

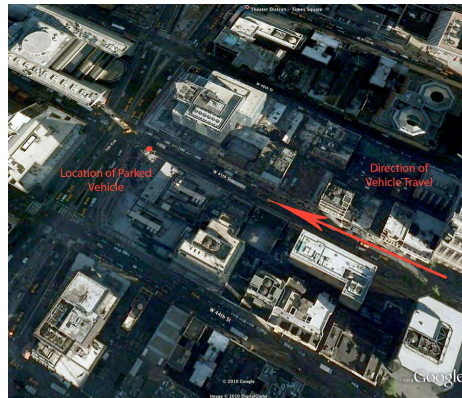
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SIGNIFICANT TERRORIST EVENT
REPORT (STER)

NEW YORK TIMES SQUARE
VEHICULAR BOMBING
(NYTSVB-1MAY2010) v1.5



3 May 2010
0505 EDT / 0905 GMT

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NOTE:

THIS IS A DYNAMIC WORKING DOCUMENT AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE. Questions or comments can be directed to Ben Venzke at benv@intelcenter.com or ben.venzke@leo.gov. The latest release can be found at <http://www.intelcenter.com>.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At 1830 EDT on 1 May 2010, street vendor Duane Jackson noticed a suspicious vehicle parked on 45th St. between 7th and 8th Avenues approximately 10ft from the corner in a no-standing zone with its hazard lights on and the engine running in New York City's Times Square near the Nokia Theatre in front of a Bank of America branch. The street vendor notified mounted police officer Wayne Rhatigan of NYPD's Mounted Unit. The police officer noticed smoke billowing from vents near the backseat of the vehicle, smelled gunpowder and heard "popping noises". Officer Rhatigan made an emergency call at 1834 EDT. The New York Fire Department (NYFD) responded and saw propane tanks inside the vehicle. The NYPD bomb squad was called to respond and Times Square was evacuated. NYPD using a robot found a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) composed of three propane tanks, two filled 5-gallon gasoline containers, black powder, burnt electrical wires, two clocks with batteries, "consumer-grade" fireworks and a metal box resembling a gun-locker inside the vehicle. The metal box contained eight bags of an unknown granular substance, firecrackers and several wires. Commissioner Kelly said a white male in his 40s had been identified on video footage in the area and was seen removing a dark shirt to reveal a red shirt less than a block from the vehicle.

On 2 May 2010, Tehrik-i Taliban Pakistan (TTP) released three videos either claiming or appearing to discuss the NYC attack before it occurred. All three videos appear to be official credible releases from the TTP's Umar Studio. The three statements from a messaging analysis point of view appear to strongly indicate that the NYC 1 May VBIED attack was the work of the TTP and that there is a high threat of further attacks in major US cities over coming days and possibly weeks.

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OVERVIEW

At 1830 EDT on 1 May 2010, Duane Jackson, a 58-year-old handbag street vendor from Buchanan, New York, noticed a suspicious vehicle parked on 45th St. between 7th and 8th Avenues approximately 10ft from the corner in a no-standing zone with its hazard lights on and the engine running in New York City's Times Square near the Nokia Theatre in front of a Bank of America branch. Jackson said, "That was my first thought: Who sat this car here? That's when the smoke started coming out and then we heard the little pop pop pop like firecrackers going out and that's when everybody scattered and ran back. Now that I saw the propane tanks and the gasoline, what if that would have ignited? I'm less than eight feet away from the car. We dodged a bullet here." Jackson added that a key was in the ignition on a key ring with approximately 19 or 20 other keys. After seeing the propane tanks inside the vehicle, Jackson alerted police officer Wayne Rhatigan of NYPD's Mounted Unit. The police officer noticed smoke billowing from vents near the backseat of the vehicle, smelled gunpowder and heard "popping noises". Officer Rhatigan made an emergency call at 1834 EDT and grabbed two nearby police officers to help move people away from the vehicle.

The New York Fire Department (NYFD) responded to Officer Rhatigan's call and identified propane tanks inside the vehicle. A NYFD firefighter who reportedly arrived early on the scene said he saw "a flash" from the back of the vehicle. He added, "The SUV was smoking. There was a flash and we put two and two together". The NYPD bomb squad was subsequently called to respond and Times Square was evacuated. NYPD's bomb squad using a robot smashed through the back window of the vehicle and found a vehicular-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) composed of three propane tanks, two filled 5-gallon containers with gasoline, black powder, burnt electrical wires, two clocks with batteries, "consumer-grade" M-88 firecrackers contained in a 16 oz can and a 75-lbs metal box resembling a gun-locker. The metal box contained eight bags of an unknown granular substance. New York Police Commissioner Kelly said the substance in the metal box looked and felt like fertilizer. Bomb technicians from the FBI's New York office were also called to the scene to assist with rendering safe the VBIED and aiding the investigation.

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After rendering safe the VBIED, NYPD moved the parts of the device to a bomb squad facility in the Bronx for forensics analysis. The vehicle was moved to a forensics lab in Queens where it is being “thoroughly checked for prints, hairs and fibers”, according to Deputy Commissioner Paul J. Browne. Browne also said, “It appears to be a car bomb left in a Pathfinder between Seventh and Eighth” Avenues on 45th Street. Browne added, “This is a bomb. This is a car bomb. A crude device that includes gasoline, propane and is wired together”. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano said fingernails were recovered from inside the vehicle.

The vehicle is a dark-green Nissan Pathfinder SUV with a Connecticut license plate. The license plate was registered to a Ford truck and not the Pathfinder. Police authorities contacted the person whom the plate was registered to, and that individual said the plate was registered to a Ford truck that was previously sent to a junk yard near Bridgeport, Connecticut within the last two weeks. Mayor Michael Bloomberg said investigators have no reason to believe the Ford truck owner “had anything to do with it or his story is false”. Police officers are attempting to contact the owner of the junk yard. The Pathfinder’s Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) had also been removed. The vehicle’s Connecticut tag number has been tentatively identified as “9BC-109”.

Commissioner Kelly also said a white male in his 40s had been identified on video footage in the area and was seen removing a dark shirt to reveal a red shirt less than a block from the vehicle.

On 2 May 2010, Tehrik-i Taliban Pakistan (TTP) released three videos either claiming or appearing to discuss the NYC attack before it occurred. All three videos appear to be official credible releases from the TTP’s Umar Studio. The three statements from a messaging analysis point of view appear to strongly indicate that the NYC 1 May VBIED attack was the work of the TTP and that there is a high threat of further attacks in major US cities over coming days and possibly weeks.

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INCIDENT TIMELINE

- At 1828 EDT on 1 May 2010, a dark-green Nissan Pathfinder was viewed traveling west-bound on 45th Street.
- At 1830 EDT, the Nissan Pathfinder parked in a no-standing zone on 45th St. between 7th and 8th Avenues in New York City's Times Square near the Nokia Theatre in front of a Bank of America branch. The vehicle was left with its hazards lights on and the engine running.
- At 1830 EDT, street vendor Duane Jackson noticed the suspicious vehicle and alerted police officer Wayne Rhatigan of NYPD's Mounted Unit.
- At approximately 1832 EDT, Officer Rhatigan saw smoke coming from vehicle
- At 1834 EDT, Officer Rhatigan made an emergency phone call after observing smoke coming from the vehicle.
- An evacuation of 43rd to 48th Streets and 6th to 8th Avenues was ordered shortly afterwards. The south tower of the Marriott Hotel at 1535 Broadway at 46th Street was also evacuated.
- At 0400 EDT, an unknown caller placed a 911 call and said that there would be a significant explosion in Times Square, and that the 1 May 2010 vehicular bombing was only a diversion.
- On 2 May 2010, Tehrik-i Taliban Pakistan (TTP) released three videos either claiming or appearing to discuss the NYC attack before it occurred. All three videos appear to be official credible releases from the TTP's Umar Studio. The three statements from a messaging analysis point of view appear to strongly indicate that the NYC 1 May VBIED attack was the work of the TTP. One recording was purportedly recorded on 4 Apr. 2010 and the other on 19 Apr. 2010.

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THE ATTACK

- At 0628 EDT, a dark-green colored Nissan Pathfinder SUV was viewed heading west-bound on 45th Street. Photos of it en route to the attack site is above.
- At 0630 EDT, the vehicle containing an IED composed of three propane tanks, two filled 5-gallon gasoline containers, black powder, burnt electrical wires, two clocks with batteries, “consumer-grade” fireworks and a metal box resembling a gun-locker with eight bags of an unknown granular substance, firecrackers and several wires parked in a no-standing zone on 45th St. between 7th and 8th Avenues approximately 10 feet from the corner. The vehicle was seen with smoke coming from it shortly afterwards
- A white male suspect in his 40s was seen changing shirts nearby following the attack. Police are attempting to locate a tourist from Pennsylvania who may have capture footage of the suspect with his video camera.

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PRIMARY SUSPECT

- New York Police Commissioner Kelly said a white male in his 40s had been identified on video footage in the area and was seen removing a dark shirt to reveal a red shirt less than a block from the vehicle. He put the darker shirt into a bag that he was carrying.
- The male was walking in Shubert Alley and according to the video evidence, was shown looking back in the direction of West 45th Street.
- The video footage was taken about a half a block from where the vehicle housing the explosive devices was parked.

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PATHFINDER VBIED

- The Pathfinder Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device (VBIED) was comprised of three 20-pound propane tanks, two filled 5-gallon gasoline containers, black powder, burnt electrical wires, two clocks [one is pictured above] with batteries, “consumer-grade” M-88 crackers and a 2x2x4 ft black metal box resembling a gun-locker. The metal box weighed 75-lbs and contained eight bags of an unknown granular substance that, according to Police Commissioner Kelly, looked and felt like fertilizer. The firecrackers were reportedly taped to the gasoline cans. The alarm clocks were connected to the device with small wires. One of the alarm clocks was canary yellow and resembled a child’s toy. The alarm clocks were on the backseat floor and possibly wired to the metal box. In addition to the eight bags, there was a pressure cooker pot filled with more firecrackers and wires inside the metal box. The firecrackers contained

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50mg or less of “flash powder”, a fast-burning mix of aluminum, potassium perchlorate and other materials.

- The gas containers were on the backseat with a 16 oz container filled with firecrackers
- Former NYPD bomb squad supervisor Kevin Barry said the ignition source “failed to function the main charge”.
- If the IED had detonated, Barry said, “it would be more of an incendiary event”
- NYPD spokesman Paul Browne said, “This is a bomb. This is a car bomb. A crude device that includes gasoline, propane and is wired together”. Brown also said, “There were explosive elements, including powder, gasoline, propane and some kind of electrical wires attached to a clock. No motive has been established.”
- NYC Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly said, the IED was “amateurish”, but could have caused massive damage within a one-block radius. He said, “I think the intent was to cause a significant ball of fire.” Kelly also said, “We were lucky it didn’t detonate. In my judgement, it would have caused casualties, a significant. I’m told the vehicle itself would have been cut in half”.
- Mayor Michael Bloomberg said, “It certainly could have exploded and had a pretty big fire and a decent amount of explosive impact”.
- The vehicle was a dark-green Nissan Pathfinder SUV with a Connecticut license plate. The license plate was registered to a Ford truck and not the Pathfinder. Police authorities contacted the person whom the plate was registered to, and that individual said the plate was registered to a Ford truck that was previously sent to a junk yard near Bridgeport, Connecticut.
- Mayor Michael Bloomberg said investigators have no reason to believe the Ford truck owner “had anything to do with it or his story is false”. Police officers are attempting to contact the owner of the junk yard.
- The Pathfinder’s Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) had been removed.

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911 CALL

On 2 May 2010, an anonymous caller placed a 911 call at around 0400 local time (0800 GMT). The caller said that there would be a significant explosion in Times Square and that the failed attack on 1 May was only a diversion. Officials determined that the call came from a pay phone at West 53rd Street and 7th Avenue - about eight blocks away from the scene of the failed vehicle attack - however, officials have yet to definitively link the 911 call to this attack.

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TEHRIK-I TALIBAN PAKISTAN (TTP) CLAIM

On 2 May 2010, Tehrik-i Taliban Pakistan (TTP) released three videos either claiming or appearing to discuss the NYC attack before it occurred. All three videos appear to be official credible releases from the TTP's Umar Studio. The three statements from a messaging analysis point of view appear to strongly indicate that the NYC 1 May VBIED attack was the work of the TTP and that there is a high threat of further attacks in major US cities over coming days and possibly weeks.

If the claims are confirmed this would mark the first attack by the TTP against a target in the US, which the group has been threatening to do. This represents then the second al-Qaeda regional arm/affiliate to conduct an attack in the US since the end of Dec. 2009 with the last being the Delta attack by al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). The involvement of groups like AQAP and TTP in conducting attacks in the US, significantly complicates the threat environment in the US and raises the threat of more frequent and lower-level attacks occurring in the US while the threat of major 9-11 size events from core al-Qaeda remains.

On 9 Jan. 2010, the TTP released a video showing Jordanian double-agent suicide bomber Hammam Khalil al-Balawi (a.k.a. Abu Dujanah al-Khorasani) giving a video statement before he conducted the suicide bombing targeting CIA personnel on 30 Dec. 2009. Al-Balawi is seated next to TTP Emir Hakimullah Mehsud. Al-Balawi said it is an obligation for jihadists who were sheltered by TTP former emir Baitullah Mehsud to retaliate for his death both in the US and outside the US. Prior to this both the previous TTP Emir Baitullah Mehsud and other TTP members have threatened to conduct attacks in the US and Europe.

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TTP VIDEO - QARI HUSSEIN MEHSUD - 2 MAY 2010

- On 2 May 2010 the TTP released a 1'05" video featuring an audio statement from Qari Hussein Mehsud in which he appears to claim responsibility for the 1 May Times Square attack.

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FULL TRANSCRIPT

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BEGIN TRANSCRIPT

We Tehreek-e-Taliban with all the Pride and Bravery, TAKE full responsibility for the RECENT ATTACK IN THE USA. We also congratulate the MUSLIM UMMAH with all the pleasure and happiness.

This attack is a revenge for the great & value-able martyred leaders of Mujahideen i.e., Baitullah Mehsud Shaheed RA, The Arab Mujahideen's leaders especially Abu Umer al-baghdadi shaheed's companions in Iraq.

This is also a revenge for the Global American interference & terrorism in Muslim Countries, especially in Pakistan for Lalmasjid operation, The recent rain of Drone attacks in the tribal areas and the abduction, torture and humiliation of our most respected & innocent sister Dr. Aafia siddiquie.

We Furiously Warn, the member countries of NATO, their Governments and common Public to oppose the evil U.S policies and sincerely apologize for the massacres in Iraq, Yemen, Afghanistan & Pakistani tribal areas otherwise be prepared for the worst ever destruction and devastation in their regions. InshaALLAH

END TRANSCRIPT

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TTP VIDEO - HAKIMULLAH MEHSUD - 4 APR. 2010 - 2 MAY 2010

- On 2 May 2010, the TTP's Umar Studio released an 8'42" video featuring a video statement from Hakimullah Mehsud. The video has English subtitles. This is his first video appearance since reports of his death in a drone strike. He states that the video was recorded on 4 Apr. 2010 and that an attack is coming to major American cities soon. He said, "The time is very near when our Fedayeen will attack the American states in their major cities." He adds, "Our fedayeen have penetrated the terrorist America, we will give extremely painful blows to the fanatic America."
- In the video Mehsud said was made on 4 Apr. 2010, he said, "Inshahallah very soon in some days or a month's time, the Muslim ummah will see the fruits of most successful attacks of our fedayeen in USA." He reiterates this point towards the end of the video saying, "Inshahallah in some days or a month, time will prove the success of our Fedayee attacks bringing joy and bliss to the hearts of Muslim ummah."

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- Mehsud's claim appears credible based on initial analysis and his references to multiple attacks raises concerns that there are plans for multiple attacks. These could be timed to occur in days ahead or a longer period, although if following his time reference the greater likelihood would be in immediate days ahead.
- IntelCenter analysis indicates that this video is credible and an official release from the TTP's Umar Studio.

FULL TRANSCRIPT

Transcript is an exact transcription of English subtitles that appeared on the video and includes all spelling and grammatical errors made in original subtitles.

BEGIN TRANSCRIPT

My respected Brothers of the Muslim Ummah May Peace & Blessings of Allah be on to you The non-believers (kuffars) have always been doing propaganda that Hakeem ullah Mehsood has been martyred. Sometimes they say in a Drone attack, mostly giving references of Shaktui or Orukzai and sometimes they say we martyred him on his way to Multan. This is an open LIE & propaganda made by Kuffar and its funded Media. Alhamdulillah, on the 4th day of April 2010, I give good news to the Muslim Ummah about being alive and healthy.

And I want to make one more thing very clear that America is the worst Fanatic Terrorist & Extremist country in the whole world. Its hands are filled with the blood of millions of Muslim children, women, young & old of Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq and various other muslim countries. And now this arrogant terrorist has started showing bad intentions towards the Mujahideen of Yemen, Now America wants to enter into Yemen for its evil objectives. I want to give a clear message to the Muslim Ummah to WAKE UP from the slumber of ignorance and cowardness. America and its Allies are facing the worst defeat ever in the history.

America and Nato forces are facing a destructive defeat in Afghanistan and want to run away from Afghanistan under the camouflage of PEACE DEALS.

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Very soon the muslim Ummah will hear victorious & joyous news of US troops leaving Afghanistan back to its terrorist state after a humiliating end. Along with its front-line Ally Pakistani Murtad Army facing the same humiliating fate in the tribals areas. InshaALLAH. With the help of ALLAH (SWT) we are steadfast and successful in our mission.

I want to especially convey my message to the Mujhaideen of Yemen, Aljazzair, Saudi Arab (Hijaz-e-Muqaddas) and Palestine to be steadfast on their Jihad and don't loose their stance even for a micro second. I request you all to be steadfast & firm in your Jihad. The time is very near when our Fidaeen will attack the American states in their major cities. And inshaALLAH we will succeed in our attacks. Our fidaeen have penetrated the terrorist America, we will give extremely painful blows to the fanatic America. I request you all to be steadfast & firm in your Jihad.

America, the criminal state has martyred many of our great muslim Leaders i.e., Baitullah Mehsud Shaheed RA and many respected brothers from Al-Qaida who were prince of Arab and they only came to us for shelter. They came to us with the invitation towards ISLAMIC / Shariah System and for this the US and their Extremist Allies have martyred them.

We can never forget our honorable martyred brothers, our faith and dignity doesn't allow us to forget about these Great Martyrs in the path of ALLAH (swt). InshaALLAH we will take revenge of our brothers in the most ruthless way.

Not to forget about the respected and innocent sister from Pakistan Dr. Afia Siddiqui who has been stripped naked in order to make Fun of the dignity and respect of the Muslim Ummah. Our hearts are in severe pain seeing our sister in such un-human and disrespectful condition. The flames in our hearts will only be lightened when our Fidaeen will deliver precise and destructive attacks on the terrorist America bringing it down to its knees. inshaALLAH

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InshaALLAH very soon in some days or a month's time, the Muslim ummah will see the fruits of a most successful attacks of our fidaeen in USA. Please don't worry for the pain and suffering that's in your heart. America the extremist has Lost terribly.

And I want to Warn its Allies to have some mercy on themselves, stop assisting America and If you don't stop your KUFR / Disbelief being a frontline ally in their war against Islam, you will face even worst humiliation, destruction and defeat than America itself.

I want to again WARN the evil Allies to have mercy on themselves and reject the friendship of USA, openly oppose the satanic American policies. Otherwise your end will be much Harsh than Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iraq.

inshaALLAH in some days or a month, time will prove the success of our Fidaee attacks bringing Joy & bliss to the hearts of Muslim Ummah.

Al Quran: "And the hearts of the momineen will receive bliss"

O' the Youth, Ulema & Scholars and pious people of the Ummah remember us in your prayers to ALLAH (SWT).

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TTP VIDEO - HAKIMULLAH MEHSUD - 19 APR. 2010 - 2 MAY 2010

- On 2 May 2010, the TTP released a 2nd video from Hakimullah Mehsud. The 2'16" video contains an audio message from Mehsud purportedly made on 19 Apr. 2010. The video shows a still of Mehsud's face next to a map of the US. Stills and transcript of this video are coming soon. This video is the 3rd TTP release connected to the NYC attack as of now.
- In his message recorded on 19 Apr., Meshud said, "From now on, the main targets of our fedayeen are American cities. This good news will be heard within some days or weeks. Today on-wards, the direction of our jihad is American states and cities. Inshahallah we are successful in this mission and objective." While he makes this remarks a GoogleEarth map of the US is shown with multiple explosions running from coast to coast.

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FULL TRANSCRIPT

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BEGIN TRANSCRIPT

Today, dated 19th April 2010, through media I want to convey an important message to the Muslim Ummah. The Evil Groups of Kuffar around the world, conspired to sadden the Muslim Ummah with false rumors about my martyrdom. Today I want to give a very good news to the Muslim Ummah. America which is the Biggest EVIL of this world, it has savagely massacred millions of innocent Muslims in Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistani Tribal areas. And has martyred respected Arab mujahedeen brothers, who announced the implementation of Islamic system. For this the Satanic America martyred them, and rejoiced on it as their victory.

Alhamdulillah, today I want to assure Ummat-e-Muslimah that our Moral is at its peak, we haven't felt weak for a micro-second. From now on, THE MAIN TARGETS of our FIDAEEN are AMERICAN CITIES.

This good news will be heard within some days or weeks. Today on-wards, the direction of our JEHAD is AMERICAN States & Cities. InshaALLAH We are successful in this mission and objective. I request the Muslim Ummah to pray for success of the Mujahideen worldwide.

END TRANSCRIPT

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SITES OF IMPORTANCE NEAR THE ATTACK SITE

The attack occurred on 45th St. and 7th avenue near the 7th avenue intersection with Broadway in downtown New York City. The VBIED was parked adjacent to the Swatch store and the Minskoff Theatre.

The vehicle was parked in one of New York City's most popular locations - three blocks, or about 0.1 mile, away from Times Square and six blocks, or about 0.2 miles, away from Radio City Music Hall. The area is crowded with theatres, including the Nokia Theatre, the Minskoff Theatre, the Marquis Theatre and the Richard Rodgers Theatre. Theatre productions in this area typically run on Saturdays at 1400 and 2000, placing the time of the attack at 1830 near the time when theatre patrons would be coming and going from shows.

There are also several large hotels in the area, including the Marriott Marquis and the Muse Hotel.

Within a five block radius of the attack site there are eight metro stations, including the crowded Times Square - 42nd Street Station.

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IMAGERY OF ATTACK LOCATION, STREET LEVEL



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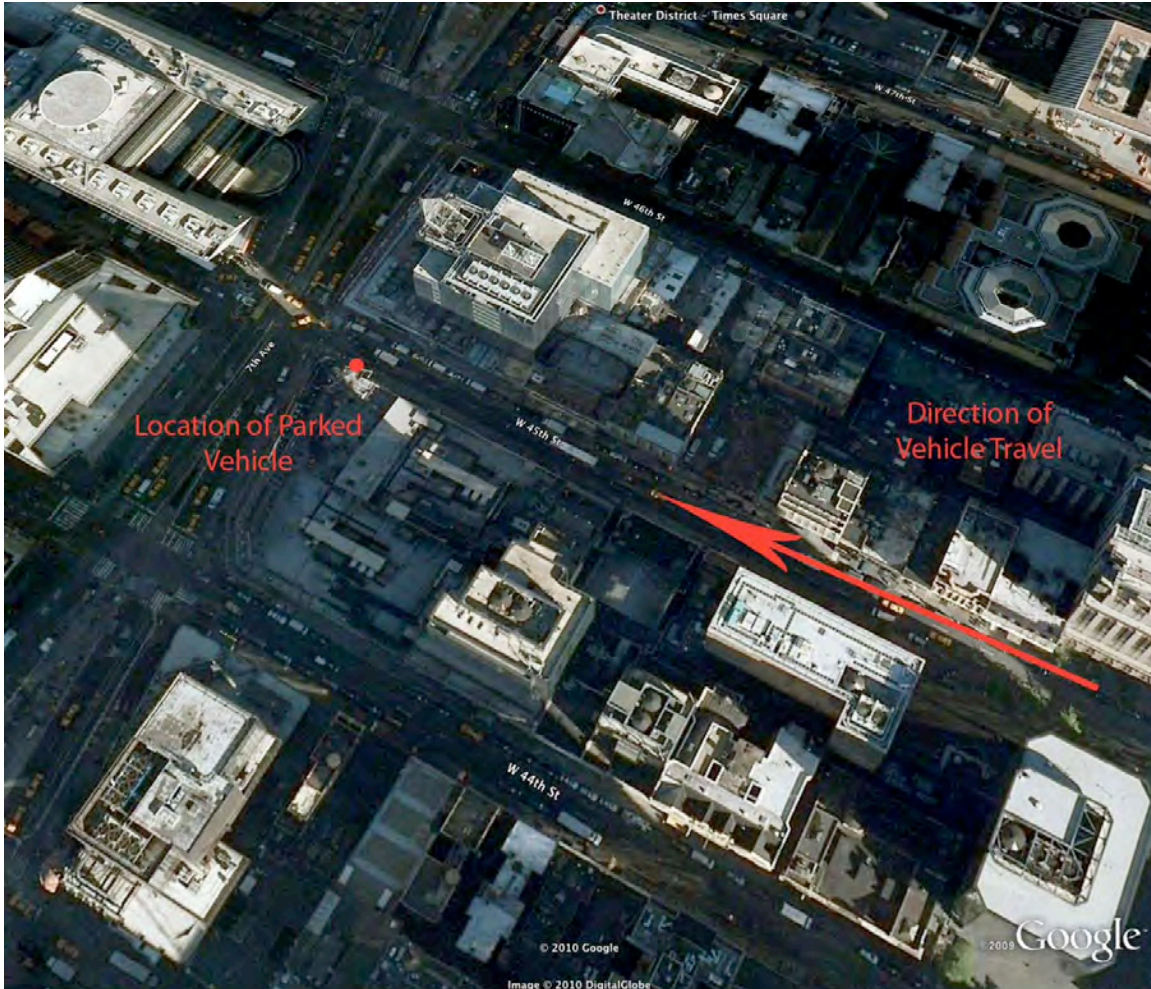
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IMAGERY OF ATTACK LOCATION, 784 ft



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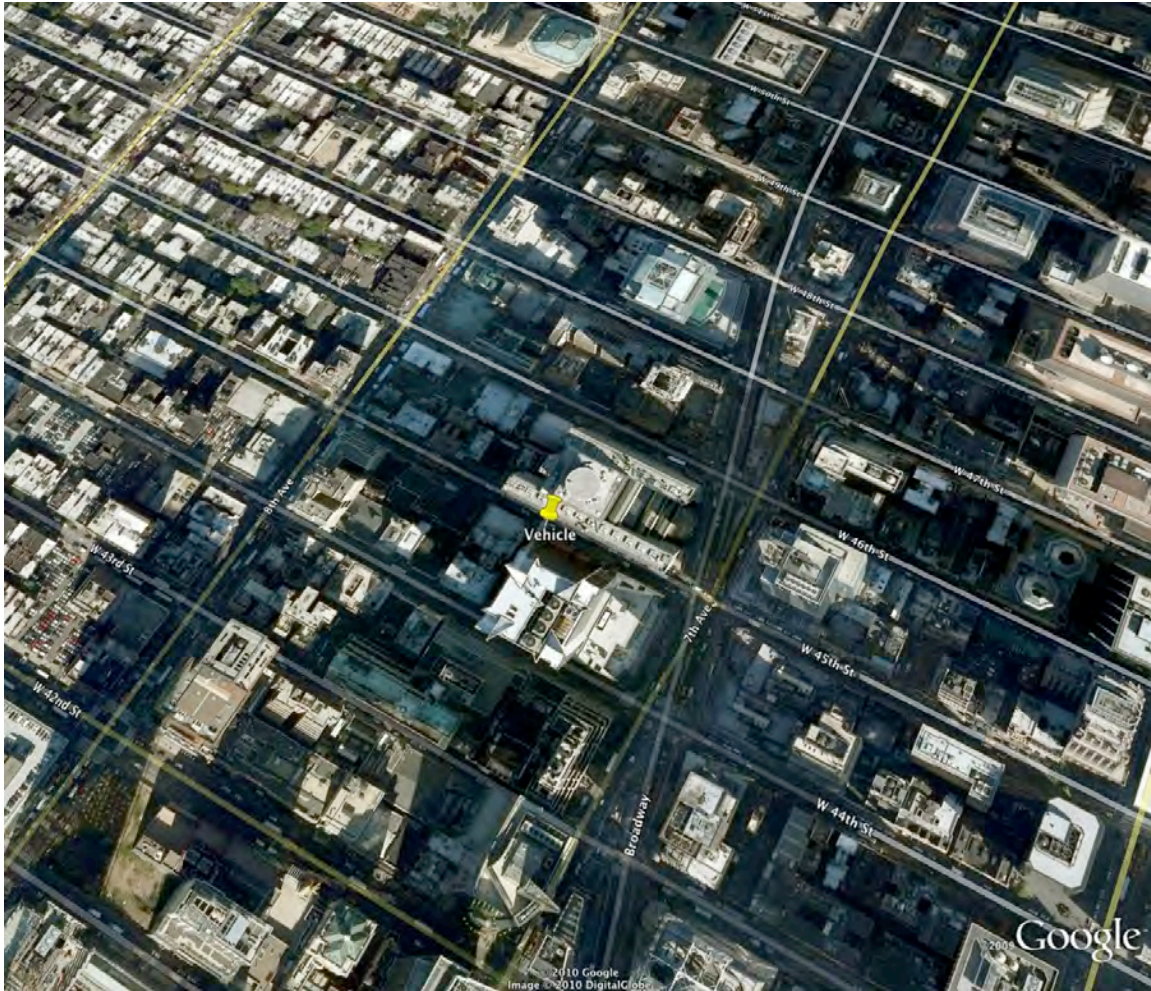
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IMAGERY OF ATTACK LOCATION, 1,991 ft



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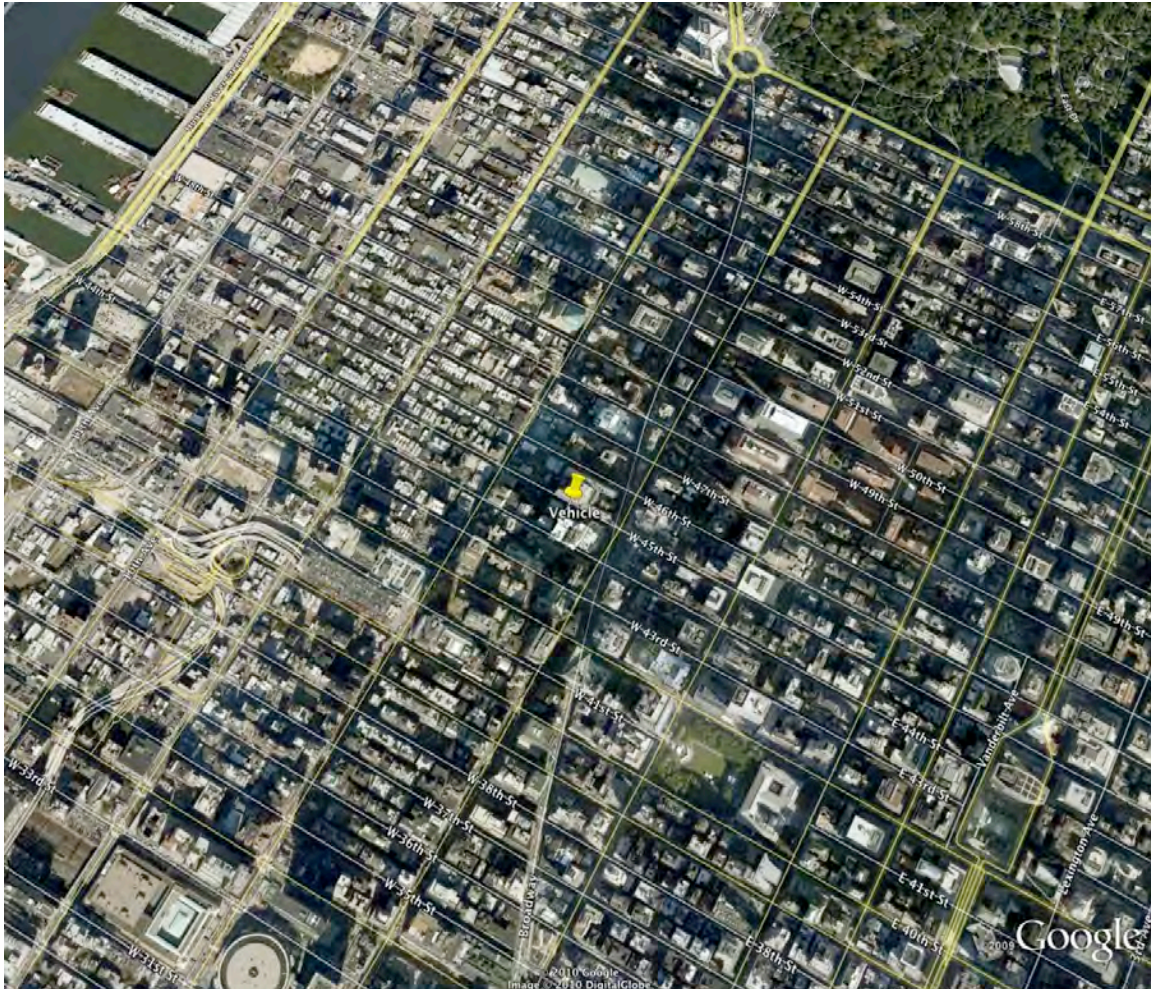
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IMAGERY OF ATTACK LOCATION, 6,529 ft



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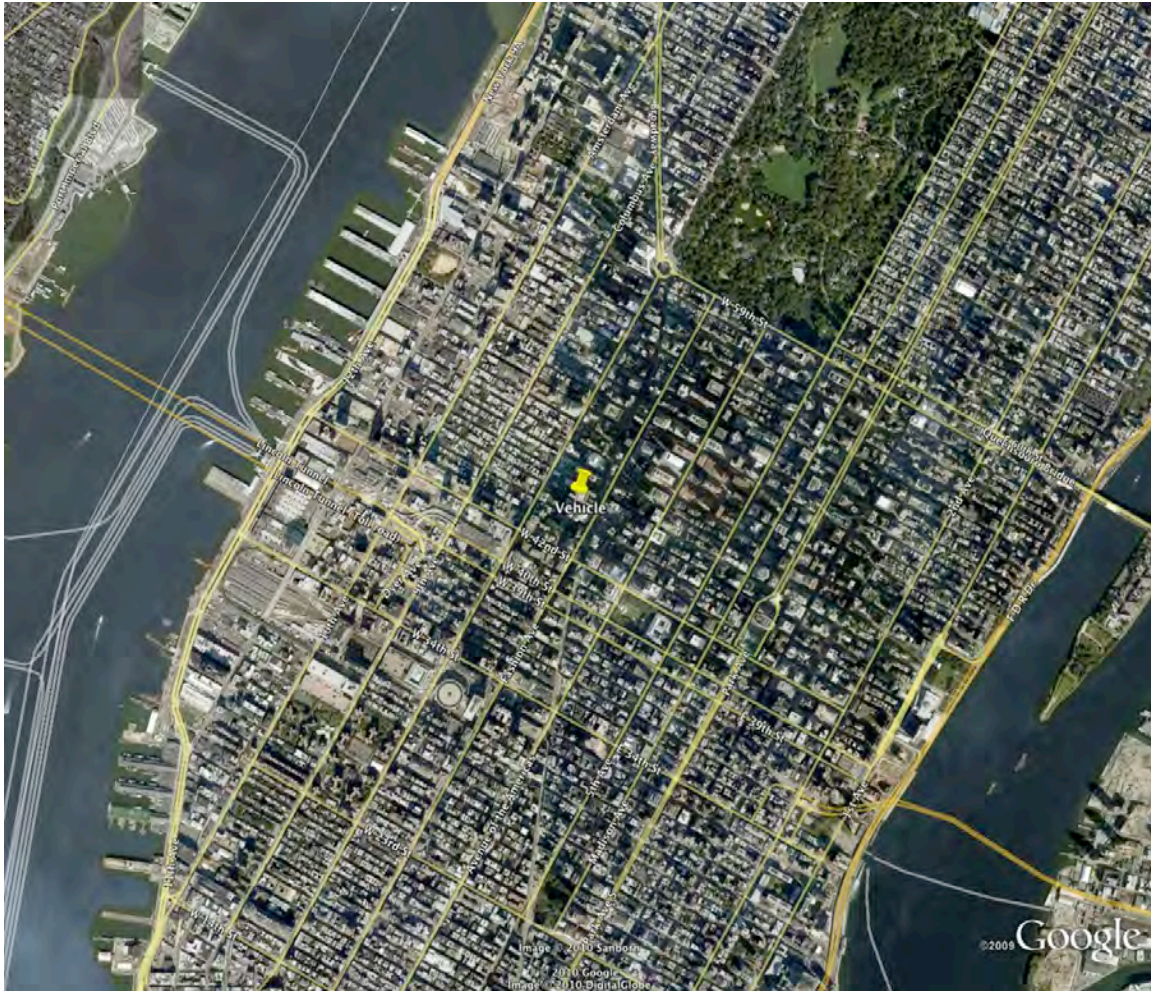
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IMAGERY OF ATTACK LOCATION, 15,026 ft



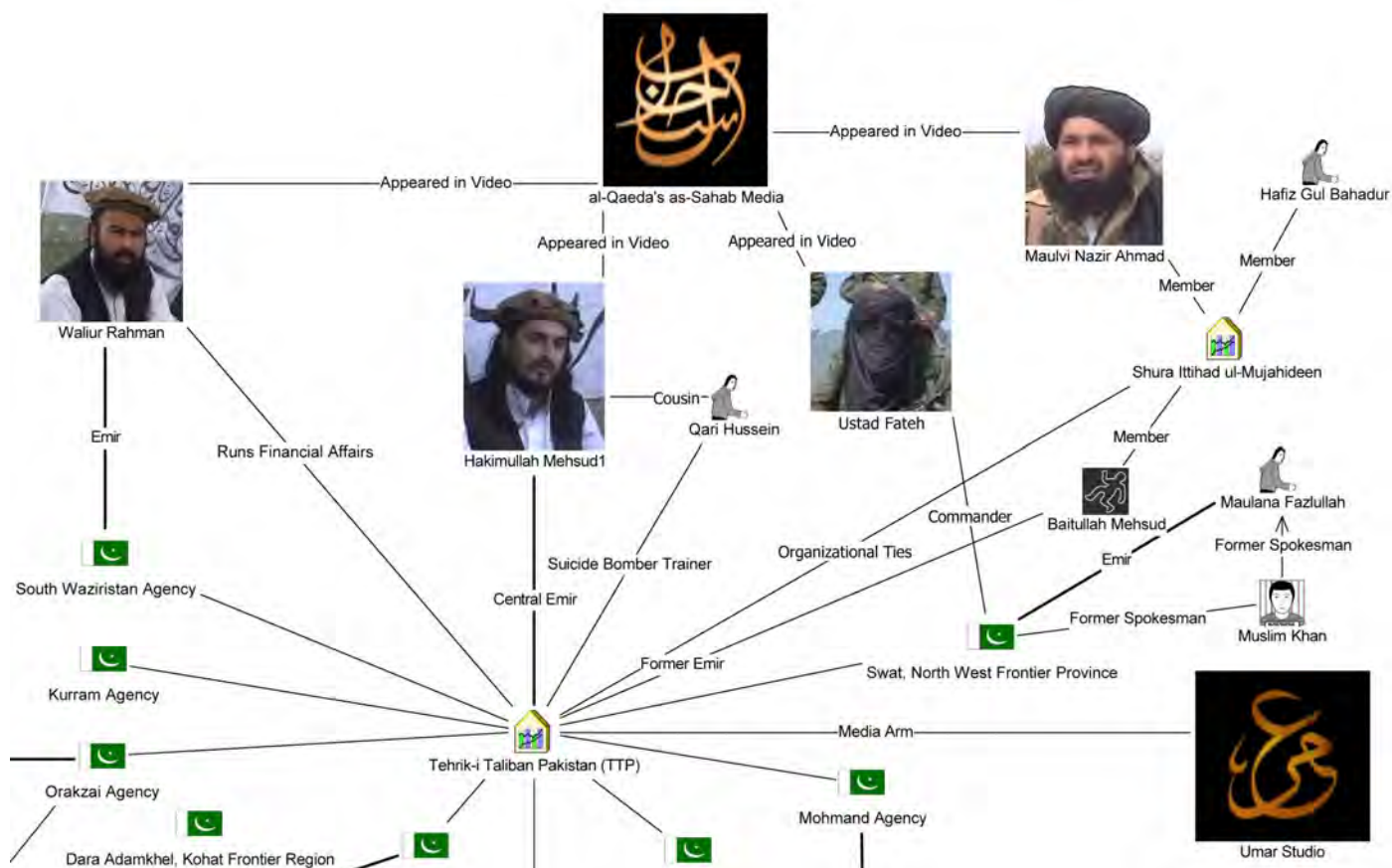
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TEHRIK-I TALIBAN PAKISTAN (TTP)

- Above is a partial link analysis chart of the TTP from 12 Nov. 2009.
- The TTP Current Organizational Structure link analysis graphic above shows the leadership structure of the TTP and highlights some of the links between the group and outside organizations. The leadership structure underwent several significant changes following the death in Aug. 2009 of the TTP's founding emir, Baitullah Mehsud.

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Hakimullah Mehsud, who was formerly in control of Kurram, Orakzai and Khyber Agencies, became central emir. He was replaced in Orakzai by Aslam Farooqi and by Tariq Afridi in Khyber Agency. Afridi also took control of the TTP's Dara Adamkhel faction. Commander Waliur Rahman became the emir of South Waziristan and maintained control of the central TTP's financial affairs. Maulana Fazlullah remained emir in the Swat Valley, Omar Khalid in Mohmand Agency and Maulvi Faqir Mohammed, the central TTP's deputy emir, remained emir in Bajaur Agency.

- The graphic chart illustrates some of the relationships established publicly by the TTP with other organizations. The TTP has incorporated Umar Studio as its official media arm, although individual emirs, commanders and regional branches of the group often maintain their own individual spokesmen for contacting the media, the TTP's primary means of messaging. The Shura Ittihad ul-Mujahideen, formed by late TTP Emir Baitullah Mehsud and two former rival commanders, is shown as having links with the central TTP organization. Immediately following the death of Baitullah Mehsud, it was unclear whether the alliance he formed with commanders Maulvi Nazir Ahmad and Hafiz Gul Bahadur would withstand the TTP's organizational changes. New Emir Hakimullah Mehsud addressed the issue in a 4 Oct. 2009 press conference he conducted with reporters, saying he had met with the leaders of the Shura Ittihad ul-Mujahideen three days earlier. Also shown in the graphic are the links between al-Qaeda's as-Sahab Media and the Pakistani rebels, including several members of the TTP and Maulvi Nazir Ahmad of the Shura Ittihad ul-Mujahideen. Al-Qaeda has been featuring an increasing number of Pakistani mujahideen in its video productions.

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HAKIMULLAH MEHSUD

In his breakout media appearance in Nov. 2008, Hakimullah Mehsud invited 20 journalists to a press conference in Orakzai Agency, which, in addition to Khyber and Kurram Agencies, he oversaw as a regional commander for the TTP. During the press conference, Hakimullah posed with a stolen US Humvee and a jeep taken from UN employees. The brazen display, during which he and his men opened fire on a plane flying overhead, calling it “target practice”, was viewed as unusually public and bold behavior for a TTP commander, especially when compared to the reclusive TTP emir, Baitullah Mehsud, who refused to be photographed by the media. In his write-up of the press conference for The News, veteran journalist Rahimullah Yusufzai said, “Tough and blunt talk from someone who had never spoken to reporters before!”

Hakimullah has continued to maintain a reputation for being brash, brazen and hotheaded. Following Baitullah Mehsud’s death in Aug. 2009, Hakimullah announced on 4 Oct. 2009 that he would be Baitullah’s successor and vowed to avenge his death. This announcement roughly coincided with the launch of a Pakistani military offensive in South Waziristan, which the TTP promised to respond to with a sustained campaign of

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attacks. Beginning in Oct. 2009, Pakistan experienced a wave of TTP suicide bombings and attacks throughout its major cities as well as the tribal areas, many of which were claimed by the TTP. Many of the attacks, including a raid on the Pakistan Army's General Headquarters (GHQ) building in Rawalpindi, were carried out in heavily fortified, protected areas and struck at the heart of Pakistan's security apparatus.

Given Hakimullah's personality and his demonstrated ability to conduct sophisticated, penetrating attacks in some of the most heavily fortified areas in Pakistan's cities, outside of his stronghold in the tribal areas, his threats against the US should be taken seriously. Prior to Hakimullah's ascension as TTP Emir, former Emir Baitullah Mehsud and other TTP members had made threats against the US and Europe, and Hakimullah's determination to follow through on these threats should not be underestimated.

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UMAR STUDIO

• Umar Studio is the TTP's official media arm and is responsible for producing the groups videos. Almost all current TTP material coming from the main branch of the group has the Umar Studio bug in it.

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