

## Pakistan – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 3 May 2016

The number of extreme Terrorist groups in Pakistan and their policies and practices towards liberal Muslims eg Muslims raised as Sunni but who believe that there is no difference between the various branches of Islam in Pakistan.

A report on Pakistan published by the European Asylum Support Office, in a section titled "Militant Groups", refers to a number of groups as follows:

"Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is the largest militant group active in Pakistan. It was founded in about 2007 as a loose formation of Deobandi (see section 3.4.6 Deobandi) groupings chiefly operating in the Pakistani border area with Afghanistan. Initial objectives of the organisation were implementation of Sharia law and the ousting of coalition forces from Afghanistan. After President Pervez Musharraf took action against militants hiding in the red mosque (Lal Masjid) in Islamabad, action was also undertaken against the Pakistani authorities. In 2010 membership of TTP had reached 30 000 to 35 000 armed men. Militants are mostly Pashtun originating from the border zone between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Recruitment is voluntary and most of these recruits are thought to be jobless youngsters. The Pakistani Taliban finances its activities via extortion, smuggling, the drugs trade and kidnappings. TTP has strong ties with sectarian Deobandi organisations such as Lashkar-e-Janghvi and Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat.

In 2013 the TTP was responsible for 645 acts of terror. These claimed the lives of 732 civilians and 425 members of the security forces. In the FATA and Khyber-Pakhtunkwha the organisation was involved in 34 direct confrontations with the Pakistani army and security services. Though the FATA and Khyber-Pakhtunkwha are TTP's main operational areas, terror attacks elsewhere in Pakistan and specifically Karachi have increased. On 1 November 2013 TTP official leader Hakimullah Mehsud was killed by a drone attack in North-Waziristan. The nomination of hardliner, Mullah Fazlullah, as his successor was considered as a rejection of possible peace talks with the Pakistani authorities. In December 2014 TTP claimed responsibility for the Peshawar school attack, which killed 145 people. A spokesman said it was retaliation for the ongoing army campaign in North-Waziristan.

In the Pakistani tribal regions there are several groups who operate alongside TTP but were initially not home grown. First there is the Haqqani Network, led by Afghani warlord Jalaluddin Haqqani and his son Sirajuddin Haqqani. Originating from Loya Paktya (Khost, Paktia and Paktika provinces) they now mainly operate in North-Waziristan. Though their main objective is attacking international forces in Afghanistan, they closely cooperate with TTP. The Haqqani Network also has a longstanding relationship with the ISI which caused friction between Pakistan and the US. The vast majority of the Haqqani fighters belong to the Zadran tribe but there are also non-Pashtun militants including Arabs, Chechens and Uzbeks. The Haqqani network is believed to have ties with Al-Qaeda. American sources stated in November 2014 that ongoing Pakistani military operations in North-Waziristan have 'disrupted' the military capabilities of the Haqqani's.

The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) has been active in the Pakistani tribal region since late 2001, where it regrouped after sustaining heavy losses fighting alongside the Taliban during the US combat operations in Afghanistan. Under the leadership of Toher Yuldashev the group targeted the Pakistani security forces from its bases in North and South Waziristan. In 2007 the IMU formed an alliance with the TTP and fought alongside them. In 2009 Yuldashev was killed in a drone attack while Pakistani military operations forced the IMU to north-Waziristan where it started to cooperate with the Haqqani network. Osman Odil became the new leader of the organisation. A radical splinter group of IMU, the Islamic Jihad Union (IJU), is aiming to export terrorism from its Pakistan base. On 8 June 2014 IMU militants staged a bloody attack on Karachi airport.

Following the US intervention in Afghanistan, many Al-Qaeda operatives withdrew to the Pakistani tribal regions. By 2008 they were so deeply entrenched in Waziristan that according to American intelligence officials the area had become Al-Qaeda's 'international operations hub'. Among their ranks were Arabs, Uzbeks, Chechens and Chinese Muslims (Uyghurs). In the FATA AI Qaeda has aligned itself with several militant groups, offering support with manpower, training and propaganda. It also attacks the Pakistani government, which is viewed as apostate for allying itself with the US-led war on terrorism. Al-Qaeda in Waziristan has developed privileged relations with the IJU. In December 2014 Al-Qaeda lost two top operatives: the Pakistani army killed Adnan El-Shukrijuma in South-Waziristan, while a US drone eliminated Umar Faroog in North-Waziristan.

It is not clear if the Punjabi Taliban is part of the TTP or they are independent organisations. The most influential group of the Punjabi Taliban is led by Maulana Asmatullah Muawiya. But there are several groups who have facilitated TTP, Al-Qaeda and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ). In 2014 the Punbjabi Taliban claimed responsibility for only two terrorist attacks. In September 2014 Muawiya first intended to shift his militant activities from Pakistan to Afghanistan, and some days later announced he would give up the armed struggle in Pakistan entirely.

Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) is a former Deobandi political party founded in the early 1980s by Sunni cleric Maulana Haq Nawaz Jhangvi in Jhang, in Punjab. Its principal aim is to fight Shia influence in Pakistan. Jhangvi was assassinated in 1990, and was replaced by Maulana Azam Tariq. Tariq, in turn, was killed in 2003 when gunmen fired at the vehicle he was travelling in. Tariq was succeeded by Maulana Ali Sher Hyderi. The organisation is understood to have close ties to the Jihadi organisation Jaish-e-Muhammad. Numerous reports have labelled SSP a violent group. At the beginning of the century it was responsible for the murder of Shiite militants, Shiite citizens and attacks on Shiite mosques. In spite of the group denying involvement in violence President Musharraf banned it in 2002 and in 2005 the US listed SSP as a terrorist organisation (425). Part of SSP resurfaced in more recent years under the name Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat, who, under the leadership of Maulana Muhammad Ahmed Ludhianvi, contested elections in 2014 (426). Some members left SSP to form an apparently even more radical outfit under the name Lashkar-e Jhangvi (LeJ). Other extremist splinter groups of SSP are the Jhangvi Tigers, Al-Haq Tigers, Tanzeem-ul-Haq, Al-Farooq and the Al-Badra Foundation (427). Still, according to the South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) remnants of SSP kept on perpetrating attacks on Shiite into 2015. In January 2015 Pakistani authorities executed three convicted members of SSP.

The core of the SSP's supporters is formed by Sunni peasantry in the rural Jhang and by the merchant and trader classes in the urban centres. The madrassas are also a major recruiting ground for the SSP. Militants have been known to receive jihadi training in Afghanistan. To fund its organisation and activities, the SSP has relied on contributions from its supporters in the form of zakat. Sunni business people contribute as well. It is also widely understood that the SSP thrives on considerable financial and logistical backing from Saudi donors, who have wanted to curb Iran's influence over the Shia population in Pakistan The SSP is reportedly not only a militant group with about 6 000 members and a party with one million members, but it also has a student wing, an insurance company, many offices and a nation-wide network.

Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) is a Deobandi terrorist group founded in 1996, when a number of militants lead by Riaz Basra, Akram Lahori and Malik Ishaq broke away from Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan. LeJ is not a political party; it is a purely paramilitary organisation. Some claim that its creation was prompted by the 1994 establishment of Sipah-e-Mohammed Pakistan (SMP) a Shiite militant group that targeted leaders of the SSP. There is also a theory that the LeJ was formed as the militant wing of the SSP to carry out attacks against the Shia community and that it became independent when it gained more proficiency. In the following years LeJ became a strong terrorist organisation, responsible for 350 violent attacks prior to 2001. In later years there were bombings on Shiite mosques. Just like SSP, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi has cordial relations with Jaish-e-Muhammad.

LeJ was placed on the US terrorist list in 2000 and was banned by President Musharraf in 2001 (432). Its underground violent activities continued unabated, especially against members of the Hazara community in Quetta (433). In February 2013 Pakistani authorities arrested Malik Ishaq after LeJ had bombed a marketplace in Quetta and killed more than 80 Shiite civilians.

Although most of the LeJ violence targets Shiites, the organisation also cultivates a radical stance against Christians, Ahmadi and Sufi Muslims. According to South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) attacks by LeJ members continued into 2015. In January 2015 Pakistani authorities executed several convicted activists of LeJ. Not much is known about the LeJ's financial resources. But like the SSP, the LeJ has also benefited from contributions made by other Deobandi groups and sympathisers in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.

Lashkar-e-Islam (LI) is a small militant organisation active in the Khyber Agency of FATA, where it conducted 63 attacks in 2014, mainly on shrines, security forces and leaders of rival sectarian groups. LI was banned in June 2008. Pakistani military operations in 2014 seem to have crippled the group's operational capabilities. Sipah-e-Muhammad Pakistan (SMP) is a Shia militant group whose aim is to protect the Shiite community and target hostile Sunni Deobandi organisations such as SSP and LeJ. SMP is a radical offshoot of a mainstream Shia political party, the Tehrik-e-Jaferia Pakistan. The origins are unclear but it was probably founded in about 1993 by Maulana Mureed Abbas Yazdani. Its current leader is Ghulam Raza Naqvi and the organisation claims to have some 30.000 activists. SMP was outlawed in Pakistan in August 2001. Karachi and Quetta are the two major cities where the SMP carried out most of its attacks." (European Asylum Support Office (August 2015) *Pakistan Country Overview*, pp.50-52)

A report on Pakistan from the South Asia Terrorism Portal states:

"According to partial data compiled by the South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) database, 831 terrorism-linked fatalities have already occurred in Pakistan in 2016, including 222 civilians, 102 Security Force (SF) personnel and 507 terrorists/militants. The country has also recorded 82 major incidents (each involving three or more fatalities) resulting in 715 fatalities (183 civilians, 68 SF personnel and 464 terrorists). Further, 43 blasts accounting for 176 deaths and over 520 injuries in the current year. During the corresponding period of 2015, Pakistan had seen 1,334 terrorism related fatalities, including 351 civilians, 107 SF personnel and 876 terrorists. The country witnessed 111 major incidents resulting in 1.021 fatalities (147 civilians, 59 SF personnel and 815 militants) in this period, as well as 83 blasts accounting for 214 deaths and over 398 injured. Through 2015, Pakistan recorded a total of 3,682 fatalities, including 940 civilians, 339 SF personnel and 2,403 terrorists/militants as against 5,496 fatalities, including 1,781 civilians, 533 SF personnel and 3,182 terrorists/militants in 2014. The number of major incidents also declined from 402 (accounting for 4.173 deaths) to 322 (resulting in 2,923 fatalities) over this period. Similarly, 2015 recorded 216 incidents of bomb blasts resulting in 495 deaths, down from 388 incidents resulting in 840 deaths recorded in 2014. Moreover, as against 25 suicide bombings accounting for 336 deaths in 2014, year 2015 recorded 19 such incidents resulting in 161 deaths." (South Asia Terrorism Portal (13 April 2016) Pakistan Assessment 2016)

This report also states:

"More worryingly, seeds of religious intolerance that have been systematically sown in Pakistan since its inception in 1947 - and, indeed, even earlier, during the struggle for independence continue to yield their bitter harvest. According to the Annual Report, 2015, of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), between July 2013 and June 2014, 122 incidents of sectarian violence occurred in Pakistan, resulting in more than 1,200 casualties, including 430 fatalities. The report, noted, 'Pakistan represents one of the worst situations in the world for religious freedom for countries not currently designated by the U.S. government as "countries of particular concern"... Pakistan continued to experience chronic sectarian violence targeting Shi'a Muslims, Christians, Ahmadi Muslims, and Hindus.' Similarly, the Jinnah Institute of Pakistan in a report titled State of Religious Freedom in Pakistan 2015, stated that, during the period 2012-2015, at least 543 incidents of violence were carried out against religious minorities in Pakistan. Shias were targeted on at least 288 occasions during this period, followed by Hindus (91 occasions), Christians (88 occasions), and Ahamadiyas (76 occasions). According to partial data compiled by SATP, Pakistan has recorded at least 3,021 incidents of sectarian attack leading to 5,233 deaths and 9,904 injuries since 1989. 53 of these incidents, resulting in 276 fatalities and 327 injuries, were reported in 2015 alone." (ibid)

See also attached South Asia Terrorism portal document which lists alleged terrorist groups in Pakistan (South Asia Terrorism Portal (undated) *Terrorist and Extremist Groups of Pakistan*)

A US Department of State report on the alleged terrorist group Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan, in a paragraph headed "Description" states:

"Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on September 1, 2010, Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is a Pakistan-based terrorist organization formed in 2007 in opposition to Pakistani military efforts in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas." (US Department of State (19 June 2015) *Country Reports on Terrorism 2014 - Foreign Terrorist Organizations: Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan*)

In a paragraph headed "Activities" this report states:

"TTP continued attacking both civilian and Pakistani government targets in 2014. In January, a TTP suicide attack on a police convoy in Karachi killed three and injured ten others. Also in January, a bombing against a military convoy, which was carried out by TTP in the Pakistani town of Bannu, killed at least 20 Pakistani soldiers and wounded at least 30. Two days later, a TTP suicide bombing at a bazaar in Rawalpindi killed eight soldiers and three children. In February, at least 13 policemen were killed and almost 60 others were injured in a suicide bombing targeting a bus carrying officers to a local training center near Karachi. In June, TTP launched two consecutive attacks against Karachi's international airport, one on June 8 and the second followed two days later. In the June 8 attack, carried out in conjunction with Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, a squad of commandos, disguised as government security forces, stormed the airport. The ensuing fight between security forces and the TTP, which lasted through the night, killed at least 36 people. The second attack, in which at least two gunmen opened fire on a guard post at the airport perimeter, caused no casualties. In December, TTP laid siege to a primary school in Peshawar, Pakistan. The eight-hour assault on the school killed 145 people, 132 of whom were children." (ibid)

A US Department of State report on Lashkar I Jhangvi states:

"Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on January 30, 2003, Lashkar I Jhangvi (LJ) is the terrorist offshoot of the Sunni Deobandi sectarian group Sipah-i-Sahaba Pakistan. LJ focuses primarily on anti-Shia attacks and other attacks in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and was banned by the Government of Pakistan in August 2001 as part of an effort to rein in sectarian violence. Many of its members then sought refuge in Afghanistan with the Taliban, with whom they had existing ties. After the collapse of the Taliban as the ruling government in Afghanistan, LJ members became active in aiding other terrorists, providing safe houses, false identities, and protection in Pakistani cities, including Karachi, Peshawar, and Rawalpindi. LJ works closely with Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan." (US Department of State (19 June 2015) Country Reports on Terrorism 2014 - Foreign Terrorist Organizations: Lashkar I Jhangvi)

A US Department of State report on Lashkar e-Tayyiba states:

"Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) on December 26, 2001, Lashkar e-Tayyiba (LeT) is one of the largest and most proficient of the traditionally anti-India-focused terrorist groups, with the ability to severely disrupt already tense regional relations. LeT formed in the late 1980s as the terrorist wing of the Islamist extremist organization, Markaz ud Dawa ul-Irshad, a Pakistan-based Islamic fundamentalist mission organization and charity originally founded to oppose the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. Led by Hafiz Muhammad Saeed, LeT is not connected to any political party. Shortly after LeT was designated as an FTO, Saeed changed its name to Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JUD) and began humanitarian projects to circumvent restrictions. LeT disseminates its message through JUD's media outlets. In addition to LeT's creation of JUD. LeT has repeatedly changed its name in an effort to avoid sanctions; other LeT aliases and front groups include Al-Anfal Trust, Tehrik-e-Hurmat-e-Rasool, and Tehrik-e-Tahafuz Qibla Awwal. Elements of LeT and Jaish-e-Muhammad (JEM) combined with other groups to mount such attacks as 'The Save Kashmir Movement.' The Pakistani government banned LeT in January 2002, and JUD in 2008, following the 2008 Mumbai attack. LeT and Saeed continue to spread terrorist ideology, as well as virulent hate speech condemning the United States, India, Israel, and other perceived enemies." (US Department of State (19 June 2015) Country Reports on Terrorism 2014 - Foreign Terrorist Organizations: Lashkar e-Tayyiba)

A US Department of State report on Jaish-e-Mohammed) states:

"Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on December 26, 2001, Jaish-e-Mohammed (JEM) is based in Pakistan." (US Department of State (19 June 2015) *Country Reports on Terrorism 2014 - Foreign Terrorist Organizations: Jaish-e-Mohammed*)

In a paragraph headed "Activities" this report states:

"JEM continued to operate openly in parts of Pakistan despite the 2002 ban on its activities. Since its founding, JEM has conducted many fatal terrorist attacks in the region" (ibid)

A US Department of State report on Islamic Jihad Union states:

"Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on June 17, 2005, the Islamic Jihad Union (IJU) is a Sunni violent extremist organization that splintered from the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan in the early 2000s and is currently based in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas." (US Department of State (19 June 2015) *Country Reports on Terrorism 2014 -Foreign Terrorist Organizations: Islamic Jihad Union*)

A US Department of State report on Harakat ul-Mujahideen states:

"Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 8, 1997, Harakat ul-Mujahideen (HUM) seeks the annexation of Indian Kashmir and the

expulsion of Coalition Forces in Afghanistan." (US Department of State (19 June 2015) Country Reports on Terrorism 2014 - Foreign Terrorist Organizations: Harakat ul-Mujahideen)

## A US Department of State report on the Haqqani Network states:

"Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on September 19, 2012, the Haqqani Network (HQN) was formed in the late 1970s, around the time of the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan. Jalaluddin Haqqani, HQN's founder, established a relationship with Usama bin Laden in the mid-1980s, and joined the Taliban in 1995. After the fall of the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2001, Jalaluddin retreated to Pakistan where, under the leadership of Jalaluddin's son, Sirajuddin Haqqani, the group began participating in the insurgency and became known as the Haqqani Network." (US Department of State (19 June 2015) *Country Reports on Terrorism 2014 - Foreign Terrorist Organizations: Haqqani Network*)

A US Department of State report on al-Qa'ida states:

"Designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on October 8, 1999, al-Qa'ida (AQ) was established by Usama bin Laden in 1988. The group helped finance, recruit, transport, and train Sunni Islamist extremists for the Afghan resistance against the Soviet Union. AQ's strategic objectives are to remove Western influence and presence from the Muslim world, topple 'apostate' governments of Muslim countries, and establish a pan-Islamic caliphate governed by its own interpretation of Sharia law that ultimately would be at the center of a new international order." (US Department of State (19 June 2015) *Country Reports on Terrorism 2014 - Foreign Terrorist Organizations: al-Qa'ida*)

A report from the Asian Human Rights Commission states:

"The religious terrorist groups have always remained dear to the state and its intelligence agencies. It is no longer a secret that these groups are collecting funds on the streets and running terrorist recruiting centers in the cities including Islamabad, Karachi and Lahore. All these groups have received training from retired army officers who have been identified in the media and international reports. The governments and its intelligence agencies are well aware of the training centers and recruiting seminaries of these terrorist organizations but to-date no action has been taken. However, conversely, the authorities have already started action against the banned secular and nationalist organizations to punish them for being against the Talibanisation of society. JSMM has been one of the most vocal and active organisation struggling for the historical and political rights of people of Sindh and in the last few years a number of its leaders have been abducted, tortured and murdered. Members of the central Body of JSMM were abducted, killed and even burnt alive, including Muzafar Bhutto, Sirai Qurban Khuhawar, Noorullah Tunio, Samiullah Kalhoro, Zulfiqar Kolachi and Aijaz Solangi. Besides this, many of the JSMM activists have been abducted and kept under brutal physical and mental torture to admit and accept the accusations of their involvement in any of terrorist activity, but none of them has ever held himself responsible for such type of activity. Even up to today, after a 12 year long mission of state operations against the JSMM state agencies have failed to produce even a single person in the court. Nor have they produced anything

even a single piece of paper which can provide any evidence against JSMM activists of being guilty in the eyes of law." (Asian Human Rights Commission (5 April 2013) *Pakistan: The government bans secular and nationalist groups to appease the fundamentalist and Taliban groups*)

A report published by the Jamestown Foundation refers to the presence of Islamic State in Pakistan as follows:

"After months of denying the Islamic State's presence in Pakistan, the Pakistani government has finally acknowledged that the terrorist network, both as an inspiration and an organized group, is fast luring Pakistani jihadists into its fold. In one such admission, the Provincial Law Minister of Punjab Province officially confirmed the Islamic State presence in Punjab (Frontier Post, December, 29, 2015). Earlier, at the federal level, Pakistan's foreign secretary Azaz Ahmad Chaudhry admitted that Islamic State poses a serious threat to the country. The Islamic State considers itself the true heir of al-Qaeda founder Osama Bin Laden and has been able to attract some former al-Qaeda affiliated cells of jihadists from across the globe. Salafist jihadist organizations in Pakistan such Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) as well as anti-Shia militant groups like Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) may find a new inspiration in the Islamic State's nascent rise and could attempt to pledge their loyalty to its leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. This reflects that the Islamic State is taking root in many Muslim-majority countries - Pakistan is no exception. Indeed, in the past few months, the Islamic State has shown a steady growth on the Pakistani jihad scene and perhaps more broadly, as shown by the appearance of pro-Islamic State graffiti on in the outskirts of Karachi and Peshawar." (Jamestown Foundation (4 February 2016) Growing Evidence of Islamic State in Pakistan)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research and Information Unit within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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