

# South Asia Conflict Monitor

*monthly newsletter on terrorism, violence and armed conflict*



## ASSAM-MIZORAM BORDER TENSIONS EXPOSED INDIA'S NORTHEAST VULNERABILITIES

ANIMESH ROUL & NIHAR NAYAK

Seven people including six Assam police personnel were killed by the Mizoram police firing on July 26, 2021, during an armed standoff at the Assam-Mizoram borders. The situation remained tense but came under control after the Union Government deployed two companies of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) along with the disputed areas on the Assam-Mizoram border. The CRPF also made on loudspeakers asking Assam and Mizoram police forces to withdraw from the disputed area. Later, on July 31, the situation came under control after Union Home Minister Amit Shah's closed-door meetings with the Northeast Chief Ministers in Shillong and discussed inter-state disputes and other issues. After the meeting, both sides retracted their forces, and Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and Mizoram Chief Minister Zoramthanga tagged each other in their tweets while calling for peace. However, the conflict is still simmering at the border, if not on social media for the time being and future escalation cannot be ruled out.

Despite having an undersetting at the political level for restoring peace and normalcy at the borders, the traffic at the border was resumed after fifteen days due to border blockade by a few local Assamese

groups. The blockade was removed after visiting of two Ministers of Assam to the Lailapur border on August 7. The local people could agree to remove the blockade on two conditions: first, action to be taken against Mizoram police officials involved in the July 26 firing, and second, the Indian Reserve Battalion of Mizoram be moved from the disputed areas and leaving it to neutral forces. The locals warned the political leaders that they might reimpose the blockade if their demands were not addressed.

During this period, Mizoram witnessed a shortage of essential goods and lifesaving drugs since it has been dependent on NH-306, which enters the state from Assam. There is now a growing public sentiment in Mizoram that the state government should find an alternative route for an unhindered supply of essential goods and reduce Mizoram's dependency on Assam. In interaction with media, the district magistrate Kolasib district said, "Barak Valley of Assam always threatens Mizoram with economic blockade which only causes suffering to the common people...In that sense, this is a wake-up call, and

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Mizoram has started thinking of alternatives in such situations”.

Before issuing a joint statement for peace by both the state governments, the political leaders of the neighbouring provinces backed by their respective state police forces blamed each other for the incident. In a statement, the Mizoram Home Minister Lalchamliana claimed that around 200 Assam Police personnel overran a post operated by the CRPF and another by the Mizoram Police near Vairengte auto-rickshaw stand. Unarmed locals of Vairengte town were also lathi-charged when they inquired about the situation”. In counter to that, Assam Minister, Parimal Suklabaidya, comparing the clash to the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, said nearly 80 people were injured. There was no firing from the Assam side of the inter-state border.” Assam side also accused Mizoram of violating the existing border agreement and existing statuesque.

### **Historical baggage**

Boundary disputes among the north-eastern states are not new. That has been there for centuries due to diverse ethnic groups, the location of the ethnic groups, and the formation of new states based on ethnic lines in the post-independent period. Most of the newly formed ethnic-based states share borders with Assam because those territories were earlier part of Assam. Assam shares its boundary with Nagaland, Meghalaya, and Mizoram, and it has some unresolved border disputes with these states.

Assam and Mizoram share 165 km long borders. The border dispute has a history dating back to when Mizoram was a district of Assam and known as Lushai Hills. The intra-district boundary was demarcated in 1875 and again in 1933. The Mizos do not accept the 1933 demarcation because their tribal chiefs were not consulted at that time. They feel that some plain areas of Mizoram were given to the Cachar district of Assam. The Mizos argue that the current boundary should be resolved as per the 1875 border demarcation. In this regard, the political parties of Mizoram, NGOs, and a joint action committee on the border issue wrote in a memorandum submitted to Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2018 by mentioning that the current boundary was arbitrarily made by excluding some of the Lushai inhabited areas such as Cachar Zion, Tlangnuam, Lala Bazar and Banga Bazar.

On the contrary, Assam claims that the current boundary with Mizoram is constitutional since Mizoram became a state in 1987. The two states signed an agreement that the status quo should be maintained at no man’s land set up in the

boundaries. Despite that, there were frequent allegations of transgression from both sides. The July incident aggravated due to the communication gap at the local officials level and the failure of the CRPF to disengage the state forces before coming closer to each other.

### **Way forward**

The July incident has refreshed the scar of geo-cultural tension between Assam and Mizoram. Despite peace in the disputed areas, the situation may go out of control at any point in time due to rising public sentiments in Assam. Even the statements of the local political leader of Assam indicate that the peace is restored under pressure from the Union government. The local people on the Assam side has strictly warned their political leaders for concrete action against Mizo security forces.

Although ethnic-based insurgent groups from that region have not made any statements on the development, they may step in later if the political leaders of both the states fail to convince the local people to abandon their aggression. In June this year, the NSCN-IM, a Nagaland based insurgent group, has already opposed the Assam government’s peace initiative in the Karbi Anglong region. Therefore, the role of the Union government is critical here. It should play a proactive role in keeping the region peaceful and not allowing the spreading of the conflict to other parts of the NE region by setting up a special committee for dialogue between the affected states.

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## ANSAR GHAZWAT-UL-HIND: LINGERING AL QAEDA INFLUENCE IN KASHMIR AND BEYOND



In July 2021, Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind (AGH), the Al Qaeda linked Kashmir jihadist group, came to the limelight when several suspected militant members were arrested in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh (UP). This was a significant breakthrough as, for the first time, suspected AGH operatives were arrested beyond their usual operating ground, Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). Interrogations have found that detained militants planned to carry out suicide bombings in different parts of the state. The police had identified them as Shakeel, Mohammad Mustakeem, Mohammad Moid, Minhaz Ahmed and Maseeruddin. Intriguingly, they are all related through a family connection, and the case is

under further investigation. ([Indian Express](#), July 23)

Two arrested accused, Minhaz and Masiruddin, have reportedly confessed about their communication with Al Qaeda and AGH linked terrorist Umar Al-Mandi, a nom de guerre (also reported as Umar Halmandi). Umar Al-Mandi is the handler who instructed them from an unidentified location in Afghanistan and Pakistan border. Umar Halmandi reportedly studied in Deoband Islamic seminary in Uttar Pradesh and was originally from the state. He went to Pakistan in 1999 and has never returned to India since then. Other than subversive activities, the accused were also asked to recruiting and radicalising people. ([news18.com](#))

### **Kashmir Epicenter**

AGH was established in Kashmir in September 2017. The founding statement announced that the catalyst for the formation of Ansar Ghazwat ul- Hind was based on the July 2016 death of Burhan Muzaffar Wani, a militant of the Hizbul Mujahideen group. Although the AGH had a strong presence in Kashmir and used the region as a haven, it has a pan-India jihadist vision. Zakir Musa, the founder of the AGH in Kashmir, said in July 2018 that “We will take this jihad to the last corner of India and, this...will be the source of victory of Islam in Kashmir and India...”.

In October 2019, the J&K police officially declared that it has wiped out the AGH from the state entirely with the death of Hameed Lone (Hameed Lelhari or Haroon Abbas) on October 22, 2019. Hameed Lone, a native of Pulwama, was also a member of the Islamist outfit Jamiat Ahle Hadith. After the split from Hizbul Mujahideen (HM), Hameed Lone joined hands with Musa in 2017. Hameed Lone took the rein of AGH following the death of Zakir Musa, the founder of AGH in Kashmir and a renegade Hizbul militant. He was killed in an encounter in May 2019. To note, Musa joined the terror ranks of Hizbul Mujahideen of Kashmir in 2013. He was keen to establish an Islamic State in the Kashmir Valley and never accepted mainstream separatist group Hurriyat’s approach, seeing Kashmir as a political dispute instead of a religious struggle. After the October 2019 death of Hameed Lone, Ghazi Khalid Ibrahim was appointed as new interim commander and Abu Bakr Shopiani and Umar Mansour as his deputies. ([IBTimes](#))

### **Propaganda**

Al-Hurr is the official media wing of AGH, and Abu Ubaidah is the spokesperson of AGH. Also, AGH releases propaganda material under another media outlet called Al-Sindh. Al Qaeda also shares the press releases of AGH through the Global Islamic Media Front (GIMF). In July 2021, on the eve of Eid al-Adha,

Ghazi Khalid Ibrahim released a statement (in Urdu and Arabic) praising the Afghan Taliban as a role model for jihadists in Kashmir. The same month, AGH released a new propaganda video that portrayed the Pakistani government as a bigger enemy to jihadists than India and accused it of betrayal. The message by Mustafa Abdul Kareem titled 'Why We Rejected Pakistan' urged jihadists in Kashmir to abandon all relations with Islamabad and join AGH Kashmir.

### Counterterrorism

AGH attempted to expand its networks beyond the J&K to the hinterlands of India in 2019. The same year, AGH suffered a huge leadership loss following the deaths of some of its top commanders. AGH received a body blow again in April 2021 when the security forces in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) had killed several members in the Shopian and Pulwama districts of Kashmir. The slain members were Hafiz Muzamil, Basit Bakhshi, Yunus Khanday, Kashif Mir, Adil Lone, Zahid Koka, Imtiyaz Ahmad Shah and Shaeed Kashif Mir.

The members of the AGH in Kashmir are operating in tandem with Al Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS). Information shared by the nine suspected Al Qaeda operatives from Bengal and Kerala in September 2020 suggested a close operational linkage. Before arresting these accused, the NIA had used its IT cell to trace phone calls and WhatsApp video calls between suspects. The AGH was also in touch with Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT). The NIA had arrested Tania Parveen, a college student from Baduria in the North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal, in March 2020. Parveen had links with the LeT. The nine suspected Al Qaeda operatives were in touch with Parveen. These linkages with LeT or Al Qaeda notwithstanding, the arrests of AGH cadres in UP reflects its pan-India jihad programme.

*Brief-2:*

## MARTYRS' MEMORIAL WEEK CELEBRATION BY CPI-MAOIST

From July 28 to August 3, the Communist Party of India (CPI-Maoist) celebrates Martyrs' Memorial Week. The outfit observes martyrs' week in memory (death anniversary) of Charu Majumdar, the founder of the Maoist movement in India. Majumdar had spearheaded the peasant uprising in Naxalbari in North Bengal in 1967, which paved the way for the Maoists (the Naxalite) movement. As



part of the celebration, the party pays homage to cadres killed in the encounters by organising small meetings, poster campaigning, erecting memorial pillars, and attacking the state forces in their stronghold areas. Other objectives are to message the state about their revolution and to the masses that the party can fight against the state.

Unlike a couple of years ago, this year, some provincial government's response to the Martyr week announcement by the CPI-Maoist was prompt. Police in the erstwhile Maoists affected Telangana province, and current Naxalite affected provinces-Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh-were on high alert. The Telangana government especially anticipating some violent incidents from the CPI-Maoist since the outfit has revived the movement after lying dormant for several years. More importantly, recently, the CPI-Maoists lost five to six top cadres of their underground network and three central committees (CC) members, including Haribhushan, Ganganna and Mohan Rao alias Prakash.

During the declaration of Martyr week, the outfit had announced that it would undertake a massive programme to celebrate memorial week in the previous belts hinting towards Telangana. Therefore, on the occasion of the Martyr week, the CPI-Maoist has been planning to carry out some attacks on the state forces to motivate the cadres in the Telangana region.

Despite the Maoists' warnings to celebrate the week by targeting state forces, the week was ended peacefully, barring a few minor violent incidents. One Maoist cadre was killed in an alleged exchange of fire between the police forces and the Maoists on the Telangana-Chhattisgarh border near Kurnavalli-Bodhanalu in Bhadradi Kothagudem district in Telangana. This incident happened since the Telangana police forces had increased the combing operations anticipating any Maoists' attacks.

Apart from Martyr week, the party celebrates the People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA), the armed wing of the CP-Maoist, formation week from December 2. Instead of the PLGA week this year, the party celebrated the 20th year of the PLGA formation. Therefore, the party has been celebrating a 'year-long action' from December 2, 2020. This will continue till December 1, 2021. On the occasion of the formation week, the party organises various programmes in memory of slain cadres. Ahead of the PLGA anniversary, the CMC released a comprehensive report with figures on the PLGA's guerrilla actions to recount their achievements since its inception in the year 2000 and the plan. These are the occasion for the top leaders to motivate the young cadres by narrating the sacrifices of the slain cadres. Another way of celebrating the memorial weeks is to attack the state forces, public infrastructure, and government buildings.

In this regard, the outfit operationalised its Tactical Counter Offensive Campaign (TCOC) campaign much ahead of its usual month (from March to July). The campaign is planned and executed by the Central Military Commission of the CPI-Maoists. During this period, the armed cadres of the outfits recruit new cadres and attack the security forces by taking advantage of the shedding of leaves in the forests.

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### NEWS ROUNDUP: JULY 2021

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## AFGHANISTAN

### MAJOR EVENTS:



**July 09:** Taliban claimed to be in control of 85 percent of Afghanistan, including a key border crossing with Iran after US troops started pulling out. In Moscow, a Taliban delegation said the group controlled some 250 of Afghanistan's 398 districts. ([NDTV](#))

**July 16:** President Ashraf Ghani at an international summit in Uzbekistan criticized Pakistan for its support to the Taliban. He urged Pakistan to use its influence and leverage for peace and cessation of hostilities in Afghanistan. He said, “Contrary to the repeated assurances by Prime Minister Imran Khan and his generals that Pakistan does not find a Taliban take over in Afghanistan in

Pakistan’s interest, and assured of its use of force will use its power to influence to make the Taliban negotiate seriously, networks and organizations supporting the Taliban are openly celebrating the destruction of assets and capabilities of the Afghan people and state.” ([Tolo News](#))

**July 18:** Taliban supreme leader, Mawlawi Hebtullah Akhundzada in his Eid message said foreign diplomats, embassies, consulates, welfare organizations, and investors are of utmost importance and the Taliban will strive to ensure their security and safety. He added other countries do not necessarily need to worry about the recent territorial gains of the Taliban and can carry on their operation as normal. The Taliban leadership assures international agencies at a time when several consulates evacuated their diplomats from Kandahar and Mazar-e-sharif cities. ([Khaama](#))

**July 25:** Thirty-three people, including religious scholars, tribal elders and journalists, have been assassinated in Afghanistan's Kandahar province over the last two weeks. “Religious scholars, tribal elders, civil society activists, journalists and human rights defenders and female journalists are being sacrificed in targeted attacks,” said Zabihullah Farhang, spokesperson of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC).([Hindustan Times](#)).

**July 26:** US CENTCOM Commander Gen. Kenneth McKenzie said the United States will continue to carry out airstrikes to support Afghan National Defense and Security Forces facing Taliban attacks. He was addressing a news conference in Kabul and met with President Ashraf Ghani. He warned that Afghanistan is going to face hard days ahead, but added that “there is a path that could lead us to a political solution to this war.” ([Tolo News](#))

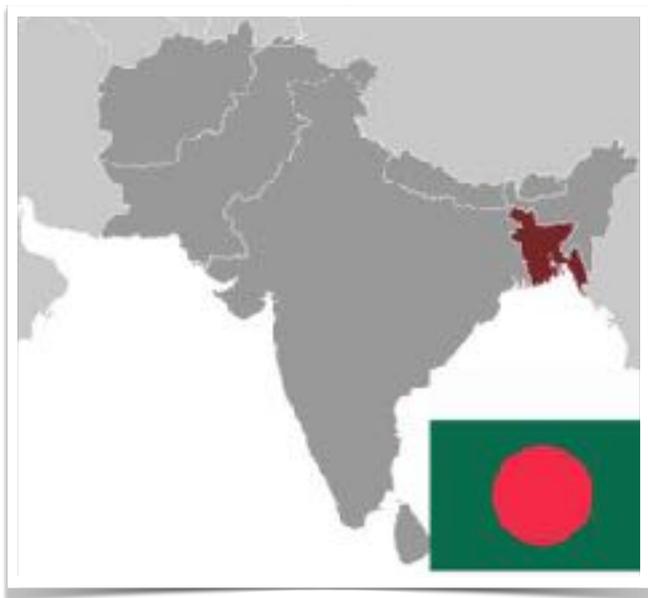
**July 28:** The US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said that Afghanistan would become a “pariah state” if the government commits atrocities against its own population. He said that the violence carried out by the Taliban against the Afghan people was deeply troubling and not a good sign for the future of the country. ([Tolo News](#))

**July 30:** The State Ministry for Peace Affairs found that over 24,000 Taliban fighters were killed and wounded in battles with the Afghan security forces over the past four months. The statistics suggested that the Taliban launched 22,000 attacks across the country. The report also highlighted

that the influx of more than 10,000 fighters from outside Afghanistan. Around 5,777 civilians were killed including women and children during this period. ([Tolo News](#))

## BANGLADESH

### MAJOR EVENTS:



**July 06:** CTTC Bangladesh sources said that Islamic State (IS)-inspired militant outfit Neo-Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) has formed a 20-member council under the name of 'Islamic State of Bengal Province' (Wilayat Bengal). The Neo-JMB's improvised explosive device expert, Sabbir Hossain (Abu Hafs al Bengali) reportedly leading the council. Sabbir, who hails from a village in Jamalpur, had joined the militant outfit in 2016 on an online invitation. The incumbent Neo JMB ameer, Mahadi Hasan Jon (Abu Abbas Al Bangali), had declared Sabbir a leader in 2019. ([Daily Star](#))

**July 12:** The CTTC unearthed militant hideouts of Neo-JMB in Narayanganj District's Mirabari and Madanpur areas. Police also arrested a militant identified as Major Osama (Nayeem), a member of the 'military wing' of Neo-JMB. ([UNB](#))

**July 13:** The Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) found that Kawsar Hossain, an explosive expert of the IS inspired militant outfit Neo-JMB tried to build a militant den in the hilly area of Bandarban. He was reportedly wanted to establish links with militants in Arakan region of Myanmar. The CTTC recovered an unspecified amount of IEDs and bomb-making materials from the den. ([Daily Star](#))

**July 15:** Bangladesh police arrested Mahmudul Hasan Gunobi, spiritual leader of pro-al Qaeda militant outfit Ansar al-Islam, from Shah Ali Beribandh area of Dhaka. Gunobi used to deliver religious speeches at different madrasas to identify a target group, lure them into militancy and train them in secret dens in the country's hilly areas. He works under the garb of an organisation called 'Dawatul Islam', played a special role in the invitation and training programmes of Ansar al-Islam. Multiple law enforcement sources say, Gunbi is also working as a key figure in an extremist group called Manhaji. He and three others are leaders of this group. The other two are Maulana Harun Izhar and Ali Hasan Osama. ([Daily Star](#))

**July 27:** Bangladesh counterterrorism agencies said three members of banned Ansar al Islam have reportedly travelled to Afghanistan while many others are expressing their desire in closed online groups to reach that country. They expressed worries that there might be a surge of Bangladeshi youths travelling to Afghanistan if Taliban seeks help from Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) for establishing an "Islamic regime" in that country. ([Daily Star](#))

## INDIA

### MAJOR EVENTS:

**July 02:** Five Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorists and one security force personnel were died in an encounter between the militants and the security forces in Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir. An unspecified amount of arms, ammunition and other incriminating materials were recovered from the encounter site. ([The Week](#))



**July 05:** Four The Resistance Front (TRF) militants, identified as Irfan Ahmad Sofi, resident of Natipura in Srinagar District of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K); Abu Hamza, Ali Bhai and Abu Zaraq, quit the outfit and vowed to work for establishing 'Islamic Rule', reports IB Times website on July 5. The announcement was made in a video. ([IBTimes](#))

**July 08:** Acting on the intelligence input, security forces killed five militants in two separate gunfights in south Kashmir's Pulwama and Kulgam districts. An unspecified number of Arms and ammunition were also recovered from them. ([Greater Kashmir](#))

**July 10:** Three militants were killed in an encounter with security forces in Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir. The encounter took place in the Kawarigam area of Anantnag. The three militants --Arif Hajam, Basit Rashid Ganai and Suhail Mushtaq Bhat--have been identified to be members of the Lashkar-e-Taiba. ([India Today](#))

**July 11:** Police said an Al Qaeda unit busted in Uttar Pradesh which was planning terrorist attacks - including suicide bombings - in crowded areas of Lucknow and other cities in the state. Two men named Minhaj Ahmed and Maseeruddin-both residents of Lucknow-are arrested, leading to the discovery of the Al Qaeda-supported 'Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind' terrorist cell. An unspecified number of arms, explosive materials have been recovered in searches. ([NDTV](#))

**July 12:** At least 15 Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) cadres have entered West Bengal from the Bangladesh earlier this year and 10 of them moved to various parts of India including Jammu and Kashmir, Odisha and Bihar, said Kolkata Police's Special Task Force (STF) officer on July 12, reports The Hindu. The remaining five had stayed back in West Bengal and three of them, who are Bangladeshi nationals, were arrested from Kolkata's Haridevpur area on July 11. The remaining two JMB cadres who stayed back in West Bengal are identified as Sheikh Sakil and Salim Munshi.

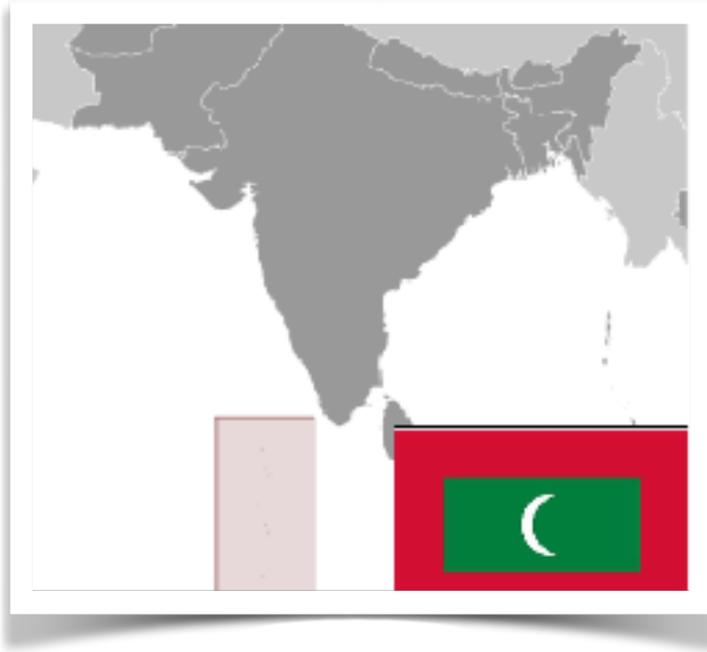
**July 15:** Three suspected Al-Qaeda-linked Ansar Ghazwatul Hind operatives were arrested in Uttar Pradesh (UP). Those arrested have been identified as Shakeel, Mohammad Mustqueem, and Mohammad Moid. Director General (Law and Order) Prashant Kumar said. Earlier on July 11, the UP Anti-Terror Squad arrested Minhaz Ahmed and Musheeruddin for suspected links with Ansar Ghazwatul Hind.

**July 26:** Six Assam Police personnel and a civilian were killed and over 50 others were injured when the Mizoram Police opened fire on a team of the Assam officials. The tension escalated after counter-allegations of encroachment of territory over the past few weeks and skirmishes along the inter-state border. ([News18](#))

**July 25:** National Investigation Agency (NIA) has conducted searches at six different locations in four Districts of Tamil Nadu in a case related to Facebook posts by Abdullah, an extremist advocating the ideology of the Islamic State (IS) and Hizb-ut-Tahrir (HuT). The searches were carried out in Thanjavur, Madurai, Theni and Tirunelveli Districts at the residences of arrested accused Abdullah and his associates. In April this year, a complaint was received at Theppakulam police station that Abdullah had posted incendiary messages on Facebook, instigating people on religious grounds to wage war against India and establish Islamic Caliphate. ([Telegraph India](#))

## MALDIVES

### MAJOR EVENTS:



**July 12:** Two persons arrested for threatening to bomb the Mulee'aage, official residence of the President. Photos circulating on social media show that two people were carrying a suitcase and a red plastic bag in addition to the box they claimed the bomb was in. Maldives Police Service and Maldives National Defense Force (MNDF) has increased security at near the Presidential residence and its surrounding areas following the threats. ([Raajje](#))

**July 21:** Parliament Speaker Mohamed Nasheed has alleged that the individuals who were responsible for May 6, 2021, Male bombing are linked to the terrorist organization, Islamic State (IS). "The

arrested individuals and their associates are religious extremists - those that follow the extreme ideologies, especially that of ISIS. Prior to this, other individuals with similar ideologies have also carried out such attacks in the Maldives as well... While it may not have been an attack specifically aimed at me, three murders have been carried out previously under the same pattern. It is very serious and very unfortunate ([Sun Online](#))

**July 26:** The National Council of Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) has passed the resolution submitted by the party's Leader Mohamed Nasheed calling to declare a state of emergency in the Maldives and to confer special powers to Maldives Police Service in order to counter terrorism and religious extremism. The passage of the resolution comes after significant findings in the investigation into the May 6 attack were disclosed in a joint press conference held by the Police and the Prosecutor General's Office on July 24. ([Sun Online](#))

**July 25:** Maldives Police arrested Mohammed Thasleem, a key person from Addu for his involved in assassination attempt on May 6 on former President Mohamed Nasheed. Police Commissioner Mohamed Hameed, said that from the information gathered so far suggested Mohamed Thasleem, Ali Haisham and Ishaag were involved in the attack at a high level. Police announced they have made total 10 arrests in connection to the case. ([The Edition](#))

## PAKISTAN

### MAJOR EVENTS



**July 03:** Two Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) militant belongs to Gandapur faction, were killed during an operation conducted by the police. Four hand-grenades, IEDs, weapons and ammunition were recovered from the encounter site. In another incident, a hand-grenade was recovered during cleaning of the Maternal and Child Centre in Thoya Siyal within the limits of Cantonment Police Station in Dera Ismail Khan. ([Dawn](#))

**July 05:** Five Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) terrorists have been killed during an operation conducted by the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) in the Hazar Ganji, Balochistan. ([Dawn](#))

**July 13:** Three militants were killed during an operation in Zewa area in Kurram District of Khyber Pakhtunkwa. According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) two security personnel were also killed in the event. ([Express Tribune](#))

**July 14:** The Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) of Malakand Region arrested Hussain Ali from Buner District of Khyber Pakhtunkwa. Ali is from Uzbekistan and a wanted militant commander belonging to Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan's Swat chapter. ([Daily Times](#))

**July 14:** Thirteen people died including 9 Chinese workers in a suicide bombing near Dasu in the Upper Kohistan District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). Two buses carrying workers from the China Gezhouba Group Co., a construction company based in Wuhan, China, were damaged in the explosion. ([Express Tribune](#))

**July 18:** Two TTP militants active in Spin Wan area were killed during an encounter in South Waziristan district of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. ([Tribune Pakistan](#))

**July 27:** The 28th report of the United Nation (UN) Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team reported that Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) still has about 6,000 trained fighters on the Afghan side of the border. The report also noted presence of hundreds of anti-Beijing Muslim militants close to Afghanistan's border with China. Led by Noor Wali Mehsud as cheif and Qari Amjad as deputy since June 2018, TTP has distinctive anti-Pakistan objectives but also supports the Afghan Taliban militarily inside Afghanistan against Afghan government forces, according to the UN report. ([Dawn](#))

**July 27:** The leader of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) Noor Wali Mehsud appeared in a TV interview for the first time ever and said that their relations with the Afghan Taliban are based on brotherhood, sympathy, and Islamic principles. The TTP leader acknowledged that the victory of the Afghan Taliban in Afghanistan is not limited to the country but it is a victory for the entire Muslim people in the world ([Khaama Press](#))

**July 28:** A Chinese national was shot at and wounded in a moving car by gunmen riding a motorbike near Gulbai Bridge in Karachi. Another Chinese man and a local driver remained unhurt in the incident. The banned Balochistan Liberation Front's claimed responsibility for the armed attack. ([Dawn](#))

## SRI LANKA

### MAJOR EVENTS



**July 08:** Two people were arrested by the Terrorism Investigation Division within last 48 hours in connection with the 2019 Easter Sunday attacks. They were reportedly attended extremist ideologies' classes conducted in 2018-19 by Easter Sunday attacks mastermind Zahran Hashim. One of them was arrested from Mawanella area in Kegalle District in the Sabaragamuwa Province. ([Hiru News](#); [Hiru News](#))

**July 26:** Sri Lanka's ruling party Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) blamed the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) for the recent surge in protests and strikes across Sri Lanka despite over a decade passing since the end of the armed conflict. ([Tamil Guardian](#))

**July 28:** Eleven Rights groups, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the International Commission of Jurists urged Sri Lanka to free Hejaaz Hizbullah who has been held since April 2020. They also demanded the repeal of anti-terror laws. ([Colombo Page](#))

**The South Asia Conflict Monitor (SACM)** aims to provide in-depth analyses, country briefs, summary sketches of important players and a timeline of major events on issues relating to armed conflicts, insurgencies and terrorism. It also aims to cover the government's strategies on conflict resolution and related policies to tackle these risks and crises.

**The South Asia Conflict Monitor** is a monthly bulletin designed to provide quality information and actionable intelligence for the policy and research communities, the media, business houses, law enforcement agencies and the general reader by filtering relevant open source information and intelligence gathered from the ground contacts and sources.

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## **ABOUT SSPC**

The Society for the Study of Peace and Conflict (SSPC) is an independent, non-profit, non-partisan research organization based in New Delhi, dedicated to conduct rigorous and comprehensive research, and work towards disseminating information through commentaries and analyses on a broad spectrum of issues relating to peace, conflict and human development. SSPC has been registered under the Societies Registration Act (XXI) of 1860. The SSPC came into being as a platform to exchange ideas, to undertake quality research, and to ensure a fruitful dialogue.

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