

# Osama bin Laden main suspect in several terrorist acts

**JT Bowen**  
Reporter

The U.S. State Department calls him "one of the most significant sponsors of Islamic extremist activities in the world today." He is one of the CIA's most wanted men and stands as a heroic image to many people in the Arab world. He is Osama bin Laden, the man suspected responsible for the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11.

Osama bin Laden was born in Saudi Arabia into a wealthy family. His family owned an extremely successful construction business. He relocated to Afghanistan, where he turned his immense wealth into power and used that power to gain the respect and obedience of many Arabs.

According to John Miller of the BBC News, bin Laden was granted a "safe haven" by the Afghanistan-ruling Taliban movement. Bin Laden rallied

more than 3,000 fighters for his cause while he was in this haven. The cause is a "holy war" against the United States, to be accomplished by killing Americans and Jews.

Bin Laden has had many other "causes" in the past decade, many of which resulted in killing innocent people.

Bin Laden was responsible for the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. In 1996, he was involved in the killing of 19 U.S. soldiers stationed in Saudi Arabia at the time.

In 1998, he was placed on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted list in connection with the bombings of U.S. embassies in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania and Nairobi, Kenya. These attacks, which occurred Aug. 7, 1998, killed more than 200 people. The U.S. government offered a reward for up to \$5 million for information leading to his conviction in this case.

Last year, bin Laden was held responsible for the attack

made upon the USS Cole in Yemen. Bin Laden is now suspected of helping set up Islamic training centers to prepare soldiers to fight in Chechnya, as well as in other parts of the Soviet Union. According to Miller, American officials believe bin Laden's associates may be currently operating in more than 40 countries, including some in Europe, North America, Asia and the Middle East.

Analysts say bin Laden and his terrorist acts differ greatly from the usual terrorist profile. Bin Laden does not have a tightly knit group with a well-defined command post; instead he controls a very broad coalition. However, this broadness of groups is expanding over many continents.

According to Associated Press writer Thomas Wagner, the Taliban currently refuses to hand over bin Laden and his lieutenants. In fear of an attack, 300,000 fighters were dis-

patched to defend the borders of Afghanistan.

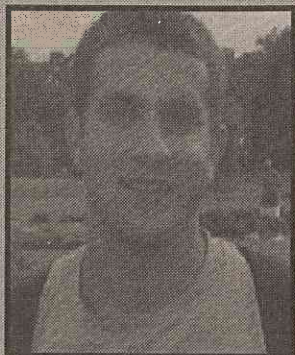
In a statement faxed from the Taliban to the AP, Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar said, "Eliminating bin Laden would do little to remove the threat of more terrorism against the United States.

"America wants to eliminate Islam, and they are spreading lawlessness to install a pro-American government in Afghanistan," Omar said. "This effort will not solve the problem, and the Americans will burn themselves if they indulge in this kind of activity."



Photo credit: KRT Campus  
*Osama bin Laden is the main suspect in the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11 as well as several other attacks.*

## What do you think the U.S. reaction should be to the terrorist attack, and what can you do to help?



"Find whoever is responsible and eliminate him or her. Try to figure out who else is involved, but do not piss off other countries in the process. I guess I can help the Red Cross by donating more money and by supporting the President in his decisions while praying for the military, too."

- Pat Keating, sophomore



"Seek out and prevent, but not necessarily kill people. I will make art to inform people, be informed myself, and be understanding to those students who lost people in the tragedy."

- LM Wood, art professor



"Retaliation is necessary, however, fighting isn't noble. All I can really do is pray."

- Jackie Ryerson, sophomore



"Investigate more thoroughly before responding. Donate money whenever possible."

- Phillip Reynolds, junior

"More investigation, but definitely have a response. I am coordinating a blood drive, I plan to give blood, and of course, pray."

- Nick Smith, sophomore



- Compiled by Amy Trageser