



ICSR Update

DECEMBER 2008/JANUARY 2009

ICSR is a unique partnership in which King's College London, the University of Pennsylvania, the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya, and the Regional Center on Conflict Prevention Amman are equal stakeholders.

Our joint mission is to bring together knowledge and leadership to counter the growth of radicalisation and political violence.

Dear Friend,

I am sure you have followed the tragic events in India in the past week. They serve as a reminder that the threat from terrorism affects all parts of the globe. Given the magnitude of the event, a special ICSR briefing is included in this newsletter. It draws on the expertise of ICSR analysts and researchers, who have been very busy in sharing their knowledge with policymakers and the public.

Find below an abridged summary of events and other news from ICSR and our four partner institutions. You will soon hear more about concluded and upcoming ICSR projects, especially our report on Countering Online Radicalisation, to be released early in the new year, and a number of timely papers written by leading experts in the field.

If you have any questions or ideas, please do not hesitate to get in touch. In any case, best wishes for the Christmas holidays and a peaceful new year.

Dr. Peter Neumann
Director, ICSR

Selected Events

(Unless stated otherwise, events take place at ICSR in London)

Pakistan in Crisis: A Report from the North West Frontier Province. On 6 November Professor Anatol Lieven shared experiences of his recent field work in Pakistan, where he conducted research for his upcoming book.

Prospects for Peace in the Middle East. The Palestinian Ambassador to the United Kingdom, Professor Manuel Hassassian, gave a talk in which he discussed possibilities for change and progress in the Israel-Palestine peace process.

Upcoming Event: The Muslim Brotherhood in the West. On 9 December, Lorenzo Vidino will discuss the modus operandi of the Muslim Brotherhood in Europe and assess how various Western governments interact with it.

Upcoming Event: Making Peace in Northern Ireland – Lessons for Conflict Resolution. On 15 December, Peter Hain MP will share some of the lessons learned during his time as British Northern Ireland Secretary in 2005-07.

News From Our Partners

Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya: The International Institute for Counterterrorism will hold a two day conference on 4-5 December 2008 to discuss the threat of terrorism to the stability of the Middle East. For more information, visit www.ict.org.il.

University of Pennsylvania: On 17 October, Penn hosted the first in its new series of ICSR seminars, with ICSR Director Dr. Peter Neumann speaking about the dynamics of Muslim radicalisation in Europe.

Regional Center on Conflict Prevention Amman: Together with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, RCCP organized a third workshop entitled *Conflict Prevention in Practice*, which aims to develop a training manual on conflict prevention for Jordanian NGOs.

King's College London: In collaboration with ICSR, King's organized a series of debates on the presidential elections and the future of the 'War on Terror' in the United States. Events were held in Boston, Washington DC, and New York.

Fact File: *The Mumbai Attacks*

The attacks on Mumbai began on 26 November and ended three days later.

At least 170 people – including more than 30 foreigners – were killed, more than 300 injured.

The attackers targeted two hotels, a Jewish community centre and a series of other landmarks in the city.

The attacks initially took the form of commando-style raids, and later evolved into several protracted sieges, which were eventually ended by Indian special forces.

A previously unknown group calling itself the Deccan Mujahedeen claimed responsibility.

ICSR

King's College London
138-142 Strand
London WC2R 1HH
United Kingdom

P +44 (0) 207 848 2065
F +44 (0) 207 848 2748
E mail@icsr.info

<http://www.icsr.info>

If you do not wish to receive *ICSR Update*, unsubscribe by sending a blank email to mail@icsr.info.

Briefing: *The Mumbai Attacks*

The following is a summary of the ICSR analysis provided to the public and policymakers over the course of the past six days. Much remains unknown, but some core elements are becoming increasingly clear.

As we have learned from the interrogation of the one surviving attacker, the **planning** for the operation began between six months and a year ago, and included several reconnaissance missions as well as 'the forward basing of weapons and ammunition secretly hidden in at least one hotel' (Daily Telegraph, 29 November).

ICSR experts were among the first to highlight the sophistication of the attack. ICSR Director Peter Neumann correctly assessed that the attack 'was not as sophisticated as 9/11 but it needed planning [and] training' (The Guardian, 29 November): despite the seemingly chaotic impression, it was 'not some leaderless, grassroots thing' (Washington Post, 28 November).

The Indian authorities immediately alleged that the attackers could be traced to **Pakistan**. While such claims were initially regarded with a degree of skepticism, more evidence has since emerged.

This includes the apparent identity of the one surviving attacker, spelling errors in the Hindi language claim of responsibility, or the fact that the attackers conversed with each other in Punjabi (The Hindu, 1 December).

One of the most important clues can be found in the method of attack. ICSR Associate Fellow Stephen Tankel was among the first Western analysts to connect the style of attacks with the Pakistan based group Lashkar-e-Taiba.

Writing for the Guardian, he explained: 'Opposed to suicide on theological grounds, the group pioneered the use of Fidayeen attacks in which fighters storm a target – generally using automatic weapons and hand grenades... [I]f the Fidayee dies during the operation, it is because he fought to the death rather than dying by his own hand' (The Guardian, 27 November).

Initially, claims of **involvement by Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT)** were thought to be unlikely, given the group's original focus on the Kashmir conflict and its long-standing reluctance to target Westerners.

However, ICSR Associate Fellow Laila Bokhari points out that this might no longer be true. Drawing on the interviews she recently carried out with LeT members, she confirms that the group has 'shifted their agenda to launch more attacks in India. They have broader, more global goals, which include the wider enemy – the US, India, and Israel'.

This shift, she argues, 'reflects a number of developments, including a wider membership and support network in Europe and Australia, as well as the growing influence of Al Qaeda'.

LeT is a separate organization, but **connections with Al Qaeda** exist. According to Tankel, a number of Western, Al Qaeda inspired terrorists have trained with LeT or passed through the group's training camps on their way to Al Qaeda. One of Al Qaeda's most senior operatives, Abu Zubayda, was arrested in an LeT safe house.

Like Bokhari, Tankel believes that 'elements of LeT are becoming more globalized and are adopting Al Qaeda's global jihadist outlook'. This, however, does not imply that the Mumbai attacks were organised by Al Qaeda. As Neumann pointed out, 'at this point, it is impossible to say whether the links to Al Qaeda were merely ideological or operational' (Sky News, 29 November).

Little is yet known about the precise **aims** of the attacks. Based on briefings received from Western intelligence sources, one of the more likely objectives might have been the disruption of the recently improved relationship between Pakistan and India.

Indeed, there can be no doubt that the attacks are likely to make the **relationship between India and Pakistan** more complicated. Even though the Pakistani government offered immediate assistance, ICSR Associate Fellow Ely Karmon argues that 'it is not sure that this noteworthy gesture... will prevent a serious crisis' (ABC, 29 November).

This view is shared by Professor Anatol Lieven, a Pakistan expert at King's College London: 'The Pakistan government wants to be helpful, but there are limits. It may arrest or kill the people it believes are associated with the operation. But extraditing them to India is out of the question. That would be seen as a national humiliation' (1 December).

As events develop, ICSR will continue to provide analysis on the problem of global terrorism and its implications for the region.