

3.3.6. Other armed groups

COMMON ANALYSIS
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Alongside major militant organisations such as TTP and ISKP, several sectarian, ideological, and/or regionally focused armed groups continue to operate across Pakistan. Their activities are characterised by sectarian violence, targeted killings, attacks on civilians, and cooperation or overlap with broader militant networks.

Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) is a Sunni Deobandi anti-Shia organisation founded in Punjab with the aim of targeting the country's Shia population. The group had between 3 000 and 6 000 members mainly operating in Punjab, Karachi, and the former FATA. It targets Shia community members and Shia places of worship. After having been banned by the Pakistani government, SSP continues to operate under the name Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat (ASWJ) and has used the names SSP and its separate armed wing, LeJ, when claiming militant activities.

Lashkar-e Jhangvi (LeJ), a separate armed wing of SSP, that previously carried out high-profile attacks against the Shia community, has been significantly weakened in recent years. The group has shifted its focus to smaller-scale targeted killings and sporadic attacks in Punjab, Sindh, and KP. LeJ has been characterised as a fragmented organisation with limited operational capabilities, comprising a few hundred members. The group has allegedly operated in Quetta (Balochistan), Karachi (Sindh), parts of Punjab (including Lahore), and in KP's Kurram and Peshawar districts.

Hafiz Gul Bahadur (HGB) is an independent militant umbrella organisation based mainly in North Waziristan. It competes with TTP over territorial control, authority, and resources in the Waziristan region. HGB carried out numerous attacks against security forces, including ambushes, IED attacks, and suicide bombings, mainly in North Waziristan, and emerged as a growing security threat.

Sindhi nationalist militant groups include the **Sindhudesh Revolutionary Army (SRA)** which has operated mainly in Karachi and interior Sindh, where they reportedly target civilians perceived to have links to Pakistani security and intelligence agencies, including individuals of Punjabi ethnicity. SRA, together with other groups such as the BLA and the BLF, is part of the Baloch Raji Aajoi Sangar (BRAS) organisation, which acts as a platform for Baloch and Sindhi militant groups to coordinate attacks in Balochistan and Sindh.

In addition to sectarian groups, there are also organised crime groups operating in the country, involved in activities such as trafficking in human beings, forced labour, sexual exploitation, and drug trafficking.

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