

Pakistan Intelligence Thwarts Large-Scale Terror Attack

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— Categories: Crime



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On August 17, 2025, Pakistan's intelligence agencies successfully dismantled a major terrorist network in Balochistan, preventing a potentially catastrophic series of attacks during Independence Day celebrations. The operation, code-named Herof-II, led to the arrest of Muhammad Usman, a university lecturer who allegedly became a facilitator for the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA).

Authorities report that the network had planned to deploy 32 suicide bombers and four vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIEDs) across Quetta and other major cities. Muhammad Usman, a state-educated academic at BUITEMS University in Quetta, is accused of using his position to radicalize students while coordinating high-profile attacks, including the Quetta Railway Station bombing, which killed 32 civilians, and the hijacking of the Jaffar Express train, which involved 380 hostages.

The investigation also identified several members of Usman's cell, including his brother, Jibran, and a suicide bomber known as Noman "Peerak," who reportedly had ties to the Tehrik-e-Taliban Afghanistan (TTA). The network operated under instructions from BLA commanders Murid Baloch and Mulla Amin.

In addition to operational planning, intelligence agencies uncovered a coordinated propaganda effort by the BLA. Its political front, the Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC), publicly called for Usman's release and staged demonstrations portraying detained militants as victims. International rights groups were noted to have echoed these narratives, framing Pakistan's counterterrorism measures as crackdowns while not highlighting the BLA's attacks on civilians.

The United States officially designated the BLA and its Majeed Brigade as Foreign Terrorist Organizations in August 2025, reinforcing Pakistan's assessment of the group's threat. Pakistani authorities describe the broader effort in Balochistan as a dual fight against both terrorism and the spread of disinformation. Officials say the BLA has used violence to advance its objectives, while the BYC and sympathetic external actors sought to manipulate public perception.

"This case underscores the depth of infiltration by extremist networks in educational institutions," said a senior official involved in the operation. "It is a reminder that preventing terrorism requires vigilance across multiple sectors, not only security enforcement."

The arrests mark a significant strategic victory for Pakistan's intelligence agencies, particularly in a region that has faced repeated attacks by separatist groups. Analysts note that while the country continues to grapple with security challenges, operations such as Herof-II demonstrate the effectiveness of coordinated intelligence and counterterrorism strategies.

Authorities continue to monitor potential follow-up threats and are reviewing educational institutions to prevent further radicalization. Meanwhile, the broader campaign against violent extremist networks in Balochistan is ongoing, highlighting the challenges of balancing security, governance, and public safety in volatile regions.

Balochistan's recent operations reflect a focus on dismantling militant cells while countering propaganda and extremist influence, aiming to secure both the physical and ideological landscape of the province.