

Militancy/Terrorism

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Argentina & Paraguay Alert: Governments to tighten border security after tip of explosive smuggling to target Jewish site on November 14; potential targets likely to receive extra security

Please be advised

- On November 14, Argentina's government announced it would tighten security at its border with Paraguay after its embassy in the UK received an anonymous tip alerting authorities to the possibility of bomb-making materials entering across the northern border.
- The Security Ministry released a statement claiming that the tip warned of a person from Paraguay seeking to ship ammonium nitrate to Argentina in order to make a bomb to target the local Jewish community. Ammonium nitrate was also used during the 1994 attack on the Asociacion Mutual Israeli-Argentina (AMIA) in Buenos Aires, which killed 85 people.
- The General Directorate of the International Coordination of the Argentine Federal Police is currently carrying out a criminal investigation in order to identify the individual mentioned in the anonymous tip. A series of preventive measures have been planned, including the deployment of federal police to potential targeted locations.
- In Encarnacion, Itapua, a southern region in Paraguay, police found a charge of dynamite gel, divided into 12 rounds, weighing 1.5 kilograms each. Authorities stated that the explosives could create a blast radius of 400 to 500 meters. It is unconfirmed whether these explosives were connected to the embassy tip.
- The President of the Delegation of Israelite Associations of Argentina (DAIA), Jorge Knoblovits, confirmed that his organization had been informed and made aware of the embassy tip.

Assessments

1. While authorities have yet to locate the alleged explosives, the anonymous tip reiterates the threat of militancy stemming from the Tri-Border area, as evidenced by the fact that the 1994 AMIA bombing was reportedly carried out by a militant cell operating out of the area. Although links between the dynamite found in Encarnacion and the embassy tip have not been confirmed, both incidents highlight the risk level within border regions between Argentina and Paraguay.
2. That the Jewish community was supposedly the target is notable, given that the community has been the victim of previous militant attacks, including the AMIA bombing and the 1992 attack on the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires. It is likely that Islamist groups operating in Latin America, such as Hezbollah, were involved in the smuggling and possible planning of an attack. **FORECAST:** Considering that the Jewish community in Argentina is the largest in Latin America, with over 250,000 members, further threats are expected. As such, authorities are liable to increase surveillance and security surrounding Jewish community centers, schools, and synagogues, especially within Buenos Aires. Involvement by the DAIA remains possible.
3. **FORECAST:** Given that the government stated it will tighten surveillance at the border with

Paraguay, the potential for delays and disruptions is expected to increase significantly in the near term. Cooperation between Argentina and Paraguay is possible.

Recommendations

1. Travel to Argentina and the capital of Buenos Aires can continue, while maintaining vigilance due to the potential for militancy.
2. Alert authorities immediately upon witnessing suspicious items or behavior.
3. Public, private, and third sector organizations, especially those linked with the local Jewish or Israeli community, are advised to increase their awareness of threats on social media through the use of threat monitoring services. Increased awareness of an organization's political footprint and perceptions from fringe online groups can help uncover potential violent actors and plots before they occur.