**LeT increasing its operational role in Afghanistan: US**

**Washington:** Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) was increasing its operational role against America and coalition forces in Afghanistan, a top US official said.  
  
Deposing before House Homeland Security Committee yesterday, Michael Leiter, Director of National Counter terrorism Center, told Congressmen that besides al-Qaeda, Taliban, Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, and the Haqqani network, the United States was now also focused on LeT when it comes to terrorist outfits in Pakistan.  
  
"In Pakistan, we remain focused on Lashkar-e-Taiba, the group behind the 2008 Mumbai attacks, which remains a threat to a variety of interests in South Asia. And although LeT has not yet conducted attacks in the West, it does have individuals who have been trained, who have been involved in attacks, and it could pose a threat to the homeland and Europe, in addition to destabilizing South Asia more broadly," Leiter said.  
  
In his testimony, he said LeT's previous attacks in Kashmir and India have had a destabilizing effect on the region, increasing tension and brinkmanship between New Delhi and Islamabad.  
  
LeT, which has a well-documented relationship with ISI, has been involved in some of the major terrorist attacks in India, including the Mumbai terrorist attack, the attack on the Indian Parliament and Akshardham Temple.  
  
"We are concerned that it is increasing its operational role in attacks against coalition forces in Afghanistan," he said.  
  
The US official said al-Qaeda and its allies in Pakistan still pose a threat despite degradation suffered from extensive and sustained counter terrorism operations over the past several years and accelerated over the past two years.  
  
"al-Qaeda, we believe, in Pakistan is at one of its weakest points in the past decade, and it is continuously being forced to react to a reduced safe haven and personnel losses, but it remains a very determined enemy," he said.

**Story First Published:** February 10, 2011 11:19 IST