

Wanted Saudi men include dangerous Al Qaida leaders

Authorities believe they are hiding in four countries.

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Riyadh: A spokesman for the Saudi Interior Ministry, Major General Mansour Al Turki, has revealed that the 47 wanted Saudis whose names were announced by security forces on Sunday include leaders of Al Qaida. He added that all the wanted men are Saudis hiding outside the kingdom.

"Out of the number of wanted ones, 16 are hiding in Yemen, 27 between Pakistan and Afghanistan and 4 in Iraq," the spokesman for the Interior Ministry said during a press conference late on Sunday.

"One of their goals is to establish terrorism cells inside the kingdom and recruit Saudis to send abroad for training," Turki told reporters.

Infiltrated

He described all those on the list as "very dangerous". He added that they are between 18 and 40 with an average age of 26. "Thirteen [out] of them secretly infiltrated out of the kingdom, 30 left the kingdom illegally while the remaining 4 had left the kingdom legally as there has been nothing banning their departure," he said.

The spokesman for the Interior Ministry explained that some of the 47 wanted men have been using their brothers' passports and others left the kingdom with forged passports. "Investigations have revealed that some of them were drug takers," he added.

This recent list of wanted men was the fifth to be announced by the Saudi authorities since bomb attacks targeting vital civilian and military facilities in Saudi Arabia were waged in May 2003.

A total of 207 wanted terrorists were on these lists. Forty-six of them were killed in confrontations with security personnel, 22 were blown up during suicide attacks, nine of them voluntarily surrendered to the authorities and only eight were apprehended.

Interpol help

Al Turki said some of the countries where the wanted terrorists are hiding have no legal power to apprehend them. "We are passing information to the authorities concerned in these countries through [the] Interpol," he added.

He pointed out that some of those on the list are trying to establish terrorist cells in the kingdom and mobilise Saudis to wage terrorist attacks in the locations where they hide.

Asked why Al Qaida manages to recruit minors, the Interior Ministry official said the deviant group would not hesitate to recruit even a three-year-old child. He urged parents to take care of their children.

Troubled locations

He did not rule out that the fifth list of wanted men announced on Sunday would be the last one.

"We hope it is the last one," he said. He added that the kingdom did not restrict its measures against those involved in attacks to security confrontation, but turned to other ways in a bid to maintain intellectual security.

Al Turki noted that the terrorists are training their elements in "troubled locations" outside Saudi Arabia as it is difficult to train them in the kingdom.

He added that the main goal of terrorists is to mobilise Saudis and train them to carry out terrorist attacks.