



Pakistan – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 9 February 2018

- 1. Conflict between Pashtun and Punjabi (Bhatii) people in Pakistan (Lahore area)**
- 2. Honour killings in relations between Pashtun and Punjabis**
- 3. Revenge culture in Pashtun culture**
- 4. Police protection against honour killings**
- 5. Internal relocation as an option to avoid an honour killing in Pakistan**

An article from the Washington Post states:

“Since the Pakistani security forces launched a nationwide anti-terrorist operation in February after a spate of suicide bombings, Pashtun leaders have complained vociferously that their communities are being targeted for harassment and racial profiling, especially here in Punjab province. Traditionally based in the northwest region bordering Afghanistan, Pashtuns who migrate or flee south to the Punjabi heartland have often been viewed as suspect outsiders, disdained by some as backward tribal people or war refugees with a penchant for crime and violence. Now they have been further tarred by the Afghan and Pashtun origins of the militants who claimed most of the recent bombings, which took more than 125 lives; one blast ripped through a crowded public square in Lahore, Punjab’s capital.” (Washington Post (3 March 2017) *Pakistan targets Afghan Pashtuns and refugees in anti-terrorism crackdown*)

A Voice of America news report states:

“Pakistan's ethnic Pashtuns say they are being roused in midnight raids, detained and subjected to other harassment in the country's crackdown on extremists following a series of terrorist attacks. They see it as a case of guilt by association because the Taliban and other like-minded groups are predominantly Pashtun. Pashtuns have protested to the government and launched a scathing campaign on social media.” (Voice of America (7 March 2017) *Pashtuns Claim Ethnic Profiling During Pakistan Extremism Crackdown*)

In a paragraph headed “Crackdown” this report states:

“Noor Khan of Bajaur, a tribal region on the border with Afghanistan, is one of the owners of a factory that makes cement blocks in Rawalpindi, just outside Islamabad. He was on a visit home when the crackdown against ethnic Pashtuns began in Punjab province. Khan told VOA's Deewa service that his brother, with whom he owns the factory, called and advised him to stay in Bajaur until the situation eased.” (ibid)

An article from Indian newspaper the Sunday Guardian states:

“Pashtun separatist activists have condemned the clash between Pashtun and Punjabi student groups in Punjab University (PU) that led to the hospitalisation of around 10 students, while a dozen were arrested by police in Lahore, Pakistan, earlier this week.

“A fight broke out when Islami Jamiat-e-Talaba (IJT) allegedly attacked a group of Pashtun students who were celebrating Nawroz, an important Pashtun festival, on the campus. The Pashtun activists who have been demanding that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa be made a separate Pashtun nation, ‘identified’ this clash as prove of ‘ethnic discrimination’ faced by the Pashtuns in Pakistan.

Umar Daud Khattak, a Pashtun activist, said, ‘IJT is notorious for such discriminatory practices that they justify through their extreme religious beliefs. Members of IJT are Punjabi religious extremists who don't want us Pashtuns, Balochs and Sindhis to get involved with the mainstream. They treat students of these ethnic groups as outsiders. This was not the first attack that took place because of extreme cultural discrimination.’ In February, IJT had clashed with members of the Pashtun students' organisation after offering Friday prayers that led to hospitalisation of five students.” (Sunday Guardian (25 March 2017) *Activists condemn Jamiat attack on Pashtuns*)

An article from Pakistan Today states:

“Violent clashes once again erupted in Quaid-e-Azam University (QAU) between Punjabi and Pashtun student groups, leaving dozens injured in the incident. Sources told Pakistan Today that the students from both sides freely used sticks and stones during their fight due to which about 16 students sustained injuries. They said that some of the fighting students were even drunk and smashed windows of several vehicles. Sources further informed that Punjabi students had beaten some Pashtun students on Wednesday, who attacked Punjabi students in order to take revenge. (Pakistan Today (2 February 2018) *Clashes in QAU leave around 16 students injured*)

An article from UK newspaper The Telegraph states:

“A Pakistani mother has been arrested on suspicion of burning her 16-year-old daughter alive for marrying without family consent in the latest so-called ‘honour killing’ to shock the country .Perveen Bibi, tied her daughter, Zeenat, to a bed, doused her with fuel and then set fire to her in Lahore, police said. Family members stopped neighbours from entering the house as the girl screamed for help, said Nighat Bibi, who lives nearby. As her daughter burned, Perveen Bibi ran into the street shouting that she had killed the teen for bringing shame on her family. The police eventually arrived and found the charred body near a staircase. Zeenat married a man named Hasan Khan on May 29, police said. Khan's ethnicity - he is an ethnic Pashtun, while Zeenat was a Punjabi - was the main cause of the family's disapproval, according to the woman's family.” (The Telegraph (8 June 2016) *Pakistani mother burns daughter to death in latest shocking 'honour killing' case*)

A country report on Pakistan published by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) of Australia, in a chapter titled "Refugee Convention Claims (section headed "Pashtuns", paragraph 3.3) , states:

"Pashtuns are characterised by their use of the Pashto language and its many dialects. Pashtun culture emphasises tribal and family relations, as well as customary norms collectively referred to as Pashtunwali." (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Australia (1 September 2017) *DFAT Country Information Report Pakistan*, p.12)

An article from Pakistani newspaper The Nation states:

"Dating back to the pre-Islamic era, Pashtunwali is the code of conduct every proud Pashtun follows, may he live in Afghanistan, Pakistan, or as a refugee anywhere in the world." (The Nation (6 August 2013) *Understanding Pashtunwali*)

This article also states:

"Simply put, 'Badal' means 'to seek justice or take revenge against the wrongdoer.' There is no time limit to when the injustice can be avenged. If badal is not exercised, the offended man or his family will be considered stripped of honour. The exercise of this principle can lead to generations of bloodshed, feuds, hundreds of lives lost for one insult. It requires a violent reaction to the insult or death or injury inflicted. A badal usually ends with a badal. An action elicits or demands an equivalent response - and the cycle goes on." (ibid)

A report published by the Landinfo Country of Origin Information Centre of Norway, in a section titled "About Honour, Shame and Revenge in Pashtunwali", states:

"Dignity, honour, shame are central concepts in Pashtunwali. This comes across, among other things, in the language, Pashto, which has a large and nuanced vocabulary relating to shame. To be perceived as dishonorable is among the most serious fates that can befall a Pashtun and his family. The paramount importance of honour is illustrated by the fact that at murder in certain contexts is considered to be both an acceptable and necessary act in order to restore a group's status." (Landinfo Country of Origin Information Centre (1 November 2011) *Afghanistan: Blood feuds, traditional law (pashtunwali) and traditional conflict resolution*, p.7)

In a section titled "Blood Revenge / Feuds" this report states:

"In Afghanistan, murder is a very serious act that can entail a risk of serious sanctions for the murderer and his family. Murder can trigger a demand for blood revenge. Blood revenge is primarily a Pashtun tradition, and its connection to honour is illustrated by the fact that failure to reciprocate is deemed a sign of moral weakness, and may imply whole kinship groups being seen as lacking in moral character. Both reporting a murder to the authorities and negotiating for financial compensation with the perpetrator's family can be interpreted as weakness and as indicating that the group is not strong enough to defend its honour." (ibid, p.8)

See also section titled “Taking Revenge” which states:

“According to Barfield, it is optimal that revenge is taken against the murderer or the perpetrator of the misdeed, but, under some conditions, killing his brother or other patrilineal kin represents an alternative. Revenge cannot be exacted against women and children. The person exacting the revenge should be a close adult male relative of the victim, but in exceptional cases ‘hired assassins’ sometimes carry out the revenge (Barfield 2003). Ideally, the killing should be carried out man to man and face to face (courage), but ambushes are also acceptable.” (ibid, p.10)

An undated document published on the website of the Pashtun Cultural Institute, in a section titled “Pashtunwali / Pashtunwaali”, states:

“Central to identity as a Pakhtun is adherence to the male-centered code of conduct, the Pashtunwali (or Pakhtunwali). In the tribal model, conformity to Pashtunwali defines what it means to be ‘really’ Pashtun. Their injunctions clearly point back to a nomade state of society, when a man depended on his immediate relations, not on laws, for protection, and when to refuse hospitality was equivalent to murder. Pashtunwali, a code good enough for wandering shepherds, when land and water were abundant for all, tended to foster the best virtues of barbarians, and probably produced a simple, hospitable, and spirited race. It has not kept pace with the increase of population, and the change from a pastoral to a settled life. Traditionally, the conduct of Pukhtoos was guided by the Pukhtunwali. The foremost commandment of the Pukhtunwali is Badal or revenge (revenge is a dish which tastes better cold, Pukhtoon proverb). The obligations to take revenge for wrong falls not only upon the man who has suffered it, but also upon his family and tribe. Insults and retaliation hence involve clans and perpetuate blood feuds.” (Pashtun Cultural Institute (undated) *Information*)

A thesis written by Raja G. Hussain of the US Naval Postgraduate School, in a section titled “Pashtunwali (Pashtun Tribal Code)”, states:

“Even though subsequent chapters will explore Pashtun tribal code to address the research question, it is important to briefly discuss the Pashtunwali concept of *nang* and its significance to collateral damage. *Nang* means honor. It is the basic concept embedded in Pashtun tribal code. Its core elements include *badal* (revenge), *malmastia* (hospitality), and *nanawatey* (refuge). *Badal* is often considered at the hierarchy of *nang*. *Badal* revolves around *zan* (women), *zar* (wealth), and *zamin* (land). It may also be invoked to restore honor involving a loss of live. Failure to restore honor may categorize the individual, family, or clan as *beghairat* (shameless; dishonorable; opposite of *ghairat*) and reduce the status within the respective tribe.” (Hussain, Raja G. (March 2008) *Badal: a culture of revenge - the impact of collateral damage on Taliban insurgency*, p.7, Calhoun: The Naval Postgraduate School Institutional Archive)

In a section titled “Concept Of Badal” the author of this thesis states:

“In any society the cause of collateral damage to human life carries the potential of creating resistance movements by invoking morality. However, in a society like Pashtuns the effect is three-fold. Not only is morality invoked

through mere human emotion but tribal custom of *nang* (honor) and Jihad are also invoked. These three factors combined not only motivate and create a Jihadi force unlike any other, but they also render the Coalition's efforts useless in the face of very people it is trying to protect. To best explain this loss of hearts and minds campaign, Pashtun tribal code must be studied; more specifically the concept of *badal*. The word *badal* means revenge-killing or vendetta. '*Badal* is an action taken to avenge death, or when the honor of a woman has been involved. When it is a matter to be resolved by *badal*, the right to avenge by death is the prerogative of the individual immediately concerned, but that right also resides in the family, section, clan, or tribe. Further, *badal* need not be restricted to action against the culprit, but can be taken against any member of his kinship group.' It is a tribal custom held high in Pashtunwali (Pashtun tribal culture). Pashtunwali is unique to the Pashtu-speaking tribes in Afghanistan who comprise of over 42 percent of the population; a separate percentage lives in the adjacent Federally Administered Tribal Area of Pakistan (FATA)." (ibid, p.33)

The DAFT report referred to above, in a section titled "Other Considerations" (section headed "Internal Relocation", paragraph 5.12), states:

"Article 15 of the Constitution guarantees the right to freedom of movement in Pakistan. The country's last census in 1998 showed the high level of internal migration; almost three million people lived in a different province to the one in which they had been born, and nearly 11 million lived in a different district. DFAT understands that large-scale internal movements have continued since the census in 1998." (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Australia (1 September 2017) *DFAT Country Information Report Pakistan*, p.37)

In a section titled "Options for internal relocation" (paragraph 5.15) this report states:

"Lahore has a population of around 10 million people. While it remains a majority-Punjabi city, there are significant numbers of some other ethnic groups, particularly Pashtuns. There are few Hazaras or Turis in Lahore. While security incidents can occur—such as the 2016 Easter Sunday attack—the security situation in Lahore tends to be better than other areas. Representatives of the Pashtun community told DFAT that Lahore was safer for Pashtuns than other parts of the country. Similarly, representatives of the Shi'a community told DFAT that Lahore and Islamabad were the safest parts of the country for Shi'a. Representatives of the Lahore Christian community told DFAT that the security situation has improved and that the government is genuine in its attempts to provide Christians with state protection, although some risks—particularly of communal violence and societal discrimination—remain." (ibid, p.38)

A report from the US Overseas Security Advisory Council, in a paragraph headed "Police Response", states:

"The Punjab Police is the largest police force in Pakistan, numbering over 180,000 active members. However, funding, resources, and training for the police (as with the rest of the Pakistani police services) remain scant. Police resources and service remain well below Western standards, though the government is working to improve the situation through computerization and

modernization of many processes.” (Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) (30 January 2017) *Pakistan 2017 Crime & Safety Report: Lahore*)

The Summary of a report from Human Rights Watch refers to the Pakistani police force as follows:

“Public surveys and reports of government accountability and redress institutions show that the police are one of the most widely feared, complained against, and least trusted government institutions in Pakistan, lacking a clear system of accountability and plagued by corruption at the highest levels. District-level police are often under the control of powerful politicians, wealthy landowners, and other influential members of society.” (Human Rights Watch (25 September 2016) "This Crooked System" - Police Abuse and Reform in Pakistan, p.1)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research and Information Unit within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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