

JEISH AL-ADL EXECUTES ONE OF FIVE IRANIAN BORDER GUARDS ABDUCTED LAST MONTH

There is a major new development in the ongoing saga of incidents along the Iran-Pakistan border. Recall that a group of Sunni extremists, Jeish Al-Adl, captured five Iranian border guards in early February (after killing 14 in an attack last October). Iran had briefly claimed that the guards had been released earlier this month, but then quickly backed down on that claim. It seems that Iran has difficulty getting accurate information on the status of the guards, as they first denied and then finally confirmed that the highest ranking of the guards, Jamshid Danaeifar (his face is circled on a photo of the detained guards that is circulating on Twitter) has been executed:

Informed sources in Pakistan confirmed earlier reports that Jeish al-Adl terrorist group has executed one of the five Iranian border guards that it abducted along Iran-Pakistan border on February 6.

The sources told FNA in Islamabad on Monday that "Jeish al-Adl has martyred one of the kidnapped border guards".

This is while the Iranian Interior Ministry earlier today rejected Jeish al-Adl's claim.

"We don't confirm this report; were it true, we would have been informed," Interior Ministry Spokesman Hossein Ali Amiri said on Monday. He said that the five border guards are kept in Pakistan at present and are safe and sound.

Amiri made the remarks after Jeish al-Adl claimed on its tweeter page that it

has killed Jamshid Danayeefar, one of the kidnapped border guards.

News of the execution came just as Iran had been expressing hope that the guards were about to be released. From an earlier report on Sunday by Fars News:

Efforts and consultations with the Pakistani officials still continue to secure the release of the five border guards abducted along Iran-Pakistan border on February 6, an Iranian official announced on Sunday.

"Talks with national and local Pakistani officials have been held at different levels and they have made some promises," Governor-General of Iran's Southeastern Sistan and Balouchestan province Ali Awsat Hashemi told FNA today.

He expressed the hope that the five young border guards would be released to return to their families soon.

Writing at the International Policy Digest, Sadaf Megan informs us that Jeish Al-Adl has stated that if their demands on the release of prisoners are not met, they will execute another prisoner in ten days:

In the statement following the announcement of his death, Jaish al-Adl demands that if 50 of their prisoners are not released by Iran then Jaish al-Adl will execute another hostage within 10 days.

The clock is ticking for the four remaining "pasdar(s)" or guards. In the meantime it seems unlikely that the Iranian government will be able to fulfill or want to meet the demands of Jaish Al-Adl. A regime that does not succumb to threats and ultimatums by the

West is unlikely to make a deal with a terrorist group.

The article also has interesting background information on Jeish Al-Adl, providing perspective on the relationship with Jundallah:

Jaish al-Adl operates in the Sistan-Baluchistan region of Iran, and frequently utilizes the Iranian-Pakistani border to carry out attacks. Cross border operations have been practiced during the time of Abdolmalek Rigi's Sunni Balochi group, Jundallah. After Iran executed Rigi in 2010, Jundallah dissolved and merged with Jaish al-Adl.

Stay tuned for further developments. With Pakistan still reeling from the Carlotta Gall article the Express Tribune wound up censoring entirely because of its revelations of ISI sheltering bin Laden, they risk displaying more evidence of collaboration with terrorists if they are unable to secure the release of the remaining border guards before the next one is executed.