

Pakistan: Extremism and Terrorism

On April 21, 2021, a car bomb exploded in the parking lot of the Serena Hotel in Quetta, killing at least five and wounding 11. Chinese ambassador to Pakistan Nong Rong was staying in the hotel but was not present during the attack. Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) claimed responsibility. “It was a suicide attack in which our suicide bomber used his explosives-filled car in the hotel,” the TTP said in a text message to Reuters. (Sources: [Reuters](#), [Associated Press](#))

On April 12, 2021, police in Lahore arrested Saad Rizvi, leader of the outlawed Islamist political party Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan (TLP). The arrest was reportedly to deter TLP supporters from further demanding the expulsion of France’s ambassador over the publication in France of cartoons featuring Islam’s Prophet Muhammad. Rizvi had claimed the government had reached an agreement with his party to expel the ambassador by April 20, while government officials claimed they agreed only to discuss the issue in parliament. In response to Rizvi’s arrest, TLP supporters blocked highways and clash with police across the country over the course of two days, killing at least four people and wounding dozens of others, including at least 60 police officers. On April 18, TLP supporters attacked a police station in Lahore while rallying in the city against Rizvi’s arrest. The protesters took hostage 11 officers. The protesters released the hostages the following day after negotiations with the government. Photos released of the hostages during the negotiations showed they had been tortured. (Sources: [Voice of America](#), [Associated Press](#))

Overview

Since its independence from British colonial rule in 1947, Pakistan has been divided along ethnic, religious, and sectarian lines, a condition which has been exploited by internal and external organizations to foster extremism and terrorism. For example, Sufism—Islamic mysticism—is popular in Pakistan. However, religious fundamentalists and extremists, especially those influenced by Wahhabism, view Sufism as un-Islamic and its followers as heretics, which has led to religious tension and frequent attacks on Sufi shrines in Pakistan. (Sources: [Asian Studies Association of Australia](#), [International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research](#), [Brookings Institution](#))

At the end of colonial rule in 1947, the British did not partition Kashmir, which created a rivalry between Pakistan and India that continues today.

The Pakistani state itself has also used Islamic extremism as a strategic tool to further its interests in the region. At the end of colonial rule in 1947, the British did not partition Kashmir, which created a rivalry between Pakistan and India that continues today. The two countries have fought three wars over the control of Kashmir, a disputed territory over which India, Pakistan, and China all claim partial or complete ownership. India and Pakistan also engaged in a fourth conflict over the liberation of East Pakistan—now known as Bangladesh. India—whose 1.2 billion population far outnumbers Pakistan’s 182 million—defeated Pakistan in all four conflicts. Pakistan not only contests India over territorial claims, but perceives the country as an existential threat aiming to wipe it off the map—a sentiment exacerbated by the fear of India’s vast manpower in comparison to its own. Pakistan therefore has tolerated and sometimes supported the activities of militant extremist groups that target Indian interests. Pakistan has also supported groups that operate in Afghanistan in order to deny Indian influence there. (Sources: [CNN](#), [Foreign Policy](#), [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [Long War Journal](#), [Brookings Institution](#), [BBC News](#), [Brookings Institution](#))

Extremist groups that Pakistan has tolerated or supported in the past include Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Harakat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM), Hizb-il-Mujahideen (HM), the Mullah Nazir Group, Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), and the Afghan Taliban and its affiliated Haqqani network. Pakistan has instead focused most of its counterterrorism operations against groups that seek to challenge and overthrow the Pakistani state. These groups, which pose a more direct threat to the state, include the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP)—a subset of the Pakistani Taliban and the deadliest of indigenous Pakistani extremist groups, al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS), Jamaat-ul-Ahrar (JuA), and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ). (Sources: [Long War Journal](#), [Brookings Institution](#), [RAND Corporation](#), [Stanford University](#))

In March 2019, the Pakistani government promised to crack down on extremist groups operating in the country. The following month, Prime Minister Imran Khan accepted Pakistan’s responsibility in creating multiple militant groups but said that they no longer served Pakistan’s interests and fighting violent extremism was necessary for Pakistan’s stability. Pakistan’s past counter-extremism efforts have generally been insufficient. In a 2016 report, the U.S. Department of State assessed that Pakistan was not doing enough to disrupt the activities of LeT and JeM—both of which continue to operate, train, organize and fundraise within Pakistan. Although terrorism-related violence has been on the decline in Pakistan in recent years—with only 600 terrorism-related civilian deaths in 2016 compared with 3,000 in 2012—many local scholars claim that intolerance and extremism in the country are on the rise. Pakistan’s poor performance on countering violent extremism has been attributed to domestic political constraints such as weak governance, civilian-military divides, and economic obstacles, as well as Pakistan’s reluctance to target extremist groups that serve its strategic interests. Most counter-radicalization efforts in Pakistan have been initiated by foreign or civil society organizations or

Pakistan: Extremism and Terrorism

donors, such as the U.S. Agency for International Development. (Sources: [Reuters](#), [Asian Studies Association of Australia](#), [U.S. Department of State](#), [Brookings Institution](#), [Reuters](#), [New York Times](#))

Public opinion on extremism in Pakistan is mixed. A majority of Pakistanis reportedly condemn violence, but many still support extremist ideology, especially when based in religious rhetoric. Many Pakistanis trust the country’s religious scholars and faith-based networks, which have significant influence on shaping and molding public opinion. A January 2015 Brookings Institution study concluded that the government of Pakistan has been “largely unsuccessful” in mobilizing public support for its countering violent extremism (CVE) initiatives. (Sources: [International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research](#), [Brookings Institution](#))

Radicalization and Foreign Fighters

The Pakistani state has supported some extremist groups for strategic reasons and at times has leveraged Islamic extremist movements for internal political mobilization. Additionally, socio-economic disparities, competing sectarian agendas, and political marginalization contribute to radicalization in Pakistan. In the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), radicalization can largely be attributed to the influence of militant Islamist organizations that operate there, including the Taliban and al-Qaeda. Growing radicalization on Pakistani university campuses also poses an increasing challenge to Pakistani counterterrorism efforts. Since December 2014, Pakistan’s Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) officials have been monitoring universities for signs of recruitment by extremists. (Sources: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [Long War Journal](#), [Asian Studies Association of Australia](#), [International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research](#), [Brookings Institution](#), [Combating Terrorism Center at West Point](#))

Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan

Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is a subset of the Pakistani Taliban, which is a general term for Pakistani groups that support and share the ideology and objectives of the Afghan Taliban. The TTP is an umbrella organization comprised of 13 distinct Pakistani Taliban factions—approximately half of all Pakistani Taliban factions. Established in December 2007, the TTP seeks to expel the Pakistani military from the FATA, wage defensive jihad against the Pakistani government, establish an Islamic state under sharia law in Pakistan, and finally, expel U.S.-led coalition forces from Afghanistan. Based in the South Waziristan Agency of the FATA, the TTP contains more than 30,000 members and is the deadliest of indigenous Pakistani extremist groups. The TTP was banned in Pakistan in August 2008, designated as a terrorist organization by the United States in 2010, and sanctioned by the United Nations in 2011. (Sources: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [Stanford University](#), [CNN](#), [U.S. Department of State](#))

Unlike the Afghan Taliban, which targets mostly U.S.-led coalition forces in Afghanistan, the TTP focuses its attacks on the Pakistani state and security apparatus. However, the group has also sought to negotiate with the Pakistani state. For example, in January 2014, the TTP began a dialogue with the Pakistani government aimed at achieving peace, but the negotiations collapsed the following month when the group executed 23 Pakistani soldiers. (Sources: [Stanford University](#), [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [Telegraph](#))

The TTP recruits masses of teenage boys to become suicide bombers through youth-targeted propaganda. The TTP also recruits from Internally Displaced Persons camps, where many occupants harbor grievances against the Pakistani army. The group has also pledged its support to the Afghan Taliban in the aim of attracting recruits from among Taliban supporters. New recruits are sent to training facilities in the FATA, where they to learn how to conduct guerrilla warfare and carry out bombings—the TTP’s preferred method of attack. The TTP frequently conducts attacks designed to wear down the morale of its enemy—such as attacks targeting schools for girls or for military children. The TTP also draws support from conservative and hardline religious Pakistanis due to its efforts to rid cities like Karachi of so-called “immoral” activities such as drugs and prostitution. (Source: [Stanford University](#))

Nevertheless, the group’s frequent and increasingly indiscriminate terror attacks are reportedly strongly opposed by the vast majority of Pakistanis. On August 31, 2012, the TTP released a video showing the severed heads of 12 missing Pakistani soldiers arranged on the ground. On October 9, 2012, a TTP gunman shot Malala Yousafzai, a 15-year-old advocate for female education, though Yousafzai survived the gunshot wound to her head and the incident sparked international attention and outrage. The TTP has conducted joint attacks with the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), including a June 2014 raid on Jinnah International Airport in Karachi that killed 18 people. A December 16, 2014 massacre on a Pakistani Army-run school in Peshawar killed 143 individuals—including 134 children. More recently, suicide bombings targeting two Shi’ite markets in Kurram Agency in June and July of 2017 killed over 120 people altogether, and a December 1, 2017 attack on the Agricultural Training Institute in Peshawar killed nine people—including six students. (Sources: [Stanford University](#), [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [Al Jazeera](#))

Pakistan: Extremism and Terrorism

The TTP has also expressed hostility toward the United States. In December 2009, the TTP carried out a suicide bombing on a U.S. military base in Afghanistan, allegedly in retaliation for TTP leader Baitullah Mehsud's death in a U.S. drone strike. A few months later, the TTP released a video message in which it threatened to attack U.S. cities in response to further drone strikes. In May 2010, U.S. law enforcement authorities linked the group to an attempted terror attack in New York City's Times Square. In November 2013, Hakimullah Mehsud, who assumed TTP leadership after Baitullah Mehsud's death, was also killed in a U.S. drone strike. (Source: [Stanford University](#))

The TTP funds its operations through kidnappings for ransom, smuggling natural resources such as gems and timber, collecting taxes from local populations, and receiving donations from benefactors both in Pakistan and abroad. TTP has also received funding and logistical support from other extremist groups, such as LeJ, HuM, and even al-Qaeda—who reportedly contributed \$15 million to the TTP through the Saudi-based Al-Haramain Foundation. In April 2017, the TTP's former spokesman Ehsanullah Ehsan claimed that Afghan and Indian intelligence agencies provide funding and intelligence to TTP to fight the Pakistani government, though both the Afghan and Indian governments rejected the accusations. (Source: [Stanford University](#))

In 2014, the Afghan Taliban condemned as “un-Islamic” the TTP attack on a Pakistan Army-run school that killed 134 children. Nevertheless, the two groups cooperate in order to maintain control over the tribal regions along the Afghan-Pakistan border, and TTP has pledged its support to the Afghan Taliban in the hopes of attracting new recruits from among Taliban supporters. Likewise, extending some measure of goodwill to the TTP helps the Afghan Taliban maintain safe havens and sanctuaries in Pakistan, and to recruit Pakistani Pashtun tribesmen as fighters. (Sources: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [Stanford University](#))

Lashkar i-Jhangvi

Formed in 1996, Lashkar i-Jhangvi (LeJ) is a Sunni terrorist organization that splintered off from the militant group Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) due to ideological disagreements. The group aims to transform Pakistan into a Sunni Islamic state and drive Western influence from the region. LeJ leadership mainly consists of jihadis who fought against Soviet forces in Afghanistan, and a majority of its members are recruited from Sunni religious schools in Pakistan. LeJ was outlawed in Pakistan on August 14, 2001, by then-President Pervez Musharraf, and was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization by the United States in 2003. LeJ often cooperates with the TTP, and one of its cells officially merged with the TTP in May 2015. (Sources: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [Stanford University](#), [U.S. Department of the Treasury](#), [Long War Journal](#), [Diplomat](#))

LeJ's attacks have mostly targeted Shias within Pakistan, including targeted killings of Shia religious and community leaders. LeJ has carried out several deadly attacks in recent years, including a January 2013 double bombing of a pool club in Quetta that left more than 100 dead, and a June 2013 attack in which female suicide bomber targeted a bus full of female university students, killing 14. LeJ's targets have also included U.S. interests. In 2002, LeJ kidnapped and beheaded American journalist Daniel Pearl. The U.S. issued a \$5 million reward for the capture of former LeJ commander Qari Zafa due to his alleged involvement in a March 2, 2006 attack on the U.S. Consulate in Karachi that killed two Pakistani nationals employed there. However, Zafar was reported killed in an IED blast in June 2010. (Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [Stanford University](#), [Guardian](#))

LeJ also has links to other Pakistan-based terrorist organizations, including Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) and Harakat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM). Many LeJ members reportedly receive military training in HuM camps in Afghanistan. In February 2015, LeJ reportedly requested assistance from al-Qaeda amid a crackdown on its activities by Pakistani security forces but was rejected. LeJ then appealed to and successfully received financial assistance from the TTP. LeJ has also reportedly received substantial funding from wealthy benefactors in Karachi. (Sources: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [Stanford University](#))

Lashkar-e-Taiba

Pakistan: Extremism and Terrorism

Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) is a Sunni militant group that was founded in 1990 in Afghanistan’s Kunar province and is currently based near Lahore, Pakistan. LeT seeks to refute Indian sovereignty in Jammu and Kashmir—an Indian state that makes up about 45 percent of the disputed territory of Kashmir—and to extend Islamic rule to parts of India and to other regions surrounding Pakistan. It is active in Kashmir, Chechnya, and other parts of Central Asia. LeT leader Hafiz Muhammad Saeed has stated that he considers India, Israel, and the United States to be his prime enemies, and has threatened attacks on U.S. interests. However, LeT refrains from targeting Muslims and the Pakistani state. The group was designated as a U.S. Foreign Terrorist Organization in December 2001 and is also outlawed in both India and Pakistan. However, Pakistan has continued to tolerate and at times, directly support LeT, as the government benefits from the militant group’s anti-Indian activities. (Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [Stanford University](#), [Long War Journal](#), [Washington Post](#), [CNN](#))

Within Pakistan, LeT maintains a vast network of training camps and branch offices. LeT openly fundraises, holds rallies, recruits, and trains within Pakistan, and has even been funded, armed, and trained in part by Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). LeT also operates a large social service infrastructure—Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD)—which includes 135 secondary schools, an ambulance service, mobile clinics, and blood banks. The group publishes an Urdu-language monthly journal, *al-Dawa*, as well as publications in English and Arabic. The group receives substantial funding from global charitable donations, and has received direct support from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and other Gulf states. (Sources: [U.S. Department of State](#), [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [Carnegie Endowment for International Peace](#), [Long War Journal](#))

LeT has targeted U.S.-led coalition forces in Afghanistan since 2004. The United States also holds LeT leader Hafiz Saeed responsible for masterminding the November 2008 Mumbai attacks that killed 166 people, including six Americans. After Pakistan released Saeed from house arrest on November 24, 2017, the White House criticized Pakistan and called for his immediate re-arrest and prosecution, stating that his release “sends a deeply troubling message about Pakistan’s commitment to combatting international terrorism and belies Pakistani claims that it will not provide sanctuary for terrorists on its soil.” Following his release, Saeed announced that LeT’s political wing, the Milli Muslim League, would run in the 2018 general election, though the party has yet to be recognized by Pakistan’s electoral commission. No LeT members have been prosecuted in Pakistan for involvement in the 2008 Mumbai attack, though at least three Pakistani military officials have been implicated by Interpol for their involvement. (Sources: [Carnegie Endowment for International Peace](#), [The White House](#), [Jamestown Foundation](#), [Long War Journal](#))

Jaish-e-Mohammad

Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) is a Pakistan-based extremist group that aims to undermine Indian control in Kashmir, impose sharia law in Pakistan, and expel U.S.-led coalition forces from Afghanistan. JeM was founded by Masood Azhar, a former member of Harakat al-Mujahedeen (HuM), reportedly with the support of Osama bin Laden, the ISI, and the Afghan Taliban. JeM initially conducted attacks in Indian-controlled Kashmir, but later began operating in other parts of India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. The United States designated JeM as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in December 2001, and Pakistan banned JeM in 2002. However, JeM is still able to freely hold rallies, raise money, recruit, and train inside Pakistan. (Sources: [Stanford University](#), [Long War Journal](#), [U.S. Department of State](#))

JeM carried out multiple deadly attacks in the early 2000s. In October 2001, JeM attacked the legislative assembly building in Indian-controlled Kashmir, killing 30 people. That December, JeM collaborated with LeT in an armed assault on the Indian parliament that killed 14, according to Indian authorities. A JeM member was also implicated in the 2002 abduction and beheading of American journalist Daniel Pearl, carried out by LeT. In December 2003, Pakistani officials implicated JeM members in two 2002 assassination attempts against then-President Musharraf. JeM has received funding for its militant activities through charitable foundations, such as the Al-Rashid Trust, a trust fund designated by the United States as a financial facilitator of al-Qaeda and the Taliban, as well as through personal donations. (Sources: [Stanford University](#), [U.S. Department of State](#), [U.S. Department of State](#))

JeM splintered into two factions—Khuddam ul-Islam (KUI) and Jammāt ul-Furqan (JUF)—in 2003, although sources have continued to refer to both factions as JeM. The group faced setbacks in the mid-2000s after many senior leaders were arrested by the Pakistani government. In June 2008, JeM reportedly refocused its efforts on expelling foreign forces from Afghanistan, though JeM attacks in Kashmir continued. (Source: [Stanford University](#))

JeM claimed responsibility for a February 14, 2019, suicide car bomb in the Pulwama district of India-controlled Kashmir that killed at least 40 Indian paramilitary police officers and wounded five others. The Indian government accused Pakistan of having a “direct hand” in the attack. On February 26, India launched air strikes on JeM training camps inside Pakistan, allegedly killing hundreds of JeM militants. It was India’s first direct air strike in Pakistan since 1971. Pakistan retaliated on February 27, resulting in aerial combat between Indian and Pakistani forces and the capture of Indian pilot Abhinandan Varthaman. The Pakistani government returned Varthaman on March 1 and pledged to crack down on JeM. India

Pakistan: Extremism and Terrorism

reportedly sent the Pakistani government a dossier on JeM militants, training centers inside Pakistan, and evidence of JeM's complicity in the February 14 bombing. After Pakistan arrested 44 militants, including the son and brother of JeM leader Masood Azhar, on March 5, Pakistani military authorities said the crackdown was part of ongoing domestic policy and not in response to tensions with India. All 44 of the JeM militants arrested were listed in the Indian dossier. The Pakistani government has also denied that India struck a JeM camp in its February 26 airstrike. (Sources: [CNN](#), [Washington Post](#), [NDTV](#), [Reuters](#), [BBC News](#), [CNN](#))

India also shared that dossier with all 15 members of the U.N. Security Council in an effort to have JeM leader Azhar added to the council's list of designated terrorists. The United Nations designated JeM as a terrorist organization in 2001, but permanent Security Council member China vetoed past efforts to designate Azhar. According to Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi in a February 28, 2019, CNN interview, Pakistani authorities know Azhar is in Pakistan but he is "very unwell" and unable to leave his house. Asked why Pakistan does not arrest Azhar, Qureshi said that India should provide "acceptable" evidence that Pakistan can use to convince the Pakistani people and the Pakistani judiciary. Asked directly if he doubted accusations against Azhar and JeM, he said "there is a legal process and you have to satisfy that legal process." On March 5, the Pakistani Foreign Minister said it was ready to take action against the assets and bank accounts of militant groups within its borders and within Pakistan-controlled Kashmir. (Sources: [CNN](#), [CNN](#), [CNN](#), [Times of India](#))

As of July 2020, India has continued its investigation into the 2019 Pulwama attack. On July 7, 2020, India's National Investigation Agency (NIA) arrested Bilal Ahmed Kuchey in Pulwama, for harboring and providing logistical support to JeM members who were involved in the attack. Additionally, on July 2, 2020, NIA forces arrested Mohammad Iqbal Rather in Budgam, Jammu and Kashmir, for allegedly facilitating the movement of Muhammad Umar Farooq into the Indian territory of Jammu. Farooq, a member of JeM, was a key conspirator in the 2019 Pulwama bombing. (Sources: [New Indian Express](#), [The Indian Express](#))

Jaish al Adl

Jaish al Adl ("Army of Justice") is a Sunni extremist group founded in 2012 and based in Pakistan's Balochistan region. It claims to champion the rights of Iranian Sunnis whom they say are persecuted by Iran's Shiite government. The group has carried out multiple cross-border attacks against the Iranian government and Iran's [Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps](#) (IRGC). The group claimed responsibility for a February 13, 2019, suicide bombing in Iran's Sistan-Baluchestan province near the Pakistani border, which killed at least 27 Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corp members and wounded 13 others. Iran has repeatedly called on Pakistan to crack down on Jaish al Adl and other groups operating in its territory. (Sources: [Reuters](#), [BBC News](#), [Terrorism Research & Analysis Consortium](#))

Jamaat-ul-Ahrar

Jamaat-ul-Ahrar (JuA) broke off from the TTP in August 2014 due to a disagreement over the TTP's participation in peace talks with the Pakistani government. JuA leader Omar Khalid Khorasani, who had links to al-Qaeda, criticized the TTP for straying from its goal of establishing a global Islamic caliphate. JuA's main base of operations is in Mohmand Agency in the FATA, and the group recruits from tribal districts along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border as well as from TTP factions across Pakistan. JuA has reportedly received funding from al-Qaeda due to Khorasani's links with the organization. JuA spokesman Ehsanullah Ehsan has also claimed that the group receives assistance from Indian and Afghani intelligence and security services, although both countries have denied the claim. (Source: [Stanford University](#))

After splitting from the TTP, JuA conducted its first suicide attack in November 2014 in Wagah, a village outside of Lahore. The attack killed 60 people and injured 100 others. JuA has since stated that it opposes attacks on Islamic places of worship and public gathering places, such as markets, though the group has not always adhered to this claim. For example, in March 2017, JuA conducted a suicide bombing at a market in Parachinar near a nearby women's mosque, killing 22 and injuring 57. (Source: [Stanford University](#))

In March 2015, JuA re-unified with the TTP following Operation Zarb-e-Azb, a major Pakistani government counterterrorism offensive. However, JuA has continued to retain some degree of independence, releasing its own publications and attack claims. In July 2016, Khorasani was killed in a U.S. drone strike in eastern Nangahar Province, though the group has successfully continued to mount attacks since. (Source: [Stanford University](#))

Pakistan: Extremism and Terrorism

On August 3, 2016, the U.S. Department of State designated JuA as a Foreign Terrorist Organization. In its designation, the State Department cited the group's March 2016 attack on the U.S. consulate in Peshawar, which killed two Pakistani employees, and Easter Sunday 2016 suicide bombing at an amusement park in Lahore that killed over 70 people, including many women and children. JuA has also recently conducted joint attacks with ISIS, such as a June 2017 attack on the office of the police chief of Balochistan that killed 13 people. Despite the ideological differences between al-Qaeda and ISIS, JuA leverages and maintains relationships with both groups. (Sources: [U.S. Department of State](#), [Stanford University](#))

Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent

[Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent](#) (AQIS) is a U.S.-designated terror group and al-Qaeda's newest affiliate that seeks to wage jihad and impose Islamic rule by sharia law on the Indian subcontinent. Al-Qaeda leader [Ayman al-Zawahiri](#) announced its formation in September 2014. AQIS reportedly operates in Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, Myanmar, and Bangladesh. The group has claimed numerous attacks in the region, although it has gained the most traction within Pakistan. AQIS conducted a few assassinations of Pakistani professors and military personnel in 2014 and 2015, but has been unable to conduct larger-scale attacks typical of al-Qaeda. Analysts generally believe that AQIS was formed as an attempt to take attention away from ISIS and to preserve al-Qaeda's safe havens in Pakistan and Afghanistan. (Sources: [Stanford University](#), [Australian National Security](#), [New York Times](#), [Voice of America](#), [Long War Journal](#), [Long War Journal](#), [Long War Journal](#), [Diplomat](#))

AQIS works with al-Qaeda Central and the Taliban, and its fighters have sometimes fought under the flag of the Taliban. In June 2017, the group released a 20-page "Code of Conduct" reiterating its allegiance to those groups, as well as its intentions to conduct attacks against military targets in its countries of operation as well as American targets in Afghanistan and Pakistan (Source: [Long War Journal](#))

In addition to AQIS, senior leaders of al-Qaeda Central continue to operate in Pakistan despite an ongoing multinational effort that has degraded the group's capabilities, and maintain links to multiple extremists groups. For example, the TTP provides al-Qaeda members with a safe haven in parts of Pakistan, while al-Qaeda provides the TTP with logistical support. The Pakistani military continues to battle al-Qaeda militants in the North Waziristan region of Pakistan bordering Afghanistan. Al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri reportedly enjoys sanctuary in Pakistan—likely in the southwest corner of Balochistan. (Sources: [U.S. Department of State](#), [Stanford University](#), [New York Times](#), [Long War Journal](#))

Haqqani Network and the Afghan Taliban

Founded in Afghanistan the 1970s, the Haqqani network is a Sunni militant organization that now operates in southeastern Afghanistan and North Waziristan, Pakistan, where it runs the notorious Manba Ulom madrassa. The [Taliban](#) was founded as a Sunni militant organization in 1994 and as the predominant umbrella group for the Afghan insurgency. The Haqqani network is officially considered to be under the umbrella of the Taliban, although it retains its own independent structure. Both the Taliban and Haqqani conduct attacks in Afghanistan, as they seek to expel U.S.-led coalition forces from the country and establish Taliban rule under sharia law there. Both groups maintain close links to al-Qaeda and the Haqqani network is designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization by the United States. (Sources: [Stanford University](#), [Stanford University](#), [Institute for the Study of War](#))

Pakistan's ISI has reportedly provided both the Haqqani network and Afghan Taliban with extensive funding, weapons, and sanctuary. Most early Taliban members were also trained the Deobandi or Saudi-funded Wahhabi madrassas of Pakistan, and the group continues to recruit from madrassas there. While the Afghan Taliban still thrives in Afghanistan—reportedly controlling up to 43 percent of the country in 2014—the Afghan government and U.S.-led coalition forces have inflicted great damage on the Haqqani network in recent years, bringing its total size from 10,000 members in 2011 to around 2,000 in 2012. Furthermore, since 2014, Pakistan has carried out extensive counterterrorism operations against the Haqqani network. However, many of the group's fighters have reportedly relocated from North Waziristan to other parts of Pakistan, such as the Kurram tribal area. Sirajuddin Haqqani, the leader of the Haqqani network, reportedly moved freely around Pakistan as of February 2016 and has even visited Pakistani intelligence offices in Rawalpindi. (Sources: [Stanford University](#), [Reuters](#), [Long War Journal](#), [Wall Street Journal](#), [Washington Post](#), [New York Times](#), [BBC News](#), [Brookings Institution](#), [Long War Journal](#))

According to U.S. and Afghan officials, both the Haqqani network and Afghan Taliban take shelter and launch attacks from the Pakistani side of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. As of 2016, Pakistan was supporting Afghan efforts to bring the Haqqani network, Taliban, and Afghan government into peace talks, but the U.S. State Department assessed that it was not doing enough to prevent their attacks on Afghan and U.S. targets inside Afghanistan. (Source: [Stanford University](#), [Washington Post](#), [U.S. Department of State](#))

Pakistan: Extremism and Terrorism

ISIS

Established in January 2015, the Khorasan Province (ISIS-K) is ISIS's formal branch in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The group was led by former TTP commander Hafiz Saeed Khan, who was killed in a July 2016 U.S. drone strike. The group has since lost hundreds of fighters and control of some territory due to counterterrorism operations by Afghan and U.S. forces, but it remains active in the region. In addition to a number of high-profile, mass-casualty attacks in Kabul, Afghanistan, ISIS-K has claimed a number of mass-casualty attacks inside Pakistan, many of which were conducted in collaboration with Lashkar i-Jhangvi (LeJ). (Source: [Long War Journal](#), [U.S. Department of State](#))

On September 1, 2016, the Pakistan military announced that it had arrested more than 300 ISIS members and disrupted the group's efforts to establish itself in Pakistan. However, subsequent attacks inside Pakistan have been claimed by ISIS-K—for example, a December 2017 double suicide bombing at a church in Quetta that killed nine. (Source: [U.S. Department of State](#), [Associated Press](#))

Harakat-ul-Mujahideen

Harakat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM)—a.k.a. Jamiat ul-Ansar—is a Sunni militant organization founded in 1985 to fight the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. The group has since changed its focus to waging jihad against Indian forces in Kashmir. HuM's primary aim is to unite Kashmir with Pakistan and establish an Islamic state in Pakistan under sharia law. The United States designated HuM as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in 1997. HuM maintains extensive ties to al-Qaeda and is allied with several other Pakistani terrorist groups, including Hiz-il-Mujahideen, Lashkar-e-Taiba, and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi. HuM targeted the United States in a 2002 attack outside the U.S. consulate in Karachi that killed 11, but has mostly conducted attacks against Indian targets. The group has allegedly received support from Pakistan's ISI as recently as 2011. (Sources: [Stanford University](#), [Long War Journal](#))

Hizb-il-Mujahideen

Hizb-il-Mujahideen (HM) is one of the largest and most powerful militant groups operating in Kashmir. It seeks the integration of Kashmir with Pakistan. The group formed in September 1989 as the military wing of Jamaat-e-Islami (JeL), a conservative Islamist political party in Pakistan. It aimed to counter the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, which advocated for complete independence for Kashmir. The group is headquartered at Muzaffarabad in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and has an estimated 1,500 members. Former Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and army chief Gen. Qamar Javed Bajwa both glorified slain HM commander Burhan Wani as a leader of the "freedom struggle in Kashmir." HM was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization by the United States on August 16, 2017. (Sources: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [Hindustan Times](#), [U.S. Department of the Treasury](#))

HM has received support from Pakistan's ISI and its leader, Syed Salahuddin, is allowed to operate with relative impunity in Pakistan. Most of HM's fighters are from Pakistan, and Salahuddin has stated that the Pakistani military allows him to run "hundreds of training camps" in the country. In recent years, HM has also utilized social media and video tutorials in an attempt to recruit and train Kashmiri youth. (Sources: [Long War Journal](#), [BBC News](#), [Hindustan Times](#), [International Business Times India](#))

Mullah Nazir Group

The Mullah Nazir Group is a faction of the Pakistani Taliban operating within South Waziristan. It seeks to expel U.S.-led coalition forces from Afghanistan, and establish an Islamic state ruled by sharia law in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and eventually, around the world. The Mullah Nazir Group merged with the TTP for a brief time in 2007, but broke away the following year due to ideological disagreements. The group has extensive ties to al-Qaeda, and in 2013, was designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization by the United States. Although the Mullah Nazir Group eventually seeks to overthrow the Pakistani government, its immediate focus is on Afghanistan, and Pakistan has viewed it as an ally against other groups in the FATA that pose an immediate threat to the Pakistani state and has even provided it with direct support. (Sources: [Long War Journal](#), [Stanford University](#), [Jamestown Foundation](#))

Balochistan Liberation Army

The Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) is an armed separatist group based in Pakistan's Balochistan region with activities also in Afghanistan and Iran. After Pakistan's 1947 partition from India, Balochistan was divided between Pakistan's Balochistan province, Afghanistan's Balochistan

Pakistan: Extremism and Terrorism

region, and Iran's Sistan province. The BLA seeks to create an independent Balochistan nation in the Baloch regions of those countries. Pakistan, the United States, and the United Kingdom have designated the BLA as a terrorist group. The group rose to prominence in 2000 after it claimed credit for a series of bomb attacks on Pakistani authorities. The BLA has since claimed responsibility for multiple terror attacks in Pakistan, including an August 2018 suicide car bombing that wounded five, a November 2018 attack on the Chinese consulate in Karachi that killed four, and a May 2019 attack on a luxury hotel in Balochistan that killed five. The BLA views Chinese investment in Pakistan as a Chinese attempt to colonize Balochistan. As such, the BLA has conducted multiple attacks on the Chinese consulate in Pakistan and China-owned businesses and other interests. (Sources: [Kootneeti](#), [Express Tribune](#), [Al Jazeera](#), [New York Times](#), [New York Times](#), [Reuters](#), [BBC News](#), [U.S. Department of State](#), [Gov.UK](#))

Pakistan accuses India of supporting Baloch separatists. After a June 2020 attack on the Stock Exchange building in Karachi, Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan told the Pakistani parliament there was no doubt India had supported the attack. The Pakistani government has also specifically accused the Indian spy agency Research and Analysis Wing of supporting the BLA. India denies the allegations. (Sources: [Al Jazeera](#), [India Today](#))

2018 Elections

Several candidates in Pakistan's July 25, 2018, national elections were reportedly linked to extremist groups. According to news reports, 1,500 right-wing candidates have promoted fundamentalist ideals. For example, 566 candidates were aligned with Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan, whose platform included increased enforcement of a law proscribing the death penalty for those convicted of insulting Islam. The Milli Muslim League is banned from participation in Pakistan's politics because the party's spiritual leader, Hafiz Saeed, is a U.N.-designated terrorist suspected of orchestrating the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks. Nonetheless, the party fielded 260 candidates in the election, either as independents or under other parties. The Ahl-e-Sunnat Wal Jamaat (ASWJ) party is the accused political wing of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), a terror group that has at times allied with both al-Qaeda and ISIS and is responsible for killing hundreds. More than 150 LeJ candidates ran in the election under the Pakistan Rah-e-Haq party or as independents. A month before the election, the Pakistani government removed ASWJ leader Muhammad Ahmed Ludhianvi from its terrorism watch list. The Islamist parties ran under a joint political alliance called Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal. (Sources: [CNBC](#), [Reuters](#), [Reuters](#))

Pakistani voters largely rejected extremism in the election. Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal failed to win a significant number of seats. Former cricket star Imran Khan's conservative Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party won 116 of the 270 parliamentary seats. Khan has reportedly expressed sympathy for the Taliban and support for Pakistan's blasphemy laws. Khan's opponents and other protesters have alleged voter fraud and called for a new election. (Sources: [New York Times](#), [Hindustan Times](#), [Dawn](#), [Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty](#))

Foreign Fighters

As of December 2014, as many as 300 Pakistani foreign fighters were reportedly in Syria fighting against Bashar al-Assad's government forces. In August 2016, Pakistani intelligence officials reportedly assessed that as many as 650 Pakistani foreign fighters were fighting for several extremist groups in conflict zones including Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Afghanistan, and Central Asian states. Pakistani intelligence agencies were able to identify 132 of them, and expressed concern over the security risks that these "radicalized, trained, and experienced" fighters could present upon returning to Pakistan. In November 2017, Afghan officials claimed that many Pakistanis were included in the 3,000 foreign fighters fighting on behalf of ISIS in Afghanistan. (Sources: [Dawn](#), [U.S. Library of Congress](#), [New York Times](#), [Voice of America](#))

In May 2011, foreign fighters from other countries reportedly amassed in Pakistan's tribal areas to prepare cross-border attacks on U.S.-led coalition troops in Afghanistan. A Moroccan man who had traveled to Afghanistan told British authorities upon arrest that some of the fighters converging in Pakistan were from France and Saudi Arabia. Foreign fighters have also joined some of Pakistan's most prominent extremist groups, such as Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), which reportedly includes members from Afghanistan, Sudan, Bahrain, Central Asia, Turkey, and Libya. (Sources: [Telegraph](#), [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#))

Major Extremist and Terrorist Incidents

During the 2001 U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, Pakistan provided logistical support to NATO forces there. Some militant religious groups previously supported by the Pakistani state opposed this decision and subsequently began to attack foreign targets inside Pakistan. As a result, Pakistan launched military operations against these groups, who were mostly based in the country's tribal areas. These terrorists then began to direct

Pakistan: Extremism and Terrorism

attacks against the Pakistani state and the general public in revenge. For example, after the May 2, 2011 death of Osama bin Laden, the TTP accused Pakistan of complicity in the raid that killed him and mounted several high-profile attacks in revenge throughout the month—such as a double suicide bombing the following week that killed more than 80 people. (Source: [Defense & Security Analysis](#), [Center for Strategic and International Studies](#), [Guardian](#), [Reuters](#))

In addition, terrorist groups operating in Pakistan continue to target civilians, officials, and religious minorities at venues such as schools, markets, government institutions, and places of worship. (Source: [U.S. Department of State](#))

Pre-Election Violence

Less than a week before Pakistan's July 25, 2018, elections, Pakistan's Election Commission ordered the army to deploy approximately 371,000 troops around the country to guard election sites. The commission also granted the army judicial power to immediately try and sentence anyone found to be breaking election laws. The army deployment was triple that for the 2013 elections. At least 158 people were killed and 670 wounded in attacks in the six weeks ahead of Pakistan's July 25, 2018, elections, according to the Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies. Most prominently, an ISIS suicide bomber killed at least 149 and wounded more than 180 at a political rally in Balochistan on July 13, 2018, in the third deadliest attack in Pakistan's history. The bombing targeted the anti-Taliban Awami party, which was also the subject of a July 10, 2018, attack that killed 20 people in Peshawar. Among the fatalities was Awami National Party provincial candidate Haroon Bilour, whose father, Bashir Bilour, was killed in a December 2012 Taliban bombing ahead of Pakistan's 2013 elections. According to the Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, 170 people were killed during the 2013 election period. (Sources: [Reuters](#), [Al Jazeera](#), [Wall Street Journal](#), [Reuters](#), [Al Jazeera](#), [Reuters](#), [New York Times](#))

Attacks on Schools

In one of the TTP's most notorious attacks on December 16, 2014, militants stormed an Pakistani Army-run children's school in Peshawar, killing at least 143 people—including 134 children—and wounding more than 121 others. In October 2012, in an incident that spurred international outrage, a TTP gunman shot Malala Yousafzai, a 15-year-old advocate for female education, on a school bus. The TTP has also attacked the Agricultural Training Institute in Peshawar, Bacha Khan University in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and other schools and school-related targets across Pakistan. (Sources: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [Al Jazeera](#), [Stanford University](#), [Guardian](#), [Indian Express](#))

According to Human Rights Watch, the TTP and other militant groups in Pakistan target schools and universities in order to foster intolerance, attack symbols of the government, and enforce gender discrimination by preventing the education of girls in particular. There were reportedly 867 attacks on education institutions in Pakistan between 2007 and 2015, and as of 2017, an estimated 25 million Pakistani children were not enrolled in school. Human Rights Watch predicts that such a devastating impact on education will have negative long-term effects on Pakistani society. (Sources: [Human Rights Watch](#), [Human Rights Watch](#))

Attacks in Kashmir

Kashmir has been a contended territory since the end of colonial rule in 1947, when the British did not partition the territory but left its princes to choose allegiance to either Pakistan or India, creating a rivalry between the two countries that continues today. The present insurgency in Kashmir began in 1989, and continues today, with death toll estimates well over 40,000. Several Pakistan-based extremist groups, including Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), Harakat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM), and Hizb-il-Mujahideen (HM), conduct attacks on Indian targets in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, which makes up 45 percent of the overall Kashmir region. For example, a February 14, 2019, suicide bombing in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district killed at least 40 Indian paramilitary police officers and resulted in India's first direct air strike into Pakistan since 1971 as the country bombed what it called a JeM training camp. (Sources: [CNN](#), [Foreign Policy](#), [Hindu](#), [Hindustan Times](#), [CNN](#), [Washington Post](#), [Reuters](#), [BBC News](#))

- **March 6, 2021:** Gunmen ambush a convoy carrying navy personnel in Gwadar district in the Baluchistan province, killing two and wounding one. The BLA claims responsibility. Sources: [Hindu](#), [Voice of America](#)
- **March 5, 2021:** A roadside bomb kills five and wounds five others in Baluchistan province. Source: [Voice of America](#)
- **February 22, 2021:** Unidentified gunmen ambush a car carrying female Pakistani aid workers in Mir Ali in North Waziristan, killing four and wounding two, including the male driver.

Pakistan: Extremism and Terrorism

The aid workers are part of a program to help women develop household skills. The attackers escape into the mountains. Source: [New York Times](#)

- **February 18, 2021:** Militants attack a security checkpoint in South Waziristan, killing five and wounding one. The Pakistani Taliban claim responsibility and claim the military had been conducting an active operation against the group. Source: [New York Times](#)
- **February 11, 2021:** Militants attack a security outpost in Makeen, in South Waziristan, killing four soldiers. Four of the attackers are also killed. Source: [Associated Press](#)
- **January 20, 2021:** An IED explodes in the Sibi district of Balochistan province, killing at least four and wounding five others. The BLA claims responsibility. Source: [Xinhua](#)
- **January 15, 2021:** Pakistani soldiers clash with militants in North Waziristan. Three soldiers and two militants are killed. Source: [Al Jazeera](#)
- **January 12, 2021:** Unidentified gunmen on motorcycles shoot and kill a police officer guarding a polio vaccination team in Karak in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. There are no other reported casualties. Since 2012, at least 102 people have been killed in attacks on polio vaccination teams and those guarding them. Source: [Al Jazeera](#)
- **January 6, 2021:** Afghanistan-based militants fire across the border at a security checkpoint in Pakistan’s Mohmand district, killing one. Source: [Anadolu Agency](#)
- **January 3, 2021:** Militants attack a coal mine in the Mach area of Bolan district in Balochistan province, abducting and then killing 11 of Pakistan’s Shiite Hazara minority. Four others are wounded. ISIS claims responsibility. Sources: [New York Times](#), [Reuters](#)
- **December 30, 2020:** A mob attacks and sets on fire a Hindu temple in the Karak district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. No casualties are reported but the temple is heavily damaged. The mob is led by a local cleric and supporters of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam party who were protesting the temple’s alleged expansion. Pakistani police arrest more than one dozen people. Sources: [CNN](#), [Al Jazeera](#)
- **December 29, 2020:** Unidentified militants throw a grenade a security vehicle belonging to the paramilitary Frontier Corps in Sorab, wounding 14 passersby. Source: [Associated Press](#)
- **December 26, 2020:** Militants attack a security checkpoint in Harnai, in Balochistan, killing at least seven Pakistani paramilitary soldiers. Source: [Deutsche Welle](#)
- **December 4, 2020:** A timed explosive near a bus terminal in Rawalpindi kills one and wounds seven others. Source: [Al Arabiya](#)
- **October 27, 2020:** A bomb kills at least seven and wounds more than 50 at a religious school in Peshawar. Source: [BBC News](#)
- **October 25, 2020:** A remote-controlled bomb attached to a motorcycle kills at least three and wounds at least seven at a fruit market in Quetta. Sources: [Nation](#), [The News](#)
- **October 15, 2020:** Militants attack a convoy belonging to the Oil and Gas Development Company in Balochistan province, killing at least 14 paramilitary and private security guards. The separatist alliance Baloch Raji Ajoi Sangar claims responsibility, calling drilling in the area without permission of the people unacceptable. Separately, a roadside bomb kills six soldiers near Razmak, in North Waziristan. The Pakistani Taliban claim responsibility for that attack. Source: [New York Times](#)
- **October 10, 2020:** Three gunmen on a shared motorcycle kill Islamic cleric Maulana Adil Khan and his driver in Karachi. The gunmen escape. Prime Minister Imran Khan accuses India of attempting to create sectarian conflict in Pakistan. Source: [Associated Press](#)
- **August 5, 2020:** A grenade wounds at least 30 at a rally in Karachi marking the first anniversary of India’s revocation of Kashmir’s semi-autonomy. The SRA claims responsibility. Source: [Reuters](#)
- **July 29, 2020:** A cross-border attack from Afghanistan kills a Pakistan soldier in Bajur near the Afghan border. Source: [Anadolu Agency](#)
- **June 29, 2020:** Four gunmen armed with grenades attack the Pakistan Stock Exchange in Karachi, killing two guards and a policeman before security forces kill them. The BLA claims responsibility. Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan accuses India of responsibility for the attack. Source: [Al Jazeera](#)
- **June 19, 2020:** Sindhudesh Revolutionary Army (SRA) militants launch three consecutive explosions in Sindh province, southern Pakistan. The attacks kill four people and injure over a dozen others. The SRA is a secessionist group that seeks to break from the Pakistan Federation. Source: [Reuters](#)
- **June 12, 2020:** A bomb detonates near Kabari Bazar in Rawalpindi. At least one person is killed and 12 others are wounded. No group claims responsibility for the attack, but it is expected the area was targeted given the proximity to the headquarters of the Pakistan Army. Source: [Anadolu Agency](#)
- **May 27, 2020:** Two gunmen open fire on policemen at a roadside checkpoint outside of Islamabad. The attack kills two. Hizbul Ahrar, a splinter group of the Pakistani Taliban, claims responsibility for the attack. Source: [Associated Press](#)
- **May 12, 2020:** Counterterrorism officers arrest two ISIS militants in Bahawalnagar district. The militants allegedly sought to carry out an IED attack on a “sensitive installation” in Bahawalnagar. Source: [Telangana Today](#)

Pakistan: Extremism and Terrorism

- **May 10, 2020:** A roadside bomb detonates in Balochistan, southwestern Pakistan. The explosion targeted a vehicle belonging to security personnel. The attack kills six soldiers and wounds one other. The BLA claims responsibility for the attack. Source: [Statesman](#)
- **April 17, 2020:** A JeM terrorist captured by Afghanistan's security forces claims that Pakistan has reactivated Taliban camps along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, and that the militants are being trained to launch attacks in Kashmir as well as on Indian assets in Afghanistan. It is also alleged that the captured terrorist and his fellow militants were infected with coronavirus and sought to spread the virus into Kashmir. Sources: [Zee News](#), [DNA India](#)
- **April 10, 2020:** The Hindustan Times reports that Pakistan-based jihadist groups have activated launch pads along the Line of Control (LoC) in Kashmir and the international border in Jammu. According to intelligence collected by national security investigators, around 160 LeT, JeM, and Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) militants are in position to infiltrate the region. Source: [Hindustan Times](#)
- **April 7, 2020:** The Indian army launches an operation in Keran, Kashmir, targeting suspected terrorists who infiltrated the area from Pakistan. At least five special force members are killed as well as five terrorists. Source: [Hindustan Times](#)
- **March 29, 2020:** An Indian intelligence agency claims that two suspected terrorists from Pakistan sought to carry out a terror attack in New Delhi. The terrorists were originally operating in the Shopian region of Jammu and Kashmir and had allegedly pledged allegiance to ISIS, according to Telegram communication accessed by the intelligence agency. Source: [Times of India](#)
- **March 19, 2020:** U.S. federal agents arrest a Pakistani national at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport on a terrorism charge. Paid FBI informants allege that the suspect, Muhammad Masoon, had claimed to pledge allegiance to ISIS and that he sought to carry out lone wolf attacks in the United States. Sources: [U.S. News](#), [Voice of America](#)
- **March 4, 2020:** India's National Investigation Agency (NIA) arrests a father-daughter duo with ties to two Pakistani terrorists who carried out the February 2019 Pulwama terror attack. Tariq Ahmad Shah and his daughter Insha Jan allegedly sheltered all of the JeM terrorists who planned the attack. The duo also allegedly assisted in recording the assailant's video that was released after the attack. Source: [Economic Times](#)
- **February 21, 2020 - February 25, 2020:** On February 21, an assailant with a hammer randomly bludgeons a woman to death in Toronto, Canada. The assailant, Saad Akhtar, is a Pakistani national, turned himself in to Toronto Police a few hours after the attack. On February 25, after uncovering unreported statements from Akhtar regarding ISIS, Canadian police charge Akhtar with "murder-terrorist activity." Sources: [National Post](#), [Global News](#)
- **February 19, 2020:** A Pakistani anti-terrorism court sentences three members of Jamaat-ul-Ahrar to death for their involvement in the 2014 Wagah border bombing that killed over 60 people. Sources: [New Indian Express](#), [The Hindu](#)
- **February 17, 2020:** A suicide blast targets a religious rally in Quetta, southwestern Pakistan. The attack kills at least eight and injures at least 20 others. The rally was organized by Ahle Sunnat Wal Jammāt (ASWJ), a radical Sunni Muslim political party that has long called for Shia Muslims to be declared "non-Muslim" under Pakistani law. No group claims responsibility for the attack. The attack took place in a province that is continually plagued by both a low-level Baloch separatist insurgency and militants linked to proscribed terrorist groups including ISIS. Source: [Voice of America](#)
- **February 12, 2020:** An antiterrorism court in Pakistan convicts Hafiz Muhammad Saeed on terrorism-related charges and sentences him to two prison terms of five and a half years, which will run concurrently, and a \$194 fine (30,000 rupees). Saeed is found guilty of having links with terrorist groups, raising funds for terrorism, and having illegal property. Source: [New York Times](#)
- **January 11, 2020:** Former Pakistani Taliban spokesman, Ehsanullah Ehasn, escapes from a maximum-security military prison after detained for three years. Ehsan, a high-profile local Taliban figure, announced and justified the 2012 attack on Malala Yousafzai, and also claimed responsibility on behalf of the Taliban for scores of attacks. Source: [Reuters](#)
- **August 30, 2019:** Pakistani-born, current New York resident, Awais Chudhary, is arrested and charged by a Brooklyn federal court of plotting a terrorist attack with a knife on behalf of ISIS. Chudhary communicated with undercover FBI agents in text messages, telling them he planned to carry out a stabbing or bombing to kill innocent people in the name of ISIS and wanted to record it to "inspire" others. Chudhary faces up to 20 years in prison if convicted. Source: [Fox News](#)
- **August 16, 2019:** A bomb explodes at the Al-Haj mosque in Quetta, killing four and wounding 25. Among the fatalities is the brother of Afghan Taliban chief Mullah Haybatullah. Sources: [Dawn](#), [U.S. Department of State](#)
- **August 6, 2019:** Following India's revocation of Kashmir's autonomy, Pakistani military forces and Prime Minister Imran Khan warn of the potential rise of extremist activity in the Muslim-majority region as Kashmiris and rebels support either an independent Kashmir or having the state unified under Pakistan. Source: [Telegraph](#)
- **August 3, 2019:** India claims that Pakistan is planning a terrorist attack against Hindu pilgrims heading to the Amarnath shrine in Kashmir. Indian forces claim they found ammunition and weapon filled mines covered in Pakistani ordinance markings along the route of the pilgrimage. The annual event attracts over 20,000 pilgrims and thousands of more tourists a year. Source: [BBC News](#)

Pakistan: Extremism and Terrorism

- **July 21, 2019:** The Taliban carries out twin attacks in Dera Ismail Khan, northwestern Pakistan. An unidentified number of gunmen attack a security checkpoint while a suicide bomber targets a hospital. At least 10 are killed and another 30 are wounded. TTP takes responsibility and claims the attacks are carried out to avenge the killing of one of its militants in the district the previous month. Sources: [New York Times](#), [U.S. Department of State](#)
- **July 7, 2019:** Counterterrorism forces arrest Ali Nawaz, a man accused of funding al-Qaeda militants through funds from Human Concern International, a non-governmental organization. Source: [Associated Press](#)
- **July 4, 2019:** Pakistan, under pressure from the United States and the Financial Action Task Force, prosecutes Hafiz Muhammad Saeed on charges of terrorism financing. Pakistani officials register 23 cases against Saeed and more than a dozen of his associates after discovering that two charities—Jamaat-ud-Dawa and Falah-e-Isaniat Foundation—were fronts for the banned Lashkar-e-Taiba group he founded. Lashkar-e-Taiba carried out the deadly 2008 Mumbai attacks which killed more than 160 people. Source: [New York Times](#)
- **June 23, 2019:** Counterterrorism police officials kill a Taliban militant during a raid at his compound in Dera Ismail Khan. Source: [New York Times](#)
- **June 6, 2019:** An unidentified number of gunmen open fire on a paramilitary vehicle in Quetta, killing two troops before fleeing. It is not clear if the attackers belonged to any militant group although Quetta is targeted in a low-level insurgency by Baloch separatists. Source: [Associated Press](#)
- **May 24, 2019:** Militants remotely detonate a bomb inside a mosque in Quetta. The attack kills three people and injures another 28. No group claims responsibility. Source: [Al Jazeera](#)
- **May 14, 2019:** A bomb detonates near two police vehicles in Quetta. At least four policemen are killed and an unreported number are wounded. The BLA claims responsibility for the attack. Source: [Al Jazeera](#)
- **May 13, 2019:** Militants remotely detonate a bomb hidden under a motorbike in Quetta. Four police officers are killed and nine are wounded. Tehrik-i Taliban claims responsibility for the attack. Source: [The Defense Post](#)
- **May 11, 2019:** Three members of the separatist BLA raid and open fire on the Pearl Continental luxury hotel in Gwadar, Balochistan. Eight people, including the three attackers, are killed and another six are injured. The army's media wing, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) claims the group targeted the Chinese-owned hotel to target foreign investors. Sources: [U.S. Department of State](#), [BBC News](#)
- **May 8, 2019:** A suicide bomber detonates at the Data Darbar Sufi shrine in Lahore, killing at least 10 and wounding at least 24. TTP faction Hizbul Ahrar claims responsibility and claims law enforcement, not civilians, were the target. Source: [U.S. Department of State](#)
- **April 28, 2019:** A bomb detonates near a security checkpoint in North Waziristan. Three security personnel are killed and one is injured. No one claims responsibility for the attack but the area is known as a stronghold for the Taliban. Source: [Associated Press](#)
- **April 18, 2019:** Dozens of gunmen ambush a passenger bus in Balochistan, killing 14. Authorities suspect the BLA is responsible for the attack. It is suspected that the victims were targeted for either belonging to the Pakistani security forces or belonging to the Punjabi ethnic group. Source: [Independent](#)
- **April 16, 2019:** Security forces raid a militant hideout in Peshawar, triggering a 15-hour shootout. Six people are killed, including five militants. Source: [Associated Press](#)
- **April 12, 2019:** A bomb explodes in a vegetable market in Quetta, killing at least 20 and wounding at least 48. At least nine of the dead are part of the minority Shiite Hazara community, which has been targeted in the past. Lashkar-e-Jhangvi claims responsibility. Sources: [New York Times](#), [CNN](#)
- **February 18, 2019:** Gunmen attack a security outpost in Panjgur district of the Balochistan province, killing four paramilitary soldiers. Pakistani authorities suspect Balochistan separatists. Source: [Reuters](#)
- **February 12, 2019:** Gunmen open fire on a police vehicle in the Dera Ismail Khan district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, killing four officers. The TTP splinter group Hizbul Ahrar claims responsibility. Source: [Reuters](#)
- **January 29, 2019:** Three suicide bombers attack the Deputy Inspector General Police office compound in Loralai in the Balochistan province, killing at least nine and injuring 21. Two of the bombers are shot before they can set off their explosives. TTP claims responsibility. Source: [Voice of America](#)
- **January 5, 2019 - January 6, 2019:** On January 5, a car bomb in a market area of Peshawar wounds four people. On January 6, two roadside bombs wound eight in the Balochistan province. There are no immediate claims of responsibility for any of the attacks. Sources: [Xinhua](#), [Associated Press](#)
- **January 4, 2019:** A car bomb explodes outside a mosque in Peshawar, wounding three. There are no immediate claims of responsibility. Source: [Associated Press](#)
- **January 1, 2019:** Gunmen attack a training facility belonging to the paramilitary Frontier Corps in Loralai district in the Balochistan province, killing at least four and wounding two. Four of the gunmen are killed, including one who detonates a suicide vest. There are no immediate claims of responsibility. Source: [Reuters](#)
- **November 23, 2018:** Three militants attack the Chinese consulate in Karachi, killing two police officers and two civilians at a checkpoint. The attackers are killed by security forces. The separatist group BLA claims responsibility in a Twitter post. Later that day, a bomb explodes in a fruit and vegetable market in the town of Kalaya in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, killing at least 30 and wounding 40. There are no immediate claims of responsibility. In January 2019, Pakistan accuses Indian spy agency Research and Analysis Wing of involvement in the

Pakistan: Extremism and Terrorism

attack on the Chinese consulate. India denies the allegation. Sources: [New York Times](#), [India Today](#)

- **August 11, 2018:** A suicide bomber in a pick-up truck attacks a bus carrying Chinese mining workers in the Balochistan province, wounding five.
The BLA claims responsibility. Sources: [New York Times](#), [Reuters](#)
- **July 25, 2018:** More than 30 people are killed in multiple attacks during Pakistan’s national elections.
An ISIS suicide bomber explodes outside a polling station in Quetta in the Balochistan province, killing at least 31 and wounding more than 30. A grenade attack in Balochistan’s Khuzdar district kills one. There are no immediate claims of responsibility. A shooting between political rivals in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province also leaves one dead. Sources: [CNN](#), [BBC News](#)
- **July 13, 2018:** A suicide bomber explodes at a political rally for the Balochistan Awami Party in the Mastung district of Balochistan, killing at least 149 and wounding more than 180.
ISIS claims responsibility. It is the third deadliest attack in Pakistan’s history behind the 2008 Karsaz bombing and the 2014 attack on a school in Peshawar. Separately, a bombing at a campaign event of the JUI-F party in the northwest town of Banmu kills at least four and wounding 19. There are no immediate claims of responsibility for the Banmu bombing. On July 20, Pakistani forces kill Hidayat Ullah, the alleged mastermind of the Balochistan bombing. Sources: [Al Jazeera](#), [Wall Street Journal](#), [Reuters](#), [Agence France-Presse](#)
- **July 10, 2018:** A suicide bomber explodes at a campaign rally for the anti-Taliban Awami National Party (ANP) in Peshawar, killing 20 people and wounding 69 others.
The TTP claims responsibility. Among the fatalities is ANP provincial candidate Haroon Bilour, whose father was killed in a Taliban bombing ahead of Pakistan’s 2013 elections. The Peshawar bombing is the first such attack ahead of the July 25 general elections. Sources: [Al Jazeera](#), [Reuters](#), [New York Times](#)
- **December 17, 2017:** Two suicide bombers target a church in Quetta where hundreds of worshippers are attending prayer services, killing nine and injuring dozens.
One attacker is shot outside of the church, while the second reaches the church’s entrance hall and opens fire before detonating an explosive vest. ISIS claims responsibility for the attack. Source: [Associated Press](#)
- **December 1, 2017:** TTP gunmen attack the Agricultural Training Institute in Peshawar, killing nine people—including six students—and wounding 37 others.
Sources: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [Al Jazeera](#)
- **October 5, 2017:** A suicide bomber targets a religious shrine in Fatehpur, a small town in the Balochistan district, killing 24 people and wounding 30 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **August 12, 2017:** A suicide bomber targets a military truck at a bus stop in Quetta, killing 15 people—including eight soldiers—and wounding 40 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **July 26, 2017:** The TTP conducts two coordinated suicide attacks against a Shiite market in Kurram Agency of the FATA, killing 60 persons and wounding 180 others.
The attack is allegedly an attempt to avenge Shia attacks on Sunni Muslims in Iraq and Syria. Source: [Stanford University](#)
- **July 24, 2017:** A suicide bomber targets a commercial building in Lahore, killing 26 people—including nine policemen—and wounding 56 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **June 24, 2017:** In Kurram Agency of the FATA, the TTP launches back-to-back explosions at a market crowded with people shopping in preparation for a religious holiday, killing 67 people and wounding 200 others.
Sources: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [Stanford University](#)
- **June 23, 2017:** In a joint operation, JuA and ISIS carry out a suicide car bombing outside of the office of the Balochistan police chief, killing 13 and wounding 20.
Source: [Stanford University](#)
- **May 21, 2017:** A suicide attack in Balochistan targets a convoy carrying politician and Senate deputy chairman Mualana Abdul Ghafoor Haider, killing 27 people and wounding 40 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **March 31, 2017:** A JuA suicide bomber targets a market in Kurram Agency of the FATA, killing 24 people and wounding 100 others.
Sources: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **February 21, 2017:** JuA terrorists wearing suicide vests attack a court in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, along Pakistan’s northern border with Afghanistan, killing seven people—including a lawyer and an eight-year-old boy—and wounding 25 others.
Sources: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **February 16, 2017:** A suicide bomber targets a crowded Sufi shrine in Jamshoro District in Sindh, killing 88 people are killed and wounding 343 others.
ISIS claims responsibility for the attack. Sources: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [Asian Studies Association of Australia](#), [Al Jazeera](#)
- **February 13, 2017:** A suicide bomber targets a public protest in Lahore, killing 14 people—including six policemen—and wounding 85 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **January 21, 2017:** A bomb explodes at a vegetable market in Kurram Agency in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, killing at least 25 people and wounding at least 87 others.

Pakistan: Extremism and Terrorism

Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)

- **November 12, 2016:** A suicide bomber kills 53 people and injures more than 100 others at the shrine of Sufi saint Shah Bilal Noorani in Balochistan.
A LeJ affiliate and ISIS-K both claim responsibility. Sources: [U.S. Department of State](#), [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **October 24, 2016:** Three militants storm a police training center in Quetta with gunfire and suicide vests, killing at least 60 people with gunfire and wounding 164 others.
A LeJ affiliate and ISIS-K both claim responsibility, and the TTP is also suspected. Sources: [U.S. Department of State](#), [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [Stanford University](#)
 - **October 7, 2016:** Two coordinated bomb blasts target railway tracks in Balochistan, killing six people and injuring 19 others.
Source: [Al Jazeera](#)
 - **September 16, 2016:** A suicide bomber targets a mosque in the Mohmand Tribal District, killing at least 36 people and injuring at least 37 others. JuA claims responsibility.
Sources: [U.S. Department of State](#), [Stanford University](#), [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **August 8, 2016:** A bomb kills 70 people at a hospital in Quetta where lawyers had gathered to mourn the assassination of a prominent colleague.
The JuA faction of the TTP and ISIS-K both claim responsibility. Sources: [U.S. Department of State](#), [Stanford University](#), [Stanford University](#), [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **March 27, 2016:** A suicide bomber targets Christians celebrating Easter at Gulshan-e-Iqbal Park in Lahore, killing 74 people and wounding 300 others. The JuA faction of the TTP claims responsibility.
Sources: [U.S. Department of State](#), [Stanford University](#), [Stanford University](#), [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **March 15, 2016:** A power bomb rips through a bus carrying government employees in Peshawar, the provincial capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, killing 15 people and wounding 25 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **March 7, 2016:** A teenage JuA suicide bomber kills 17 people—including six women, two children, and two policemen—and injures 23 others in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
Sources: [Stanford University](#), [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **January 20, 2016:** TTP militants storm Bacha Khan University in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, located in northwestern Pakistan along the border with Afghanistan, killing at least 30 people and injuring at least 50 others.
Sources: [Guardian](#), [Indian Express](#)
 - **January 19, 2016:** A suicide bomber targets military personnel in Khyber Agency in the FATA, killing 12 people—including a journalist—and wounding 39 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **January 13, 2016:** A suicide bomber targets a government health center in Quetta, Balochistan, killing one civilian and 14 police and military personnel, and wounding 25 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **December 29, 2015:** A JuA suicide bomber targets a government building in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, killing 26 people and wounding 50 others.
Sources: [Stanford University](#), [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **December 13, 2015:** A bomb attack on a marketplace in Parachinar town in the Kurram tribal area kills at least 25 people and injures at least 62 others.
LeJ claims responsibility, stating that the attack targeted unspecified Shia elements who support Syrian President Assad and the Iranian government. Ansar-ul-Mujahideen, a group based in South Waziristan, also claims responsibility. Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **October 23, 2015:** A suicide bomber targets a Shia mourning procession near a park in Sindh Province, killing 22 people—including eight children—and wounding 40 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **October 19, 2015:** A bomb explodes inside a local city bus in Quetta, Balochistan, killing 11 people—including two children—and wounding 20 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **May 13, 2015:** Unidentified militants open fire on a bus near the Dow Medical College in Karachi, killing 45 Shia and wounding 24.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **April 26, 2015:** A bomb explodes near a vegetable market in Balochistan, killing four people and wounding 20 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **April 10, 2015:** Unidentified militants attack a labor camp in Balochistan, killing 20 laborers and wounding three others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **March 28, 2015:** AQIS militants assassinate Pakistani Army Colonel Tariq Azim in a “targeting killing operation.”
Source: [Australian National Security](#)
 - **March 15, 2015:** Two suicide bombers target two churches in Lahore, killing 15 people—including 13 Christians and two policemen—and wounding 70 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **February 13, 2015:** A gun and bomb attack targets Shia worshippers in Peshawar, killing 22 people and wounding 50 others.
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Pakistan: Extremism and Terrorism

Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)

- **January 9, 2015:** Eight persons are killed and 25 others are wounded in a bomb blast in Rawalpindi, Punjab.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **December 16, 2014:** TTP militants storm an Army-run children's school in Peshawar, killing at least 143 people—including 134 children—and wounding over 121 others.
Sources: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [Stanford University](#)
 - **November 2, 2014:** A JuA suicide bomber targets a military checkpoint in Punjab, killing at least 61 people and wounding at least 150 others.
Sources: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [Stanford University](#)
 - **October 4, 2014:** A suicide bomber targets shoppers preparing for a religious holiday in Quetta, Balochistan, killing five people and wounding 12 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **September 8, 2014:** Professor Mohammed Shakil Auj, who teaches Islamic studies at the University of Karachi and known for his liberal views, is shot dead.
The attack is later claimed by AQIS. Sources: [Guardian](#), [Long War Journal](#)
 - **September 6, 2014:** AQIS gunmen assassinate Brigadier Fazal Zahoor, a senior commander in the Pakistani military.
The same day, AQIS militants also attempt to hijack two Pakistani and two U.S. naval ships, but the operation is thwarted by the Pakistani Navy. Sources: [Stanford University](#), [Australian National Security](#)
 - **June 8, 2014:** In a joint operation with the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, 10 TTP-led militants conduct a five-hour long siege at Jinnah International Airport in Karachi, killing 18 people and wounding 26 others.
Source: [Stanford University](#)
 - **April 25, 2014:** A bomb explodes on a road in Karachi, killing six people and wounding 30 others.
According to a security official, a busload of worshippers may have been the target. Police suspect LeJ of involvement. Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **April 8, 2014:** Seventeen people are killed, including a woman and five children, and 44 others are hurt when a passenger train is bombed in Balochistan.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **February 16, 2014:** A bomb attack causes a train to derail in Sindh Province, killing six people—including four children—and injuring 35 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **February 11, 2014:** Three back-to-back explosions at a cinema in Peshawar kill 13 people and injure 19 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **February 4, 2014:** A suicide bomber targets a restaurant in Peshawar, killing nine people and wounding 40 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **January 21, 2014:** A bomb targets a bus in the Khusak area of Kanak in Mastung District, killing at least 24 Shia pilgrims returning from Iran and wounding at least 40 others. LeJ claims responsibility.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **January 1, 2014:** A suicide bombing targets Shia pilgrims in Quetta, killing three people and wounding 30 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **September 29, 2013:** A bomb explodes at a market in Peshawar, killing 42 people and wounding at least 100 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **September 22, 2013:** Two TTP suicide attackers target a church in Peshawar, killing 81 and wounding at least 145 others.
Sources: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [Stanford University](#)
 - **August 8, 2013:** A suicide bombing targets a funeral in Quetta, Balochistan, killing 38 people and wounding at least 40 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **August 7, 2013:** A suicide bombing targets a football stadium in Karachi, killing 11 people and wounding 26 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **July 26, 2013:** Twin suicide attacks in Kurram Agency of the FATA kill 26 and wound at least 160.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **June 18, 2013:** A suicide bomber targets a funeral service in Mardan District, killing 35 people and wounding 57 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **June 15, 2013:** Unidentified militants detonate bombs targeting a university bus and a medical college hospital in Quetta, killing 24 people—including 14 female nurses—and wounding 27 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **May 17, 2013:** Separate bomb blasts at two mosques in Malakand District in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa kill 21 people and injure 120 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **April 29, 2013:** A suicide bomb attack on University Road in Peshawar kills 10 people—including an Afghan diplomat and a journalist—and injures 60 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **April 23, 2013:** Three bomb blasts in Quetta injure six people. LeJ claims responsibility.
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Pakistan: Extremism and Terrorism

Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)

- **March 22, 2013:** A bombing near a market in Jaffarabad District kills ten people—including two children—and injures 37 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **March 21, 2013:** A car bomb targets an internally displaced persons camp in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, killing 17 people and wounding 34 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **March 18, 2013:** Two suicide bombers target a judicial building in Peshawar, killing four people—including a policeman and three civilians—and injuring 49 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **March 9, 2013:** A remote-controlled bomb detonates inside a mosque in Peshawar, killing six people and injuring 30 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **March 3, 2013:** A bomb explodes in a Shiite-majority neighborhood in Karachi during a religious ceremony, killing 48 people and wounding 70 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **February 16, 2013:** A bomb blast in Quetta kills 84 people and injures 200 others. Claiming responsibility, a LeJ spokesman says, “Our suicide bomber carried out the blast and the Shia community was the target.” Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **February 8, 2013:** A bomb blast kills 16 and injures 27 in Kalaya, the capital of Orakzai Agency in the FATA.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **January 1, 2013:** A suicide bomber targets a mosque just after Friday prayers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, killing 28 Shia and wounding 46.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **January 10, 2013:** Two separate bomb blasts on Alamdar Road in Quetta kill 105 people and injure 169 others. That same day, a bomb in Quetta explodes under a security force vehicle, killing 12 people and wounding 47 others. LeJ claims responsibility for that bombing. Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **January 1, 2013:** An IED explodes in Karachi, killing four people and wounding 50 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **December 29, 2012:** A bomb targeting an intercity bus in Peshawar kills six people—including a woman and a child—and injures 50 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **December 22, 2012:** A suicide bomber explodes during an Awami National Party rally in Peshawar, killing at least nine and wounding 17 others. Among the fatalities is Provincial Minister Bashir Bilour. The Taliban claim responsibility. Source: [Agence France-Presse](#)
- **December 17, 2012:** A car bomb targeting a market in Khyber Agency in the FATA kills 19 people—including women and children—and injures 71 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **November 21, 2012:** A suicide bomber targets a funeral procession in the Rawalpindi District of Punjab, killing 20 people and wounding 30 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **October 9, 2012:** A TTP gunman shoots Malala Yousafzai, a 15-year-old advocate for female education, on a school bus. Yousafzai survives the gunshot wound to her head, and the incident spurs international attention and outrage. Source: [Stanford University](#)
- **September 16, 2012:** A remote-controlled bomb destroys a passenger van in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, killing 16 people and wounding 13 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **September 10, 2012:** A suicide bombing targets a crowded market in Kurram Agency in the FATA, killing 15 people and wounding 40 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **September 3, 2012:** A suicide bomber targets a vehicle used by Americans in Peshawar, killing four people—including two Americans—and wounding 19 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **July 26, 2012:** An explosives-laden truck explodes in a market in Bajaur Agency in the FATA, killing 15 people and wounding 23 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **June 28, 2012:** A suicide attack in Quetta targets a bus full of pilgrims returning from Iran, killing 15 people and wounding 30 others. LeJ claims responsibility.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- A powerful bomb explodes near a bus approaching the Balochistan University of Information Technology in Quetta, killing five Shia students and a professor and wounding 54 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **June 7, 2012:** A remote-controlled bomb targets a religious school in Quetta, killing fifteen people—including five children—and injuring 48 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **May 4, 2012:** A suicide attack targeting security in Bajaur Agency in the FATA forces kills 29 people—including four policemen—and injures 73 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)

Pakistan: Extremism and Terrorism

- **March 11, 2012:** A suicide bomber targeting a funeral in Peshawar kills 17 people and injures 32 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **March 2, 2012:** A suicide bomber targets a mosque in the Tirah Valley in Khyber Agency of the FATA, killing 25 people and injuring 18 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **February 23, 2012:** A car bomb attack on a bus stop in Peshawar kills 15 people—including two children—and injures 38 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **February 17, 2012:** A suicide bomber targets a mosque in Kurram Agency in the FATA, killing 40 Shia and wounding 24.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **January 15, 2012:** A bomb attack targets a procession marking a religious observance in Rahim Yar Khan District, killing 18 Shia and wounding 30.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **January 10, 2012:** A bomb planted in a pick-up truck explodes at a petrol station in a market in Khyber Agency in the FATA, killing 35 people and injuring 78 others.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **September 20, 2011:** LeJ militants kill 29 Shia in two separate attacks.
The first attack, in the Ganjidori area of Mastung District, targets Shia pilgrims en route to a town on the Iranian border. The militants order the pilgrims off of a bus, line them up, and shoot them indiscriminately. An hour later, militants kill three people in Quetta on their way to collect the bodies of relatives killed in the Ganjidori attack. Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **August 19, 2011:** The TTP carries out a suicide bombing during prayers at a mosque in Khyber Agency of the FATA, killing 56 and wounding 123.
Source: [Stanford University](#)
 - **July 29, 2011:** LeJ militants kill seven people—including four Shia—waiting at a bus terminal in Taftan.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **May 18, 2011:** Gunmen kill seven Shia and wound six others in Quetta. LeJ claims responsibility.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **May 3, 2011:** The TTP carries out a suicide bombing against a police cadet training center in revenge for the killing of Osama Bin Laden, killing 98 people and wounding 115 others.
Source: [Stanford University](#)
 - **April 3, 2011:** Two TTP suicide bombers attack a Sufi shrine in Dera Ghazi Khan, killing 50 and wounding 120.
Source: [Stanford University](#)
 - **November 11, 2010:** An explosive-laden truck blows up inside the head office of the Crime Investigation Department in Karachi, killing at least 20 people and wounding 100 others.
LeJ is suspected of responsibility. Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **September 1, 2010:** Two suicide attacks and one grenade attack targeting a Shia procession in Lahore kill 43 people and injure 230 others.
LeJ claims responsibility. Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **April 17, 2010:** Two suicide bombers kill 44 people and injure 70 others waiting to register and receive aid at an internally displaced persons camp in North Waziristan.
LeJ claims responsibility and cite the presence of Shia at the camp as the reason for the attack. Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **April 16, 2010:** A suicide bomber blows himself up inside a hospital in Quetta, killing 11 people and injuring 35 others.
LeJ claims responsibility. Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **March 12, 2010:** Twin suicide blasts target a bazaar in Lahore during Friday prayers, killing 57 people—including eight soldiers—and wounding 90.
Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
 - **July 9, 2010:** The TTP conducts a double suicide bombing at a market in Mohmand Agency of the FATA, in close proximity to an anti-Taliban militia gathering.
The attacks kill 105 people and wound at least 100 more. Source: [Stanford University](#)
 - **January 1, 2010:** The TTP conducts a suicide car bombing in Lakki Marwat, where hundreds of people gathered to watch a volleyball game.
The attack kills 105 and wounds at least 100 more. Source: [Stanford University](#)
 - **December 30, 2009:** The TTP targets a U.S. military base in Afghanistan, killing seven and wounding six.
The attack is allegedly intended to avenge the death of TTP leader Baitullah Mehsud, who was killed in a drone strike. Source: [Stanford University](#)
 - **March 30, 2009:** TTP militants target a police training academy in Lahore, killing 10 and wounding 95.
The attack is allegedly intended as retaliation for Pakistani assistance to U.S. drone strikes. Source: [Stanford University](#)
 - **October 10, 2008:** A TTP suicide bomber targets a meeting at which local tribal leaders are discussing the formation of a militia to secure the region and oppose the Taliban, killing 85 and wounding 200 people.
Source: [Stanford University](#)
 - **August 21, 2008:** The TTP conducts twin suicide attacks against Pakistan's largest weapons factory, killing 66 and wounding 70.
Source: [Stanford University](#)
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Pakistan: Extremism and Terrorism

- **December 23, 2007:** A TTP suicide attack on a military convoy in Mingora kills 13 and wounds 25.
Source: [Stanford University](#)
- **December 25, 2002:** JeM makes two assassination attempts on Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf in Rawalpindi, Pakistan.
Source: [Stanford University](#)
- **August 4, 2002:** JeM members attack a convent school in Islamabad and then a nearby Christian hospital a few days later, killing 10 persons and wounding 23.
Source: [Stanford University](#)
- **June 14, 2002:** A bombing near the U.S. Consulate in Karachi kills 12 people.
Pakistan police subsequently determine that LeJ was involved. Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **May 8, 2002:** At least 16 people are killed and 26 others injured in a bomb blast in Karachi.
Pakistan police subsequently determine that LeJ was involved. Source: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#)
- **January 23, 2002:** JeM members in Karachi, Pakistan, abduct U.S. journalist Daniel Pearl. He is beheaded the following week on February 1.
Source: [Stanford University](#)

Domestic Counter-Extremism

Pakistan has long faced international criticism that it allows violent extremist groups to operate within its territory. In March 2019, the Pakistani government pledged to take action against these groups and actuate an idled 2014 Plan of Action against extremism. That month, the government took control of at least 182 religious schools affiliated with extremist groups, as well as dozens of hospitals and other charities. The crackdown came in response to a February 14, 2019, Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) attack in India that killed at least 40 and sparked international criticism that Pakistan has harbored violent extremist groups. The Pakistani government claimed the crackdown is part of a long-planned strategy and not in response to pressure following the attack in India. In April 2019, Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan declared that the push against violent extremism was necessary for Pakistan's stability and the country "will not allow armed militias to operate." He further stated that the government is seeking to bring the country's 30,000 madrassas under government control and rehabilitate thousands of former militants. Nonetheless, the U.S. State Department has declared Pakistan is still doing too little to confront terrorist groups. (Sources: [Reuters](#), [Reuters](#), [Reuters](#), [Associated Press](#))

Although Pakistan has in the past taken action against some extremist groups that have threatened the state or its interests, most of its responses have been reactionary, according to the Asian Studies Association of Australia. Furthermore, Pakistan continues to tolerate and even encourage the activities of other extremist groups that serve its greater strategic interests. According to *Foreign Policy*, Pakistan not only contests India over the control of Kashmir, but fears that India aims to challenge Pakistan's very existence. Pakistan has therefore tolerated and even supported extremist groups that attack Indian targets and contest India's control of the Kashmir region. The Brookings Institution also attributes Pakistan's inadequate countering violent extremism (CVE) performance to additional domestic political constraints such as weak governance, civilian-military divides, and economic obstacles. Local scholars have reported that extremism is on the rise, which makes Pakistan's deficient CVE efforts especially concerning. (Sources: [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [Asian Studies Association of Australia](#), [Foreign Policy](#), [Long War Journal](#), [Brookings Institution](#), [Brookings Institution](#))

While the Pakistani government has touted its assistance to the United States in brokering a ceasefire with the Taliban, the government faces international criticism of its counterterrorism efforts. In June 2020, the U.S. government criticized Pakistan for doing too little to combat terrorism, particularly the Haqqani network and groups targeting Indian interests. The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) maintains that Pakistan has not done enough to combat terror financing. And despite objections by the Pakistani government, the Pakistani Supreme Court in January 2021 acquitted Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh, who had spent the previous 18 years on death row for the 2002 death of American-Jewish journalist Daniel Pearl. The United States intends to Sheikh's his extradition. The court also ordered the release of Fahad Naseem, Sheikh Adil, and Salman Saqib, who had all been sentenced to life in prison for roles in Pearl's murder. (Sources: [Associated Press](#), [Guardian](#), [BBC News](#), [Associated Press](#))

Legislation

Pakistan's National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA), provincial counterterrorism departments, and a National Action Plan on Preventing Violent Extremism aim to regulate madrassas, block extremist communications, and curb terrorist financing. However, according to the U.S. State Department, the plan has not been consistently implemented. For example, although Pakistani authorities announced in September 2016 that they had frozen the bank accounts of 8,400 individuals suspected of having links to terrorism, the following month, members of the multi-national Financial Action Task Force (FATF) expressed concern over terrorist financing in Pakistan. Furthermore, the U.S. State Department has expressed concern over the lack of information sharing between Pakistan's counterterrorism agencies. (Sources: [U.S. Department of State](#), [International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research](#))

Pakistan: Extremism and Terrorism

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Pakistan's legal code includes anti-terrorism legislation, including the Antiterrorism Act (ATA) of 1997, which bans membership, support, and funding for certain terrorist groups. It was amended in 2014 to expand its definition of terrorism to groups that act against foreign or international targets. However, acquittal rates in ATA courts are reportedly high due to bureaucratic disagreements between military and civilian security agencies and bribery by terrorist groups. (Sources: [U.S. Department of State](#), [U.S. Library of Congress](#))

Pakistan unveiled its National Action Plan in 2014 in the wake of that December's TTP attack on the Army Public School. The 20-point plan calls for strengthening existing anti-terrorism authorities, creating and deploying a specific counter-terrorism force, enforcing the death penalty for convicted terrorists, registering and regulating religious seminaries, addressing terror financing and propaganda, and "dealing firmly with sectarian terrorists." The plan called on the minister of interior to design a mechanism to implement the plan. In his first address as prime minister in August 2018, Imran Khan recognized that many parts of the NPA called for the National Action Plan's implementation. He declared that Pakistan "cannot progress without combating terrorism." (Sources: [National Counter Terrorism Authority Pakistan](#), [The News](#))

Terror Financing

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) has placed Pakistan on its "grey list" of nations that maintain insufficient anti-money laundering/counter terror financing (AML/CTF) mechanisms. In June 2018, Pakistan committed to work with FATF to improve its AML/CTF policies. In February 2019, FATF reported that Pakistan has made "limited progress." According to FATF, Pakistan "does not demonstrate a proper understanding" of the terror financing risks posed by al-Qaeda, ISIS, Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammed, and other terror groups. FATF called on Pakistan to demonstrate that sanctions are being applied to money laundering and terror financing cases, improve effectiveness and cooperation among authorities, and increase support for prosecutors. (Sources: [Reuters](#), [FATF](#))

On April 20, 2020, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that Pakistan removed thousands of names from its terrorist watch list over the past 18 months. Among the names removed were senior members of al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT). The proscribed persons list, maintained by Pakistan's National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA), provides a guideline for financial institutions to avoid doing business with or processing transactions of suspected terrorists. The amendments were made in an effort to correct and update the list for the FATF. (Sources: [Wall Street Journal](#), [Times](#), [Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project](#))

In September 2020, the Pakistani senate rejected legislation that would have expanded the investigative powers of authorities to combat terror financing by allowing them to conduct undercover operations, intercept communications, and access computer systems. On February 25, 2021, FATF recognized Pakistan had made "significant progress" in updating its policies but "serious deficiencies" remained in its terror financing laws. Specifically, FATF said Pakistan still needed to better demonstrate that terror financing investigations and prosecutions target people and entities acting on behalf of designated individuals and entities; demonstrate that terror financing prosecutions result in effective, proportionate, and dissuasive sanctions; and effectively implement targeted financial sanctions against designated terrorists and those acting on their behalf. The FATF granted Pakistan an extension until June 2021 to address the remaining deficiencies. (Sources: [Hindustan Times](#), [Hindustan Times](#), [FATF](#), [Reuters](#))

Military

Pakistan has also launched military operations against terrorist groups within the country, with mixed results. The Pakistan military has killed hundreds of terrorists in raids in Khyber, North Waziristan, and elsewhere, reducing the number of terrorism-related civilian deaths in Pakistan, according to the U.S. State Department. For example, in February 2017, the Pakistan military launched Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad ("Reject Disorder"), which targeted three ISIS-linked terror groups: Jamaat-ul-Ahrar, the TTP, and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi. Although 100 militants were killed in the first week of the operation and a large cache of weapons and ammunition were recovered, an analysis published by NATO Association of Canada assessed that such military operations would be insufficient to root out terrorism in Punjab without accompanying efforts to target radicalization at its source. In July 2017, the Pakistani army launched a new operation in Khyber Agency called "Khyber 4," which aimed to stop ISIS from making inroads into the area. (Sources: [U.S. Department of State](#), [Asian Studies Association of Australia](#), [Washington Post](#), [NATO Association of Canada](#), [CNN](#), [Dawn](#), [Reuters](#))

Countering Violent Extremism

Pakistan does have several initiatives underway to counter radicalization and recruitment. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Swat valley, a region occupied by the Taliban from 2007 to 2009, the government has implemented a rehabilitation program for former militants, including teenagers trained as

Pakistan: Extremism and Terrorism

suicide bombers. Between 2009 and summer 2015, 2,500 former Taliban militants were de-radicalized and reintegrated back into society, including 1,400 individuals between the ages of 12 and 25. In 2011, over 900 ex-militants from groups including LeT, JeM, and LeJ participated in a rehabilitation program run by the Counter Terrorism Division of the Pakistan police in Punjab. The program offered psychological assessment, religious rehabilitation, and vocational training, but was shelved the following year due to lack of funding. Programs are also underway in religious institutions and schools, especially in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, to counter the influence of extremism and promote religious tolerance. Pakistan's military also runs a radio station which, in cooperation with the government, broadcasts counter-propaganda messages. (Sources: [International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research](#), [New York Post](#), [Brookings Institution](#), [Asian Studies Association of Australia](#))

On January 31, 2018, NACTA announced the finalization of a Pakistani national narrative on extremism, sectarianism, terrorism, and militancy. According to NACTA coordinator Ihsan Ghani, the narrative will be the “cornerstone of the country’s response to non-traditional threats and to deal with extremist ideology,” and discuss topics such as coordination of government institutions, rehabilitation of extremists, and creation of interfaith harmony. Ghani also indicated that NACTA had finalized a set of National Counter Extremism Guidelines, which outline strategies and action plans for CVE initiatives. (Source: [Express Tribune](#))

Pakistan has also sought to reform and regulate madrassas (Islamic religious schools). According to analysis published by the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, the growth of extremism in Pakistan is “closely linked” with the proliferation of radical madrassas, of which there were about 35,000 in 2016. In 2008, President Musharraf issued an ordinance requiring that madrassas register with the government and teach curriculum which does not preach militancy, hate, or sectarianism. In 2010, the government signed an agreement with an umbrella organization of madrasa oversight boards that prohibited madrassas from publishing extremist literature, but the agreement was ultimately not passed by Pakistan’s parliament due to bureaucratic difficulties. Despite these efforts, extremist groups such as JeM reportedly run hundreds of madrassas throughout Pakistan. The charitable network Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD), which the U.S. government classifies as a front for Lashkar-e-Taiba, reportedly runs 300 madrassas, as well as hospitals and ambulances. The Pakistani government banned JuD in February 2019. In March 2019, provincial governments took control of 182 madrassas affiliated with banned organizations. (Sources: [International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research](#), [Reuters](#), [Reuters](#))

Non-governmental organizations in Pakistan have also undertaken domestic CVE initiatives. For example, advocacy groups such as the Jinnah Institute conduct public awareness campaigns, including peace rallies, in an effort to reduce public support for extremist organizations. The National Flag Day March brings together cross-sections of civil society to demonstrate public support for military operations targeting extremists. Other groups have organized sit-ins to denounce attacks on civilian targets and sites significant to culture heritage. (Sources: [Brookings Institution](#), [Jinnah Institute](#))

International Counter-Extremism

Pakistan has not joined the U.S.-led Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. However, it has designated ISIS as a terrorist group and has detained and killed a substantial number of ISIS-affiliated militants, according to the U.S. State Department. (Source: [U.S. Department of State](#))

On November 23, 2017, the sixth round of the Pakistan-EU Political Counter-Terrorism dialogue was held in Islamabad, during which both sides reiterated their resolve to jointly combat terrorism “in all its forms,” promote inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue and understanding, and exchange CVE best practices. Specifically, all sides reaffirmed their determination to work together in promoting international cooperation through forums such as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), as well as their commitment to the U.N. Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. (Source: [European Union](#))

U.S.-Pakistan Cooperation

Although the United States has acknowledged Pakistan to be an “important counterterrorism partner,” it has repeatedly urged Pakistan to improve its CVE efforts. On December 4, 2017, during a visit to Pakistan, U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis called on Pakistani security officials to “redouble” efforts to prevent Islamist militants from using Pakistan as a refuge and launchpad for attacks in Afghanistan and elsewhere. On an October 24, 2017, visit to Islamabad, U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson urged Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi to eliminate safe havens for extremists in Pakistan, and to increase efforts to eradicate terrorists operating within Pakistan. In response to U.S. criticism, Pakistan issued a “fact sheet” in December 2017 detailing its counterterrorism efforts and successes, such as its efforts to strengthen the National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA). (Sources: [Washington Post](#), [Dawn](#), [Wall Street Journal](#), [U.S. Department of State](#), [Pakistan Today](#))

Pakistan: Extremism and Terrorism

Between 2001 and 2016, the United States provided more than \$30 billion in civilian and military assistance to Pakistan, which included funding for CVE efforts. Additionally, the United States aids Pakistan through government programs designed to counter extremism. The U.S. Agency for International Development, for instance, runs programs in Karachi and southern Punjab that provide recreational opportunities and vocational training to promote counter-narratives and mitigate social and political factors that facilitate recruitment of youth into extremist groups. Other U.S. government programs in the FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa aim to build trust between the Pakistani government and community organizations in order to create community resilience against extremism. (Sources: [Foreign Policy](#), [Brookings Institution](#))

The United States has conducted several covert military operations within Pakistan. U.S. Special Operations Forces have conducted ground raids and joint operations with the Pakistani military targeting militant groups in Pakistan's tribal regions. Notoriously, U.S. Special Operations Forces killed al-Qaeda leader [Osama bin Laden](#) in a May 2, 2011 raid on his compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan. The United States has also conducted drone strikes on Pakistani soil, though not always with the consent of the Pakistani government. On October 16, 2017, at least 20 suspected militants were killed in a U.S. drone strike on an unidentified compound in Pakistan near the border with Afghanistan in the FATA. Another U.S. drone strike killed a Haqqani network leader and two of his aides in northwestern Pakistan on January 24, 2018. However, Pakistan condemned the latter drone strike as a violation of the country's sovereignty. (Sources: Council on Foreign Relations, [Nation](#), [CNN](#), [South Asia Terrorism Portal](#), [New York Times](#))

In February 2019, the Taliban announced that a delegation would meet with U.S. representatives for peace talks in Pakistan later that month in response to a "formal invitation" from the Pakistani government. The talks were later canceled due to "US and UN travel restrictions" on the Taliban representatives. It would have been the first meeting of Pakistani leaders with the Taliban since the 2001 overthrow of the Taliban government. In February 2020, the Taliban and the United States reached an agreement to reduce violence in Afghanistan. In its annual terrorism report in June 2020, the U.S. State Department recognized Pakistan had played a "constructive role" in aiding a ceasefire agreement between the United States and the Taliban. In April 2021, Pakistani President Arif Alvi said Pakistan continues to use its influence over the Taliban and wants to play "a peaceful role," but does not want to "become a base for U.S. actions in Afghanistan." (Sources: [Al Jazeera](#), [Washington Post](#), [Express Tribune](#), [Associated Press](#), [Associated Press](#), [Voice of America](#))

Regional Cooperation

Pakistan participates in various multilateral groups that discuss counterterrorism issues, including the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation and the Global Counterterrorism Forum. Pakistan has also participated in U.N. Security Council meetings on counterterrorism. (Source: [U.S. Department of State](#))

On November 27, 2017, according to the Kazakhstan Defense Ministry, Pakistan and Kazakhstan completed a two-week counterterrorism exercise aimed at bolstering military readiness. About 100 military personnel from Pakistan and Kazakhstan reportedly participated in the training held at Pakistan's National Counter-Terrorism Center in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. (Source: [Central.Asia-News.com](#))

At a November 7, 2017 meeting in Beijing, China, Pakistan, China, and Afghanistan reportedly agreed to "step up" cooperation on counterterrorism. China expressed gratitude to both Pakistan and Afghanistan for "constantly and steadfastly supporting" China in fighting the East Turkistan Islamic Movement and other terrorist forces. (Source: [Pakistan Today](#))

Public Opinion

Public opinion on extremism in Pakistan is mixed. In a spring 2014 public opinion poll, 8 percent of respondents reported favorable views of the Pakistani Taliban while 12 percent reported favorable views of al-Qaeda. Respondents were more concerned by the threat that India poses to Pakistan than the threat posed by terrorist groups. Slightly more than half (51 percent) identified India as the greatest threat to Pakistan, while only a quarter (25 percent) identified the Taliban as the greatest threat. A January 2015 Brookings Institution study concluded that the government of Pakistan has been "largely unsuccessful" in mobilizing public support for its CVE initiatives. (Sources: [U.S. Institute of Peace](#), [Brookings Institution](#))

As of March 2019, extremist groups such as JeM reportedly maintained public support among the Pakistani population, primarily due to their civic outreach efforts. JeM and other extremist organizations run mosques, hospitals, schools, and other charities that influence public opinion. Pakistanis interviewed by the Associated Press believe that JeM militants "just want to spread Islam." According to a 2015 report by the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, a "moderate majority" in Pakistan rejects violence, yet many still support extremist ideology,

Pakistan: Extremism and Terrorism

especially when based in religious rhetoric. Many Pakistanis trust the country's religious scholars and faith-based networks, which have significant influence on shaping and molding public opinion. However, in an early 2016 public opinion poll conducted by Gallup Pakistan, 87 percent of Pakistanis agreed that "Islam preaches peace and love instead of extremism." (Sources: [International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research](#), [The Muslim Post](#), [Associated Press](#))