

Ahead of PM Modi's Riyadh visit, US, Saudi join hands to sanction Pakistani entities

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Washington: The United States and Saudi Arabia on Thursday joined hands to sanction Pakistani individuals and terrorist entities, including Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), hours ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Riyadh.

Thursday's action targeted James Alexander McLintock and his Pakistan-based Al-Rahmah Welfare Organization, which the Treasury Department said is a front organization that provides money for al-Qaida, the Taliban, Lashkar-e-Taiba and other Afghan extremists groups under the guise of helping orphans.

"As of early 2013, McLintock recruited Afghan insurgents to obtain photos of children, Afghan identity documents and cell phone numbers to create falsified dossiers used to obtain donations," Treasury said in a statement.

The department said McLintock used his organization to allegedly provide money to Afghan orphans while helping finance Taliban militant activities in Afghanistan's Kunar province. McLintock received about \$180,000 from donors in Britain between April 2011 and April 2012 and also received money from charities in the Persian Gulf and the United Kingdom, Treasury said. McLintock also is suspected of smuggling cash to insurgents in Afghanistan and moving parts for improvised explosive devices between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Also sanctioned were:

• Abdul Aziz Nuristani and his Jamia Asariya Madrassa in Peshawar, Pakistan, which is suspected of supporting terror groups and recruiting students to become militant fighters.

• Naveed Qamar, who has held several influential positions with Lashkar-e-Taiba, including running a training camp, supervising commanders from Karachi and helping raise money for the group.

• Muhammad Ijaz Safarash, who has been a Lashkar-e-Taiba operative for several years, acquiring travel documents and facilitating financial transfers in Saudi Arabia.

Treasury put the six on its list of specially designated global terrorists. The action freezes any property they have within U.S. jurisdiction and bans Americans from doing business with them. Saudi Arabia designated the same six suspected of having ties across Afghanistan, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

- AP