

Mumbai attack mastermind set free by Pakistan court

Chief of the banned Islamist organisation Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD) and founder of the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) Hafiz Saeed, who was detained following the [Mumbai](#) terror attacks in India, was released by the Lahore High Court Tuesday.

A JuD spokesperson told reporters at Lahore that Saeed, who was under house arrest, had been set free.

'Saeed is not a terrorist,' the spokesperson held, adding that JuD was not a terror organisation either.

A.K. Dogar, Saeed's lawyer, said that the high court described the detention of Saeed as illegal and hence Saeed was set free.

On May 30, the Pakistani government presented evidence to the Lahore High Court linking the JuD of terror mastermind Hafiz Saeed to Al Qaida.

Attorney Latif Khosa told the court during an in-camera hearing Saturday 'that JuD is linked to Al-Qaeda, adding one culprit involved in Mumbai attacks is said to have links with JuD', Geo TV said.

Saeed is the founder of the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terror group that India blames for the Nov 26-29, 2008 terror attacks in Mumbai. The LeT had morphed into the JuD after the Pakistani government banned it under international pressure in the wake of the Dec 13, 2001 attack on the Indian parliament that [New Delhi](#) blamed on the terror group.

Ajmal Amir Kasab, the lone gunman captured alive during the Mumbai mayhem, has admitted to being a Pakistani national and to being trained by the LeT for the Mumbai attacks.

Saeed was detained last December after the United Nations declared Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD), a frontal organisation of the LeT, as a terrorist group.

He was originally detained for one month and this has been successively extended. On May 5, his detention was extended by 60 days.

After the UN action, the authorities arrested some 40 JuD members and closed dozens of its offices and relief units in the country.

India had in January handed over a dossier to Pakistan linking the LeT and some Pakistani nationals to the Mumbai carnage that claimed the lives of over 170 people, including 26 foreigners.

In February, Pakistan admitted that part of the Mumbai conspiracy was planned in this country and also submitted a list of 30 questions on the Indian dossier of the evidence on Mumbai attack.

India replied to this in March. Pakistan then sought another set of clarifications that India has provided.

Also in December 2008, Pakistani authorities arrested LeT commander Zakiur Rehman Lakhvi after India handed over to the FBI intercepts of telephone conversations between him and the Mumbai attackers.

The FBI concluded that the intercepts were genuine and that Lakhvi was the handler of the Mumbai attackers.

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