

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	552
Land:	Pakistan
Kilde:	Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB)
Titel:	Pakistan: Lashkar-e-Jhangvi [Lashkar-i-Jhangvi] (LeJ), Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan [Sipah-i-Sahaba Pakistan] (SSP) / Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat [Ahl-e-Sunnat-wal-Jamaat] (ASWJ) and Tehrik-i-Taliban [Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan, Tehrik-e-Taliban, Pakistani Taliban, Tehreek-e-Taliban] (TTP) militant groups, including leadership, structure, objectives, activities, areas of operation and capacity to track the persons they target; relationships between these groups; state response (2018-December 2020)
Udgivet:	14. december 2020
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	6. maj 2021

Document #2043467

IRB – Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

Pakistan: Lashkar-e-Jhangvi [Lashkar-i-Jhangvi] (LeJ), Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan [Sipah-i-Sahaba Pakistan] (SSP) / Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat [Ahl-e-Sunnat-wal-Jamaat] (ASWJ) and Tehrik-i-Taliban [Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan, Tehrik-e-Taliban, Pakistani Taliban, Tehreek-e-Taliban] (TTP) militant groups, including leadership, structure, objectives, activities, areas of operation and capacity to track the persons they target; relationships between these groups; state response (2018–December 2020) [PAK200382.E]

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

1. The LeJ

Sources report that the LeJ was founded in 1996 by Malik Ishaq, Riaz Basra and Akram Lahori, former members of the SSP [see section 2 of this Response] (Australia 3 Mar. 2018; Mapping Militant Organizations 3 Aug. 2018). The US Department of State's *Country Reports on Terrorism 2019* describes the LeJ as "the terrorist offshoot of the Sunni Deobandi [1] sectarian group Sipah-i-Sahaba Pakistan" (US 24 June 2020, 283). Matthew Nelson, a reader in politics at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) University of London, who gave a presentation on sectarian politics during an October 2017 meeting organized by the EU's European Asylum Support Office (EASO), described the LeJ as the "militant wing" of the SSP (Nelson Feb. 2018, 30). Sources report that the LeJ is a "secretive" organization (Mapping Militant Organizations 3 Aug. 2018) or that it "shuns media exposure and tries to operate as covertly as possible" (ITCT n.d.a).

According to US *Country Reports on Terrorism 2019*, the sources of the LeJ's funding are "wealthy donors in Pakistan and the Middle East, particularly [the] Gulf States" and criminal activities, including extortion (US 24 June 2020, 284). The South Asian Terrorism Portal (SATP), a database of information on terrorism, "low intensity warfare" and ethnic, communal and sectarian conflict in South Asia (SATP n.d.a), similarly reports that the LeJ receives "private" funding from Saudi Arabia and "from wealthy benefactors in Karachi, Pakistan" (SATP n.d.b).

1.1 Leadership, Objectives and Structure

Sources from 2017 and 2018 indicate that the leader of the LeJ is Yousaf Mansoor Khurasani (The Jamestown Foundation 27 Jan. 2017; Australia 3 Mar. 2018), also known as Syed Safdar Shah (The Jamestown Foundation 27 Jan. 2017).

Sources indicate that the objective of the LeJ is to form a Sharia law-based "Islamist Sunni state" in Pakistan (Canada 21 Nov. 2018a) or to turn Pakistan into a "Sunni caliphate" (The Jamestown Foundation 27 Jan. 2017).

The National Security website of the Australian Department of Home Affairs states that the membership of the LeJ is estimated in "the low hundreds" (Australia 3 Mar. 2018). Similarly, the SATP reports that the LeJ has "approximately 300" "active" members (SATP n.d.b).

According to the SATP, "the LeJ is an amalgam of loosely co-ordinated sub-units in various parts of Pakistan, particularly in the districts of Punjab[,] with autonomous chiefs for each sub-unit" (SATP n.d.b). Sources report that LeJ members operate in a small cells of five to eight personnel (Australia 3 Mar. 2018; SATP n.d.b).

1.2 Areas of Operation and Activities

US *Country Reports on Terrorism 2019* states that the LeJ is located and operates in Pakistan and Afghanistan (US 24 June 2020, 284). The SATP reports that two of the LeJ's "most important training centres" are located in the city of Muridke in Sheikhupura district and the city of Kabirwala in Khanewal district, both in Punjab province (SATP n.d.b).

Media sources report that in July 2020 five alleged LeJ members were arrested in Karachi (*Dawn* 23 July 2020; *The News International* 23 July 2020). The same sources further cite information provided by the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) as indicating that the suspects alleged that four teams of killers had been activated by incarcerated LeJ leaders and directed to attack law enforcement and religious leaders (*Dawn* 23 July 2020; *The News International* 23 July 2020).

According to the *Pakistan Security Report 2019* by the Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) [2], the LeJ was responsible for eight "terrorist attacks" in 2019, including five in Karachi and three in Balochistan province; this is compared to seven attacks in 2018 (PIPS Jan.-June 2020, 71). PIPS' security report for 2018 states that six of the seven attacks that year took place in Balochistan province and the remaining one took place in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province (PIPS Jan.-June 2019, 78). The same source further states that

[m]any [LeJ] and Jundullah militants were also killed in operations launched by the Pakistani security forces and police's counter terrorism departments (CTDs) in the country. These killings caused disruption among the militant groups, which resulted in the reduction of terrorist attacks. (PIPS Jan.-June 2019, 73)

Based on a search conducted on 17 November 2020 with "Lashkar-E-Jhangvi" as the "perpetrators," the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) [3] indicates that the LeJ was involved in the following five terrorist attacks [4] in 2018 [5]:

- an "[a]rmed assault" on 8 October 2018 targeting the police in Karachi conducted with ASWJ and "suspected" involvement from Hizb-ul-Ahrar [Hizbul Ahrar] (HuA);
- a "[b]ombing/[e]xplosion [and] [a]rmed [a]ssault" on 17 May 2018 targeting the police and military in Quetta city in Balochistan province conducted with HuA and TTP;
- an "[a]rmed [a]ssault" on 5 May 2018 targeting "[p]rivate [c]itizens" and "[p]roperty" in Mianli village in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province;
- an "[a]rmed [a]ssault" on 15 April 2018 targeting "[p]rivate [c]itizens" and "[p]roperty" in Quetta city conducted with the Khorasan chapter of the Islamic State;
- an "[a]rmed [a]ssault" on 14 February 2018 targeting the military in Quetta city conducted with the TTP (GTD n.d.b).

According to the SATP, LeJ "cadres are reportedly using police uniforms for their operations in order to secure easy access to mosques and for easy extrication after committing a terrorist act" (SATP n.d.b). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

2. The SSP and the ASWJ

Sources report that the SSP was founded in 1985 by Haq Nawaz Jhangvi, Zia-ur-Rehman Farooqi [Ziaur Rahman Farooqi], Eesar-ul-Haq Qasmi and Azam Tariq (The Jamestown Foundation 5 May 2005; SATP n.d.c). According to sources, the SSP returned as the ASWJ after being banned by the government in 2002 (*The Diplomat* 20 Sept. 2016; *TNS* 14 May 2017). The Terrorism Research & Analysis Consortium (TRAC), a database of information and analyses on terrorist groups and activities worldwide (TRAC n.d.a), states that the

ASWJ was formed after the government of former president General ([retired]) Pervez Musharraf banned a handful of religious parties including the [SSP] in 2002. Since that time ASWJ has operated covertly with SSP's offshoot, another strongly anti-Shia [Shi'a, Shi'i, Shi'ite] group, [LeJ]. (TRAC n.d.b)

Nelson described the following:

The SSP itself now has two faces, if you will. The SSP itself is not something we run into as much anymore. Instead, we have a mainstream political wing known as the [ASWJ], and we also have a militant face, [LEJ]. Both of them emerged from the SSP. (Nelson Feb. 2018, 30)

According to sources, the leader of the ASWJ as of 2018 is Ahmed Ludhianvi (ANI 28 June 2018; Reuters 27 June 2018).

Sources indicate that the objective of the ASWJ is to proclaim Pakistan as a Sunni state (SATP n.d.c; *TNS* 14 May 2017). Sources state that the ASWJ also aims to declare Shias *kafirs* (infidels) (*TNS* 14 May 2017) or to declare "all other sects" to be non-Muslim minorities (The Jamestown Foundation 5 May 2005). According to the Christian Solidarity Network (CSW), an organization that advocates for and documents violations of religious rights (CSW n.d.), the ASWJ "advocates for Shi'ites to be legally declared non-Muslim and has a violent offshoot that targets Shi'ite mosques" (CSW 10 Dec. 2019, 11).

Information on the structure, activities and areas of operation of the ASWJ could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

3. The TTP

Sources report that the TTP was formed in 2007 by Baitullah Mehsud (Canada 21 Nov. 2018b; US 24 June 2020, 300). According to the Mapping Militant Organizations Project [6], the TTP is "ethnically diverse, comprised of Arab, Uzbek, Afghan, Chechen and Punjabi militants, in addition to its Pashtun majority" (Mapping Militant Organizations July 2018). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

Sources indicate that the Jamaat-ul-Ahrar (JuA), which left the TTP in 2014, and the HuA, which split from the JuA, reunited with the TTP in 2020 (Al Jazeera 18 Aug. 2020; VOA 3 Sept. 2020).

According to sources, the TTP is associated with the following organizations:

- Al Qaeda (Mapping Militant Organizations July 2018; US 24 June 2020, 300);
- the Haqqani Network (Australia 20 Feb. 2019, para. 2.95; Mapping Militant Organizations July 2018);
- the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) (Mapping Militant Organizations July 2018; US 24 June 2020, 265);
- the LeJ (Australia 3 Mar. 2018; US 24 June 2020, 283);
- Afghan Taliban (Mapping Militant Organizations July 2018) or is "ideologically aligned" with the Afghan Taliban, while maintaining a "separate identity" (Australia 20 Feb. 2019, para. 2.84).

3.1 Leadership, Objectives and Structure

According to sources, Noor Wali Mehsud was appointed as leader in 2018 following the death of the previous leader, Mullah Fazlullah (ITCT n.d.b; US 24 June 2020, 300; UN 16 July 2020).

Sources indicate that the objective of the TTP is to establish an Islamic state in Pakistan (Mapping Militant Organizations July 2018) or starting in Pakistan's tribal areas and then "extending to include Muslims elsewhere" (Canada 21 Nov. 2018b). Sources state that the TTP also aims to enforce Sharia law, resist the Pakistan security forces and combat coalition forces in Afghanistan (Mapping Militant Organizations July 2018; UK 17 July 2020, 21).

Sources report that the TTP is structured as an "umbrella organization" of "predominantly Pashtun Sunni militant groups" (Australia 20 Feb. 2019, para. 2.84) or "pro-Taliban groups operating mostly in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa" (Canada 21 Nov. 2018b). Similarly, the Mapping Militant Organizations Project states that "the TTP is not a monolithic entity. Rather, it is an agglomerate of more than 40 Islamist and Pashtun tribal factions" from FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Mapping Militant Organizations July 2018). According to sources, most of Pakistan's Taliban organizations fall under the TTP umbrella (EU Oct. 2020, 11; ITCT n.d.b).

For further information on the TTP and its activities, see Response to Information Request PAK106391 of January 2020.

4. Deobandi Organizations: Targets, Interoperability and Connections

According to sources, the LeJ, SSP and TTP are "all related" and draw members and support from the same Deobandi *madrasa* [*madrassa*, *madrasah*] [religious schools], mosques and *ulama* [*ulema*] [religious scholars] (Independent Scholar 20 Nov. 2020; Professor 18 Nov. 2020). In an interview with the Research Directorate, a professor of security studies at Georgetown University, whose research interests include political and military affairs in South Asia, reported that there are only small "organizational differences" between Deobandi organizations and that individuals move between them (Professor 18 Nov. 2020). Similarly, in an interview with the Research Directorate, an independent scholar at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) University of London with expertise in militancy and extremism in South Asia and the Middle East described Deobandi organizations as "a loose network" rather than "separate groups," adding that members can move between groups or follow multiple Deobandi leaders and groups; Deobandi militant organizations have "decades of experience" with "interoperability" (Independent scholar 20 Nov. 2020). The same source provided the example of members training with one Deobandi organization but deploying with another for an attack (Independent scholar 20 Nov. 2020).

Sources reported that the SSP/ASWJ and other Sunni Deobandi organizations have political protection from the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) political party and that the JUI sometimes works with the military and sometimes against it (Independent scholar 20 Nov. 2020; Professor 18 Nov. 2020), depending on who is leading the party (Independent scholar 20 Nov. 2020). The Professor reported that the Sunni Deobandi ulema provide "religious cover" to the activities of militant organizations, including suicide attacks (Professor 18 Nov. 2020).

Sources reported that Deobandi organizations work together and have the support of the Pakistan Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) (Independent scholar 20 Nov. 2020; Professor 18 Nov. 2020). According to sources, the ISI may use Deobandi militants for attacks in Afghanistan, India and Pakistan (Independent scholar 20 Nov. 2020; Professor 18 Nov. 2020).

The Professor reported that Deobandi organizations "sometimes" have the protection of the police and further stated that local police may arrest Deobandi militants, but will release them when ordered by the ISI or sometimes other intelligence agencies (Professor 18 Nov. 2020). The same source provided the example of the Pakistan military giving months of warning to Deobandi militants before conducting the counter-militant operation Zarb-e-Azb

(Professor 18 Nov. 2020). Similarly, the independent scholar reported that Deobandi militant organizations operate "openly" and that the state has the "means and ability to censor or shut down" these organizations but does not do so (Independent scholar 20 Nov. 2020).

Sources reported that these Deobandi militant organizations are of the same school of thought as the Afghan Taliban (Independent scholar 20 Nov. 2020; Professor 18 Nov. 2020), which emerged from the Deobandi madrassahs in Pakistan (Professor 18 Nov. 2020). The independent scholar noted that Deobandi militants go to Afghanistan to fight *jihād* (Independent scholar 20 Nov. 2020). Sources noted that "Deobandi militant organizations are sometimes subcontracted by Al Qaeda" (Independent scholar 20 Nov. 2020; Professor 18 Nov. 2020). Sources stated that members of Deobandi militant organizations also travel to Iraq and Syria to work with the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) [Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), Islamic State (IS), Daesh] (Independent scholar 20 Nov. 2020; Professor 18 Nov. 2020). The Professor added that even prior to ISIS' declaration of an Islamic state in 2014, members of Deobandi militant organizations traveled to Iraq, where they killed Shias, and to Syria, where they killed Alawites, since the "sectarian nature of ISIS naturally appeals to the Deobandi extremists" (Professor 18 November 2020).

The Professor reported that targeting "tactics and approval depended on the strategic value of the target," for example a local commander can order a local or low-level attack, while high value targets are decided by *shura* [consultation] or directed by ISI (Professor 18 Nov. 2020).

5. Capacity to Track Targets

According to sources, the LeJ, SSP, TTP and other Deobandi organizations target those they see as practising apostasy, particularly Ahmadis and Shias; other groups targeted include Hindus, Sikhs and Barelvi Muslims (Independent scholar 20 Nov. 2020; Professor 18 Nov. 2020). Sources reported that ISI and Deobandi organizations also target Baloch and Pashtun activists (Independent scholar 20 Nov. 2020), journalists and Ahmadi and Shia business or land-owners, not just for religious reasons but for protection money or to force a sale at below market value (Professor 18 Nov. 2020).

Sources reported that if individuals are targeted by the ISI or military, Deobandi militants will be used to conduct an attack "anywhere in Pakistan" (Independent scholar 20 Nov. 2020; Professor 18 Nov. 2020). The Professor explained that it is not "rogue" elements in the army or in the ISI that are ordering these domestic attacks, but rather ISI members working for the state (Professor 18 Nov. 2020).

The independent scholar stated that the ISI may force individuals to stay silent or censor themselves by placing them on the list of targets for militant organizations (Independent scholar 20 Nov. 2020). The same source added that an individual may be able to remove themselves as a target if they make "public amends, promot[e] the Pakistani state's agenda" and, "essentially," allow themselves to "be manipulated by the ISI or military" (Independent scholar 20 Nov. 2020). However, sources reported that once an individual is on an ISI or military "hit list," there is no effective mechanism to recall or remove the order (Independent scholar 20 Nov. 2020; Professor 18 Nov. 2020), as the Deobandi militant organizations may not receive the cancel order, may not believe it or may choose to still conduct the strike as a propaganda or recruitment tool (Independent scholar 20 Nov. 2020).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

Notes

[1] The country information report on Pakistan by Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) indicates that "[a]round 60 per cent of the Sunnis adhere to the Barelvi school, with a significant minority (around 35 per cent) following the Deobandi school. While both groups follow the same basic principles of Islamic theology (the Hanafi school), Deobandis have a more orthodox and conservative interpretation" (Australia 20 Feb. 2019, para. 3.73).

[2] The Pak Institute for Peace Studies Pvt Ltd. (PIPS) is a "research and advocacy think-tank" composed of "Pakistani scholars, researchers and journalists," focusing on "political, social and religious conflicts" (PIPS n.d.).

[3] The Global Terrorism Database (GTD) is an "open-source database" containing information on worldwide terrorist attacks between 1970 and 2019 (GTD n.d.a). The GTD is maintained by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) at the University of Maryland (GTD n.d.a).

[4] The GTD "defines a terrorist attack as *the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation*" (GTD Oct. 2019, 10, emphasis in original).

[5] According to the GTD's website, as of November 2020 only data between 1970 and 2018 is publicly available (GTD n.d.a).

[6] The Mapping Militant Organizations Project is a research project of the Center for International Security and Cooperation (CISAC) at Stanford University that “traces the evolution of militant organizations” (Mapping Militant Organizations n.d.).

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Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: Associate professor of justice, law & criminology at a US-based university; Australian Strategic Policy Institute; Christian Solidarity Worldwide; PhD candidate at a US-based university; PhD student of public affairs and policy at an US-based university; professor of government and international affairs at a US-based university; senior reporter of a Pakistani English-language newspaper.

Internet sites, including: Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project; The Asia Foundation; Asia News Network; Asylum Research Centre; Austria – Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum; BBC; Center for Research & Security Studies; ecoi.net; Encyclopedia.com; EUR-Lex; *The Express Tribune*; Factiva; Fédération internationale pour les droits humains; *Financial Express*; Gandhara; Geo News; Geopolitical Monitor; Global Governance Watch; GlobalSecurity.org; *The Guardian*; Human Rights Watch; Indiatimes; International Crisis Group; The Khaama Press News Agency; Mantraya; Middle East Monitor; Nanyang Technological University – S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies; New Zealand – New Zealand Police; Pakistan – National Counter Terrorism Authority; Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies; ThePrint; Public Broadcasting Service; *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*; The Secretariat of the World Congress Against Extremism and Takfiri Movements; Shafaqna; Sindh – Sindh Police; *Tehran Times*; Terrorism Research & Analysis Consortium; UK – Home Office; UN – Refworld, ReliefWeb; United States Institute of Peace.

ecoi.net summary:

Query response on Pakistan:

Armed groups Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (Lashkar-i-Jhangvi - LeJ), Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (Sipah-i-Sahaba Pakistan - SSP) / Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat (Ahl-e-Sunnat-wal-Jamaat -

ASWJ) and Tehrik-i-Taliban
(Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan, Tehrik-
e-Taliban, Pakistani Taliban,
Tehreek-e-Taliban - TTP) (2018 -
December 2020)

Country:
Pakistan

Source:
[IRB – Immigration and Refugee
Board of Canada](#)

Original link:
[https://irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/country-
information/rir/Pages/index.aspx?
doc=458262&pls=1](https://irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/country-information/rir/Pages/index.aspx?doc=458262&pls=1)

Document type:
Response

Language:
English

Published:
14 December 2020

Document ID:
2043467

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