

Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA)



OVERVIEW

AS OF FEBRUARY 2026

The Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) is a secular ethnonationalist separatist group based in Pakistan and one of the largest and most capable terrorist groups in South Asia. The group's main goal is to establish an independent Balochistan. Since its foundation in 2000, the BLA has steadily increased the scope and frequency of its attacks against the Pakistani state, expanding its operations across Pakistan's Balochistan Province and neighboring regions. The BLA's vast operating area, its ability to move between Pakistan and Afghanistan, and local dissatisfaction with the Pakistani state have enabled the BLA's growth, despite the Pakistani Government's sustained counterinsurgency operations against the group.

Operating Areas

Primarily Balochistan Province in Pakistan, with reach into Sindh Province

Members

2,000-5,000 fighters

Tactics And Targets

The BLA conducts suicide bombings, ambushes using small arms and explosives, hostage-taking operations, and targeted assassinations against local security services, ethnic Punjabis, and Chinese personnel and infrastructure development projects. The group has specialized units, such as the Majeed Brigade (suicide operations), Zirab (intelligence), STOS (special tactical operations), and Fateh Squad (vanguard assaults).

Terrorist Group Designation

The State Department designated the BLA as a foreign terrorist organization in August 2025.



Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) *(continued)*

KEY LEADERS

**Bashir Zeb Baloch**

Leader of the BLA Jeeyand (BLA-J) faction since 2018

**Hyrbayir Marri**

Influential leader of the BLA-Azad (BLA-A) faction, a less operational faction within the BLA

NOTABLE ATTACKS

31 January–2 February 2026**Quetta, Pasni, Mastung, Nushki and Gwadar, Pakistan**

The BLA conducts coordinated attacks in 12 locations across Balochistan that targets military installations and briefly seize control of Quetta's main market.

31 May 2025**Surab City, Pakistan**

The BLA takes control of Surab City and sets up checkpoints on the Quetta-Karachi and Surab-Gidar main highways, restricting movement for a few hours.

11 March 2025**The Quetta-Peshawar route in Pakistan**

BLA fighters hijack the Jaffar Express passenger train, killing at least 26 passengers and kidnapping more than 400 others.

15 May 2022**Karachi**

The BLA uses a female suicide bomber to attack Chinese teachers at Karachi University's Confucius Institute; this demonstrates its capability to strike targets beyond Balochistan, potentially deterring Chinese investment in Pakistan.

27 November 2018**Karachi**

The BLA attacks the Chinese consulate in Karachi, resulting in the death of the attackers.

