

India remains target of terrorist attacks: US report

20/06/2015 13:09 by admin

Washington: The US on Friday acknowledged that India remains one of the most persistently targeted countries by insurgents and transnational and domestic terrorist groups, even as New Delhi blames Pakistan for supporting terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir.

Approximately 400 people were killed in 2014 in terrorist attacks, including operations launched by Maoist insurgents, according to the State Department's annual Country Reports on Terrorism 2014.

"The level of terrorist violence in India was substantially unchanged from 2013, demonstrating that India remains one of the most persistently targeted countries by insurgents and transnational and domestic terrorist groups," it said.

On September 3 last year, Al Qaeda announced the establishment of a new branch in the Indian subcontinent, the Congressionally mandated report released by Tina Kaidanow, the State Department's coordinator for counterterrorism, noted.

India had deepened counterterrorism cooperation with the US, highlighted by a September 30 summit between President Barack Obama and Prime Minister Narendra Modi where both sides pledged greater cooperation in countering terrorist networks and in information sharing, the report noted.

"Even though only a small number of Indian nationals are believed to have joined the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the Indian government closely monitored the domestic threat it and other terrorist organisations posed," it said.

India continued to attribute attacks and fatalities in Jammu and Kashmir and against Indian facilities in Afghanistan, to transnational terrorist groups, such as Lashkar e-Taeba (LeT), which the report acknowledged "continued to operate, train, rally, propagandize, and fundraise in Pakistan".

At their September 30 summit, the report noted, Obama and Modi stressed "the need for joint and concerted efforts against networks such as Al Qaeda, LeT, Jaish-e-Mohammed, and the Haqqani Network, and reiterated their call to bring the perpetrators of the November 2008 terrorist attacks in Mumbai to justice".

Modi also joined President Obama in reaffirming "deep concern over the continued threat posed by terrorism, most recently highlighted by the dangers presented by ISIL".

"Given India's large Muslim population, potential socio-religious marginalisation, and active ISIL online propaganda efforts, there remains a risk of increased ISIL recruitment of Indian nationals," the report suggested.

Noting that on December 16, India banned Islamic State under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, the report said, the "Indian government officials have raised concerns over the use of social media and the internet to recruit, radicalise, and foment inter-religious tensions".

- IANS