



# TERROR TRACKER

*Newsletter by Counter Terrorism Centre*



MANOHAR PARRIKAR INSTITUTE FOR  
DEFENCE STUDIES AND ANALYSES  
मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान



**BALUCH TRAIN HIJACKING KILLS 26**

**GABBARD: THREAT TO HINDUS IN BANGLADESH**

**HAIFIZ SAEED AIDE ABU QATAL SHOT DEAD**

**+ MORE NEWS & ANALYSES**

# Baloch Train Hijacking Kills 26

**O**n 11 March 2025, militants of the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) ambushed the Jaffar Express train in Balochistan, taking over 400 passengers hostage. In the ensuing violence, a total of 26 hostages were reportedly killed by the militants. The deceased included several army and paramilitary soldiers, government officials, and a few civilians.

The army operation to rescue hostages began late, which ended a 30-hour-long standoff and led to the deaths of all 33 militants and the rescue of 354 hostages.

The attack highlighted the growing threat posed by militant groups in Balochistan, which experts suspect have links to Afghanistan. It is reported that the Pakistani military is currently conducting around 180 intelligence-driven “counter-terror” operations on an almost daily basis.

In 2024, over 59,000 operations were carried out, leading to the deaths of 1,250 militants and 563 soldiers. Pakistan’s security forces are struggling to combat terrorism, particularly led by groups like Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP),

and is fighting militants bearing weapons left behind by US forces following their withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021.

Following the train hijacking, Balochistan’s Chief Minister Sarfaraz Bugti commended what he called was the military’s swift response and pointed to the region’s volatile situation, while admitting the need for stronger governance and reforms.

He said that the policies of appeasement should end and instructed that such violence should be met with decisive action. Bugti noted that Baloch terrorists had become allies of the TTP and called for robust measures to counter the threat.

In India, security alerts have been heightened across Jammu and Kashmir in the wake of the Baloch train hijacking and the killing of a top Lashkar-e-Taiba commander. The threat of further attacks in Pakistan remains a concern for our security forces as well, with authorities focusing on preventive measures against potential rise in terrorist activities. – [\*The Hindu\*](#), [\*Deccan Herald\*](#)

# Gabbard: Threat to Hindus in Bangladesh

**I**n an exclusive interview with NDTV, US Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard expressed the Trump administration's grave concerns over the ongoing persecution of religious minorities — Hindus, Buddhists, and Christians — in Bangladesh.

Gabbard also highlighted the growing threat of Islamist terrorism globally. However, she reaffirmed the US administration's commitment to defeating terrorism and emphasised that both President Trump and Indian Prime Minister Modi would work together towards combating the threat.

During Prime Minister Modi's visit to Washington, he met with Gabbard to congratulate her on her appointment and discussed strengthening intelligence cooperation between India and the US. Their talks focused on counter-terrorism, cybersecurity, and addressing emerging threats, reinforcing the growing relationship between the two nations.

Meanwhile, security agencies suspect the hand of Bangladeshi elements in violence that erupted in Nagpur on 17 March 2025, following rumours about the burning of a religious scripture. The reported violence led to over 30 injuries.

Police investigation revealed a disturbing connection to Bangladesh, with 97 social media accounts identified as sources of inflammatory posts.

Many of these accounts were linked to IP addresses in Bangladesh, which in turn fuelled further unease in the city.

Authorities are now investigating the role of foreign-based social media accounts in stoking violence and the spread of false information.

The unrest is a stark reminder of the challenges posed by cross-border online radicalisation and the urgent need for stronger regional cooperation in countering such threats. – [NDTV](#), [DD News](#), [Op India](#)

# Hafiz Saeed Aide Abu Qatal Shot Dead

**A**bu Qatal, a key Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) commander and close aide of Hafiz Saeed, was killed by unidentified gunmen in Jhelum, Pakistan on 17 March, 2025.

Abu Qatal, also known as Zia-ur-Rehman, had been active in orchestrating attacks against civilians and security forces in Jammu and Kashmir for over two decades.

He played a central role in LeT's operations in the region, particularly overseeing guerrilla-style attacks in areas like Pir Panjal, where foreign terrorists launched attacks and then hid in the dense jungles.

The killing occurred while he was traveling with his security team.

Abu Qatal, who was wanted by India's National Investigation Agency (NIA), was involved in several high-profile attacks, including the 2023 twin attacks in Dhangri (Rajouri), where seven civilians were killed, and the 2024 shooting on a bus carrying pilgrims from Shiv Khori to Katra, resulting in nine deaths.

Indian intelligence agencies found his hand behind the attacks, and he was named in an NIA charge sheet for orchestrating the operations, along with other LeT commanders. Abu Qatal had extensive networks in Poonch, Rajouri, and Sindh, aiding LeT's operations across the region.

As one of the most trusted aides of Hafiz Saeed, Abu Qatal was integral to LeT's recruitment and planning operations.

Furthermore, Abu Qatal was focused on targeting minority communities and security personnel in J&K.

He was also implicated in providing logistical support to terrorists in India for three months following the Dhangri attack.

The NIA's investigations revealed that Abu Qatal's network extended to Pakistan, specifically to areas like PoJK and Sindh, where he coordinated LeT's terror activities. With his death, Abu Qatal's threat as a prominent LeT mastermind in conducting attacks from across the border has come to an end. –

[\*Hindustan Times\*](#)

## **Tahawwur's New Bid to Evade Extradition**

Tahawwur Rana, a key accused in the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, has submitted a new plea to the US Supreme Court to block his extradition to India. His petition, which follows a previous denial from Justice Elena Kagan, asks Chief Justice John Roberts to intervene and halt the transfer. India seeks to prosecute Rana for his involvement in facilitating the attacks.

Rana's extradition case has been closely watched, with high-level diplomatic discussions surrounding it, including an announcement by US President Donald Trump in a joint press conference with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in February over his imminent extradition to India. Despite the US Supreme Court denying his earlier petitions, including a writ of certiorari in January, Rana's legal team seeks to evade his extradition to India. The Court is scheduled to take up Rana's latest appeal on April 4, 2025. – [New India Express](#)

## **Attacks on Tesla Cars Spark 'Domestic Terror' Debate in US**

The Trump administration is seeking to expand the definition of domestic terrorism following a series of recent arson attacks on Tesla vehicles across the US, in supposed protest against CEO Elon Musk's growing influence on the country's politics. Attorney General Pam Bondi called the vandalism "domestic terrorism" and vowed severe consequences for the vandals, as well as those coordinating and funding the attacks.

Federal investigators have linked several incidents of attacks on Tesla cars across the US, including a woman in Colorado charged with throwing Molotov cocktails at the Tesla electric vehicles, and a man has been arrested in South Carolina for setting fire to a Tesla charging station. Authorities have ramped up security at Tesla locations nationwide. - [CNN](#)

## **Somali Airstrikes Target Al-Shabaab Hideouts**

The National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) of Somalia carried out six airstrikes in the Sabiid and Canoole areas of Lower Shabelle, resulting in the deaths of several al-Shabaab militants and serious injuries to 19 others. This operation follows a series of predawn attacks by al-Shabaab on Somali military troops stationed in Sabiid, a village near the key agricultural town of Afgoye. Located about 30 kilometres southwest of the capital Mogadishu, Afgoye is strategically (agriculturally) important, and the Somali government is actively working to secure it from insurgent threats. – [Mehr News Agency](#)