



Pursuing Lashkar-e-Taiba

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Pursuing Lashkar-e-Taiba-The U.S. has sought to pressure Pakistan over the terror group but the fundamental problem remains

- Today, on the 10th anniversary of the Mumbai terror attacks, it is worth considering how U.S. policy towards the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) has evolved over the last decade.
- The conventional wisdom is that the Afghanistan war has compelled Washington to give more attention to Afghanistan-focussed militants in Pakistan than to the LeT and other India-oriented jihadists.
- With 15,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan, the Taliban is a much more clear and present danger to American lives than the LeT and its India-focussed ilk.
- Still, the U.S. hasn't exactly sidelined the LeT issue.
- The U.S. government has sought to pressure Pakistan over the LeT in ways that go beyond its formal designation of the LeT as a foreign terrorist organisation in 2001, and the \$10 million bounty it put on Hafiz Saeed in 2012.
- Early this year, however, the Financial Action Task Force penalised Islamabad for failing to curb the finances of the LeT-affiliated Jamaat-ud-Dawah. Additionally, China has signed on to BRICS and Heart of Asia declarations condemning the LeT.
- In April, the State Department designated the LeT's newest affiliate, Milli Muslim League, as a terrorist organisation.
- True, such moves have done little to address the fundamental problem: the LeT, its various front organisations, and many of its top leaders enjoy relative freedom in Pakistan, and Pakistani legal action against the Mumbai perpetrators remains limited.
- Nonetheless, impelled in great part by counterterrorism imperatives, the U.S.-India defence partnership continues to grow.
- Indeed, the Mumbai attacks are a tragic yet powerful symbol of the shared threat of terrorism that brings the two nations together.
- U.S.-India counterterrorism cooperation is poised to increase.

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