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Pakistan Declares Kashmir Attack Probe Inconclusive as U.S. Blacklists Militant Group

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Pakistan's investigation into the April 22, 2025, attack that killed 26 tourists in Indian-administered Kashmir remains unresolved, while the United States (U.S.) has designated The Resistance Front (TRF), a militant group linked to Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), as a terrorist organization. Pakistan denies any connection to the attack and accuses India of exploiting the designation to push anti-Pakistan

propaganda, escalating tensions between the nuclear-armed neighbors.

The brutal assault in Pahalgam's Baisaran Valley, where gunmen targeted Hindu tourists, marked the deadliest civilian attack in Kashmir since 2008. The U.S. State Department, led by Secretary Marco Rubio, labeled TRF a "foreign terrorist organization" on July 17, 2025, citing its initial claim of responsibility, later retracted, and its ties to LeT, a Pakistan-based group banned under U.S. law. Rubio stated, "TRF's actions show it's a proxy for LeT, threatening regional stability." Pakistan's Foreign Office countered, calling LeT "defunct" and claiming it has "dismantled" such groups, though evidence suggests militant networks persist.

Pakistan's Foreign Ministry insists the probe into the Pahalgam attack, in what it calls Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), is inconclusive. It argues that linking TRF to LeT "belies ground realities" and accuses India of using terror designations to deflect from its human rights abuses in Kashmir. "India manipulates these listings to smear Pakistan internationally," said spokesperson Shafqat Ali Khan, pointing to India's revocation of Kashmir's autonomy in 2019 as a driver of unrest.

The attack's fallout has fueled distrust, with India alleging Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) supports TRF. Indian officials claim the assault, which killed 25 tourists and one local, was meticulously planned, targeting non-Muslims to inflame communal tensions. Pakistan's denial and call for a "neutral" investigation have done little to ease India's outrage, which led to airstrikes on alleged terror sites in Pakistan on May 7, 2025, killing dozens.

As tensions simmer, Pakistan's claim of cracking down on militancy rings hollow to critics, given its history of harboring groups like LeT. The U.S. blacklist underscores global concerns over Pakistan's role in regional instability, while India's aggressive response signals a volatile future for South Asia's security.