

Terrorism Trends with a Focus on Energy and Mining

OVERVIEW

Terrorist attacks on energy- and mining-related targets have the potential to result in significant economic damage as well as causing considerable disruptions to everyday life in the affected communities. This analysis was conducted to provide information on the prevalence and characteristics of terrorist attacks (and their perpetrators) on energy- and mining-related targets from 1970 through 2014, and was presented to the Southeast Analysts' Roundtable, held in Houston, Texas, in June 2015.

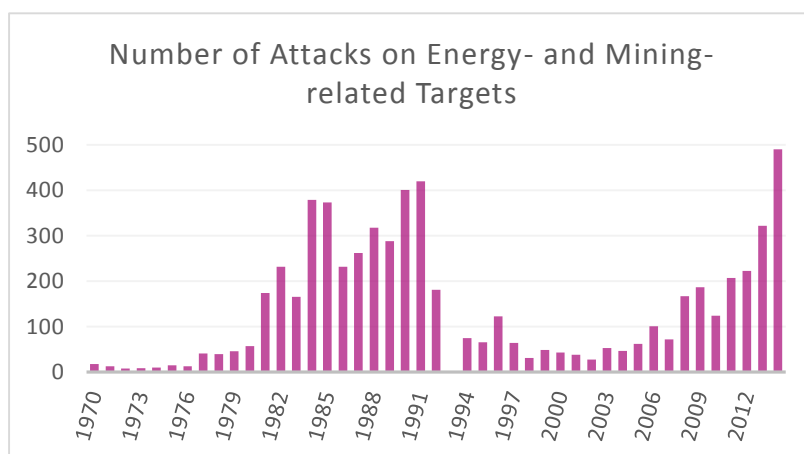
METHOD

Data for this analysis was taken from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD), which was supplemented with independently collected data on the ideological orientation of perpetrators.

FINDINGS

Attacks on energy and mining-related targets were most prevalent in the 1980s. During that decade, an average of 8 percent of all attacks were on this type of target each year, with more than 10 percent of all attacks targeting energy and mining-related entities in 1984 and 1985.

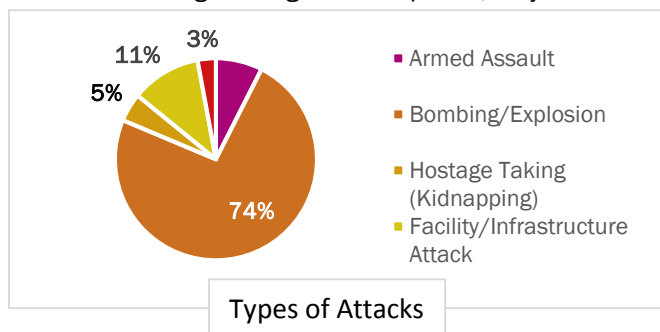
- The number of attacks on these targets increased dramatically in 2013 and 2014, as the number of attacks in 2014 surpassed the total for any year in the 1980s.
- However, these only accounted for 3 percent of all terrorist attacks.
- In fact, attacks on energy and mining-related targets increased less from 2013 to 2014 than the general increase of terrorist incidents across all targets.



LOCATIONS AND ATTACK TYPES

As is the case with terrorism in general, attacks on energy- and mining-related targets are geographically concentrated. From 2010-2014, **Pakistan experienced almost as many attacks (439) as the next three countries, Yemen (170), Colombia (161), and Iraq (146), combined.** The Philippines, with 73 attacks, rounds out the top five.

The overwhelming majority of attacks during this time period (74 percent) were bombings, according to the GTD. While bombings are also the most common attack type for terrorist incidents writ large during this time period, they account for a lower percentage (54 percent) as compared to attacks on energy- and mining-related targets. Facility and infrastructure attacks, which include arson and sabotage tactics, are the second most common attack type on energy- and mining-related targets. They are also more than twice as prevalent accounting for 11 percent of attacks, as compared to terrorist incidents in general (4.5 percent).



Country	# of Attacks, 2010-2014
Pakistan	439
Yemen	170
Colombia	161
Iraq	146
Philippines	73
India	69
Egypt	42
Nigeria	38
Thailand	37
Turkey	28

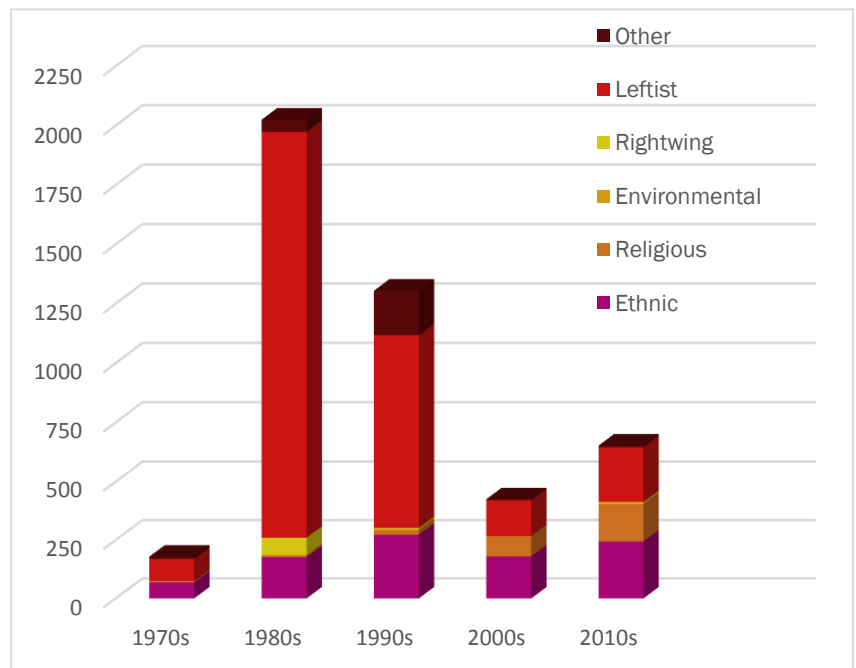
PERPETRATORS

Group Name	# of Attacks
Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)	102
Baloch Republican Army (BRA)	84
Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)	43
New People's Army (NPA)	39
National Liberation Army of Colombia (ELN)	35
Al-Qa`ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)	33
Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK)	21
Taliban	14
Communist Party of India - Maoist (CPI-Maoist)	12
United Baloch Army (UBA)	12

From 2010-2014, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) was the most active group, with 102 attacks over the five years. The lesser-known Baloch Republican Army (an ethnonationalist group in Pakistan) was responsible for the second highest number of attacks (84), while the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) carried out 43 attacks on energy- and mining-related targets from 2010 through 2014.

Additional data were collected on the ideological orientations of the perpetrators responsible for at least one terrorist attack on an energy- or mining-related target. Perpetrators were coded as having leftist, right-wing, environmentalist, religious, or ethnically-based ideologies. Any ideology that did not fit into one of the categorizations was coded as "other." Perpetrators could be coded as having multiple ideologies, as many groups do espouse more than one and distinguishing between dominant and subordinate ideologies is difficult (and can evolve over time). For example, the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) is both a Marxist-Leninist (or leftist) organization and a Kurdish separatist (or ethnic) organization. Similarly, the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Movement is simultaneously a Moro nationalist (or ethnic) and Sunni Islamist (religious) organization.

- In 35 percent of cases, the ideology of the perpetrator could not be determined (primarily because the perpetrator's identity was unknown).
- For the remaining cases, leftist organizations were the most frequent perpetrators of attacks against energy- and mining-related targets.
- However, the prevalence of attacks by leftist perpetrators is heavily skewed to the 1980s.
- Attacks by right-wing or environmentally motivated groups are rare across all time periods, while attacks by ethnically based organizations persist at fairly steady, if relatively low, rates across time periods.
- Attacks on energy- and mining-related infrastructure by groups with religiously based ideologies increased in prevalence in the 21st century, with most of these attacks being carried out by Islamist extremists.



RESEARCHERS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

To provide feedback, or for any correspondence relating to this research please contact:

Amy Pate | Research Director | START, University of Maryland | 301-405-6821 | apate@start.umd.edu



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