



TERROR TRACKER

Newsletter by Counter Terrorism Centre



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DRONE TERROR: PREPARING A POTENT POLICY RESPONSE

PM HOLDS HIGH-LEVEL MEETING IN THE WAKE OF UAV STRIKES IN JAMMU



In a first-of-its-kind attack, two unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), popularly known as drones, dropped improvised explosive devices (IEDs) of low intensity at the Indian Airforce (IAF) base in Jammu, which exploded close to a helicopter hangar on 27-28 June 2021. The blasts did not cause damage to any equipment but two IAF personnel received minor injuries.

The first explosion is said to have occurred around 1:30am, with the second blast taking place minutes later. The blast sites were too far from the outer perimeter wall of the airport base and thus the possibility of a grenade attack has been ruled out. No rebel group has so far claimed responsibility, nor commented on the two incidents. However, Director General of Jammu and Kashmir Police Dilbag Singh says that Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), the Pakistan-based terror outfit, is suspected to be responsible for the attack. There have been at least two more attempts of using drones to target military targets since, which has heightened concerns that militants in Jammu and Kashmir may have switch to this new mode of low-intensity warfare, wherein they could sneak under the radar to carry out strikes at critical installations.

In the wake of the drone attacks, Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired a meeting of cabinet ministers on 29 June to review policy framework for opening up the skies for civil use of drones that was already in the pipeline. It is reported that although the proposed policy for civilian use of drones will be allowed, a more stringent mechanism to avoid security threats will be built in.

The two-hour meeting was also attended by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Home Minister Amit Shah, National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and others, including civil aviation ministry officials. Meanwhile, experts have underlined India's need to acquire counter-drone technology systems to prevent such attacks in the future. These systems could locate incoming drones and either destroy them or jam their signal. — [Times of India](#), [India Today](#), [Hindustan Times](#), [The Print](#)

PROMPT IAF ACTION TO CLIP 'WINGS OF TERROR'



The day following the Jammu attacks (28 June 2021), Indian Air Force issued an RFI (request for information) to acquire 10 counter-unmanned aircraft systems (CUAS) from Indian companies. “The CUAS is intended to detect, track, identify, designate and neutralize hostile UAS (drones). Laser-Directed Energy Weapons (Laser DEWS)” are essentially required as a kill option,” said the RFI. The selection and procurement process is scheduled to kick off in the third quarter of this year. Meanwhile, the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) is reported to have developed two anti-drone DEW systems, with a 10 kilowatt laser to engage enemy targets at 2km range and a compact tripod-mounted one with a 2-kilowatt laser for one kilometre range, but they are yet to be productionized in large numbers. — [The Times of India](#)



AL-QAEDA LEADERS STILL LURKING IN AF-PAK BORDER: UN REPORT

A United Nations Security Council report released early in June has once again stated that a significant section of Al Qaeda leadership (including its co-founder Ayman Al Zawahiri who is 'alive, but frail'), resides in the Afghanistan and Pakistan border region and that the terrorist group celebrates developments in Afghanistan as a victory for its brand of radicalism.

The 12th report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team said that the Taliban and Al Qaeda remain closely aligned and show no signs of breaking ties, in spite of Taliban's assurance to the US that it will have no ties with the terror group. "Al Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent operates under the Taliban umbrella from Kandahar, Helmand (notably Baramcha) and Nimruz Provinces. The group reportedly consists of primarily Afghan and Pakistani nationals, but also individuals from Bangladesh, India and Myanmar. Its current leader is Osama Mahmood (not listed), who succeeded the deceased Asim Umar (not listed). — [PTI](#), [IANS](#)

TALIBAN 'SOFT POWER' OF GLOBAL JIHAD LINKAGES

GROUP WARNS NEIGHBOURING STATES AGAINST GIVING US MILITARY BASES



File photo of Taliban militants and jihadist mercenaries rejoicing as allies —AFP

As the US goes ahead with its unconditional withdrawal from Afghanistan, notwithstanding the Taliban's brutal offensive for a military takeover of the country and apparent aversion towards any intra-Afghan political dialogue, the fundamentalist movement is slowly revealing its regional ambitions in Central Asia and South Asia.

On 26 May, the militant group issued a warning to its neighbouring states against giving military bases to the US on their territory and warned that "the people of Afghanistan will not remain idle in the face of such heinous and provocative acts". Analysts believe that Taliban's threat is mainly addressed to the Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, but may also be directed toward Pakistan, which it believes betrayed it during the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001.

Not surprisingly, the jihadist groups in Central Asia that are linked to Al-Qaeda and ISIS have also issued similar threats to Central Asian states on their several Telegram channels and other Dark Web outlets. In the absence of the Taliban having any economic or political leverage over the former Soviet republics in Central Asia, it can be asked as to what kind of leverage does the militant group have to issue such warnings. Security experts aver that the only obvious leverage it has are its linkages with jihadist groups operating in its neighbourhood that could potentially destabilize the region. Therefore for all its denials, the Taliban has already started projecting its links with terrorist groups as its 'soft power' to influence the neighbourhood, which can be seen as signs of disconcerting developments to come. — [Modern Diplomacy](#), [BBC](#)

JIHADIST MILITANTS KILL 160, INJURE 40 IN BURKINA FASO

TERROR IN THE SAHEL NEW BLIND SPOT FOR GLOBAL SECURITY



The jihadist menace spread out in The Sahel – Courtesy Africanews

As many as 160 civilians, including women and children, were killed and about 40 injured in a savage raid on a village in Burkina Faso.

Members of Jamaat Nasr Al-Islam Wal-Muslimin shot dead civilians, even children, burned down homes and a market in Solhan village in the Yagha province of Burkina Faso on 4 June 2021, which borders Niger. The deadly attack was carried out in the middle of the night and gave no time to civilians to seek safety, a source said. The killings were allegedly in response to some volunteers in the area who supported the Army's combat operations against the terrorists.

Terrorist groups have been expanding their networks and increasing their attacks on civilians and soldiers, in much of the Sahel region of Africa over the last five years — a 5,900 km-long semi-arid territory. The recent attack comes on the heels of an earlier attack in March this year, which killed 137 people in Niger. Four prominent jihadist outfits operate in the region — the Islamic State in Greater Sahara (ISGS), the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), the Jamaat Nasr Al-Islam wal Muslimin (an Al-Qaeda affiliate) and Boko Haram.

The problem escalated after NATO forces helped remove Muammar Gaddafi from power in Libya in 2011, as the region lost a strong state that kept jihadists in the region in check. However, after the civil war in Libya, jihadists spread their activities in Mali, where France made a military intervention in 2013, but could not end the menace. France has since sent troops to other parts of the region for counter-insurgency operations. It has been supported by the US, which has a drone base in Niger. — [Christian Post](#), [The Hindu](#)

FRANCE ENDS ANTI-TERROR OPERATION IN WEST AFRICA



President Emmanuel Macron

France has announced the end of its years-long anti-terror mission targeting jihadists in the Sahel region of West Africa.

French President Emmanuel Macron stated at a press conference on 10 June 2021 that his country's counter-terrorist operations in the region, known as Operation Barkhane, will be replaced by a more international effort. He said that his government will be consulting with its allies, the US and European states, to initiate a "profound transformation" of French military presence in the Sahel.

According to the French Ministry of Defence, the country currently has 5,100 troops in the region in connection with Operation Barkhane, currently ongoing in Chad, Mali, Niger, Mauritania and Burkina Faso.

Even after a decade of French intervention, jihadists in the region continue to operate and increase their terrorist activities in the region. — [CNN](#)

Special Police Officer, Wife and Daughter Killed by JeM Terrorists in Pulwama

On 27 June 2021, Special Police Officer (SPO) Fayaz Ahmad, his wife and daughter were shot at home by suspected Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) militants in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district. The incident occurred at around 11 pm when militants barged into the home of the SPO and riddled the family with bullets.

Security forces have cordoned off the area and launched a search operation to track down the assailants. According to police sources, two JEM fighters including a foreigner were involved in the killing. According to Inspector General of Police (IGP), Kashmir, Vijay Kumar, the wife and daughter of SPO Fayaz Ahmad tried to save him but they were also fired upon by the militants.

BJP spokesman (J&K) Altaf Thakur condemned the attack and said that shooting down a policemen and "killing women is (in) no way bravery, but a pure cowardly attack which deserves the highest form of condemnation." — [The Indian Express](#)

26/11 Terror Suspect Remains in US Custody

Tahawwur Rana, a Canadian businessman of Pakistani origin, will remain in the US until a federal judge in Los Angeles weighs whether he will be extradited to India for his involvement in the 2008 Mumbai terror attack. The in-person extradition hearing of Rana, at the request of the Indian government, was held in the court of magistrate judge Jacqueline Chooljian in Los Angeles on 24 June 2021. Chooljian ordered prosecutors to file more documents by July 15. — [Hindustan Times](#)

Two held for Darbhanga station blast

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) arrested two persons — Imran Malik and Mohammad Nasir Khan from Namapally in Hyderabad — in connection with the explosions in parcel at platform number 1 of Darbhanga railway station on June 17, 2021.

According to NIA, a parcel containing explosives was booked at Secunderabad station on June 15 and sent on an express train. When the parcel bomb, which also contained garments, reached Darbhanga on June 17 morning and was being taken to the parcel room, it exploded on the platform. — [Free Press Journal](#)

4 Muslims killed in hit-and-run hate crime

Police has arrested a 20-year-old man, Nathaniel Veltman, in the Canadian town of London, Ontario, for killing four members of a Muslim family with his pick-up truck which jumped the curb and is alleged to have purposely run them over on 7 June 2021. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said on Twitter that he was "horrified" by the crime. — [Reuters](#)

Blast outside House of Terrorist Hafiz Saeed

On 23 June, 2021, a powerful car bomb went off outside Mumbai terror attack mastermind and banned Jamat-ud-Dawa (JuD) chief Hafiz Saeed's house in Lahore on Wednesday, killing at least three people and injuring 20 others, police said. The blast took place at the BOR Society in Jauhar Town in Lahore at the police picket outside Saeed's residence.

Meanwhile, Indian Ministry of External Affairs has trashed as "baseless propaganda", Pakistan's claim that Indian intelligence agencies were behind the blast and asked Islamabad to take "credible and verifiable" action against terrorism emanating from Pakistan's soil instead. — [PTI, Times of India](#)

New Biden plan to combat domestic terror

The Biden administration is planning to enhance its analysis of threats from domestic terrorists, mainly from White supremacists, which will include the sharing of intelligence within law enforcement agencies, and will work with tech companies to eliminate terrorist content online as part of a nationwide strategy to combat domestic terrorism.

The National Security Council released the strategy plan, which comes more than six months after a mob of insurgents loyal to President Donald Trump stormed the U.S. Capitol. - [AP](#)

Neo-Nazi guilty of terrorism charges

A student of politics, who has called for the 'extermination of the Jewish people', has been found guilty of 12 terrorism charges in the UK.

Andrew Dymock, from Bath is founder of two banned right-wing groups System Resistance Network (SRN) and Sonnenkrieg Division. — [BBC](#)