Sikh Disinformation Lab

MISLEADING

Yes Punjab report links Punjab surveillance arrests to ISI and Khalistan networks without evidence

A 3 September 2026 article on yespunjab.com asserts that a Dubai-based, ISI-backed network is expanding "Khalistan operations" and stepping up recruitment in Punjab. The Lab's review finds the report misleading: an apparent local surveillance investigation is escalated into a transnational terror-financing narrative on the basis of unnamed officials alone.

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16 September 2026

SOURCE POSTED
3 September 2026

NARRATIVES
Claiming Pakistan Controls Sikh Political Activism · Portraying Advocacy for Khalistan as Terrorism · Linking Sikhs to Gangs, Drugs and Organized Crime

OUR ASSESSMENT

This is misleading rather than unsupported . There appears to be a real investigation here. there is a named accused, specific locations are mentioned , including a cantonment distance, physical equipment, three arrests. But every link mentioned here from cameras in Ludhiana, to ISI direction, to Dubai handlers, to Khalistan groups, to drug financing, to planning attacks — is asserted by unnamed officials with nothing behind it. A surveillance arrest becomes a transnational terror-financing network across nine paragraphs.

THE CLAIM

ISI Expands Khalistan Operations Through Dubai, Steps Up Surveillance and Recruitment in Punjab

THE ANALYSIS

What was published

On 3 September 2026, the India-based outlet **Yes Punjab** (yespunjab.com) published an article headlined *"ISI Expands Khalistan Operations Through Dubai, Steps Up Surveillance and Recruitment in Punjab."* The piece, datelined New Delhi, opens by stating that investigating agencies are probing an alleged Dubai-based network backed by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

What it claims

The report asserts three central propositions:

- that investigating agencies are probing an alleged Dubai-based network backed by the ISI;
- that the ISI is expanding "Khalistan operations" through Dubai; and
- that the ISI has stepped up surveillance and recruitment inside Punjab.

Across the article, these assertions are extended into a chain: surveillance cameras in Ludhiana, direction from the ISI, handlers based in Dubai, links to Khalistan-associated groups, financing through the drug trade, and the planning of attacks.

What the review found

Verdict: Disinformation — misleading. Factual accuracy: insufficient evidence. Severity: 3 of 5.

The Lab's analyst assessed the item as misleading rather than wholly fabricated, and the distinction matters.

There appears to be a real underlying investigation. The article carries the markers of one: a named accused, specific locations, a stated distance from a cantonment, physical equipment, and three arrests. Those details are concrete and are not what the review disputes.

What the review identifies is the gap between that underlying event and the story built on top of it. Every link in the chain — from cameras in Ludhiana, to ISI direction, to Dubai handlers, to Khalistan groups, to drug financing, to the planning of attacks — is attributed to unnamed officials, with nothing presented to substantiate it. No documents, no named investigators, no charging material, no independent corroboration accompanies any step in the sequence.

The result, in the analyst's assessment, is that a surveillance arrest becomes a transnational terror-financing network over the course of nine paragraphs. The headline states as established fact — "ISI Expands Khalistan Operations Through Dubai" — a proposition that the body of the article never evidences beyond anonymous assertion.

Each of the three claims listed above was reviewed individually and each was found unsupported.

Why this pattern matters

The Lab has catalogued this item under the Claiming Pakistan Controls Sikh Political Activism narrative. The mechanism at work is not invention but escalation: a verifiable local law-enforcement action supplies the credibility, and a series of unattributed claims supplies the geopolitical framing. Readers encountering the headline are given a finished conclusion about ISI sponsorship and Khalistan networks; readers reaching the end of the article are given no material on which to test it.

The practical effect is that arrests in Punjab are presented to the public as confirmed nodes in an international terror-financing structure before any investigative or judicial process has established that they are. The specificity of the incidental details — distances, equipment, arrest counts — lends an evidentiary texture to claims that carry no evidence at all.

The Lab does not assess whether the underlying investigation is legitimate, nor whether the individuals referenced are innocent or culpable. Those are questions for investigative and judicial processes. The finding here is narrower and concerns the reporting: the article's central claims, including its headline, are not supported by the material it presents.

Note on method

This assessment is based on the article as captured at the URL below on the date of publication. The Lab's assessments address published content, not the individuals who produce it. No assertion is made here about the intent behind the article or about coordination with any other actor; the provided review records none.

> Khalistan-related activities were earlier largely promoted from Canada, but officials said increased action by Canadian authorities against such elements has prompted a shift towards Dubai.
>
> Investigators have also found that recruits are allegedly being instructed to rent premises near sensitive locations and install surveillance cameras. The instructions for setting up the equipment are reportedly being provided by handlers operating from Dubai.

The article's only reference to Canada, sourced to unnamed officials. — Source: yespunjab.com

Readers encountering similar reports are advised to check whether attributions are to named officials or documents, and whether each step in a claimed network — sponsorship, funding, direction, intent — is separately evidenced or simply asserted in sequence.

CLAIMS ASSESSED

01	Investigating agencies are probing an alleged Dubai-based network backed by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).	UNSUPPORTED
02	The ISI is expanding Khalistan operations through Dubai.	UNSUPPORTED
03	The ISI has stepped up surveillance and recruitment in Punjab.	UNSUPPORTED

SOURCES

01 https://yespunjab.com/isi-expands-khalistan-operations-through-dubai-steps-up-surveillance-and-recruitment-in-punjab/

02 The Lab's analyst review record: verdict "Disinformation / Misleading", severity 3, factual accuracy "Insufficient evidence", the Claiming Pakistan Controls Sikh Political Activism narrative

Sikh Disinformation Lab

About Sikh Disinformation Lab

Sikh Disinformation Lab is an independent, evidence-based programme founded and hosted by the World Sikh Organization of Canada. It monitors, analyses and publicly documents disinformation affecting Sikhs.

The Lab examines claims against evidence, publishes assessments with that evidence attached, and tracks coordinated campaigns over time. Every published assessment names what was claimed, where it appeared, what the review found, and what that assessment rests on. Where an item makes several distinct claims, each is assessed separately.

Assessments are made against the methodology framework in force at the time of publication. That framework is public, versioned, and reviewed at each phase gate; a material change produces a new version rather than a silent edit. The full method is published at sikhdisinfolab.ca/method.

Corrections are dated entries, never silent edits. Where a published assessment is found to be wrong or incomplete, the correction is recorded against it and listed at sikhdisinfolab.ca/corrections. If you believe something published here is inaccurate, write to the programme and it will be reviewed.

Assessments are the responsibility of Sikh Disinformation Lab.

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