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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

COUNTRY REPORTS ON TERRORISM 2020

December 2021

Country Reports on Terrorism 2020

BUREAU OF COUNTERTERRORISM

Country Reports on Terrorism 2020 is submitted in compliance with Title 22 of the United States Code, Section 2656f (the “Act”), which requires the Department of State to provide to Congress a full and complete annual report on terrorism for those countries and groups meeting the criteria of the Act.

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 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 since 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 2017.

In 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 1999 the group attempted to assassinate then-Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his brother Shahbaz Sharif, chief minister of Punjab province.

In 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 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 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 2019, LJ claimed responsibility for bombing a market in Quetta that killed 20 people and injured 48 others. The attack reportedly targeted the local minority Shia Muslim Hazara community.

In July, Pakistani police arrested three LJ members who were allegedly planning to carry out an attack in the Gujranwala, Pakistan. Explosive materials, detonators, and a safety fuse were recovered during the arrest.

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

Location/Area of Operation: Afghanistan and Pakistan

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.

Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

Aka Ellalan Force; Tamil Tigers

Description: Founded in 1976 and designated as an FTO on October 8, 1997, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) is a Tamil secessionist group in Sri Lanka. Despite its military

defeat at the hands of the Sri Lankan government in 2009, the LTTE's international network of sympathizers and financial support has persisted.

Activities: Although largely inactive since 2009, the LTTE was responsible for an integrated insurgent strategy that targeted key installations and senior Sri Lankan leaders. In early 2009, Sri Lankan forces recaptured the LTTE's key strongholds, including its capital of Kilinochchi. In 2009, government forces defeated the last LTTE fighting forces, killed members of its leadership including leader Velupillai Prabhakaran, and declared military victory.

There have been no known attacks in Sri Lanka attributed to the LTTE since 2009, but 13 LTTE supporters, several of whom had allegedly planned attacks against U.S. and Israeli diplomatic facilities in India, were arrested in Malaysia in 2014. Additional members were arrested in Malaysia and India in 2015, one of whom was accused of exhorting other Sri Lankans to fund and revive the LTTE.

Strength: Precise numbers are unknown.

Location/Area of Operation: Sri Lanka, India, and Malaysia

Funding and External Aid: The LTTE's financial network of support continued after the group's military defeat in 2009. The LTTE has employed charities as fronts to collect and divert funds for its activities.

Mujahidin Shura Council in the Environs of Jerusalem

Aka MSC; Mujahideen Shura Council in the Environs of Jerusalem; Mujahideen Shura Council; Shura al-Mujahedin Fi Aknaf Bayt al-Maqdis; Majlis Shura al-Mujahidin; Majlis Shura alMujahideen; Magles Shoura al-Mujahddin

Description: The Mujahidin Shura Council in the Environs of Jerusalem (MSC) was designated as an FTO on August 19, 2014. The MSC is a consolidation of several Salafi terrorist groups based in Gaza that have claimed responsibility for numerous attacks against Israel since the group's founding in 2012.

Activities: In 2013, MSC claimed responsibility for a rocket attack targeting the Israeli city of Eilat. Previously, MSC claimed responsibility for the 2013 attack in which Gaza-based militants fired at least five rockets at Sderot, Israel, and the 2013 attack in which two rockets were fired at Eilat. MSC did not claim responsibility for any attacks in 2020.

Strength: MSC is estimated to have several hundred fighters.

Location/Area of Operation: Gaza

Funding and External Aid: Sources of funding are unknown.