 Aug. 2003; Pakistan Press 17 Aug. 2003). Following the murder, hundreds of people demonstrated in the streets and some caused damage to property in the area (AFP 16 Aug. 2003; AP 17 Aug. 2003; *The News International* 31 Aug. 2003). Following the funeral of Dr. Hassan on 17 August 2003, a riot broke out, resulting in attacks on a Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant, gas stations and a police checkpoint (AP 17 Aug. 2003; Reuters 17 Aug. 2003). Also on 16 August 2003 in Malir, unknown assailants shot and killed 80-year-old Syed Waji Haider (AFP 17 Aug. 2003; AP 17 Aug. 2003; *Daily Times* 17 Aug. 2003).

Both Dr. Hassan and Haider were Shiite Muslims (AP 17 Aug. 2003; *Daily Times* 17 Aug. 2003). According to media reports, the police believe the murder of Dr. Hassan was likely driven by sectarian aims (AFP 16 Aug. 2003; AP 17 Aug. 2003). In the few years preceding his murder, Sunni-Shiite sectarian violence claimed approximately 50 Shiite doctors in Karachi (*The News International* 31 Aug. 2003; AFP 17 Aug. 2003). In Pakistan, Shiite Muslims account for approximately 20 percent of the population (AFP 17 Aug. 2003) and Sunni Muslims account for 77 percent (US 5 Oct. 2006).

No information could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate as to whether any person or group has been charged with the murder of Dr. Hassan or has claimed responsibility, whether there are any suspects, or whether a trial is pending. However, in February 2004, two members of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LJ) [also Lashkar I Jhangvi (CDI 3 Mar. 2003) and Lashkar-i-Jhangvi (US 11 Oct. 2005)] were remanded in police custody for questioning in connection with the murder (*Dawn* 27 Feb. 2004; *The News International* 26 Feb. 2004). The LJ is a Sunni sectarian organization named by both the Pakistani and United States governments as a "terrorist" group (CDI 3 Mar. 2003; *Shia News* 30 Jan. 2003; US 11 Oct. 2003).

The LJ members in question, Sajid Jabbar, alias Budha (*Dawn* 19 Feb. 2004), and Mohammad Athar, aliases Khalid Memon (ibid.) and Kala (*Pakistan Times* 18 Feb. 2004), were also arrested in connection with other offences, including delivering parcel bombs to government offices (*Dawn* 18 Feb. 2004; Pakistan Press 4 Mar. 2004; *Pakistan Times* 18 Feb. 2004). Media sources indicate that both Jabbar and Athar were later acquitted of charges related to the parcel bomb case (*Dawn* 9 Mar. 2004; Pakistan Press 30 Aug. 2005; ibid. 22 Mar. 2004; ibid. 8 Mar. 2004). Media sources also report that Jabbar was suspected of involvement in the January 2002 murder of American journalist Daniel Pearl (CNN 17 Feb. 2004; *Telegraph* 5 Sept. 2004). Among the sources consulted, no information could be found regarding the outcome of the police questioning of Jabbar and Athar in relation to the murder of Dr. Ibne Hassan.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

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Oral sources: The High Court of Sindh Karachi and a Pakistani criminal lawyer did not provide information within the time constraints of this Response.

Internet sites, including: British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), National Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism (MIPT), Pakistan News Service, South Asian Terrorism Portal, *The Nation*, World News Network.

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