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COUNTRY REPORT ON TERRORISM 2018 -

CHAPTER 5 - AL-QA'IDA IN THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

Aka al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent; Qaedat al-Jihad in the Indian Subcontinent.

Description: In September 2014, al-Qa'ida announced the establishment of a new AQ affiliate, al-Qa'ida in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS). The Department of State designated AQIS on July 1, 2016 as a FTO. AQIS focuses on terrorist activity in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan. Its leader is Asim Umar, a former member of the FTO Harakat ul-Mujahideen.

Activities: AQIS claimed responsibility for the September 6, 2014, attack on a naval dockyard in Karachi, Pakistan, in which militants attempted to hijack a Pakistani Navy frigate to attack nearby U.S. warships. AQIS has also claimed attacks against human rights activists and secular writers in Bangladesh, including U.S. citizen Avijit Roy, U.S. Embassy local employee Xulhaz Mannan, and Bangladeshi nationals Oyasiqur Rahman Babu, Ahmed Rajib Haideer, and A.K.M. Shafiul Islam. In September 2017, AQAP called on AQIS to launch more attacks on Burmese authorities, because of Burma's policies towards Rohingya Muslims. AQIS did not claim responsibility for attacks in 2017 or 2018.

Strength: AQIS is estimated to have several hundred members.

Location/Area of Operations: AQIS members are thought to be located primarily in Afghanistan, with elements operating in Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan.

Funding and External Aid: AQIS likely receives funding from al-Qa'ida senior leadership and engages in general criminal activity, kidnapping, and extortion.