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USDOS – US Department of State

Country Report on Terrorism 2019 - Chapter 5 - Lashkar i Jhangvi (LJ)

Aka Army of Jhangvi; Lashkar e Jhangvi; Lashkar-i-Jhangvi

Description: Designated as an FTO on January 30, 2003, Lashkar i Jhangvi (LJ) is the terrorist offshoot of the Sunni Deobandi sectarian group Sipah-i-Sahaba Pakistan. LJ carries out anti-Shia and other sectarian attacks in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The Government of Pakistan banned the group in August 2001 as part of an effort to rein in sectarian violence, causing many LJ members to seek refuge in Afghanistan with the Taliban, with whom the group had existing ties. After the collapse of the Taliban government in Afghanistan, LJ members became active in aiding other terrorists and have provided them with safe houses, false identities, and protection in Pakistani cities. LJ works closely with Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan. LJ chief Asif Chotu was killed along with three other LJ militants in a police operation in Pakistan in January 2017.

In May 2018, LJ's Balochistan chief, Salman Badini, and two other LJ militants were killed during a police raid in Quetta, Pakistan.

Activities: LJ specializes in armed attacks and bombings and has admitted to numerous killings of Shia religious and community leaders in Pakistan. In January 1999, the group attempted to assassinate then-Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his brother Shahbaz Sharif, Chief Minister of Punjab province. Media reports linked LJ to attacks on Christian targets in Pakistan, including a March 2002 grenade assault on the Protestant International Church in Islamabad that killed two U.S. citizens.

In January 2014, more than 24 people were killed and 40 others wounded in a bus bombing by an LJ attack targeting Shia pilgrims. LJ claimed responsibility for the December 2015 suicide bombing that targeted a market in the predominantly Shia town of Parachinar, Pakistan, that killed at least 23 people and wounded 50. In November 2016, two individuals suspected of belonging to LJ were arrested by police in Pakistan for their alleged involvement in 25 cases of targeted killings, including the murder of Pakistani singer Amjad Sabri, as well as army and police personnel. In April 2019, LJ claimed responsibility for the bombing of a market in Quetta, Pakistan that killed 20 people. The attack reportedly targeted the local minority Shia Muslim Hazara community.

Strength: LJ's membership is assessed to be in the low hundreds.

Location/Area of Operation: Pakistan and Afghanistan

Funding and External Aid: LJ's funding comes from wealthy donors in Pakistan and the Middle East, particularly Gulf States. The group engages in criminal activity, including extortion, to fund its activities.

ecoi.net summary:

Brief description of the Lashkar i Jhangvi (Excerpt of chapter 5 of the country report on terrorism 2019)

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Austrian Red Cross Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation (ACCORD)	Wiedner Hauptstraße 32, 1041 Wien T (Telefon) +43 1 589 00 583 F (Fax) +43 1 589 00 589 info@ecoi.net	Contact Imprint & Disclaimer F.A.Q. Data Protection Notice
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