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Newsletter by Counter Terrorism Centre



MANOHAR PARRIKAR INSTITUTE FOR
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JeM Unveils Women's Brigade

Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) chief Masood Azhar has announced the creation of a new women's brigade, Jamaat-ul-Mominaat, to counter what he calls the "enemies of Jaish" who have "put Hindu women into the Army."

In a 21-minute audio message from Bahawalpur's Markaz Usman-o-Ali, Azhar revealed an extensive plan to train and indoctrinate women for extremist activities.

Under this initiative, women recruits will undergo a structured radicalisation program similar to that of male fighters. The first course, "Daura-e-Taskiya," mirrors the male training module "Daura-e-Tarbiat", focusing on religious indoctrination and promises of paradise through jihad.

Graduates will then proceed to "Daura-Ayat-ul-Nisah," emphasising how women are "instructed to conduct jihad" in Islamic texts. Azhar claims that these sessions will be held

at the Jaish headquarters and that branches of the brigade will be set up in every district of Pakistan, each led by a muntazima (female manager) tasked with recruitment.

The group's leadership reportedly includes Azhar's sisters, Sadiya Azhar and Samaira Azhar, as well as Afeera Farooq, wife of Pulwama mastermind Umar Farooq.

Azhar also reveals that some members are relatives of militants killed in encounters with Indian forces. In his speech, he recounts how the idea for Jamaat-ul-Mominaat was conceived with his sister Hawa Bibi, who was later killed during Operation Sindoor, India's counterstrike after the Pahalgam terror attack.

The creation of this women's wing underscores how terror networks continue to thrive in Pakistan, contradicting its global claims of fighting extremism. - [NDTV](#)

11 Wounded in UK Stabbing Rampage

Britain was left shocked and shaken after a brutal mass stabbing on a London-bound train on 1 November leaving several passengers critically injured. The attack unfolded aboard a London North Eastern Railway (LNER) service traveling from Doncaster to London, moments after it departed Peterborough station. Within minutes of an emergency call, armed officers stopped the train at Huntingdon station, arresting two men—though later confirming only one suspect, a 32-year-old British man from Peterborough, remains in custody. Witnesses described scenes of chaos and terror, with passengers fleeing through carriages and barricading themselves in toilets to escape the knife-wielding attacker. Police swiftly neutralised the suspect with a taser as terrified passengers were evacuated. The train remained cordoned off at Huntingdon into Sunday, littered with medical debris and bloodstained seats—grim evidence of the violence that had erupted onboard.

Among the 11 victims, an LNER staff member was hailed a hero after CCTV footage showed him attempting to subdue the attacker, an act police said “undoubtedly saved many lives.” Ten people were hospitalised with severe injuries, while one person remained in life-threatening condition. Authorities confirmed that there was no indication of terrorism, describing it as an isolated act.

The quick thinking of train driver Andrew Johnson, a former Royal Navy officer, was also praised—he diverted the train to the slow track and halted at a safe station, allowing emergency services to board.

The attack has sparked nationwide concern over rising knife crime in the UK, which has seen more than 51,000 offences in the past year. Leaders across the country, including King Charles, Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood, and Prime Minister Keir Starmer, expressed condolences and solidarity with the victims. – [CNN](#), [Firstpost](#)

Al-Qaeda Tightens Grip in Mali

Five years after General Assimi Goita's 2020 coup promised to eliminate jihadists and restore stability, Mali now faces its gravest crisis yet. The al-Qaeda-linked group Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM), once confined to Mali's north, has expanded southward, imposing a blockade on southern Mali since September 2025.

This siege has cut off key trade routes linking Mali to Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire, crippling fuel supplies and triggering economic collapse. Schools and universities have shut down, airline operations have halted, and fuel prices have surged by **500%**, sparking public anger against the military rulers who claim that "everything is under control."

By cutting vital supply lines and torching fuel trucks, JNIM seeks to undermine the junta's authority, turn

citizens against the regime, and showcase its ability to paralyse the capital Bamako without conventional battles. The group's decentralised structure, use of motorcycles, and ability to blend into local communities make it elusive to the Malian army—an overstretched, conventionally trained force ill-equipped for asymmetric warfare.

With more than 478 civilians killed in 2024 and 350,000 displaced, Mali's crisis reflects a broader Sahelian collapse, where military regimes, weakened governance, and extremist adaptability feed a vicious cycle of instability. Analysts warn that defeating JNIM will require more than military might—it demands rebuilding trust, governance, and regional cooperation, or Mali risks sliding irreversibly into state failure.-

[*The Conversation, Al Jazeera*](#)

NIA Uncovers Key Digital Evidence in Pahalgam Terror Attack Probe

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has recovered Aadhaar cards, Facebook account details, and photographs from the mobile phones of three Pakistani Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorists involved in the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, which killed 25 tourists and a pony operator. The attackers — Suleiman Shah, Hamza Afghani alias Afghan, and Jibran — were later neutralised in a July 28 encounter in the Dachigam forest. Two locals, Bashir Ahmad Jothar and Parvez Ahmad Jothar, were arrested in June for allegedly sheltering the terrorists before the assault. The recovered devices, including satellite phones and assault rifles, have yielded evidence linking the attackers to handlers in Pakistan, with investigators now decrypting encrypted communications to trace the broader LeT and The Resistance Front (TRF) network.

On 31 October, a Jammu court granted the NIA a second 45-day extension to complete its investigation under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), citing the need for more time to analyse digital data and record eyewitness testimonies. A forensic report from the National Forensic Science University (NFSU), Gandhinagar, has already revealed incriminating links to the two arrested locals. Officials said further forensic and digital analysis could expose additional LeT/TRF operatives involved in planning or facilitating the Pahalgam terror attack, as the agency works to file a comprehensive charge sheet in the coming weeks. — *Hindustan Times*

Three SFJ Operatives Held for Pro-Khalistan Graffiti in Bathinda

In a joint operation, the Bathinda Counter-Intelligence Branch and local police arrested three operatives of the banned Sikhs for Justice (SFJ) outfit for painting pro-Khalistan slogans on school walls in Bhissiana and Mananwala villages. The arrested men — Navjot Singh alias Jota (24), Gurpreet Singh (26) from Ferozepur, and Harjinder Singh from Bathinda — were allegedly acting under instructions from foreign-based handler Pawanpreet Singh alias Deep Chahal, a close aide of Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, SFJ's leader. Police seized four mobile phones and a dongle device used in the operation, confirming that the men were paid for spreading anti-national slogans.

According to DGP Gaurav Yadav, the graffiti was intended to incite unrest and promote separatist propaganda. Investigations revealed that the accused received foreign funding to carry out these acts between October 19 and 27. Acting on technical leads, police nabbed Jota and Gurpreet first, followed by Harjinder, who confessed to receiving ₹2,000 for his role. Two separate cases have been filed under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and the Punjab Prevention of Defacement of Property Act, as authorities intensify their crackdown on SFJ-linked propaganda and cross-border influence operations in Punjab. — *The Indian Express*

Pune Techie Arrested for Alleged Al-Qaeda Links

The Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) has arrested Zuber Hungargekar, a software engineer from Solapur, for alleged links to Al-Qaeda. During raids, officials recovered an Urdu translation of Osama Bin Laden's speech, along with photos of Hungargekar using an AK-47 rifle and making bombs. The accused, who worked at an IT firm in Pune's Kalyani Nagar, was arrested under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and remanded in custody till 4 November. Investigators said he was allegedly involved in anti-national activities and planning terror strikes in Maharashtra and other Indian cities.

Hungargekar had been under ATS surveillance for a month following raids in Pune's Kondhwa area linked to a terror funding probe. Digital evidence seized from his possession is being investigated pointed to determine if there were efforts at radicalising youth. The ATS is now examining recovered documents and data to identify any additional individuals connected to the suspected Al-Qaeda module. – [NDTV](#)

US, UK, Canada Warn Citizens Against Travel to Niger

The United States, United Kingdom, and Canada have issued strict travel advisories warning citizens against traveling to Niger, citing escalating terrorism, kidnappings, and political instability. The alerts follow the kidnapping of an American missionary in Niamey, Niger's capital. The US State Department has ordered the departure of families of US government staff, warning that it cannot provide emergency assistance outside Niamey. It cautioned that terrorist groups use kidnapping-for-ransom as a business model, with attacks possible anywhere. American citizens and government personnel have been told to avoid public areas like restaurants and markets and prepare for limited consular support.

Similarly, the UK and Canadian governments urged citizens to avoid all travel to Niger and not rely on official evacuation aid. The UK Foreign Office cited a high risk of terror attacks and kidnappings, stressing that in-person support is unavailable due to instability since the July 2023 military coup. Canada advised nationals to stay indoors after dark, avoid crowded areas, and prepare independent evacuation plans, warning of frequent nighttime assaults on major routes such as Agadez–Niamey and within Zinder city. All three nations underscored that foreign nationals remain prime targets as extremist violence and lawlessness worsen across the Sahel nation. – [LiveMint](#)