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## Explainer

Security and Mutual  
Dependence Desk

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# Decoding the Delhi Blast

Exploring How Evolving Security  
Risks In India Impact UK and US  
Interests

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International Centre For  
**Sustainability**



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We work with government officials, political leaders, policy influencers, and businesses to build trust, cooperation, and market architecture.

We do this as a platform that brings together experts to provide the latest research and insights for our clients and members. We work with them to turn their vision into reality.

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## **Purpose and Objectives of the Briefing**

The purpose of this briefing is to provide a clear, factual understanding of the 10th November Delhi blast, the key events surrounding the attack, and the broader security implications, including internal security challenges for India, the region, and implications for US and UK interests, emerging from the investigation. It summarises the current understanding, including details on how Indian authorities believe a far larger plot was averted, key arrests, the ongoing forensic developments and counter-terror investigations that inform official responses.

## **Executive Summary**

The 10<sup>th</sup> November 2025 Delhi blast highlights a shift from cross-border infiltration to homegrown radicalisation enabled by transnational digital coordination. A network of Indian professionals, including doctors, was reportedly groomed and radicalised online by handlers based in Pakistan and Turkey. The group communicated via encrypted platforms such as Threema, Telegram, and Session, complicating detection.

This reflects a global pattern observed in the UK, US and Europe since 9/11, where professionals have been radicalised and joined extremist networks. The Delhi Module's ideological underpinnings draw from Salafi-Deobandi teachings promoted by groups such as Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), Islamic State (Khorasan), and Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind (AGuH), ideologies that continue to circulate within segments of the South Asian diaspora in the UK and US. Mobilisation around conflicts such as Gaza and Kashmir are increasingly transnational, merging local grievances with global Islamist identity.

The attack underscores India's need for long-term counter-radicalisation strategies addressing ideological and psychological drivers, highlighting the risk of diaspora radicalisation, particularly in countries with significant South Asian populations. For the UK, US, and other partners, deeper intelligence cooperation with India is increasingly a strategic necessity.



## Overview of the Incidents - in Delhi and Srinagar

### The Delhi Blast

On 10<sup>th</sup> November, a vehicle explosion in Delhi's Old Fort area, killed 13 people and injured at least 20. Authorities are treating it as a suicide attack that may have detonated prematurely, in an unintended location.

Security agencies had been tracking the terror module and had anticipated a major attack on 6<sup>th</sup> December, the 33<sup>rd</sup> year anniversary of the Babari Masjid demolition. For further context read the [briefing on the Ram Mandir](#).

The deceased attacker, Dr Umar un-Nabi, appeared part of a wider India-wide network of professionals including doctors, academics, and paramedical students. The nexus shows ideological connections with JeM, Islamic State (Khorasan) and Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind. This marks a notable shift: Indian agencies are now facing a homegrown cell with global jihadist links, as opposed to previous attacks in Pathankot (2016), Uri (2016), Pulwama (2019) and Pahalgam (2025), which were largely driven by cross-border infiltrators (supported by Pakistani State operatives).

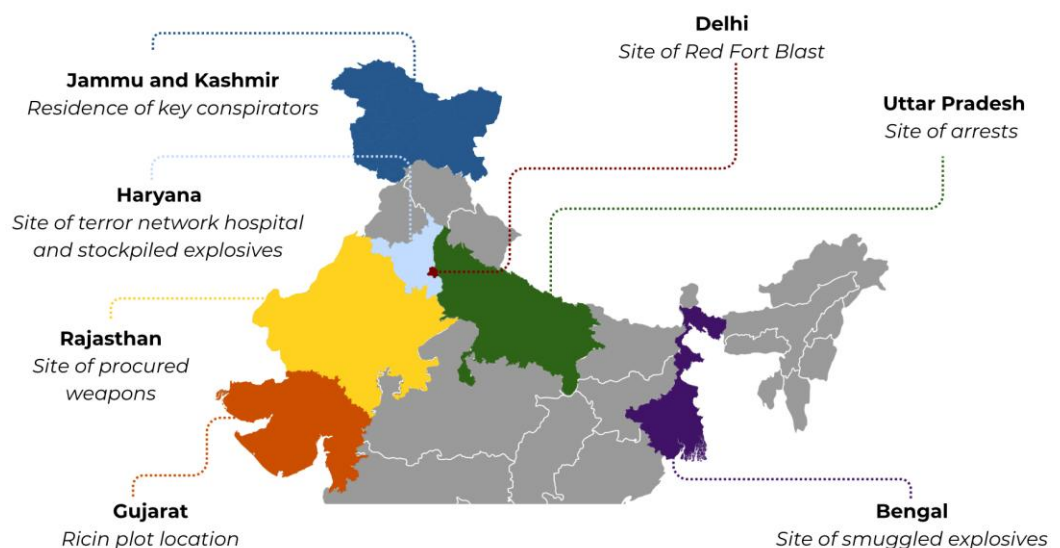


Figure 1: Inter-State Terror Module Under Investigation

### The Srinagar Blast

A second explosion occurred on 14<sup>th</sup> November at the Nowgam Police Station in Srinagar, killing 9 and injuring dozens more. Authorities classify it as accidental, caused during forensic handling of volatile explosive material linked to the Delhi module. Large quantities

were retrieved and transported from Faridabad, raising concerns about the storage of hazardous substances in densely populated police facilities and the adequacy of protocols governing long-distance transport of unstable chemicals.

## Timeline of the Red Fort Blast: Key Events Unpacked

### October 19th

Posters linked to terror group Jaish-e-Mohammed emerged across Srinagar, calling for people to 'come back to the fold' and threatening those who shelter 'Indian predators'.

### November 6th

Dr Adeel Ahmed Rather is arrested in Saharanpur after CCTV footage reveals his distribution of JeM posters in Srinagar.

### November 9th

Authorities recovered 12 suitcases of 358 kgs of ammonium nitrate from a residential property in Faridabad and detained Dr Muzammil Shakeel Ganaie for his links to the terror network and explosives.

### November 11th

Following Ganaie's arrest, police detained Dr. Shaheen Shahid after uncovering her involvement in the terror network

### November 14th

A cache of apprehended explosives detonated inside Nowgam police station, Srinagar, killing 9 people and injuring 32.

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### October 27th

With Indian Security Agencies covertly monitoring the terror networks in the lead-up to the attacks, authorities arrest Ifran Ahmed Wagay due to his involvement in organising the distribution of JeM posters in Srinagar.

### November 8th

Gujarat's Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) seized over 4kg of castor-bean mash, used to make ricin, from Gandhinagar. The ATS arrested 3 individuals Ahmed Mohiyuddin Saiyed, Azad Suleman Sheikh and Mohammad Saleem Khan, in connection with the ricin discovery.

### November 10th

Authorities recovered an additional 2,550 kg of ammonium nitrate from another residential property in Faridabad.

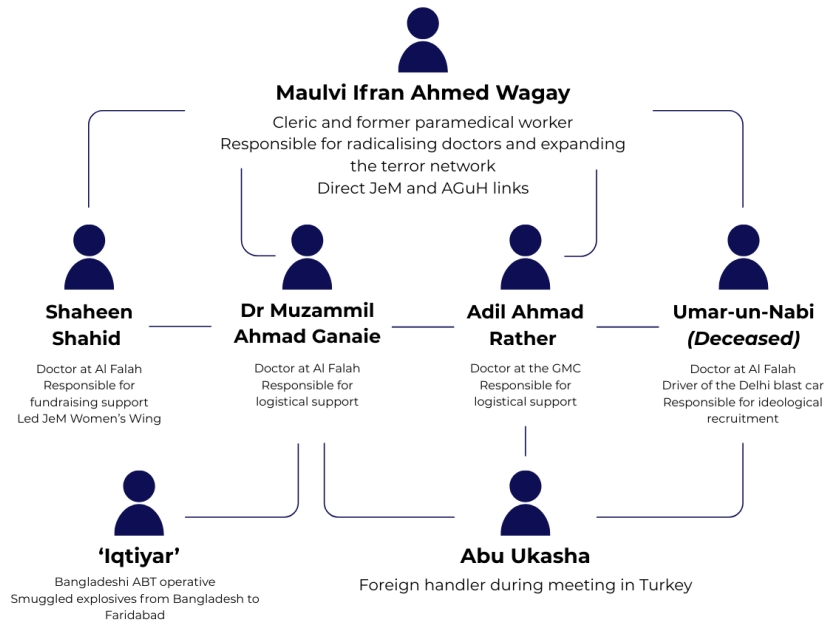
A car explodes in Delhi's main square at 6:52 pm. The blast killed thirteen people and injured over twenty, near the Red Fort and Lal Qila Metro Station. Home Minister Shah confirmed that a slow-moving white Hyundai i20 stopped at a red light before exploding. Dr Umar Nabi, an assistant professor at Al Falah University, was identified as the driver of the vehicle following forensic testing.

### November 12<sup>th</sup>

The Indian Government officially rules the blast as a "terror incident, perpetrated by anti-national forces".

## Motivation, Ideology, and Radicalisation Pathways

### Delhi-blast Terror Network



### Ricin-attack Terror Network

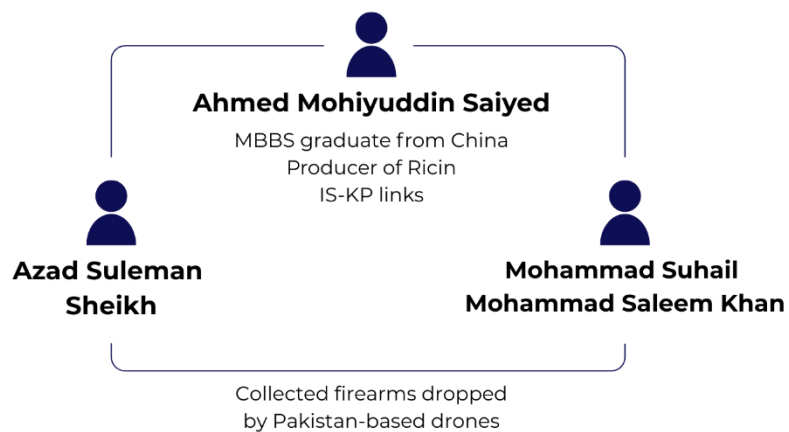


Figure 2: The Delhi-blast Terror Network



Irfan Ahmad Wagay from Kashmir is alleged to be central to the module's ideological arc. Drawing on JeM-linked narratives, he reportedly influenced medical students, toward a jihadist worldview framed around "restoring Muslim dignity." The terror plot of "D-6" planned for 6<sup>th</sup> December reflects symbolic resonance tied to the Babri Masjid demolition perceived as Muslim humiliation. Dr Umar recorded a martyrdom video, signalling ideological commitment.

The radicalisation evident here reflects three intersecting ideas found in pockets of Kashmir: a theological hardening shaped by strict, literalist currents within Wahhabi-Salafi and Deobandi thought; a Pan-Islamist lens that situates local grievances within a global struggle of the Muslim ummah; and an embrace of militant jihad, which elevates as devotion.

These narratives reframe Kashmir in religious terms and portray Muslims as victims of systemic injustice, creating the climate for cross-border terror.

## **Implications for India's Internal Security**

### **1. A Homegrown Threat with Transnational Dimensions**

While Pakistan-backed proxy networks continue to shape India's security environment, the Delhi attack appears rooted in domestic radicalisation across multiple Indian states rather than external infiltrators. This is unlike previous major attacks in Pathankot, Uri, Pulwama or Pahalgam.

The involvement of professionals mirrors a longstanding global trend: as Bruce Hoffman notes, "Throughout history, key members of terrorist organisations and persons with operational responsibility have often come from comfortable middle-class or upper middle-class backgrounds." The module's educated profile widens India's counter-radicalisation challenge and underscores the need to address non-traditional recruitment pathways.

Ideological and operational links to JeM, Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind and IS-K suggest that domestic radicalisation and foreign influence are converging, producing decentralised but globally connected cells.

### **2. The Digital Landscape and Invisible Nodes of Influence**

The digital ecosystem is central to modern radicalisation. Swiss encrypted platforms such as Threema, which is banned in India but accessed through VPNs, Telegram and Session facilitated communication.

Investigators believe the group also relied on online tutorials to assemble IEDs, demonstrating the accessibility of operational knowledge and the difficulty of monitoring decentralised digital spaces.

### **3. Regulatory Gaps: Access to Explosive Precursors**

The use of ammonium nitrate despite bans on open sale highlights regulatory vulnerabilities. Individuals may legally hold limited quantities for scientific purposes, while larger quantities require licensing and safety plans. The recovery of 2,900 kg of ammonium nitrate reveals substantial planning and mass-casualty potential. Evidence of approximately £21,800 (or \$29,100) raised by five doctors involved, alongside two years of procurement activity, indicates an organised effort to exploit weaknesses in chemical monitoring and financial oversight.

## **Regional Implications**

Investigations are examining potential links with transnational networks including JeM, IS-K and Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind, with suspected handlers operating from Pakistan, Turkey and Bangladesh.

### **Turkey**

Emerging leads from the investigation suggest possible Turkish-based facilitation. According to reports, the accused, Dr Umar Mohammed and Dr Muzammil, were allegedly guided by a handler in Ankara using the alias "Ukasha". Investigators traced a large volume of calls from suspicious numbers to Pakistan and Turkey. Turkey has denied involvement, calling such claims "malicious disinformation."

Pakistan-Turkey ties provide context: their strategic cooperation, shared Sunni-majority identity, strong political and military ties, and reciprocal diplomatic support including on Kashmir and Pakistan's bid to join the Nuclear Suppliers Group, all shape Ankara's diplomatic posture toward India. Erdogan's ambition to position himself as a leader and protector of the Muslim world, rooted in its broader aspiration to revive the legacy of the Ottoman Empire, has been a central driver of its strategic partnership with Pakistan.

### **Bangladesh**

The arrest of Iqtiyar, a Bangladeshi member of the Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT), a group also proscribed in the United Kingdom, for allegedly supplying explosives, has shifted focus to the India-Bangladesh border regions. Agencies are examining patterns of collaboration between radical groups operating across South Asia and the ease with which actors exploit porous borders and informal networks.

Indian reports suggest a meeting in Dhaka in October involving Bangladesh-based Jihadists, groups such as the proscribed Hizb ut-Tahrir and a virtual appearance by Lashkar-e-Taiba commander Saifullah Saif, possibly discussing coordinated activities. Bangladesh's interim government has stated that it is not allowing its territory to be used by extremists.

However, weakened law enforcement following regime change has expanded space for extremist networks. AQIS and IS-K have intensified propaganda, tapping into themes of corruption and secularism.

Hizb ut-Tahrir–Bangladesh continues to circulate caliphate-centred narratives online, while pro-Pakistan Islamist groups increasingly frame India as a threat to Bangladesh's Islamic identity. These dynamics, combined with grievances over Gaza, Kashmir and Arakan, heighten the risk of regional spillovers.

## Pakistan

Although early evidence suggests no Pakistani nationals executed the attack, ideological and logistical influences from Pakistan-based networks remain. The involvement of an imam with alleged JeM links aligns with longstanding patterns of Pakistani ideological ecosystems influencing Indian networks.

A widely circulated video of Pakistani political figure Chaudhry Anwarul Haq has raised questions about Pakistan's role. In the video, he states: "If you (India) keep bleeding Balochistan, we will strike India from the Red Fort to the forests of Kashmir. By the grace of Allah, we have done it, and they still cannot count the bodies." Parallel developments, including the Gujarat ATS arrest of individuals tied to a ricin-plot cell reliant on supplies from Pakistani drones, require further scrutiny for potential links.

Indian agencies are also assessing the implications of Pakistan Army Chief General Asim Munir's radical hardline ideology, which may embolden extremist networks and further complicate India's threat landscape.

## International Implications

The interstate terror module has implications extending beyond India. It affects global Muslim sentiment and poses challenges in Western countries with large South Asian diasporas.

### 1. Diaspora Impacts of South Asian tensions

Kashmir has long been a flashpoint in India–Pakistan relations, and developments there often reverberate across diaspora communities. In the UK, home to around 1.8 million British Indians and 1.5 million British Pakistanis, events in the region can quickly influence local

sentiment and community dynamics. The Pahalgam attack showed this clearly in the UK, with the incident sparking rival Indian and Pakistani diaspora protests outside the High Commission and resulting in tense stand-offs.

Ideological messages travel across borders and take root in homegrown networks. As a result, Muslim youth, whether in Kashmir, India, Pakistan, the Gulf, or Western diasporas, are exposed to similar radicalising influences, which they may internalise and reinterpret within their own contexts through the shared identity of a global ummah.

## **2. From Territorial Politics to Global Religious Framing**

The Kashmir conflict is no longer viewed simply as a territorial or political dispute but increasingly as a religious struggle. Jihadist groups have reframed Kashmir as a frontline in the global defence of the Muslim ummah, linking it to perceived assaults on Muslim identity and dignity. As highlighted in our earlier Pahalgam report, online media frequently merges “Kashmir–India” with “Palestine–Israel,” creating a shared narrative of Muslim victimhood, resistance, and liberation.

This ideological fusion sharply heightens the risk of Hindu–Muslim polarisation over Kashmir, mirroring the broader Muslim–Jewish tensions seen over Palestine. Once a dispute is cast in religious terms, it draws far wider engagement across Muslim audiences and significantly increases the risk of confrontation.

## **3. Ideological Exposure within UK Muslim Institutions**

The UK’s Muslim landscape reflects the South Asian origins of much of its Muslim population. Around 42% of the UK’s mosques are Deobandi. It is a Sunni tradition that originated in the Indian subcontinent and has been at the forefront of shaping Islamism in South Asian communities. As an example, the Deobandi tradition holds regressive views on gender and sexuality, which, if left uncontested, can create ideological rigidities that could be leveraged by hardline Islamist groups.

The prominence of Deobandi networks could imply that some young British Muslims are more likely to encounter ideological currents similar to jihadist groups such as JeM, whose ideology draws on Deobandi scriptural influences, exploited in South Asia.

The Leicester unrest of 2022 illustrated how misinformation and grievance narratives can escalate into inter-community conflict.

Claims of abducted girls and warnings about Hindutva groups fuelled violent mobilisation, drawing participation from youth in neighbouring

cities. These dynamics show how transnational narratives of defending the ummah map onto local tensions.

The Delhi module underscores the risk posed by globalised religious framings that travel rapidly across borders. Had the Delhi attack succeeded, Indian retaliation may have been far greater than after Pahalgam, potentially intensifying Hindu-Muslim tensions across diaspora communities, fuelling narratives of Muslim oppression, and accelerating radicalisation.

## **Key Takeaways from the Delhi Blast**

### **1. Operational Disruption Success:**

The swift action and coordination by Indian agencies successfully disrupted what could have been a large-scale, multi-site terror operation.

### **2. Radicalisation Remains the Core Challenge:**

The plot underscores a deeper, unresolved challenge: radicalisation cannot be neutralised solely through legal reform or economic development. The relative calm in Kashmir should not be misread as a resolution.

### **3. Global Lessons on Homegrown Terror:**

India can draw meaningful lessons from the UK and European experiences in tackling homegrown extremism, particularly in developing early warning systems, community interventions, and long-term deradicalisation programmes.

### **4. The Need for International Collaboration:**

The ideological currents behind the Delhi module do not recognise borders. Enhanced intelligence and knowledge-sharing between India, the UK, and other Western partners is vital, particularly given the vulnerability of diaspora communities to transnational jihadist narratives.

## Authors Page

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Shruti Kapil is Head of the Security and Mutual Dependence Desk at the ICfS. She worked as a consultant for both the private and public sectors, specialising in conflict resolution, building sustainable peace, and promoting development through strategic communication. Shruti has worked with think tanks and institutes in India and abroad on initiatives to counter violent extremism, drawing on field experience and engagement in Kashmir.

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