Questions

1. Please provide a chronological overview/timeline of the activities of Lashkar-i-Islam and Mangal Bagh since 2004.

RESPONSE

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Overview

Sources indicate that Lashkar-i-Islam (LI) had its conception in the FM radio broadcasts of Mufti Munir Shakir, and came to prominence in late 2005 due to an increasingly violent conflict with followers of rival Mufti Pir Saifur Rahman in the Bara region of Khyber Agency. Both Muftis were reportedly forced to leave Khyber Agency after a tribal jirga in late 2005 or early 2006, but LI continued its activities under the leadership of ‘Amir’ Mangal Bagh.

During 2006 articles appeared reporting actions against LI by Pakistan security forces. In March 2006, security forces demolished the LI headquarters and radio station, but Bagh and other LI leaders were able to flee and transfer their activities to the Tirah Valley region of Khyber Agency. In June 2006, security forces responded again to LI attempts to take control of Bara bazaar and enforce strict enforcement of sharia in the Bara region by taking control of the bazaar and demolishing a commercial building owned by Mangal Bagh.
During mid-2006, the conflict between LI and Ansar-ul-Islam (AI) of Pir Saifur Rehman continued in the Tirah Valley, and by October 2006 LI and Bagh were again active in the Bara region. Violent clashes between LI and AI continued in Bara during late 2006, and a December 2006 International Crisis Group report claims that LI are enforcing a “parallel justice system” in the Khyber Agency.

2007 sees numerous reports of LI engaging in extrajudicial executions and threats; conflict between LI and security forces also continues. In March 2007 LI activists publicly executed three people accused of adultery, and in April 2007 LI members fought with government security forces as they took control of most of the Bara region. In April 2007, security forces again demolished the LI headquarters, but with seemingly little effect, as in May 2007 Bagh publicly warned the administration against setting up checkpoints in the Bara region, and made public threats against a journalist whose home was later attacked with grenades. In September 2007, Bagh renewed his edicts over his radio station, and in December 2007 LI members executed an ‘outlaw’, the third public execution carried out by LI during the year.

2008 has seen reports of extensive LI activity in the Khyber Agency, interrupted by a brief military offensive in June. In January 2008, Bagh held a meeting at which candidates swore on the Koran “not to sign any un-Islamic bill or support anti-country strategies”, and to “spend all development funds in consultation with Lashkar-e-Islam”. In February 2008, Bagh warned women in the Khyber Agency against voting in the election, stating that “those who would allow their women to cast their votes in NA-45 and NA-46 [National Assembly constituencies] would face dire consequences”. In April 2008 Bagh demanded the closure of the local political headquarters, stating that “the role of the authorities is no more acceptable to us”. In May 2008 LI members shot and killed a man outside a mosque in Sarband, near Bara, and in June 2008 LI was implicated in the kidnapping of a group of Christians and a Muslim from Peshawar. In late June 2008 Pakistani forces launched an offensive against militant groups in Khyber Agency, including LI and AI, which was met with no resistance from LI. Bagh had instructed LI members not to oppose the operation, and had left for the Tirah Valley, where the conflict with AI continued unabated. In August 2008 Bagh stated that LI would establish centres in all tehsils of Khyber Agency, and by September and October 2008 media reports suggested that Bagh and LI were back in control in the Bara region (for overviews of the history of Mangal Bagh and Lashkar-i-Islam, see: Behuria, A.K. 2006, ‘Million Mutinies in Pakistan’s Tribal Areas’, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses website, 27 June http://www.idsa.in/publications/stratcomments/AshokBehuria270606.htm – Accessed 3 October 2006 – Attachment 1; and Zaidi, S. 2008, ‘A Profile of Mangal Bagh’, Long War Journal website, November http://www.longwarjournal.org/multimedia/Mangal-Bagh-Profile.pdf – Accessed 25 November 2008 – Attachment 2; for security forces actions against LI in 2006, see: ‘Security forces takes over Lashkar-i-Islami HQ’ 2006, Frontier Star, 1 April – Attachment 4; and ‘Political authorities blow up commercial plaza in Bara’ 2006, Frontier Star, 12 June – Attachment 7; for violence between LI and Ansar-ul-Islam, see: ‘Seven dead as rival religious groups clash in Pakistan tribal area’ 2006, BBC Monitoring Newsfile, source: Dawn website (14 August 2006), 14 August – Attachment 6; and ‘Major incidents of Terrorism-related violence in Pakistan, 1988-2008’ 2008, South Asia Terrorism Portal website http://satp.org/satporgtp/countries/pakistan/database/majorincidents.htm – Accessed 26 November 2008 – Attachment 10; and for the strict enforcement of sharia by LI, see: Zaidi, S. 2008, ‘A Profile of Mangal Bagh’, Long War Journal website, November http://www.longwarjournal.org/multimedia/Mangal-Bagh-Profile.pdf – Accessed 25 November 2008 – Attachment 2; ‘Lashkar active in Bara again’ 2006, Frontier Star, 10 October – Attachment 8; International Crisis Group 2006, Pakistan’s Tribal Areas:
http://www.longwarjournal.org/multimedia/Mangal-Bagh-Profile.pdf – Accessed 25 November 2008 – Attachment 2; for 2008 reports that LI and Bagh are back in control in Bara, see: ‘Mangal Bagh still rules Khyber’ 2008, Daily Times, 1 September

Timeline

2004-2005: A June 2006 report from the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses website and a November 2008 article from the Long War Journal website provide information on the background of Mangal Bagh and Lashkar-i-Islam. According to these reports, Mufti Muneer Shakir and Pir Saifur Rahman, rival clerics of the Deobandi and Barelvi schools respectively, established FM stations in Bara and verbally attacked one another’s interpretation of Islamic law and its policing. Shakir founded Lashkar-i-Islam (LI), with Mangal Bagh as his “principal follower”, and also described as the “Amir” of LI. Rahman headed the rival group Ansar ul-Islam (AI), and the two groups fought for control of the Bara area (Behuria, A.K. 2006, ‘Million Mutinies in Pakistan’s Tribal Areas’, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses website, 27 June

2005: A report from BBC Monitoring South Asia, sourced from Pakistani newspaper The News, states that “more than 1,000 troops of Bajaur Scouts, Mohmand Rifles, Mehsud Scouts and Khyber Rifles have been rushed to Bara” to “help the political administration in maintaining law and order, as two rival religious groups are bent on expelling each other from the area”. The clashing religious groups are LI and AI (“Pakistan troops sent to tribal area to avert armed clash’ 2005, BBC Monitoring South Asia, 23
December, sourced from report by Behroz Khan on Pakistani The News website, 23 December 2005 – Attachment 3).


March-April 2006: The Pakistan Frontier Star reports that security forces moved against LI, took over LI headquarters, and destroyed their FM radio station. According to this report, Mangal Bagh and other LI leaders moved to the Tirah Valley region of Khyber Agency (‘Security forces takes over Lashkar-i-Islami HQ’ 2006, Frontier Star, 1 April – Attachment 4).

June 2006: A November 2008 article on Mangal Bagh sourced from the Long War Journal website states that LI and Mangal Bagh are back in Bara at this time, and enforcing a strict interpretation of sharia:

Lashkar-e-Islam forced markets to close down, announced formation of an Islamic government, banned interest banking, and warned of strict punishment for infractions. It was reportedly announced that a murderer would pay a fine equivalent to roughly $6,000; the fine for having a dish antenna was $600; and failure to pray five times a day would cost $6. No woman was to be allowed in market areas without one of her blood relatives. CD shops were closed down. Music of any kind is not tolerated. Television is ordained by Bagh’s illegal FM radio transmissions as un-Islamic. Beards are to be grown compulsorily. Shopkeepers in Bara pay a monthly fee to Lashkar-e-Islam that they used to give to a bazaar committee for security in the large markets; Bagh claims to fill that role (Zaidi, S. 2008, ‘A Profile of Mangal Bagh’, Long War Journal website, November http://www.longwarjournal.org/multimedia/Mangal-Bagh-Profile.pdf – Accessed 25 November 2008 – Attachment 2).

June 2006: A Pakistan AVT Khyber TV report claims that the political agent in Khyber Agency “has…lost its power now”, that the media is “weak” and that “journalists have left the area” (‘Commentator views “deteriorating” situation in Pakistan’s tribal areas’ 2006, BBC Monitoring South Asia, source: Pakistan AVT Khyber TV (11 June 2006), 14 June – Attachment 5).

June 2006: LI members kidnap a local Jamiat-Ulema-i-Islam leader “for allegedly cooperating with the administration” of FATA, LI take control of the Bara bazaar on June 10; on June 12, FATA administration destroys a three-story market building in the Bara bazaar.

June 2006: On 12 June, the Pakistan Frontier Star also reports that the political authorities of Khyber Agency have taken control of Bara bazaar and demolished a three-story building owned by Mangal Bagh (‘Political authorities blow up commercial plaza in Bara’ 2006, Frontier Star, 12 June – Attachment 7).

August 2006: A Dawn newspaper report claims that 7 people were killed and 3 injured in conflict between LI and AI in the Bara and Tirah Valley areas (‘Seven dead as rival religious groups clash in Pakistan tribal area’ 2006, BBC Monitoring Newsfile, source: Dawn website (14 August 2006), 14 August – Attachment 6).

October 2006: The Frontier Star claims that LI have resumed activities in Bara, and that Mangal Bagh returned from fighting AI in the Tirah Valley and re-established his FM radio station (‘Lashkar active in Bara again’ 2006, Frontier Star, 10 October – Attachment 8).


March 2007: The South Asia Terrorism Portal website reports that on 3 March:

At least 10 people were killed and six others injured when dozens of armed men belonging to the Khyber Agency-based Lashkar-e-Islam (LeI) attacked Shiekhan village on the outskirts of Peshawar, capital of the NWFP, with rocket launchers and other sophisticated weapons before


April 2007: A report from The News claims that “[m]ilitants of Lashkar-e-Islami took control of most of the areas of Bara subdivision of Khyber Agency, limiting writ of the political administration only to Bara Bazaar” (‘Lashkar-e-Islami militants take control in parts of Pakistan’s Khyber Agency’ 2007, BBC Monitoring South Asia (source: The News), 17 April – Attachment 13).

April 2007: A report from Pakistan Press International Information Services states that the “[p]olitical authorities of Khyber Agency in a major operation in Bara sub division of the Agency on Thursday demolished the office of Lashkar Islami, established in Kohi Malik Din Khel, thus initiating the process to purge the area of illegal and notorious activities of the group. Earlier the authorities had issued a final warning to Mangal Bagh on Wednesday to vacate the office which he did and finally it was demolished” (‘Political Administration demolishes office of Lashkar-e-Islam’ 2007, Pakistan Press International Information Services, 20 April – Attachment 14).

May 2007: The 2008 Reporters Without Borders annual report for Pakistan claims that a journalist was publicly threatened by Mangal Bagh and later had his home attacked with grenades; the reporter subsequently claimed that he must “leave the town” (Reporters Without Borders 2008, Pakistan – Annual report 2008, 11 February http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=25678&Valider=OK – Accessed 15 September 2008 – Attachment 15).

May 2007: A report in the Pakistani newspaper The Nation claims that Mangal Bagh warned the Khyber Agency administration against building checkpoints in the Bara region. According to the report, Bagh stated that “[t]he Lashkar is determined to continue struggle against the criminals, corrupt officers and their paid agents” (‘Lashkar warns Bara Admin’ 2007, The Nation, 6 May – Attachment 16).

September 2007: A report from the Jamestown Foundation’s Terrorism Monitor claims that “many men are seen wearing traditional caps in the agency because of fear, as a local religious outfit sympathetic to the Taliban, Lashkar-i-Islam (Army of Islam), has declared it binding on all men of the agency to wear caps. The leader of the group, Mangle [sic] Bagh, in his radio address last week issued this edict and announced that violators’ heads will be shaved and they will face a monetary fine” (Abbas, H. 2007, ‘Increasing Talibanisation in Pakistan’s Seven Tribal Agencies’, Terrorism Monitor, Vol. 5, No. 18, Jamestown
December 2007: A report from *Dawn* claims that LI activists publicly executed an alleged outlaw in Bara, and quotes an LI leader claiming that “his group would not tolerate any crime in Khyber Agency”. The report also claims that this was the third public execution carried out by LI in 2007, after the earlier killings of six people for ‘adultery’ (‘Islamic group publicly executes alleged criminal in Pakistan tribal area – paper’ 2007, *BBC Monitoring South Asia* (source: *Dawn*), 10 December – Attachment 18).

January 2008: A November 2008 history of Mangal Bagh and LI, sourced from the *Long War Journal* website, states that:

> In January 2008, shortly before the general election, Bagh forced the candidates for the National Assembly seat from Bara to host a feast for voters. At this event of some 65,000 people in Mandi Kas Ground, roughly 10 kilometers from Peshawar, Bagh administered an oath on the holy Quran to nominees, wherein they swore not to sign any un-Islamic bill or support anti-country strategies; they also pledged to spend all development funds in consultation with Lashkar-e-Islam. Bagh also promulgated an improvised election code forbidding public processions, use of vehicles, or display of party flags. This was later modified to allow the use of the party flag atop houses, so long as the Lashkar-e-Islam flag was also flown alongside (Zaidi, S. 2008, ‘A Profile of Mangal Bagh’, *Long War Journal* website, November [http://www.longwarjournal.org/multimedia/Mangal-Bagh-Profile.pdf](http://www.longwarjournal.org/multimedia/Mangal-Bagh-Profile.pdf) – Accessed 25 November 2008 – Attachment 2).


April 2008: An interview with Mangal Bagh from *The News* quotes Bagh claiming that: the LI has “no problem” with Pakistan’s security forces in Khyber Agency; that LI is “a reformist organisation trying to promote virtue and prevent vice”; that “Lashkar-i-Islam was now able to enforce its code of conduct in almost the whole of Khyber Agency”; and that LI has “120,000 men under arms who at a short notice would be able to assemble in case of need” (*Mangal Bagh claims he refused to join Taliban* 2008, *The News*, 21 April [http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=108035](http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=108035) – Accessed 13 November 2008 – Attachment 22).

April 2008: In an interview with Mangal Bagh in the *Pakistan Times*, the reporter claims that “[t]he Pakistani state seems to have withdrawn from Bara and much of Khyber agency and it has taken no recent action to rein in Mr Bagh” and that “Lashkar-i-Islam have become the de facto police”. According to this report, Bagh claims that “people’s frustration with the failure of the state to deliver law and order brought them flocking to him”, and that “his writ ran over almost the whole of Khyber”, while “[o]thers suggested that while he has Bara and its surrounding area, his command elsewhere is less certain”. The writer also claims that “Lashkar-i-Islam forbids kidnapping and suicide bombings” and that “Mr Bagh’s message is more an austere one, that ‘VICES’ must end, not the international jihad of the Taliban and Al-Qaeda”. According to this report, “[i]n Bara, there were no women walking around. The Lashkar-i-Islam’s harsh strictures, delivered through a pirate radio station, appear to have driven them indoors” (Masood, A. 2008, ‘Who is Mangal Bagh Now Commanding Khyber’, *Pakistan Times*, 29 April [http://www.pak-times.com/2008/04/29/who-is-mangal-bagh-now-commanding-khyber/](http://www.pak-times.com/2008/04/29/who-is-mangal-bagh-now-commanding-khyber/) – Accessed 13 November 2008 – Attachment 23).

May 2008: The US Department of State’s *International Religious Freedom Report for 2008* for Pakistan states that LI militants killed a man “for not offering Asr prayers and standing outside a mosque in the Sarband Police Station jurisdiction in the NWFP. When Mukarram told the militants that it was his personal matter, the LI men shot him” (US Department of State 2008, *International Religious Freedom Report for 2008 – Pakistan*, 19 September – Attachment 24).

June 2008: The US Department of State’s *International Religious Freedom Report for 2008* for Pakistan states that militants “affiliated with” LI kidnapped 25 to 32 Christians and one Muslim in Peshawar, because the Muslim man had rented a building to the Christians. All were later released. LI activists also visited a shrine in Peshawar and warned people “to avoid taking part in religious ceremonies there” (US Department of State 2008, *International Religious Freedom Report for 2008 – Pakistan*, 19 September – Attachment 24).

June 2008: The November 2008 history of Mangal Bagh and LI, sourced from the *Long War Journal* website, states that the Pakistan military launched an “offensive” against LI and other militant groups in Khyber Agency:
…acts of violence in and around Peshawar raised alarm bells with the establishment, and media reports began springing up that Peshawar was no longer safe and was about to be taken over by militants. Though Bagh vehemently denied any such intentions, a military operation called Sirat-e-Mustaqqim, or the Right Path, was started on June 28, 2008, ostensibly to restore the government’s writ in Khyber agency (Zaidi, S. 2008, ‘A Profile of Mangal Bagh’, Long War Journal website, November http://www.longwarjournal.org/multimedia/Mangal-Bagh-Profile.pdf – Accessed 25 November 2008 – Attachment 2).

Nonetheless, “[e]ven though the operation in Bara was started with much fanfare, eyewitness accounts emanating from the area revealed that more media hype was created as opposed to real action on ground”. According to this report, “[t]he operation culminated in 13 days, with an agreement reached between Bagh and the government”, with heavy fighting continuing in the Tirah Valley between LI and AI (Zaidi, S. 2008, ‘A Profile of Mangal Bagh’, Long War Journal website, November http://www.longwarjournal.org/multimedia/Mangal-Bagh-Profile.pdf – Accessed 25 November 2008 – Attachment 2).

August 2008: A report from the Dawn News Group claims that Mangal Bagh “said that Lashkar-i-Islam would not permit the observance of any un-Islamic practices in any part of Khyber Agency and would wage a jihad against the violators”, and that LI “would establish centres [in] every tehsil of Khyber Agency” (‘Militant group takes over two mosques in Pakistan tribal area’ 2008, Dawn News Group, 28 August – Attachment 25).

September 2008: A report from the Pakistan Daily Times, titled ‘Mangal Bagh still rules Khyber’, suggests that the “‘successful’ operation in Khyber Agency” only meant that Bagh and the LI temporarily relocated to Landi Kotal, also in Khyber Agency, and imposed their rule there. According to this report, “[n]o one dares to speak up against Mr. Bagh. But everyone is ready to speak against the state and ask it not to come to their help. This is because the state has gone in and then left the job unfinished. When the state was winning against him, Mr Bagh was laughing on TV” (‘Mangal Bagh still rules Khyber’ 2008, Daily Times, 1 September http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008%5C09%5C01%5Cstory_1-9-2008_pg3_1 – Accessed 13 November 2008 – Attachment 26).

October 2008: A report from USA Today states that “militants with bushy beards, shoulder-length hair and Kalashnikov rifles have taken over Bara and surrounding areas”. The report notes that “Pakistani troops swept through Bara as recently as June. The local militant group – Lashkar-e-Islam, led by former bus driver Mangal Bagh – melted away, then returned as soon as the army pulled out. It is back in charge now”. According to this report, the LI enforces a “rigid Muslim code of behaviour” in Bara, but quotes a local resident who claims that “Bara is safer now that Lashkar gunmen are walking the streets” (Wiseman, P. & Sheikh, Z. 2008, ‘Militants flourish in Pakistan’s tribal area’, USA Today, 1 October http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2008-10-01-tribes_N.htm – Accessed 13 November 2008 – Attachment 27).

October 2008: A report from Newstrack India states that “[t]wo Lashkar-e-Islam (LI) men were killed in a clash with security forces in Khyber Agency on Wednesday, when they were stopped at the BC-1 checkpoint while on their way from Jamrud to Bara tehsil” (‘15 Pak FC soldiers found dead in Swat’ 2008, Newstrack India (source: ANI), 23 October http://www.newstrackindia.com/newsdetails/30549 – Accessed 13 November 2008 – Attachment 28).
November 2008: An article in the Pakistan Daily Times reports that the “Bara-based…LI claimed recovering a kidnapped child”, and that Bagh “said the kidnappers would be fined Rs 1 million and their houses would be razed”. The report also states that “Bagh asked the government to lift the ban on the LI, so the outfit could help the government curb crime” (‘LI claims recovering kidnapped child’ 2008, Daily Times, 5 November http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008%5C11%5C05%5Cstory_5-11-2008_pg7_18 – Accessed 13 November 2008 – Attachment 29).

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Amnesty International http://www.amnesty.org
International Crisis Group http://www.crisisgroup.org

International News & Politics
BBC News http://news.bbc.co.uk

Region Specific Links
Asian Centre for Human Rights website http://www.achrweb.org/
Dawn website www.dawn.com
Pakistan Times http://www.pakistantimes.net
The Daily Times website http://www.dailytimes.com.pk
The Nation http://www.nation.com.pk

Topic Specific Links
Khyber Agency official website http://www.khyber.gov.pk
Khyber Gateway website http://www.khyber.org

Search Engines
Google http://www.google.com
Silobreaker http://www.silobreaker.com/
Staggeation Google API Proximity Search http://www.staggeation.com/cgi-bin/gaps.cgi
Yahoo http://search.yahoo.com/

Databases:

FACTIVA (news database)
BACIS (DIAC Country Information database)
REFINFO (IRBDC (Canada) Country Information database)
ISYS (RRT Research & Information database, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, US Department of State Reports)
RRT Library Catalogue
List of Attachments


3. ‘Pakistan troops sent to tribal area to avert armed clash’ 2005, BBC Monitoring South Asia, 23 December, sourced from report by Behroz Khan on Pakistani The News website, 23 December 2005. (FACTIVA)

4. ‘Security forces takes over Lashkar-i-Islami HQ’ 2006, Frontier Star, 1 April. (FACTIVA)

5. ‘Commentator views “deteriorating” situation in Pakistan’s tribal areas’ 2006, BBC Monitoring South Asia, source: Pakistan AVT Khyber TV (11 June 2006), 14 June. (FACTIVA)

6. ‘Seven dead as rival religious groups clash in Pakistan tribal area’ 2006, BBC Monitoring Newsfile, source: Dawn website (14 August 2006), 14 August. (FACTIVA)

7. ‘Political authorities blow up commercial plaza in Bara’ 2006, Frontier Star, 12 June. (FACTIVA)

8. ‘Lashkar active in Bara again’ 2006, Frontier Star, 10 October. (FACTIVA)


28. ‘15 Pak FC soldiers found dead in Swat’ 2008, *Newstrack India* (source: *ANI*), 23 October