



Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)
LEGAL AID BOARD

Afghanistan - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on Wednesday 1 May 2019

Information on the current security situation in Nangarhar including Islamic State/Daesh involvement

A publication issued in April 2019 by *Reuters* states that:

“Taliban and Islamic State militants have been fighting for more than a week in the eastern border province of Nangarhar, since Islamic State fighters seized six villages in an area where the mineral talc is mined” (Reuters (30 April 2019) *Afghan forces launch attacks to clear warring militants from east Afghanistan*)

This document also states that:

“Nangarhar province has large deposits of talc and other minerals such as chromite and marble, and sits on major smuggling routes into Pakistan. Illegal mining of talc, used in products ranging from paint to baby powder, is a major source of revenue for insurgents in Nangarhar, where Islamic State has its stronghold” (ibid).

In April 2019 a publication issued by the *United States Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction* notes that:

“ACLED recorded 7,399 security-related events in Afghanistan in 2018, roughly the same as the 7,345 recorded in 2017. The three provinces with the most events were unchanged from 2017 to 2018: Nangarhar, Ghazni, and Helmand” (United States Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (30 April 2019) *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, p.76).

Voice of America in April 2019 states that:

“Clashes between the Taliban and IS are a continuing issue in eastern Afghanistan, particularly in Nangarhar, the traditional stronghold of the IS Khorasan branch that emerged in the country in 2015. The militant group has since made inroads to adjacent provinces in the eastern and northern parts of the country” (*Voice of America* (25 April 2019) *Taliban-IS Clashes Displace Hundreds of Afghan Families*).

A publication issued in April 2019 by *Reuters* points out that:

“Islamic State in Khorasan (ISIS-K), which took its name from an historical region that covered much of modern-day Afghanistan and parts of Central Asia, appeared in late 2014 in the eastern province of Nangarhar, where it retains a stronghold. It announced its formation in January 2015” (Reuters (24 April 2019) *Factbox: After 'caliphate' defeat, Islamic State is down but not out*, p.3).

In April 2019 the *United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan* states that:

“In the first quarter of 2019, the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) continued to document high levels of harm to civilians from the armed conflict”

(United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (24 April 2019) *Quarterly Report on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: 1 January to 31 March 2019*, p.1).

This document also states that:

“Civilians living in Kabul, Helmand, Nangarhar, Faryab and Kunduz provinces were most affected...” (ibid, p.2).

A publication issued in April 2019 by *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* points out that:

“Nangarhar is the stronghold of IS militants, who are active on Afghanistan's porous eastern border with Pakistan” (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (6 April 2019) *Twin Explosions Kill At Least Three In Eastern Afghanistan*).

In March 2019 a publication issued by the *United States Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction* notes that:

“...IS-K has gone from being concentrated in a few districts in Nangarhar Province in eastern Afghanistan to having a limited presence in two other provinces—Kunar and Jowzjan...” (United States Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (28 March 2019) *2019 High-Risk List*, p.15).

In February 2019 the *United States Security Council* states that:

“The security situation remained volatile, with a consistently high number of security incidents” (United States Security Council (28 February 2019) *The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security: Report of the Secretary-General (February 2019)*, p.6).

This document also notes that:

“The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant-Khorasan Province (ISIL-KP) remained resilient, despite Afghan and international military forces maintaining a high tempo of operations against its strongholds in Nangarhar and Kunar provinces. These operations, including air strikes, had a significant impact in degrading ISIL-KP. UNAMA recorded clashes in Kunar Province between the Taliban and ISIL-KP, suggesting that it was one of the most active locations for Taliban and ISIL-KP confrontation, although clashes also continued in Nangarhar Province” (ibid, p.8).

It is also pointed out in this document that:

“The need for trauma care was particularly high in Nangarhar, Kandahar and Helmand Provinces, where clashes have taken heavy tolls and access has been reduced” (ibid, p.13).

A report issued in February 2019 by the *United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan* points out that:

“The armed conflict in Afghanistan continued to harm civilians at unacceptably high levels in 2018, with overall civilian deaths, including child deaths, reaching record high levels” (United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (24 February 2019) *Afghanistan: Protection Of Civilians In Armed Conflict: Annual Report 2018*, p.5).

This document also notes that:

“Kabul remained the province most affected by IEDs (mainly suicide), while civilian casualties from IEDs in Nangarhar province increased four-fold (mostly from non-suicide devices), reaching nearly the same level as Kabul for the first time” (ibid, p.6).

This report also states that:

“Daesh/ISKP increased the frequency and intensity of its attacks throughout 2018, particularly in the eastern region. From 1 January to 31 December 2018, UNAMA attributed 138 incidents countrywide resulting in 2,181 civilian casualties (681 deaths and 1,500 injured) to Daesh/ISKP, which represents a 118 per cent increase from 2017...The vast majority of these incidents – 102 – occurred across numerous districts in Nangarhar province, causing 991 civilian casualties, while 20 incidents took place in Kabul province (all in Kabul city) resulting in 1,027 civilian casualties, and reflecting a high level of civilian harm caused by each attack in the densely populated city...” (ibid, p.24).

It is also noted in this report that:

“The number of suicide and complex attacks as well as the harm they caused to civilians drastically increased in Nangarhar province due to the heightened activities of Daesh/ISKP. In 2018, UNAMA documented 17 suicide and complex attacks attributed to Daesh/ISKP in Nangarhar, which caused 738 civilian casualties (222 deaths and 516 injuries)” (ibid, p.26).

References

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (6 April 2019) *Twin Explosions Kill At Least Three In Eastern Afghanistan*

<https://www.ecoi.net/en/document/2007359.html>

Accessed Wednesday 1 May 2019

Reuters (30 April 2019) *Afghan forces launch attacks to clear warring militants from east Afghanistan*

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-attacks/afghan-forces-launch-attacks-to-clear-warring-militants-from-east-afghanistan-idUSKCN1S61BI>

Accessed Wednesday 1 May 2019

Reuters (24 April 2019) *Factbox: After 'caliphate' defeat, Islamic State is down but not out*

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-islamic-state-group-factbox/factbox-after-caliphate-defeat-islamic-state-is-down-but-not-out-idUSKCN1S021K>

Accessed Wednesday 1 May 2019

United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (24 April 2019) *Quarterly Report on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: 1 January to 31 March 2019*

<http://www.ein.org.uk/print/members/country-report/quarterly-report-protection-civilians-armed-conflict-1-january-31-march-2019>

This is a subscription database

Accessed Wednesday 1 May 2019

United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (24 February 2019) *Afghanistan: Protection Of Civilians In Armed Conflict: Annual Report 2018*

<http://www.ein.org.uk/print/members/country-report/afghanistan-protection-civilians-armed-conflict-annual-report-2018>

This is a subscription database
Accessed Wednesday 1 May 2019

United States Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (30 April 2019) *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*

<https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2019-04-30qr.pdf>

Accessed Wednesday 1 May 2019

United States Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (28 March 2019) *2019 High-Risk List*

https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/spotlight/2019_High-Risk_List.pdf

Accessed Wednesday 1 May 2019

United States Security Council (28 February 2019) *The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security: Report of the Secretary-General (February 2019)*

<http://www.ein.org.uk/print/members/country-report/situation-afghanistan-and-its-implications-international-peace-and-securit-22>

This is a subscription database
Accessed Wednesday 1 May 2019

Voice of America (25 April 2019) *Taliban-IS Clashes Displace Hundreds of Afghan Families*

<https://www.voanews.com/a/taliban-is-clashes-displace-hundreds-of-afghan-families/4891831.html>

Accessed Wednesday 1 May 2019

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre 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.

Sources Consulted

Amnesty International
BBC News/Monitoring
Electronic Immigration Network
European Country of Origin Information Network
Freedom House
Google
Human Rights Watch
Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada
Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
International Crisis Group
IRIN News

Lexis Nexis
Minority Rights Group International
Online Newspapers
Refugee Documentation Centre E-Library
Refugee Documentation Centre Query Database
Reliefweb
Reuters
United Kingdom Home Office
United States Department of State
UNHCR Refworld