3.3.2. Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) and Pakistan Province (ISPP)

COMMON ANALYSIS
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Islamic State activity in Pakistan is mainly represented by two branches: Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) and Islamic State Pakistan Province (ISPP). ISKP adheres to a Salafist-jihadist ideology and operates primarily in Afghanistan, while also maintaining a presence in Pakistan, especially in KP and Balochistan, and to a lesser extent in Punjab. Estimates of the group's size range from around 2 000 to 6 000 fighters. Although its operational footprint remains more limited than that of groups such as TTP, the organisation continues to pose an unpredictable security challenge because of its decentralised network structure and evolving operational tactics. ISKP also maintains sympathisers in major urban centres including Islamabad, Lahore, and Sialkot district in Punjab.

ISPP formally split from ISKP in 2019 and operates exclusively within Pakistan, primarily in Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, and Pakistan Administered Kashmir, while maintaining a more limited presence in KP. In Balochistan, the activities of ISKP and ISPP are reportedly difficult to distinguish. Although ISPP is generally associated with smaller-scale attacks (including acts of sectarian violence), it claims several major deadly attacks in Balochistan and in Islamabad. Since 2019, ISPP carried out around 100 attacks, mostly in Balochistan.

Both organisations contribute to insecurity through attacks motivated by sectarian ideology and through violence directed at ethnic and religious minorities, as well as political opponents, such as the Balochistan National Party (BNP) (see Pashtuns, Baloch people and Shia Muslims including Hazaras). The groups frequently use improvised explosive devices (IED), suicide attacks, and targeted assassinations, causing casualties among both civilians and state personnel.

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