



Ansar-ul-Sharia Pakistan

Information Release

CommandEleven
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ABOUT COMMANDELEVEN

CommandEleven is a research organization focused on Pakistan's national security aspects and enhancing global understanding and collaboration opportunities for the nation.

Founded in 2015, CommandEleven provides situational awareness to facilitate a better understanding of the key dynamics that effect Pakistan from a national security perspective, especially in relation to terrorism, insurgencies and extremism.

CommandEleven seeks to inform and guide public policy and decision makers in government, business and military through a rigorous program of publications, conferences, digital medias, policy briefings and recommendations.

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ANSAR-UL-SHARIA BACKGROUND

- Founded by Saifullah, alias Tusani, who fought in the Afghan Jihad
- Saifullah was arrested in Tunisia in 2006, where he made numerous contacts with militants and militant groups
- Launched Ansar-ul-Sharia Tunisia in 2011 after his release. The core work of the group was welfare, preaching and fund raising.
- Ansar-ul-Sharia is inspired by al-Qaeda targeting liberal politicians, schools & institutions
- When they were banned in Tunisia, they fled to Libya.
- They have distanced themselves from ISIS, but still support al-Qaeda & it's central command
- Targets 3 groups of people for recruitment:
 - Militant fighters
 - Preachers
 - Fundraisers
- Follows the AQIS model, hiring/recruiting militants EXPELLED by AQIS, ISIS, and other terror groups
- They are currently operating from Afghanistan targeting military and LEAs. Potential future targets: anyone who fosters, carries or supports the liberalization of Pakistan
- There are claims that they fought for IS – Khorasan in Afghanistan before becoming disgusted with their brutality and broke off

LAUNCHED IN APRIL 2017 IN PAKISTAN

There was no terror attack. There was no targeted killing of police, LEAs or military officials. There was just an announcement on social media.

12 JUNE, 2017 – ANSAR UL SHARIA PAKISTAN RELEASES “MANIFESTO”

- The composition, clarity of design and dictation shows that this was designed for a liberal/middle-class audience that is continually a victim of police highhandedness
 - The design is similar to something that could be purchased from a graphic design template factory, a clear attempt to set themselves apart from the regular “jihadi” groups
 - The language is very familiar, very friendly. There are no threats or warnings, no attempts to create fear among the population
 - Keep in mind that during the Afghan Jihad, most of the materials created to spread and “enrich” the jihad were drafted at the University of Nebraska – Omaha, spread by USAID in refugee camps in Pakistan.
- They claim that they are “mujahideen” from Karachi, Southern Punjab, and FATA, why the reason to show origins of the fighters?

- They say they are seeking cooperation with other jihadi groups active in the "Pakistan jihad." Sadly, they don't seem to realize that TTP, JuA, LeT, JuD and many others have been eliminated. Who is left to cooperate with?
- **POINT OF FACT** – Ansar-ul-Sharia has no international footprint. They were founded on a "franchise terrorism" model that allows anyone, anywhere to raise their flag and claim affiliation. Unlike AQ & ISIS, which require many things be achieved before claiming affiliation, Ansar-ul-Sharia does not.
- **POINT OF FACT** – They make serious contradictions, or implications, with their next statements.
 - They pledge jihad in the name of Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat, Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri, but they are not members of al-Qaeda. They were members of ISIS, according to them.
 - They claim to have no connection or relation with any branch of the international jihad – again supporting our statement of an independent outfit working without an umbrella group
- **CRUCIAL** – Their fighters were once with ISIS, but their leadership never was. This is key to understanding this group.
 - We can assure that they have drawn their fighters from multiple local groups, where they had been marginalized. Very few will have actual ISIS training from Syria.
 - We can assure that their LOCAL leadership has spent time in the past recruiting and training for other domestic terror groups. They are not new at all, but they have never been part of a formal jihad.
 - We can assure that the arrests made in the past few days aren't the key leadership. They were moved underground before the attacks were carried out.
 - We can assure that they have support in Nangarhar, Khost or Nuristan provinces of Afghanistan.
 - Their only link to Syria may be some of their top leadership fought there, but the immaturity of target selection and tactics show that they can't be "battle-hardened."
- Compare the materials that are being used by Ansar-ul-Sharia to any terrorist group in Pakistan. You'll easily understand the audience target has changed.

30 JUNE, 2017 – ARTICLE IN DAWN CLAIMS THAT ANSAR-UL-SHARIA PAKISTAN ARE "BATTLE-HARDENED MILITANTS RETURNING FROM SYRIA."

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1342170/more-attacks-feared-as-battle-hardened-militants-come-back-from-syria>

- Problem 1 – If they are returning from Syria, they would most likely be from Gilgit-Balistan or Parachinar. Why Karachi as a home base?
- At the time of article publication, there had been 3 attacks in 3 months, yet DAWN was hyping the situation to "more attacks feared."
 - The article quoted an "unnamed senior official":
 - It's the Pakistan chapter of Ansar-ul-Sharia that had been fighting in Syria." – the Pakistan chapter that was announced in April?

- The group claims to be operating under the umbrella of Jabhat al-Nusra, loyal to AQ leader Ayman al-Zawahiri, rather than IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.
- AuSP claimed that a large number of individuals, specifically from Karachi & South Punjab, had travelled to Syria to fight for IS.
- They returned home because they became "disillusioned" with the message & practices of ISIS.
 - By April 2017, ISIS was in full operations in the Middle East, with many lone wolf attacks in Europe. How did they not know the message or practices prior to travelling to Syria?
 - The "unnamed" CTD source believes "the militants had not come back home in large numbers."
- Even the CTD described them as a small splinter group being facilitated for larger attacks.
- Our analysis then -
<https://twitter.com/commandeleven/status/891588968357212160>

PUBLIC GUIDELINES RELEASED IN JULY 2017.

<https://twitter.com/commandeleven/status/884125308093444096>

- For the first time in the history of terrorism in the region, a "terror group" issues guidelines on how to respond and act during one of their attacks. They even go to the extent of explaining how people will know if it is them carrying out the attack or not.
- They try very hard to differentiate themselves from the traditional jihadi groups in stating that they will not target public gatherings, schools, masjids, etc.
- Their only targets are the police, law enforcement agencies and military/intelligence targets.
- They imply that in the past jihadi groups were linked to intelligence services and killing general public to bring jihad into disrepute.
 - IMPORTANT: Is this one of the reasons they broke with ISIS-K, because of links to intelligence services?
 - CommandEleven has already linked militant support & safe havens for TTP & JuA to Afghanistan's National Directorate of Security (NDS).
- They imply that the reason for the "Muslim massacre" is due to badly trained, ill-informed "mujahideen." Again, creating distance between themselves and the traditional jihadi groups.
- They suggest that "in the case of Muslim blood," Mujahidden must be very conscious and avoid extremism, negligence and protect the public during their military operations.
 - This is the reason for the Public Guidelines according to Ansar-ul-Sharia Pakistan
- Thus far, everything stated in their materials suggests that they are an armed military force, not a terrorist group. That would mean an escalation from fighting terrorism to dealing with guerilla warfare in our cities.

- This would be the only connection that we can determine to a Syrian battlespace. Urban, or guerilla, warfare is the tactic of choice because of the environment. Karachi lends itself to the same.
- This entire document is an attempt to humanize themselves to the public, to demonstrate that they are not a threat to them, but protection.

22 JULY, 2017 – STORY IN GEO CREDITS ANSAR-UL-SHARIA WITH 5 TERRORISM INCIDENTS AND DECLARED THEM “SO FAR BEEN OUTSIDE THE REACH OF LAW.” (<https://www.geo.tv/latest/150528-terror-outfit-ansar-ul-sharia-behind-recent-attacks-in-karachi-sources>)

- This article claims that the group comprises of militants from al-Qaeda – Indian Subcontinent, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan and ISIS/Daesh
 - 21 Feb – Private security guard shot in Gulistan-e-Jauhar
 - Guard wearing uniform, bike-riding militant thought he was police
 - 05 Apr – Target retired Pak Army Colonel Tahir Nagi on Shahrah-e-Faisal. Bike riding militant carried out the attack
 - KEY INFO: The attackers took the Colonel’s laptop. He helped candidates prepare for the armed forces examination.
 - 20 May – 2 policemen killed and 1 wounded in Bahadurabad
 - 9mm pistol used in killing security guard recovered
 - 23 Jun – 4 policemen killed while having iftar in SITE
 - One of the weapons recovered traced back to Bahadurabad incident
 - REPORTED – Ansar-ul-Sharia claims to have carried out an IED blast on a security forces vehicle sometime in this timeframe.
 - Our analysis then –
https://twitter.com/Khalid_C11/status/896132114369855489

11 AUG, 2017 – SENIOR POLICE OFFICIAL & GUARD SHOT DEAD IN KARACHI

(<http://www.newindianexpress.com/world/2017/aug/11/senior-police-official-guard-shot-dead-in-pakistans-karachi-1641799.html>)

- Hanif Ahmed, DSP Traffic, and his guard, Sultan, were traveling from his residence in Azizabad area, when an unidentified gunmen on a motorcycle opened fire on their vehicle.
- The article also cited another attack in July.
 - 3 policemen and a 12-year old boy were killed in the Korangi area of Karachi
- AD Khawaja, IG – Sindh Police, said it was Ansar-ul-Sharia, but look at the difference in explanation:
 - “The Counter Terrorism Department of the Sindh Police believes after that a **relatively unknown splinter group** of militants who

have returned from Syria are behind the attacks that calls itself Ansar-ul-Sharia Pakistan."

- How did a group that was given so much hype, and actually carried out targeted attacks, turned into a "relatively unknown splinter group"?

OUR MOST RECENT ANALYSIS ON THE GROUP –

<https://twitter.com/commandeleven/status/905808960980209664>

ANALYSIS – GROUP COMPOSITION/POTENTIAL RECRUITS

From the day that Ansar-ul-Sharia Pakistan was announced, the story behind this group didn't make sense. They were after an audience that Pakistan never expected could be radicalized – the educated middle class.

Note that from their propaganda materials to their recruitment methodology, we are seeing a formal targeting of educated youth into heavily radicalized environments.

The recruitment is, has, and always will be done, at university campuses.

While the world's focus has been getting Pakistan's madrassas under control, the new proxy & terror groups are focused on new recruiting channels – colleges & universities.

Why colleges & universities?

The university environment gives a recruiter the ability to judge a candidate from many aspects before every making an approach. Students will demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and confidence in the classroom, but they will also demonstrate their leadership skills and ability to collaborate with others outside the classroom.

It's literally the perfect environment to groom and recruit assets, which is why most intelligence services recruit from university campuses.

Who are they targeting for recruitment?

Those who are hostile to a "more liberal" lifestyle coming to Pakistan. Many will recall, while the TTP was in control of Swat, there were many reports in Karachi of women being harassed because of how they were dressed and how they behaved. Most of the harassment was done on the streets by those who are considered "jahil" or "uneducated."

But there was another group that never said anything, but shared the same mentality as those who vocalized their opposition. This is the group that is being targeted for recruitment – those who want to do more than just voice their opposition.

ANALYSIS – LINKAGES AND SUPPORT NETWORKS

Looking at the size of Ansar-ul-Sharia Pakistan, 12–40 members, we know they are getting their operational support and structure from another group.

While they claim links to Ansar-ul-Sharia, there is very little a Libya-based group can do to support their Pakistani counterparts, if they really are.

If we attempt to link them back to Jabhat al-Nusra, we will find there is no support for them in Pakistan because the war continues in Syria.

But if they take Ansar-ul-Sharia's "chief" statement that they received training in Afghanistan, the background that we presented from CommandEleven takes more credibility.

The targeted assassination tactic being used by Ansar-ul-Sharia Pakistan is a regular tactic taught and used by Tehrik-e-Taliban & Jamaat-ul-Ahrar Special Operations Team. This is a Close Quarter Assassination (CSA) commonly used in Swat, Bajaur, Buner, Kohat & other areas where the TTP has/had a strong presence.

This is typically used against those who stand in opposition to the TTP ideology, i.e. liberal thinkers.

They are failed Islamic State – Khorasan, al-Qaeda, Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, Jammat-ul-Ahrar, Ansar-ul-Hind, etc. fighters in Afghanistan that are looking for somewhere to prove themselves to the big players in global jihad.

They are drawing their funding from southern Punjab, where TTP and ISIS has a strong fundraising base.

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