

Business Standard

Terrorists enjoyed military training in Pak, Afghanistan: EFSAS Director

In a recently-held high profile conference by a Europe-based leading non-governmental organisation, it was revealed that [Pakistan](#) is one of the countries, which give military and psychological training to terrorists.

Junaid Qureshi, the [Director](#) of the [European Foundation for South Asian Studies](#) (EFSAS) made these observations at the Crans Montana Forum, which promotes "[International Cooperation](#) and works to promote best practices to ensure a permanent dialogue between all those who handle high-level responsibilities around the World".

Qureshi mentioned that sleeper cells have "enjoyed" military and psychological training at [Pakistan](#) and even in [Bangladesh](#) and [Afghanistan](#).

"Some extremists in [Europe](#) have shown to derive inspiration from successes of other extremists elsewhere and as such establish sleeper cells which threaten the basic fundamentals of democracy in [Europe](#) and pose serious challenges to security concerns that the rest of the [world](#) has," the [Director](#) said at the 20th Annual Session of the Homeland and Global Security Forum in Geneva, organised by the Crans Montana Forum.

He further mentioned, "These sleeper cells are known to have enjoyed psychological and military training in South Asia, particularly in countries like Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh, which has turned them into a formidable force to reckon with."

In the seminar, organised on October 26 in Switzerland, Qureshi spoke at a special programme dedicated to 'Fight against terrorist contamination from the East', where he stated that the different conflicts of [South Asia](#) have the potential of becoming stimuli for clashes amongst countries, and can have a divisive impact on security in the West and everywhere else in the [world](#).

He elaborated on the terrorist attacks in the US, London, Madrid, and Paris, while stating that regional turmoil can "spread like a disease" to other places as well, following which he referred to the sleeper cells and mentioned the countries.

The [Director](#) also remarked that the expansion of global terrorist organisations like the Islamic State of [Iraq](#) and the [Levant](#) (ISIL) and [Al-Qaeda](#) "sent shockwaves around the world" and "instigated local extremist forces like the Lashkar-e-Taibah (LeT), operating from Pakistan, to strengthen its reach and adopt new strategies, as it continues to enjoy patronage from State actors," according to the EFSAS.

The Conference comprised of various Heads of States, Ministers, International Organisations, Parliaments, Justice and Police Administrations and Businesses from around the [world](#).

[Bangladesh President](#) Abdul Hamid, [President](#) of Armenia Armen Sarkissian, [Director General](#) of [United Nations Office Geneva](#) Michael Møller, [President](#) of the [Kofi Annan Foundation](#) Alan Doss and other eminent officials were present at the conference.

Qureshi further recommended that global partners should make use of opportunities of participating in bilateral agreements of intelligence sharing, counter-[terrorism](#) policies and maritime security with respective countries in [South Asia](#).

He emphasised that "one cannot afford to underestimate the [formidable infrastructure](#) of [terrorism](#) in South Asia," while highlighting that the threat of [terrorism](#) is not restricted to its region of origin anymore due to the expansion and worldwide recruitment policies of terrorist organisations.

In his concluding remarks, the EFSAS Director stressed that "South Asian countries and global partners should take a lead in implementing counter-terrorism policies as the situation demands a genuine collective approach from the West, East, North, and South as equal partners and stakeholders".

Qureshi was a part of an EFSAS delegation, along with Dusan Vejinovic, a Senior Research Analyst, that visited the conference held at [Geneva](#). He had been invited to give an insight into terrorism in [South Asia](#) and its impact on the rest of the world.

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