



EASO Pakistan Security situation

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ACCORD - Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation

BAMF - Germany - Federal Office for Migration and Refugees

The Netherlands, Office for Country Information and Language Analysis, Ministry of Justice

It must be noted that the review carried out by the mentioned departments, experts or organisations contributes to the overall quality of the report, but does not necessarily imply their formal endorsement of the final report, which is the full responsibility of EASO.

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Disclaimer

This report was written according to the EASO COI Report Methodology (2019)¹. The report is based on carefully selected sources of information. All sources used are referenced.

The information contained in this report has been researched, evaluated and analysed with utmost care. However, this document does not claim to be exhaustive. If a particular event, person or organisation is not mentioned in the report, this does not mean that the event has not taken place or that the person or organisation does not exist.

Furthermore, this report is not conclusive as to the determination or merit of any particular application for international protection. Terminology used should not be regarded as indicative of a particular legal position.

‘Refugee’, ‘risk’ and similar terminology are used as generic terminology and not in the legal sense as applied in the EU Asylum Acquis, the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees.

Neither EASO nor any person acting on its behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained in this report.

The drafting of this report was finalised on 13 August 2021. Some additional information was added during the finalisation of this report in response to feedback received during the quality control process, until 17 September 2021. More information on the reference period for this report can be found in the methodology section of the [Introduction](#).

¹ EASO, EASO Country of Origin Information (COI) Report Methodology, June 2019, [url](#)

Glossary and Abbreviations

AJK/AK	Azad Jammu and Kashmir/ Azad Kashmir
ANF	Anti-Narcotics Force
ANP	Awami National Party
AQIS	Al-Qaeda on the Indian Peninsula
ASWJ	Ahl-e-Sunnat-Wal-Jamaat
BRP	Baloch Republican Party
BLA	Balochistan Liberation Army
BLF	Baloch Liberation Front
BRA	Baloch Republican Army
BRAS	Baloch Raji Aajoi Sangar
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
CPEC	China-Pakistan Economic Corridor
CRPF	Central Reserve Police Force (India)
CTD	Counterterrorism Department
Daesh	See Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP)
Deobandi	A conservative Sunni religious movement ²
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
FC	Frontier Corps
FWO	Frontier Works Organization
GB	Gilgit-Baltistan
Haqqani network	Armed insurgent movement led by Sirajuddin Haqqani. This movement is affiliated with the Taliban. Their headquarters are based in North Waziristan tribal district and in south-east Afghanistan, in areas of the Pashtun tribe of the Zadran. ³
Hazara	Ethnic (primarily) Shia Muslim minority group living predominantly in central Afghanistan, western and northern Pakistan and parts of Iran ⁴
HBC	Higher Border Commission
HM	Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, militant group operating in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, led by Syed Salahuddin ⁵
HuA	Hizbul Ahrar, a breakaway faction of the JuA ⁶
HCNR	High Council of National Reconciliation, Afghanistan

² Nelson, M., EASO, EASO COI Meeting Report: Pakistan; 16-17 October 2017, Rome, February 2018, [url](#), pp. 9, 27

³ Stanford University, Mapping Militant Organizations. "Haqqani Network.", last updated: July 2018, [url](#)

⁴ BBC News, Pakistan Hazara minority protests after bombing in Quetta, 13 April 2019, [url](#)

⁵ Al Jazeera, Explainer: Who are Kashmir's armed groups?, 3 March 2019, [url](#)

⁶ Dawn, Taliban splinter group splits further, 13 November 2017, [url](#)

IBO	Intelligence-Based Operation
ICT	Islamabad Capital Territory
IDP	Internally Displaced Person: person or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognised state border ⁷
IJU	Islamic Jihad Union
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IMU	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan: an armed insurgent movement operating in Afghanistan and other countries with fighters originally from Uzbekistan ⁸
ISKP	Islamic State Khorasan Province, also called ISIS, ISIL, IS or Daesh
ISPP	Islamic State Pakistan Province
ISI	Inter-Services Intelligence, one of the intelligence agencies of Pakistan, generally considered to be one of the most powerful Pakistani state institutions
ISPR	Inter-Services Public Relations, media wing of the Pakistani Army
<i>Jamaat-ul Ansar Al-Sharia</i>	An umbrella organisation of Islamist armed insurgent organisations uniting with the aim of reintroducing a platform to reintroduce al-Qaeda ⁹
JuA	Jamaat-ul Ahrar (Assembly of the Free), splinter faction of the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan formed in August 2014 and based in Mohmand tribal district (former FATA) ¹⁰
JeM	Jaish-e-Muhammad (Muhammad's Army), Islamist armed insurgent group active in Kashmir ¹¹
<i>Jundullah</i>	Soldiers of Allah, a group linked to the TTP and IS ¹²
JSMM	Jeay Sindh Muttahida Mahaz
JST	Jeay Sindh Tehreek
JSQM-A	Jeay Sindh Qaumi Mahaz-Aresar
<i>Khassadar</i>	Tribal militia, institutionalised by the British. In recent times, they have been made responsible for security in Pashtun areas, and receive a salary by the Pakistani authorities. ¹³

⁷ UNOCHA, Guiding principles on Internal Displacement, September 2004, [url](#)

⁸ Stanford University, Mapping Militant Organizations. "Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan.", last updated: August 2018, [url](#)

⁹ Zahid, F., Jamaat ul Ansar al-Sharia: The New al-Qaeda Threat in Pakistan, Terrorism Monitor, Volume: 15 Issue: 18, 22 September 2017, [url](#); Zahid, F., The Return of Al-Qaeda to Pakistan, Middle East Institute, 24 August 2017, [url](#)

¹⁰ Jeffery, F., Documenting: Jihadist groups operating in Afghanistan, 2 June 2019, Aurora Intel, [url](#)

¹¹ Zahid, F., Profile of Jaish-e-Muhammad and Leader Masood Azhar, April 2019, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, [url](#), pp. 1-5

¹² Reuters, Pakistan Taliban splinter group vows allegiance to Islamic State, 18 November 2014, [url](#)

¹³ Express Tribune (The), Khasadar force personnel deprived of salaries, 28 May 2016, [url](#); TNN, Pro-merger people should now raise their voice for Khassadars', 14 August 2018, [url](#)

Khyber-IV	Operation launched by the Pakistani army on 16 July 2017 aimed at clearing Rajgal Valley in Khyber Agency of militants ¹⁴
KP ¹⁵	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including former FATA
KPTDs	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts
<i>Lashkars</i>	Pashtun tribal armies or militias that can be mobilised via traditional tribal decision mechanisms ¹⁶
LB	Lashkar-e Balochistan
Lel	Lashkar-e Islam, a militant Sunni group with a sectarian agenda formed in 2004 under Mufti Shakir. ¹⁷ In 2015, Lashkar-e Islam announced that it was joining Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan. ¹⁸
LeJ	Lashkar-e Jhangvi, an armed Sunni militant group with a sectarian agenda in Pakistan formed in 1996. The group has carried out a number of attacks on minority groups in Pakistan and aims at establishing a Sunni caliphate. ¹⁹
LeT	Lashkar-e Taiba, a Sunni militant group, formed in 1990 and initially trained in the Kunar Province of Afghanistan. LeT fights for the unification of the Kashmir region and its integration into Pakistani territory and also attacks civilian targets in Afghanistan. ²⁰
LoC	Line of Control, disputed borderline between India and Pakistan in the regions of Jammu and Kashmir.
LJA	Lashkar-e Jhangvi Al-Alami, a faction of Lashkar-e Jhangvi ²¹
LWJ	Long War Journal
<i>Madrasa</i>	Islamic school
MQM-P	Muttahadi Qaumi Movement- Pakistan
NACTA	National Counter Terrorism Authority
NADRA	National Database & Registration Authority
NAP	National Action Plan, Pakistan government plan to eliminate terrorism ²²
NCA	National Command Authority
NICC	National Intelligence Coordination Committee
NDS	National Directorate of Security, the Afghan intelligence agency

¹⁴ Dawn, Army launches Operation Khyber-4 in Rajgal Valley, 16 July 2017, [url](#)

¹⁵ In this report KP refers to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with the exception in the abbreviation ISKP where KP means Khorasan Province

¹⁶ Dawn, Death by lashkar: The forgotten protectors of Adezai village, 9 May 2016, [url](#)

¹⁷ Dawn, Pakistan bans 25 militant organisations, 6 August 2009, [url](#); Express Tribune (The), List of banned organisations in Pakistan, 24 October 2012, [url](#)

¹⁸ LWJ, 3 jihadist groups merge with Movement of the Taliban in Pakistan, 6 May 2015, [url](#)

¹⁹ USDOS, Country Report on Terrorism 2019, 24 June 2020, [url](#), pp. 283-284

²⁰ Stanford University, Mapping Militant Organizations. "Lashkar-e-Taiba.", last updated: June 2018, [url](#)

²¹ Jamestown Foundation (The), Lashkar-e-Jhangvi al-Alami: A Pakistani Partner for Islamic State, 27 January 2017, [url](#)

²² Express Tribune (The), Fight against terrorism: Defining moment, 25 December 2014, [url](#)

NWFP	North West Frontier Province, the former name for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
PDMA	Provincial Disaster Management Authority
Peace Committee	Often called <i>Aman Jirgas</i> . Members are appointed by the military or police in order to deal with security issues and to bring peace in an area, with the government giving them authority for out-of-court arbitration. ²³
PoR	Proof of Registration card: administrative document issued to registered Afghan refugees in Pakistan ²⁴
PPAC	Prime Minister's Prisoners Reforms Committee
PPP	Pakistan People's Party
PTI	Pakistan Tehreek-e Insaf
PTM	Pashtun Tahafuz Movement, or Pashtun Protection Movement, a grassroots Pashtun civil rights movement ²⁵
<i>Radd-ul Fasaad</i>	Code name for a military operation launched by the Pakistani army on 22 February 2017 ²⁶
<i>Razakar</i>	Pro-government tribal militia ²⁷
RAW	Research and Analysis Wing, India's main intelligence agency
SDLA	Sindhudesh Liberation Army
SDLF	Sindhu Desh Liberation Front
SDRA	Sindhudesh Revolutionary Army
SMP	Sipah-e Mohammed Pakistan, a Shia militant group ²⁸
SSP	Sipah-e Sahaba Pakistan (Army of the Prophet Followers), a former political party following the Deobandi school in Islam ²⁹
TLP	Tehreek-e Labbaik Pakistan
TNN	Tribal News Network
TTP	Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan, (Pakistan Movement of Taliban), the largest militant group in Pakistan. The organisation was founded in 2007 and is an umbrella of mostly, but not all, Pakistani Taliban groups. TTP had pledged allegiance to Mullah Omar, in 2007 the leader of the Taliban in Afghanistan. The main goal behind TTP's establishment was to unite the various factions of the Pakistan Taliban in order to organise synchronised attacks on NATO/ISAF forces in Afghanistan. The group

²³ Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium, The role of local institutions in conflict affected Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pakistan, September 2017, [url](#), p. 12

²⁴ UNHCR, UNHCR welcomes Pakistan cabinet's decision to extend stay of Afghan refugees, 28 June 2019, [url](#)

²⁵ BBC News, Manzoor Pashteen: The young tribesman rattling Pakistan's army, 23 April 2018, [url](#)

²⁶ Dawn, Pakistan Army launches 'Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad' across the country, 21 June 2017, [url](#)

²⁷ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 10

²⁸ Nelson M., EASO, EASO COI Meeting Report: Pakistan; 16-17 October 2017, Rome, February 2018, [url](#), pp. 31-32

²⁹ Nelson, M., EASO, EASO COI Meeting Report: Pakistan; 16-17 October 2017, Rome, February 2018, [url](#), p. 30

also carries out 'defensive jihad' against Pakistani military forces conducting operations in former FATA.³⁰

UBA

United Baloch Army

Zakat

Religious alms

³⁰ USIP, The Evolution and Potential Resurgence of the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan, May 2021, [url](#), p. 4

Introduction

This report aims to provide information on the security situation in Pakistan, which is relevant for the assessment of international protection status determination, including refugee status and subsidiary protection.

This report was drafted by a Country of Origin Information (COI) specialist from Cedoca, the Belgian COI unit, as referred to in the [Acknowledgements](#) section.

Methodology

This report is an update of the EASO COI report on Pakistan, Security Situation, October 2020.³¹ The reference period for the events described in this report is from 1 August 2020 until 31 July 2021. However, to allow a better comparison with 2020, for data on violent incidents and civilian casualties, the timeframe is between 1 January 2020 until 31 December 2020 and 1 January 2021 until 31 July 2021.

This report is produced in line with the EASO COI Report Methodology (2019)³² and the EASO COI Writing and Referencing Style Guide (2019).³³

Defining the terms of reference

For the terms of reference of this report, EASO and the COI Specialist Network on Pakistan provided input to Cedoca. Cedoca defined the terms of reference taking into account this input. The terms of reference can be found in [Annex 2](#) of this report.

Quality control

In order to ensure that the drafter respected the EASO COI Report Methodology, a review was carried out by COI specialists from the countries and organisations listed as reviewers in the [Acknowledgements](#) section. This quality process led to the inclusion of some additional information, in response to feedback received during the respective reviews, until 17 September 2021. All comments made by the reviewers were taken into consideration and most of them were implemented in the final draft of this report.

Sources

The information in this report results from desk research of public specialised paper-based and electronic sources, which were consulted within the time frame and the scope of the research. In addition, the Cedoca researcher, a specialist on Pakistan, sent a query on 7 June 2021 to the following experts. Each of them responded by email within the reference period of this report:

- An academic expert on terrorism in South Asia, email, 22 July 2021.
- Abdul Basit, email, 29 July 2021. Abdul Basit is an independent Associate Research Fellow at the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR) of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore. He has written

³¹ EASO COI reports are available via EASO's website: [url](#)

³² EASO, EASO Country of Origin Information (COI) Report Methodology, June 2019, [url](#)

³³ EASO, Writing and Referencing Guide for EASO Country of Origin Information (COI) Reports, June 2019, [url](#)

extensively in reputed academic journals such as the Perspectives on Terrorism and mainstream Pakistani English dailies on security in Pakistan.

- Fahad Nabeel, email, 4 August 2021. Fahad Nabeel is a Pakistani independent researcher on militancy and cybersecurity. His area of expertise covers the geopolitical issues and military trends of South Asia.
- Kiyya Baloch, email, 12 July 2021. Kiyya Baloch is a freelance Pakistani journalist currently based in Norway.
- Mansur Khan Mahsud, email, 11 June 2021. Mansur Khan Mahsud is the Executive Director of FATA Research Center (FRC).

The query list sent to the aforementioned experts can be found in [Annex 3](#) of this report.

This report relies extensively on data about security incidents and casualties provided by different institutions, which was either published in reports available on their websites or was provided by email to Cedoca.³⁴ Data on the security incidents provided by Pakistani institutes such as the [Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies \(PICSS\)](#), the [Pak Institute for Peace Studies \(PIPS\)](#), [FATA Research Centre \(FRC\)](#) and also the publicly available curated dataset on South Asia from the [Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project \(ACLED\)](#) was used. For civilian casualties, the main sources used are the publications by the [Centre for Research and Security Studies \(CRSS\)](#). Where possible, data on casualties provided by PICSS, PIPS and FRC was also used.

The following descriptions of their respective methodologies are based on each institution's own reports or websites.

The [Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies \(PICSS\)](#) is an independent research think-tank based in Islamabad. PICSS collects statistical data regarding Pakistan-specific anti-state violence.³⁵ PICSS publishes annual security reports and divides incidents of violence mainly in two categories: 1. 'violent militant attacks' and 'Security Forces Actions'. Sectarian violence, general crimes, ethnic or language-based violence are not recorded. The data collected is based on open sources such as newspapers, government sources and own correspondents. PICSS defines violent militant attacks as follows: 'a. Militant Attacks against government, public, or private targets. These targets can be against life or property e.g. government installations such as gas pipelines, electricity transmission lines etc., b. Militant clashes among different militant groups.'³⁶

The [Pak Institute for Peace Studies \(PIPS\)](#), established in Islamabad, was founded in January 2006. One of the founding members is Muhammad Amir Rana, a security and political analyst.³⁷ PIPS monitors relevant incidents in Pakistan on a daily basis, from sources such as correspondents in the different regions, newspapers, magazines, journals and television news channels. The information is gathered in the PIPS conflict/security database and archives which form the base for their annual and monthly reports.³⁸ PIPS divides 'attacks' into five categories:

- '(i) terrorist attacks, including militant attacks, nationalist insurgent attacks and sectarian-related attacks;³⁹
- (ii) incidents of ethno-political violence;
- (iii) cross-border attacks;
- (iv) drone attacks; and

³⁴ PIPS, PICSS and FRC provided data by email to Cedoca. Khan, A. email, 8 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PICSS; Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS; Khan Mahsud, M., email, 6 August 2021 data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of FRC

³⁵ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), p. ii

³⁶ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), pp. iii-iv

³⁷ PIPS, PIPS Team, n.d., [url](#)

³⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 7

³⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 7-8



(v) operational attacks by security forces against militants'.⁴⁰

PIPS defines 'casualties' as follows: 'casualties include both the number of people killed and injured'.⁴¹

The [FATA Research Centre \(FRC\)](#) is a private and apolitical research organisation based in Islamabad and established in 2009. FRC provides only information on the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts (KPTDs) previously known as the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan.⁴² The data collected by FRC is based on sources such as newspapers, government sources and own correspondents in all seven KPTDs. FRC mentions that their research contains certain limitations since the area is undergoing counter-insurgency operations and curfews.⁴³ FRC defines 'terrorist attacks' as follows: 'Indiscriminate use of violence by local, non-local, and foreign terrorist outfits'.⁴⁴

The [Centre for Research and Security Studies \(CRSS\)](#) is a Pakistani research institute that analyses politics and security in the country. Executive Director, Imtiaz Gul, founded CRSS in December 2007.⁴⁵ CRSS publishes annually a report on the security situation in Pakistan and also quarterly reports.⁴⁶ CRSS uses open sources such as national printed and electronic media.⁴⁷ The reports mainly contain statistical data on violence-related casualties.⁴⁸

The [Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project \(ACLED\)](#) is a project collecting, analysing and mapping information on crisis and conflict in Africa, south and south-east Asia, the Middle East, East Asia, Central Asia, the Caucasus, Latin America and others and also provides datasets on conflict incidents.⁴⁹ As ACLED points out, the reader should, however, be aware of some limitations in the data. These limitations are:

'the first is that most of the data is gathered based on publicly available, secondary reports. This means that the data is in part a reflection of the coverage and reporting priorities of media and international organisations. One of the effects of this is that it may underestimate the volume of events of non-strategic importance (for example, low-level communal conflict, or events in very isolated areas). We work to address this possibility by triangulating data sources to include humanitarian and international organisation reports, rather than media alone; and by conducting ground-truthing exercises in which we present data to local organisations and partners to assess its validity among people working directly in conflict-affected contexts'.⁵⁰

Therefore, ACLED's figures in this report are to be considered as an estimate and indication of trends in violence over a given period of time.

ACLED codes security incidents as follows:

- **Battles:** violent clashes between at least two armed groups. 'Battles can occur between armed and organised state, non-state, and external groups, and in any combination therein.

⁴⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 7-8

⁴¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 8

⁴² FRC, About Us, n.d., [url](#); FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 1

⁴³ FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. iii

⁴⁴ FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. iv

⁴⁵ Imtiaz Gul Official Website, Biography, n.d., [url](#)

⁴⁶ For example: CRSS, CRSS Annual Security Report Special Edition 2013 – 2018, March 2019, [url](#); CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#); CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

⁴⁷ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 4

⁴⁸ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#)

⁴⁹ ACLED, About Acled, n.d., [url](#); For more information on ACLED methodology, see ACLED Codebook, [url](#)

⁵⁰ ACLED, Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) Guide for Media Users, January 2015, [url](#), pp. 9-10

Sub-events of battles are armed clashes, government regains territory and non-state actor overtakes territory.'

- **Violence against civilians:** violent events where an organised armed group deliberately inflicts violence upon unarmed non-combatants. It includes violent attacks on unarmed civilians such as sexual violence, attacks, abduction/forced disappearance.'
- **Explosions/remote violence:** events where an explosion, bomb or other explosive device was used to engage in conflict. They include one-sided violent events in which the tool for engaging in conflict creates asymmetry by taking away the ability of the target to engage or defend themselves and their location. They include air/drone strikes, suicide bombs, shelling/artillery/missile attack, remote explosive/landmine/IED, grenade, chemical weapon.
- **Riots:** are a violent demonstration, often involving a spontaneous action by unorganised, unaffiliated members of society. They include violent demonstration, mob violence.
- **Protests:** 'public demonstration in which the participants do not engage in violence, though violence may be used against them. It includes peaceful protests, protest with intervention, excessive force against protesters.'
- **Strategic developments:** information regarding the activities of violent groups that is not itself recorded as political violence, yet may trigger future events or contribute to political dynamics within and across states. Among others it includes agreements, change to group/activity, non-violent transfer of territory, arrests.⁵¹

Data on violent incidents reported in Chapter 2 of this report is based on Cedoca analysis of ACLED public data extracted on 3 September 2021. For the purpose of this report,⁵² only the following type of events were included in the analysis of the security situation in Pakistan: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians. The ACLED data and maps derived from such data, used in this report refer to the timeframe between 1 January 2020 and 31 December 2020 and 1 January 2021 until 31 July 2021 (based on the ACLED curated dataset for South Asia-updated until 3 September 2021).⁵³

Because of the use of a different methodology and terminology by each institution, the data on security incidents and casualties can differ between the institutions. For example, while PIPS records 'terrorist attacks', PICSS records militant attacks. Therefore, chapters [1.4.1 Figures on civilian fatalities](#) and [1.4.2 Figures on casualties 1 January 2021 - 31 July 2021](#) present data from the different sources separately to allow comparison and a clearer understanding of the situation.

On Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Pakistan, information collected from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) in Pakistan and information collected by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) was used.⁵⁴ These IDP data is complemented with anecdotal information on IDP movements in or from the provinces and information on the causes. This information comes mainly from media sources.

In the regional description, a government source was used to describe the population figures in the administrative divisions.⁵⁵ This source was used because it provides the most recent population

⁵¹ ACLED, Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) Codebook, October 2017, [url](#), pp. 7-14

⁵² Fatalities collected by ACLED were not used in this report

⁵³ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 July 2021), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

⁵⁴ UNOCHA Pakistan, email, 9 July 2020; IDMC, GRID 2021 Global Report on Internal Displacement, May 2021, [url](#)

⁵⁵ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017 - National, 19 May 2021, [url](#); Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017 - District Tables FATA, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

figures in Pakistan. Some sources casted doubts about the results of the 2017 census.⁵⁶ The definite census figures of 2017 were published in May 2021.⁵⁷

Due to the deteriorating situation for journalists in Pakistan, several sources mentioned difficulties on reporting concerning the security situation. In an interview via email on 12 July 2021, Pakistani journalist, Kiyya Baloch stated the following:

‘Recent persecution of journalists covering security, human rights, and politics has seriously impacted journalism in Pakistan. In the past year, the country’s powerful military and intelligence agencies have restricted access for media and human rights monitors to conflict areas, such as Balochistan, rural Sindh, and KP. However, in recent times the authorities have prosecuted journalists across the country, especially in Islamabad, for reporting on military intervention in politics and persecuting journalists for simply doing their job. Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has initiated criminal proceedings against journalists, bloggers, and social media activists for exercising the right to freedom of expression. In May, Pakistan’s most-watched television talk show Capital Talk’s host, Hamid Mir, was taken off air just days after speaking out against the country’s military at a protest against an attack on a fellow journalist in Islamabad. This has raised severe fear among little-known journalists covering security, militancy, and human rights in less urbanized cities, who believe that when prominent journalists such as Hamid Mir are not spared how they can be. Following an unprecedented number of attacks against prominent journalists in big cities like Islamabad, Lahore, and Karachi, little-known journalists, including prominent television hosts, live under fear who have largely given up doing stories considered critical to the military and civilian government.’⁵⁸

Fahad Nabeel stated via email on 4 August 2021 the following:

‘Generally, reporting on the security situation in Pakistan has brought a number of challenges for journalists. From limited or no access to areas encountering deteriorated security situation to facing life threats from militant groups and their sympathizers, journalists and media workers have no safety net to rely upon in case things went south and often have to risk their lives in covering stories related to security situation.’⁵⁹

In an interview via email on 11 June 2021, the Executive Director of FRC, Mansur Khan Mahsud wrote the following on the difficulties experienced in the KPTDs:

‘For journalists working in former districts of FATA was always difficult and risky but after the outbreak of COVID-19 it is almost impossible for journalists to freely work in South and North Waziristan tribal districts. But in the rest of the five districts of FATA journalists are not facing to many problems like in South and North Waziristan districts.’⁶⁰

Structure and use of the report

This report provides information on elements and indicators that may help in assessing the need for international protection. In the [first part](#) a general description is given on the security situation in Pakistan. The [second part](#) explains the security situation per province in more detail. The provincial chapters in this report have the following structure: a general description of the province contains

⁵⁶ Daily Pakistan, Mustafa Kamal challenges census 2017 results in SC, 25 April 2018, [url](#); Express Tribune (The), Census 2017: FATA lawmakers dispute census count, 26 August 2017, [url](#); Dawn, Opposition parties suspicious of census results, 27 August 2017, [url](#)

⁵⁷ Dawn, Pakistan’s population is 207.68m, shows 2017 census result, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

⁵⁸ Baloch, K., email, 12 July 2021

⁵⁹ Nabeel, F., email, 4 August 2021

⁶⁰ Mahsud Khan, M., email, 11 June 2021

information on the geography and population; the conflict background takes a longer term look at the security situation in a province, including the armed actors active in the province. A section on recent trends in the security situation describes the nature of the violence, targets, locations, and casualties within the timeframe from 1 August 2020 – 31 July 2021. Finally, conflict-induced displacements are described in a separate section. Recent security incidents described in sub-sections should be read as illustrations of trends in the security situation and not as an exhaustive list of incidents. Both the general and regional descriptions provide information from various sources on the relevant elements and indicators. Information on an indicator as such should never be taken as conclusive, but as indicative for the assessment of protection needs, and should be read in conjunction with other indicators and information on the region.

Administrative divisions

The description of the security situation uses the following administrative divisions:

- The four provinces: Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Balochistan⁶¹ and Sindh;
- Islamabad Capital Territory;
- The two administrative regions: Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan.⁶²

On 28 May 2018, the former President of Pakistan Mamnoon Hussain signed the FATA Interim Governance Regulation (2018) which will govern FATA until it merges with KP by 2020.⁶³ EASO opted to follow the administrative divisions used by UNOCHA, as they produce very clear maps and use the same division systematically in all their publications.⁶⁴ In this report, following UNOCHA's administrative division, former FATA is described in the section of the province of KP (see [Map 1](#)). In this report, the new names of the KPTDs for each of the former tribal agencies in FATA are used.⁶⁵ For a better understanding of these tribal districts and because of their impact on the security situation, the KP tribal districts are described in general terms and then in more detail in the relevant chapter (see [2.2.2 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa \(including former FATA\)](#)).

⁶¹ Balochistan refers to the Pakistani province of Baluchistan (see [Map 1](#))

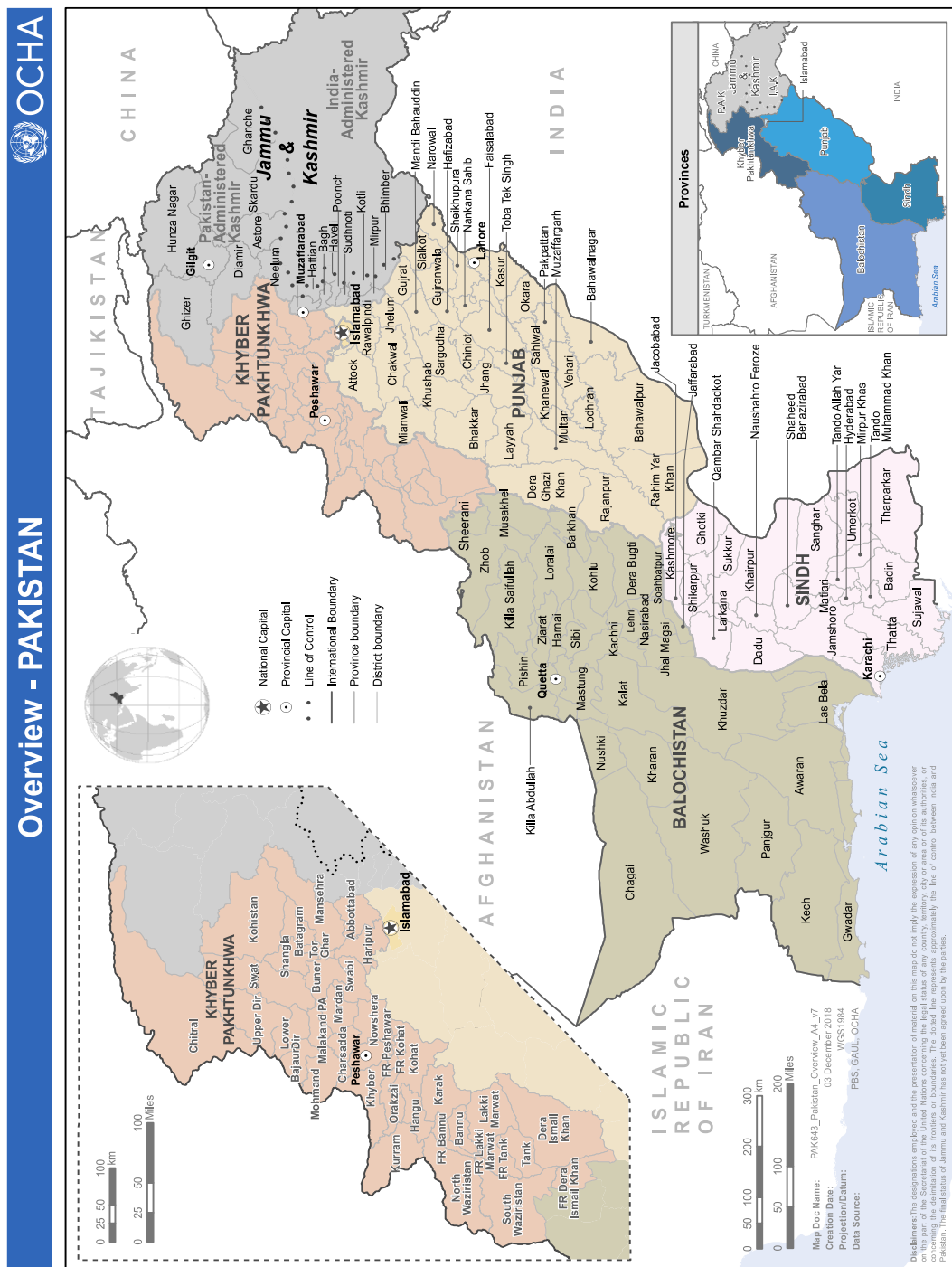
⁶² [Map 1](#): the two regions are situated in the north of Pakistan. On [Map 1](#), they are indicated in the grey area in the north of Pakistan

⁶³ Dawn, President signs KP-Fata merger bill into law, 31 May 2018, [url](#); RFE/RL, Pakistani Tribal Areas Face Long Road To Stabilization, 28 May 2018, [url](#)

⁶⁴ All their relevant maps can be found at: UNOCHA, Humanitarian Response, Maps/Infographics, [url](#)

⁶⁵ Express Tribune (The), Tribal areas re-designated as districts, sub-divisions, 12 June 2018, [url](#); Express Tribune (The), Notification issued for composition of new administrative divisions in Mohmand, Khyber, 20 July 2018, [url](#)

Map



Map 1: Pakistan-Overview © UNOCHA⁶⁶

⁶⁶ UNOCHA, Pakistan-Overview map [map], 3 December 2018, [url](#)

1. General description of the security situation in Pakistan

1.1 Overview of conflicts in Pakistan

1.1.1 Background of militancy

During the Afghan war in the 1980's, Pakistan supported the *mujahideen* against the Soviet occupation in Afghanistan.⁶⁷ By 2001, the Taliban controlled most of the Afghan territory. At the end of 2001, as a consequence of the attacks on 11 September 2001 in the United States (US), they were ousted by a US-led military operation.⁶⁸ Pakistan had the side of the US against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan.⁶⁹ After the US invasion in Afghanistan, thousands of Afghan Taliban and al-Qaeda militants crossed the border 'looking for safe havens' in the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), and in parts of the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan.⁷⁰ Under their influence, several Pakistani groups with a similar ideology continued working together. Taliban policies included a strict application of conservative Islamic principles and resulted in violence against civilians and later the Pakistani authorities.⁷¹ Previously, Pakistan supported the *mujahideen*, and when in 2001 they allied with the US, Pakistan had to relinquish their support for some Islamist groups.⁷²

In 2004, the Pakistan military carried out its first military operation in South Waziristan against militants, which evoked the start of multiple military operations in the former FATA.⁷³ In this timeframe, the Pakistani Taliban (also known as the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan, TTP, [see chapter 1.2.2 Armed groups](#)) started to emerge out of a decentralized network of different militant groups in former FATA under own leadership and clashed with the existing system of political structures there.⁷⁴ In December 2007, the TTP emerged [as a loosely tied umbrella organization] under the leadership of Baitullah Mehsud, a militant leader from South Waziristan.⁷⁵ Violence began to escalate in 2007 in Pakistan, as tribal area-based fighters started to intensify attacks against army and government targets.⁷⁶ Since 2007, the Pakistani security forces have carried out several military operations in the tribal districts aimed at breaking the power of the Pakistani Taliban and their affiliated organisations.⁷⁷ Military operations against the Pakistani Taliban have been one of the main sources of insecurity, causing a large-scale displacement in the north-west of Pakistan.⁷⁸

Pakistan's efforts to negotiate a peace agreement in early 2014 with the Pakistani Taliban were unsuccessful.⁷⁹ The negotiations collapsed in the beginning of June 2014, when militants attacked

⁶⁷ Deutsche Welle, What is Pakistan's militancy issue all about?, 1 December 2017, [url](#)

⁶⁸ CFR, The Taliban in Afghanistan, last updated: 15 March 2021, [url](#)

⁶⁹ Deutsche Welle, What is Pakistan's militancy issue all about?, 1 December 2017, [url](#)

⁷⁰ USIP, The Evolution and Potential Resurgence of the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan, May 2021, [url](#), p. 4

⁷¹ Rashid, A., Descent into Chaos, 2008, pp. 265-270; AI, As if hell fell on me, the human rights crisis in northwest Pakistan, 10 June 2010, [url](#), pp. 10-11

⁷² Deutsche Welle, What is Pakistan's militancy issue all about?, 1 December 2017, [url](#)

⁷³ Semple, M., The Pakistan Taliban Movement: An Appraisal, November 2014, [url](#), p. 5

⁷⁴ USIP, The Evolution and Potential Resurgence of the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan, May 2021, [url](#), p. 5

⁷⁵ USIP, The Evolution and Potential Resurgence of the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan, May 2021, [url](#), p. 5

⁷⁶ Semple, M., The Pakistan Taliban Movement: An Appraisal, November 2014, [url](#), p. 5

⁷⁷ Al Jazeera, Pakistan military warns Pashtun rights group its 'time is up', 30 April 2019, [url](#)

⁷⁸ ECHO, Pakistan-Factsheet, last updated: 31 March 2021, [url](#)

⁷⁹ Deutsche Welle, Are Pakistan's talks with the Taliban bound to fail?, 7 February 2014, [url](#); Guardian (The), Pakistani Taliban claim Karachi attack and leave peace talks in crisis, 9 June 2014, [url](#); Farooq, T., Lucas, S. and Wolff, S., Predators and Peace: Explaining the Failure of the Pakistani Conflict Settlement Process in 2013-4, 10 January 2020, [url](#)

the international airport in Karachi.⁸⁰ On 15 June 2014, the Pakistani government launched a military offensive code-named *Zarb-e Azb* against militant strongholds in North Waziristan.⁸¹ On 25 December 2014, after consultation with different political parties, former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif announced a 20-point comprehensive plan of action - the National Action Plan (NAP) - in order to confront the insurgent threat. The plan encompassed the establishment of special courts for the speedy trial of 'terror suspects', and a moratorium on capital punishment was revoked, after being instated earlier in December 2014. The plan furthermore stipulated the deployment of 5 000 strong counterterrorism forces across the country. Under the plan, 'no armed militias would be allowed to function in the country' and the funding of terrorist organisations would be 'choked'. The plan also envisaged combatting hate speech.⁸²

Despite the Pakistani military efforts, militant groups continued to carry out large-scale attacks in the country.⁸³ In response to these attacks, on 22 February 2017, the government of Pakistan announced a countrywide military operation code-named *Radd-ul Fasaad*.⁸⁴ As stated by New America in 2020, the number of attacks and casualties have declined since 2017.⁸⁵ Since the summer of 2020, reports are claiming the regrouping of the TTP⁸⁶ and 'a silent come back in the tribal districts bordering Afghanistan'.⁸⁷ According to the Diplomat, during 2020, the Pakistani government conducted secret peace negotiations with the TTP, facilitated by the Haqqani Network that is part of the Afghan Taliban and is supposed to have close ties to Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), but either in late December 2020 or early January 2021 the talks failed without result.⁸⁸

In addition, the changing situation in Afghanistan amid the withdrawal of US troops in 2021 raises concern among Pakistani authorities. Pakistani officials fear that the growing violence in Afghanistan will have an effect on Pakistan.⁸⁹ In July 2021, Pakistan has sent army troops to replace the paramilitary forces alongside the Pakistan-Afghanistan border to secure the situation and avoid a new influx of Afghan refugees.⁹⁰

1.1.2 Ethnic and sectarian violence

Militant groups have continuously targeted religious minorities in Pakistan throughout the years. Shias, Hindus, Christians and Ahmadiyya communities were the victims of sectarian violence. According to Christian Solidarity Worldwide, discrimination/sectarian violence does not only stem from militant groups, but also from the wider society.⁹¹ Since 2017, Pakistan is experiencing a resurgence in sectarian violence.⁹² Most frequently, such violence involves hostility between Sunni and Shia's or the filling of blasphemy cases.⁹³ The Guardian attributes the resurgence to the Pakistani government who allows extremist Sunni Muslim groups such as the Ahl-e-Sunnat-Wal-

⁸⁰ Guardian (The), Pakistani Taliban claim Karachi attack and leave peace talks in crisis, 9 June 2014, [url](#)

⁸¹ Burki, J.S., Pakistan's Anti-Terror Offensive: The Zarb-e-Azb Operation, 20 June 2014, [url](#), pp. 1-2

⁸² Express Tribune (The), Fight against terrorism: Defining moment, 25 December 2014, [url](#)

⁸³ Deutsche Welle, Has Pakistan's Zarb-e-Azb military operation failed?, 2 September 2016, [url](#)

⁸⁴ Dawn, Pakistan Army launches 'Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad' across the country, 22 February 2017, [url](#)

⁸⁵ Brookings, Terrorism in Pakistan has declined, but the underlying roots of extremism remain, 15 January 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁶ USIP, The Evolution and Potential Resurgence of the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan, May 2021, [url](#); TRT World, The rebranded 'Pakistani Taliban' may pose a renewed threat, 21 August 2020, [url](#)

⁸⁷ New America, Whither the Pakistani Taliban: An Assessment of Recent Trends, 31 August 2020, [url](#)

⁸⁸ Diplomat (The), Spike in Violence Follows Failed Negotiations Between the Pakistani Taliban and Islamabad, 3 April 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁹ Dawn, Afghanistan situation is volatile, out of Pakistan's control: Moeed Yusuf, 9 July 2021, [url](#); Deutsche Welle, Afghanistan: Can Pakistan 'manage' the Taliban?, 13 July 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁰ Gulf News, Pakistan deploys military troops on Afghan border amid security situation, 24 July 2021, [url](#)

⁹¹ CSW, General Briefing: Pakistan, 1 May 2020, [url](#)

⁹² Guardian (The), Pakistani Shias live in terror as sectarian violence increases, 21 October 2020, [url](#)

⁹³ Deutsche Welle, Pakistan: Hardline Sunni groups on collision course with Shiites, 14 September 2020, [url](#); PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 62-64

Jamaat (ASWJ) and Tehreek-e Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) to campaign in Pakistan.⁹⁴ In its 2021 annual report (covering 2020), the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) noted that religious freedom conditions continued to deteriorate. USCIRF mentioned 'a sharp rise in targeted killings, blasphemy cases, forced conversions, and hate speech targeting religious minorities including Ahmadis, Shi'a Muslims, Hindus, Christians, and Sikhs'.⁹⁵

Examples of ethnic militancy include the case of Karachi (multicultural environment mixed with militant wings of political parties) and the case of Balochistan (Quetta), where the Shia Hazara community has been specifically targeted.⁹⁶ In July 2020, Abdul Basit, research fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), stated the geopolitical situation (the intra-Afghan peace process and the India-China border dispute) has implications on the security situation and on anti-Pakistan militant groups, particularly on the ethno-separatist groups.⁹⁷

1.1.3 Political developments

On 25 July 2018, general elections were held in Pakistan. The run-up to these elections was overshadowed by a series of violent incidents in different provinces, by criminal cases opened against members of the ruling party and by the Prime Minister's accusation that the military had interfered.⁹⁸ Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e Insaaf (PTI) party won most seats for the National Assembly.⁹⁹ On 18 August 2018, Imran Khan was sworn in as Pakistan's Prime Minister.¹⁰⁰ On 9 September 2018, Arif Alvi was sworn in as President of Pakistan.¹⁰¹

The Pakistani military is a prominent player in Pakistan's politics, particularly with regard to domestic security, foreign policy and economic affairs.¹⁰² A May 2020 commentary by the European Foundation of South Asian Studies (EFSAS), an Amsterdam-based think tank, stated that in the wake of the 2013 general elections the military dominance in Pakistan increased.¹⁰³ Serving and retired military officials were given a number of key functions in the government of Prime Minister Imran Khan.¹⁰⁴ In an April 2020 report of the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), analyst Cyril Almeida mentioned that the government of Imran Khan 'struggles to govern and manage the economy'.¹⁰⁵ According to a March 2020 article published by the New York Times, the COVID-19¹⁰⁶ outbreak in Pakistan demonstrated the tensions between the government and the military.¹⁰⁷ In September 2020, the political opposition accused the military establishment of interference in the civilian administration and, hereby, of exceeding its subservient role, as laid down in the country's 1973 constitution. Furthermore, rights groups accuse the military agencies of unlawfully detaining activists, journalists and political workers, and of censoring the media.¹⁰⁸

⁹⁴ Guardian (The), Pakistani Shias live in terror as sectarian violence increases, 21 October 2020, [url](#)

⁹⁵ USCIRF, United States Commission on International Religious Freedom 2021 Annual Report; USCIRF – Recommended for Countries of Particular Concern (CPC): Pakistan, April 2021, [url](#), p. 36

⁹⁶ Azam, M. and Javaid, U., The sources of Militancy in Pakistan, (July - December, 2017), [url](#), pp. 193-194

⁹⁷ Nation (The), (Basit, A.), A New Wave of Terrorism in Pakistan, 14 July 2020, [url](#)

⁹⁸ BBC News, Pakistan election: Who's who and why it matters, 22 July 2018, [url](#); USIP, Despite Violence, Pakistan's Elections Steadily Improve, 16 August 2018, [url](#)

⁹⁹ RFE/RL, Pakistani Opposition Leader Khan Ahead In Early Results, Media Report, 27 July 2018, [url](#)

¹⁰⁰ Guardian (The), Imran Khan sworn in as prime minister of Pakistan, 18 August 2018, [url](#)

¹⁰¹ Dawn, Arif Alvi sworn in as 13th President of Pakistan, 9 September 2018, [url](#)

¹⁰² New York Times (The), Imran Khan's 'New Pakistan' Is as Good as the Old, 17 July 2019, [url](#); EFSAS, The Military's overbearing shadow over Pakistan, 15 May 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰³ EFSAS, The Military's overbearing shadow over Pakistan, 15 May 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁴ Deutsche Welle, Why are Pakistan's generals taking up top civilian posts?, 28 May 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁵ Almeida, C. and Olson, R., Pakistan's Looming Coronavirus Crisis, 1 April 2020, USIP, [url](#)

¹⁰⁶ Coronavirus disease 2019. Pakistan witnessed its first cases of COVID-19 on 26 February 2020; Arab News Pakistan, Pakistan prepares to fight back as two coronavirus cases emerge in country, 26 February 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁷ New York Times (The), 'God Will Protect Us': Coronavirus Spreads Through an Already Struggling Pakistan, 26 March 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁸ Deutsche Welle, Amid civilian-military conflict, does Pakistan need a new social contract?, 24 September 2021, [url](#)

Pakistan witnessed the emerge of the Pashtun Tahafuz (protection) Movement (PTM), a civil rights movement advocating for rights for the Pashtun in the country.¹⁰⁹ Sources are unclear about the date when the PTM emerged. According to Al Jazeera, the PTM was founded in 2016.¹¹⁰ The Diplomat stated that the PTM was 'launched' in 2018.¹¹¹ The PTM has the following main demands: the clearance of land mines from the tribal districts; accountability for targeted killings, for extrajudicial killings, for missing persons, and people who have been held without charge or crime by the government.¹¹² Manzoor Pashteen leads the PTM and the movement holds rallies and sit-ins. The media barely covers these rallies.¹¹³ Two other leaders of the PTM, Mohsin Dawar and Ali Wazir, ran in the general elections in 2018 as independent candidates and each won a seat in the National Assembly.¹¹⁴ During 2018, the PTM and its leadership were labelled as 'traitors, disloyal, and anti-state' by their opponents, according to a 2019 article of the Diplomat. The police and security agencies arrested several members and activists.¹¹⁵ The Pakistani military accused the PTM of being funded by India's main intelligence agency, called Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), and by the Afghan intelligence agency, called National Directorate of Security (NDS).¹¹⁶ Ali Wazir and eight others were arrested¹¹⁷ after the military killed at least three protesters at a checkpoint in North Waziristan on 26 May 2019, according to the PTM.¹¹⁸ Mohsin Dawar was arrested a couple of days later.¹¹⁹ On 21 September 2019, both Wazir and Dawar, were released from prison on bail.¹²⁰ On 27 January 2020, Manzoor Pashteen was arrested in Peshawar together with nine others of the PTM on charges of sedition and hate speech.¹²¹ On 25 February 2020, Manzoor Pashteen was released from prison.¹²² Arif Wazir, a leader of the PTM and brother of Ali Wazir, was arrested on 17 April 2020. He was 'accused of delivering "anti-Pakistan" remarks during a recent visit to Afghanistan.' Arif Wazir died on 2 May 2020 after he was attacked by unknown gunmen in Wana in South Waziristan tribal district. Members of the PTM accused the state of being behind the attack.¹²³ In June 2020, the PTM accepted an invitation by the government of Pakistan for consultation but mentioned that the government should first take confidence-building measures.¹²⁴ In December 2020, Ali Wazir was arrested in Peshawar and transferred to a prison in Karachi based on unspecified charges.¹²⁵ In February 2021, RFE/RL's Gandhara firstly reported that some members of the PTM were willing to establish a political party. The aim of this political party would be to strengthen the PTM's campaign against human rights abuses. The debate of forming a political party caused internal rift in the PTM.¹²⁶ In June 2021, Mohsin Dawar with other founding members of the PTM formally announced the launch of a political party.¹²⁷

¹⁰⁹ BBC News, Manzoor Pashteen: The young tribesman rattling Pakistan's army, 23 April 2018, [url](#)

¹¹⁰ Al Jazeera, Why is Pakistan's Pashtun movement under attack?, 28 January 2020, [url](#)

¹¹¹ Diplomat (The), Pakistan's Pashtun Rights Movement Suffers First Casualty, 5 February 2019, [url](#)

¹¹² Al Jazeera, Pakistan military warns Pashtun rights group its 'time is up', 30 April 2019, [url](#)

¹¹³ Diplomat (The), Pakistan's Pashtun Rights Movement Suffers First Casualty, 5 February 2019, [url](#); Brookings, Why is Pakistan's military repressing a huge, nonviolent Pashtun protest movement?, 7 February 2020, [url](#)

¹¹⁴ International News (The), Two PTM leaders make it to NA, 29 July 2018, [url](#)

¹¹⁵ Diplomat (The), Pakistan's Pashtun Rights Movement Suffers First Casualty, 5 February 2019, [url](#)

¹¹⁶ Deutsche Welle, Is Pakistan's war-ravaged northwestern region turning against the military?, 7 May 2019, [url](#)

¹¹⁷ Al Jazeera, Pakistani legislator Dawar surrenders to authorities, 30 May 2019, [url](#)

¹¹⁸ Al Jazeera, Three killed by military gunfire at Pakistan rights protest, 26 May 2019, [url](#)

¹¹⁹ RFE/RL, Pakistan Arrests Second Pashtun Lawmaker Over 'Attack' On Troops, 30 May 2019, [url](#)

¹²⁰ Dawn, MNAs Ali Wazir, Mohsin Dawar released from jail as bail goes into effect, 21 September 2019, [url](#)

¹²¹ BBC News, Manzoor Pashteen: Activist who dared to challenge Pakistan army held, 27 January 2020, [url](#)

¹²² Dawn, PTM's Manzoor Pashteen released from jail, 25 February 2020, [url](#)

¹²³ Gandhara, Lawmaker Sees State-Sponsored Militants Behind Pashtun Activist's Killing, 11 May 2020, [url](#)

¹²⁴ Dawn, PTM says ready for talks but calls for confidence-building measures, 27 June 2020, [url](#)

¹²⁵ Gandhara, Pakistani Police Arrest Lawmaker, Prominent Pashtun Rights Activist, 16 December 2020, [url](#)

¹²⁶ Gandhara, Political Party Grows Out Of Pashtun Civil Rights Movement, 22 February 2021, [url](#)

¹²⁷ Nation (The), Mohsin Dawar set to launch own party, 7 June 2021, [url](#)

1.1.4 International context

A sign of improvement in the relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan reportedly came with the visit of Pakistan's military and intelligence chiefs to Kabul on 9 June 2020. The visit was described as an ice breaker for the relations between the two countries.¹²⁸ The visit occurred ahead of intra-Afghan peace dialogue which was set to start in mid-June 2020.¹²⁹ The reopening of trade routes between Afghanistan and Pakistan in July 2020 was also seen as a positive and improving sign in the ties between both countries.¹³⁰ At the beginning of July 2020, Abdullah Abdullah, former head of High Council of National Reconciliation (HCNR), announced an official visit to Pakistan as part of the efforts to initiate the intra-Afghan talks.¹³¹ In November 2020, Pakistan Prime Minister, Imran Khan, travelled to Kabul and met with at that time Afghan President Ashraf Ghani to discuss 'bilateral relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan, the Afghan peace process, and regional economic development and connectivity'.¹³² The Biden administration's announcement that the US will withdraw its troops from Afghanistan by 11 September 2021 has sparked new disputes between Pakistan and Afghanistan.¹³³ On 10 May 2021, Pakistan army chief, Qamar Javed Bajwa visited Kabul and stated that Pakistan will support Afghanistan in the peace process.¹³⁴ On 14 May 2021, at that time Afghan President Ashraf Ghani stated in an interview with the German news magazine Der Spiegel that Pakistan 'operates an organized system of support' for the Afghan Taliban.¹³⁵ Pakistan denied these allegations.¹³⁶ In June 2021, at that time Afghanistan's national security adviser, Hamdullah Mohib made some provocative remarks about Pakistan that ignited a diplomatic crisis between both countries.¹³⁷ In July 2021, the daughter of the ambassador to Pakistan was abducted in the middle of the Pakistani capital Islamabad and held for several hours.¹³⁸ This incident further propelled tensions between the two neighbouring countries. Afghanistan withdrew its ambassador to Pakistan.¹³⁹ Afghanistan accused Pakistan of sending thousands of jihadi militants over the border and providing a safe haven for the Taliban. Pakistan in turn accused Kabul of harbouring anti-Pakistani groups.¹⁴⁰ In the first week of August 2021, the Taliban advanced rapidly in Afghanistan, and in less than nine days they took control over most of Afghanistan's provincial capitals, including Kabul.¹⁴¹ On 15 August 2021, President Ashraf Ghani fled Afghanistan.¹⁴² The following day, Taliban leaders declared the war to be over. On 19 August 2021, an official Taliban spokesperson, Zabiullah Mujahid, declared the creation of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. Some analyses point out the competing interests within Pakistan's government about the Taliban take-over.¹⁴³ Overall statements by Pakistani officials are interpreted as welcoming the Taliban take-over.¹⁴⁴ However, some officials have carefully expressed that they support a peaceful resolution in Afghanistan, and

¹²⁸ Express Tribune (The), Afghanistan's Abdullah Abdullah to visit Pakistan soon, 5 July 2020, [url](#)

¹²⁹ AA, Pakistan's military, intelligence chiefs visit Kabul, 9 June 2020, [url](#)

¹³⁰ Diplomat (The), What Does Afghanistan's Latest Outreach to Pakistan Mean for India?, 27 July 2020, [url](#)

¹³¹ Express Tribune (The), Afghanistan's Abdullah Abdullah to visit Pakistan soon, 5 July 2020, [url](#)

¹³² Al Jazeera, Pakistan PM pledges support for Afghan peace in historic visit, 19 November 2020, [url](#)

¹³³ International News (The), Pak-Afghan ties, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

¹³⁴ International Crisis Group, Pakistan: Shoring Up Afghanistan's Peace Process, 30 June 2021, [url](#), pp. 13-14; Reuters, Pakistani general reiterates support for Afghan peace process as violence surges, 10 May 2021, [url](#)

¹³⁵ Der Spiegel, Interview with Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani "I Know I Am Only One Bullet Away from Death", 14 May 2021, [url](#)

¹³⁶ International News (The), Pakistan protests Afghan govt's accusations, 18 May 2021, [url](#)

¹³⁷ Express Tribune (The), Afghan NSA's remarks spark diplomatic crisis, 7 June 2021, [url](#)

¹³⁸ Deutsche Welle, Pakistan: Daughter of Afghan ambassador kidnapped, tortured, 17 July 2021, [url](#)

¹³⁹ Diplomat (The), Afghanistan-Pakistan Ties Fray Further Over Abduction of Afghan Ambassador's Daughter, 22 July 2021, [url](#)

¹⁴⁰ Deutsche Welle, Pakistan: Daughter of Afghan ambassador kidnapped, tortured, 17 July 2021, [url](#)

¹⁴¹ VoA, Taliban's Afghanistan Takeover – a Timeline, 17 August 2021, [url](#)

¹⁴² Al Jazeera, Kabul the day after the takeover, 16 August 2021, [url](#)

¹⁴³ Al Jazeera, Biden defends Afghanistan pullout amid airport chaos, 17 August 2021, [url](#)

¹⁴⁴ Diplomat (The), The Taliban's Careful Cheerleaders: Pakistan's Statements on the Fall of Kabul, 17 August 2021, [url](#)

they have communicated a stance of non-interference in Afghan affairs.¹⁴⁵ Pakistan's prime minister, Imran Khan, stated that Afghans had broken 'the shackles of slavery'.¹⁴⁶ At the beginning of September 2021, a Pakistani delegation led by Faiz Hameed, director of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) visited Kabul and held a meeting with the Taliban.¹⁴⁷

Ties between Pakistan and India deteriorated in 2019 due to a series of events.¹⁴⁸ The heightened tensions started with the February 2019 attack in Pulwama in Indian-administered Kashmir, claimed by Jaish-e Muhammed (JeM).¹⁴⁹ On 26 February 2019, the Indian Air Force conducted airstrikes at Balakot in Pakistan.¹⁵⁰ On 5 August 2019, India removed Kashmir's special autonomous status (Indian-administered Kashmir) from its constitution with a presidential decree. Pakistan reacted by stating that it will expel India's high commissioner in Islamabad and suspend all trade with India.¹⁵¹ In June 2020, a diplomatic feud between India and Pakistan erupted, leading to reducing the diplomatic staff by half in both countries.¹⁵² On 30 June 2020, Prime Minister Imran Khan accused India in the parliament of Pakistan of being behind the fatal attack on the stock exchange building in Karachi.¹⁵³ In August 2020, Pakistan asked the US to mediate and to help deescalate the tensions with India.¹⁵⁴ On 25 February 2021, India and Pakistan issued a joint statement indicating that both nations agreed to end cross border firing at the disputed Line of Control (LoC) in Kashmir.¹⁵⁵ In April 2021, the Pakistani government halted on restarting to import goods from India. Prime minister Imran Khan stated that 'trade with India would not be normalized until New Delhi resumed Kashmir's special constitutional status'.¹⁵⁶ At the end of May 2021, Prime minister Imran Khan reaffirmed this and mentioned 'that bilateral ties with India cannot return to normal until the neighbouring country restores the semi-autonomous status of the disputed Kashmir region'.¹⁵⁷

Pakistan and China have long-standing ties.¹⁵⁸ The relationship between both countries has 'expanded from defence and diplomacy to economy and energy over the past three decades'.¹⁵⁹ The China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has further tightened economic cooperation.¹⁶⁰ In July 2021, a string of attacks against Chinese nationals in Pakistan occurred.¹⁶¹ A bilateral meeting between Pakistan and Chinese officials has taken place on 23 July 2021 in Beijing to discuss security and regional developments.¹⁶² Pakistan increased security measures for all projects where Chinese companies and nationals are involved.¹⁶³

In April 2021, Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi travelled to Teheran and met with President Hassan Rouhani, to discuss 'bilateral ties, regional developments and the ongoing talks in

¹⁴⁵ Diplomat (The), The Taliban's Careful Cheerleaders: Pakistan's Statements on the Fall of Kabul, 17 August 2021, [url](#)

¹⁴⁶ Dawn, PM Imran talks about overpowering 'shackles of slavery' at Single National Curriculum launch, 16 August 2021, [url](#)

¹⁴⁷ AA, Pakistan's intelligence chief visits Afghanistan's capital, 4 September 2019, [url](#)

¹⁴⁸ AA, India-Pakistan in 2019: Mistrust plagues relations, 24 December 2019, [url](#)

¹⁴⁹ Deutsche Welle, India and Pakistan's troubled history, 27 February 2019, [url](#); BBC News, Kashmir attack: Tracing the path that led to Pulwama, 1 May 2019, [url](#)

¹⁵⁰ BBC News, Balakot: Indian air strikes target militants in Pakistan, 26 February 2019, [url](#)

¹⁵¹ BBC News, Kashmir dispute: Pakistan downgrades ties with India, 7 August 2019, [url](#); International Crisis Group, Raising the Stakes in Jammu and Kashmir, 5 August 2020, [url](#)

¹⁵² VoA, Pakistan, India in Diplomatic Feud, 23 June 2020, [url](#)

¹⁵³ Deutsche Welle, Pakistan's Imran Khan blames India for stock exchange attack, 30 June 2020, [url](#)

¹⁵⁴ Dawn, Pakistan urges US to help de-escalate tensions with India, 12 August 2020, [url](#)

¹⁵⁵ Al Jazeera, India, Pakistan agree to stop cross-border firing in Kashmir, 25 February 2021, [url](#)

¹⁵⁶ Deutsche Welle, Pakistan faces dilemma over trade ties with India, 5 April 2021, [url](#)

¹⁵⁷ VoA, Pakistan PM: Normalizing Ties with India Would Be 'Betrayal' to Kashmiris, 30 May 2021, [url](#)

¹⁵⁸ Diplomat (The), Pakistan's Burgeoning Relationship with China, 24 January 2018, [url](#); AA, Sino-Pakistan ties: Diplomacy to strategic partnership, 5 March 2021, [url](#)

¹⁵⁹ AA, Sino-Pakistan ties: Diplomacy to strategic partnership, 5 March 2021, [url](#)

¹⁶⁰ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, How Pakistan and China Negotiate, 24 May 2021, [url](#), p.16

¹⁶¹ Gandhara, Attacks On Chinese Workers In Pakistan Raise Regional Security Questions For Beijing, 30 July 2021, [url](#)

¹⁶² Dawn, Foreign Minister, ISI chief in China for strategic dialogue, 24 July 2021, [url](#)

¹⁶³ Express Tribune (The), New security plan to cover 'all Chinese workers', 26 July 2021, [url](#)

Vienna on the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers.¹⁶⁴ In June 2021, Iran's Special Envoy for Afghanistan, Ebrahim Taherian Fard was on a two-day visit in Pakistan. Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi stressed the need for a closer coordination between Pakistan and Iran regarding the peace process in Afghanistan.¹⁶⁵

The relationship between the United States and Pakistan is one of ups and downs.¹⁶⁶ Pakistan-US relations have been set out around the security situation in Afghanistan and counterterrorism. The Afghan peace process was an important aspect of the relations between both nations.¹⁶⁷ In June 2020, Al Jazeera stated that the US mentioned that the US Special Representative for Afghan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad 'expressed his appreciation' for Pakistan's efforts in the US-Taliban peace deal signed in February 2020 in Doha.¹⁶⁸ In June 2021, the Pakistan government refused the use of its military bases by the US.¹⁶⁹ In mid July 2021, a 'quadrilateral diplomatic forum' was announced between the US, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Uzbekistan.¹⁷⁰ At the end of July 2021, the national security advisors of both countries held talks in Washington about the situation in Afghanistan.¹⁷¹

1.2 Actors in the conflict

1.2.1 State forces

The section below provides a description of the different branches of state armed forces. For a detailed description of the state's ability to secure law and order, see [1.5. State ability to secure law and order](#).

Pakistan Armed Forces

The Pakistan Armed Forces comprise the army, the navy, the air force and paramilitary. The operation command rests with the National Command Authority. The Pakistan Armed Forces have around 651 800 active personnel. They have traditionally been oriented and structured against a threat from India. Since 2008, however, a priority for the army has been counterinsurgency operations. The Pakistan Armed Forces wield considerably domestic political influence.¹⁷²

The Pakistani army consists of 26 combat divisions falling under the control of nine army corps. Most divisions are infantry divisions.¹⁷³ The total active personnel of the Pakistani army is estimated at 560 000.¹⁷⁴ Since November 2016, the Pakistan army is led by General Qamar Jawed Bajwa.¹⁷⁵ In August 2019, the government of Pakistan extended the tenure of General Bajwa by three years. This move came three months before his tenure would have ended in November 2019.¹⁷⁶ On 28 November 2019, the Supreme Court of Pakistan granted a six-month extension after initially blocking the government's decision to extend the tenure of General Bajwa.¹⁷⁷ On 7 January 2020, the National Assembly passed three bills 'to set a higher retirement age for the chiefs of the

¹⁶⁴ AA, Iran, Pakistan seek to bolster trade, border security, 21 April 2021, [url](#)

¹⁶⁵ Dawn, FM urges greater liaison with Iran for Afghan peace, 25 June 2021, [url](#)

¹⁶⁶ Brookings, Will the Afghan peace process be Pakistan's road to redemption?, 25 June 2020, [url](#)

¹⁶⁷ USIP, U.S., Pakistan at 'Convergence' on Afghanistan, Says Pakistani Envoy, 8 July 2021, [url](#)

¹⁶⁸ Al Jazeera, Pakistan, US hold talks on restarting intra-Afghan peace talks, 8 June 2020, [url](#)

¹⁶⁹ AA, Pakistan refuses to allow US military to use its bases, 8 June 2021, [url](#)

¹⁷⁰ Express Tribune (The), New quad launched for Afghan stability, 16 July 2021, [url](#)

¹⁷¹ Dawn, US, Pakistan NSAs meet in Washington to discuss Afghan security situation, 30 July 2021, [url](#)

¹⁷² IISS, The Military Balance 2021, 25 February 2021, [url](#), p. 289

¹⁷³ Reuters, Factbox - Pakistan, India troop strength and weapons, 19 February 2019, [url](#)

¹⁷⁴ IISS, The Military Balance 2021, 25 February 2021, [url](#), p. 290

¹⁷⁵ New York Times (The), Pakistan Army 'Has Greatly Increased Its Clout' Under New Chief, 28 January 2018, [url](#)

¹⁷⁶ Brookings, The curious case of the Pakistani army chief's extension, 4 December 2019, [url](#)

¹⁷⁷ Al Jazeera, Pakistan's top court grants extension to army chief's tenure 28 November 2019, [url](#)

Pakistani army, navy and air force allowing the prime minister to extend their terms at his discretion'.¹⁷⁸

The air force has 425 combat aircrafts and has seven airborne early warning and control aircrafts.¹⁷⁹ Active personnel is estimated at 70 000.¹⁸⁰ Since March 2021, the Pakistani air force is led by Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmad Babar Sidhu.¹⁸¹ The navy consists of nine frigates, eight submarines, seventeen patrol and coastal vessels, and eight combat capable aircrafts.¹⁸² Active personnel is estimated at 21 800.¹⁸³ Since October 2020, the navy is led by Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi.¹⁸⁴

In September 2020, the political opposition accused the military establishment of interference in the civilian administration and, hereby, of exceeding its subservient role, as laid down in the country's 1973 constitution. Furthermore, 'rights groups accuse the military agencies of unlawfully detaining activists, journalists and political workers, and censoring the media'.¹⁸⁵

Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI)

The ISI is one of several and the most important military intelligence service in Pakistan. The ISI's task is coordinating intelligence between the branches of the military, collecting foreign and domestic intelligence, and conducting covert offensive operations.¹⁸⁶ Since June 2019, the ISI is headed by Lieutenant-General Faiz Hameed.¹⁸⁷

According to Hein Kiessling, a political scientist and historian, the ISI reportedly has close ties with a number of extremist Islamist groups.¹⁸⁸ In the 1990s, the ISI established close relationships with groups such as Lashkar-e Taiba (LeT)¹⁸⁹ and Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) to put pressure on India.¹⁹⁰ The US has accused the ISI of supporting groups such as the Afghan Taliban and the Haqqani Network.¹⁹¹ The Diplomat stated in October 2018 that former Afghan Intelligence Chief Amrullah Salah mentioned that the ISI supports 'terrorist groups'.¹⁹² An April 2020 article published by Al Jazeera stated that 'international rights groups such as Amnesty International have repeatedly accused the ISI of using its surveillance programmes to abduct rights activists alongside legitimate security targets'.¹⁹³ The press freedom index annually documented by Reporters Without Borders, which was published in April 2021, outlines that the military controls journalists and mentions that the ISI 'continues to make extensive use of judicial harassment, intimidation, abduction and torture to silence critics both domestically and abroad'.¹⁹⁴

In November 2020, Prime Minister Imran Khan approved the establishment of the National Intelligence Coordination Committee (NICC). The NICC is headed by the Director-General of the

¹⁷⁸ Al Jazeera, Pakistan passes bill legalising extensions for military chiefs, 8 January 2020, [url](#)

¹⁷⁹ Reuters, Factbox - Pakistan, India troop strength and weapons, 19 February 2019, [url](#)

¹⁸⁰ IISS, The Military Balance 2021, 25 February 2021, [url](#), p. 290

¹⁸¹ Dawn, Air Marshal Zaheer Ahmad Babar named new PAF chief, 17 March 2021, [url](#)

¹⁸² Reuters, Factbox - Pakistan, India troop strength and weapons, 19 February 2019, [url](#)

¹⁸³ IISS, The Military Balance 2021, 25 February 2021, [url](#), p. 290

¹⁸⁴ AA, Pakistan's new naval chief takes command, 7 October 2020, [url](#)

¹⁸⁵ Deutsche Welle, Amid civilian-military conflict, does Pakistan need a new social contract?, 24 September 2021, [url](#)

¹⁸⁶ Global Security, ISI Organization, 15 December 2016, [url](#)

¹⁸⁷ Dawn, Military rejects speculation about ISI chief, 23 February 2021, [url](#)

¹⁸⁸ Kiessling, H., Faith, Unity, Discipline The Inter-Service-Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan, October 2016, pp. 1-11

¹⁸⁹ BBC News, Hafiz Saeed: Will Pakistan's 'terror cleric' stay in jail?, 13 February 2020, [url](#)

¹⁹⁰ Kiessling, H., Faith, Unity, Discipline The Inter-Service-Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan, October 2016, pp. 1-11

¹⁹¹ Reuters, Mattis says will try to work with Pakistan 'one more time', 3 October 2017, [url](#); Al Jazeera, Pakistan appoints new head of powerful intelligence agency, 10 October 2018, [url](#)

¹⁹² Diplomat (The), Why Pakistan Isn't Changing Its Taliban Policy, 25 October 2018, [url](#)

¹⁹³ Al Jazeera, Pakistan using intelligence services to track coronavirus cases, 24 April 2020, [url](#)

¹⁹⁴ Reporters Sans Frontières, RSF 2021 Index: Censorship and disinformation virus hits Asia-Pacific, 20 April 2021, [url](#)

Inter-Services Intelligence. The NICC is created as a control organ to coordinate over two dozen intelligence organisations in Pakistan.¹⁹⁵

The Frontier Corps (FC)

The Frontier Corps (FC) is an auxiliary paramilitary force, formally under the authority of the Interior Ministry.¹⁹⁶ Their strength is estimated at 70 000.¹⁹⁷ There are two major subdivisions, one stationed in KP and one stationed in the province of Balochistan. According to the US Department of State (USDOS), the Frontier Corps ‘reports to the Interior Ministry in peacetime and to the [Pakistan] army in times of conflict’. The primary goal of the FC is to maintain security alongside the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.¹⁹⁸ The FC is frequently targeted by Baloch nationalist groups in Balochistan province.¹⁹⁹

Levies and Khassadars

In April 2019, the provincial government of KP announced the merger of former FATA Levies and Khassadar forces into KP police.²⁰⁰ In August 2020, it was formally announced that the Levies and Khassadar forces were a part of the regular police force in the province of KP.²⁰¹ According to a December 2019 newspaper article, the Balochistan Home Minister stated the strength of the Levies in the province of Balochistan to be 30 000. In December 2019, the provincial government in Balochistan was in the process of modernising the Levies Force. Several wings of the Levies Force were created, including a CPEC wing, a Quick Reaction Force and an investigation wing.²⁰²

The Rangers

The Rangers are a paramilitary force under the authority of the Interior Ministry. There are two major subdivisions: the Punjabi Rangers headquartered in Lahore and the Sindh Rangers headquartered in Karachi.²⁰³ The Rangers help local law enforcement, provide border security and fight smuggling. According to a March 2016 publication of the government of Pakistan, their total strength is about 23 515 personnel in Punjab and 27 778 in Sindh.²⁰⁴ No recent figures could be found for the reference period of this report.

The Pakistani police

The Pakistani police, as a primary domestic security force, are responsible for most parts of the country. USDOS reported that the local police is governed under the jurisdiction of provincial governments.²⁰⁵ According to USIP, the Pakistani police is underfunded, and has shortfalls in facilities and equipment. They are facing the difficult task of fighting rising crime. USIP mentioned that: ‘police stations remain focused on their traditional roles of controlling crime and maintaining order

¹⁹⁵ Dawn, PM okays creation of liaison body for spy agencies, 24 November 2020, [url](#)

¹⁹⁶ IISS, The Military Balance 2021, 25 February 2021, [url](#), p. 292

¹⁹⁷ IISS, The Military Balance 2021, 25 February 2021, [url](#), p. 292

¹⁹⁸ USDOS, 2020 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Pakistan, 30 March 2021, [url](#), p. 1

¹⁹⁹ Zahid, F., Baluch Nationalist-Separatist Militant Alliance Threatens Pakistani Security Forces, 12 February 2021, in: Terrorism Monitor Volume: 19 Issue: 3, [url](#)

²⁰⁰ Nation (The), Khasadar, Levies forces merged into KP police, 9 April 2019, [url](#)

²⁰¹ Express Tribune (The), Ex-Khasadars, Levies officers finish first phase of police integration training in K-P, 20 December 2020, [url](#)

²⁰² Express Tribune (The), Govt modernising Levies force, 22 December 2019, [url](#)

²⁰³ IISS, The Military Balance 2021, 25 February 2021, [url](#), pp-290-292

²⁰⁴ National Commission for Government Reforms Prime Minister’s office Government of Pakistan, A functional and legal classification of Corporations, autonomous bodies and attached departments under the federal government, March 2016, [url](#), p. 69

²⁰⁵ USDOS, 2020 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Pakistan, 30 March 2021, [url](#), p. 1

and have not accepted countering terrorism as part of their mission'.²⁰⁶ The police are perceived as 'inefficient, corrupt, brutal, unprofessional and politicised'.²⁰⁷

Pro-government armed militia

Tribal militias (so-called *Lashkars*) emerged in 2008 in the tribal belt. The Pakistani military counted on the tribal militias 'to work as localized forces' and to help fight the Taliban in the tribal area in 2008.²⁰⁸ In May 2016 Dawn reported that the provincial government of KP withdrew their financing.²⁰⁹ In April 2019, Prime Minister Imran Khan stated that 'his country' had no use of armed militias anymore'.²¹⁰

1.2.2 Armed groups

A January 2021 report by RSIS stated that in 2020 'Pakistan's threat landscape was marked by shifting terrorist tactics, the reunification of Pakistani Taliban and re-emergence of Sunni-Shia tensions'.²¹¹ Similar observations were made by Hassan Abbas in a February 2021 article published by the Combating Terrorism Center. Hassan Abbas stated the following:

'an increased crime-terror nexus in urban centres and a new terrorist recruitment drive by Islamic State Khorasan province, or ISK, in Baluchistan has raised alarms. Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is trying to stage a comeback, and sectarianism is also rising, creating a congenial environment for terrorist and extremist organizations, including some Kashmir-focused groups that have evaded counterterrorism scrutiny.'²¹²

In an interview via email on 12 July 2021, Pakistani journalist, Kiyya Baloch stated the following about the main actors of instability in Pakistan in 2021:

'So far, the Baloch nationalist insurgent groups are the main actors of instability in Pakistan, but the nationalist insurgents have carried out the most attacks in Pakistan's southwestern Balochistan province. The Baloch nationalist insurgents have been behind several deadly attacks inside and outside of Balochistan for decades. They have waged a campaign seeking separation from Pakistan. The militant Islamic State group also carried out a fatal attack in Balochistan, killing 11 Shia Hazara coal miners in January 2021. TTP and religiously motivated groups also remain active in northwestern and southwestern Pakistan, often carrying out attacks.'²¹³

The main armed groups in Pakistan are described in detail below.

Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP)

The TTP (also called Pakistani Taliban) was officially formed in 2007 by Baitullah Mehsud, who was killed in 2009 by a missile strike.²¹⁴ The TTP is an umbrella organisation that was formed out of about 13 distinct Pakistani Taliban factions.²¹⁵ The objectives of the TTP are 'the implementation of Sharia law, the ousting of coalition forces from Afghanistan and a defensive jihad against Pakistani security

²⁰⁶ USIP, A Counterterrorism Role for Pakistan's Police Stations, 18 August 2014, [url](#), pp. 3-4

²⁰⁷ Dawn, Sisyphean task, 21 July 2019, [url](#); International News (The), Inefficiency, corruption smears police department, 12 March 2018, [url](#); International News (The), Inefficiency and corruption blotch police, 17 June 2019, [url](#); Nation (The), Police Reforms, 18 June 2021, [url](#)

²⁰⁸ New York Times (The), Pakistan Uses Tribal Militias in Taliban War, 23 October 2008, [url](#)

²⁰⁹ Dawn, Death by lashkar: The forgotten protectors of Adezai village, 9 May 2016, [url](#)

²¹⁰ Diplomat (The), Pakistan Revisits the Usefulness of 'Armed Militias' —For What?, 17 April 2019, [url](#)

²¹¹ RSIS, Annual Threat Assessment-South Asia, 1 January 2021, [url](#), p. 72

²¹² Abbas, H., Extremism and Terrorism Trends in Pakistan: Changing Dynamics and New Challenges, February 2021, [url](#), p. 44

²¹³ Baloch, K., e-mail, 12 July 2021. Kiyya Baloch is a Pakistani journalist based in Norway covering Pakistan.

²¹⁴ USIP, The Evolution and Potential Resurgence of the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan, May 2021, [url](#), pp. 5-6

²¹⁵ Jeffery, F., Documenting: Jihadist groups operating in Afghanistan, Aurora Intel, 2 June 2019, [url](#)

forces'.²¹⁶ In August 2008, the group was banned by the government of Pakistan.²¹⁷ In 2013, the nomination of hardliner Mullah Fazlullah as successor for B. Mehsud was considered a rejection of possible peace talks with the Pakistani authorities.²¹⁸

The TTP is a Pakistan and Afghanistan-based terrorist organisation and operates in both Pakistan and Afghanistan.²¹⁹ Military operations during 2011-2015 eliminated the strongholds of the TTP in the former FATA. Under the strain of military operations in North Waziristan in 2014, the rise of ISKP and tensions within the group over the leadership of Fazlullah, the TTP split into different factions.²²⁰

In June 2018, the TTP confirmed that their leader Mullah Fazlullah was killed by a US drone strike in the province of Kunar in Afghanistan.²²¹ The TTP appointed Mufti Noor Wali Mehsud as the new 'emir' or TTP leader.²²² The United Nations (UN) Security Council added emir Mufti Noor Wali Mehsud to its list of terrorist leaders and operatives associated with al-Qaeda.²²³ In September 2018, the TTP released a redefined code of conduct to outline internal procedures, tactics and efforts to seek unification of the different factions.²²⁴ Different sources indicated that under the leadership of Noor Wali Mehsud the TTP was going through a resurgence and became operationally active again.²²⁵ Noor Wali Mehsud focused on the reunification of various splinter factions. Since July 2020, the TTP announced a string of mergers with influential commanders and rival groups.²²⁶ In July 2020, the TTP communicated that the Hakimullah Mehsud group returned to them.²²⁷ Shortly after, the TTP announced that the Amjad Farouqi group (affiliated with al-Qaeda) had joined the them; this statement was followed by the announcement that the Usman Saifullah Kurd group of Lashkar-e Jhangvi, under Maulvi Khush Muhammad Sindhi, had pledged allegiance to Noor Wali Mehsud.²²⁸ In August 2020, both leaders of Jamaat-ul-hrar (JuA) and Hizbul-ul-Ahrar (HuA) joined the TTP.²²⁹ In November 2020, the TTP announced the mergers of two groups originating from Waziristan, the Mulawi Aleem Khan Ustad and Commander Umar Azzam groups.²³⁰ Multiple sources stated that these mergers indicate a resurgence and may result in an upsurge in the TTP's activity.²³¹ At the end of June 2021, CNN conducted a video interview with Noor Wali Mehsud. He denied all links with al-Qaeda and stated that TTP's war is only with the Pakistani forces.²³²

According to experts interviewed by RFE/RL's Gandhara, which is part of Radio Free Europe's / Radio Liberty's family of news organization covering a selection of reports on Afghanistan and Pakistan from journalists on the ground, the operational command of the TTP has been decentralised.

²¹⁶ Stanford University, Mapping Militant Organizations. "Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan.", last updated: July 2018, [url](#)

²¹⁷ Dawn, Tehrik-i-Taliban banned, 26 August 2008, [url](#)

²¹⁸ Guardian (The), Pakistani Taliban select hardliner Mullah Fazlullah as new leader, 8 November 2013, [url](#)

²¹⁹ USDOs, Country Report on Terrorism 2019, 24 June 2020, [url](#), pp. 300-301

²²⁰ Jeffery, F., Documenting: Jihadist groups operating in Afghanistan, Aurora Intel, 2 June 2019, [url](#)

²²¹ Dawn, TTP chief targeted in Afghan drone strike: US, 15 June 2018, [url](#); LWJ, Pakistani Taliban appoints new emir after confirming death of Mullah Fazlullah, 23 June 2018, [url](#)

²²² LWJ, Pakistani Taliban appoints new emir after confirming death of Mullah Fazlullah, 23 June 2018, [url](#)

²²³ UN Security Council, Noor Wali Mehsud, 16 July 2020, [url](#)

²²⁴ USIP, The Evolution and Potential Resurgence of the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan, May 2021, [url](#), p. 7; Middle East Institute (Hamming, T.), Jihadists' Code of Conduct in the Era of ISIS, 29 April 2019, [url](#), p. 6

²²⁵ USIP, The Evolution and Potential Resurgence of the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan, May 2021, [url](#), p. 7; Fazl-e Haider, S., Pakistan's TTP Mounts Comeback Under New Leadership of Wali Mehsud, 18 June 2021, in: Terrorism Monitor, volume: 19, issue: 12, [url](#)

²²⁶ Diplomat (The), The Pakistani Taliban is Back, 9 March 2021, [url](#)

²²⁷ Diplomat (The), The Resurgence of the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, 18 June 2020, [url](#)

²²⁸ New America, Whither the Pakistani Taliban: An Assessment of Recent Trends, 31 August 2020, [url](#)

²²⁹ Al Jazeera, Pakistan Taliban reunites with two splinter groups, 18 August 2020, [url](#)

²³⁰ Sayed, A., Waziristan Militant Leader Aleem Khan Ustad Joins Tehreek-e-Taliban, 5 January 2021, in: Militant Leadership Monitor, volume: 11, issue: 12, [url](#)

²³¹ USIP, The Evolution and Potential Resurgence of the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan, May 2021, [url](#), p. 14; Diplomat (The), The Pakistani Taliban is Back, 9 March 2021, [url](#)

²³² CNN, Pakistani Taliban leader reacts to Afghan gains after US withdrawal, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

Refraining from appointing commanders for certain areas, the TTP handed over significant authority to local commanders. Each commander leads a unit that numbers around 25 to 30 fighters. In addition, the TTP has increased its financial resources from extortion, smuggling, and taxes on locals and businesses in areas where the group is active. The TTP shifted their tactics and reduced indiscriminate attacks against civilians. This new tactic is described to be in line with the strategy of the Afghan Taliban in Afghanistan. The TTP has sworn allegiance to Afghan Taliban leader Mullah Haibatullah Akhundzada. The TTP has close ideological and organizational ties with the Afghan Taliban.²³³

According to local sources, cited by RFE/RL's Gandhara, the TTP operates from the Bermal district of Afghanistan's eastern province of Paktika. Previously, the group was based in Afghanistan's eastern Kunar and Nuristan provinces.²³⁴ A BBC News Urdu article of April 2020 described that militants of the TTP who are staying across the border may want to relocate to their native towns in the tribal districts. Defense analyst Brigadier (Retd.) Mehmood Shah, quoted in the BBC article, stated that about 9 000 militants wanted to come back to their native towns in the province of KP after seeking forgiveness and promising to quit violence.²³⁵ According to the UN Security Council report of June 2021, the 'return of splinter groups to the TTP fold has increased its strength, of which current Member State estimates range between 2,500 and 6,000 armed fighters, with one Member State assessing that the upper range is more accurate.'²³⁶

In 2020, according to PIPS, the TTP was involved in 46 'terrorist attacks', compared to 82 in 2019.²³⁷ PIPS mentioned also that most of the cross-border attacks in 2020 reported from Afghanistan were also claimed by the TTP. In 2020, the TTP attacks were concentrated mainly in the province of KP.²³⁸ According to a report published by USIP in May 2021, attacks perpetrated by the TTP have 'increased significantly' in the first months of 2021.²³⁹ For example: on 7 March 2021, two police officers in Islamabad and Rawalpindi were killed in separate attacks by the TTP.²⁴⁰ The deaths of two police officers killed in Islamabad in June 2021 were also claimed by the TTP.²⁴¹ In April 2021, the TTP has taken responsibility for a suicide attack on the Serena hotel in Quetta in the province of Balochistan.²⁴²

Jamaat-ul Ahrar (JuA)

The JuA is a faction of the TTP but operates with a degree of autonomy.²⁴³ In the summer of 2014, the JuA split from the TTP.²⁴⁴ In March 2015, the group rejoined the TTP but released its own statements on attacks.²⁴⁵ The Diplomat reported in March 2017 that the group is operating from

²³³ Gandhara, The Rise Of The New Pakistani Taliban, 18 May 2021, [url](#)

²³⁴ Gandhara, The Rise Of The New Pakistani Taliban, 18 May 2021, [url](#)

²³⁵ BBC News Urdu, شمالی وزیرستان میں سکیورٹی فورسز اور شدت پسندوں میں جھڑپیں: کیا شدت پسند قبائلی علاقوں میں دوبارہ اکٹھے ہو رہے ہیں؟ [informal translation 'clashes between security forces and militants in North Waziristan: Are militants regrouping in the tribal areas?'], 16 April 2020, [url](#)

²³⁶ UN Security Council, Letter dated 20 May 2021 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) addressed to the President of the Security Council, 1 June 2021, [url](#), para.78

²³⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 68; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 78

²³⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 78

²³⁹ USIP, The Evolution and Potential Resurgence of the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan, May 2021, [url](#), p. 12

²⁴⁰ Samaa TV, Two police officers killed in Rawalpindi, Islamabad shootings, 8 March 2021, [url](#); Samaa TV, Two policemen martyred in Islamabad gun attack: official, 4 June 2021, [url](#)

²⁴¹ AA, 2 police officers killed in Islamabad 'terror attack', 4 June 2021, [url](#)

²⁴² BBC News, Pakistan hotel bomb: Deadly blast hits luxury venue in Quetta, 22 April 2021, [url](#)

²⁴³ LWJ, Mehsud faction rejoins the Movement of the Taliban in Pakistan, 4 February 2017, [url](#)

²⁴⁴ LWJ, Taliban splinter group Jamaat-ul-Ahrar forms in northwestern Pakistan, 26 August 2014, [url](#); Nation (The), Ex-TTP spokesman surrender a major breakthrough, 18 April 2017, [url](#)

²⁴⁵ Roggio, B. and Weiss, C., Pakistani Taliban faction showcases training camp, suicide attacks, 2 February 2017, [url](#)

Lalpur in Nangarhar province in Afghanistan.²⁴⁶ The US government estimated that approximately 200 JuA militants were present in Afghanistan.²⁴⁷

The leadership of JuA reportedly had ties to al-Qaeda and its emir, Ayman al Zawahiri.²⁴⁸ In 2017, JuA was led by Omar Khalid al Khurasani, a Taliban commander from Mohmand Agency. A spokesperson for the group revealed that Khurasani was killed in October 2017 in a US drone strike in Afghanistan.²⁴⁹ However, Khurasani reportedly released a statement, just days after his presumed death. The US also did not confirm his death.²⁵⁰ In August 2020, the leader of JuA, Omar Khalid al Khurasani joined the TTP.²⁵¹

In August 2016, USDOS added the group to its list of global terrorist organisations.²⁵² In June 2017, JuA was listed as a terrorist group by the UN Security Council.²⁵³ In February 2017, JuA announced its strategy for 2017 and named their action plan Operation Ghazi.²⁵⁴ The group encountered internal rivalry and a faction led by former spokesperson Mukarram formed a separate group called Hizbul-ul Ahrar (HuA) in November 2017.²⁵⁵ Different sources stated that since then the JuA was losing operational strength and human resources.²⁵⁶ According to PIPS in its annual report of 2019 the weak organisational structure is due to internal rivalry and important commanders have reunited with the TTP and surrendered to the security forces.²⁵⁷ The main targets of the group were military and law enforcement personnel, government buildings, politicians, minority groups and lawyers.²⁵⁸

In 2020, according to PIPS, JuA was involved in three 'terrorist attacks', compared to one in 2019.²⁵⁹ According to RFE/RL's Gandhara, in August 2020 JuA claimed responsibility for an attack in Chaman in the province of Balochistan whereby a vehicle from Pakistan's Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) was targeted.²⁶⁰

Hizbul Ahrar (HuA)

Hizbul Ahrar is a breakaway faction of the JuA. In November 2017, Mukkaram Khan announced the formation of HuA in a video message.²⁶¹ Mukkaram Khan is a commander originating from Mohmand tribal district. This group is orientated against the US and its allies.²⁶² In April 2018, HuA announced Operation Ibne Qasim²⁶³, directed against the Pakistani security forces while promising not to harm civilians, according to Farhan Jeffery on Twitter in April 2018.²⁶⁴ In September 2018, the

²⁴⁶ Diplomat (The), Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the 'Good Taliban', 10 March 2017, [url](#)

²⁴⁷ USDOD, Operation Freedom's Sentinel Lead Inspector General report to the United States Congress January 1, 2019-March 31, 2019, 5 August 2019, [url](#), p. 25

²⁴⁸ Roggio, B. and Weiss, C., Pakistani Taliban faction showcases training camp, suicide attacks, 2 February 2017, [url](#)

²⁴⁹ Express Tribune (The), Khorasani confirmed dead in US drone strike, 19 October 2017, [url](#)

²⁵⁰ LWJ, Leader of Jamaat-ul-Ahrar emerges after reports of his death, 22 October 2017, [url](#)

²⁵¹ Al Jazeera, Pakistan Taliban reunites with two splinter groups, 18 August 2020, [url](#)

²⁵² USDOS, State Department Terrorist Designations and State sponsors of terrorism, 19 May 2019, [url](#)

²⁵³ UN Security Council, Jamaat-ul-Ahrar (JuA), 27 June 2018, [url](#); Dawn, Pakistan welcomes UNSC sanctions on Jamaatul Ahrar, 7 July 2017, [url](#)

²⁵⁴ FRC, Strategic Code of Conduct for "Operation Ghazi", 16 February 2017, [url](#)

²⁵⁵ Dawn, Taliban splinter group splits further, 13 November 2017, [url](#)

²⁵⁶ RSIS, Annual Threat Assessment-South Asia, January 2019, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, [url](#), p. 54; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 74; PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2018, 19 April 2019, [url](#), pp. 23-24

²⁵⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 69

²⁵⁸ Dawn, Pakistan welcomes UNSC sanctions on Jamaatul Ahrar, 7 July 2017, [url](#)

²⁵⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 70; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 80

²⁶⁰ Gandhara, Bomb Kills Five In Troubled Pakistani Border Town, 10 August 2020, [url](#)

²⁶¹ Dawn, Taliban splinter group splits further, 13 November 2017, [url](#)

²⁶² Pakistan Today, Hizbul Ahrar takes birth as internal rifts tear Jamaatul Ahrar apart, 13 November 2017, [url](#)

²⁶³ ITCT, Hizbul Ahrar, n.d., [url](#)

²⁶⁴ FJ [Twitter], posted on: 24 April 2018, [url](#)

Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) claimed that it had neutralised a network of HuA.²⁶⁵ In February 2019, HuA announced an operation against the Pakistani security forces named Operation Shamzai.²⁶⁶ In January 2020, HuA announced a new operation named Operation Haqqani.²⁶⁷

In August 2019, HuA was banned in Pakistan under Section 11-B of Pakistan's Anti-Terrorism Act.²⁶⁸ In an article of December 2019 expert Animesh Roul stated that HuA carried out 'targeted attacks in regular intervals.' In 2019, the HuA killed several Pakistani soldiers and police officers in targeted attacks. Roul stated further that 'one of the core strengths of HuA remains its cross-border presence and ability to launch attacks on Pakistani forces from Afghan soil by employing suicide bombers and hit and run tactics'.²⁶⁹ In February 2020, BBC News reported that the Afghan forces conducted a raid on HuA in the province of Nangarhar in Afghanistan. The fact that the Afghan forces targeted HuA surprised members of the HuA, as they had never carried out attacks inside Afghanistan.²⁷⁰ In August 2020, HuA rejoined the TTP.²⁷¹

In 2020, according to PIPS, HuA was involved in four 'terrorist attacks', compared to fourteen in 2019.²⁷² PIPS stated that two of the 2020 attacks occurred in the province of Punjab and one each in the provinces of KP and Balochistan.²⁷³

The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)

The original aim of IMU is to overthrow the Uzbek government.²⁷⁴ The IMU has been active in the Pakistani tribal region since late 2001, where it regrouped after sustaining heavy losses fighting alongside the Taliban during the US invasion of Afghanistan. Under the leadership of Toher Yuldash the group targeted the Pakistani security forces from its bases in North and South Waziristan. Since 2007, the IMU formed an alliance with the TTP and fought alongside them. In 2009, Yuldashev was killed in a drone attack. Pakistan's military operations forced the IMU to flee to North Waziristan where it started to cooperate with the Haqqani Network. Osman Odil became the new leader of the organisation in 2010.²⁷⁵ On 8 June 2014, IMU militants staged a major attack on Karachi Airport.²⁷⁶ The Pakistani army subsequently made it a priority to eradicate the group. Most of its militants fled to Afghanistan.²⁷⁷ In 2015, a radical splinter group of IMU - the Islamic Jihad Union (IJU) - tried to export terrorism from its Pakistan base.²⁷⁸ At the end of March 2015, the IMU reportedly pledged allegiance to ISKP.²⁷⁹ 'However, some elements within IMU retained the name of the group along with its alliance with al-Qaeda, the Afghan Taliban and the TTP. [...] Remnants of IMU continue to fight alongside the Taliban in Afghanistan'.²⁸⁰ In July 2020, a brief in Terrorism Monitor stated that the IMU 'is largely defunct and the relationship with the Taliban has been severely damaged by

²⁶⁵ Dawn, CTD Punjab 'breaks' TTP, Hizbul Ahrar network, 18 September 2018, [url](#)

²⁶⁶ Jeffery, F., Documenting: Jihadist groups operating in Afghanistan, Aurora Intel, 2 June 2019, [url](#)

²⁶⁷ PICSS, 2019 Annual Security Assessment Report, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 32

²⁶⁸ Dawn, Nacta slaps ban on two more organisations, 23 August 2019, [url](#)

²⁶⁹ Roul, A., Hizb ul-Ahrar: Pakistan's Cross-border Taliban Problem Remains Critical, 17 December 2019, Terrorism Monitor, volume 17, issue 23, [url](#)

²⁷⁰ BBC News, Crackdown on militants as US and Afghan Taliban seek deal, 15 February 2020, [url](#)

²⁷¹ Al Jazeera, Pakistan Taliban reunites with two splinter groups, 18 August 2020, [url](#)

²⁷² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 70; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 81

²⁷³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 80

²⁷⁴ RFE/RL, What Next For The Islamic Movement Of Uzbekistan?, 23 August 2015, [url](#)

²⁷⁵ RFE/RL, What Next For The Islamic Movement Of Uzbekistan?, 23 August 2015, [url](#)

²⁷⁶ BBC News, Karachi airport: Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan claims attack, 11 June 2014, [url](#)

²⁷⁷ RFE/RL, What Next For The Islamic Movement Of Uzbekistan?, 23 August 2015, [url](#)

²⁷⁸ RFE/RL, What Next For The Islamic Movement Of Uzbekistan?, 23 August 2015, [url](#)

²⁷⁹ Stanford University, Mapping Militant Organizations, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, last updated August 2018, [url](#)

²⁸⁰ Jeffery, F., Documenting: Jihadist groups operating in Afghanistan, Aurora Intel, 2 June 2019, [url](#)

defections to IS-K [...]'.²⁸¹ No further information could be found about the IMU in Pakistan during the reference period.

Al-Qaeda

Following the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, many al-Qaeda operatives withdrew to the Pakistani tribal regions. 'By 2010, Al-Qaeda had not only established links with the rebellious clansmen, but also with longstanding sectarian militias and even within parts of the "mujahideen" factions once patronised by, but increasingly irate with, the Pakistani state.'²⁸² Among their ranks were also Arabs, Uzbeks, Chechens and Chinese Muslims.²⁸³ In former FATA, al-Qaeda had aligned itself with several militant groups, offering support with manpower, training and propaganda skills. It also attacked the government of Pakistan, which was viewed as apostate for allying itself with the US-led war on terrorism. Al-Qaeda attempted to develop privileged relations with the IJU in former FATA.²⁸⁴ According to Farhan Zahid, al-Qaeda has suffered losses and setbacks. In August 2017, al-Qaeda was attempting to resurrect itself in Pakistan, possibly with the help of the Jamaat-ul Ansar al-Sharia.²⁸⁵ According to an article published by Combating Terrorism Center in September 2017, the presence of al-Qaeda in Karachi 'appears to have grown in recent years'.²⁸⁶

According to the UN Security Council report of June 2021, Al-Qaeda resides in the border region of Afghanistan with Pakistan and works closely with Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS). The AQIS has cadres mainly from Pakistan and Afghanistan with some from India, Bangladesh and Myanmar.²⁸⁷ Despite the fact that the group did not perpetrate any attacks in Pakistan in 2020 and previous years, PIPS stated that law enforcement agencies in Pakistan still consider Al-Qaeda to be a threat.²⁸⁸ No further information could be found about al-Qaeda in Pakistan during the reference period.

Jamaat-ul Ansar Al-Sharia

Jamaat-ul Ansar Al-Sharia is believed to be an umbrella organisation of Islamist terrorist organisations endeavouring to converge into a platform to reintroduce al-Qaeda and restart armed activities under its banner.²⁸⁹ It emerged in Pakistan in April 2017. A security official, cited in Dawn in September 2017, stated that the exact date of the formation of this group was still not known though it was initially believed that 'the genesis of the group could be traced to Pakistanis fighting in Syria.' In 2017, the group operated in Karachi. The same article by Dawn in September 2017 mentioned that the group 'has been busted with almost all its members taken into custody and being interrogated'.²⁹⁰

PIPS did not attribute any attack to this group in the 2020 annual security report.²⁹¹ No further information could be found about the Jamaat-ul Ansar Al-Sharia in Pakistan within the consulted sources during the reference period.

²⁸¹ Perkins, M.B., What Will Come of Uzbek and Central Asian Militant Groups Fighting Alongside the Taliban?, 28 July 2020, Terrorism Monitor, volume: 18, issue: 15, [url](#)

²⁸² TRT World, Al Qaeda: Ten years after Osama bin Laden, 3 May 2021, [url](#)

²⁸³ Reuters Alertnet, Analysis - The ties that kill: Pakistan militant groups uniting, 30 May 2010, [url](#)

²⁸⁴ CSIS, Religion and militancy in Pakistan and Afghanistan, 29 June 2012, [url](#), pp. 67-68

²⁸⁵ Zahid, F., The Return of Al-Qaeda to Pakistan, Middle East Institute, 24 August 2017, [url](#)

²⁸⁶ Combating Terrorism Center, Al-Qa'ida in Pakistan: A Metric Problem?, September 2017, [url](#)

²⁸⁷ UN Security Council, Letter dated 20 May 2021 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) addressed to the President of the Security Council, 1 June 2021, [url](#), p. 3, p. 13

²⁸⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 82

²⁸⁹ Zahid, F., Jamaat ul Ansar al-Sharia: The New al-Qaeda Threat in Pakistan, 22 September 2017, [url](#); Zahid, F., The Return of Al-Qaeda to Pakistan, Middle East Institute, 24 August 2017, [url](#)

²⁹⁰ Dawn, The rise and 'fall' of Ansarul Sharia Pakistan, 9 September 2017, [url](#)

²⁹¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021 [url](#)

The Punjabi Taliban

‘The Punjabi Taliban network is a loose conglomeration of members of banned militant groups of Punjabi origin’, mostly sectarian and Kashmir insurgency focused, who have developed strong links with the TTP. The major factions of this network include operatives from LeJ, Sipah-e Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) and JeM and their splinter groups (for details on these groups, see their separate sections in this chapter).²⁹² In 2014, the TTP Punjab chapter was led by Maulana Asmatullah Muawiya.²⁹³ In September 2014, Muawiya first intended to shift his militant activities from Pakistan to Afghanistan, and then some days later announced he would give up armed struggle in Pakistan entirely and use peaceful means instead.²⁹⁴ In April 2016, it was reported that the Punjabi Taliban was considered weakened and scattered.²⁹⁵ On 30 July 2020, the TTP announced the inclusion of the Amjad Farouqi group of the so-called Punjabi Taliban.²⁹⁶

Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP)

The first reports about ISKP (also called ISIS, ISIL, IS, or Daesh) appearing in Pakistan date back to the beginning of 2015.²⁹⁷ IS envisaged global expansion of the caliphate and designated the region of Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran and the Central Asian republics as Wilayat Khorasan (ISKP – Islamic State Khorasan Province).²⁹⁸ In May 2019, Islamic State announced the creation of Wilayat Pakistan (Islamic State Pakistan Province, ISPP)²⁹⁹ after claiming multiple attacks in the province of Balochistan.³⁰⁰ A former TTP commander from Karachi, Daud Mehsud, had been appointed as ‘emir’ of the Islamic State Province of Pakistan (ISPP).³⁰¹ ISPP is believed to be autonomous from ISIS’s central command.³⁰² In 2016 it was reported that different militant groups pledged allegiance to the leader of IS, al-Baghdadi.³⁰³ The group has strong alliances with anti-Shia Sunni militant groups.³⁰⁴

In 2017, Farhan Zahid stated that ISKP had managed to increase its influence by forming ‘tactical alliances’ with similar local militant groups. ‘ISKP was likely to assert its dominance through local affiliates in urban centres of Pakistan’.³⁰⁵ Different sources reported that in 2016-2017 ISKP had recruitment networks in several major urban regions such as Peshawar and Karachi.³⁰⁶ In a report of

²⁹² Abbas, H., Defining the Punjabi Taliban Network, 15 April 2009, [url](#)

²⁹³ TRT World, Pakistani Taliban: Between infighting, government crackdowns and Daesh, 18 April 2019, [url](#)

²⁹⁴ Dawn, Punjabi Taliban call off armed struggle in Pakistan, 13 September 2014, [url](#); Dawn, Punjabi Taliban give up ‘armed struggle’, 14 September 2014, [url](#)

²⁹⁵ International News (The), Who are Punjabi Taliban?, 24 April 2016, [url](#)

²⁹⁶ RSIS, Annual Threat Assessment-South Asia, 1 January 2021, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, [url](#), p. 74

²⁹⁷ Henry Jackson Society (The), ISIS Khorasan: Presence and potential in the Afghanistan Pakistan- region, October 2017, [url](#), pp. 4-7; USIP, The Islamic State in Pakistan, 21 September 2016, [url](#)

²⁹⁸ Jamestown Foundation, Islamic State in Afghanistan Ready to Capitalize on Mullah Omar’s Death, 3 September 2015, [url](#)

²⁹⁹ Throughout this report reference is made to ISKP.

³⁰⁰ Jeffery, F., What Does Islamic State’s Wilayat al-Hind & Wilayat Pakistan Mean?, ITCT, 20 May 2019, [url](#)

³⁰¹ RSIS, RSIS, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, Annual Threat Assessment-South Asia, January 2020, [url](#), p. 58

³⁰² Newlines Institute for Strategy and Policy (The), ISIS in South Asia: Struggle for Survival Beyond ‘Khorasan’, 29 July 2020, [url](#)

³⁰³ Jamestown Foundation (The), ‘Growing Evidence of Islamic State in Pakistan’, 4 February 2016, [url](#); Diplomat (The), The Islamic State Threat Is Real in Pakistan, 18 February 2016, [url](#)

³⁰⁴ RSIS, RSIS, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, Annual Threat Assessment-South Asia, January 2020, [url](#), p. 58; Basit, A., The US-Taliban Deal and Expected US Exit from Afghanistan: Impact on South Asian Militant Landscape, June 2020, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, volume 12, issue 4, [url](#), p. 13

³⁰⁵ Zahid, F., ‘IS Footprint in Pakistan: Nature of Presence, Method of Recruitment, and Future Outlook’, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, Volume 9, Issue 5, May 2017, [url](#)

³⁰⁶ Jamestown Foundation (The), ‘Growing Evidence of Islamic State in Pakistan’, 4 February 2016, [url](#); New Humanitarian (The), Islamic State ramps up recruitment in Pakistan, 11 January 2017, [url](#); Wall Street Journal (The), Pakistan Frets Over Potential Appeal of Islamic State, 23 February 2016, [url](#); VoA, Islamic State Takes Root, Grows Along Afghan-Pakistan Border, 1 March 2017, [url](#)

May 2019 by Huzaifa Baloch, a writer on security issues, it is stated that ISKP has ex-TTP commanders within its ranks and this makes it easy for this group to carry out attacks in Pakistan.³⁰⁷ In July 2021, it was reported that in the last two years law enforcement agencies in the province of Sindh have killed or arrested more than 118 ISKP militants. The law enforcement agencies stated that they destroyed a network of ISKP in Manghopir.³⁰⁸ In July 2021, a message on Twitter circulated stating that areas in KP province that formerly were under ISPP, now have been integrated under ISKP.³⁰⁹

In 2020, PIPS documented that ISPK claimed responsibility for two 'terrorist attacks', one in Peshawar and one in Quetta. In 2019, ISKP only claimed one attack.³¹⁰

Haqqani Network

The Haqqani network is an insurgent group that was formed in the late 1980s.³¹¹ Jalaluddin Haqqani founded the Haqqani Network.³¹² In September 2018, Jalaluddin Haqqani reportedly died aged 71.³¹³ In July 2015, Sirajuddin Haqqani was appointed as one of two deputy heads of the Afghan Taliban.³¹⁴ The group's leadership historically maintained a power base around Pakistan's tribal areas.³¹⁵

According to a USDOS report of May 2020:

'The DIA also told the DoD OIG that Pakistan continues to harbor the Taliban and associated militant groups in Pakistan, such as the Haqqani Network, which maintains the ability to conduct attacks against Afghan interests.'³¹⁶

It was reported in 2017 that the Haqqani Network also had a long-standing relationship with the ISI, which led to frictions between Pakistan and the US.³¹⁷ A 2012 source stated that the Haqqani network was also believed to have ties with al-Qaeda.³¹⁸ A United States general stated in November 2014 that ongoing Pakistani military operations in North Waziristan have 'disrupted' the military capabilities of the Haqqani Network.³¹⁹ The group 'is active along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border and across much of south-eastern Afghanistan, particularly in Loya Paktia'.³²⁰ The Haqqani Network relocated in 2014 from North Waziristan to Kurram under pressure of these military operations.³²¹ No information could be found within the consulted sources during the reference period of attacks carried out by the Haqqani Network in Pakistan.

Sipah-e Sahaba Pakistan (SSP)

SSP is a former Deobandi political party founded in the early 1980s. Sunni cleric Maulana Haq Nawaz Jhangvi founded Lashkar-e Jhangvi, the militant wing of SSP in Jhang, Punjab. Its principal aim is to

³⁰⁷ Baloch, H., Peace Talks, ISKP and TTP--The Future in Question, ITCT, 6 May 2019, [url](#)

³⁰⁸ International News (The), In last two years: Was large Daesh network dismantled in Karachi?, 5 July 2021, [url](#)

³⁰⁹ ValleRiccardo, [Twitter], posted on: 18 July 2021, [url](#)

³¹⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 70; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 81-82

³¹¹ USDOS, Country Report on Terrorism 2019, 24 June 2020, [url](#), p. 258

³¹² Deutsche Welle, Taliban: Haqqani network leader dead, 4 September 2018, [url](#)

³¹³ AP, Death of Afghan group's founder unlikely to weaken militants, 4 September 2018, [url](#)

³¹⁴ Ruttig, T., The New Taleban Deputy Leaders: Is there an obvious successor to Akhtar Mansur?, 10 February 2016, AAN, [url](#)

³¹⁵ VoA, What Is the Haqqani Network?, 1 June 2017, [url](#); Economic Times (The), US asks Pakistan to act against Haqqani network, other terror groups, 27 February 2018, [url](#)

³¹⁶ USDOD, Lead Inspector General for Operation Freedom's Sentinel I Quarterly Report to the United States Congress I January 1, 2020 - March 31, 2020, 19 May 2020, [url](#), p. 5

³¹⁷ VoA, Haqqani Network Remains Primary Source of Pakistan-US Tensions, 29 November 2017, [url](#)

³¹⁸ CSIS, Religion and militancy in Pakistan and Afghanistan, 29 June 2012, [url](#), p. 63

³¹⁹ Dawn, Operation Zarb-e-Azb disrupted Haqqani network; US general, 6 November 2014, [url](#)

³²⁰ USDOS, Country Report on Terrorism 2018, 1 November 2019, [url](#), p. 282

³²¹ LWJ, US drones target jihadist 'hideouts' in Pakistan's tribal areas, 22 February 2016, [url](#)

fight Shia influence in Pakistan.³²² Jhangvi was assassinated in 1990³²³ and replaced by Maulana Azam Tariq. In 2003, Tariq was killed.³²⁴ In July 2005, Dawn identified Maulana Ali Sher Hyderi [Haideri] as a leader of the SSP.³²⁵ It was reported that the organisation had close ties with the Jihadi organisation JeM and the TTP, and was a part of the Punjabi Taliban network. Several reports labelled SSP as a violent group. At the beginning of the century, it was responsible for the murder of Shia militants, ordinary Shia citizens and attacks on Shia mosques. Although the group denied involvement in violence, former President Musharraf banned it in 2002.³²⁶ A part of SSP rebranded itself as Ah-le Sunnat Wal Jama'at, which under the leadership of Maulana Muhammad Ahmed Ludhianvi became a political party.³²⁷

Other members left SSP to form Lashkar-e Jhangvi (LeJ), which was said by observers to be even more radical than the SSP. Other extremist splinter groups of SSP include the Jhangvi Tigers, Al-Haq Tigers, Tanzeem-ul Haq, Al-Farooq and the Al-Badr Foundation.³²⁸ The core of SSP supporters was made up of Sunni peasantry in the rural Jhang and merchant and trader classes in the urban centres. The *madrassas* (Islamic schools) were a major recruiting ground for SSP. The group's cadres received *jihadi* training in Afghanistan. To fund its organisation and activities, SSP 'relied on contributions from its supporters in the form of *zakat* (religious alms)'. Sunni business people contributed as well. Observers believed that SSP received considerable financial and logistic backing from Saudi government who wanted 'to curb Iran's influence over the Shia population in Pakistan'.³²⁹ In 2007, it was reported that SSP had a political party; it also had a student wing, an insurance company, many offices in all districts of the Punjab and a nationwide network.³³⁰

Lashkar-e Jhangvi (LeJ)

LeJ is a Deobandi militant group founded in 1996, when a number of militants led by Riaz Basra, Akram Lahori and Malik Ishaq broke away from SSP Pakistan. LeJ is not a political party but a purely paramilitary organisation.³³¹ USDOS noted in June 2020 that LeJ was formed as the militant wing of SSP to attack the Shia community.³³² LeJ was openly supported by the ISI, which used the group as a proxy in Afghanistan and India as well to counter Shia militant groups.³³³ LeJ was banned by the Pakistan government in 2001 and was placed on the US terrorist list in 2003.³³⁴ Its underground violent activities continued, especially against Shias and members of the Hazara community in Quetta.³³⁵

Although most of the violence used by LeJ targets Shias, the organisation also cultivated a radical stance against Christians, Ahmadi and Sufi Muslims.³³⁶ A substantial part of the leadership of LeJ

³²² Nelson, M., EASO, EASO COI Meeting Report: Pakistan; 16-17 October 2017, Rome, February 2018, [url](#), p. 30

³²³ Jamestown Foundation (The), 'Sipah-e-Sahaba: Fomenting Sectarian Violence in Pakistan', 5 May 2005, [url](#)

³²⁴ GEO News TV, Suspect in Maulana Azam Tariq's murder arrested from Islamabad airport, 11 May 2017, [url](#)

³²⁵ Dawn, Hunt intensified; 200 held: Prominent SSP leader arrested in Khairpur, 21 July 2005, [url](#)

³²⁶ Dawn, 2009: Southern Punjab extremism battle between haves and have-nots, 21 May 2011, [url](#); NOREF, Sectarian violence: Pakistan's greatest security threat?, July 2012, [url](#), p. 4.; Rashid, A., Descent into Chaos, 2008, pp. 227-228; Jamestown Foundation (The), 'Sipah-e-Sahaba: Fomenting Sectarian Violence in Pakistan', 5 May 2005, [url](#); Abbas, H., Defining the Punjabi Taliban Network, 15 April 2009, [url](#)

³²⁷ Nelson, M., EASO, EASO COI Meeting Report: Pakistan; 16-17 October 2017, Rome, February 2018, [url](#), p. 30

³²⁸ CSIS, Religion and militancy in Pakistan and Afghanistan, 29 June 2012, [url](#), p. 38

³²⁹ CSIS, Religion and militancy in Pakistan and Afghanistan, 29 June 2012, [url](#), p. 39

³³⁰ Hussain, Z., Frontline Pakistan, The struggle with militant Islam, 2007, p. 92

³³¹ BBC News, Profile: Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, 11 January 2013, [url](#); Stanford University, Mapping Militant Organizations. "Lashkar-e-Jhangvi.", last updated: July 2018, [url](#)

³³² USDOS, Country Report on Terrorism 2019, 24 June 2020, [url](#), p. 283

³³³ Reuters, Special Report: Pakistan's threat within - the Sunni-Shia divide, 24 October 2012, [url](#); National (The), Pakistan arrests 97 Al Qaeda and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi militants, 12 February 2016, [url](#); Guardian (The), Pakistan military intelligence under fire for failing to prevent Quetta bombing, 18 February 2013, [url](#)

³³⁴ USDOS, Country Report on Terrorism 2019, 24 June 2020, [url](#), p. 183

³³⁵ RFE/RL, Pakistan's Army Kills Commander Of Islamist Militant Group In Balochistan, 17 May 2018, [url](#)

³³⁶ LWJ, State designates leader of Lashkar-e-Jhanghvi as global terrorist, 6 February 2014, [url](#)

have either been killed, including Malik Ishaq in 2015³³⁷, or captured in 2017, like Naeem Bukhari.³³⁸ On 19 January 2017, LeJ's commander Asif Chotu was killed in an encounter with law enforcement agencies.³³⁹ In May 2018, security forces killed the commander of LeJ's Balochistan chapter Salman Badeni.³⁴⁰ According to PIPS, in 2019, LeJ has further lost its operational strength.³⁴¹ In its 2019 annual security report, PIPS mentioned that 'several reports indicated that LeJ is once again focusing on Karachi'.³⁴² PIPS reported in its annual report of 2020 that law enforcement agencies arrested multiple suspected LeJ leaders and members.³⁴³ In 2020, PIPS stated that LeJ was responsible for one 'terrorist attack', compared to eight in 2019.³⁴⁴

Lashkar-e Jhangvi Al-Alami (LJA)

Over the past decade, LeJ broke up in different factions as a result of the military operations of the Pakistan state.³⁴⁵ One of those factions is LeJ Al-Alami (LJA)³⁴⁶, designated by Pakistan as a 'terrorist organisation' in November 2016.³⁴⁷ The main difference between LeJ and LJA is that LeJ only targets minority groups whilst LJA also carries out attacks on law enforcement agencies and government installations.³⁴⁸ In January 2017, the Jamestown Foundation reported that the group was led by Yousaf Mansoor Khurasani.³⁴⁹ In 2020, PIPS did not mention any attack claimed by LJA.³⁵⁰

Lashkar-e Islam (LI)

LI is a militant group that is active in Khyber district.³⁵¹ The government of Pakistan banned LI in June 2008.³⁵² Pakistani military operations reportedly crippled the group's operational capabilities in Khyber district. As a result, members of LI relocated to Afghanistan.³⁵³ It has been reported that LI works together with ISKP in Afghanistan and is considered an 'important ally'.³⁵⁴ Source states that he was at enmity with many because he repeatedly formed new alliances, among others with the TTP, ISKP but also with the Afghan government-backed militia Arbaki in Nangarhar, Afghanistan.³⁵⁵ In January 2021, Mangal Bagh was killed in a mine blast in the province of Nangarhar in Afghanistan.³⁵⁶ According to PIPS annual report 2020, the TTP tried to incorporate the LI into the group.³⁵⁷ In 2020, PIPS documented one 'terrorist attack' in Khyber district, compared to two in 2019.³⁵⁸

³³⁷ LWJ, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi emir killed in shootout with Pakistani police, 29 July 2015, [url](#)

³³⁸ Daily Times, LeJ leads international terrorist organisations in Pakistan, 10 March 2017, [url](#)

³³⁹ Express Tribune (The), Sheikhpura raid: LeJ chief Asif Chotu, three aides killed in gunfight, 19 January 2017, [url](#)

³⁴⁰ Nation (The), Security forces kill senior Lashkar-e-Jhangvi militant in Balochistan raid, 17 May 2018, [url](#)

³⁴¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 73

³⁴² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 68

³⁴³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 83

³⁴⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 71; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021 [url](#), p. 83

³⁴⁵ RFE/RL, Pakistani Extremists Carve A Sanctuary In Southern Afghanistan, 23 January 2017, [url](#)

³⁴⁶ Jamestown Foundation (The), 'Lashkar-e-Jhangvi al-Alami: A Pakistani Partner for Islamic State', 27 January 2017, [url](#)

³⁴⁷ Daily Times, From sectarian to anti-state outfit, journey of al-Alami, 2 April 2017, [url](#)

³⁴⁸ Daily Times, From sectarian to anti-state outfit, journey of al-Alami, 2 April 2017, [url](#)

³⁴⁹ Jamestown Foundation (The), 'Lashkar-e-Jhangvi al-Alami: A Pakistani Partner for Islamic State', 27 January 2017, [url](#)

³⁵⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#); PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021 [url](#)

³⁵¹ Stanford University, Mapping Militant Organizations. "Lashkar-e-Islam.", last updated: August 2019, [url](#)

³⁵² Dawn, Pakistan bans 25 militant organisations, 6 August 2009, [url](#); Express Tribune (The), List of banned organisations in Pakistan, 24 October 2012, [url](#)

³⁵³ PIPS, Security Report 2016, 10 January 2017, [url](#), p. 68

³⁵⁴ RSIS, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, Annual Threat Assessment-South Asia, January 2019, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, [url](#), p. 37; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 75

³⁵⁵ International News (The), Mangal Bagh killed in Afghanistan, 29 January 2021, [url](#)

³⁵⁶ Gandhara, Pakistani Militant Leader Killed In Afghanistan, 28 January 2021, [url](#)

³⁵⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 80

³⁵⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 69; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 80

Sipah-e Muhammad Pakistan (SMP)

SMP is a Shia militant group whose aim is to protect the Shia community and target hostile Sunni Deobandi organisations such as SSP and LeJ.³⁵⁹ SMP is an armed offshoot of a mainstream Shia political party, the Tehrik-Nifaz-e-Fiqh-e-Jafaria (TNFJ).³⁶⁰ The origins are unclear, but it was probably founded around 1993 by Maulana Mureed Abbas Yazdani. SMP was banned in Pakistan in August 2001.³⁶¹

According to PIPS, in 2020 the group was found involved in one 'terrorist attack' in Karachi, compared to two in 2019.³⁶²

Jaish-e Muhammad (JeM)

JeM was founded late 2000 by former Harakat ul-Mujahideen leader Masood Azhar.³⁶³ USDOS stated in June 2020 that 'the group aims to annex the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir to Pakistan and expel international forces from Afghanistan. JeM has openly declared war against the United States.'³⁶⁴ JeM and the Pakistani army have been accused of having an alliance.³⁶⁵ According to Pakistani security analyst, Azaz Syed, cited by Farhan Zahid in an article of 2019, JeM has an estimated strength of 40 000 militants.³⁶⁶ JeM has relations with multiple militant groups operating in Pakistan such as the TTP and LeJ. The structure of the organisation can be categorised as cell-based and operates in Pakistan Punjab's southern districts.³⁶⁷ According to a May 2020 UN Security Council report, citing Afghan interlocutors, 'JeM and Lashkar-e Taiba (LeT) facilitate the trafficking of terrorist fighters into Afghanistan, who act as advisers, trainers and specialists in improvised explosive devices'.³⁶⁸

JeM was also active in Indian Kashmir since the Pathankot airbase attack in 2016. Since then, it steadily increased its presence and activities in Kashmir according to security analysts.³⁶⁹ On 14 February 2019, JeM carried out an attack on a convoy of vehicles carrying security personnel in Pulwama in Indian-administrated Kashmir. In this attack, referred to as the Pulwama attack, 46 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel were killed and 80 others wounded.³⁷⁰ India blamed Pakistan for this attack, which triggered an escalation of tensions between the two countries.³⁷¹ The leader of JeM, Masood Azhar was placed on the list of 'global terrorists' by the United Nations on 1 May 2019.³⁷²

³⁵⁹ Dawn, Pakistan bans 25 militant organisations, 6 August 2009, [url](#)

³⁶⁰ Jamestown Foundation (The), 'Sipah-e-Sahaba: Fomenting Sectarian Violence in Pakistan', 5 May 2005, [url](#)

³⁶¹ Express Tribune (The), List of banned organisations in Pakistan, 24 October 2012, [url](#)

³⁶² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 71; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 83

³⁶³ Zahid, F., Profile of Jaish-e-Muhammad and Leader Masood Azhar, April 2019, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, [url](#), pp. 1-2

³⁶⁴ USDOS, Country Report on Terrorism 2019, 24 June 2020, [url](#), p. 276

³⁶⁵ Lowy Institute, Pakistan and Jaish-e-Mohammad: An unholy alliance, 7 July 2017, [url](#); Diplomat (The), Jaish-e-Mohammed: Under the Hood, 13 March 2019, [url](#)

³⁶⁶ Zahid, F., Profile of Jaish-e-Muhammad and Leader Masood Azhar, April 2019, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, [url](#), p. 5

³⁶⁷ Zahid, F., Profile of Jaish-e-Muhammad and Leader Masood Azhar, April 2019, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, [url](#), p. 5

³⁶⁸ UN Security Council, Letter dated 19 May 2020 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) addressed to the President of the Security Council, 27 May 2020, [url](#), para. 81

³⁶⁹ Basit, A. and Mahmood, S., Implications of Possible United States Withdrawal on the South Asian Militant Landscape, April 2019, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, [url](#), p. 21

³⁷⁰ BBC News, Pulwama attack: India will 'completely isolate' Pakistan, 15 February 2019, [url](#); Zahid, F., Profile of Jaish-e-Muhammad and Leader Masood Azhar, April 2019, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, [url](#), p. 1

³⁷¹ Zahid, F., Profile of Jaish-e-Muhammad and Leader Masood Azhar, April 2019, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, [url](#), p. 1

³⁷² Al Jazeera, UN puts Pakistani armed group chief Masood Azhar on 'terror' list, 1 May 2019, [url](#)

Lashkar-e Taiba (LeT)

LeT was founded in the late 1980s as a 'terrorist'³⁷³ and military wing of the religious organisation Markaz Dawa-ul-Irshad.³⁷⁴ The group was founded by Hafiz Muhammad Saeed, who was during the reporting period its current leader.³⁷⁵ In the 1990s, the ISI established close relationships with groups such as LeT³⁷⁶, and the group reportedly received clandestine support by elements of Pakistani military and intelligence services.³⁷⁷ In 2001, LeT was designated 'as a Foreign Terrorist Organisation (FTO)' by the US. To circumvent sanctions, Saeed changed the group's name to Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JUD)³⁷⁸, however, the group continues to operate in the country through its charitable organisations, including Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD).³⁷⁹ LeT aims to unite Kashmir with Pakistan and impose Sharia law rule in South Asia.³⁸⁰ It is based in Punjab and present in both Indian and Pakistan-administered Kashmir.³⁸¹ LeT is considered 'one of the most prominent armed groups operating on Pakistani soil', reportedly 'sending fighters across the Line of Control into Indian-administered Kashmir'; the group has carried out several attacks against the Indian security forces. In 2018, it was blamed for the Mumbai attacks that killed over 160 people.³⁸² According to Indian government source, the group has 129 active fighters in Indian-administered Kashmir. LeT claims to maintain over 2 000 offices in Pakistan³⁸³, however the group does not conduct attacks against Pakistan.³⁸⁴ In 2018, members of the group ran as independent candidates in Pakistani elections.³⁸⁵ According to a January 2021 report of the Brookings institution, in recent years the Pakistan government has taken action against LeT in light of the monitoring of terrorism financing by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).³⁸⁶

Nationalist movements in Sindh

The Sindhi nationalist groups include the Jeay Sindh Qaumi Mahaz-Aresar (JSQM-A) group, the Sindhu Desh Liberation Army (SDLA), also known as Sindhu Desh Liberation Front (SDLF), and the Sindhu Desh Revolutionary Army (SDRA).³⁸⁷ According to a July 2020 report by Muhammed Amir Rana, a security analyst, the activities of these groups have increased since the outbreak of COVID-19 in Pakistan.³⁸⁸ According to PIPS annual report 2020 these 'groups have a history of perpetrating sporadic low-intensity, low-impact attacks. However, in 2020 they managed to create some impact both in terms of number and in terms of intensity of the attacks they launched. Half of the attacks by Sindhi insurgents targeted security forces.'³⁸⁹ In May 2020, the Pakistan government banned the JSQM-A group, the SDLA, and the SDRA under the Ant-Terrorism Act 1997.³⁹⁰

³⁷³ USDOS, Country reports on Terrorism 2019, 24 June 2020, [url](#)

³⁷⁴ EFSAS, Pakistan Army and Terrorism; an unholy alliance, n.d., [url](#); FAS, Lashkar-e-Taiba Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (Army of the Righteous), n.d., [url](#)

³⁷⁵ Al Jazeera, Explainer: Who are Kashmir's armed groups?, 3 March 2019, [url](#)

³⁷⁶ BBC News, Hafiz Saeed: Will Pakistan's 'terror cleric' stay in jail?, 13 February 2020, [url](#)

³⁷⁷ CEP, Pakistan: Extremism and Terrorism, n.d., [url](#)

³⁷⁸ USDOS, Country reports on Terrorism 2019, 24 June 2020, [url](#)

³⁷⁹ Al Jazeera, Explainer: Who are Kashmir's armed groups?, 3 March 2019, [url](#); CEP, Pakistan: Extremism and Terrorism, n.d., [url](#); CIA, World Factbook, Pakistan, [url](#)

³⁸⁰ CIA, World Factbook, Pakistan, [url](#)

³⁸¹ CIA, World Factbook, Pakistan, [url](#)

³⁸² Al Jazeera, Explainer: Who are Kashmir's armed groups?, 3 March 2019, [url](#)

³⁸³ EFSAS, Pakistan Army and Terrorism; an unholy alliance, n.d., [url](#)

³⁸⁴ CEP, Pakistan: Extremism and Terrorism, n.d., [url](#); CIA, World Factbook, Pakistan, [url](#)

³⁸⁵ Al Jazeera, Explainer: Who are Kashmir's armed groups?, 3 March 2019, [url](#)

³⁸⁶ Brookings, Terrorism in Pakistan has declined, but the underlying roots of extremism remain, 15 January 2021, [url](#)

³⁸⁷ International News (The), Sindhi separatist JSQM-A, militant groups SRA, SLA approved for banning, 8 May 2020, [url](#)

³⁸⁸ Amir Rana, M., Terrorism in Pakistan under Covid-19, NIOC, 24 July 2020, [url](#), p. 12

³⁸⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 87

³⁹⁰ International News (The), Sindhi separatist JSQM-A, militant groups SRA, SLA approved for banning, 8 May 2020, [url](#)

Sindh Desh Liberation Army (SDLA)

According to Muhammed Amir Rana, a security analyst, the SDLA had ties with the Jeay Sindh Muttahida Mahaz (JSMM)³⁹¹, a Sindhi nationalist party headed by Shafi Brat, who lives in exile in Europe.³⁹² The SDLA reportedly collaborated with the BLA and BLF in targeting Chinese nationals.³⁹³ According to PIPS, the SDLA carried out one attack in 2020.³⁹⁴

Sindh Desh Revolutionary Army (SDRA)

Syed Asghar Shah, a leader within the SDLA, left the group after growing differences with Shafi Burfat over funds and leadership.³⁹⁵ Syed Asghar Shah established the SDRA in 2010.³⁹⁶ On 25 July 2020, the Baloch Raji Ajoji Sangar (BRAS) announced an operational alliance with the SDRA. Fahad Nabeel, a senior research associate at the Centre for Strategic and Contemporary Research (CSCR), stated that the strength of this alliance is estimated at approximately 1 000 to 2 000 militants.³⁹⁷ A June 2020 article by Tushar Ranjan Mohanty, a researcher working for South Asian Terrorism Portal (SATP), mentioned that since its formation in 2010, the SDRA was involved in thirteen attacks.³⁹⁸ On 5 August 2020, a grenade explosion targeted a political rally in Karachi. At least 39 people were injured. The SDRA claimed responsibility for the attack.³⁹⁹ At the end of December 2020, the SDRA claimed two attacks against Chinese nationals in Karachi.⁴⁰⁰ According to PIPS, the SDRA carried out eight attacks in 2020.⁴⁰¹

Jeay Sindh Qaumi Mahaz-Aresar (JSQM-A)

The JSQM-A was founded in 2006 by Abdul Wahid Arisar, who died in 2015. It is led by Aslam Khairpuri.⁴⁰² The JSQM-A is a faction of the Jeay Sindh Tehreek (JST), 'a self-proclaimed "non-violent movement" founded by legendary GM Syed'.⁴⁰³

Nationalist movements in Balochistan

PIPS 2020 annual security situation report stated that there are approximately six Baloch nationalist movements active in Balochistan.⁴⁰⁴ In 2020, the attacks claimed by Baloch militants were less frequent compared to 2019 but included 'more high-impact attacks'. According to PIPS, the Baloch movements expanded their areas of operations. They showed a presence in Quetta and were focusing on south and southwestern Balochistan.⁴⁰⁵ A September 2020 ACLED report stated that, since the start of 2020, ACLED recorded 'a rise in organized political violence events involving armed Baloch separatist groups'. The report of ACLED mentioned: 'greater unity among Baloch separatist groups, the formation of trans-province alliances between Baloch separatist groups and other

³⁹¹ Amir Rana, M., Terrorism in Pakistan under Covid-19, NIOC, 24 July 2020, [url](#), p. 13

³⁹² News on Sunday (The), A new wave of terror, 5 July 2020, [url](#); Mohanty Ranjan, T., Pakistan: Sindh: Hardening Separatism, 29 June 2020, SAIR, volume 19, no. 1, [url](#)

³⁹³ Nabeel, F., Interpreting BRAS-SRA Alliance, 27 July 2020, CSCR, [url](#)

³⁹⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 81

³⁹⁵ Amir Rana, M., Terrorism in Pakistan under Covid-19, NIOC, 24 July 2020, [url](#), p. 13

³⁹⁶ Mohanty Ranjan, T., Pakistan: Sindh: Hardening Separatism, 29 June 2020, SAIR, volume 19, no. 1, [url](#)

³⁹⁷ Nabeel, F., Interpreting BRAS-SRA Alliance, 27 July 2020, CSCR, [url](#)

³⁹⁸ Mohanty Ranjan, T., Pakistan: Sindh: Hardening Separatism, 29 June 2020, SAIR, volume 19, no. 1, [url](#)

³⁹⁹ Al Jazeera, Dozens wounded in grenade attack at pro-Kashmir Karachi rally, 5 August 2020, [url](#)

⁴⁰⁰ Nikkei Asia, Pakistani militants shift focus to cities in targeting of Chinese, 27 December 2020, [url](#)

⁴⁰¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 81

⁴⁰² International News (The), Sindhi separatist JSQM-A, militant groups SRA, SLA approved for banning, 8 May 2020, [url](#)

⁴⁰³ News on Sunday (The), The crackdown intensifies, 7 June 2020, [url](#)

⁴⁰⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 85

⁴⁰⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 85

separatist groups, and increased exploitation and repression of Baloch civilians by Pakistan's military during security operations in Balochistan'.⁴⁰⁶

The Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA)

The objective of the BLA is an independent Balochistan, free of Pakistani and Iranian rule. Because of its violent methods, such as bomb attacks, it was banned in Pakistan in April 2006.⁴⁰⁷ The BLA first emerged in the late 1990s.⁴⁰⁸ PIPS stated on the other hand that the BLA has 'two offshoots'. One group is led by Harbiyar Marri and another group is comprised of insurgents who were led by Aslam Achu⁴⁰⁹ until he was killed in Afghanistan in December 2018.⁴¹⁰ Aslam Achu has set up the Majeed Brigade which, according to Ghandara, is a 'suicide squad'.⁴¹¹ The Majeed Brigade is an elite unit within the BLA.⁴¹² Security analyst Abdul Basit stated that the BLA has become the main threat to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. The BLA has a physical strength of 2 000 to 3 000 militants and has a capability to operate out of Afghanistan, in Iran and in Balochistan's mountainous areas.⁴¹³ In July 2019, USDOS designated the BLA as a terrorist organisation.⁴¹⁴

PIPS stated that the BLA carried out 19 'terrorist attacks' in Balochistan in 2020, which represents a decrease compared to 2019 when they carried out 27 attacks.⁴¹⁵ The majority of the attacks in 2020 took place in Balochistan (17 attacks) while one took place in southern Punjab and one in Karachi.⁴¹⁶ According to media reports, the BLA carried out multiple attacks on security forces in Balochistan in the first half of 2021.⁴¹⁷

The Baloch Liberation Front (BLF)

The BLF is an insurgent group, led by Allah Nazar Baloch.⁴¹⁸ In 2017, it was reported that this group operated across Balochistan, and is primarily active in the Makran belt.⁴¹⁹ The BLF was banned in September 2010.⁴²⁰ In October 2017, the BLF accused local journalists of collaborating with the Pakistani army, and also threatened and boycotted the local media.⁴²¹ According to PIPS 2019 annual report, the BLF has its base in the central and south-western districts of Balochistan. The group has gone into hiding, either in the areas close to the Iranian border or across the border in Iran or Afghanistan.⁴²²

⁴⁰⁶ ACLED, Rising Organized Political Violence in Balochistan: A Resurgence of Baloch Separatism?, 4 September 2020, [url](#)

⁴⁰⁷ Dawn, Pakistan bans 25 militant organisations, 6 August 2009, [url](#)

⁴⁰⁸ Gandhara, Baluch Separatist Insurgency Torn By Internal Conflict Over Class, 4 July 2020, [url](#)

⁴⁰⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 93

⁴¹⁰ Nabeel, F., Aslam Baloch's killing: Implications for Balochistan Insurgency, CSCR, 28 December 2018, [url](#)

⁴¹¹ Gandhara, Baluch Separatist Insurgency Torn By Internal Conflict Over Class, 4 July 2020, [url](#)

⁴¹² Balochistan Post (The), TBP Report: Majeed Brigade – The Inside Story, 20 July 2020, [url](#)

⁴¹³ Basit, A., Attacks on Chinese nationals and interests in Pakistan are likely to continue. Here's why, South China Morning, 27 November 2018, [url](#)

⁴¹⁴ RFE/RL, U.S. Designates Pakistan's Balochistan Liberation Army As Terrorist Group, 3 July 2019, [url](#)

⁴¹⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 73; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 85

⁴¹⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 85

⁴¹⁷ Al Jazeera, Several killed in two attacks in Pakistan's southwest, 1 June 2021, [url](#); IBG News, The BLA accepts responsibility for the bombing on a Pakistani army vehicle in Kohlu and the killing of our personnel, 29 May 2021, [url](#)

⁴¹⁸ South China Morning Post (Basit, A.), Attacks on Chinese nationals and interests in Pakistan are likely to continue. Here's why, 27 November 2018, [url](#)

⁴¹⁹ RFE/RL, Pakistan's Balochistan Conflict Reverberates In Europe, 7 December 2017, [url](#)

⁴²⁰ Express Tribune (The), List of banned organisations in Pakistan, 24 October 2012, [url](#)

⁴²¹ BBC News, Balochistan journalists caught 'between the stick and the gun', 26 November 2017, [url](#)

⁴²² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 94

In 2020, the BLF claimed responsibility for five ‘terrorist attacks’ compared to 11 in 2019.⁴²³ All 2020 attacks were carried out in the district of Kech in Balochistan and all attacks targeted the security forces.⁴²⁴

The Baloch Republican Army (BRA)

The BRA is the militant wing of the separatist Baloch Republican Party (BRP) and was reportedly headed by Brahumdagh Bugti at the end of 2018.⁴²⁵ In September 2010, the Pakistani government banned the BRA.⁴²⁶ The most prominent BRA attack was in January 2015 against the electricity network of Pakistan, which caused a blackout in 80 % of Pakistan.⁴²⁷

In 2020, the BRA carried out three ‘terrorist attacks’ compared to six attacks in 2019. The attacks in 2020 occurred in Dera Bugti and Nasirabad districts of Balochistan.⁴²⁸

United Baloch Army (UBA)

The UBA is a nationalist insurgent group in Balochistan and a splinter group of the BLA.⁴²⁹ In 2015, the UBA was led by Mehran Marri.⁴³⁰ The Balochistan Post reported in February 2018 that the BRA, the UBA and the Lashkar-e-Balochistan (LB) work together for an independent Balochistan.⁴³¹ According to PIPS 2020 annual security report, the group re-emerged in 2020. PIPS documented two attacks in 2020 Bolan and Nushki districts. These attacks were directed against the security forces.⁴³²

Baloch Raji Ajoi Sangar (BRAS)

The Baloch Raji Ajoi Sangar (BRAS), also known as the Baloch People Liberation Coalition, is a coalition of the BLA, the BLF and the Baloch Republican Guards after publicly disagreeing for years. This coalition was launched in November 2018. According to an article published by CSCR, ‘unification and consolidation of the national strength is the only way forward to get rid of Pakistani occupation of Balochistan.’ The coalition aims to direct ‘coordinated attacks against Pakistani military, Chinese interests in Balochistan and CPEC sites’.⁴³³ According to the Pakistani Foreign Minister, training and logistical camps are established in the Iranian region bordering Pakistan.⁴³⁴ Farhan Zahid, a security analyst, stated in September 2019 that the group operates in the south-western part of Balochistan and has ‘safe havens’ in Kacha, DG Khan and Koh Suleman. The primary targets of BRAS are Chinese workers and CPEC projects in Balochistan. BRAS also targeted military and paramilitary security force personnel near the Makran coast.⁴³⁵ On 25 July 2020, BRAS announced an operational alliance with the SDRA.⁴³⁶

⁴²³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 73; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 86

⁴²⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 86

⁴²⁵ South China Morning Post (Basit, A.), Attacks on Chinese nationals and interests in Pakistan are likely to continue. Here’s why, 27 November 2018, [url](#)

⁴²⁶ Dawn, Five Baloch militant outfits banned, 9 September 2010, [url](#)

⁴²⁷ BBC News, Pakistan works on power blackout after ‘rebel attack’, 26 January 2015, [url](#); Diplomat (The), Understanding Pakistan’s Baloch Insurgency, 24 June 2015, [url](#)

⁴²⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 73; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 86

⁴²⁹ RFE/RL, Pakistan’s Balochistan Conflict Reverberates In Europe, 7 December 2017, [url](#); Dawn, Situationer: Who’s who of Baloch insurgency, 1 June 2015, [url](#)

⁴³⁰ Dawn, Situationer: Who’s who of Baloch insurgency, 1 June 2015, [url](#)

⁴³¹ Balochistan Post (The), Baloch pro-freedom groups to work unitedly, 25 February 2018, [url](#)

⁴³² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 86

⁴³³ Nabeel, F., Identity as a Pretext of Terror: Brief Backgrounder of Baloch Raaji Aajoi Sangar, CSCR 18 April 2019, [url](#)

⁴³⁴ Reuters, Pakistan asks Iran to act on militants behind Baluchistan killings, 20 April 2019, [url](#)

⁴³⁵ Zahid, F., Baluch Raji Ajoji Sangar: Emergence of a New Baluch Separatist Alliance, 20 September 2019, [url](#)

⁴³⁶ Nabeel, F., Interpreting BRAS-SRA Alliance, 27 July 2020, CSCR, [url](#)

According to PIPS, the group was responsible for one attack in 2020.⁴³⁷ In October 2020, BRAS claimed to have killed seven military personnel of the Frontier Corps and as many civilian guards in the Ormara area of Gwadar district.⁴³⁸

1.3 Recent security trends and armed confrontations

1.3.1 Security incidents

In the first two sub-sections below, the number of security incidents by ACLED, PIPS and PICSS are described for 2020 and the first seven months of 2021 respectively. Due to different methodologies used by these three sources, the number of security incidents reported below are described per each source for ease of comparison. For more detailed information on the methodology applied by the sources, see the [Introduction](#).

In general, according to PIPS annual security report 2021, covering 2020, the overall security situation improved in 2020 compared to previous years.⁴³⁹ According to PICSS annual security report covering 2020, an increase in violence was observed in 2020.⁴⁴⁰ If compared the ACLED data from January to July 2020 with January to July 2021, then it is illustrated that there is an increase in security incidents in 2021 (see [Figure 1](#) and [Figure 2](#)).

Security incidents in 2020

According to ACLED⁴⁴¹, there were 483 security incidents⁴⁴² recorded in Pakistan in 2020: 270 were coded as battles, 100 as explosions/remote violence and 113 as violence against civilians. Most security incidents occurred in the month of July 2020 (63 security incidents), followed by November 2020 (56 incidents) and September 2020 (49 incidents).⁴⁴³

⁴³⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 86

⁴³⁸ Dawn, 20 security personnel martyred in two attacks, 16 October 2020, [url](#)

⁴³⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 11

⁴⁴⁰ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#)

⁴⁴¹ For a description of this source, see the [Introduction](#)

⁴⁴² Security incidents: the event types battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; ACLED, About Acled, n.d., [url](#); For more information on ACLED methodology, see ACLED Codebook, [url](#)

⁴⁴³ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 December 2020), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

See Figure 1 for an evolution of the security incidents in 2020 in Pakistan by ACLED.

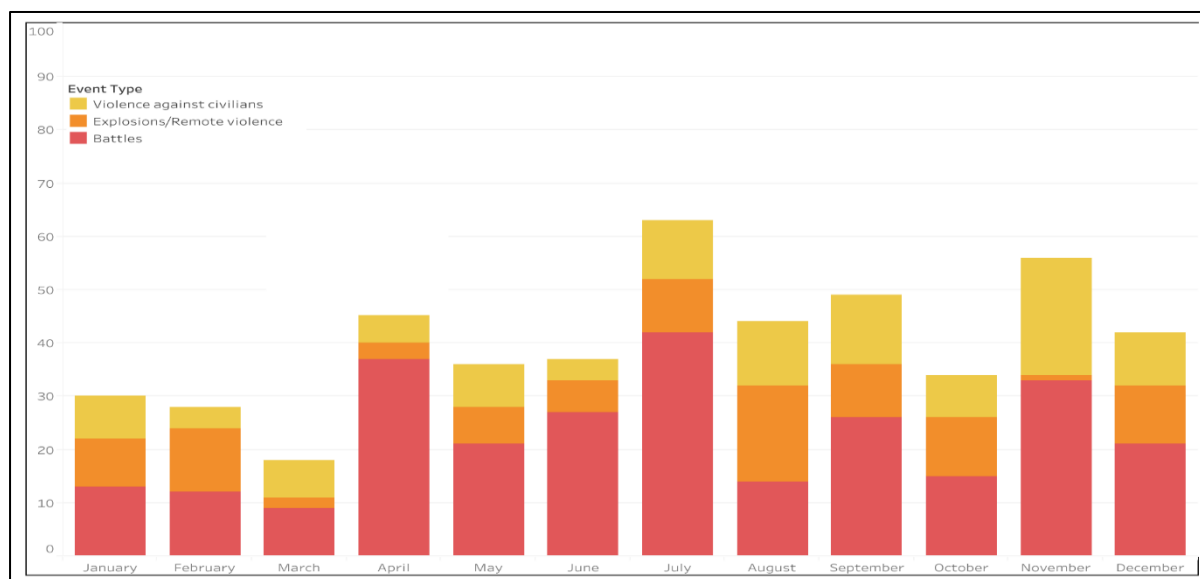


Figure 1. Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians in 2020 in Pakistan, based on ACLED data ⁴⁴⁵

In 2020, PICSS⁴⁴⁴ In 2020 PICS⁴⁴⁵ recorded 333 security incidents including 187 caused by militants and 149 by the Pakistani government, in which 429 people were killed: 165 militants, 127 civilians and 137 security forces personnel.⁴⁴⁶ A total of 619 people were injured including 454 civilians, 16 militants and 149 security forces personnel. Compared to 2019, this represents a 23 % increase in the number of incidents (270 in 2019).⁴⁴⁷

PIPS⁴⁴⁸ documented 373 incidents of violence in 2020. The overall incidents of violence resulted in 503 deaths and 851 injured. 146 incidents of these incidents of violence were labelled as 'terrorist attacks'⁴⁴⁹, according to PIPS. Compared to 2019, the overall number of people killed in these violent incidents decreased by approximately 14 % (433 incidents of violence in 2019).⁴⁵⁰

⁴⁴⁴ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 December 2020), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

⁴⁴⁵ For a description of this source, see the [Introduction](#)

⁴⁴⁶ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), p. 1, p. 3

⁴⁴⁷ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), p. 1, p. 3; PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 12

⁴⁴⁸ For a description of this source, see the [Introduction](#)

⁴⁴⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 21-22

⁴⁵⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 21-22

Security incidents 1 January 2021 – 31 July 2021

In the first seven months of 2021, ACLED recorded 459 security incidents in Pakistan: 194 battles, 123 explosions/remote violence and 142 incidents of violence against civilians. Most security incidents occurred in the month of June 2021 (83 security incidents), followed by May 2021 (76 incidents) and March 2021 (70 incidents).⁴⁵¹ See

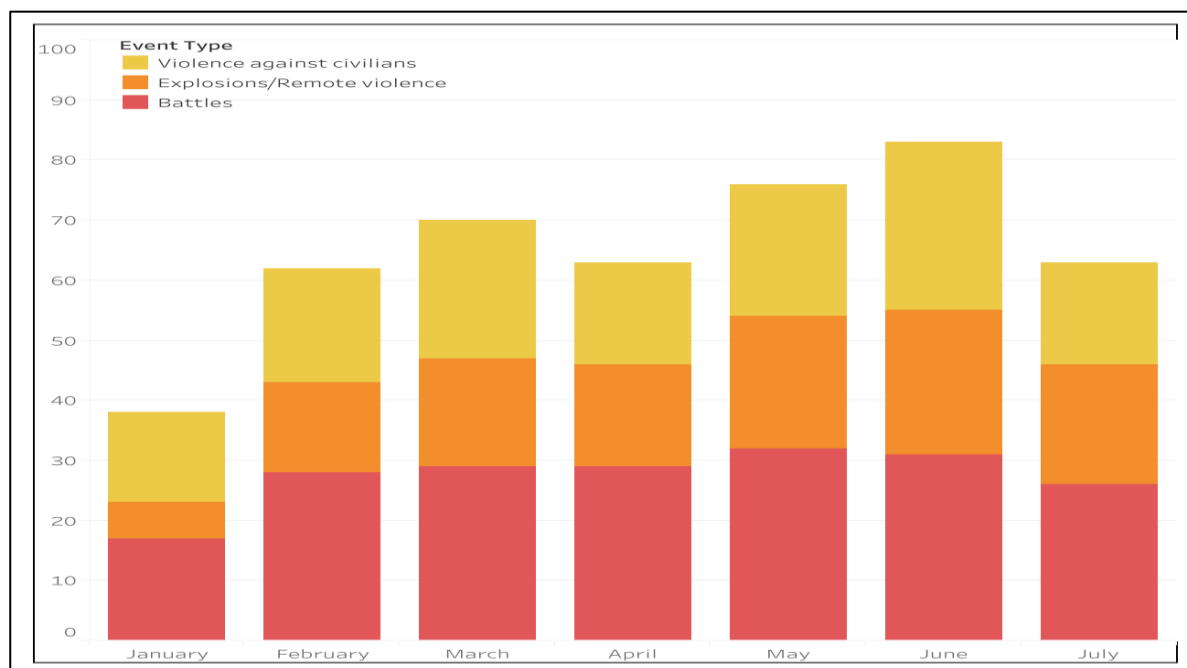


Figure 21 for an evolution of the security incidents the first seven months of 2021 in Pakistan by ACLED.

Figure 21. Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians in the first seven months of 2021 in Pakistan, based on ACLED data⁴⁵²

In the period from 1 January 2021 - 31 July 2021, PICSS recorded 263 incidents of anti-state violence by militants (141) and ‘security forces actions’ by the Pakistani government (122), in which 313 people were killed (94 militants, 111 civilians, and 108 security forces personnel).⁴⁵³ A total of 341 people were injured including 221 civilians, 8 militants and 112 security forces personnel.⁴⁵⁴

In the period from 1 January 2021 - 31 July 2021, PIPS documented 158 incidents of violence, resulting in 300 deaths and 765 injured. Of the total 158 incidents of violence, 97 incidents were labelled as ‘terrorist attacks’, according to PIPS.⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁵¹ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2021-31 July 2021), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

⁴⁵² Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2021-31 July 2021), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

⁴⁵³ Khan, A. email, 8 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PICSS

⁴⁵⁴ Khan, A. email, 8 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PICSS

⁴⁵⁵ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

1.3.2 Nature of security incidents

General

The nature of the violence in 2020 and in the first seven months of 2021 was diverse and is described in detail in the following sections. The 2020 annual security situation report by PIPS listed a breakdown of the nature of the violent incidents and the number of casualties in 2020 (see [Figure 3.](#)).

Nature of violent incidents 2020	Incidents	Persons killed	Persons injured
'Terrorist attacks'	146	220	547
Political / ethnic violence	1	0	5
Clashes & encounters between security forces & militants	15	38	6
Cross-border clashes/attacks	125	62	222
Operational attacks by sec. forces	47	146	22
Sectarian clashes	1	2	0
Inter-militant clashes/attacks	3	4	10
Communal/faith –based clashes	8	6	3
Plot/foiled terror attempts	14	1	0
Targeted attacks (not clear if by terrorists)	11	14	1
Protests/clashes with security forces	2	10	35
Total 2020	373	503	851

Figure 3. Breakdown nature of all incidents of violence in 2020, based on PIPS data⁴⁵⁶

[Figure](#) presents a breakdown of the nature of violent incidents and the number of casualties recorded by PIPS in the first seven months of 2021.

Nature of violent incidents 1 January 2021 – 31 July 2021	Incidents	Persons killed	Persons injured
'Terrorist attacks'	97	180	295
Political / ethnic violence	1	2	6

⁴⁵⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 21-22

Clashes & encounters between security forces & militants	3	7	1
Cross-border clashes/attacks	16	10	23
Operational attacks by sec. forces	31	87	8
Inter-militant clashes/attacks	0	0	0
Communal/faith- based violence	3	0	8
Plot/foiled terror attempts	2	0	0
Recovery of dead bodies	1	1	0
Targeted attacks (not by 'terrorists')	1	1	0
Protests/clashes with security forces	3	12	415
Total 1 January 2021 – 31 July 2021	158	300	756

Figure 4. Breakdown of the nature of all violent incidents in the period 1 January 2021-31 July 2021 based on PIPS data⁴⁵⁷

In the following sections the nature of the violent incidents in Pakistan is described in detail. For further information on the varying numbers of civilian casualties and the various methodologies used by these research institutions, see the [Introduction](#) and [1.4.1 Figures on casualties in 2020](#) and [1.4.2 Figures on casualties 1 January 2021 - 31 July 2021](#).

Security operations and armed clashes

In the past, the Pakistan armed forces conducted major security operations in the country. These operations are described below. In addition, a description of the nature of security operations in 2019 and the first half of 2021 is provided.

Operation Zarb-e Azb

On 15 June 2014, Operation *Zarb-e Azb* was launched by the Pakistani armed forces in the province of KP and in the former FATA. The purpose of the operation was to target the militants in North Waziristan.⁴⁵⁸ Operation *Zarb-e Azb* reduced the levels of militant violence, but at the cost of high levels of violence on behalf of security forces that also affected the civilian population.⁴⁵⁹ Most areas were cleared from militants, except for a few pockets and sleeper cells. Therefore, the Pakistani state has regained public trust to some extent, but the operation was conducted in a violent manner. The operation also caused internal displacement.⁴⁶⁰ Critics of the operation claim it did not destroy the TTP, who were able to relocate to Afghanistan to carry out attacks from there.⁴⁶¹

Operation Radd-ul Fasaad

Operation *Radd-ul Fasaad* was launched on 22 February 2017, after a series of attacks in the country in the beginning of 2017. This operation has not been confined to one area, but it was carried out across the country.⁴⁶² The operation is aimed at eliminating the threat of terrorism and at

⁴⁵⁷ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

⁴⁵⁸ Zulfqar, S., An Overview of Pakistan's Security Situation after Operation Zarb-e-Azb, Islamabad Policy Research Institute, October 2017, [url](#), pp. 117-118

⁴⁵⁹ Diplomat (The), Pakistan's Counterterrorism Operation: Myth vs. Reality, 27 June 2016, [url](#); BBC News, Uncovering Pakistan's secret human rights abuses, 2 June 2019, [url](#); Diplomat (The), The Pakistani Taliban is Back, 9 March 2021, [url](#)

⁴⁶⁰ Dawn, Nearly 40pc IDPs have returned to North Waziristan, army chief told, 19 December 2015, [url](#)

⁴⁶¹ Diplomat (The), Pakistan's Counterterrorism Operation: Myth vs. Reality, 27 June 2016, [url](#); Diplomat (The), The Pakistani Taliban is Back, 9 March 2021, [url](#)

⁴⁶² Express Tribune (The), Army launches Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad against terrorists across the country, 22 February 2017, [url](#)

consolidating the gains of other military operations. It also aimed at ensuring the security of Pakistan's borders. The operation included the involvement of Pakistan's air force, Pakistan's navy, Pakistan's police and other civil armed forces.⁴⁶³ The Rangers were given 'special powers' to operate in Lahore and different parts in the province of Punjab.⁴⁶⁴ The strategy of the operation is to use Intelligence-Based Operations (IBOs). 'IBOs use[d] information from multiple intelligence agencies to find and eliminate militant hideouts across the country.' Operation *Radd-ul Fasaad* failed to prevent militant attacks on security forces and civilians.⁴⁶⁵ This military operation led to criticism that some groups such as Pashtuns, including Afghan migrants in the country, were indiscriminately targeted.⁴⁶⁶ In February 2020, a defence analyst stated in the Express Tribune that the operation 'help[ed] Pakistan to establish complete control over tribal areas'.⁴⁶⁷ In February 2021, an army general stated that in the last four years more than 375 000 IBOs were conducted in the country.⁴⁶⁸

Operation Khyber-IV

In July 2017, the Pakistani army launched Operation Khyber-IV to clear Rajgal Valley of militants in Khyber tribal district.⁴⁶⁹ The main goal of Operation Khyber-IV was to eradicate the threat of IS in Khyber tribal district, although security forces also targeted other militant groups and focused on the border security at the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.⁴⁷⁰ The Pakistani army announced the completion of Operation Khyber-IV on 21 August 2017.⁴⁷¹

Security operations 2020 and 2021

According to PIPS, security operations and armed clashes were reported in all four provinces of Pakistan in 2020.⁴⁷² Security forces carried out 47 operations and raids against militants in 2020, compared to 28 operations and raids against militants in 2019.⁴⁷³ Most of these operational strikes in 2020 were carried out in KP (28, followed by Balochistan (15) and two each in Punjab and Sindh.⁴⁷⁴ According to PIPS, 146 people were killed (compared to 81 in 2019), including 129 militants and 17 security forces personnel.⁴⁷⁵

Besides these operational attacks, security forces engaged also in 15 armed clashes with militants in 2020 compared to 25 armed clashes in 2019.⁴⁷⁶ The armed clashes in 2020 claimed 38 lives (29 militants, 7 security forces personnel and two civilians).⁴⁷⁷

PIPS stated that in the first seven months of 2021, the security forces carried out 31 operations against militants. According to PIPS, 87 people were killed and 8 injured. Besides these operational attacks, security forces engaged in one armed clash with militants in the first seven months of 2021. PIPS mentioned for the same timeframe also two encounters of militants with security forces.⁴⁷⁸

⁴⁶³ Dawn, Pakistan Army launches 'Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad' across the country, 22 February 2017, [url](#)

⁴⁶⁴ Al, Pakistan: Wave of violence shows a horrific disregard for human life, 23 February 2017, [url](#)

⁴⁶⁵ Critical Threats, Pakistan's Counter-Militant Offensive: Operation Raddul Fasaad, 25 August 2017, [url](#)

⁴⁶⁶ Express Tribune (The), Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad: 'Punjab police focus on Pakhtuns and Afghans', 4 March 2017, [url](#)

⁴⁶⁷ Express Tribune (The), In three years, Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad has cleansed Pakistan, 22 February 2020, [url](#)

⁴⁶⁸ International News (The), Every Pakistani is a soldier of Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad: DG ISPR, 22 February 2021, [url](#)

⁴⁶⁹ Dawn, Army launches Operation Khyber-4 in Rajgal Valley, 16 July 2017, [url](#)

⁴⁷⁰ PIPS, Security Report 2017, 7 January 2018, [url](#), pp. 98-99

⁴⁷¹ Express Tribune (The), Rajgal cleansed of terrorists as military concludes Operation Khyber-IV, 21 August 2017, [url](#)

⁴⁷² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 26

⁴⁷³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 25

⁴⁷⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 26

⁴⁷⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 25-26

⁴⁷⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 26; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 23

⁴⁷⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 26

⁴⁷⁸ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

According to an academic expert of terrorism in South Asia, the response of the Pakistan security forces in reaction to the security situation in 2021 was the following:

‘Pakistani armed forces have pursued an aggressive tempo of policing and targeting of militant actors in the provinces of Punjab and Sindh. In former tribal areas and parts of Baluchistan, Pakistani authorities have engaged in collective punishment practices in regions where IED or other terror attacks take place. Pakistani authorities seek to demobilize members of various terrorist groups and use them in pro-state militaries in counterinsurgency/counterterrorism operations or other militant groups. Pakistani authorities detain terrorism suspects, political dissidents and select journalists outside the purview of law – referred to in local media as the “missing persons” phenomenon. Pakistan is pursuing a covert assassination program against the anti-state TTP leaders based in Afghanistan.’⁴⁷⁹

On the question regarding what measures the Pakistan armed forces have taken to respond to the security situation in 2021 in the KPTDs, Abdul Basit stated on 29 July 2021 the following:

‘Border fencing, Intelligence Based Operations (IBOs), ongoing Operation Raddul Fasaad and replacing the paramilitary Frontier Corps (FC) with regular army troops at the Pak-Afghan border.’⁴⁸⁰

Attacks by militant groups

Militant groups continued to conduct attacks in 2020 and in the first seven months of 2021. Tactics frequently used were targeted killings, different types of IEDs, suicide attacks, kidnappings, grenade blasts, rocket attacks and sabotage acts.⁴⁸¹

Figures on these attacks and a description of the most common tactics and weapons used by militants are provided below.

Figures of attacks by militant groups

According to PICSS 2020 annual report, 187 militant attacks occurred in 2020 compared to 159 in 2019, which is a slight increase. PICSS mentioned that in 2020 these militant attacks killed 154 people and injured 217. In terms of casualties there was a decline notable compared to 2019 (305 killed, 662 injured in 2019).⁴⁸²

According to the PIPS 2020 annual security report, 146 ‘terrorist attacks’ were carried out by militant, nationalist, insurgent and violent sectarian groups in Pakistan in 2020. This is a 36 % decrease compared to 2019 (229 ‘terrorist attacks’).⁴⁸³ PIPS mentioned that in 2020 those attacks killed 220 and injured 547 people. The number of people killed decreased by 38 % compared to 2019.⁴⁸⁴

In the first seven months of 2021, PICSS observed 141 militant attacks. PICSS noticed that in this timeframe these militant attacks killed 210 people and injured 332. Most targeted were civilians (109 killed and 221 injured), followed by security force personnel (94 killed, 103 injured) and militants (7 killed, 8 injured).⁴⁸⁵

⁴⁷⁹ Academic expert of terrorism in South Asia, email, 22 July 2021

⁴⁸⁰ Basit, A., email, 29 July 2021

⁴⁸¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021 [url](#), p. 19; PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 8-12

⁴⁸² PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), p. 5

⁴⁸³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 17; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 17

⁴⁸⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 17

⁴⁸⁵ Khan, A. email, 8 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PICSS

PIPS counted 97 'terrorist attacks' in the first seven months of 2021. PIPS mentioned that in 2021 those attacks killed 180 and injured 295 people.⁴⁸⁶

Tactics and weapons used by militants

PICSS provides a breakdown of the tactics used by militants in 2020 in its annual report. PICSS reported suicide attacks, IED attacks, militant assaults, targeted killings and kidnapping.⁴⁸⁷ PICSS mentioned 'during 2020 that the militants enhanced some types of tactics while some tactics saw declining pattern'.⁴⁸⁸ The same tactics were also observed in the first half of 2021.⁴⁸⁹

In the following paragraphs the major tactics used by militants are explained in greater detail.

Suicide attacks

According to an overview by PICSS, since 2016 the number of suicide attacks carried out in Pakistan is decreasing.⁴⁹⁰ The PICSS 2020 annual report stated that militants carried out four suicide attacks in which 26 people were killed and 43 were injured in 2020. According to PICSS, the number of suicide attacks in 2020 decreased by 60 % compared to 2019 (10 suicide attacks).⁴⁹¹ According to PIPS, three suicide attacks took place in 2020 in which 26 people were killed and 43 injured.⁴⁹² The CRSS 2020 annual report recorded two suicide attacks, in which 10 people were killed.⁴⁹³

Two out of the three suicide attacks counted by PIPS in 2020, occurred in the province of Balochistan (two), followed by one in the province of KP in South Waziristan tribal district.⁴⁹⁴

In the period from 1 January 2021 until 31 July 2021, PICSS observed one suicide attack in which 5 people were killed and 12 injured.⁴⁹⁵

Bomb explosions and Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs)

PIPS stated that in 2020 militants used various types of IEDs in 68 attacks compared to 123 attacks in 2019.⁴⁹⁶ PICSS reported that in 2020, 64 incidents with IEDs occurred in which 67 people were killed and 331 were injured. The number of IED attacks decreased slightly in 2020 compared to 2019 (84 IED attacks).⁴⁹⁷ CRSS reported that in 2020, 78 'explosive attacks'⁴⁹⁸ took place in which 130 people were killed.⁴⁹⁹ The highest number of IED explosions in 2020 was recorded in tribal districts of the province of KP followed by the province of Balochistan according to PICSS.⁵⁰⁰ According to the 2020 annual report of FRC, the majority of the IED attacks in the tribal districts occurred in North and South Waziristan tribal districts.⁵⁰¹

⁴⁸⁶ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

⁴⁸⁷ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 8-12

⁴⁸⁸ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), p. 8

⁴⁸⁹ Khan, A. email, 8 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PICSS

⁴⁹⁰ PICSS, Suicide Attacks in Pakistan Since 2001, 26 July 2021, [url](#)

⁴⁹¹ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), p. 8

⁴⁹² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 61

⁴⁹³ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 19

⁴⁹⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 61

⁴⁹⁵ Khan, A. email, 8 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PICSS

⁴⁹⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 18; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 19

⁴⁹⁷ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 9-10

⁴⁹⁸ According to CRSS definition of explosive attacks: bombs, IEDs, landmines, accidental detonations, mortar, rocket attacks, hand grenade attacks, cracker attacks, toy bombs, CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2020, [url](#), p. 19

⁴⁹⁹ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2020, [url](#), p. 19

⁵⁰⁰ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), p. 9

⁵⁰¹ FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 15

In the period from 1 January 2021 until 31 July 2021, PICSS reported 46 incidents with IEDs in which 68 people were killed and 218 were injured. Civilians and security personnel were the victims of IEDs.⁵⁰²

Targeted killings

According to PICSS, 49 targeted killings occurred in 2020. In these attacks, 64 people were killed and 10 injured. Compared to 2019 (24 targeted killings), the number of targeted killings doubled in 2020. The majority of the casualties in 2020 were civilians. Most targeted killings occurred in the tribal districts.⁵⁰³ PICSS stated that 'The rise in target-killing is a major security challenge as it is directly linked with a fear factor related to militants' strategy'.⁵⁰⁴ CRSS stated that in the terrorist attacks that occurred in 2020, 148 incidents were targeted killings in which 169 people were killed and 43 injured.⁵⁰⁵ FRC stated that targeted killings were 'the most preferred tool of militants for carrying out attacks against civilians in the tribal districts'.⁵⁰⁶ FRC documented 53 targeted killings in the tribal districts.⁵⁰⁷

In the period from 1 January 2021 until 31 July 2021, PICSS mentioned 46 targeted killings in which 54 people were killed and 13 injured.⁵⁰⁸

Kidnappings

PICSS counted in 2020 ten kidnappings by militants. Compared to previous years, PICSS noted an increase in kidnappings.⁵⁰⁹ The 2020 annual report by FRC recorded eight kidnappings for ransom in 2020 in the tribal districts.⁵¹⁰ FRC mentioned that militants make use of kidnapping for ransom and extortion for financing their activities.⁵¹¹

Abduction was reported as a method used by the Pakistani security establishment to silence anyone who tried to question and expose their actions.⁵¹² A December 2020 article of The Guardian stated that there were reports of abductions of suspected Islamic or separatist militants, political opponents, activists, students, politicians, human rights defenders, journalists and lawyers.⁵¹³

In the period from 1 January 2021 until 31 July 2021, PICSS counted in total three incidents of kidnapping and killing.⁵¹⁴

Sectarian-related violence

According to PIPS, seven incidents of sectarian-related violence occurred in 2020. Compared to 2019, this is a decrease of 50 % (14 incidents in 2019).⁵¹⁵ In 2020, 9 persons were killed and 14 persons were injured in those incidents.⁵¹⁶ PIPS mentioned also that one sectarian clash occurred in 2020, in which two people were killed.⁵¹⁷ Most of the sectarian attacks and clashes in 2020 were

⁵⁰² Khan, A. email, 8 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PICSS

⁵⁰³ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 10-11

⁵⁰⁴ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), p. 11

⁵⁰⁵ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 15

⁵⁰⁶ FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 14

⁵⁰⁷ FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 14

⁵⁰⁸ Khan, A. email, 8 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PICSS

⁵⁰⁹ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), p. 12

⁵¹⁰ FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 18

⁵¹¹ FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 18

⁵¹² Al Jazeera, Pakistani activist abduction sparks fear of crackdown on dissent, 6 June 2018, [url](#)

⁵¹³ Guardian (The), Kidnap, torture, murder: the plight of Pakistan's thousands of disappeared, 14 December 2020, [url](#)

⁵¹⁴ Khan, A. email, 8 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PICSS

⁵¹⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021 [url](#), p. 17, p. 62; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 17, p. 53

⁵¹⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 17

⁵¹⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 62

incidents of targeted killings or firing while two incidents were bomb blasts.⁵¹⁸ Geographically, most sectarian attacks occurred Karachi, followed by Kurram tribal district and Kohat district.⁵¹⁹ The only sectarian clash mentioned by PIPS occurred in Rahim Yar Khan.⁵²⁰

In contrast, CRSS documented 138 sectarian-related casualties in 2020 with 55 killed and 83 wounded.⁵²¹ Balochistan and KP were the provinces where most of these casualties occurred in 2020.⁵²² CRSS noted that the Sunni community suffered the most casualties in 2020.⁵²³

In the period from 1 January 2021 until 31 July 2021, PIPS counted one sectarian-related 'terrorist attacks'. In this incident, one person was injured.⁵²⁴ In the first quarter of 2021 counted CRSS in total 17 casualties of sectarian violence. CRSS mentioned that most of the sectarian violence in the first quarter of 2021 occurred in Balochistan and Sindh.⁵²⁵ In the second quarter of 2021, CRSS documented 808 (7 killed, 801 injured) casualties of sectarian violence. Most of the casualties were from violence that erupted during the protest staged by the TLP in the month of April 2021.⁵²⁶

Political violence

In 2020, PIPS counted four attacks on political leaders/workers in which 39 people were injured. No one was killed.⁵²⁷ Political leaders and workers were targeted in attacks in Bajaur tribal district, Peshawar and Karachi. The TTP, HUA, the SDRA and an unknown militant group perpetrated these attacks.⁵²⁸

In the period from 1 January 2021 until 31 July 2021, PIPS recorded one incident of political/ethnic violence.⁵²⁹

Border attacks

In 2020, PIPS counted in total 125 cross-border attacks at the borders with Afghanistan and India by foreign forces and militants. Most of these attacks (114) took place at the border with India, followed by attacks at the Pakistan-Afghanistan border (11).⁵³⁰ PIPS did not observe any attacks at the border with Iran in 2020.⁵³¹ The highest number of people killed were civilians, followed by army personnel. A combined total of 62 people were killed in these attacks and 222 injured.⁵³² In the period from 1 January 2021 until 31 July 2021, PIPS mentioned in total 16 cross-border attacks at the borders with Afghanistan, India and Iran. All of these attacks took place at the border with India and Afghanistan. Not a single cross-border attack was counted at the border with Iran. A combined total of 10 people were killed in these attacks and 23 were injured.⁵³³

⁵¹⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 63

⁵¹⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 64

⁵²⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 64

⁵²¹ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 28

⁵²² CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 30

⁵²³ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), pp. 28-29

⁵²⁴ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

⁵²⁵ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

⁵²⁶ CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

⁵²⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 18

⁵²⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 150

⁵²⁹ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

⁵³⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 66-67

⁵³¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 73

⁵³² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 66

⁵³³ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

In 2017, the Pakistani army started fencing the border to Afghanistan and building border fortifications.⁵³⁴ Pakistani officials announced in January 2021 that 90 % of the fence was completed. It is scheduled to be finalised by June 2021. According to the Pakistan Army, the construction of the fence reduced militant cross-border attacks.⁵³⁵ According to a May 2021 article of RFE/RL's Gandhara, the fence between Afghanistan and Pakistan caused a standstill in cross-border trade and separation of families.⁵³⁶ According to PIPS, 11 cross-border attacks at the border with Afghanistan killed 17 and injured 18 people in the border area in 2020, mostly civilians (12 killed) and security personnel (5 killed). Most of these attacks (8) occurred near the border with Bajaur tribal district.⁵³⁷ In the first seven months of 2021, clashes at the Pakistan-Afghanistan border continued. PIPS reported 9 attacks in the first seven months of 2021. These attacks killed 9 people and injured 17.⁵³⁸ On 23 May 2021, the Pakistan army stated that one soldier was killed by cross-border shelling from Afghanistan.⁵³⁹ On 30 June 2021, Al Jazeera cited Pakistani military officials, who mentioned that cross-border firing from Paktika province in Afghanistan killed at least two Pakistani soldiers.⁵⁴⁰

The situation at the LoC and the de facto border between the Indian and Pakistani-controlled parts of Kashmir stayed 'relatively more volatile' in terms of the number of cross-border violations documented in 2020, according to PIPS.⁵⁴¹ A slight decrease in terms of cross border attacks was observed by PIPS in 2020 (114 cross-border attacks) compared to 123 cross-border attacks in 2019.⁵⁴² These 114 cross-border attacks at the Pakistan-India border in 2020 claimed the lives of 45 and injured 204 people.⁵⁴³ Most of the fatalities were civilians followed by army personnel. The majority of these attacks concentrated in the districts of Kotli, Bhimber, Poonch and Haveli.⁵⁴⁴ A spike in cross-border attacks was noticed by PIPS in November 2020 compared to previous months in 2020.⁵⁴⁵ According to a report of CRSS, 75 cross-border attacks occurred at the India-Pakistan border in 2020, in which 69 were killed and 169 injured.⁵⁴⁶ On 25 February 2021, Pakistan and India reached a ceasefire agreement.⁵⁴⁷ In total in the first seven months of 2021, 7 cross-border attacks caused the death of 1 person and injured 6 according to PIPS.⁵⁴⁸

PIPS documented not a single cross-border attack at the border with Iran in 2020.⁵⁴⁹ A December 2020 article of VoA, citing the Pakistan army, mentioned that about 30 % of the Pakistan-Iran border is fenced and the project is expected to be completed at the end of 2021.⁵⁵⁰ Human Rights Watch reported that on 22 February 2021 at least 10 Baluchi people were killed at the Saravan border area

⁵³⁴ Gandhara, Afghanistan Returns Captured, Dead Pakistani Soldiers After Cross-Border Clash, 16 April 2018, [url](#); Los Angeles Times, This border barrier got built — and it's upended lives in Pakistan and Afghanistan, 26 May 2019, [url](#)

⁵³⁵ Gandhara, Pakistan Fences Off Afghanistan, Impacting Families And Fighters, 5 February 2021, [url](#)

⁵³⁶ Gandhara, Divided By Pakistan's Border Fence, Pashtuns Lose Business, Rights, And Tribal Ties, 17 May 2021, [url](#)

⁵³⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 67

⁵³⁸ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

⁵³⁹ Gandhara, Pakistani Soldier Killed In Cross-Border Attack By Afghan Militants, 23 May 2021, [url](#)

⁵⁴⁰ Al Jazeera, Pakistani soldiers killed in firing along Afghanistan border, 30 June 2021, [url](#)

⁵⁴¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 25

⁵⁴² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 25, p. 67; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 58, p. 59

⁵⁴³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 69

⁵⁴⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 66

⁵⁴⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 72

⁵⁴⁶ CRSS, Pakistan India Conflict Report October 16, 2016- February 25, 2021, 9 April 2021, [url](#)

⁵⁴⁷ Diplomat (The), India and Pakistan Announce Ceasefire Across Disputed Border, 25 February 2021, [url](#); Al Jazeera, What prompted India-Pakistan ceasefire pact along Kashmir border?, 9 March 2021, [url](#)

⁵⁴⁸ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

⁵⁴⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 73

⁵⁵⁰ VoA, Pakistan Says Afghan Border Fence Nearly Complete, 4 December 2020, [url](#)

near Pakistan.⁵⁵¹ In the aftermath of this incident, 'there have been reports of armed men attacking Iranian government buildings and security forces near the border'.⁵⁵²

Drone strikes

The first US drone strike in Pakistan took place in the Waziristan region in 2004. The number of drone strikes between 2004 and 2014, and casualties, varied according to the source consulted.⁵⁵³ Most of the US drone strikes in Pakistan took place in former FATA, where the US military believed al-Qaeda, Taliban and other militant groups sought refuge.⁵⁵⁴ Under the Trump administration, aerial drone strikes in Pakistan continued after a pause of nine months under the Obama administration.⁵⁵⁵ A study published in March 2019 by Action on Armed Violence (AOAV) that examined the relationship between drone strikes and suicide attacks in Pakistan, stated that between January 2011 and January 2019 there were 199 confirmed drone strikes in Pakistan. This study stated that US-led drone strikes in Pakistan might be fuelling 'terrorist attacks' – both of which were linked to high levels of civilian harm.⁵⁵⁶ The last drone strike in Pakistan occurred on 4 July 2018, when a US drone killed a commander of the TTP near North Waziristan.⁵⁵⁷

In September 2015, for the first time, the Pakistani army launched a Pakistani-made drone, a Burraq Drone, to strike at terrorists in Shawal Valley in former FATA.⁵⁵⁸

1.3.3 Impact of COVID-19 on the security situation

On 26 February 2020, the first case of COVID-19 was reported from Karachi in the province of Sindh. The virus spread into various regions nationwide.⁵⁵⁹ In mid-March 2020, the government closed all schools, banned public gatherings and transport links, locked the national economy, sealed land borders and limited international flights.⁵⁶⁰ On 10 August 2020, partial lockdown measures were lifted.⁵⁶¹ In the beginning of February 2021, Pakistan started its COVID-19 vaccination programme initially aiming at Pakistan's senior citizens.⁵⁶²

Muhammad Amir Rana, a security analyst, wrote two reports about the possible impact of COVID-19 on the security situation in Pakistan.⁵⁶³ Rana stated that in May and June 2020, the frequency and intensity of militant attacks increased in Pakistan.⁵⁶⁴ From October until December 2020, he again noticed an upward trend in militant attacks.⁵⁶⁵ However, is it hard to link this increase to the virus.⁵⁶⁶ Rana concluded that militant groups are still able to carry out attacks and try to exploit the socio-

⁵⁵¹ HRW, Iran: Killings Near Pakistani Border, 25 February 2021, [url](#)

⁵⁵² RFE/RL, Pakistan's Baluchis Protest Iranian Treatment Of Ethnic Brethren After Border Shootings, 4 March 2021, [url](#)

⁵⁵³ Watson Institute for International Studies, Costs of War: War-related Death, Injury, and Displacement in Afghanistan and Pakistan 2001-2014, 22 May 2015, [url](#), p. 11

⁵⁵⁴ Express Tribune (The), Explore the data: Drone strikes in Pakistan, 9 February 2018, [url](#); Dawn, Thousands killed in drone strikes, terror attacks since 2004, 9 November 2018, [url](#)

⁵⁵⁵ New America, Drone strikes: Pakistan, n.d., [url](#)

⁵⁵⁶ AOAV, Drone strikes and suicide attacks in Pakistan: an analysis, 29 March 2019, [url](#), p. 1

⁵⁵⁷ Dawn, Taliban commander killed in suspected US drone strike near Pak-Afghan border, 5 July 2018, [url](#)

⁵⁵⁸ Express Tribune (The), Why Pakistan's first drone strike should worry Obama, 1 October 2015, [url](#)

⁵⁵⁹ International Crisis Group, Pakistan's COVID-19 Crisis, 7 August 2020, [url](#), p. 3

⁵⁶⁰ VoA, Pakistan Lifts Lockdowns, Top UN Diplomat Lauds Anti-Virus Gains, 10 August 2020, [url](#)

⁵⁶¹ Al Jazeera, Pakistan partial lockdown measures to lift, 10 August 2020, [url](#)

⁵⁶² New York Times (The), Unvaccinated in Pakistan? You might lose your cellphone service, 15 June 2021, [url](#); Deutsche Welle, Pakistan picks up its COVID vaccination drive just in time, 23 June 2021, [url](#)

⁵⁶³ Amir Rana, M., Terrorism in Pakistan under Covid-19, NIOC, 24 July 2020, [url](#); Amir Rana, M., Terrorism in Pakistan during Covid-19 (March-December 2020), NIOC, January 2021, [url](#)

⁵⁶⁴ Amir Rana, M., Terrorism in Pakistan under Covid-19, NIOC, 24 July 2020, [url](#), p. 5

⁵⁶⁵ Amir Rana, M., Terrorism in Pakistan during Covid-19 (March-December 2020), NIOC, January 2021, [url](#), p. 2

⁵⁶⁶ Amir Rana, M., Terrorism in Pakistan during Covid-19 (March-December 2020), NIOC, January 2021, [url](#), p. 2

economic instability and the preoccupation of the security forces with managing the COVID-19 situation.⁵⁶⁷

Kiyya Baloch stated on 12 July 2021 about the impact of COVID-19 on the security situation in Pakistan that:

‘There is no academic data on COVID-19’s impact on media reporting on the security situation in Pakistan. Still, it is obvious that the pandemic has taken a heavy toll on every sector, and the media industry isn’t an exception. There were reports that news organizations were not supplying journalists with protective equipment such as facemasks, hand sanitizers, and extendable boom microphones and telescopic lenses. Some reports say 22 journalists died of COVID-19 in Pakistan. These fatalities must have had immense impacts on media reporting on issues related to security in Pakistan.’⁵⁶⁸

Abdul Basit stated the following on 29 July 2021 about COVID-19 and the security situation in the KPTDs:

‘COVID-19 did not have a major impact on the media reporting on the security situation in the ex-FATA region. The major hurdle in reporting is state censorship as well as threats from TTP and other terrorist groups.’⁵⁶⁹

1.4 Impact of the violence on the civilian population

The first section of this chapter describes the figures on casualties of violence in 2020 and the first seven months of 2021. There are several Pakistani organisations that keep count on the casualties⁵⁷⁰ of violence (PIPS, PICSS and CRSS); however, the figures vary between organisations. This is related to the fact that these organisations have varying methods, ground presence and access to information.⁵⁷¹ Separate sections further below in this chapter describe the targets of violence, the effects of violent incidents on society and the situation of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees.

1.4.1 Figures on casualties in 2020

In 2020, PIPS recorded 373 violent incidents, resulting in 503 deaths and 851 injured (including deaths and injured from ‘terrorist attacks’).⁵⁷² The number of people killed in overall incidents of violence in Pakistan decreased by 14 %, from 588 in 2019 to 503 in 2020. The number of people injured in overall incidents of violence decreased by 17 % from 1 030 in 2019 to 851 in 2020.⁵⁷³ According to PIPS, 171 civilians, 181 militants and 151 security personnel were killed in 2020.⁵⁷⁴ A downward trend was recorded for the number of civilians killed (171) in these violent incidents, a decrease by about 27 % as compared to 2019 (235). Fatalities among security forces personnel in 2020 (151) were 28 % less than the previous year’s fatalities among them (209). On the contrary, an increase was documented for the number of deaths of militants: 181 militants in 2020, an increase of 26 % compared to 2019.⁵⁷⁵ In addition, the PIPS data showed that ‘terrorist attacks’ (146)

⁵⁶⁷ Amir Rana, M., Terrorism in Pakistan under Covid-19, NIOC, 24 July 2020, [url](#), p. 5; Amir Rana, M., Terrorism in Pakistan during Covid-19 (March-December 2020), NIOC, January 2021, [url](#), pp. 2-3

⁵⁶⁸ Baloch, K., email, 12 July 2021

⁵⁶⁹ Basit, A., email, 29 July 2021

⁵⁷⁰ In this report the term casualties means the sum of the fatalities and injured persons

⁵⁷¹ For a description of these sources, see the [introduction](#)

⁵⁷² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 22

⁵⁷³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 22

⁵⁷⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 26-27

⁵⁷⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 26

accounted for less than half of all violent incidents in 2020. The number of people killed in these ‘terrorist attacks’ in 2020 decreased by 38 % compared to 2019.⁵⁷⁶

PICSS recorded 333 incidents of violence carried out by militants and during counter-insurgency operations by the state in 2020. In total 429 people were killed: 165 militants, 127 civilians, 137 security forces personnel.⁵⁷⁷ PICSS reported 619 injured: 454 civilians, 16 militants, 149 security forces personnel. Compared to 2019, an increase of 9 % in deaths and an almost 37 % decrease in injured people.⁵⁷⁸

Data provided by CRSS showed 600 fatalities and 518 injured from violence in 2020.⁵⁷⁹ This includes the deaths of 239 civilians, 198 militants and 163 security officials.⁵⁸⁰ Compared to 2019, the number of violence-related fatalities decreased by 11, 50 % according to CRSS.⁵⁸¹

Figure 2 gives a comparison of the persons killed in 2019 and in 2020 between the three sources based on the definitions described in the [Introduction](#).

2019 by source	Total killed	Civilians killed	Militants killed	Security forces killed
PIPS	588	235	144	209
CRSS	679	328	155	196
PICSS	393	133	110	150
2020 by source	Total killed	Civilians killed	Militants killed	Security forces killed
PIPS	503	171	181	151
CRSS	600	239	198	163
PICSS	429	127	165	137

Figure 2. Comparison of the number of fatalities in 2019 and 2020, based on PIPS, CRSS, PICSS data⁵⁸²

Patterns of casualties in 2020⁵⁸³

Data compiled in the CRSS annual report 2020 shows a certain stability in the number of fatalities throughout most of the year 2020. The highest number of monthly fatalities occurred in February (54), October (86) and December (60) 2020. August (32) 2020 witnessed the fewest fatalities of the year.⁵⁸⁴

Data compiled by PICSS shows the highest number of casualties (fatalities and injured) in October and December 2020. PICSS noted a significant increase in the numbers of casualties in the month of October 2020.⁵⁸⁵

⁵⁷⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 27

⁵⁷⁷ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), p. 3

⁵⁷⁸ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), p. 3

⁵⁷⁹ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 4

⁵⁸⁰ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 7

⁵⁸¹ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 5

⁵⁸² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 24-25; PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 14; CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 8-9; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 26-27; PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), p. 3; CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 7

⁵⁸³ In this section the data compiled by CRSS and PICSS are compared, as both sources have collected data throughout 2020 for each month.

⁵⁸⁴ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 6

⁵⁸⁵ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), p. 6

1.4.2 Figures on casualties 1 January 2021 - 31 July 2021

In the first seven months of 2021, PIPS recorded 158 violent incidents, resulting in 1 056 casualties (300 deaths and 756 injured) (including 180 deaths and 295 injured from 97 'terrorist attacks').⁵⁸⁶

PICSS recorded 263 incidents of violence carried out by militants and during counter-insurgency operations by the state in the first seven months of 2021. These incidents of violence resulted in 654 casualties (313 deaths, 341 injured).⁵⁸⁷

Data provided by CRSS showed in total 395 fatalities and a number of 208 injured persons in violent incidents in the first and second quarter of 2021 in Pakistan.⁵⁸⁸ The total number of casualties for both quarters in 2021 stood at 603 casualties. CRSS counted the deaths of 173 civilians, 112 militants, and 116 security and government officials in the first and second quarter of 2021.⁵⁸⁹

Patterns of casualties 1 January 2021 - 31 July 2021

Data compiled by CRSS for the first seven months shows that most fatalities occurred in June (78) followed by May (72) 2021. The least fatalities were recorded in April 2021 (53).⁵⁹⁰

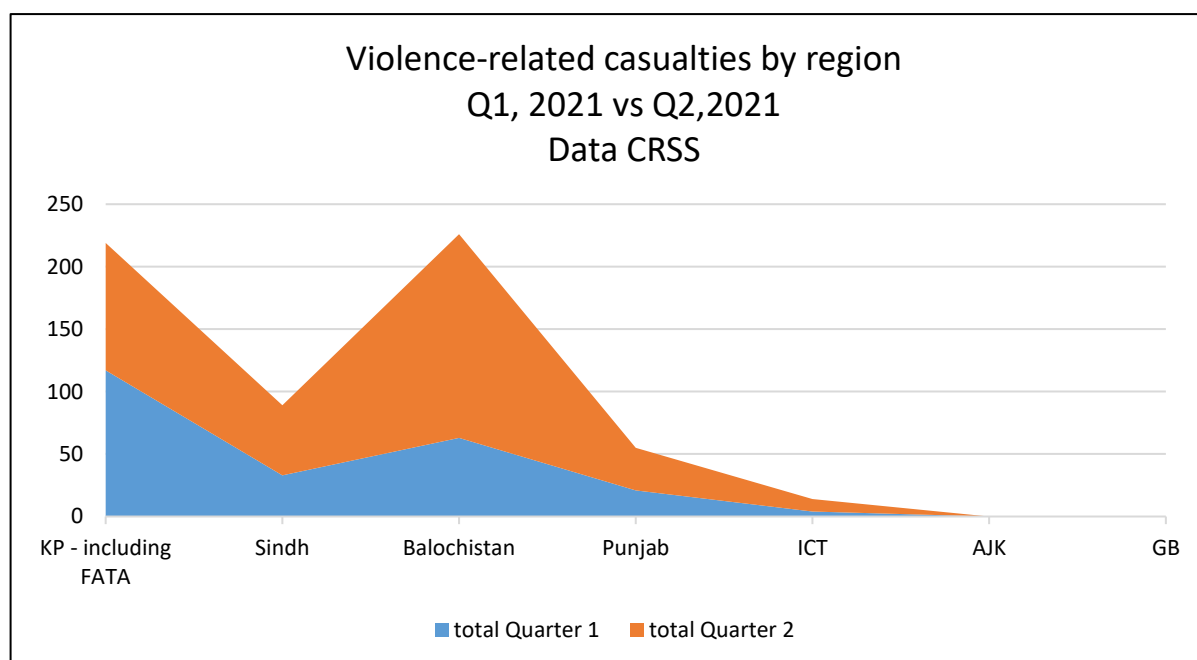


Figure 6. Violence-related casualties by region Q1, 2021 vs Q2, 2021 based on CRSS data⁵⁹¹

⁵⁸⁶ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

⁵⁸⁷ Khan, A. email, 8 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PICSS

⁵⁸⁸ For Q2 the incident with the TLP was left out (Pakistan, 800 injured and 4 deaths, to not influence the overall number). Figures fatalities and injured summed up for the first and second quarter – for the second quarter the number of fatalities/injured of the incident TLP was not included in these figures because it is not clear if it was a security incident. CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#);

⁵⁸⁹ Figures fatalities and injured summed up for the first and second quarter – for the second quarter the number of fatalities/injured of the incident TLP was not included in these figures because it is not clear it was a security incident. CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#);

⁵⁹⁰ Figures fatalities and injured summed up for the first and second quarter – for the second quarter the number of fatalities/injured of the incident TLP was not included in these figures because it is not clear if it was a security incident. CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#);

⁵⁹¹ Figures fatalities and injured summed up for the first and second quarter – for the second quarter the number of fatalities/injured of the incident TLP was not included in these figures because it is not clear if it was a security incident. CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#);

According to CRSS, in the second quarter of 2021 an increase in casualties (365 casualties in total)⁵⁹² was recorded compared to the first quarter of 2021 (238 casualties in total).⁵⁹³ The number of fatalities and injured in Pakistan in the second quarter of 2021 was higher than in the first quarter of 2021. In the second quarter of 2021, the number of casualties increased in Balochistan, Sindh, in Punjab and ICT compared to the first quarter of 2021. In KP and former FATA, the number of casualties in the second quarter were lower than in the first quarter of 2021 (see

[Data](#) compiled by CRSS for the first seven months shows that most fatalities occurred in June (78) followed by May (72) 2021. The least fatalities were recorded in April 2021 (53).

Figure).⁵⁹⁴

Data compiled by PICSS showed the highest number of casualties in May and June 2021. PICSS noted an increase in the numbers of casualties from May 2021 onwards.⁵⁹⁵

1.4.3 Targets of attacks

Both PIPS and CRSS provided more in-depth information about the affiliations of the victims⁵⁹⁶ of ‘terrorist attacks’ and security operations in Pakistan during the year 2020.

PIPS counted 146 ‘terrorist attacks’ in 2020 in which 220 people were killed and 547 injured.⁵⁹⁷ In the first seven months of 2021, PIPS counted 97 ‘terrorist attacks’ in which 180 people were killed and 295 injured.⁵⁹⁸

[Figure](#) shows in detail the targets of ‘terrorist attacks’ in 2020 and the first seven months of 2021 provided by PIPS.

Targets	2020			First seven months of 2021		
	Incidents	Persons killed	Persons injured	Incidents	Persons killed	Persons injured
Security forces/law enforcement	84	133	215	62	107	172
Non-Baloch settlers/workers	0	0	0	2	5	9
Gas pipelines	1	0	0	0	0	0
Tribal elders	6	9	2	2	1	2
Civilians	29	19	138	12	25	49

⁵⁹² Figures fatalities and injured summed up for the first and second quarter – for the second quarter the number of fatalities/injured of the incident TLP was not included in these figures because it is not clear if it was a security incident. CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

⁵⁹³ Figures fatalities and injured summed up for the first and second quarter – for the second quarter the number of fatalities/injured of the incident TLP was not included in these figures because it is not clear if it was a security incident. CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

⁵⁹⁴ Figures fatalities and injured summed up for the first and second quarter – for the second quarter the number of fatalities/injured of the incident TLP was not included in these figures because it is not clear if it was a security incident. CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

⁵⁹⁵ Khan, A. email, 8 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PICSS

⁵⁹⁶ A broader description than merely civilians, security personnel and militants

⁵⁹⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 18

⁵⁹⁸ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

CD/other shops/private property	1	0	0	0	0	0
Shia religious scholars/community	4	5	14	1	11	0
Worship places/shrines/imam bargahs	3	24	112	1	0	1
Government offices/public property (hospitals, banks, etc.)	1	8	7	2	2	29
Sunni religious leaders/community	4	13	20	1	0	1
Political leaders/workers	4	0	39	1	1	0
Haqqani network of Afghan Taliban	1	1	0	1	1	0
Media/Journalists	1	1	0	0	0	0
Health/polio workers, security escorts	2	3	0	1	1	0
Railway tracks/trains	2	0	0	0	0	0
CPEC/workers/Chinese nationals	1	0	0	3	13	31
Development, explorations projects, companies, workers	1	4	0	1	1	0
NATO/US supply vehicles	1	0	0	0	0	0
NGO/civil society members	0	0	0	1	4	1
Alleged spy	0	0	0	1	1	0
Pro-government tribesmen/peace committee members	0	0	0	4	6	0

Figure 7. Targets attacked in 'terrorist attacks' in 2020 and first seven months of 2021, based on PIPS data⁵⁹⁹

According to CRSS, civilians and security personnel were the most targeted by militancy, making up more than half of the total fatalities in 2020.⁶⁰⁰ CRSS noticed that, in the second quarter of 2021, fatalities of security personnel and civilians increased slightly compared to the first quarter of 2021.

⁵⁹⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 18; Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

⁶⁰⁰ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 7

On the other hand, fatalities of militants declined slightly in the second quarter compared to the first quarter of 2021.⁶⁰¹

[Figure](#) shows in detail the victims of ‘terrorist attacks’ and counterterrorism operations provided by CRSS in 2020 and in the first and second quarter of 2021.

Targets of overall incidents	No. of fatalities 2020	No. of fatalities Q1 2021	No. of fatalities Q2 2021
Militants	121	41	29
Criminals	37	8	22
Insurgents	39	5	4
Political criminals	1	1	-
Religious criminals	-	-	-
Foreign militants	-	2	-
Security officials	161	55	61
Government officials	2	-	-
Civilians	214	79	77
Foreigners	1	-	-
Media	4	1	0
Politicians	6	4	2
Religious party	5	-	8
Religious members	9	2	-

Figure 8. Victims of ‘terrorist attacks’ and counterterrorism operations in 2020, Q1 2021 and Q2 2021, by CRSS⁶⁰²

In an email, Fahad Nabeel stated on 4 August 2021 the following about the main targets of militant groups in the tribal districts during 2020 and 2021:

‘The main targets of militant groups in tribal districts during 2020 and 2021 have been security forces and law enforcement personnel. The personnel are targeted as part of cross-border attacks from Afghanistan while manning Pak-Afghan border. In some cases, personnel manning check posts and those patrolling a certain area are also targeted. Clashes with militant groups as part of intelligence-based operations is also a factor for targeting these personnel. Apart from security forces and law enforcement personnel, civilians and politicians are the second and third most targeted groups respectively. However, the threat level against civilians and politicians is of low level as compared to security forces and law

⁶⁰¹ CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

⁶⁰² The CRSS data between Q1 and Q2 differ. Cedoca chose to follow the Q2 data for Q1. CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 7; CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

enforcement personnel. The low-level threat against civilians is due to a shift in TTP's policy under Noor Wali Mehsud to abandon indiscriminate attacks against civilians.'⁶⁰³

An academic expert on terrorism in South Asia listed the following main targets of militant groups in Pakistan during 2020 and 2021:

- Military, paramilitary and police targets in border regions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan.
- Civilians, specifically members of minority groups.
- Some NGO, polio and other health workers involved in inoculation efforts.
- Chinese projects, officials, and workers.
- Journalists who violate Pakistan's censorship regime.'⁶⁰⁴

1.4.4 Effects of violent incidents on society in Pakistan

Landmines, IEDs and other unexploded remnants remain a risk for the population in the tribal districts and especially for children.⁶⁰⁵ When IDPs returned to the tribal districts in 2017, the landmines and IEDs were not all dismantled.⁶⁰⁶ Throughout 2020 media reports covered landmine incidents in the tribal districts.⁶⁰⁷ The Landmine Monitor Report of 2020 recorded 'numerous antipersonnel mine incidents in Balochistan and KP'.⁶⁰⁸

On 6 January 2021, three children were killed and two others injured when a hand grenade exploded while they were playing with it at the outskirts of Peshawar.⁶⁰⁹ On 27 May 2021, four children were injured in a landmine explosion in the Tandi area of Kurram tribal district.⁶¹⁰ On 29 June 2021, children brought home an unexploded mortar and tried to dismantle it. The mortar exploded and killed five persons and injured five other persons of the household.⁶¹¹ On 3 July 2021, three children died due to an explosion of a toy bomb in Shah Alam Mehsud Koroona area of Tank.⁶¹²

On 6 June 2021, the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) released a statement whereby the organisation expressed its concern over the recent incidents of landmine explosions in Pakistan.⁶¹³ During a court hearing in the High Court of Peshawar in June 2021, several lawyers claimed that during the last thirteen years, 178 landmine explosions have occurred in the tribal districts in which 800 people were killed, 250 children disabled and 77 left visually impaired.⁶¹⁴ Dawn reported in June 2021 that security personnel cleared Malakand and Bajaur tribal districts of explosives, including landmines, while the clearance operation in other tribal districts is still ongoing. In June 2021, Dawn stated that 37 army personnel were killed in landmine blasts and 17 had suffered injuries since 2018. Around 80 square kilometres in South Waziristan and North Waziristan had still to be cleared of mines.⁶¹⁵

⁶⁰³ Nabeel F., email, 4 August 2021

⁶⁰⁴ Academic expert on terrorism in South Asia, email, 22 July 2021

⁶⁰⁵ Dawn, Special report: Toying with death, 1 March 2020, [url](#); Mohanty, R.T., Pakistan: Menacing Landmines In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa – Analysis, 5 July 2021, [url](#)

⁶⁰⁶ Mohanty, R.T., Pakistan: Menacing Landmines In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa – Analysis, 5 July 2021, [url](#)

⁶⁰⁷ Express Tribune (The), Landmine blast kills boy, injures father, 14 May 2020, [url](#); VOA DEEWA, [Twitter], posted on: 21 July 2020, [url](#)

⁶⁰⁸ ICBL-CMC, Landmine Monitor 2020, 12 November 2020, [url](#), p. 14

⁶⁰⁹ Dawn, Three brothers die in Peshawar as grenade they're playing with goes off, 7 January 2021, [url](#)

⁶¹⁰ Dawn, Four children hurt in Kurram landmine blast, 28 May 2021, [url](#)

⁶¹¹ Dawn, 30 June 2021, Blast inside Landi Kotal house kills five of family, 30 June 2021, [url](#)

⁶¹² TNN, Toy bomb kills 3 children in Tank, 3 July 2021, [url](#)

⁶¹³ UNICEF, UNICEF deeply concerned by death and injury of children due to landmine and grenade explosions in Pakistan, 6 June 2021, [url](#)

⁶¹⁴ TNN, PHC asks Centre to submit report on landmine blasts in merged districts, 25 June 2021, [url](#)

⁶¹⁵ Dawn, Large area in ex-Fata yet to be de-mined, 12 June 2021, [url](#)

Muhammad Nawaz Khan, a research officer at the Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI), stated in January 2020 that ‘owing to the increased militancy and subsequent military operations in Swat, South and North Waziristan and other parts of Pakistan, the local residents in the conflict areas – particularly the women and children – have been severely affected by social, mental, physical and psychological trauma and abuse’.⁶¹⁶

In 2017 and 2018, Human Rights Watch reported that militant attacks had a devastating impact on education.⁶¹⁷ Human Rights Watch stated that Islamist militant violence had disrupted ‘the education of hundreds of thousands of children, particularly girls’.⁶¹⁸ According to the same source, the government of Pakistan fails ‘to stop or mitigate’ attacks on educational institutes. In November 2018, Human Rights Watch stated that many girls have no access to education, mainly because of a shortage of government schools and insecurity.⁶¹⁹ The government failed to protect schools from such attacks and prosecute perpetrators.⁶²⁰

PIPS annual security report 2020 does not mention any attacks on educational institutes in the year 2020 in Pakistan.⁶²¹ On 12 July 2021, a blast caused by a hand grenade attack occurred at a girl’s school in Haider Khel area of North Waziristan tribal district. There were no casualties.⁶²²

1.4.5 Internally Displaced Persons and refugees

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

In its 2021 Global Report on Internal Displacement, the International Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) stated that as of the end of 2020 the total number of IDPs due to conflict and violence stands at 104 000 in Pakistan.⁶²³ The IDP data presented in [Figure 9](#) was provided by UNOCHA Pakistan and shows the latest statistics of IDP families until August 2021. Until August 2021, there were still 16 483 families displaced. The majority of this number are displaced from North Waziristan tribal district (15 369 families) followed by Khyber tribal district (1 114 families).⁶²⁴

⁶¹⁶ Nawaz Khan, M., The socio-psychological impact of terrorism on Pakistani society, The Asia Dialogue, 30 January 2020, [url](#)

⁶¹⁷ HRW, Dreams Turned into Nightmares: Attacks on Students, Teachers, and Schools in Pakistan, 27 March 2017, [url](#); HRW, Pakistan: Surge in Militant Attacks on Schools, 3 August 2018, [url](#); HRW, Rise in Militant Attacks on Schools in Pakistan, 14 May 2018, [url](#)

⁶¹⁸ HRW, Pakistan: Surge in Militant Attacks on Schools, 3 August 2018, [url](#)

⁶¹⁹ HRW, Rise in Militant Attacks on Schools in Pakistan, 14 May 2018, [url](#); HRW, Pakistan: Surge in Militant Attacks on Schools, 3 August 2018, [url](#); HRW, “Shall I Feed My Daughter, or Educate Her?” Barriers to Girls’ Education in Pakistan, 12 November 2018, [url](#)

⁶²⁰ HRW, Dreams Turned into Nightmares: Attacks on Students, Teachers, and Schools in Pakistan, 27 March 2017, [url](#); HRW, Rise in Militant Attacks on Schools in Pakistan, 14 May 2018, [url](#); HRW, Pakistan: Surge in Militant Attacks on Schools, 3 August 2018, [url](#)

⁶²¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#)

⁶²² Dawn, Panic as grenade hurled at girls school in N. Waziristan, 13 July 2021, [url](#)

⁶²³ IDMC, GRID 2021 Global Report on Internal Displacement, May 2021, [url](#), p. 56, p. 149

⁶²⁴ UNOCHA Pakistan, email, 4 August 2021- data of PDMA KP - courtesy of UNOCHA Pakistan.

District	Total Families Verified by NADRA	Total Verified Return	Total Remaining Families as IDPs	Return %
Bajaur	72 897	72 897	0	100 %
Mohmand	36 759	36 759	0	100 %
Khyber	91 689	90 575	1 114	99 %
Orakzai	35 823	35 823	0	100 %
Kurram	33 024	33 024	0	100 %
North Waziristan	108 149	92 780	15 369	86 %
South Waziristan	71 124	71 124	0	100 %
Frontier Region Tank	2 228	2 228	0	100 %
Total	45 1693	43 5210	16 483	96 %

Figure 9. Overview IDPs Pakistan until 4 August 2021, based on data of PDMA KP - courtesy of UNOCHA Pakistan⁶²⁵

USDOS reported in its Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2020 that:

‘Many IDPs reportedly wanted to return home, despite the lack of local infrastructure, housing, and available service delivery and the strict control that security forces maintained over returnees’ movements through extensive checkpoints. Other IDP families delayed their return or chose some family members to remain in the settled areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where regular access to health care, education, and other social services was available. For IDPs who were unwilling or unable to return, the government coordinated support with the United Nations and other international organizations.’⁶²⁶

In 2021, media reports frequently mentioned protests of people of the tribal districts because they had not received yet a compensation for their homes and businesses, which were destroyed due to the violence in the region in the past.⁶²⁷

Afghan refugees

Detailed information about the situation and living conditions of Afghan refugees in Pakistan is available in the [EASO COI Report: Pakistan- Situation of Afghan refugees \(May 2020\)](#).

According to UNOCHA, in 2020, around 7 900 Afghans returned from Pakistan.⁶²⁸ For the same period, IOM reported on 6 701 undocumented returns from Pakistan.⁶²⁹ UNHCR reported that between 3 January 2021 and 30 June 2021, 400 registered Afghans returned to Afghanistan.⁶³⁰ IOM

⁶²⁵ UNOCHA Pakistan, email, 4 August 2021- data of PDMA KP - courtesy of UNOCHA Pakistan

⁶²⁶ USDOS, 2020 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Pakistan, 30 March 2021, [url](#), pp. 32-33

⁶²⁷ TNN, Owners of damaged houses receive compensation cheques in Khyber, 24 June 2021, [url](#); TNN, Rehabilitation of affected people in Kurram sought, 25 March 2021, [url](#)

⁶²⁸ UNOCHA, Afghanistan – Snapshot of Population Movements (January to December 2020), 23 January 2021, [url](#)

⁶²⁹ IOM, Return of Undocumented Afghans – Weekly Situation Report, 20 – 31 December 2020, 31 December 2020, [url](#), p.

1

⁶³⁰ UNHCR, Afghanistan Voluntary Repatriation Update June 2021, 5 August 2021, [url](#)

reported that, between 1 January 2021 and 29 July 2021, 6 934 undocumented Afghans returned to Afghanistan.⁶³¹

1.5 State ability to secure law and order

Muhammad Amir Rana, a researcher and director of PIPS, stated in 2018 that Pakistan had ‘a comprehensive constitutional framework and accompanying legal procedures’ but in practice the rule of law was confined to ‘conventional concepts of internal security and law enforcement’.⁶³² According to a March 2021 report by Freedom House that covered 2020, the military had an ‘enormous influence’ on national security, foreign policy, the economic policy and the media. Freedom House further stated that corruption, lack of accountability and lack of transparency were pervasive problems at all levels of government, in politics, and in the military.⁶³³

1.5.1 Security forces

The security forces in Pakistan include the Pakistan Armed Forces, the police, the Pakistan Rangers, the Levies, the Frontier Corps, Khassadars and others. For a description of these forces, see [1.2.1 State armed forces](#).

General

According to Mohammad Amir Rana, the government of Pakistan engaged, parallel to the security forces, paramilitary forces to fight terrorism and other security threats. Each province in Pakistan had such parallel security forces.⁶³⁴ The military and the paramilitary forces also took up the role of law enforcement. Mohammad Amir Rana stated further that ‘such ‘temporary or situational arrangement’s’ contributed in the state’s lack of political will to reform and empower civilian law enforcement structures’. One example was the Rangers in Karachi; another example was the FC and army in Balochistan and tribal districts who took control of security as well as law enforcement, ‘parallel to existing, though weak, law enforcement structures’.⁶³⁵

In total 84 ‘terrorist attacks’ or 58 % of the total number of ‘terrorist attacks’ (146) reported in 2020 by PIPS, targeted security forces and law-enforcement agencies across Pakistan.⁶³⁶ In 2020, 151 security force personnel were killed and 174 injured in the overall violent security incidents according to PIPS.⁶³⁷ As stated by PICSS, in the first seven months of 2021, 108 security force personnel were killed and 112 injured.⁶³⁸

Capacity

In September 2018, Mohammad Amir Rana described the effectiveness of the security forces as follows:

‘The interaction and coordination between military and civilian law enforcement agencies has also not been good, thus exposing some deeper structural issues linked to the rule of law and law enforcement in the country. Indeed, paramilitary forces have been encroaching on civilian law-and-order affairs and strengthening their institutional and moral authority. On the other hand, civilian law-enforcement agencies have become so weak that they

⁶³¹ IOM, Afghanistan Return of Undocumented Afghans situation report 23-29 July 2021, 29 July 2021, [url](#), p. 1

⁶³² Amir Rana, M., The rule of law: concept and practices in Pakistan, PIPS, 26 September 2018, [url](#), p. 1

⁶³³ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2021 - Pakistan, 3 March 2021, [url](#)

⁶³⁴ Amir Rana, M., The rule of law: concept and practices in Pakistan, PIPS, 26 September 2018, [url](#), p. 2

⁶³⁵ Amir Rana, M., The rule of law: concept and practices in Pakistan, PIPS, 26 September 2018, [url](#), pp. 1-2

⁶³⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 18

⁶³⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 26-27

⁶³⁸ Khan, A. email, 8 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PICSS

cannot even clarify their position in certain instances where they could not act due to dominant role played by paramilitaries.’⁶³⁹

An October 2019 joint report of the Human Rights Commission Pakistan (HRCP) and of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) stated that the police lacked training to handle evidence in criminal cases.⁶⁴⁰ Freedom House stated in March 2021 that the police was ‘accused of biased or arbitrary handling of initial criminal complaints’. Both the police and the prosecution service were ‘criticised for a chronic failure to prosecute terrorism cases’.⁶⁴¹ USIP stated in August 2020 that the Pakistani police had been struggling with a ‘poor relationship with the public categorized by mistrust and mistreatment’. Consequently, ‘effective policing’ was hindered.⁶⁴²

In light of the COVID-19 outbreak in Pakistan, a June 2020 article published by USIP stated that the police was under-resourced and poorly trained to cope with the health restrictions. USIP stated: ‘With only outdated legal frameworks and conventional training and education to rely on, the police have largely responded to violations with corporal punishment, detentions, and arrests—actions that have been reported by the media and widely condemned’.⁶⁴³ According to the Global Firepower index 2021, the Pakistan Army has been ranked the 10th most powerful in the world out of 133 countries.⁶⁴⁴ According to an article by the Express Tribune in January 2021, Pakistan dedicates 7 billion dollar from its annual budget to defence activities.⁶⁴⁵

Integrity

HRCP and FIDH stated that police officers were susceptible to pressure of the community to arrest and ensure convictions, especially in high-level cases.⁶⁴⁶ The police force is identified as one of the most corrupt governmental institutions in Pakistan.⁶⁴⁷

The Pakistani military is involved in many spheres of the economy. Besides this, Pakistan’s army plays a dominant role in domestic politics.⁶⁴⁸ The balance between the civilian government and the military leadership was complex. The army was accused of meddling in the elections in 2018.⁶⁴⁹ In February 2019, the Supreme Court of Pakistan criticised the army for its role and for exceeding their mandate in the blasphemy protests of 2017.⁶⁵⁰ The Diplomat stated in June 2019 that sympathisers of jihadist groups like IS and LeJ were present within the army.⁶⁵¹

Abuse of power, ill-treatment, use of excessive force, disappearances, and extrajudicial killings

⁶³⁹ Amir Rana, M., The rule of law: concept and practices in Pakistan, PIPS, 26 September 2018, [url](#), p. 14

⁶⁴⁰ HRCP and FIDH, Punished for being vulnerable; How Pakistan executes the poorest and the most marginalized in society, 8 October 2019, [url](#), p. 18

⁶⁴¹ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2021 - Pakistan, 3 March 2021, [url](#)

⁶⁴² USIP, The Current Situation in Pakistan A USIP Fact Sheet, 11 August 2020, [url](#), p. 2

⁶⁴³ Waseem, Z. and Rafiq, A., Coronavirus Pandemic Puts Police in the Spotlight in Pakistan, USIP, 16 June 2020, [url](#)

⁶⁴⁴ Global Fire Power, 2021 Military Strength Ranking, n.d., [url](#)

⁶⁴⁵ Express Tribune (The), Pakistan Army surpasses Israel, Canada to become 10th most powerful in world, 18 January 2021, [url](#)

⁶⁴⁶ HRCP and FIDH, Punished for being vulnerable; How Pakistan executes the poorest and the most marginalized in society, 8 October 2019, [url](#), p. 20

⁶⁴⁷ Dawn, The problems with policing Pakistan, 9 May 2021, [url](#); Daily Times, Socio-political and economic factors of police corruption, 6 October 2020, [url](#)

⁶⁴⁸ Foreign Policy, Poor Nation, Rich Army, 21 March 2019, [url](#); Economist (The), Pakistan’s generals are ever more involved in running the country, 8 April 2021, [url](#)

⁶⁴⁹ Washington Post (The), Pakistan’s military has its fingerprints all over the elections, 25 July 2018, [url](#); BBC Reality Check, The political influence of Pakistan’s powerful army [online video], 18 August 2018, [url](#)

⁶⁵⁰ Gandhara, Pakistan’s Top Court Tells Army To Stay Out Of Politics, Media, 6 February 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁵¹ Diplomat (The), Islamic State Comes for South Asia, 18 June 2019, [url](#)

In 2015, it was reported that security forces reportedly engaged in arrests without warrants, detention for long periods before seeing a judge and detaining people in secret locations.⁶⁵² The PTM movement accused the army of using excessive force during a demonstration on 26 May 2019 when at least three people were killed as a result of violence between Pashtun activists and the army.⁶⁵³ Unlawful and extrajudicial killings by Pakistani law enforcement agencies were also reported by Amnesty International.⁶⁵⁴ In its annual report of May 2021 HRCP documented police-encounters in 2020 in different provinces of Pakistan.⁶⁵⁵

BBC News reported in May 2018 on disappearances and unlawful detentions of Shia's, suspected Sunni jihadists, ethnic nationalist activists, and secular critics of the Pakistani military establishment.⁶⁵⁶ In addition, Deutsche Welle reported in July 2019 about the disappearances of Shia apparently carried out by the country's intelligence agencies as stated by Shia organisations and activists.⁶⁵⁷ According to a report of AI covering 2020 political activists, students, journalists, human rights defenders and Shia Muslims are the victims of enforced disappearances, particularly in Sindh and Balochistan.⁶⁵⁸ A September 2020 report of the International Commission of Jurists stated that the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances (COIED) had failed entirely to address entrenched impunity.⁶⁵⁹

Torture and ill treatment in detention to obtain confessions or during investigations continued to remain a serious issue according to sources.⁶⁶⁰ On 2 June 2019, BBC News published a report that discussed Pakistan's long battle with militants in the past. The report stated that 'tens of thousands of people' had been killed during Pakistan's long battle with militants as part of the post-9/11 war on terror and that 'evidence of murder and torture by soldiers and insurgents is emerging.'⁶⁶¹ In September 2019, Deutsche Welle stated that there is no reliable data on custodial deaths in Pakistan, but 'human rights groups point to a spike in police torture cases.' According to Deutsche Welle '[t]hey say that the "culture" of police torture is more prevalent in Pakistan's most populous Punjab province than in other parts of the country.'⁶⁶²

A March 2021 joint report by the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) and Justice Project Pakistan stressed the lack of clarity on the issue of torture in Pakistan's domestic laws.⁶⁶³ Pakistan has not yet enacted a law to criminalise custodial torture, however, Pakistan is a signatory to the UN Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UNCAT).⁶⁶⁴ In October 2019, Human Rights Watch stated that Pakistan introduced a bill, The Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention and Punishment) Act 2019, to make torture by the police a criminal offense for the first time.⁶⁶⁵ The Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention and Punishment) Bill 2020,

⁶⁵² New York Times (The), In Pakistan, Detainees Are Vanishing in Covert Jails, 26 July 2015, [url](#)

⁶⁵³ HRW, Pakistan: Investigate North Waziristan Deaths Uphold Rights of Region's Pashtun Population, 30 May 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁵⁴ AI, Sahiwal shootings: The rot goes as deep as the roots, 31 January 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁵⁵ HRCP, State of Human Rights in 2020, 3 May 2021, [url](#)

⁶⁵⁶ BBC News, The story of Pakistan's 'disappeared' Shias, 31 May 2018, [url](#)

⁶⁵⁷ DW, Why are Pakistani Shiites 'disappearing'?, 9 July 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁵⁸ AI, Amnesty International Report 2020; The State of the World's Human Rights; Pakistan 2020, 7 April 2021, [url](#)

⁶⁵⁹ ICJ, Entrenching Impunity, Denying Redress: The Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances in Pakistan, 8 September 2020, [url](#), p. 3

⁶⁶⁰ BBC News, Uncovering Pakistan's secret human rights abuses, 2 June 2019, [url](#); Dawn, View from the courtroom: No legislation yet to criminalise custodial torture accessed, 1 July 2019, [url](#); News on Sunday (The), Police's third degree methods, 15 March 2020, [url](#)

⁶⁶¹ BBC News, Uncovering Pakistan's secret human rights abuses, 2 June 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁶² Deutsche Welle, Deaths in custody — the culture of police torture in Pakistan, 18 September 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁶³ OMCT, Justice Project Pakistan, Criminalising Torture in Pakistan: The need for an effective legal framework emphasises the lack of clarity on the issue of torture in Pakistan's domestic laws, 18 March 2021, [url](#), pp. 4-6

⁶⁶⁴ Dawn, View from the courtroom: No legislation yet to criminalise custodial torture accessed, 1 July 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁶⁵ HRW, Pakistan Could Make Torture A Crime, 10 October 2019, [url](#)

tabled in February 2020, has not yet been passed by the parliament.⁶⁶⁶ On 12 July 2021, the bill was passed by the Senate.⁶⁶⁷

1.5.2 Judiciary and legal system

Structure of the judiciary

The formal court system, as established by the country's 1973 constitution, consists of the Supreme Court, High Courts in the four provinces and Islamabad, session courts in each district and a federal Sharia Court.⁶⁶⁸

Capacity

In June 2021, Dawn stated that around 2.1 million cases were pending in the courts in Pakistan. About 51 387 were pending with the Supreme Court.⁶⁶⁹ The lack of capacity in the judiciary to deal with cases was also rooted in the vast numbers of detainees, detentions without documentation, slow legal processing times, lack of use of bail provisions, and lack of information sharing.⁶⁷⁰ According to The Nation, Pakistan lacks a high number of judges and many posts are vacant in the district and high courts.⁶⁷¹

In some areas, Pakistanis avoided civil and criminal courts and instead relied on tribal dispute settlement of private issues, especially in rural areas. This was largely due to lack of access to justice, lack of trust in the judiciary or because of lack of social status and financial resources for some parts of the population.⁶⁷²

Integrity

The Pakistan judiciary is susceptible to corruption, bribery, political interference, and pressure from political groups and the army.⁶⁷³ Appointments and court decisions were affected by political influence and favouritism.⁶⁷⁴ The Pakistani judiciary was described by several sources as having restricted independence and impartiality with a weak and dependent nature.⁶⁷⁵ Judicial officials and lawyers faced 'significant public pressure', intimidation, and violence, particularly regarding cases of organised crime, corruption or related to blasphemy.⁶⁷⁶

According to a June 2021 article of Dawn, the situation in the lower courts in Pakistan is more severe than in high courts. The lower courts are confronted with many problems: incompetent and/or

⁶⁶⁶ Geo News TV, What's stopping Pakistan from criminalising police torture?, 15 March 2021, [url](#)

⁶⁶⁷ HRW, Pakistan: Pass Anti-Torture Bill, 14 July 2021, [url](#)

⁶⁶⁸ Courting the Law, Criminal Justice System In Pakistan: A Critical Analysis, 15 February 2017, [url](#); Pakistan, Government of Pakistan, The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 13 February 2019, [url](#), article 175, article 213

⁶⁶⁹ Dawn, Backlog in courts, 29 June 2021, [url](#)

⁶⁷⁰ UN Human Rights Committee, Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan, 23 August 2017, [url](#), par. 31; Express Tribune (The), Judicial reforms for a competitive Pakistan, 16 January 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁷¹ Nation (The), Shortage of judges increasing burden on judiciary, 22 January 2020, [url](#)

⁶⁷² Asia Foundation (The), Alternative Dispute Resolution Gains Traction in Pakistan, 18 December 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁷³ Gandhara, Pakistani Lawyers Protest Gov't Case Against Top Judge, 3 June 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁷⁴ Pakistan Today, Political influence, favouritism behind elevation of high court judges, suggest lawyers, 29 April 2017, [url](#)

⁶⁷⁵ Nation (The), Pakistan's flawed justice system, 19 June 2018, [url](#); Daily Times, Reforming the judicial system, 8 March 2019, [url](#); Daily Times, Modern justice system and Pakistan, 21 February 2019, [url](#); Dawn, Crisis of the judiciary, 17 July 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁷⁶ International News (The), Recent incidents targeting Pakistani, global judges and family members, 16 April 2018, [url](#); HRCP and FIDH, Punished for being vulnerable; How Pakistan executes the poorest and the most marginalized in society, 8 October 2019, [url](#), pp. 22-23

overworked public prosecutors, individuals prepared to bear false witness for money and inadequate police investigations.⁶⁷⁷

1.5.3 Anti-Terrorism Acts and military courts

Anti-Terrorism Acts

On 24 February 2014, the government announced an internal security policy for a five-year period. This policy focused mainly on securing urban centres, while it often did not mention the situation in former FATA and Balochistan. It referred to dialogue with all stakeholders for *madrassa* reforms, militants' rehabilitation and deradicalisation. A primary target of the security policy was isolating terrorists. The National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) was supposed to carry out tasks ranging from counterterrorism to political and operational interventions. In February 2014, the government was still engaged in peace talks with the Taliban, and the security policy proved insufficient once the military operation in North Waziristan started and the country fell victim to retaliatory attacks by the militants.⁶⁷⁸

The December 2014 militant attack on the Peshawar Army Public School served as a catalyst for political consensus when former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif convened an all parties' conference the day after the attack.⁶⁷⁹ This led, in the same month, to consultation with all political parties and to the establishment of a National Action Plan (NAP) in order to eliminate terrorism from Pakistan.⁶⁸⁰ Later in December 2014, Nawaz Sharif announced the formation of a federal counterterrorism force with immediate effect.⁶⁸¹ The political and security establishment set up temporary military courts to try terrorism-related offences instead of pursuing the cases via an independent judiciary.⁶⁸²

Military courts

In January 2015, the 21st Constitutional Amendment Bill and the Pakistani Army Amendment Act 2015 were signed. Those amendments gave military courts the jurisdiction for two years to convict civilians for terrorism-related offences.⁶⁸³ In August 2015, the Supreme Court upheld the parliamentary bill.⁶⁸⁴ The military courts were disbanded on 7 January 2017 after the legal provision expired. In March 2017, the Parliament, the Senate and the President passed a legislation to reinstate the military courts for a two-year period.⁶⁸⁵ On 30 March 2019, the military courts' jurisdiction over civilians for terrorism-related offences ceased.⁶⁸⁶ The government failed to get support from opposition parties for a constitutional amendment to extend the jurisdiction of military courts again.⁶⁸⁷ Sources criticised the establishment of the military courts in the past and

⁶⁷⁷ Dawn, Backlog in courts, 29 June 2021, [url](#)

⁶⁷⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2014, 2015, [url](#), pp. 42-43

⁶⁷⁹ Express Tribune (The), Fight against terrorism: Defining moment, 25 December 2014, [url](#)

⁶⁸⁰ Express Tribune (The), Fight against terrorism: Defining moment, 25 December 2014, [url](#); CRSS, The NAP Tracker The Third Year Audit of the National Action Plan, June 2018, [url](#)

⁶⁸¹ Dawn, Nawaz constitutes special committee to implement national Action Plan, 26 December 2014, [url](#)

⁶⁸² Dawn, Military Courts part of National Action Plan: PM Nawaz, 30 December 2014, [url](#); Economist (The), The man with a plan, 24 January 2015, 24 January 2015, [url](#)

⁶⁸³ International Crisis Group, Revisiting Counter-terrorism Strategies in Pakistan: Opportunities and Pitfalls n°271, 22 July 2015, [url](#), p. 3

⁶⁸⁴ DW, Pakistan's military courts - a solution or a problem?, 7 August 2015, [url](#)

⁶⁸⁵ BBC News, Pakistan to reinstate secret military courts despite criticism, 22 March 2017, [url](#); Dawn, Military courts resume in Pakistan, 31 March 2017, [url](#)

⁶⁸⁶ ICJ, Military Injustice in Pakistan-Briefing Paper, January 2019, [url](#), p. 3; Dawn, Military courts cease to function today, 31 March 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁸⁷ Dawn, Military courts cease to function today, 31 March 2019, [url](#)

warned that those courts could be used as a mechanism against political dissidents or groups that had disturbed the military.⁶⁸⁸

1.5.4 Detention and death penalty

Detention

According to the latest report of the Federal Ombudsman, published in September 2020 and quoted in a report of Amnesty International (AI) and Justice Project Pakistan, the total prison population of Pakistan stands at 79 603.⁶⁸⁹

According to a December 2020 joint publication of Amnesty International Justice Project Pakistan, overcrowding in prisons is caused by a number of factors, including police arrest practices and the high proportion of people held in pre-trial detention, following the courts' reluctance to grant bail and to order alternative non-custodial sentences.⁶⁹⁰

Death penalty

On 16 December 2014, militants of the TTP attacked an army-run school in Peshawar. In the aftermath of this attack, the Pakistan authorities partially lifted a 'de facto moratorium' on the death penalty that had been in place since 2008. On 10 March 2015, the Pakistani government declared that executions would resume for all capital crimes.⁶⁹¹

According to numbers cited in a June 2021 article of the Washington Post 3 800 people are on death row in Pakistan.⁶⁹² Amnesty International (AI) recorded in 2020 not a single execution in Pakistan, compared to 14 in 2019.⁶⁹³ AI recorded 'a significantly lower number of death sentences in 2020 (49) compared to previous years which could partly be linked to a hiatus in court proceedings due to the Covid-19 pandemic'.⁶⁹⁴

⁶⁸⁸ Dawn, Govt, opposition discussing military courts' extension, 14 March 2019, [url](#); HRCP, Military courts are anti-democratic, 12 January 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁸⁹ AI and Justice Project Pakistan, Prisoners of the Pandemic – The Right to Health and COVID-19 in Pakistan, 13 December 2020, [url](#), p. 22

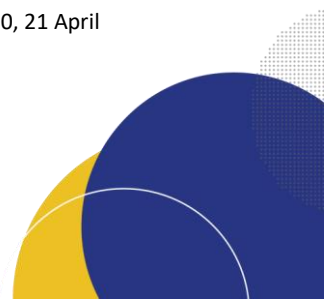
⁶⁹⁰ AI and Justice Project Pakistan, Prisoners of the Pandemic – The Right to Health and COVID-19 in Pakistan, 13 December 2020, [url](#), p. 9

⁶⁹¹ Diplomat (The), Pakistan and the Death Penalty, 21 April 2016, [url](#); Economist (The), The man with the plan: Pakistan after the school massacre, 24 January 2015, [url](#); Justice Project Pakistan, Counting Executions, 6 July 2017, [url](#), p. 1

⁶⁹² Washington Post (The), Years after Pakistan's terrorism crackdown, many with no terrorist ties face risk of execution, 24 June 2021, [url](#)

⁶⁹³ AI, Death sentences and executions 2019, 21 April 2020, [url](#), p. 28; AI, Death Sentences and Executions 2020, 21 April 2021, [url](#), p. 30

⁶⁹⁴ AI, Death Sentences and Executions 2020, 21 April 2021, [url](#), p. 30



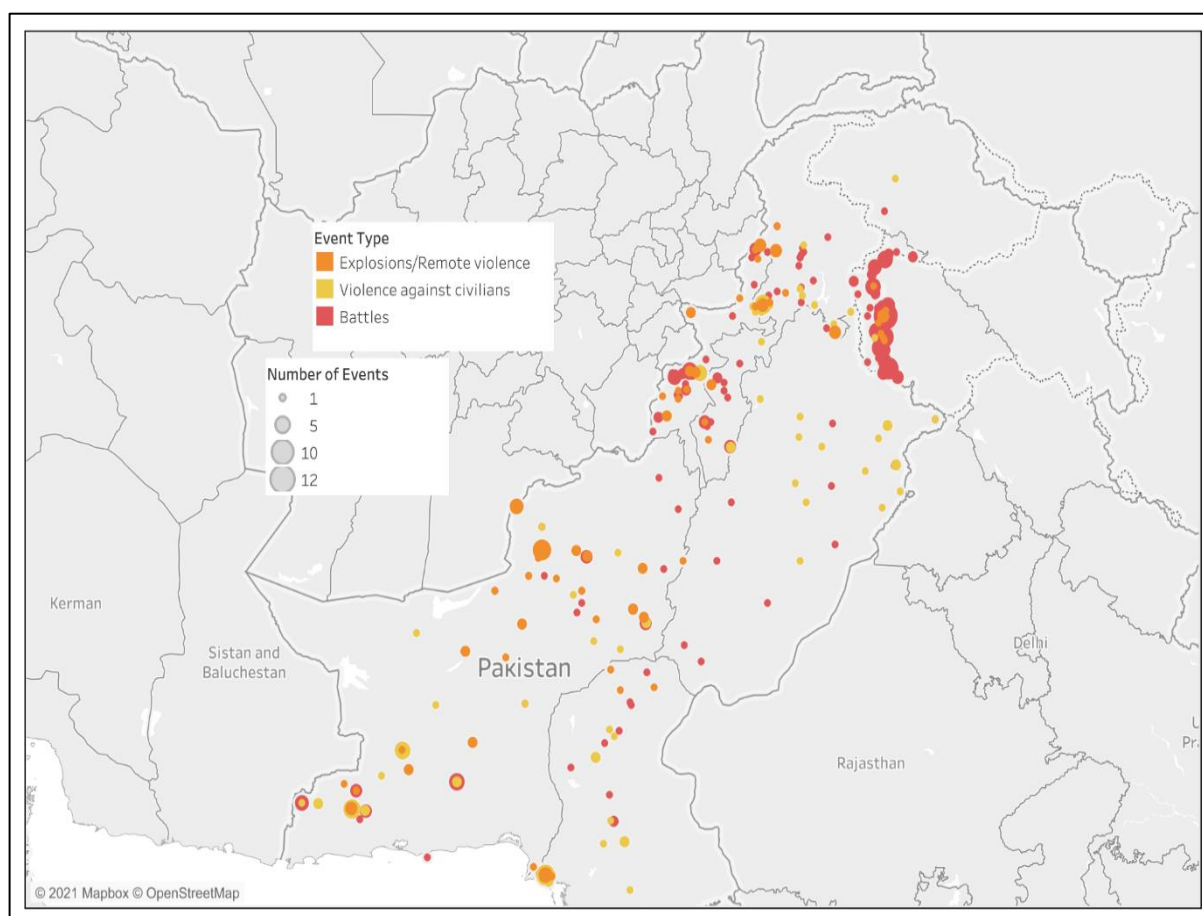
2. Security situation per region

2.1 Geographical overview of the violence

2.1.1 Trends in regional violence

ACLED provides a publicly available dataset to assess the geographical spread of violent incidents. The maps in this section are based on the ACLED dataset⁶⁹⁵, which contains data about security-related incidents in Pakistan.

[Map 2](#) and [Map 3](#) show an overview of the violence in Pakistan by type of event for 2020 and the first seven months of 2021: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians.



Map 2: Battles, violence against civilians and explosions/remote violence in Pakistan 2020, based on ACLED data⁶⁹⁶

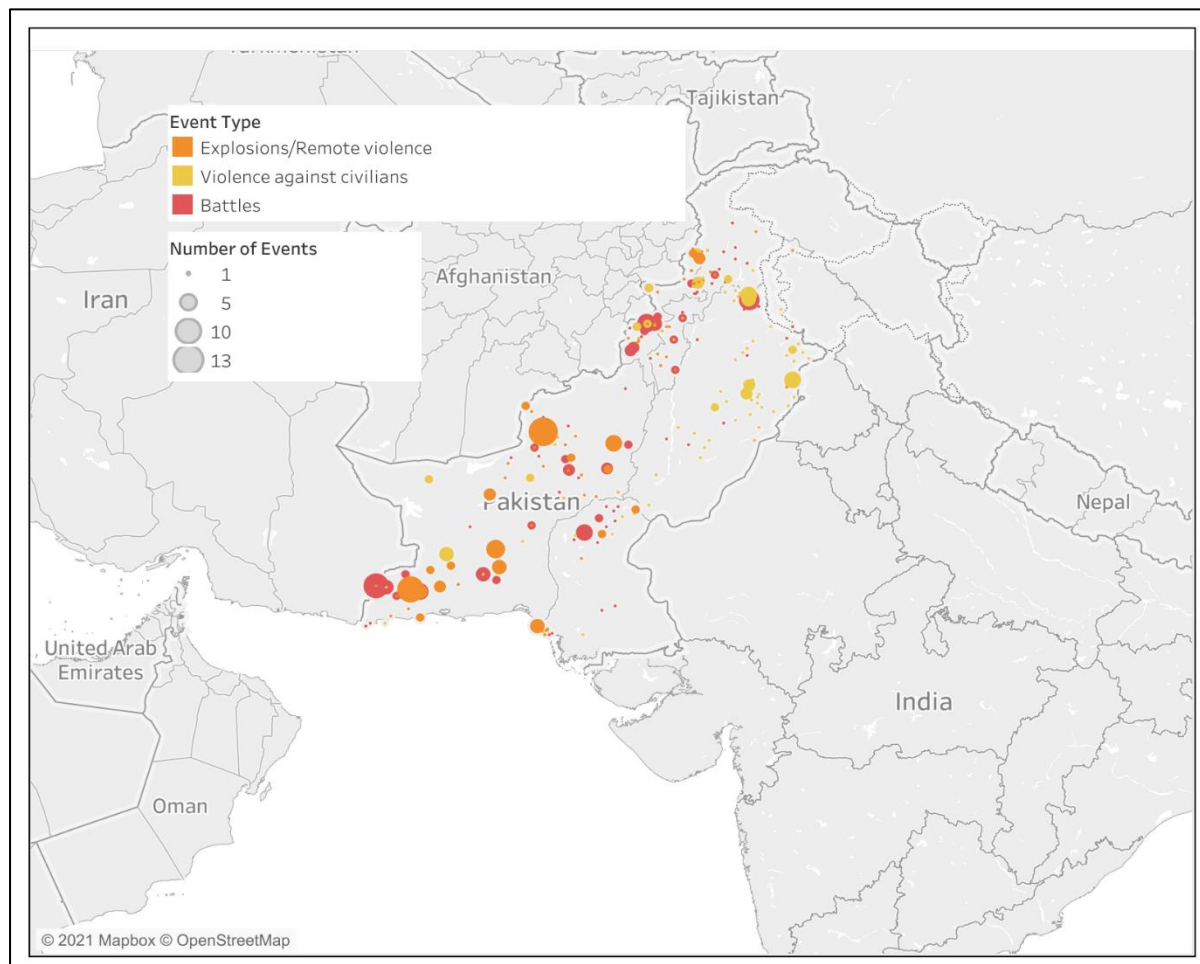
In 2020, most security incidents were coded by ACLED in the province of Balochistan (138), in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (129) and the province of KP (127). The lowest number of security incidents

⁶⁹⁵ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 December 2020), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

⁶⁹⁶ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 December 2020), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

were recorded the province of Punjab (33), in the Federal Capital of Islamabad (2) and in Gilgit-Baltistan (2).⁶⁹⁷

According to ACLED in 2020, the event type battles occurred the most in Azad Kashmir (118). Most explosions/remote violence occurred in the provinces of Balochistan (44) and KP (32). Violence against civilians occurred the most in the provinces of Balochistan (42), KP (27) and in Sindh (23).⁶⁹⁸



Map 3: Battles, violence against civilians and explosions/remote violence in Pakistan, 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 based on ACLED data⁶⁹⁹

Most security incidents in the first seven months of 2021 were recorded in Balochistan (203), the province of KP (127), the province of Punjab (81) and the province of Sindh (36). The lowest number of security incidents was recorded in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (3) and the Federal Capital of Islamabad (7). In Gilgit-Baltistan no security incidents were counted.⁷⁰⁰ According to ACLED in the

⁶⁹⁷ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 December 2020), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

⁶⁹⁸ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2021-31 July 2021), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

⁶⁹⁹ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2021-31 July 2021), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

⁷⁰⁰ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2021-31 July 2021), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

time period 1 January until 31 July 2021 the event type battles occurred the most in the provinces Balochistan (81) and KP (72). Most explosions/remote violence in the provinces of Balochistan (84) and KP (29). Violence against civilians occurred the most in the provinces of Punjab (62), Balochistan (38) and in KP (26).⁷⁰¹

2.1.2 Regional comparison of violence-related casualties

Regional comparison of violence-related casualties in 2020

This section provides figures of fatalities and attacks at regional level, according to the four sources as described in the [Introduction](#). It is impossible to present the figures in one comparative table, as the three main sources about the security situation use different parameters and definitions.

PIPS only gave regional details for ‘terrorist attacks’ in its annual report covering 2020. PIPS focused on the number of terrorist attacks (and consequent fatalities per province, and indicated percentage changes in 2020 compared to 2019, see [Figure](#)). Compared to 2019, PIPS observed a decrease in ‘terrorist incidents’ (36 % overall). The number of deaths also decreased by 38 % compared to 2019.⁷⁰² KP (including former FATA) and Balochistan were most affected by these attacks in 2020 (see [Figure](#)).⁷⁰³

Region	No of terrorist incidents 2020	% change	Persons killed	% change	Persons killed injured	% change
Balochistan	42	50 % ↘	95	44 % ↘	216	50 % ↘
Karachi	15	50 % ↗	17	21% ↗	65	32 % ↗
KP (including former FATA)	79	37 % ↘	100	31% ↘	206	17% ↘
Punjab	7	40% ↗	5	76% ↘	59	44% ↗
Sindh (excl. Karachi)	3	25 % ↘	3	25 % ↘	1	100 % ↗
Islamabad	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	146	36 % ↘		38 % ↘		25% ↘

Figure 10. ‘Terrorist attacks’ by region - 2020 vs. 2019, based on PIPS data⁷⁰⁴

CRSS recorded most of the casualties in KP (including former FATA), followed by Balochistan and Sindh in 2020.⁷⁰⁵ According to CRSS, in comparison with 2019, the province of Punjab witnessed the greatest decrease in casualties in 2020. This includes casualties from terror attacks and counter-terror operations.⁷⁰⁶

⁷⁰¹ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2021-31 July 2021), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

⁷⁰² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 20-21, p. 23

⁷⁰³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 20-21, p. 23

⁷⁰⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 20-21, p. 23

⁷⁰⁵ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 4

⁷⁰⁶ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 5

Figure presents a comparative regional analysis by CRSS of violence - related casualties in Pakistan in 2020.

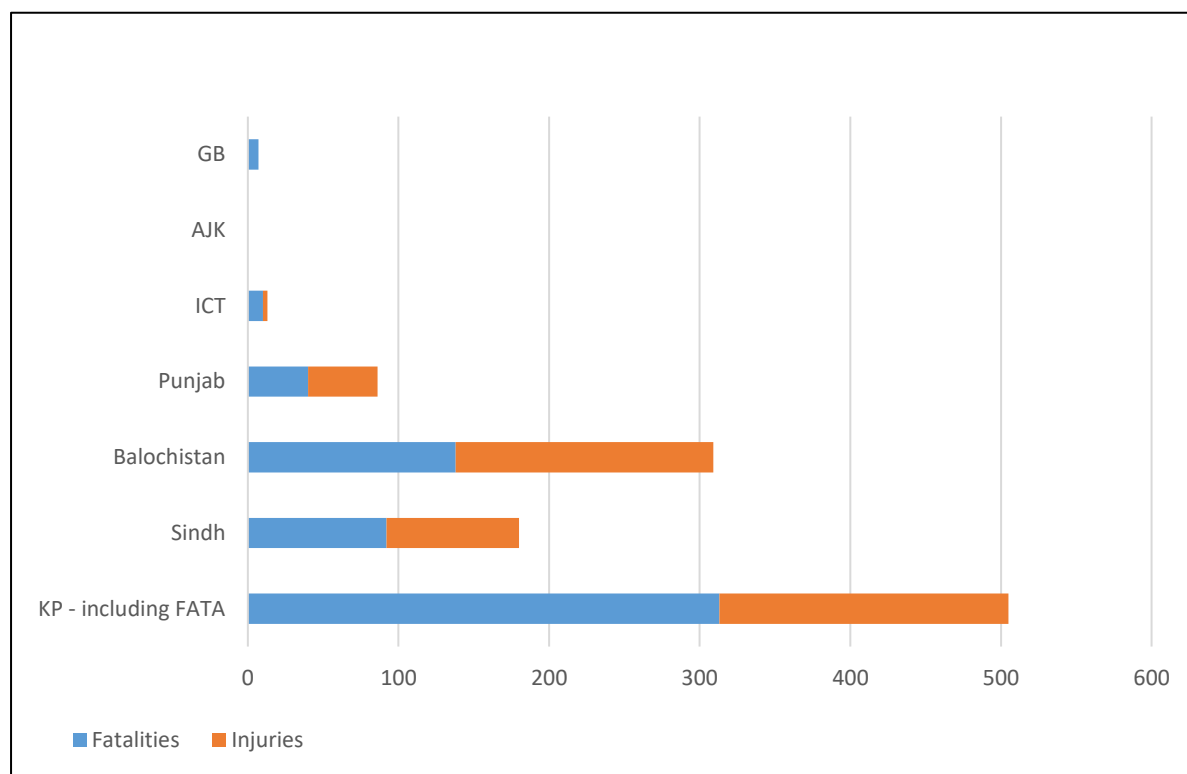


Figure 11. Comparative regional analysis of casualties in 2020, based on CRSS data⁷⁰⁷

PICSS gives data for the overall incidents per region. In 2020, in total 333 overall incidents were observed. In 2020, 429 people were killed and 619 others injured. PICSS documented most of the casualties due to overall incidents (terrorist and other violent incidents) in Balochistan, followed by the province of KP and former FATA.⁷⁰⁸

Regional comparison of violence-related casualties 1 January 2021– 31 July 2021

475 casualties were recorded by PIPS in incidents of 'terrorist attacks' during the first seven months of 2021. Data from PIPS indicated that most casualties of 'terrorist attacks' in the first half of 2021 took place in Balochistan (252 casualties) and KP (160 casualties).⁷⁰⁹

According to PICSS in total 654 casualties were recorded in 263 incidents of overall violence in the first seven months of 2021.⁷¹⁰ According to PICSS most casualties were counted in the province of Balochistan (313 casualties), the province of KP (270 casualties), and the province of Punjab (33 casualties).⁷¹¹

According to the first and the second quarterly report of CRSS, most casualties in the first half of 2021 occurred in Balochistan, followed by KP including former FATA followed by Sindh.⁷¹²

⁷⁰⁷ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 4

⁷⁰⁸ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 3-5

⁷⁰⁹ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

⁷¹⁰ Khan, A. email, 8 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PICSS

⁷¹¹ Khan, A. email, 8 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PICSS

⁷¹² Figures fatalities and injured counted together for the first and second quarter – for the second quarter the number of fatalities/injured of the incident TLP was not counted in this number. CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

Figure 3 presents a comparative regional analysis by CRSS of violence-related casualties in Pakistan in the first half of 2021 (quarter 1 and quarter 2 of 2021).⁷¹³

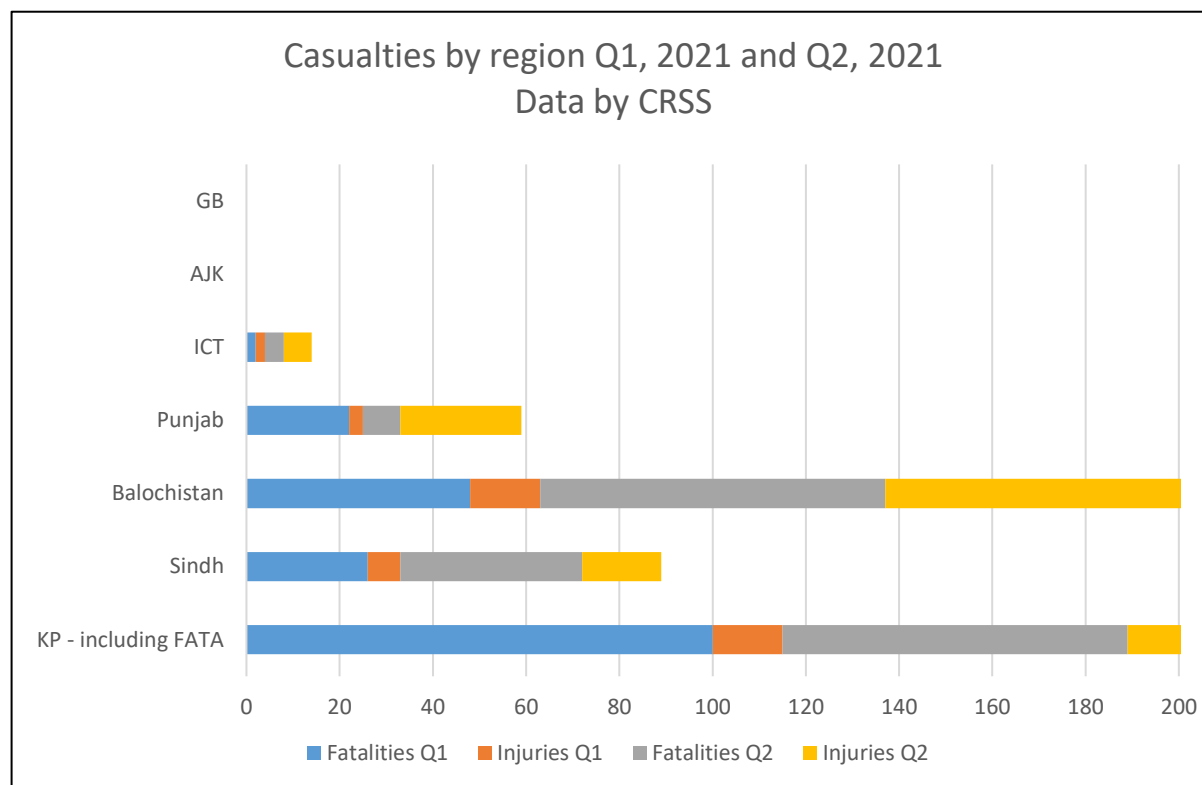


Figure 3. Comparative regional analysis of the casualties in Q1, 2020 and Q2, 2021, based on CRSS data⁷¹⁴

⁷¹³ Figures fatalities and injured counted together for the first and second quarter – for the second quarter the number of fatalities/injured of the incident TLP was not counted in this number. CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

⁷¹⁴ Figures fatalities and injured counted together for the first and second quarter – for the second quarter the number of fatalities/injured of the incident TLP was not counted in this number. CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

2.2 Security trends per geographic subdivision

In the following sections, security trends are explained in greater detail, per geographic subdivision. In each provincial section, a general description of the province contains information on the geography and population and on the background of the conflict, including the actors of the conflict in the province. The subsections describe recent trends in the security situation, including the nature of violence, frequency, targets, locations, and victims within a timeframe from 1 August 2020 until 31 July 2021. A separate part is dedicated to displacements. Under the subsections several incidents are described. These should be read as illustrations of trends in the security situation and not as an exhaustive list of incidents.

2.2.1 Punjab

General description of the province

Punjab province (see [Map 1](#)) is located in the east of Pakistan. It borders the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir in the north-east, the Indian states of Punjab and Rajasthan in the east, the province of Sindh in the south, Balochistan and KP provinces in the west, Islamabad Federal Capital area and Azad Kashmir in the north.⁷¹⁵ The province of Punjab is divided into 9 divisions and 36 districts.⁷¹⁶ Punjab can be distinguished in three zones: central, north and south Punjab with Lahore being the provincial capital. 'The military headquarters are in Northern Punjab, and it maintains most of its forces in the province.'⁷¹⁷ The southern parts of Punjab are among the poorest areas in the country.⁷¹⁸ Lahore is the second biggest city of Pakistan, after Karachi in Sindh province.⁷¹⁹

Punjab is the most populated province of Pakistan and the second largest province by area.⁷²⁰ According to the population census 2017 published by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the province of Punjab has a population of 109 989 655.⁷²¹ According to UNDP, more than half of the population is living in rural areas.⁷²²

Background of the violence and actors in the Punjab

A 2016 report by International Crisis Group stated that southern Punjab was considered as the region where militant networks and extremists were present in the province of Punjab.⁷²³ In the aftermath of the Pulwama attack in February 2019 (see chapter [1.2 Actors in the conflict - Jaish-e-Muhammad \(JeM\)](#)), the Pakistani authorities made arrests and seized assets linked to militants to this attack in the south of the province.⁷²⁴ As reported by Gandhara in November 2020, militants from Balochistan and militants linked to the TTP, have hideouts in the district of Dera Ghazi Khan in the south of Punjab.⁷²⁵ Associated Press reported in April 2021 that the Pakistani Taliban have a presence in areas of Punjab province that border the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and in southern Punjab near southwestern Balochistan province.⁷²⁶ Media agencies reported in May and

⁷¹⁵ UNOCHA, Pakistan-Overview map [map], 3 December 2018, [url](#)

⁷¹⁶ Samaa TV, 6 surprises from Pakistan's 2017 census that should worry govt, 12 June 2021, [url](#)

⁷¹⁷ McGill International Review (The), South Punjab – Neglected and Politicized, 4 April 2019, [url](#)

⁷¹⁸ Dawn, 20pc of Pakistanis live in 10 cities, census reveals, 29 August 2017, [url](#); McGill International Review (The), South Punjab – Neglected and Politicized, 4 April 2019, [url](#)

⁷¹⁹ World Population Review, Population of Cities in Pakistan, 11 November 2020, [url](#)

⁷²⁰ UNDP Pakistan, Devolution of Power: Pathways to Actualization, 23 January 2021, [url](#), p. 5

⁷²¹ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017-National, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

⁷²² UNDP Pakistan, Devolution of Power: Pathways to Actualization, 23 January 2021, [url](#), p. 5

⁷²³ International Crisis Group, Pakistan's Jihadist Heartland: Southern Punjab, 30 May 2016, [url](#)

⁷²⁴ Guardian (The), Pakistan launches major crackdown on extremist groups, 8 March 2019, [url](#); AP, Popular support for militants complicates Pakistan crackdown, 8 March 2019, [url](#)

⁷²⁵ Gandhara, Suspected Al-Qaeda-Linked Militants Killed In Pakistan's Punjab Province, 7 November 2020, [url](#)

⁷²⁶ AP, Pakistani police say wanted militant killed in shootout, 11 April 2021, [url](#)

June 2021 that the CTD has carried out operations against militants in various areas of Punjab province.⁷²⁷

Recent security trends and impact on the civilian population

Security incidents

During 2020, there were 33 security incidents recorded by ACLED in Punjab province, of which 12 were coded as battles, 3 explosions/remote violence and 18 incidents of violence against civilians.⁷²⁸ Out of these 33 security incidents, most incidents occurred in Rawalpindi and Lahore.⁷²⁹

In 2020, PIPS counted seven 'terrorist attacks', compared to five in 2019. These attacks occurred in Rawalpindi and Rahim Yar Khan.⁷³⁰ PICSS observed ten militant attacks in 2020. The number of militant attacks in the province doubled compared to 2019.⁷³¹

From 1 January 2021 to 31 July 2021, ACLED coded 82 violent events in Punjab province. 19 of which were coded as battles, 1 as explosions/remote violence and 62 incidents of violence against civilians.⁷³² In this timeframe in Rawalpindi most violent incidents were counted (16 incidents), followed by Lahore and Faisalabad (11 incidents each).⁷³³

From 1 January to 31 July 2021, PIPS counted 11 incidents of which 3 were recorded as 'terrorist attacks' in Punjab.⁷³⁴ PICSS mentioned 26 incidents of overall violence and 5 out of these incidents were marked as militant attacks.⁷³⁵

Security trends 2020-2021

According to PIPS, five 'terrorist attacks' in the province 'targeted apparently civilians, one attack targeted the police and another attack targeted a gas pipeline'. PIPS stated that in 2020 Taliban militants carried out six attacks in Rawalpindi.⁷³⁶ In April 2021, it was reported that the CTD arrested several militants of Afghan based organisations in separate IBO's in Lahore and Rawalpindi who were behind several attacks in 2020 in the province.⁷³⁷ Mid-April 2021, in an exchange of fire the CTD killed a militant in Rawalpindi who was linked to the TTP and LeJ.⁷³⁸

Illustrative incidents in 2020 and in the first seven months of 2021:

- On 12 June 2020, 1 person was killed and at least 12 were injured, when an IED blast occurred in Saddar Bazaar.⁷³⁹

⁷²⁷ International News (The), CTD conducted 46 operations in seven days, 30 May 2021, [url](#); Dawn, CTD arrests three militants, 20 June 2021, [url](#)

⁷²⁸ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 December 2020), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

⁷²⁹ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 December 2020), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

⁷³⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 50; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 60

⁷³¹ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), p. 38

⁷³² Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2021-31 July 2021), 3 September 2021, [url](#)

⁷³³ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2021-31 July 2021), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

⁷³⁴ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

⁷³⁵ Khan, A. email, 8 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PICSS

⁷³⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 60

⁷³⁷ Dawn, CTD arrests six militants in Lahore, Rawalpindi, 1 April 2021, [url](#)

⁷³⁸ Pakistan Today, Police say wanted militant killed in shootout, 11 April 2021, [url](#)

⁷³⁹ Nation (The), 1 killed, 12 injured in IED blast at Saddar, 13 June 2020, [url](#)

- On 13 December 2020, an explosion near Rawalpindi's Ganj Mandi police station injured at least 25 people. It was the second attack near a police station within 10 days.⁷⁴⁰
- On 4 December 2020, one person was killed and seven others were injured due to an IED blast near a bus station.⁷⁴¹
- On 23 June 2021, a bomb blast near the residence of the founder of LeT in Lahore killed three people and wounded 13 others.⁷⁴²

Casualties

In 2020, in Punjab province CRSS recorded in total 104 casualties (see [Figure 4](#)). According to CRSS, most casualties in 2020 were counted among civilians. The lowest number of casualties due to violence affected security personnel.⁷⁴³

In the first half of 2021, CRSS counted in total 59 casualties (see [Figure 4](#)). In the second quarter of 2021, fatalities decreased in the province (from 22 to 8) compared to the first quarter of 2021. On the other hand, the number of injured increased (from 3 to 26 injured) during the second quarter of 2021.⁷⁴⁴

Casualties in the province of Punjab					
2020			01/01/2021-30/06/2021		
Fatalities	Injuries	Total	Fatalities	Injuries	Total
40	64	104	30	29	59

Figure 4. Casualties in the province of Punjab, 2020 and the first half of 2021, based on CRSS data⁷⁴⁵

Displacement

Among the consulted sources, no information was found about any conflict-induced displacement from areas in and to Punjab in 2020 and the first seven months of 2021.⁷⁴⁶

⁷⁴⁰ Dawn, At least 25 injured in explosion near Rawalpindi's Ganj Mandi police station, 13 December 2020, [url](#)

⁷⁴¹ Dawn, 1 dead, 7 injured in Rawalpindi blast, 4 December 2020, [url](#)

⁷⁴² Al Jazeera, Deadly blast in Pakistan near residence of armed group founder, 23 June 2021, [url](#)

⁷⁴³ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 25

⁷⁴⁴ There is a discrepancy between numbers in the Q1 and Q2 report. Cedoca chose to follow the data in the Q2 report. CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

⁷⁴⁵ There is a discrepancy between numbers in the Q1 and Q2 report. Cedoca chose to follow the data in the Q2 report. CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 25; CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

⁷⁴⁶ Websites consulted: <http://www.unocha.org/pakistan>; <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/pakistan>; <http://reliefweb.int/country/pak>

2.2.2 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (including former FATA)

General description of the province

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (see [Map 1](#)) is situated in the north of Pakistan and borders Afghanistan in the west, Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan in the east and north-east and Punjab province in the south-east.⁷⁴⁷ Peshawar is the provincial capital. The province is divided in 7 divisions and 34 districts.⁷⁴⁸ The population speaks Pashtu, followed by the local languages Hindko and Urdu.⁷⁴⁹ The province is the third-largest province of Pakistan by area.⁷⁵⁰ According to the population census of 2017 published by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the province of KP has a population of 30 508 920 and former FATA of 4 993 044.⁷⁵¹ According to UNDP, approximately 84 % of the population is living in rural areas.⁷⁵²

The FATA was a semi-autonomous tribal region in north-western Pakistan, consisting of seven tribal agencies (districts) and six frontier regions, until being merged with KP on 31 May 2018.⁷⁵³ The region of former FATA is referred to as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa tribal districts (KPTDs). The tribal agencies and frontier regions in former FATA have been re-designated as districts and subdivisions of KP.⁷⁵⁴

The KP tribal districts are described separately and in detail below.

Background of the conflict and actors in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (including former FATA)

In 2009, the Pakistani army engaged in a military operation against the TTP in KP. This offensive was marked by human rights violations and arbitrary arrests according to local residents.⁷⁵⁵ The army's counter-insurgency operations such as *Zarb-e Azb* and *Radd-ul Fasaad* (see [chapter 1.3 recent security trends and armed confrontations](#)) in KP (including former FATA) contributed to a higher level of security in the province in the long-run.⁷⁵⁶ In May 2019, it was reported that the Pakistani state was exercising control over Mingora city and peace returned to the Swat valley in 2019.⁷⁵⁷ In July 2019, it was reported that in Dera Ismael Khan, multiple security operations were carried out in the past but the area still continues to serve as 'a fertile ground for extremists to breed and thrive'.⁷⁵⁸

In August 2019, Gandhara reported that members of the TTP have returned to Buner district and established checkpoints. Gandhara cited locals, who were unsure of the treat that the TTP in Buner may pose. The military and the police were conducting search and strike operations.⁷⁵⁹ In Bajaur and Mohmand districts, 'the Taliban has forced local businesses to pay protection money'.⁷⁶⁰ In October 2020, Gandhara stated that the TTP has returned to some districts of Malakand Division.⁷⁶¹ Lower

⁷⁴⁷ Government of Pakistan, Provincial Disaster Management Authority, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Monsoon Contingency Plan 2019, 6 July 2019, [url](#), pp. 4-7

⁷⁴⁸ Samaa TV, 6 surprises from Pakistan's 2017 census that should worry govt, 12 June 2021, [url](#)

⁷⁴⁹ Daily Sabah, Pakistan: A land of many languages, 9 March 2018, [url](#)

⁷⁵⁰ UNDP Pakistan, Devolution of Power: Pathways to Actualization, 23 January 2021, [url](#), p. 5

⁷⁵¹ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017-National, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

⁷⁵² UNDP Pakistan, Devolution of Power: Pathways to Actualization, 23 January 2021, [url](#), p. 5

⁷⁵³ Asia Foundation (The), Dismantling Pakistan's Tribal Areas, 24 October 2018, [url](#)

⁷⁵⁴ Express Tribune (The), Tribal areas re-designated as districts, sub-divisions, 12 June 2018, [url](#); Express Tribune (The), Notification issued for composition of new administrative divisions in Mohmand, Khyber, 20 July 2018, [url](#)

⁷⁵⁵ Dawn, Swat: an unquiet calm, 21 September 2014, [url](#)

⁷⁵⁶ Almeida, C., EASO, EASO COI Meeting Report: Pakistan, 16-17 October 2017; Rome, February 2018, [url](#), pp. 21, 46

⁷⁵⁷ AA, Swat city center: From bloody square to business hub, 23 May 2019, [url](#)

⁷⁵⁸ Mohanty Ranjan, T., Pakistan: Dera Ismail Khan: Tenuous Control, 29 July 2019, SAIR, Volume 18, No. 5, [url](#)

⁷⁵⁹ Gandhara, Taliban See Resurgence In Northwestern Pakistan, 23 August 2019, [url](#)

⁷⁶⁰ Gandhara, Taliban Reemerges In Former Pakistani Stronghold, 26 October 2020, [url](#)

⁷⁶¹ Gandhara, Taliban Reemerges In Former Pakistani Stronghold, 26 October 2020, [url](#)

Dir has seen a rise in violent incidents in 2020.⁷⁶² Local residents, cited by Gandhara in October 2020, mentioned that several locals received death threats from the Taliban.⁷⁶³

At the end of May 2018, the FATA merged with KP. The newly merged tribal districts are governed under provincial laws of KP. According to a report of International Crisis Group in August 2018, years of military operations in former FATA broke the TTP's hold over most of the tribal belt but also displaced millions of residents, destroyed homes and ruined livelihoods. In 2018, it was reported that security in those areas has 'improved but remains fragile' according to International Crisis Group.⁷⁶⁴ PIPS noted that in 2020 there was no considerable progress in the reform process in former FATA.⁷⁶⁵ In 2018 and 2019, it was reported that the networks of the TTP were still active either in Afghanistan or in districts of KP such as Tank, Dera Ismael Khan, North and South Waziristan.⁷⁶⁶ Fahad Nabeel stated the following on main trends and evolution in the tribal districts in 2020 and 2021:

'If we study and compare the patterns of militant activities in tribal districts for both years, we find similarities in trends. Last year, Bajaur, North Waziristan and South Waziristan districts were the areas that encountered large number of militant attacks. This year, up till July, these three districts continue to dominate the list of areas most impacted by militancy. TTP was the main instability actor last year and this year as well. However, a major noticeable trend is the frequency of militant attacks in the region, which has increased this year considering the fact that there are still five months left in this year. Moreover, deterioration of security situation in Afghanistan will continue to provide TTP with an opportunity to increase its activities in the region. Pakistani authorities are also fearful of TTP militants entering the country under the disguise of refugees in near future.'⁷⁶⁷

Recent security trends and impact on the civilian population in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (including former FATA)

Security incidents

ACLED collected data on 127 violent events in KP province,⁷⁶⁸ from reports in open sources in the year 2020, 68 of which were coded as battles, 32 as explosions/remote violence and 27 as violence against civilians. North Waziristan stood out as the district where most incidents were reported with 34 violent events, followed by Peshawar with 15 violent events.⁷⁶⁹

PIPS documented a total of 155 incidents of violence⁷⁷⁰ in the province in 2020. This included 79 'terrorist attacks', 28 anti-militant operational strikes by security forces, 9 armed clashes/encounters between security/law enforcement personnel and militants, 10 foiled terror plots, 6 incidents of faith-based violence, three inter-militant clashes, 10 targeted attacks and 10 cross-border attacks.⁷⁷¹ PICSS observed 109 militant attacks⁷⁷² in 2020.⁷⁷³

⁷⁶² Voicepk.net, Militancy rises again in Lower Dir, 8 October 2020, [url](#)

⁷⁶³ Gandhara, Taliban Reemerges In Former Pakistani Stronghold, 26 October 2020, [url](#)

⁷⁶⁴ International Crisis Group, Shaping a New Peace in Pakistan's Tribal Areas, 20 August 2018, [url](#), p. 2

⁷⁶⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 39

⁷⁶⁶ International Crisis Group, Shaping a New Peace in Pakistan's Tribal Areas, 20 August 2018, [url](#), p. 3; New York Times (The), Pakistan's Tribal Areas Are Still Waiting for Justice as Army Tightens Grip, 11 June 2019, [url](#)

⁷⁶⁷ Nabeel F., email, 4 August 2021

⁷⁶⁸ This number includes the FATA tribal districts

⁷⁶⁹ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 December 2020), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

⁷⁷⁰ This number includes the FATA tribal districts

⁷⁷¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 44

⁷⁷² This number includes the FATA tribal districts

⁷⁷³ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), p. 7

From 1 January 2021 to 31 July 2021, ACLED coded 127 violent events in KP province. 72 of which were coded as battles, 29 as explosions/remote violence and 26 as violence against civilians.⁷⁷⁴ In this timeframe in North Waziristan most violent incidents were counted (30), followed by South Waziristan (15) and Bajaur (14).⁷⁷⁵

From 1 January to 31 July 2021, PIPS counted 77 incidents of which 47 were recorded as ‘terrorist attacks’ in KP.⁷⁷⁶ PICSS mentioned 121 incidents of overall violence and 72 out of these incidents were marked as militant attacks.⁷⁷⁷

Security trends 2020-2021

According to PIPS a majority of the ‘terrorist attacks’ (50 out of 79) in the province targeted the security forces.⁷⁷⁸ Half of these attacks were targeted killings directed against police officers.⁷⁷⁹ The International News stated that in the province, between 2000 and July 2021, 1 505 police officers were killed.⁷⁸⁰ In the first half of 2021, attacks on the police continued in KP. In July 2021, after some attacks in the province, the police across KP increased security measures.⁷⁸¹

Attacks against civilians declined in 2020 according to PIPS and were mostly documented in the tribal districts of the province.⁷⁸² Attacks were also directed against polio/health workers and development labourers in the province. The TTP attacked polio workers and personnel of FWO (Frontier Works Organization) in Swabi, Bajaur and North Waziristan.⁷⁸³ Media reported about attacks against the police protecting polio workers during a vaccination campaign in the province in June and July 2021.⁷⁸⁴

PIPS mentioned also incidents of communal and sectarian related violence in the province in 2020. It made a distinction between sectarian-related terrorist attacks that occurred in Kurram tribal district and in Kohat district and faith-based violence that mainly occurred in Peshawar.⁷⁸⁵

Illustrative incidents in 2020 and in the first seven months of 2021:

- In the evening of 31 August 2020, three police officers were injured when their vehicle was hit by an IED in Maidan area of Lower Dir.⁷⁸⁶
- On 27 October 2020, a *madrassa* in Peshawar was targeted. Due to a bomb blast, at least nine students were killed and more than 80 injured.⁷⁸⁷

⁷⁷⁴ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2021-31 July 2021), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

⁷⁷⁵ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2021-31 July 2021), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

⁷⁷⁶ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

⁷⁷⁷ Khan, A. email, 8 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PICSS

⁷⁷⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 43

⁷⁷⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 46

⁷⁸⁰ International News (The), 1,505 policemen martyred in KP since 2000, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

⁷⁸¹ International News (The), Security upgraded in KP after recent attacks on police, 21 July 2021, [url](#)

⁷⁸² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 47

⁷⁸³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 48-49

⁷⁸⁴ Dawn, Policeman guarding polio vaccine team shot dead in Peshawar, 1 August 2021, [url](#); Dawn, Two police officers protecting polio team shot dead in Mardan, 9 June 2021, [url](#);

⁷⁸⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 49-50

⁷⁸⁶ Dawn, Three injured as bomb targets police mobile in Dir, 1 September 2020, [url](#)

⁷⁸⁷ Gandhara, Deadly Bombing Strikes Religious School In Northwest Pakistan, 27 October 2020, [url](#)

- On 18 November 2020, a FC soldier was killed during an attack on an office of a secret security agency in Charsadda by unidentified gunmen.⁷⁸⁸
- On 2 December 2020, a police officer was killed when he was returning to the police station after performing security duty with a polio team in Bannu district.⁷⁸⁹
- In January, February and April 2021, three Afghan Taliban leaders were killed in Peshawar.⁷⁹⁰
- On 12 January 2021, a police officer on security duty for a polio vaccination team was killed in Latambar area of Karak district.⁷⁹¹
- On 4 April 2021, a judge of an anti-terrorism court in Swat and four other persons were killed during an attack when travelling from Peshawar to Islamabad.⁷⁹²
- On 9 May 2021, one police officer was killed and another one injured during an attack on their vehicle by unidentified persons in Lakki Marwat district. This was the fourth attack directed against the police in this district in the first three months of 2021.⁷⁹³
- On 14 July 2021, a bus carrying Chinese workers to the Dasu hydropower project in the north of the province crashed into a ravine after an explosion. At least 12 people were killed. Initial reporting by the Pakistan government spoke of a mechanical defect; the Chinese authorities attributed the cause to an attack.⁷⁹⁴ According to the Diplomat, the TTP denied being responsible but mentioned that a splinter faction possibly was involved.⁷⁹⁵
- On 1 August 2021, gunmen killed a police officer returning home after security duty with polio vaccination workers in Peshawar.⁷⁹⁶

Casualties

According to PIPS in 155 incidents of violence of various types, 253 people were killed and 258 people wounded in the province in 2020.⁷⁹⁷ PIPS mentioned that the majority of the casualties in the province were security force personnel in 2020.⁷⁹⁸ In 2020, in KP province CRSS recorded in total 505 casualties (see [Figure](#)).⁷⁹⁹ According to CRSS, most casualties in 2020 in the tribal districts were counted among security and government officials. This was followed by militants and civilians.⁸⁰⁰ In KP, civilians were most affected. Security personnel reported the lowest number of deaths.⁸⁰¹

In the first half of 2021, CRSS counted in total 217 casualties (see [Figure](#)). The total number of casualties in the province decreased slightly in the second quarter of 2021 (102 casualties) compared

⁷⁸⁸ International News (The), Attack on sensitive agency office: FC man martyred, attacker killed in Charsadda, 19 November 2020, [url](#)

⁷⁸⁹ Dawn, Police official on polio duty shot dead in Bannu, 3 December 2020, [url](#)

⁷⁹⁰ Arab News, Third Taliban leader killed in Peshawar in past 4 months, 21 April 2021, [url](#)

⁷⁹¹ TNN, Policeman on polio team security duty shot dead, 12 January 2021, [url](#)

⁷⁹² Dawn, Swat ATC judge among four killed in 'targeted attack' near Ambar Interchange in KP, 4 April 2021, [url](#)

⁷⁹³ Express Tribune (The), Cop martyred in drive-by shooting on police vehicle, 10 May 2021, [url](#)

⁷⁹⁴ Al Jazeera, Pakistan bus 'blast' kills at least 12, including nine Chinese, 14 July 2021, [url](#)

⁷⁹⁵ Diplomat (The), Chaos in Afghanistan Threatens CPEC, 19 July 2021, [url](#)

⁷⁹⁶ Dawn, Policeman guarding polio vaccine team shot dead in Peshawar, 1 August 2021, [url](#)

⁷⁹⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 44

⁷⁹⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 45

⁷⁹⁹ These numbers include Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and former FATA, numbers used from table 1 CRSS in CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 4

⁸⁰⁰ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 23

⁸⁰¹ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 24

to the first quarter in 2021 (115 casualties).⁸⁰² This is mainly due to a decrease in fatalities in the second quarter of 2021 (74 fatalities) compared to the first quarter of 2021 (102 fatalities).⁸⁰³

Casualties in the province of KP (including former FATA)					
2020			01/01/2021-30/06/2021		
Fatalities	Injuries	Total	Fatalities	Injuries	Total
313	192	505	174	43	217

Figure 14. Casualties in the province of KP, 2020 and the first half of 2021, based on CRSS data⁸⁰⁴

Displacement

In July 2021, TNN reported that after nine years the repatriation of IDPs of Tirah-Rajgal from Kokikhel tribe in Khyber tribal district started to Zar Manzra and Mehrban Killi, in Tirah-Rajgal.⁸⁰⁵ According to UNOCHA, until August 2021, 16 483 families remain displaced in the province.⁸⁰⁶

Among the consulted sources no information was found about any conflict-induced displacement from areas in and to KP in 2020 and the first seven months of 2021.⁸⁰⁷

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa tribal districts (KPTDs)

For a better understanding of the security situation in this region, the KP tribal districts are first described in general terms and further in more detail.

General

Mansur Khan Mahsud described the security situation for the KPTDs on 11 June 2021 as follows in 2020 and 2021:

‘South and North Waziristan districts are the main hub of militancy in 2021. More than 90 % terrorist activity has been reported in these two districts. Some targets killing incidents have been reported in Khyber tribal districts and a couple of attacks have been reported in Bajaur district. The rest of the three tribal districts namely Orakzai, Mohmand and Kurram remained largely peaceful. After the reunification of the Pakistani militant groups in 2020 TTP has become bolder and are regularly attacking security forces, government officials and pro-government *Maliks* (the chiefs of a village or community) and elders in South and North Waziristan tribal districts. It is said that the TTP is going to increase its militants’ activities significantly in the coming months. South and North Waziristan districts are the main hub of militancy in 2021. More than 90 % terrorist activity has been reported in these two districts.

⁸⁰² There is a discrepancy between numbers in the Q1 and Q2 report. Cedoca chose to follow the data in the Q2 report. CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁰³ There is a discrepancy between numbers in the Q1 and Q2 report. Cedoca chose to follow the data in the Q2 report. CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁰⁴ There is a discrepancy between numbers in the Q1 and Q2 report. Cedoca chose to follow the data in the Q2 report. CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 24; CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁰⁵ TNN, Repatriation of displaced families of Tirah begins, 10 July 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁰⁶ UNOCHA Pakistan, email, 4 August 2021 - data of PDMA KP - courtesy of UNOCHA Pakistan

⁸⁰⁷ Websites consulted: [url](#); [url](#); [url](#)

Some targets killing incidents have been reported in Khyber tribal districts and a couple of attacks have been reported in Bajaur district. The rest of the three tribal districts namely Orakzai, Mohmand and Kurram remained largely peaceful.⁸⁰⁸

Abdul Basit also indicated the following on 29 July 2021:

‘After witnessing an improvement in the security situation between 2015 and 2019, things deteriorated in 2020 with terrorist attacks by TTP become near daily occurrence on the Pakistani security forces. TTP reunified in August 2020 under Nur Wali Mehsud who has reorganized, disciplined and revived the militant group. The US withdrawal from Afghanistan and the Taliban’s triumphant jihadist narrative will serve as a source of strength and inspiration for TTP. In his recent interview to CNN, Nur Wali has termed Taliban’s victory against the US as the win of all the Muslims and vowed to continue terrorist attacks on the Pakistani security forces in the ex-FATA region. In sum, ex-FATA region’s deteriorated during 2020 and will decline further in the coming months due to the civil war in Afghanistan and its blowback. In 2021, the upward trajectory of terrorist attacks in the ex-FATA region continued even though Pakistan has fenced a major portion of its border with Afghanistan. The ambushes and IED attacks against the Pakistani security forces have increased in North and South Waziristan Agencies. Three main fault lines in the ex-FATA region are i) the Pakistani state vs TTP, ii) the Pakistani state vs PTM and iii) PTM vs TTP.’⁸⁰⁹

FRC stated in its annual report of 2020 that, compared to 2019, there was an increase of 29 % in militancy incidents in 2020. In total FRC counted 169 violent incidents (137 terrorism and 32 counterterrorism incidents) in 2020.⁸¹⁰ According to data provided by FRC, in the time period from 1 January 2021 to 31 July 2021 251 violent incidents (terrorism and counterterrorism incidents) occurred.⁸¹¹

[Figure 5](#) shows an overview of the violent incidents in the KPTDS in 2020 and the first seven months of 2021.

Incidents of violence in the KPTDs	2020			01/01/2021-31/07/2021		
	Incidents	Persons killed	Persons injured	Incidents	Persons killed	Persons Injured
Bajaur	36	47	46	31	18	18
Mohmand	2	4	2	8	8	4
Kurram	3	0	2	8	11	7
Khyber	22	14	5	33	28	12
Orakzai	4	5	2	3	1	0
North Waziristan	64	121	77	107	131	58
South Waziristan	38	34	44	61	63	54
Total	169	226	164	251	260	153

⁸⁰⁸ Khan Mahsud, M., email, 11 June 2021

⁸⁰⁹ Basit, A., email, 29 July 2021

⁸¹⁰ FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 1

⁸¹¹ Khan Mahsud, M., email, 6 August 2020 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of FRC

Figure 5. Overview of the violent incidents in the KPTDS in 2020 and the first seven months of 2021, based on FRC data⁸¹²

[Figure 6](#) (see below) gives an overview of the nature of violence in the tribal districts in 2019, 2020 and the first seven months of 2021 showing that the nature of the incidents is diverse: from search operations by the military to attacks on civilians and security force personnel by militants. In 2020, the number of attacks on civilians and security forces increased compared to 2019.⁸¹³ In the first seven months of 2021, the attacks on civilians and security forces increased compared to 2020.⁸¹⁴

Nature of incidents of violence in the KPTDs	Incidents 2019	Incidents 2020	Incidents 01/01/2021- 31/07/2021
Attacks on civilians	48	86	124
Attacks on security forces	54	54	81
Attacks on peace forces	4	-	-
Clashes between militant groups	0	-	-
Search operations	54	28	46
Aerial strikes	0	-	-
Drone attacks	0	-	-
Total	160	169	251

Figure 6. Nature of violent incidents in the FATA in 2019, 2020 and the first seven months of 2021, based on FRC data⁸¹⁵

[Figure 7](#) (see below) gives an overview of the nature of the casualties in the tribal districts in 2019, 2020 and the first seven months of 2021. In 2020, FRC counted a total of 390 casualties (226 killed and 164 injured) in all the KPTDs, marking a significant increase of 39 % in overall casualties compared to 2019.⁸¹⁶ According to [Figure 7](#) security forces were the most affected target during the year 2020. In the first seven months of 2021, most casualties were civilians followed by security forces (see [Figure 7](#)). The number of casualties among civilians in the first seven months increased compared to 2020.⁸¹⁷

Nature of casualties in the KPTDs	Casualties 2019		Casualties 2020		Casualties 01/01/2021- 31/07/2021	
	Killed	injured	Killed	Injured	Killed	Injured
Militants	16	10	81	20	69	3

⁸¹² For the 2020 data Cedoca noticed a discrepancy in the FRC report. On p.3 there is written in the graph: Bajaur 36 incidents, Khyber 22 incidents, South Waziristan 38 incidents, furtherdown in the report the data differ (Bajaur 35 incidents, Khyber 21 incidents and South Waziristan 39 incidents). Cedoca chose to follow the data on p. 3. FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 4-12; Khan Mahsud, M., email, 6 August 2020 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of FRC

⁸¹³ FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 1

⁸¹⁴ Khan Mahsud, M., email, 6 August 2020 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of FRC

⁸¹⁵ FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. 1; FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 1; Khan Mahsud, M., email, 6 August 2020 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of FRC

⁸¹⁶ FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 2

⁸¹⁷ Khan Mahsud, M., email, 6 August 2020 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of FRC

Civilians	34	52	80	63	116	66
Security forces	54	107	65	81	75	84
Peace forces/Aman Lashkar	6	2	-	-	-	-
Total	110	171	226	164	260	153

Figure 7. Nature of casualties in the tribal districts in 2019, 2020 and first seven months of 2021, based on FRC data⁸¹⁸

Methods used by militants included IEDs, suicide attacks, cross-border attacks, clashes between militant groups, kidnappings and militant ambushes on security personnel. The use of targeted killings is the most used tactic by militants in 2020. The use of IEDs is observed in all tribal districts.⁸¹⁹

On 11 June 2021, Mansur Khan Mahsud stated the following on the main targets of militant groups in the KPTDs:

‘Army, [p]olice, pro-government tribal Maliks and elders and civil servants and the TTP militants which have surrendered to the army and now working for the army are the main target of militant groups in the tribal districts of former FATA.’⁸²⁰

Abdul Basit mentioned the following on the main targets of militant groups in the KPTDs:

‘The Pakistani security forces, tribal elders, NGO workers and the border fence.’⁸²¹

Below a description is given of the recent security trends in each tribal district in 2020 and the first seven months of 2021.

Bajaur tribal district

Bajaur is located in the north of the province of KP and shares a border with Afghanistan’s eastern Kunar Province to the north-west, and Mohmand tribal district in the west.⁸²² According to the census of 2017, the population of Bajaur tribal district is 1 090 987.⁸²³

FRC documented 36 violent incidents in 2020 in Bajaur.⁸²⁴ This represents an increase of 133 % in terms of incidents compared to 2019 (15 violent incidents). According to FRC, 93 casualties were counted in 2020 (47 killed and 46 injured).⁸²⁵ PIPS counted 9 ‘terrorist attacks’ in Bajaur which killed 7 and injured 4 people in 2020.⁸²⁶ According to FRC, IEDs were used in 7 violent incidents.⁸²⁷

From 1 January 2021 to 31 July 2021, FRC documented 31 violent incidents in Bajaur, which caused 36 casualties (18 killed and 18 injured).⁸²⁸ From 1 January 2021 to 31 July 2021, PIPS counted seven

⁸¹⁸ FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2021, [url](#), p. 1; FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 2; Khan Mahsud, M., email, 6 August 2020 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of FRC

⁸¹⁹ FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 14 (diagram)

⁸²⁰ Khan Mahsud, M., email, 11 June 2021

⁸²¹ Basit, A., email, 29 July 2021

⁸²² CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), p. 22

⁸²³ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017 – District Tables FATA, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

⁸²⁴ For the 2020 data Cedoca noticed a discrepancy in the FRC report. On p. 3 there is written in the graph: Bajaur 36 incidents, further down in the report the data differ (Bajaur 35 incidents). Cedoca chose to follow the data on p. 3. FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 3

⁸²⁵ FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 5

⁸²⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 43

⁸²⁷ FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 15

⁸²⁸ Khan Mahsud, M., email, 6 August 2020 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of FRC

‘terrorist attacks’ in Bajaur tribal district. Six people were killed and five injured.⁸²⁹ Groups responsible for these attacks were local Taliban, the TTP and unknown militants.⁸³⁰

According to PIPS in 2020, tribal elders, political leaders and health workers were the target of militant attacks.⁸³¹ In 2021, Media reports continued to relate on attacks against political leaders and tribal elders in Bajaur. In February 2021, a tribal elder was killed in a remote-controlled blast in Asbal Targhao area.⁸³² In March 2021, a local activist of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) was injured in a remote-controlled bomb blast in Damadola area.⁸³³ In June 2021, unknown assailants killed an Awami National Party (ANP) local leader and injured two others, including his son, in an attack on his car.⁸³⁴ In July 2021, the tribal elders of Bajaur protested because the police ordered the withdrawal of security from tribal elders, lawmakers, their relatives, political leaders and trader leaders across Bajaur tribal district.⁸³⁵

Khyber tribal district

Khyber tribal district borders with Afghanistan on the west, Orakzai tribal district on the south, Kurram tribal district on the south-west and Peshawar on the east. This district is divided into three sub-administrative units: Bara, Jamrud and Landi Kotal.⁸³⁶ According to the census of 2017, Khyber tribal district has a population of 984 246.⁸³⁷

In 2020, FRC stated that 22 violent incidents occurred in Khyber tribal district.⁸³⁸ This represents an increase of 75 % compared to 2019 when 12 violent incidents were reported by FRC. According to FRC 19 casualties were counted in 2020 (14 killed and 5 injured).⁸³⁹ PIPS counted three ‘terrorist attacks’ in Khyber, killing two and injuring one person in 2020.⁸⁴⁰

From 1 January 2021 to 31 July 2021, FRC documented 33 violent incidents in Khyber, which caused 40 casualties (28 killed and 12 injured).⁸⁴¹ From 1 January 2021 to 31 July 2021, PIPS counted not a single ‘terrorist attack’ in Khyber tribal district.⁸⁴²

The Pakistani army announced in July 2017 that it had launched a new military operation in Khyber Agency’s Rajgal Valley, the operation Khyber-IV. Hideouts and training camps of militants were destroyed in this offensive.⁸⁴³ The Pakistani army carried out in total four military operations in Khyber.⁸⁴⁴ No information on further military operations after July 2017 could be found.

Kurram tribal district

Kurram shares its border largely with Afghanistan (Nangarhar and Paktia provinces). In the east this agency borders Orakzai, Khyber and North Waziristan in the south. It is divided into three

⁸²⁹ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

⁸³⁰ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

⁸³¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021 [url](#), p. 48

⁸³² International News (The), Tribal elder killed in Bajaur blast, 23 February 2021, [url](#)

⁸³³ International News (The), JUI activist injured in Bajaur bomb blast, 26 March 2021, [url](#)

⁸³⁴ Dawn, ANP leader shot dead, son injured in Bajaur attack, 22 June 2021, [url](#)

⁸³⁵ Dawn, Bajaur elders rally against withdrawal of security, 14 July 2021, [url](#)

⁸³⁶ CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), pp. 14-15

⁸³⁷ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017 – District Tables FATA, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

⁸³⁸ For the 2020 data Cedoca noticed a discrepancy in the FRC report. On p. 3 there is written in the graph: Bajaur 22 incidents, further down in the report the data differ (Khyber 21 incidents). Cedoca chose to follow the data on p. 3. FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 3

⁸³⁹ FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 7

⁸⁴⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021 [url](#), p. 43

⁸⁴¹ Khan Mahsud, M., email, 6 August 2020 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of FRC

⁸⁴² Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

⁸⁴³ Dawn, Operation Khyber-IV: army clears terrorist strongholds in Rajgal valley, 23 July 2017, [url](#)

⁸⁴⁴ PIPS, Security Report 2017, 7 January 2018, [url](#), p. 122

administrative units: Lower Kurram, Upper Kurram and Central Kurram. Parachinar is the main capital of Kurram Agency. Kurram has a significant Shia population. Kurram agency has a history of sectarian violence between the Sunni and the Shia population.⁸⁴⁵ According to the census of 2017, Kurram tribal district has a population of 615 372.⁸⁴⁶

In 2020, a slight increase in violent incidents was observed by FRC in this tribal district compared to 2019. In total, FRC counted three violent incidents in 2020 compared to one in 2019. The same upward trend was noted in the number of casualties in 2020. FRC counted 19 casualties (1 killed, 18 injured) in 2020 compared to 2 casualties (2 injured) in 2019.⁸⁴⁷ PIPS mentioned 3 'terrorist attacks' in 2020 in Kurram in which 2 people were killed and 17 injured.⁸⁴⁸

From 1 January 2021 to 31 July 2021, FRC documented 8 violent incidents in Kurram which caused 18 casualties (11 killed and 7 injured).⁸⁴⁹ From 1 January until 31 July 2021, PIPS counted one 'terrorist attack' in Kurram tribal district in which one person got killed.⁸⁵⁰ According to PIPS this attack was carried out by affiliates of IS.⁸⁵¹

In May and July 2020, Kurram tribal districts witnessed two sectarian-related bomb blasts.⁸⁵² In May 2021, clashes between the protesters and personnel of the law enforcement agencies occurred in Sadda. In these clashes, eight people were injured.⁸⁵³ At the end of June 2021, 16 labourers working at a mobile tower site in Kurram tribal district were kidnapped by militants. After one day, ten labourers were released. Security force personnel organised a search operation whereby three militants and two security force personnel were killed. Five labourers were rescued after an exchange of fire with militants. The body of one labourer was found.⁸⁵⁴

Mohmand tribal district

Mohmand borders Bajaur in the north and Khyber in the south. In the east, it borders Malakand and Charsadda districts and Peshawar district in the south-east.⁸⁵⁵ According to the census of 2017, Mohmand tribal district has a population of 474 345.⁸⁵⁶

FRC counted two violent incidents during 2020, killing four people and injuring two. Compared to 2019, the situation in this agency slightly improved in 2020 in terms of violent incidents and casualties.⁸⁵⁷ According to PIPS, one 'terrorist attack' has taken place in Mohmand tribal district in 2020 without any casualties.⁸⁵⁸

From 1 January 2021 to 31 July 2021, FRC documented 8 violent incidents in Mohmand which caused 12 casualties (8 killed, 4 injured).⁸⁵⁹ From 1 January 2020 to 31 July 2021, PIPS counted not a single 'terrorist attack' in Mohmand tribal district.⁸⁶⁰

⁸⁴⁵ CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), pp. 16-17

⁸⁴⁶ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017 – District Tables FATA, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁴⁷ FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 8

⁸⁴⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 43

⁸⁴⁹ Khan Mahsud, M., email, 6 August 2020 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of FRC

⁸⁵⁰ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

⁸⁵¹ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

⁸⁵² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 43

⁸⁵³ International News (The), Eight injured as FC men, protesters clash in Kurram, 23 May 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁵⁴ Express Tribune (The), Five abducted labourers rescued after gunfight with terrorists: ISPR, 15 July 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁵⁵ CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally, Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), p. 22

⁸⁵⁶ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017 – District Tables FATA, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁵⁷ FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 6

⁸⁵⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 43

⁸⁵⁹ Khan Mahsud, M., email, 6 August 2020 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of FRC

⁸⁶⁰ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

In January 2021, a FC soldier was killed in a cross-border attack from Afghanistan in Mohmand tribal district.⁸⁶¹

Orakzai tribal district

Orakzai shares its borders with Khyber tribal district in the north, Kohat in the east, the districts of Kohat and Hangu in the south, and Kurram tribal district in the west. Administratively, it is divided into Upper and Lower Orakzai.⁸⁶² According to the census of 2017, the population stands at 254 303.⁸⁶³

Four incidents of violence were counted by FRC during 2020 compared to one in 2019. FRC reported seven casualties (five killed, two injured) in 2020.⁸⁶⁴ According to PIPS, two 'terrorist attacks' have taken place in Orakzai tribal district in 2020 which caused 4 casualties (two killed, two injured).⁸⁶⁵

From 1 January 2021 to 31 July 2021, FRC documented 3 violent incidents in Orakzai which caused one casualty (1 killed).⁸⁶⁶ From 1 January until 31 July 2021, PIPS counted not a single 'terrorist attack' in Orakzai tribal district.⁸⁶⁷

In January 2021, security force personnel conducted a search operation. They found explosives, bomb and improvised explosive device (IED) making gadgets and other weapons in Arakhi Killay in the central part of Orakzai tribal district.⁸⁶⁸

North Waziristan tribal district

North Waziristan borders Kurram tribal district and Hangu in the north and Karak and Bannu districts in the east, South Waziristan tribal district in the south and Afghanistan in the west.⁸⁶⁹ According to the census of 2017, North Waziristan has a population of 540 546.⁸⁷⁰

FRC describes the security situation in North Waziristan as 'turbulent' in 2020.⁸⁷¹ FRC noted an increase in violent incidents and an increase in casualties in 2020 compared to 2019. In 2020, FRC counted 64 violent incidents in 2020 compared to 45 violent incidents in 2019. FRC counted 198 casualties (121 killed, 77 injured) in 2020 compared to 160 casualties (55 killed, 105 injured) in 2019.⁸⁷² According to PIPS, 31 'terrorist attacks' have taken place in North Waziristan tribal district in 2020 killing 50 and injuring 55 people.⁸⁷³ According to PIPS, 24 of these attacks targeted security and law enforcement agencies.⁸⁷⁴

From 1 January 2021 to 31 July 2021, FRC documented 107 violent incidents in North Waziristan which caused 189 casualties (131 killed and 58 injured).⁸⁷⁵ In the first seven months of 2021, PIPS counted 15 'terrorist attacks' in North Waziristan tribal district. In total PIPS counted 35 casualties (19 killed and 16 injured). The attacks were carried out by local Taliban and the TTP.⁸⁷⁶

⁸⁶¹ TNN, Soldier martyred in cross-border attack in Mohmand, 7 January 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁶² CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), pp. 22-23

⁸⁶³ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017 – District Tables FATA, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁶⁴ FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 9

⁸⁶⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 44

⁸⁶⁶ Khan Mahsud, M., email, 6 August 2020 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of FRC

⁸⁶⁷ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

⁸⁶⁸ International News (The), Explosives, weapons recovered in Orakzai, 4 January 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁶⁹ CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), p. 20

⁸⁷⁰ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017 – District Tables FATA, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁷¹ FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 9

⁸⁷² FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 10-11

⁸⁷³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 43

⁸⁷⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 45

⁸⁷⁵ Khan Mahsud, M., email, 6 August 2020 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of FRC

⁸⁷⁶ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

Before 2014, North Waziristan was considered as a home base of al-Qaeda, Pakistani Taliban and the Haqqani-network.⁸⁷⁷ In June 2014, Operation *Zarb-e Azb* was initiated in North Waziristan.⁸⁷⁸ The area was cleared of militants according to the Pakistani military.⁸⁷⁹ In the wake of multiple incidents against the security forces and to prevent any 'untoward situation', Section 144 was imposed for thirty days in June 2019.⁸⁸⁰ Ahead of the provincial elections, Section 144 was lifted on 8 July 2019.⁸⁸¹ Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure empowers district administrations to issue orders in public interest that may place a ban on an activity for a specific period of time.⁸⁸² In Miranshah, a pamphlet issued by the TTP in July 2019 warned citizens not to play music in public, not to allow women freedom of movement or vaccinate their children against polio, or they would 'face dire consequences'.⁸⁸³

Targeted killings increased in 2020 in North Waziristan.⁸⁸⁴ Gandhara cited that more than 50 people were killed due to targeted killings in 2020.⁸⁸⁵ In the first half of 2021, targeted killings were also observed in North Waziristan.⁸⁸⁶ According to a May 2021 article by the Express Tribune, 20 people were killed in the first four months of 2021.⁸⁸⁷ Main targets of the killings were tribal leaders, activists and government officials.⁸⁸⁸ In November and December 2020, multiple targeted killings against tribal elders were reported.⁸⁸⁹ In July 2021, two tribal elders were killed, one in Miranshah and the other in Mir Ali.⁸⁹⁰ In February 2021, four female aid workers were killed near the village of Ippi, east of Mir Ali.⁸⁹¹ On 24 July 2021, a local cricket player also was killed in a targeted killing in Mir Ali.⁸⁹² Local residents, cited in Gandhara, stated that most of the targeted killings were linked to the regrouping of militants of the Taliban.⁸⁹³ On 28 July 2021, two tribal elders were killed in a targeted killing by unidentified armed men in Miranshah.⁸⁹⁴

North Waziristan witnessed also attacks on security force personnel in 2020 and the first half of 2021.⁸⁹⁵ In October 2020, six soldiers were killed in an IED attack near Razmak.⁸⁹⁶ In May 2021, a soldier was killed in a cross-border attack.⁸⁹⁷ In March 2021, the security forces conducted raids on

⁸⁷⁷ BBC News, North Waziristan: What happened after militants lost the battle?, 8 March 2017, [url](#)

⁸⁷⁸ Jamestown Foundation, The Successes and Failures of Pakistan's Operation Zarb-e-Azb, 10 July 2015, [url](#); BBC News, North Waziristan: What happened after militants lost the battle?, 8 March 2017, [url](#)

⁸⁷⁹ Nation (The), Operation Zarb-e-Azb: Two years of success, 6 September 2016, [url](#); Dawn, After Army's clean-up of North Waziristan, locals want civilian govt to get in action, 18 May 2017, [url](#)

⁸⁸⁰ Dawn, Section 144 imposed in North Waziristan due to 'current law and order situation', 10 June 2019, [url](#)

⁸⁸¹ TNN, Section 144 lifted in North Waziristan ahead of elections, 8 July 2019, [url](#)

⁸⁸² Government of Pakistan, Code of Criminal Procedure [Pakistan], Act No. V, 1 July 1898, [url](#)

⁸⁸³ Dawn, TTP warns against playing music, women going out alone in Miranshah, 1 August 2019, [url](#)

⁸⁸⁴ Gandhara, In Waziristan, Locals Worried Over Taliban Regrouping, 16 September 2020, [url](#); Gandhara, Pakistan's North Waziristan Plagued By Targeted Killings, 18 January 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁸⁵ Gandhara, Pakistan's North Waziristan Plagued By Targeted Killings, 18 January 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁸⁶ BBC News, Mourning the sisters killed as they taught handicrafts, 27 February 2021, [url](#); Express Tribune (The), Targeted killings on the rise in N Waziristan, 11 May 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁸⁷ Express Tribune (The), Targeted killings on the rise in N Waziristan, 11 May 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁸⁸ Gandhara, Pakistan's North Waziristan Plagued By Targeted Killings, 18 January 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁸⁹ Gandhara, Four Pakistani Tribal Elders Killed In Northwestern Tribal District, 30 November 2020, [url](#); Gandhara, Two More Tribal Elders Shot Dead In Northwestern Pakistan; Six Total Killed This Week, 2 December 2020, [url](#)

⁸⁹⁰ Dawn, Another elder shot dead in N. Waziristan, 9 July 2021, [url](#); Dawn, Tribal elder shot dead in North Waziristan, 5 July 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁹¹ Al Jazeera, Pakistani female aid workers shot dead by assailants, 22 February 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁹² TNN, Local cricketer shot dead in North Waziristan, 25 July 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁹³ Gandhara, Pakistan's North Waziristan Plagued By Targeted Killings, 18 January 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁹⁴ TNN, Two tribal elders shot dead in North Waziristan, 29 July 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁹⁵ BBC News, Mourning the sisters killed as they taught handicrafts, 27 February 2021, [url](#); PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 45

⁸⁹⁶ International News (The), Six Pak Army soldiers martyred in North Waziristan IED blast: ISPR, 15 October 2020, [url](#)

⁸⁹⁷ TNN, Soldier martyred in North Waziristan cross-border attack, 23 May 2021, [url](#)

suspected hideouts of militants in the tribal district.⁸⁹⁸ In March 2021, eight militants were killed during a clash with security forces in Boya and Dosali areas of North Waziristan.⁸⁹⁹ In May 2021, security forces conducted an IBO in Dosali area. During an exchange of fire, three soldiers and two militants were killed.⁹⁰⁰

South Waziristan tribal district

South Waziristan shares its border in the north with North Waziristan, and borders Bannu and Lakki Marwat districts in the north-east, the tribal area adjoining Tank district and Dera Ismail Khan district in the east, Zhob district of Balochistan Province and Dera Ismail Khan district in the south, and Afghanistan in the west.⁹⁰¹ According to the census of 2017, South Waziristan Agency has a population of 675 215.⁹⁰²

FRC stated that the situation in South Waziristan remained 'disturbed' because the frequency of the violent incidents increased 'significantly' in 2020. FRC recorded 38 violent incidents in 2020⁹⁰³, compared to 27 in 2019, which represents an increase of 44 %.⁹⁰⁴ FRC counted 78 casualties (34 killed, 44 injured) in 2020. This is a slight decrease compared to 2019 when FRC counted 46 casualties in 2019 (17 killed, 29 injured).⁹⁰⁵ According to PIPS, 6 'terrorist attacks' have taken place in South Waziristan tribal district in 2020, killing 7 and injuring 13 people.⁹⁰⁶

From 1 January 2021 to 31 July 2021, FRC documented 61 violent incidents in South Waziristan, which caused 117 casualties (63 killed and 54 injured).⁹⁰⁷ From 1 January until 31 July 2021, PIPS counted 7 'terrorist attacks' in South Waziristan tribal district in which 24 people were killed and 21 were injured. The attacks were carried out by local Taliban.⁹⁰⁸

In July 2018, RFE/RL reported that there was a 'renewed Taliban influence in Waziristan'. Locals call this armed group 'the Aman (Peace) Committee, which mostly operated as a government-backed militia'.⁹⁰⁹ Mona Kanwal Sheikh, expert on militant movements in Pakistan, stated in 2018 about the presence of the Taliban in South Waziristan:

'One "lump" of the Pakistani Taliban is, however, still active in South Waziristan. They are organized in one of the peace committees in the district and are also called the "good Taliban", the ones who the military is not targeting. They are no longer part of the larger umbrella of TTP, and they have been granted the right to control an area in South Waziristan.'⁹¹⁰

According to Kanwal Sheikh, the Taliban in Wana, in South Waziristan, is organised under four different commanders and with 'their own police and public morality "corps" and their own justice system'. They also collect taxes from local businesses.⁹¹¹ In April 2019, the Taliban in Wana warned

⁸⁹⁸ BBC News, Mourning the sisters killed as they taught handicrafts, 27 February 2021, [url](#); Gandhara, Pakistani Security Forces Claim Eight Militants Killed In Waziristan Raids, 6 March 2021, [url](#)

⁸⁹⁹ TNN, 8 terrorists killed in North Waziristan clashes, 7 March 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁰⁰ TNN, 3 soldiers martyred, 2 terrorists killed in North Waziristan IBO, 6 May 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁰¹ CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), p. 17

⁹⁰² Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017 – District Tables FATA, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁰³ For the 2020 data Cedoca noticed a discrepancy in the FRC report. On p. 3 there is written in the graph: South Waziristan 38 incidents, further down in the report the data differ (South Waziristan 39 incidents). Cedoca chose to follow the data on p. 3. FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 3

⁹⁰⁴ FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 12

⁹⁰⁵ FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts Annual Security Report 2020, 7 January 2021, [url](#), p. 12

⁹⁰⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 44

⁹⁰⁷ Khan Mahsud, M., email, 6 August 2020 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of FRC

⁹⁰⁸ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

⁹⁰⁹ RFE/RL, Locals Blame 'Surrendered Taliban' For Waziristan Murder, 24 July 2018, [url](#)

⁹¹⁰ Kanwal Sheikh, M., New conflict lines in Pakistan's tribal areas, 6 July 2018, [url](#)

⁹¹¹ Kanwal Sheikh, M., New conflict lines in Pakistan's tribal areas, 6 July 2018, [url](#)

the police through pamphlets to leave South Waziristan.⁹¹² At the end of May 2019, Section 144 was imposed for a month in South Waziristan due to a clash between PTM and the army on 26 May 2019 in North Waziristan.⁹¹³ In August 2020, Journalist Ihsanullah Tipu Mahsud mentioned that 'surrendered' Taliban returning under government amnesty scheme are causing an increase of attacks in North Waziristan and South Waziristan.⁹¹⁴ After several attacks claimed by the TTP in February 2021 the security forces installed a curfew in Wana for four days.⁹¹⁵

The TTP claimed responsibility for several attacks during 2020 and the first half of 2021 in South Waziristan.⁹¹⁶ In February 2020, Dawn reported that attacks have taken place on security forces in the areas of Ahmadzai Wazir and Mehsud tribes of South Waziristan.⁹¹⁷ In August 2020, in a suicide attack on a military vehicle in Ladha, wounded three soldiers.⁹¹⁸ At the end of June 2021, militants attacked a FC check post in Tiarza that resulted in a clash whereby three FC soldiers were killed and three others wounded.⁹¹⁹ In addition, security forces carried out IBO's in South Waziristan. In February 2021, security forces killed a TTP commander in Tiarza.⁹²⁰ In April 2021, an active member of the TTP was killed during an IBO in Ladha.⁹²¹

2.2.3 Balochistan

General description of the province

Balochistan (see [Map 1](#)) is located in the west of Pakistan. It borders Iran in the west, Afghanistan in the north-west, KP province in the north-east, Punjab province in the east, Sindh province in the south-east, and the Arabian Sea in the south.⁹²² Quetta is the provincial capital.⁹²³ Balochistan consists of 7 divisions and 33 districts.⁹²⁴ Regardless of various development initiatives, Balochistan remains the poorest province of Pakistan.⁹²⁵

The majority of the people are Baloch, and the second largest group are Pashtun who dominate the northern areas in the province.⁹²⁶ In addition, approximately more than half a million Hazaras are living in Quetta.⁹²⁷ Balochistan is the least populated province of Pakistan but the largest province by area.⁹²⁸ According to the population census 2017 published by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the province of Balochistan has a population of 12 335 129.⁹²⁹ According to UNDP, more than 70 % of the population is living in rural areas.⁹³⁰

⁹¹² Dawn, Pamphlet warns police to leave S. Waziristan in three days, 23 April 2019, [url](#)

⁹¹³ Dawn, Section 144 imposed in South Waziristan for 'public safety', 28 May 2019, [url](#)

⁹¹⁴ Arab News, Double-edged sword of 'surrendered' Taliban in Waziristan, 3 August 2020, [url](#)

⁹¹⁵ Gandhara, South Waziristan Bazaar Under Lockdown After Attack On Security Forces, 17 February 2021, [url](#)

⁹¹⁶ Dawn, Five soldiers martyred in South Waziristan attack, 20 February 2021, [url](#); TNN, Terrorist commander killed in South Waziristan, 26 February 2021, [url](#)

⁹¹⁷ Dawn, Five soldiers martyred in South Waziristan attack, 20 February 2021, [url](#)

⁹¹⁸ Arab News, Taliban bomber hits army vehicle in Pakistan's northwest, wounding 3, 12 August 2020, [url](#)

⁹¹⁹ Gandhara, Three Pakistani Paramilitary Troops Killed in Militant Attack, 30 June 2021, [url](#)

⁹²⁰ TNN, Terrorist commander killed in South Waziristan, 26 February 2021, [url](#)

⁹²¹ TNN, TTP terrorist killed in South Waziristan IBO, 13 April 2021, [url](#)

⁹²² UNOCHA, Pakistan-Overview map [map], 3 December 2018, [url](#)

⁹²³ UNOCHA, Pakistan-Overview map [map], 3 December 2018, [url](#)

⁹²⁴ Samaa TV, 6 surprises from Pakistan's 2017 census that should worry govt, 12 June 2021, [url](#)

⁹²⁵ Deutsche Welle, Can Pakistan secure Chinese investment in restive Balochistan province?, 14 July 2021, [url](#)

⁹²⁶ Diplomat (The), Fear and Loathing in Balochistan, 25 April 2019, [url](#); Diplomat (The), Pakistan's Balochs Fear Minority Status in Their Own Province, 11 February 2016, [url](#)

⁹²⁷ BBC News, Pakistan Hazara minority protests after bombing in Quetta, 13 April 2019, [url](#)

⁹²⁸ UNICEF, Report of Profiles of Slums/Underserved Areas of Quetta City of Balochistan, Pakistan (July 2020), 27 July 2020, [url](#), p. 3

⁹²⁹ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017-National, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

⁹³⁰ UNDP Pakistan, Devolution of Power: Pathways to Actualization, 23 January 2021, [url](#), p. 5

Background of the conflict and actors in Balochistan

Balochistan encounters various problems such as sectarian violence, Islamist militant attacks and a separatist insurgency.⁹³¹ These conflicts are further complicated by the involvement of several foreign states, such as the US, China, India and Iran with an economic or political stake within Balochistan.⁹³²

The separatist insurgency has been going on in Balochistan since 1948.⁹³³ Different nationalist groups have complained about the unfair distribution of royalties from the exploitation of natural minerals in the province.⁹³⁴ The conflict intensified in 2005 and escalated further in August 2006 with the death of Nationalist Leader and Tribal Head Nawab Akbar Bugti. The government of Pakistan reacted with a military operation. The building of military cantonments in Balochistan and the development of Gwadar port by China also became reasons for conflict.⁹³⁵

In April 2019, Gandhara noticed: 'Independent observers and Baluch nationalists say an extensive crackdown by Pakistani security forces relying on anti-nationalist militias, enforced disappearances, and other harsh tactics has weakened the insurgency', especially in the Makran area.⁹³⁶ According to Kiyya Baloch, a journalist from Balochistan's Makran region most of the attacks occur in the remote regions of the province.⁹³⁷ Still, the Baloch armed groups were able to carry out a series of violent attacks on Chinese interests in the region in 2019. This is largely due to a transformation of the Baloch armed groups caused by a change in traditional leadership and urbanisation of their operations from small towns to cities outside the province.⁹³⁸ According to Muhammad Amir Rana, a security analyst, due to the growth of the middle class and higher literacy rate in central and southern Balochistan 'a new cadre of young nationalists also emerged.' Rana stated that they gradually took over control of the insurgency in their region.⁹³⁹ The insurgency has largely shifted to the south-west of Balochistan.⁹⁴⁰ In June 2020, clashes between the Pakistani military and Baloch insurgents aggravated due to an increase of attacks perpetrated by Baloch groups.⁹⁴¹ ACLED stated that 'The resurgence of Baloch separatist violence was preceded by greater unity among Baloch separatist groups, including the formation of trans-province alliances between separatist groups, as well as repression of Baloch civilians by the Pakistani army during security operations.'⁹⁴² In June 2020, the Pakistan military carried out a military operation - Ground Zero Clearance Operation - aimed at destroying the bases of Baloch militant groups in the border regions with Iran.⁹⁴³ In July 2021, Prime Minister Imran Khan announced that he is willing to talk with the Baloch insurgent groups.⁹⁴⁴ An issue that has continuously fuelled the insurgency in Balochistan are the enforced

⁹³¹ Amir Rana, M., Militant Landscape of Balochistan, 19 June 2020, [url](#), p. 1

⁹³² Middle East Institute (Kowalski, P.), Balochistan: From the periphery to the center of attention, 21 October 2019, [url](#)

⁹³³ Hashmi, W., 'Fierce and Warlike': Could the Baloch Separatist Movement Remain Pakistan's Longest Insurgency?, 21 August 2018, [url](#)

⁹³⁴ Deutsche Welle, China consulate attack: Why Pakistan's Baloch separatists are against Beijing, 23 November 2018, [url](#)

⁹³⁵ Aamir, A., The Balochistan Insurgency and the Threat to Chinese Interests in Pakistan, 15 February 2019, [url](#)

⁹³⁶ Gandhara, Balochistan's Separatist Insurgency On The Wane Despite Recent Attack, 18 April 2019, [url](#)

⁹³⁷ Gandhara, Balochistan's Separatist Insurgency On The Wane Despite Recent Attack, 18 April 2019, [url](#)

⁹³⁸ Prism, Eight months in, how is Balochistan faring?, 16 August 2019, [url](#)

⁹³⁹ Amir Rana, M., Militant Landscape of Balochistan, 19 June 2020, [url](#), p. 1

⁹⁴⁰ Amir Rana, M., Militant Landscape of Balochistan, 19 June 2020, [url](#), p. 2

⁹⁴¹ Diplomat (The), Amid a Pandemic, Pakistan Focuses on a Baloch Insurgency, 26 June 2020, [url](#)

⁹⁴² ACLED, Ten conflicts to worry about in 2021, February 2021, [url](#), p. 8

⁹⁴³ Arab News Pakistan, 'Ground zero' operation underway against militant hideouts near Pakistan's border with Iran, 6 June 2020, [url](#)

⁹⁴⁴ Diplomat (The), Is Pakistan Serious About Peace Talks in Balochistan?, 16 July 2021, [url](#)

disappearances and extrajudicial killings.⁹⁴⁵ In February 2021, Baloch groups staged demonstrations across Pakistan accusing the government of enforced disappearances and violence.⁹⁴⁶

An additional factor adding to the Baloch insurgency is the international involvement in Pakistan's efforts to build the Gwadar Port in collaboration with China.⁹⁴⁷ The Baloch insurgent groups have rejected the Chinese involvement in Balochistan. They interpret the Chinese involvement and their Gwadar port and other CPEC-related projects as an attempt by the state to exploit Balochistan's resources while receiving little in return.⁹⁴⁸ The Chinese projects and Chinese workers are regularly the target of Baloch insurgents.⁹⁴⁹ In January 2021, Gandhara stated that Pakistan increased security measures in the region to protect the CPEC-related projects.⁹⁵⁰

Sources noted a rise in religious-nationalist militancy in 2021.⁹⁵¹ According to PIPS annual security situation report of 2020 the TPP, IS and some other similar unknown militants were able to carry out attacks in the province.⁹⁵² Analysts, cited in a May 2021 article by Gandhara, suggested that with the attack on the Serena hotel in Quetta in April 2021 that the TTP 'has joined the local fight against Chinese interests.'⁹⁵³ Sectarian violence is also still present in Balochistan.⁹⁵⁴ Members of the local Shia community, mostly members of the Hazara community in Quetta, have fallen victim of violent attacks, targeted killings and suicide attacks.⁹⁵⁵

Recent security trends and impact on the civilian population

Security incidents

During 2020, there were 138 security incidents recorded by ACLED in Balochistan province, of which 52 were coded as battles, 44 explosions/remote violence and 42 incidents of violence against civilians. Kech stood out as the district where most incidents were reported with 34 violent events, followed by Panjgur with 14 violent events and Quetta with also 12 violent events.⁹⁵⁶

PIPS documented 65 incidents of various types of violence in the province in 2020: 42 'terrorist attacks', 15 anti-militant operational attacks by security forces, 3 clashes/encounters between security forces and militants, two incidents of armed clashes between security forces and protestors, and two foiled terror bids, among others.⁹⁵⁷ PICSS observed 49 militant attacks in 2020. The number of militant attacks almost declined by 25 % compared to 2019.⁹⁵⁸

⁹⁴⁵ Al, Pakistan: The disappeared of Balochistan, 12 November 2020, [url](#); Al, Pakistan: Enduring Enforced Disappearances, 27 March 2019, [url](#); Gandhara, Educated Youth Still Turn To Separatist Violence In Restive Pakistani Province, 14 May 2020, [url](#)

⁹⁴⁶ Reuters, Baloch protesters end sit-in after Pakistani prime minister's pledge to meet them, 22 February 2021, [url](#); Al Jazeera, Ending Pakistan's epidemic of enforced disappearances, 9 March 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁴⁷ Dawn, The geoeconomics of CPEC, 7 April 2019, [url](#)

⁹⁴⁸ Deutsche Welle, Can Pakistan secure Chinese investment in restive Balochistan province?, 14 July 2021, [url](#); Deutsche Welle, Why Chinese investment is stoking anger in Pakistan's Balochistan province, 15 July 2020, [url](#)

⁹⁴⁹ Deutsche Welle, Can Pakistan secure Chinese investment in restive Balochistan province?, 14 July 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁵⁰ Gandhara, Locals Fear Investors In Chinese Trade Hub Are Pushing Them Out Of Gwadar, 26 January 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁵¹ International News (The), Denying safe havens, 6 July 2021, [url](#); Asia Times, Pakistan Taliban on a renewed warpath in Balochistan, 5 June 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁵² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 55

⁹⁵³ Gandhara, The Rise Of The New Pakistani Taliban, 18 May 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁵⁴ Asia Times, Pakistan Taliban on a renewed warpath in Balochistan, 5 June 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁵⁵ Guardian (The), 'Every year we dig mass graves': the slaughter of Pakistan's Hazara, 5 April 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁵⁶ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 December 2020), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁵⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 52

⁹⁵⁸ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), p. 30

From 1 January 2021 to 31 July 2021, ACLED coded 203 violent events in Balochistan province. 81 of which were coded as battles, 84 as explosions/remote violence and 38 as violence against civilians.⁹⁵⁹ In this timeframe in the district of Kech most violent incidents were counted (62), followed by Quetta (28) and Awaran (20).⁹⁶⁰

From 1 January to 31 July 2021, PIPS counted 51 incidents of which 40 were recorded as 'terrorist attacks' in Balochistan.⁹⁶¹ PICSS mentioned 65 incidents of overall violence and 52 out of these incidents were marked as militant attacks.⁹⁶²

Security trends 2020-2021

PIPS differentiated the 'terrorist attacks' in 2020 between attacks carried out by religiously inspired groups (10 attacks) and Baloch insurgents' groups (32 attacks).⁹⁶³

In 2020, religiously inspired groups such as the TTP and IS were active in the province of Balochistan. According to PIPS, the majority of the attacks by these groups were carried out in areas with larger Pashtun populations.⁹⁶⁴ The attacks in 2020 were directed against security force personnel, worship places, tribal elders, civilians and a rally of a religious organization.⁹⁶⁵ In May 2021, Pakistani security force personnel carried out an operation in Killi Aghbarg, at the outskirts of Quetta. Four militants, including a key commander of the TTP, were killed during the operation.⁹⁶⁶

Illustrative incidents 2020 and in the first seven months of 2021:

- On 10 January 2020, a suicide bombing inside a mosque killed at least 15 people in Quetta. TRT World, citing the SITE intelligence group, stated that IS claimed the attack.⁹⁶⁷
- On 17 February 2020, a suicide bombing occurred in Quetta. The target was a Sunni extremist religious rally. At least 8 people, including three police officers and four civilians, were killed and another 16 people were injured.⁹⁶⁸
- On 19 May 2020, six FC soldiers were killed in Pir Ghaib, Mach district due to an IED attack. The United Baloch Army claimed responsibility.⁹⁶⁹
- On 14 July 2020, militants fired on a patrolling party of security personnel near Gichak valley of Panjgur. Three soldiers were killed and eight others wounded.⁹⁷⁰
- On 10 August 2020, at least six people were killed and 21 others, including three soldiers of the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF), injured in a bomb blast in the border town of Chaman.⁹⁷¹
- On 15 October 2020, unidentified gunmen killed at least 14 people after ambushing a convoy of vehicles near Ormara. No group immediately claimed responsibility for the attack,

⁹⁵⁹ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2021-31 July 2021), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁶⁰ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2021-31 July 2021), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁶¹ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

⁹⁶² Khan, A. email, 8 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PICSS

⁹⁶³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 51

⁹⁶⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 55

⁹⁶⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 55

⁹⁶⁶ Dawn, TTP commander, 3 other terrorists killed in Quetta: CTD, 27 May 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁶⁷ TRT World, Suicide bombing in Pakistan mosque kills at least 15 worshippers, 10 January 2020, [url](#)

⁹⁶⁸ Gandhara, Suicide Bomber Kills Eight, Wounds 16 At Radical Sunni Islamist Rally In Pakistan, 17 February 2020, [url](#)

⁹⁶⁹ Dawn, Seven troops martyred in two attacks in Balochistan, 20 May 2020, [url](#)

⁹⁷⁰ Dawn, 3 soldiers martyred in firing by terrorists in Balochistan's Panjgur: ISPR, 14 July 2020, [url](#)

⁹⁷¹ Gandhara, Bomb Kills Five In Troubled Pakistani Border Town, 10 August 2020, [url](#)

but the incident was similar to previous assaults by armed ethnic Baloch separatist groups on convoys.⁹⁷²

- In January 2021, IS claimed responsibility for the killing of 11 coal miners in the district of Mach. All victims were members of the Hazara community.⁹⁷³ In April 2021, the TTP claimed responsibility for a bomb attack at the Serena hotel in Quetta, apparently targeting police personnel and other officials.⁹⁷⁴ The diplomat stated that this attack has been a sign that the TTP regained his operational strength and is active in Balochistan.⁹⁷⁵ Some analysts suggested that the TTP is working together with Baloch nationalist insurgents' groups and increased their anti-China rhetoric.⁹⁷⁶
- In March 2021, the TTP claimed a bomb blast in Chaman, targeting a senior police officer. Three people were killed and thirteen others injured.⁹⁷⁷

PIPS stated that Baloch nationalist militants carried out 32 'terrorist attacks' in the province in 2020, compared to 51 in 2019.⁹⁷⁸ According to PIPS, most of the attacks were carried out in the districts of Kech, Quetta and Mastung.⁹⁷⁹ Their tactics included IEDs blasts, incidents of firing or targeted killing, and hand grenade attacks.⁹⁸⁰ Main targets of the Baloch insurgents' groups were security forces and law enforcement personnel.⁹⁸¹

During the first half of 2021, Baloch militant groups continued targeting security forces in the province. In June 2021, at least eight people were killed and 15 injured in two separate attacks on security forces in Quetta and Turbat. The BLA claimed responsibility for the attack in Turbat.⁹⁸² On 26 June 2021, BLA claimed that the group has set fire on the installations of telecommunication companies near Quetta and have taken six staff members in custody.⁹⁸³

Casualties

PIPS reported that 95 people were killed and 216 injured in 2020 in 42 'terrorist attacks'.⁹⁸⁴ According to PIPS, among the reported 42 'terrorist attacks' in Balochistan most casualties fell within the security forces and civilians.⁹⁸⁵ PIPS documented that in 2020 the capital, Quetta, lost the highest number of lives due to violence. Other districts that suffered high casualties from violence were Kech, Gwadar, Qilla Abdullah, Harnai and Bolan.⁹⁸⁶ PICSS noted a decline in militant attacks and casualties in 2020 compared to 2019 in Balochistan.⁹⁸⁷

In 2020, CRSS recorded in total 309 casualties in the province (see [Figure 8](#)). According to CRSS, most casualties in 2020 were counted among civilians.⁹⁸⁸ The lowest number of casualties due to violence in the province were militants.⁹⁸⁹

⁹⁷² Al Jazeera, Convoy attack kills 14 in southwestern Pakistan, 15 October 2020, [url](#)

⁹⁷³ BBC News, Pakistan coal miners kidnapped and killed in IS attack, 3 January 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁷⁴ BBC News, Pakistan hotel bomb: Deadly blast hits luxury venue in Quetta, 22 April 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁷⁵ The Diplomat, What Is the Significance of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan's Latest Attack in Quetta?, 22 April 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁷⁶ Gandhara, The Rise Of The New Pakistani Taliban, 18 May 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁷⁷ Gandhara, Deadly Blast At Pakistani Border Town Near Afghanistan, 23 May 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁷⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 53

⁹⁷⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 53

⁹⁸⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 53

⁹⁸¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 53

⁹⁸² Al Jazeera, Several killed in two attacks in Pakistan's southwest, 1 June 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁸³ WION, BLA says it set on fire Chinese telecommunication companies, captured 6 workers in Pakistan's Balochistan, 4 July 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁸⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 51

⁹⁸⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 52-53

⁹⁸⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 51-52

⁹⁸⁷ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), p. 30

⁹⁸⁸ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 21

⁹⁸⁹ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 21

In the first half of 2021, CRSS counted in total 226 casualties (see [Figure 8](#)). In the second quarter of 2021, fatalities and injured (74 fatalities, 89 injured) increased in the province compared to the first quarter of 2021 (48 fatalities, 15 injured).⁹⁹⁰

Casualties in the province of Balochistan					
2020			01/01/2021-30/06/2021		
Fatalities	Injuries	Total	Fatalities	Injuries	Total
138	171	309	122	104	226

Figure 8. Casualties in the province of Balochistan, 2020 and the first half of 2021, based on CRSS data⁹⁹¹

Displacement

Among the consulted sources, no information was found about any conflict-induced displacement from areas in and to Balochistan in 2020 and the first seven months of 2021.⁹⁹²

⁹⁹⁰ CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁹¹ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 21; CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁹² Websites consulted: <http://www.unocha.org/pakistan>; <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/pakistan>; <http://reliefweb.int/country/pak>

2.2.4 Sindh

General description of the province

The province of Sindh (see [Map 1](#)) is situated in the south-east of Pakistan. It borders the province of Balochistan in the north and in the west, the province of Punjab in the north-east and the Arabian Sea in the south.⁹⁹³ The province of Sindh consists of seven divisions and 29 districts.⁹⁹⁴ Karachi is the provincial capital. Karachi is the largest city in Pakistan with approximately 15 to 25 million people residing.⁹⁹⁵ The two largest ethnic communities living in Sindh are the Sindhis and Mohajirs.⁹⁹⁶

According to the population census 2017 published by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the province of Sindh has a population of 47 854 510.⁹⁹⁷ According to UNDP, about 52 % of the population is living in urban areas.⁹⁹⁸

Background of the conflict and actors in Sindh

Since 5 September 2013, a security operation is ongoing in Sindh, mainly focusing on the capital Karachi. According to the 2018 security report PIPS, the purpose of this operation is to tackle four categories of violent groups involved in violence in the city: the Pakistani Taliban, sectarian armed groups, armed wings of ethno-political parties and criminal gangs.⁹⁹⁹ The Rangers have been given 'special powers' to tackle the variety of violence, not just ethno-political, but also sectarian violence and extortion.¹⁰⁰⁰

In the first half of 2019, multiple security agencies in Sindh warned of attacks on foreign consulates, foreign engineers working for CPEC, security forces, sensitive areas such as airports, political and religious leaders and places of worship of minorities. More than half of the attacks were planned by the TTP, according to the Sindh police.¹⁰⁰¹ In the past, rural Sindh especially has emerged as 'a new hotbed of militancy', where several militant groups, particularly the TTP and the LeJ, have become active through their support and use of a local militant group led by Hafeez Brohi.¹⁰⁰² In March 2019, the newspaper Dawn reported that Hafeez Brohi was killed by the police during a cross-border action in the Dadhar area of Balochistan.¹⁰⁰³

In May 2020, the government banned the JSQM-A, the SDRA and SDLA.¹⁰⁰⁴ Sources indicated an important development in 2020, i.e. the reported alliance between Baloch and Sindhi separatist militant groups.¹⁰⁰⁵ On 25 July 2020, BRAS announced an operational alliance with the SDRA.¹⁰⁰⁶ The Sindhi nationalists groups have also developed a connection with the BLA which is providing training to their militants in return of logistical support for its operations in Karachi.¹⁰⁰⁷ In July 2020, The

⁹⁹³ Minority Rights Group, Sindhis and Mohajirs, June 2018, [url](#)

⁹⁹⁴ Samaa TV, 6 surprises from Pakistan's 2017 census that should worry govt, 12 June 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁹⁵ Express Tribune (The), Pakistan fails to reap demographic dividend, 11 July 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁹⁶ Minority Rights Group, Sindhis and Mohajirs, June 2018, [url](#)

⁹⁹⁷ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017-National, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

⁹⁹⁸ UNDP Pakistan, Devolution of Power: Pathways to Actualization, 23 January 2021, [url](#), p. 5

⁹⁹⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), pp. 125-126

¹⁰⁰⁰ Fazli, S., EASO, EASO COI Meeting Report: Pakistan; 16-17 October 2017; Rome, February 2018, [url](#), p. 93

¹⁰⁰¹ Express Tribune (The), Police foil 105 terrorist attacks, 7 July 2019, [url](#)

¹⁰⁰² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), pp. 129-130

¹⁰⁰³ Dawn, 'Mastermind of several major terror attacks killed in encounter', 1 March 2019, [url](#)

¹⁰⁰⁴ Dawn, JSQM-A, two separatist outfits in Sindh banned, 12 May 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁰⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021 [url](#), p. 35; Amir Rana, M., Missing political approaches, 12 July 2020, [url](#); Arab News, Sindhi, Baloch 'separatists' forming ties in Sindh, Pakistani officials say, 13 July 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁰⁶ Nabeel, F., Interpreting BRAS-SRA Alliance, 27 July 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁰⁷ Amir Rana, M., Missing political approaches, 12 July 2020, [url](#); Arab News, Sindhi, Baloch 'separatists' forming ties in Sindh, Pakistani officials say, 13 July 2020, [url](#)

News on Sunday stated that a new militant group, the Mohajir Freedom Fighters (MFF) emerged.¹⁰⁰⁸ Abdul Basit, a security analyst, stated that ‘the attacks have geopolitical underpinnings and should be seen in the context of India-China border dispute and the intra-Afghan peace process.’¹⁰⁰⁹

Criminal activities also pose a security challenge for law enforcement personnel in Sindh.¹⁰¹⁰ Criminal gangs have their hideouts in the northern districts of the province.¹⁰¹¹ In its annual report of 2020, HRCP stated that incidents of crime and cases of missing persons increased in 2020 in Sindh province.¹⁰¹²

Recent security trends and impact on the civilian population

Security incidents

During 2020, there were 52 security incidents recorded by ACLED in Sindh province, of whom 18 were coded as battles, 11 explosions/remote violence and 23 incidents of violence against civilians. Karachi stood out as the district where most incidents were reported with 30 violent events, followed by Khairpur, Matiari and Naushahro Feroze with 3 violent events each.¹⁰¹³

PIPS documented 18 ‘terrorist attacks’ in 2020.¹⁰¹⁴ Fifteen of these attacks took place in Karachi and three in interior Sindh. This is a slight increase compared to 2019 when 14 ‘terrorist attacks’ occurred. Among those attacks, there were both sectarian-related and nationalist-inspired attacks.¹⁰¹⁵ PICSS observed 18 militant attacks in 2020. The number of militant attacks increased compared to 2019.¹⁰¹⁶

From 1 January 2021 to 31 July 2021, ACLED coded 37 violent events in Sindh province, 19 of which were coded as battles, 8 as explosions/remote violence and 10 as violence against civilians.¹⁰¹⁷ In this timeframe most security incidents were counted in Karachi (9), Larkana (5) and Khairpur (4).¹⁰¹⁸

From 1 January to 31 July 2021, PIPS counted 10 incidents of which 5 were recorded as ‘terrorist attacks’ in Sindh.¹⁰¹⁹ PICSS mentioned 47 incidents of overall violence and 8 out of these incidents were marked as militant attacks.¹⁰²⁰

Security trends 2020-2021

¹⁰⁰⁸ News on Sunday (The), A new wave of terror, 5 July 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁰⁹ News on Sunday (The), A new wave of terror, 5 July 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰¹⁰ Dawn, Karachi street crime, 2 June 2021, [url](#); Dawn, Street crimes register alarming rise in Karachi in Jan-March period, 19 April 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰¹¹ Dawn, Police achieved little success in long fight against gangs in Sindh's riverine areas: report, 21 September 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰¹² HRCP, State of Human Rights in 2020, 3 May 2021, [url](#), pp. 56-58

¹⁰¹³ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 December 2020), update 30 July 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰¹⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 52

¹⁰¹⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 56

¹⁰¹⁶ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), p. 40

¹⁰¹⁷ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2021-31 July 2021), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰¹⁸ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2021-31 July 2021), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰¹⁹ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

¹⁰²⁰ Khan, A. email, 8 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PICSS

PIPS differentiated the 'terrorist attacks' in 2020 between attacks carried out by religious inspired groups and nationalist insurgent groups.¹⁰²¹ Most of the attacks were carried out in Karachi and in Interior Sindh.¹⁰²²

In 2020, 'religiously inspired groups' including the TTP were active in the province of Sindh. These groups carried out four attacks in Karachi. Three attacks were targeted killings directed against police officers and one attack was directed against civilians.¹⁰²³ A March 2021 article of Samaa TV, citing a senior police official, stated that the TTP has a presence in Karachi. He claimed further that the TTP had 'sleeper cells' in the province.¹⁰²⁴ Different media reported that the police and Rangers have arrested or killed several suspected TTP militants in Karachi, Sukkur and other parts of Sindh in the first half of 2021.¹⁰²⁵

In addition, nationalist insurgent groups were active in Karachi and Interior Sindh. Most of these attacks were claimed by the SDRA.¹⁰²⁶ The attacks were directed against the police and Rangers, civilians, the rally of a religious-political party and a Chinese national.¹⁰²⁷ PIPS reported that also three sectarian-related attacks and incidents of ethno-political violence occurred in the province of Sindh.¹⁰²⁸

In June 2021, Dawn cited a senior police officer who stated that 'the violence allegedly perpetrated by the so-called nationalist groups has recently overtaken the violence committed by religious and sectarian outfits in Sindh.'¹⁰²⁹

Illustrative incidents 2020 and in the first seven months of 2021:

- On 1 April 2020, a religious scholar was shot in a suspected sectarian attack in Orangi Town.¹⁰³⁰
- On 29 June 2020, four militants of the BLA attacked the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) building in Karachi. At least three security guards and a police sub-inspector were killed, while seven people were injured during the attack. The four militants were also killed.¹⁰³¹
- On 5 August 2020, at least 39 people were injured in a grenade attack on a Jamaat-i-Islami rally held in Karachi. The SDRA claimed responsibility.¹⁰³²
- On 10 October 2020, a religious scholar and his driver were killed in a targeted attack.¹⁰³³
- On 15 March 2021, Reuters reported that BLA claimed responsibility for an attack in Karachi, killing a paramilitary soldier and wounding eight other people.¹⁰³⁴
- On 28 July 2021, a Chinese national was attacked in Karachi by unknown gunmen. According to Reuters, no one claimed responsibility.¹⁰³⁵

Casualties

¹⁰²¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 56

¹⁰²² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 56-58

¹⁰²³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 58

¹⁰²⁴ Samaa TV, Is TTP staging a comeback in Pakistan?, 17 March 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰²⁵ Samaa TV, Is TTP staging a comeback in Pakistan?, 17 March 2021, [url](#); Dawn, Three members of 'TTP sleeper cell' held in SITE, 3 May 2021, [url](#); Dawn, 'TTP militant' involved in terror cases arrested in Karachi, 12 March 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰²⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 57-58

¹⁰²⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 58

¹⁰²⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021 [url](#), p. 58, p. 59

¹⁰²⁹ Dawn, Nationalists' violence has overtaken religious militancy, says CTD chief, 4 June 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰³⁰ Dawn, Religious scholar shot at, wounded in 'sectarian' attack in Karachi, 1 April 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰³¹ BBC News, Pakistan attack: Deadly raid on stock exchange in Karachi, 29 June 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰³² Al Jazeera, Dozens wounded in grenade attack at pro-Kashmir Karachi rally, 5 August 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰³³ Dawn, Jamia Farooqia head Maulana Adil, driver shot dead in Karachi, 10 October 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰³⁴ Reuters, Blast in Pakistan's Karachi kills soldier, injures 8 others, 15 March 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰³⁵ Reuters, Chinese national shot and wounded in Pakistan's Karachi, 28 July 2021, [url](#)

According to PIPS, in 18 ‘terrorist attacks’ a total of 20 people were killed and 66 injured in the province in 2020.¹⁰³⁶ PICSS counted 93 casualties (23 killed and 70 injured).¹⁰³⁷

In 2020, CRSS recorded in total 180 casualties in the province (see [Figure](#)).¹⁰³⁸ According to CRSS, most casualties in 2020 were counted among civilians.¹⁰³⁹ More than 55 % of all victims of violence were civilians. They belonged to the groups of media, political and religious party activists, and religious persons.¹⁰⁴⁰ CRSS stated that the least affected from violence in Sindh were security personnel.¹⁰⁴¹

In the first half of 2021, CRSS counted in total 89 casualties (see [Figure](#)).¹⁰⁴² In the second quarter of 2021, casualties (56) increased in the province when compared to the first quarter of 2021 (33).¹⁰⁴³

Casualties in the province of Sindh					
2020			01/01/2021-30/06/2021		
Fatalities	Injuries	Total	Fatalities	Injuries	Total
92	88	180	65	24	89

Figure 19. Casualties in the province of Sindh, 2020 and the first half of 2021, based on CRSS data¹⁰⁴⁴

Displacement

Among the consulted sources, no information was found about any conflict-induced displacement from areas in and to Sindh in 2020 and the first seven months of 2021.¹⁰⁴⁵

2.2.5 Islamabad Capital Territory

General description of the territory

Islamabad Capital Territory (see [Map 1](#)) is situated in the north of Pakistan between the provinces of KP and Punjab and includes the capital of Pakistan, Islamabad. The administrative status of Islamabad Capital Territory is not very clear. The territory of the Islamabad Capital Territory is not demarcated and separated from adjoining areas.¹⁰⁴⁶ The total area of Islamabad Capital Territory is around 900 square kilometres.¹⁰⁴⁷ Islamabad is an ethnically diverse city. It has an ‘eclectic mix of Punjabi, Pakhtun, Seriaki, Sindhi, Kashmiri and Baloch ethnicities’. Islamabad has a relatively big proportion of religious minorities compared to other parts of the country, with 10 % of the

¹⁰³⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 65

¹⁰³⁷ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), p. 40

¹⁰³⁸ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), pp. 27-28

¹⁰³⁹ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 27

¹⁰⁴⁰ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 27

¹⁰⁴¹ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 27

¹⁰⁴² CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰⁴³ CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰⁴⁴ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 27; CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰⁴⁵ Websites consulted: [url](#); [url](#); [url](#)

¹⁰⁴⁶ International News (The), Islamabad: the deprived capital, 30 June 2019, [url](#)

¹⁰⁴⁷ UNDP Pakistan, Devolution of Power: Pathways to Actualization, 23 January 2021, [url](#), p. 5

inhabitants being non-Muslims.¹⁰⁴⁸ There are 3 000 Hindus living in the capital.¹⁰⁴⁹ Islamabad Capital Territory hosts Islamabad International Airport, served by international and domestic scheduled passenger flights.¹⁰⁵⁰ According to the population census of 2017 published by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Islamabad Capital Territory has a population of 2 003 368.¹⁰⁵¹ According to UNDP, half of the population is living in urban areas.¹⁰⁵²

Background of the conflict and actors in Islamabad Capital Territory

According to a report by Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) published on 17 April 2020, the capital remains an attractive target due to the prevalence of government institutions, foreign missions, and administration officials.¹⁰⁵³ The capital Islamabad was also the scene of protests in 2020 and 2021.¹⁰⁵⁴

Recent security trends and impact on the civilian population

Security incidents

ACLED collected data on two violent events in Islamabad Capital territory from reports in open sources in the year 2020, one of which was coded as battles, none as explosions/remote violence and one as violence against civilians.¹⁰⁵⁵ In 2020, PIPS recorded not a single 'terrorist attack' in Islamabad Capital Territory.¹⁰⁵⁶ PICSS documented one security incident in which two people were killed.¹⁰⁵⁷

From 1 January to 31 July 2021, ACLED coded seven violent events in Islamabad Capital Territory, of which two were coded as battles and five as violence against civilians.¹⁰⁵⁸ In the first seven months of 2021, PIPS observed three violent incidents in the province of which two were labelled as 'terrorist attacks'.¹⁰⁵⁹ PICSS counted three incidents of violence in the same timeframe.¹⁰⁶⁰

Security trends 2020-2021

According to the Minister of Interior, cited in a June 2021 article of Anadolu Agency (AA), attacks perpetrated by militants were increasing in the capital. Since 2018, nine police officers were killed in the capital.¹⁰⁶¹

Illustrative incidents 2020 and in the first seven months of 2021:

- On 27 February 2021, RFE/RL Gandhara reported that a religious cleric, his son and a student were killed at the outskirts of Islamabad by unknown gunmen.¹⁰⁶²

¹⁰⁴⁸ Friday Times (The), Battleground Islamabad, 22 June 2018, [url](#)

¹⁰⁴⁹ Al Jazeera, Pakistan's top Islamic body approves construction of Hindu temple, 29 October 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁵⁰ Gulf News, First pictures: New Islamabad airport opens, to handle up to 25m flyers a year, 1 May 2018, [url](#)

¹⁰⁵¹ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017-National, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰⁵² UNDP Pakistan, Devolution of Power: Pathways to Actualization, 23 January 2021, [url](#), p. 5

¹⁰⁵³ OSAC, Pakistan 2020 Crime & Safety Report: Islamabad, 17 April 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁵⁴ Express Tribune (The), Islamabad sit-in on cards as opposition mulls 'massive' anti-govt movement, 19 September 2020, [url](#); Dawn, Baloch protesters end Islamabad sit-in after PM Imran's pledge to meet them, 22 February 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰⁵⁵ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 December 2020), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰⁵⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 21

¹⁰⁵⁷ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), pp. 41-42

¹⁰⁵⁸ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2021-31 July 2021), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰⁵⁹ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

¹⁰⁶⁰ Khan, A. email, 8 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PICSS

¹⁰⁶¹ AA, 2 police officers killed in Islamabad 'terror attack', 4 June 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰⁶² Gandhara, Three Killed In Shooting In Pakistani Capital, Including Cleric, 28 February 2021, [url](#)

- On 3 June 2021, two police officers were killed in the capital. The attack was claimed by the TTP.¹⁰⁶³

Casualties

In 2020, the CRSS annual security report recorded 13 casualties (10 fatalities, 3 injured) from violence in Islamabad Capital Territory (see [Figure 9](#)).¹⁰⁶⁴ Among the fatalities were five civilians, one government official and two security personnel.¹⁰⁶⁵

In the first half of 2021, CRSS counted in total 14 casualties (see [Figure 9](#)).¹⁰⁶⁶ In the second quarter of 2021, casualties (10) increased in the province when compared to the first quarter of 2021 (4).¹⁰⁶⁷

Casualties in Islamabad Capital Territory					
2020			01/01/2021-30/06/2021		
Fatalities	Injuries	Total	Fatalities	Injuries	Total
10	3	13	6	8	14

Figure 9. Casualties in Islamabad Capital Territory, 2020 and the first half of 2021, based on CRSS data¹⁰⁶⁸

Displacement

Among the consulted sources, no information was found about any conflict-induced displacement from areas in and to Islamabad Capital territory in 2020 and the first seven months of 2021.¹⁰⁶⁹

2.2.6 Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan

General description of the region

The Pakistan-controlled territory of Kashmir consists of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK or commonly called Azad Kashmir, AK) and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) (see [Map 1](#)). On 4 August 2020, the Prime Minister of Pakistan revealed a new political map of the area that included Pakistan's national borders whilst including the whole of Kashmir, which confirms the political claim to the territory.¹⁰⁷⁰ In September 2020, Ali Amin Gandapur, Minister of Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan in the government of Prime Minister Imran Khan, announced that the GB region 'would soon' become a

¹⁰⁶³ AA, 2 police officers killed in Islamabad 'terror attack', 4 June 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰⁶⁴ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 4

¹⁰⁶⁵ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 28

¹⁰⁶⁶ CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰⁶⁷ CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰⁶⁸ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 28; CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰⁶⁹ IDMC, GRID 2021 Global Report on Internal Displacement, May 2021, [url](#); Websites consulted:

<http://www.unocha.org/pakistan>; <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/pakistan>;

<http://reliefweb.int/country/pak>

¹⁰⁷⁰ Dawn, In landmark move, PM Imran unveils 'new political map' of Pakistan, 4 August 2020, [url](#); Dawn, Pakistan affirms claim to IHK with new map, 5 August 2020, [url](#)

province of Pakistan.¹⁰⁷¹ In November 2020, Prime Minister Khan announced that GB would get the status of a provisional province.¹⁰⁷²

AK has an estimated population of about 3-4.5 million.¹⁰⁷³ Elections for the legislative assembly in AK were scheduled on 25 July 2021.¹⁰⁷⁴ The majority in AJK are Muslims.¹⁰⁷⁵ GB has an estimated population of about two million people.¹⁰⁷⁶ The demography of GB consists of around 40 % Shia.¹⁰⁷⁷ GB is governed by a legislative assembly but has few legal powers and the region remains largely governed directly by the federal government.¹⁰⁷⁸ On 15 November 2020, elections were held in GB for the assembly.¹⁰⁷⁹

Background of the conflict and actors in Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan

The territory of Kashmir is a disputed area divided between India, Pakistan and China but claimed in its entirety by Pakistan and India.¹⁰⁸⁰ The Pakistan-India relationship has been historically tense for decades.¹⁰⁸¹ The Line of Control (LoC) is approximately a 724 km long border separating India-administered Kashmir from Pakistan-administered Kashmir, managed by their respective armies on each side.¹⁰⁸² It is known as one of the most heavily militarised borders in the world.¹⁰⁸³

India accuses Pakistan of supporting militant groups like JeM, LeT and Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM) and of having their operational bases in the Pakistan and Indian-administrated Kashmir region.¹⁰⁸⁴ HM is a militant group operating in Azad Jammu and Kashmir. It is led by Syed Salahuddin who is based in Pakistan.¹⁰⁸⁵ HM has conducted numerous attacks in India-administered Kashmir.¹⁰⁸⁶ Also, JeM has attacked high profile Indian targets, including the Indian parliament in New Delhi and the legislative assembly in Indian-administered Kashmir.¹⁰⁸⁷ In February 2019, the group claimed the Pulwama attack, killing some 40 Indian soldiers.¹⁰⁸⁸ A month after the Pulwama attack, in February 2019, Pakistan started 'a crackdown' on groups it claims are linked to banned organisations.¹⁰⁸⁹

According to the Jamestown Foundation, the wave of attacks in August 2018 in Gilgit-Baltistan showed that the area was vulnerable to militant attacks. The article suggested further the resurgence of the TTP in the Gilgit-Baltistan region. The wave of attacks in August 2018

¹⁰⁷¹ Express Tribune (The), 'G-B to be made province soon', 17 September 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁷² Al Jazeera, Pakistan PM vows to grant provisional status to Gilgit-Baltistan, 2 November 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁷³ Reuters, Explainer: Scenic Kashmir at the heart of India-Pakistani animosity, 15 February 2019, [url](#)

¹⁰⁷⁴ AA, Elections in Pakistan-administered Kashmir on July 25, 10 June 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰⁷⁵ Reuters, Explainer: Scenic Kashmir at the heart of India-Pakistani animosity, 15 February 2019, [url](#)

¹⁰⁷⁶ Al Jazeera, Pakistan PM vows to grant provisional status to Gilgit-Baltistan, 2 November 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁷⁷ Economic Times (The), Shia majority reduced to minority in Gilgit Baltistan: Barrister Hamid Bashani, 12 November 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁷⁸ Al Jazeera, Pakistan PM vows to grant provisional status to Gilgit-Baltistan, 2 November 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁷⁹ AA, Pakistan: Third elections begin in Gilgit-Baltistan, 15 November 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁸⁰ Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Redrawing the Maps in Kashmir. New Geopolitical Realities in the Conflict between China, India, and Pakistan, November 2020, [url](#), p. 1

¹⁰⁸¹ RFE/RL, India Blames Pakistan, Demands Action After Kashmir Attack, 15 February 2019, [url](#); DW, Kashmir: The world's most dangerous conflict, 7 August 2019, [url](#)

¹⁰⁸² CFR, Conflict Between India and Pakistan, nidi, [url](#); Kulkarni, T., The escalation of ceasefire violations across the Line of Control, 20 August 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁸³ Kulkarni, T., The escalation of ceasefire violations across the Line of Control, 20 August 2020, [url](#), BBC News, Viewpoint: India and Pakistan up the ante on disputed border, 30 January 2018, [url](#)

¹⁰⁸⁴ Al Jazeera, Explainer: Who are Kashmir's armed groups?, 3 March 2019, [url](#)

¹⁰⁸⁵ Al Jazeera, Explainer: Who are Kashmir's armed groups?, 3 March 2019, [url](#)

¹⁰⁸⁶ Al Jazeera, Explainer: Who are Kashmir's armed groups?, 3 March 2019, [url](#)

¹⁰⁸⁷ Al Jazeera, Explainer: Who are Kashmir's armed groups?, 3 March 2019, [url](#)

¹⁰⁸⁸ Al Jazeera, Explainer: Who are Kashmir's armed groups?, 3 March 2019, [url](#)

¹⁰⁸⁹ Al Jazeera, India-Pakistan tensions: All the latest updates, 10 March 2019, [url](#)

demonstrated the group's possibility to recruit people as well as its ability and willingness to conduct a variety of attacks.¹⁰⁹⁰

Recent security trends and impact on the civilian population

Security incidents

ACLED collected data on 129 violent events in Azad Kashmir from open-source reports in the year 2020, 118 of which were coded as battles, 10 as explosions/remote violence and 1 as violence against civilians.¹⁰⁹¹

PIPS did not mention any 'terrorist attack' in Azad Kashmir in 2020.¹⁰⁹² PICSS reported not a single militant attack in 2020 and described the security situation in Azad Kashmir as 'stable'.¹⁰⁹³ However, the situation at the LoC remained 'relatively more volatile' in 2020, according to PIPS.¹⁰⁹⁴ PIPS counted 114 cross-border attacks from the border with India.¹⁰⁹⁵

From 1 January 2021 to 31 July 2021, ACLED coded three violent events in Azad Kashmir; of which one was coded as battles, one as explosions/remote violence and one as violence against civilians.¹⁰⁹⁶ These three violent incidents occurred in Bhimber, Kotli and Neelum.¹⁰⁹⁷

In the first seven months of 2021, PIPS observed six overall incidents. None was classified as 'terrorist attacks'.¹⁰⁹⁸ PICSS mentioned one violent incident in 2021.¹⁰⁹⁹ In the same period, PIPS recorded seven incidents of violence at the Pakistan-India border.¹¹⁰⁰

ACLED collected data on two violent events in Gilgit-Baltistan from reports in open sources in the year 2020, of which one were coded as battles and one as violence against civilians.¹¹⁰¹ According to PICSS, not a single militant attack occurred in 2020 in Gilgit-Baltistan.¹¹⁰² PIPS recorded also no 'terrorist attacks' in the area in 2020.¹¹⁰³

¹⁰⁹⁰ Zahid, F., Recent Wave of Terrorism in Pakistan's Gilgit-Baltistan Region, 2 November 2018, [url](#)

¹⁰⁹¹ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 December 2020), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰⁹² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 20

¹⁰⁹³ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), p. 41

¹⁰⁹⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 25

¹⁰⁹⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 25

¹⁰⁹⁶ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2021-31 July 2021), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰⁹⁷ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2021-31 July 2021), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰⁹⁸ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

¹⁰⁹⁹ Khan, A. email, 8 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PICSS

¹¹⁰⁰ Rana Amir, M., email, 10 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PIPS

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¹¹⁰² PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2020, 5 January 2021, [url](#), p. 41

¹¹⁰³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021 [url](#), p. 20

From 1 January to 31 July 2021, ACLED did not mention any violent incident in Gilgit-Baltistan.¹¹⁰⁴ In the first seven months of 2021, PIPS observed no incidents.¹¹⁰⁵ PICSS also observed no violent incidents in 2021.¹¹⁰⁶

Security trends 2020-2021

In February 2021, it was reported that India has committed 3 097 cease-fire violations in 2020, which killed 28 and injured 257 civilians. Pakistan reportedly committed 5 133 violations.¹¹⁰⁷ On 25 February 2021, Pakistan and India reaffirmed their commitment to the 2003 ceasefire agreement alongside the LoC.¹¹⁰⁸ In the beginning of May 2021 both nations accused each other of violating the ceasefire agreement after an exchange of fire in the Ramgarh sector.¹¹⁰⁹ At the end of June 2021, India stated that two explosive-laden Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) crashed into the Indian-controlled territory of Kashmir.¹¹¹⁰

In July 2021, BBC News Urdu reported that Habib-ur-Rehman, a commander of Mujahideen Gilgit-Baltistan and Kohistan resurfaced in Gilgit-Baltistan. BBC News Urdu stated that on videos circulating on social media it was shown that, Habib-ur-Rehman held an 'open court' in Diamer district.¹¹¹¹ According to VoA Urdu, the government denied the presence of Pakistani Taliban militants in Gilgit-Baltistan.¹¹¹²

Casualties

In 2020, CRSS documented no casualties due to violence in AJK (see [Figure 10](#)).¹¹¹³ According to data in the first and second quarter analysis report of 2021 conducted by CRSS, no casualties of violence were reported in AJK (see [Figure 10](#)).¹¹¹⁴

Casualties in Azad Kashmir					
2020			01/01/2021-30/06/2021		
Fatalities	Injuries	Total	Fatalities	Injuries	Total
0	0	0	0	0	0

Figure 10. Casualties in Azad Kashmir, 2020 and the first half of 2021, based on CRSS data¹¹¹⁵

¹¹⁰⁴ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2021-31 July 2021), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

¹¹⁰⁵ Khan, A. email, 8 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PICSS

¹¹⁰⁶ Khan, A. email, 8 August 2021 - data 01/01/2021-31/07/2021 courtesy of PICSS

¹¹⁰⁷ Al Jazeera, India, Pakistan agree to stop cross-border firing in Kashmir, 25 February 2021, [url](#)

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¹¹⁰⁹ AA, Pakistan, India trade cease-fire violation accusations, 4 May 2021, [url](#)

¹¹¹⁰ Diplomat (The), Drone Attacks on Military Installation Rattle India's Security Establishment, 30 June 2021, [url](#)

¹¹¹¹ BBC News Urdu, حبیب الرحمن: گلگت بلتستان میں انتہائی مطلوب شدت پسند کمانڈر کی ساتھیوں سمیت 'کھلی کچہری' کی ویڈیو، [informal translation 'Habib-ur-Rehman: Video of 'open court' with associates of most wanted militant commander in Gilgit-Baltistan'], 8 July 2021, [url](#)

¹¹¹² VoA Urdu, ہنی انجینئرز کی ہلاکت، گلگت بلتستان اور گردو نواح میں شدت پسند دوبارہ منظم ہو رہے ہیں؟، [informal translation 'Killing of Chinese engineers, extremists reorganizing in Gilgit-Baltistan and surrounding areas'], 22 July 2021, [url](#)

¹¹¹³ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 5

¹¹¹⁴ CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

¹¹¹⁵ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 28; CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

CRSS documented seven casualties due to violence in Gilgit-Baltistan in 2020 (see [Figure 11](#)).¹¹¹⁶ According to CRSS two casualties affected civilians and five police-CTD officials.¹¹¹⁷ In the first and second quarter of 2021, CRSS counted no casualties (see [Figure 11](#)).¹¹¹⁸

Casualties in Gilgit-Baltistan					
2020			01/01/2021-30/06/2021		
Fatalities	Injuries	Total	Fatalities	Injuries	Total
7	0	7	0	0	0

Figure 11. Casualties in Gilgit-Baltistan, 2020 and the first half of 2021, based on CRSS data¹¹¹⁹

Displacement

Among the consulted sources, no information was found about any conflict-induced displacement from areas in and to Gilgit-Baltistan in 2020 and the first seven months of 2021.¹¹²⁰

¹¹¹⁶ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 4

¹¹¹⁷ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 28

¹¹¹⁸ CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

¹¹¹⁹ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2020, 10 February 2021, [url](#), p. 28; CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q1 2021, 14 April 2021, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report-Q2 2021, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

¹¹²⁰ Websites consulted: <http://www.unocha.org/pakistan>; <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/pakistan>; <http://reliefweb.int/country/pak>

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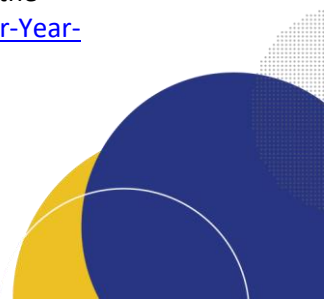
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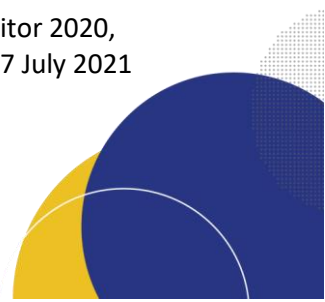
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Annex 2: Terms of Reference

The report aims to provide information on the security situation in Pakistan, which is relevant for the assessment of international protection status determination, including refugee status and subsidiary protection. An important goal of this report is to provide detailed information on a regional, provincial or even district level. The reporting period for incidents and events illustrating the general trends of the conflict, is from 1 August 2020 until 31 July 2021. The terms of reference were drafted by Cedoca in consultation with EASO and the COI Specialist Network on Pakistan.

The content of the report should contain information on the following topics:

General description of the security situation:

- Background of the conflict
 - Overview of recent conflicts
- Actors in/Parties to the conflict
- Recent security trends and security trends
- Impact of the violence
 - Civilian population: casualties, IDPs, refugees
 - State ability to secure Law and Order: security forces, justice, detention
 - Geographical overview of the security situation

Regional description of the security situation:

- Punjab
 - Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (including former FATA and a description of the KP tribal districts in detail)
- Sindh
- Balochistan
- Islamabad
- Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan

For each region, a short description of the region (terrain, urban areas, population) should be included, followed by information on:

- General description of the region
- Background of insecurity in the region: actors, type of violence
- Recent security trends (focus on 2019 and first seven months of 2020) according to the four main sources (number of incidents, example of the kind of violence, effects of the violence)
- Displacement/return



Annex 3: Query list

The following questions were sent by email to the following experts: an academic expert on terrorism in South Asia, Kiyya Baloch.

1. Description of the security situation in all the provinces of Pakistan during 2020
2. Description of the security situation in all the provinces of Pakistan during the first half of 2021
3. What are the main evolutions in the security situation in 2021 compared to 2020 in Pakistan?
4. Which militant groups have been the main actors of instability in Pakistan in 2021 and can you elaborate on the reasons why?
5. Who or what have been the main targets of militant groups in Pakistan during 2020 and 2021?
- 6a. The situation for journalists has reportedly deteriorated. What impact has this situation had on media reporting on the security situation in Pakistan?
- 6b. Has the COVID-19 outbreak had an impact on media reporting on the security situation, and how?
7. What measures have been adopted by the Pakistan armed forces to respond to the security situation in 2021?

The following questions were sent by email to the following experts: Mansur Khan Mahsud, Abdul Basit and Fahad Nabeel

1. Description of the security situation in all the tribal districts of Pakistan 2020
2. Description of the security situation in all the tribal districts of Pakistan 2021
3. What are the main evolutions in the security situation in the tribal districts in 2021 compared to 2020?
4. Which militant groups have been the main actors of instability in the tribal districts in 2021 and can you elaborate on the reasons why?
5. Who or what have been the main targets of militant groups in the tribal districts during 2020 and 2021?
- 6a. The situation for journalists has reportedly deteriorated. What impact has this situation had on media reporting on the security situation in Pakistan?
- 6b. Has the COVID-19 outbreak had an impact on media reporting on the security situation, and how?
7. What measures have been adopted by the Pakistan armed forces to respond to the security situation in 2020 in the tribal districts?

