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Pakistan: Karachi: Fatal shoot-out, militant plot underline persistent terrorism risk, need for stringent precautions

OVERVIEW

- Level:**
- Location:**
- Category:**
- Active:**
- Notice
- Karachi - Pakistan
- Terror plot, Police/security operation
- 09 Feb 2021 - 25 Feb 2021

Last Updated: 09 Feb 2021 14:55 (GMT)

The table below shows the number of impacted and potentially impacted individuals and assets at the date/time the alert was issued. The counts include individuals within the impact radius of the alert and may not reflect the total number of people in each area listed.

Please log into [Tracker](#) for the latest information or [click here](#) for an up-to-date list of affected individuals and assets in the impacted area.

| EXPOSURE IN IMPACTED AREA ONLY | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Location | There Now | There in next 24 hours | There in next 1-7 days | There while the alert is active |
| Karachi | 2 | 2 | 5 | 12 |
| TOTAL | 2 | 2 | 5 | 12 |

| EXPOSURE BY COUNTRY | | | | |
|----------------------|-----------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Location | There Now | There in next 24 hours | There in next 1-7 days | There while the alert is active |
| Pakistan (High Risk) | 2 | 2 | 5 | 12 |

A fatal shoot-out on 8 February in the [Shah Latif Town](#) area of Karachi (Sindh province) underlines the persistent risks posed by terrorism in the city. The police killed a suspected militant and arrested five others during the operation. They also recovered weapons, bomb-making equipment and explosives, including suicide vests and an auto-rickshaw laden with explosives. The authorities said that the suspects were planning to target important installations in the province, such as the provincial assembly [building](#) in Karachi. Staff in Karachi should exercise stringent security precautions and remain alert to their surroundings.

MORE DETAIL

The operation comes after the National Counter-Terrorism Authority (NACTA) on 3 February warned of a potential vehicle bombing targeting an important government building in Karachi. Several militant groups are known to operate in the city. These include ethnic-Baloch organisations, the Islamist extremist Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and the separatist Sindhudesh Revolutionary Army (SRA). In July 2020, the SRA – which is demanding the creation of an independent state of Sindhudesh – formed an alliance with the Baloch Raji Ajoi Sangar (BRAS), a coalition of ethnic-Baloch militant groups. Attacks in Karachi became more frequent prior to and after this development, with the SRA claiming responsibility for several incidents.

These developments and the latest plot highlight militants’ continued efforts to destabilise the security environment in Karachi, Pakistan’s financial hub. However, recent attacks in the city have been small and mostly involved crude bombs or grenades. This indicates that the capability of militant groups has not significantly increased. However, the discovery of suicide vests and a vehicle bomb during the 8 February operation suggests that a one-off major attack remains possible.

While security force buildings, patrols and checkpoints remain the focus of militant operations, important government buildings are also potential targets. However, generally tight security around such locations reduces the chance of a successful attack. ‘Soft’ targets in less-secure public spaces, such as markets and transport hubs, are therefore more vulnerable. Even a small-scale attack targeting such areas can cause significant casualties.

WHAT WE ADVISED YOUR PEOPLE

- Exercise stringent precautions in Karachi. Professional security support is recommended for movement outside the city’s central and southern districts.
- Remain alert to your surroundings and report any suspicious behaviour and/or objects to the authorities. Minimise time spent around likely targets for militant attacks, both stationary and in transit. These include government buildings, security force personnel and installations, religious sites and densely populated and unsecured areas, such as markets.
- Anticipate an increased police presence in Karachi. Follow all official directives and carry relevant identification documents to ease passage through any checkpoints.
- Monitor our Pakistan alerts for updates.

ASSISTANCE



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