

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

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Responses to Information Requests

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Pakistan: Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) militant group, including its leaders, activities, and areas of operation; actions taken by authorities against JeM; state protection offered to people targeted by JeM (2013-January 2015)

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1. JeM's Creation and Objectives

The Pakistan-based group JeM was designated a foreign terrorist organization by the US Department of State in December 2001 (US 30 Apr. 2014, 288).

Sources use the following names when referring to JeM:

- Army of Mohammed, Mohammed's Army, Tehrik ul-Furqaan, Khuddam ul-Islam (KuI), Khudamul Islam, Kuddam e Islami (US [2014]a; Australia 9 Mar. 2012);
- Army of the Prophet, Jaish-i-Mohammed, Jaish-i-Mohammad, Jaish-i-Muhammad, Jaish-i-Muhammed, Jaish-e-Mohammad Mujahideen E Tanzeem, Jamaat ul-Furqan (JuF), Jeish-e-Mahammed, Jesh-e-Mohammadi, Khudamul Islam, National Movement for the Restoration of Pakistani Sovereignty and Army of the Prophet (ibid.);
- Jish-e-Mohammad. (*The News International* 3 Mar. 2014).

In a report on terrorist organizations, the Australian National Security, the Australian government's portal on national security, describes JeM as a "fundamentalist Deobandi [1] Sunni Islamist organisation" operating primarily in Indian-administered Kashmir (IAK) (9 Mar. 2012). The Anti-defamation League (ADL), a US- and Israel-based civil rights and human relations agency that fights "all forms of bigotry," including anti-Semitism, extremism and hate crimes, by "developing materials, programs and services" (ADL n.d.b), reports that JeM is a Pakistan-based Sunni "extremist group" that conducts terrorist operations against the Pakistan government, Indian interests in Kashmir, as well as civilians (ADL n.d.a). Sources also indicate that JeM has targeted sectarian minority groups in Pakistan (ibid.; Mapping Militant Organizations 3 Aug. 2012a; CFR 9 July 2009).

Sources report that JeM was founded in early 2000 by Masood Azhar [also referred to as Moulana Muhammad Azhar or Maulana Masood Azhar], a former senior leader of Harakut ul-Ansar [also referred to as Harat-ul-Mujahideen or Harakat ul-Mujahideen, a Pakistan-based extremist group created to oppose the Soviet forces and support jihad in Afghanistan (Mapping Militant Organizations 3 Aug. 2012a)] (Australia 9 Mar 2012; US 30 Apr. 2014, 288). According to sources, Masood Azhar was born in Bahawalpur, in the Pakistani province of Punjab (BBC 16 Dec. 2002; Mapping Militant Organizations 3 Aug. 2012a), to a "religious Sunni family" (ibid.). The BBC describes his family as "rich" and "land-owning" (BBC 16 Dec. 2002).

The Australian National Security states that JeM is estimated to have "several hundred members, including 300 to 400 fighters," but that the complete command structure is unknown (Australia 9 Mar. 2012). The South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP), a database collecting information primarily on terrorism and warfare in South Asia (SATP n.d.c), similarly indicates that there are no reports of a formal governing body or council within the group (SATP n.d.a).

Sources indicate that since its creation, JeM has had ties with the Taliban (Mapping Militant Organizations 3 Aug. 2012a; FAS 3 May 2004). The Australian National Security states that Masood Azhar reportedly founded JeM with support from Usama bin Laden, the Afghan Taliban, Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) [2], and other Sunni extremist organizations in Pakistan (Australia 9 Mar. 2012). According to Mapping Militant Organizations, a Stanford University research project that provides information on and "traces the evolution of militant organizations and the interactions that develop between them over time" (Mapping Militant Organizations n.d.), JeM has created important relationships with other jihadi organizations, including the Taliban, Al-Qaeda, Lashkar-e-Taiba [3], Al-Rashid Trust [4] and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) [5] (ibid. 3 Aug. 2012a). Furthermore, sources report that JeM has received funding from Al-Qaeda (ibid.; FAS 3 May 2004; GlobalSecurity.org 11 July 2011). According to sources, JeM is aligned with the political party Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam Fazlur Rehman faction (JUI-F) (ibid.; Mapping Militant Organizations 3 Aug. 2012a; Australia 9 Mar. 2012), a prominent Islamist party (ibid.; Mapping Militant Organizations 3 Aug. 2012a).

Sources indicate that JeM has declared war against the US, and aims to incorporate Kashmir into Pakistan (CFR 9 July 2009; US 30 Apr. 2014, 288), as well as to expel foreign troops from Afghanistan (ibid.). The Stanford University Mapping Militant Organizations' report similarly states that JeM "aims to unite Jammu and Kashmir with Pakistan," and that the group advocates for the "destruction" of both India and America (Mapping Militant Organizations 3 Aug. 2012a).

2. Areas of Operation

According to Mapping Militant Organizations, JeM is a predominantly Pakistani organization focusing primarily on "high-security government targets, including army bases, camps, and public places" in Pakistan and Kashmir (ibid.). A 6 November 2014 article published by the *Express Tribune*, a Pakistani daily newspaper, reports that the group "remains focused on Kashmir and India," has bases in Punjab and urban Sindh and has recently "resurfaced in places like Karachi" (6 Nov. 2014). A 23 January 2014 report on violence in Pakistan by the International Crisis Group indicates that JeM has a base in Punjab and operates both inside and outside of the country. Sources indicate that Masood Azhar reportedly operates from Bahawalpur, in Pakistani Punjab (*Dawn* 2 Feb. 2014; *The Economist* 3 June 2010). Similarly, a 7 February 2014 article by *India Today*, an Indian daily newspaper, indicates that JeM's headquarters are located in Bahawalpur.

3. Targets and Activities

Sources indicate that JeM was the first jihadi organization to launch suicide attacks in Kashmir (*Kashmir Herald* Jan. 2002; Mapping Militant Organizations 3 Aug. 2012a). JeM has reportedly launched suicide attacks on high-security government operations, including camps, army bases, as well as public places in Kashmir and other parts of India (ibid.; SATP n.d.a). Sources indicate that the group's attacks are aimed at killing the maximum number of people, including security force personnel and civilians (Mapping Militant Organizations 3 Aug. 2012a; ADL n.d.a). Sources also report that the group targets the Pakistani state (ibid.; CFR 9 July 2009) and sectarian minorities (ADL n.d.). According to Mapping Militant Organizations, JeM targets Christians and Shiites (Mapping Militant Organizations 3 Aug. 2012a).

In 2012, Stanford University's Mapping Militant Organizations stated that as of spring of 2011, "JeM is said to be one of the most violent active terrorist organizations within Pakistan" (ibid.). A 2011 article by the *Express Tribune* describes JeM as "the second largest jihadi group based in Punjab" (19 Aug. 2011). Similarly, an article published by the Jamestown Foundation, a "provider of research and analysis on conflict and instability in Eurasia" (The Jamestown Foundation n.d.), in its journal *Terrorism Monitor*, states that JeM is often described as "the second most lethal India-centric terror group based in the Pakistani Punjab," and that JeM is one of the "influential Pakistan-based terror organizations that have inspired militancy in Muslim youth" (11 Nov. 2011).

Sources report that, despite bans on JeM's activities, the group continues to operate openly in different areas of Pakistan (US [2014]a; *Business Standard* 21 Feb. 2014). The group's attacks include:

- an attack on India's parliament building in 2001 (Australia 9 Mar. 2012; GlobalSecurity.org 11 July 2011) in New Delhi, that killed 9 and injured 18 (ibid.);
- the murder of US journalist Daniel Pearl in 2002 (US 30 Apr. 2014, 288; Australia 9 Mar. 2012), the South Asia bureau chief for the *Wall Street Journal* (ibid.);

- two assassination attempts against Pakistani President Musharraf in 2003 (ibid.; CFR 9 July 2009; US 30 Apr. 2014, 288); and

Furthermore, in October 2001, JeM claimed responsibility for a suicide attack on the Jammu and Kashmir legislative building in Srinagar that killed 31 people (US 30 Apr. 2014, 288; GlobalSecurity.org 11 July 2011) but later denied the claim (ibid.).

4. State Response

4.1 Ban on JeM

In December 2001, JeM attacked the Indian parliament (Asian Tribune 7 May 2010; Australia 9 Mar. 2012) in New Delhi, alongside Lashkar-e-Taiba, killing 9 people and injuring 18 (Asian Tribune 7 May 2010; GlobalSecurity.org 11 July 2011). Further to the group's attack on the Indian parliament, JeM renamed itself Tehrik-ul-Furqan (ADL n.d.a; Mapping Militant Organizations 3 Aug. 2012a). Stanford University's Mapping Militant Organizations also states that JeM changed its name to Tehrik-ul-Furqan "following reports that the US State Department was considering declaring JeM a foreign terrorist organization" (ibid.). According to SATP, on 25 October 2001, JeM was banned by the Indian government under the provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism Act (SATP n.d.a). According to the *Terrorism Monitor* article, JeM resumed its operations in Pakistan as "an educational and religious charity" under the name Al-Rahmat Trust (ART), which was founded in 2001 (The Jamestown Foundation 11 Nov. 2011). In 2011, the *Express Tribune* similarly reported that JeM had "revived" the ART charity organization (19 Aug. 2011). The Jamestown Foundation notes that ART has been "instrumental" in the sponsorship and recruitment of militants fighting in Indian-administered Kashmir, Afghanistan and Pakistan (11 Nov. 2011).

In 2002, Pakistan outlawed JeM and by 2003, the organization divided into two groups, Jamaat ul-Furqan (JuF) and Khuddam-ul-Islam (KuI) (Australia 9 Mar. 2012; FAS 3 May 2004; US 30 Apr. 2014, 288). Sources indicate that both JuF and KuI were banned in November 2003 by the Pakistani authorities (ibid.; FAS 3 May 2004; Australia 9 Mar. 2012). Despite having divided into two groups, in most reports, JeM is still viewed as a single entity (ibid.; Mapping Militant Organizations 3 Aug. 2012a).

According to an article by Asian Tribune, a news website focusing primarily on South Asia, "some intelligence experts in many countries propose that JeM is in fact a creation of Pakistan's influential spy network ISI," since "India and Pakistan have fought several wars" over the "disputed province" of Kashmir (7 May 2010). Similarly, a 2013 report published by the US Institute of Peace (USIP), an independent, federally-funded national security institution devoted to the nonviolent prevention and mitigation of deadly conflict abroad (USIP n.d.), indicates that "Pakistan's powerful ISI facilitated the re-emergence" of JeM under its new names (USIP 2013, 7).

4.2 Resurfacing of JeM

A 19 August 2011 article by the *Express Tribune* reported that, after being underground for a decade since its ban in 2001, JeM had returned to "full-scale public activity including fundraising while security agencies appear to be overlooking its 'resurgence'" (*The Express Tribune* 19 Aug. 2011). *India Today* indicates that since the 2008 ouster of President Musharraf and the return to power of the Pakistan Muslim League, JeM went through a "quiet revival" (7 Feb. 2014). *The Express Tribune* reports that some of JeM's activists and intelligence officials had declared that the group was in the process of regaining its former financial and physical strength, that it was working on a way to reach out to group activists, especially those that had abandoned the organization, and that it had revived its charity, ART (*The Express Tribune* 19 Aug. 2011). A coordinator associated with ART told the *Express Tribune* that fundraising was in "full swing" in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab (ibid.). In addition, the coordinator stated that government agencies have never prevented ART from fundraising in those areas (ibid.). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

In a 1 March 2014 article published on the web platform War on the Rocks (WOTR) [6], the Senior Program Associate for South Asia at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Michael Kugelman [7], reports that shortly after the attack on India's Parliament and the attempted assassination of the President, Azhar disappeared from public view but resurfaced in 2014, when "a fiery recorded lecture" was broadcast at an anti-India rally (Kugelman 1 Mar. 2014). Similarly, according to sources, after a "long hibernation," Maulana Masood Azhar resurfaced in January 2014, when he addressed thousands of supporters "by phone" at a rally in Muzaffarabad (*Dawn* 2 Feb. 2014; *The Economic Times* 2 Feb. 2014). Sources report that the rally promoted a book written by a former JeM leader, Mohammad Afzal Guru, who, in 2013, was executed in India for his role in the attack on the Indian parliament (ibid.; *Dawn* 27 Jan. 2014). Sources also report that Azhar asked Pakistan to "'lift restrictions on jihad'" and warned that his group would take "'revenge'" for Mohammad Guru's execution (ibid.; *The Economic Times* 2 Feb. 2014). Approximately 10,000

people attended the rally, according to sources; rally organizers did not allow journalists to enter with cell phones or cameras, and police installed "walk-through gates" (ibid.; *Dawn* 27 Jan. 2014).

Sources report that since his reappearance, Azhar has threatened to kill Narendra Modi [the Gujarat Chief Minister (Zee News 19 Dec. 2013)] if he becomes India's next prime minister (Zee News 19 Dec. 2013; Kugelman 1 Mar. 2014). Sources also report that Azhar has claimed to have 300 suicide bombers available to attack India (ibid.; First Post 18 Feb. 2014).

Sources report that since December 2014, Indian authorities have issued two airport security alerts, warning of an attempt by members of JeM to hijack a plane, with smaller airfields most at risk (ibid.; *Business Standard* 21 Feb. 2014).

A January 2015 article by the *Sunday Guardian*, an India-based newspaper, reports that a unit of Pakistan's Special Services Group, a specialized force of the Pakistani army, had been deployed "near the International Border to help terrorists belonging to Lashkhar-E-Taiba and Jaish-E-Mohammed infiltrate into India" (24 Jan. 2015).

4.3 Pakistan's Anti-terrorism Activities, Including Against JeM

USIP reports that in 2003, a Special Investigation Group was established by the Pakistan federal government as a counterterrorism unit "to undertake joint investigations with provincial police departments for offences punishable under Pakistan's 1997 Anti-Terrorism Act" (USIP 2013, 14). The same source reports that, "[i]n reality, the ISI's counterterrorism wing, ISI-CT, was taking the lead on these issues and continues to do so today" (ibid.). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

The Express Tribune reports that, according to Article 11-E of the Anti-terrorism Act, once an organization is banned, its publications and literature must be seized, its offices must be closed off, its finances frozen and addresses and dissemination banned (*The Express Tribune* 10 Oct. 2013). According to the article published by the Jamestown Foundation on 11 November 2011, a coordinator associated with ART stated that most of JeM's "operational arms" and publications, such as *Muslim Ummah* and *Al-Qalam*, are available on newsstands with the Audit Bureau of Circulation's certification (issued by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting). In a 2 February 2014 article, the Pakistan daily newspaper *Dawn* similarly states that publications and audiocassettes of Azhar's speeches were being "freely circulated," and that the widely disseminated *Zarb-i-Momin* (JeM's newspaper) continued to be published (*Dawn* 2 Feb. 2014).

In a June 2010 article, the *Economist* quoted a Lahore-based political analyst as saying that "'[t]he Punjab government is not only complacent, there is a certain ambivalence in their attitude' towards extremists. ...They compete for the religious vote bank'" (*The Economist* 3 June 2010). The same source states that

as the death toll grows, so do concerns that even the appearance of official tolerance gives these organisations legitimacy. ... The Federal Interior Minister, Rehman Malik, declared that an "operation" was needed to clear out the Punjabi groups. He claimed that 44% of Pakistan's *madrassas* - Islamic seminaries - are based in south Punjab and that groups like ... Jaish-e-Mohammed are "part of the Taliban and al-Qaeda." Punjab's government said there was no need for any such operation. (ibid.)

Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

In 2014, the Pakistani government issued the country's first *National Internal Security Policy (NISP)*, responsible for the protection of the country's national interests by addressing the nation's preoccupations and prevailing security issues (Pakistan 25 Feb. 2014). *The Express Tribune* reports that the policy has been faced with criticism; according to a journalist commissioned to write an analysis report on the policy, though it has a "comprehensive coverage of internal security issues," he said he had "little hope about its implementation" (*The Express Tribune* 27 Mar. 2014). The same journalist added that due to "herculean coordination efforts required of provinces and intelligence agencies for internal security," he could not see that the government would be able to implement the policy in the near future (ibid.). *The News International*, a Pakistani newspaper, stated in a 3 March 2014 article that, according to the *NISP*, there are a total of 60 banned organizations in Pakistan, including JeM, and although the government has taken steps to ban certain organizations, "metamorphism" of these groups and "implementation gaps" remain a challenge for the government's internal security mechanisms.

Sources report that a terrorist attack on 16 December 2014 on a Peshawar school that killed 149 people, mostly children (RT 25 Dec. 2014; *Sydney Morning Herald* 18 Dec. 2014; *The Express Tribune* 15 Jan. 2015) was perpetrated by Tehreek-e-Taliban (ibid.). Sources indicate that, following the attack, Pakistan's leadership agreed on an antiterrorist action plan (ibid.; RT 25 Dec. 2014). RT, a Russian news network (RT n.d.), reports

that the plan aims to "revamp the criminal system, crackdown on terrorist hideouts, communications and sources of income, and establish a 5,000-strong counter-terrorism force" (RT 25 Dec. 2014). The *Express Tribune* similarly reports that as a part of Pakistan's National Action Plan to defeat terrorism, "the government is going to launch a crackdown on proscribed organisations" (*The Express Tribune* 10 Jan. 2015). *The Express Tribune* adds that the plan "envisages the establishment of military courts to expedite trials of terror suspects" (ibid. 15 Jan. 2015).

Further information on actions taken by the authorities against JeM and state protection offered to individuals targeted by JeM could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

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 sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

Notes

[1] GlobalSecurity.org, a website that focuses on security and compiles information from a variety of sources (GlobalSecurity.org n.d.b), states that "the Deobandi school has long sought to purify Islam by discarding supposedly un-Islamic accretions to the faith and reemphasizing the models established in the Koran and the customary practices of the Prophet Mohammed" (ibid. n.d.a).

[2] Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) is the country's intelligence agency, responsible for safeguarding the nation's interests and security both inside and outside of the country (Pakistan 2 Jan. 2006). Its primary objectives also include "reinforcing Pakistan['s] power base in the region" (ibid.).

[3] According to the US National Counterterrorism Center, "Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, also known as Army of the Righteous, is one of the largest and most proficient of the Kashmir-focused militant groups" (US [2014]b).

[4] The SATP reports that "[t]he Karachi[-]based Al-Rashid Trust (ART) is one of the 27 groups and organisations listed by the US State Department on September 22, 2001, for involvement in financing and supporting a network of international Islamist terrorist groups" (SATP n.d.b).

[5] "LeJ is a violent, anti-Shiite militant group in Pakistan with ties to several other groups in the region, including Al Qaeda" (Mapping Militant Organizations 3 Aug. 2012b).

[6] WOTR is a Washington-based web "platform for analysis, commentary, debate and multimedia content" on foreign policy and national security issues that "features articles and podcasts produced by an array of writers with deep experience in these matters" (WOTR n.d.a).

[7] Michael Kugelman's work focuses on Pakistan, India and Afghanistan (WOTR n.d.b).

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Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: A professor of social sciences at the University of Ottawa was unable to provide information within the time constraints of this Response.

Attempts to contact the following were unsuccessful within the time constraints of this Response: Asian Human Rights Commission; assistant professor, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University; assistant professor, School of International Service at the American University; Canada – High Commission to Pakistan; Director, National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, University of Maryland; Director, Norman Patterson School of Internal Affairs, University of Carleton; Human Rights Commission of Pakistan; journalist, Agence France-Presse; Pakistan – Embassy in Washington, DC, High Commission in Ottawa, Wafaqi Mohtasib (Ombudsman); professor, Department of Politics and International Affairs, Wakeforest University; Project Manager, Canadian Network for Research on Terrorism, University of British Columbia; Punjab – Inspector General of Police; UN – UNHCR.

Internet sites, including: Amnesty International; Asia Center for Human Rights; Asian Human Rights Commission; Asia Observer; The Canadian Network for Research on Terrorism; Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; CNN; Combating Terrorism Center; The Conflict Monitoring Center; ecoi.net; European Interagency Security Forum; Factiva; Global Center on Cooperative Security; Global Terrorism Database; *The Guardian*; Human Rights Watch – Asia; IHS Global Insight; IRIN; Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies; International Crisis Group; The Investigative Project on Terrorism; Kashmir Times; National Counter Terrorism Authority; *The New York Times*; Pakistan – Human Rights Commission, The Official Gateway to the Government of Pakistan, Pakistan Defence; Reporters Without Borders; Security and Society; SITE Monitoring Service; Small Arms Survey; Society for Threatened Peoples; Terrorism Research and Analysis Consortium; UN – Refworld.

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