



Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)
LEGAL AID BOARD

Afghanistan - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on Friday 25 & Monday 28 January 2019

Information on available state protection against the Taliban

A report published by *Reuters* in January 2019 points out that:

“Despite the presence of U.S.-led foreign forces training, advising and assisting their Afghan counterparts, the Taliban controls nearly half of Afghanistan” (Reuters (27 January 2019) *Next round of Afghanistan talks tentatively set for Feb. 25*).

A report issued in January 2019 by *BBC News* states that:

“The Taliban frequently carry out deadly attacks targeting military bases, soldiers and police and in recent years US and Afghan officials have withheld detailed casualty figures as they are deemed too sensitive. Late last year, President Ghani said more than 28,000 Afghan police and soldiers had been killed since 2015 - an average of about 20 a day. Civilians, however, continue to bear the brunt of the conflict. The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (Unama) says civilian deaths for the first nine months of 2018 were higher than at any point during the same period since 2014” (BBC News (22 January 2019) *Taliban militants kill dozens at Afghan intelligence base*).

In January 2019 *BBC News* states that:

“The Taliban's power and reach has surged since foreign combat troops left Afghanistan in 2014” (BBC News (21 January 2019) *Afghanistan: Deadly Taliban attack on military compound*).

A report published by the *Associated Press* in January 2019 notes:

“...the Taliban, who now hold sway over about half of the country and regularly target Afghan forces” (Associated Press (15 January 2019) *Taliban Suicide Bomber Kills 4, Wounds Over 100 in Kabul*

A document released in January 2019 by *Reuters* reports:

“...the Taliban and other insurgent groups carrying out near daily attacks...” (Reuters (15 January 2019) *Afghan Taliban claim lethal car bomb attack in Kabul*).

The *Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect* states in January 2019 that:

“Since the Taliban was overthrown in 2001 by a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) coalition of military forces, it has conducted an insurgency against the internationally recognized Afghan government. Following the 2014 withdrawal of most foreign forces from Afghanistan, the Taliban has made substantial military gains, currently controlling or influencing more than half of the country” (Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (15 January 2019) *Afghanistan*).

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in January 2019 states that:

“The Taliban has ramped up attacks on security forces and government facilities in recent months, while Afghan and U.S. troops have increased operations against the militants' field commanders” (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (10 January 2019) *At Least 30 Afghan Troops Killed In Taliban Attacks*).

A report published in January 2019 by *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* points out that:

“The Taliban controls or contests nearly half of Afghanistan, where it is waging a deadly insurgency against the Western-backed Kabul government and government security forces” (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (3 January 2019) *At Least 11 Afghan Police Officers Killed In Taliban Attacks*).

The *United States Department of Defence* in December 2018 notes that:

“The Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) remain in control of most of Afghanistan’s population centers and all of the provincial capitals, while the Taliban control large portions of Afghanistan’s rural areas, and continue to attack poorly defended government checkpoints and rural district centers” (United States Department of Defence (17 December 2018) *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, p.1).

This document also states:

“The ANDSF, with U.S. and coalition support, have limited new Taliban territorial gains and quickly regained control of population centers when attacked” (ibid, p.1).

It is also noted in this document that:

“Afghanistan continues to face an externally enabled and resilient insurgency. The Afghan government retains control of Kabul, major population centers, most key transit routes, provincial capitals, and a majority of district centers. In this reporting period, the Taliban capitalized on the freedom of maneuver they maintain in rural areas to mass combat power against poorly defended district centers and checkpoints. Despite the Taliban’s proclaimed intent to adopt a more asymmetric approach, the group continued to mass and conduct raids on checkpoints, district centers, and threaten population centers. These types of attacks did not result in significant expansion of Taliban-controlled territory; however, they did test the ability of the ANDSF to respond, resulting in over-extension of the ANA in certain areas...” (ibid, pp.24-25).

This report also notes:

“...a continued stalemate with the ANDSF maintaining control of most of the populated areas and lines of communication, and the Taliban consolidating gains in rural and remote portions of Afghanistan as well as areas surrounding population centers” (ibid, p.46).

A report published by *Amnesty International* in October 2018 notes that:

“Today, Taliban is in control of or has presence in more provinces than was the case in the past 17 years since they were removed from power...” (Amnesty International

(8 October 2018) *European states should stop forcing people to danger in Afghanistan*, p.1).

References

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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.

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