



Home Office

# Country Policy and Information Note

## Pakistan: Hazaras

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# Preface

## Purpose

This note provides country of origin information (COI) and analysis of COI for use by Home Office decision makers handling particular types of protection and human rights claims (as set out in the [Introduction](#) section). It is not intended to be an exhaustive survey of a particular subject or theme.

It is split into 2 parts: (1) an assessment of COI and other evidence; and (2) COI. These are explained in more detail below.

## Assessment

This section analyses the evidence relevant to this note - that is information in the COI section; refugee/human rights laws and policies; and applicable caselaw - by describing this and its inter-relationships, and provides an assessment of, in general, whether one or more of the following applies:

- a person is reasonably likely to face a real risk of persecution or serious harm
- that the general humanitarian situation is so severe that there are substantial grounds for believing that there is a real risk of serious harm because conditions amount to inhuman or degrading treatment as within [paragraphs 339C and 339CA\(iii\) of the Immigration Rules](#) / Article 3 of the [European Convention on Human Rights \(ECHR\)](#)
- that the security situation is such that there are substantial grounds for believing there is a real risk of serious harm because there exists a serious and individual threat to a civilian's life or person by reason of indiscriminate violence in a situation of international or internal armed conflict as within [paragraphs 339C and 339CA\(iv\) of the Immigration Rules](#)
- a person is able to obtain protection from the state (or quasi state bodies)
- a person is reasonably able to relocate within a country or territory
- a claim is likely to justify granting asylum, humanitarian protection or other form of leave, and
- if a claim is refused, it is likely or unlikely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded' under [section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002](#).

Decision makers **must**, however, still consider all claims on an individual basis, taking into account each case's specific facts.

## Country of origin information

The country information in this note has been carefully selected in accordance with the general principles of COI research as set out in the [Common EU \[European Union\] Guidelines for Processing Country of Origin Information \(COI\)](#), April 2008, and the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation's (ACCORD), [Researching Country Origin Information – Training Manual](#), 2013. Namely, taking into account the COI's relevance, reliability, accuracy, balance, currency, transparency and traceability.

The structure and content of the country information section follows a [terms of reference](#) which sets out the general and specific topics relevant to this note.

All information included in the note was published or made publicly available on or before the 'cut-off' date(s) in the country information section. Any event taking place or report/article published after these date(s) is not included.

All information is publicly accessible or can be made publicly available. Sources and the information they provide are carefully considered before inclusion. Factors relevant to the assessment of the reliability of sources and information include:

- the motivation, purpose, knowledge and experience of the source
- how the information was obtained, including specific methodologies used
- the currency and detail of information
- whether the COI is consistent with and/or corroborated by other sources.

Multiple sourcing is used to ensure that the information is accurate and balanced, which is compared and contrasted where appropriate so that a comprehensive and up-to-date picture is provided of the issues relevant to this note at the time of publication.

The inclusion of a source is not, however, an endorsement of it or any view(s) expressed.

Each piece of information is referenced in a footnote. Full details of all sources cited and consulted in compiling the note are listed alphabetically in the bibliography.

### **Feedback**

Our goal is to provide accurate, reliable and up-to-date COI and clear guidance. We welcome feedback on how to improve our products. If you would like to comment on this note, please email the [Country Policy and Information Team](#).

### **Independent Advisory Group on Country Information**

The [Independent Advisory Group on Country Information](#) (IAGCI) was set up in March 2009 by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration to support him in reviewing the efficiency, effectiveness and consistency of approach of COI produced by the Home Office.

The IAGCI welcomes feedback on the Home Office's COI material. It is not the function of the IAGCI to endorse any Home Office material, procedures or policy. The IAGCI may be contacted at:

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Information about the IAGCI's work and a list of the documents which have been reviewed by the IAGCI can be found on the Independent Chief Inspector's pages of the [gov.uk website](#).

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# Assessment

This section was updated on 14 July 2022

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Basis of claim

1.1.1 Fear of persecution and/or serious harm by state or non-state actors because the person is ethnic Hazara.

### 1.2 Points to note

1.2.1 Hazaras are an ethnic group, the majority of whom are Shia Muslim. They have a distinct appearance making them easily identifiable from the majority of Pakistan's population.

1.2.2 For information on non-Hazara Shia Muslims see the [Country Policy and Information Note Pakistan: Shia Muslims](#).

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## 2. Consideration of issues

### 2.1 Credibility

2.1.1 For information on assessing credibility, see the instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

2.1.2 Decision makers must also check if there has been a previous application for a UK visa or another form of leave. Asylum applications matched to visas should be investigated prior to the asylum interview (see the [Asylum Instruction on Visa Matches, Asylum Claims from UK Visa Applicants](#)).

2.1.3 In cases where there are doubts surrounding a person's claimed place of origin, decision makers should also consider the need to conduct language analysis testing (see the [Asylum Instruction on Language Analysis](#)).

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## 2.2 Exclusion

- 2.2.1 Decision makers must consider whether there are serious reasons for considering whether one (or more) of the exclusion clauses is applicable. Each case must be considered on its individual facts and merits.
- 2.2.2 If the person is excluded from the Refugee Convention, they will also be excluded from a grant of humanitarian protection (which has a wider range of exclusions than refugee status).
- 2.2.3 For guidance on exclusion and restricted leave, see the Asylum Instruction on [Exclusion under Articles 1F and 33\(2\) of the Refugee Convention](#), [Humanitarian Protection](#) and the instruction on [Restricted Leave](#).

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## 2.3 Convention reason(s)

- 2.3.1 Actual or imputed race or religion.
- 2.3.2 Establishing a convention reason is not sufficient to be recognised as a refugee. The question is whether the person has a well-founded fear of persecution on account of an actual or imputed Refugee Convention reason.
- 2.3.3 For further guidance on the 5 Refugee Convention grounds see the Asylum Instruction, [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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## 2.4 Risk

### a. State treatment

- 2.4.1 In general, Hazaras are not at risk of persecution or serious harm from the state. While some Hazara face official discrimination, in general this is not likely to be sufficiently serious by its nature and/or repetition, or by an accumulation of various measures, to amount to persecution or serious harm. Each case must be considered on its own merits with the onus on the person to demonstrate that they would be at real risk from the state.
- 2.4.2 In a total population of nearly 243 million, an estimated 600,000 to one million Hazaras live in Pakistan. Around half a million live in Quetta, Balochistan, mostly concentrated in enclaves known as Hazara Town and Mariabad (Mari Abad) due to the general security situation in Balochistan. There are also Hazara communities living elsewhere, including Islamabad,

Karachi, and Lahore. The majority of Hazaras are Shia Muslim, whilst the majority of Muslims in Pakistan are Sunni. A multiple-sourced report by the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) notes that Hazaras living in rural areas speak Hazaragi, an eastern dialect of the Persian (Farsi) language, while those in urban areas also speak other languages including standard Persian, Urdu and English

- 2.4.3 The Constitution provides for the equality of citizens and the protection of minorities. However, according to Minority Rights Group International (MRGI), in the Pakistani context, ‘minority’ usually refers to religious minorities – that is Hindus, Christians and Sikhs – who are constitutionally recognised. Sectarian and ethnic minorities, such as Shia Muslims and Hazaras, fall outside this commonly accepted definition of ‘minority’ and are not explicitly recognised under the Constitution (see [Legal context](#)).
- 2.4.4 Hazaras report delays and refusals in issuing Computerised National Identity Cards (CNICs) by National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) officials, which the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) attributed to their ethnicity. CNICs are required to access public services. According to the HRCP and the Coalition for Religious Equality and Inclusive Development (CREID), Hazaras have to prove they are Pakistani and not Afghan refugees in order to obtain passports and CNICs (see [Documentation](#) and [Discrimination and harassment](#)).
- 2.4.5 The Hazara population is concentrated in Hazara Town and Mariabad (in the city of Quetta), which were subject to heightened restrictions on movement imposed by the provincial government in response to coronavirus (COVID-19), prior to a formal lockdown. According to the US Commission on International Religious Freedom and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), Hazaras were blamed for bringing the virus into Pakistan, after returning from a pilgrimage in Iran despite the fact that they comprised only a small proportion of both Shia and non-Shia returns from Iran. According to the Balochistan provincial apex committee, the decision to restrict movement was in response to concern about increased risk of spreading the virus. Hazara employees from some government offices were furloughed, whilst non-Shia staff continued to work. Access to healthcare was restricted during COVID-19 as some doctors refused to treat Hazaras (see [Discrimination and harassment](#) and [Healthcare](#)).
- 2.4.6 A study by CREID found that community members in Quetta, particularly women, face harassment and intimidation by security officials and that security checks are more strictly enforced for Hazaras at check points (see [Discrimination and harassment](#)).
- 2.4.7 For further guidance on assessing risk, see the Asylum Instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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#### b. Societal treatment

- 2.4.8 Information on the societal treatment of Hazaras beyond Quetta was limited. Based on available evidence, in general, the level and nature of societal discrimination faced by Hazaras is not sufficiently serious by its nature and/or repetition, or by an accumulation of various measures, to amount to



persecution or serious harm. Each case must be considered on its own merits with the onus on the person to demonstrate that they would be at real risk from societal actors.

- 2.4.9 A Baloch nationalist leader and CREID considered that Hazaras have cordial relationships with non-Hazaras in Quetta, mainly Balochs and Pashtuns, with whom they maintain social, business and work ties (see [Community relations](#)).
- 2.4.10 Shia Muslims generally, but particularly Hazaras, faced online harassment after the first confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Pakistan were largely amongst Shia pilgrims from Iran. Hate speech threatening sectarian and ethnic revenge also occurred following the killing of a Pashtun man in Hazara Town in May 2020. In the days following the attack 2 Hazaras were reportedly subjected to revenge attacks, with one killed. Sectarian hate speech by Sunni extremists targets Hazaras, who they deem heretics due to their Shia faith (see [Anti-Shia Hazara sentiment](#) and [Community relations](#)).
- 2.4.11 For further guidance on assessing risk, see the Asylum Instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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c. [Treatment by non-state armed groups](#)

- 2.4.12 In general, Hazaras are unlikely to be at real risk of persecution or serious harm by non-state actors. Overall the number and frequency of incidents, relative to the size of the population of Hazaras living in Pakistan, is low. Each case must be considered on its own merits with the onus on the person to demonstrate that they would be at real risk from non-state actors.
- 2.4.13 Armed sectarian groups including Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Islamic State (IS) are known to target Shia Muslims, including Hazaras (see [Security situation](#)).
- 2.4.14 The majority of attacks occur in Balochistan. Hazaras can be vulnerable to attacks when they leave their enclaves in Hazara Town and Mariabad in Quetta, which, according to MRGI, is because Hazaras are clearly identifiable. This causes some restriction on their freedom of movement, which in turn limits access to education, employment and healthcare. However, according to the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)'s January 2022 report, there are no reports of targeted attacks on Hazaras outside Balochistan since 2014 (see [Security situation](#) and [Access to, and treatment in, services](#)).
- 2.4.15 According to Pakistan's National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR), at least 2,000 Hazaras (0.2% of the estimated 1 million Hazara population) have been killed in terrorist-related incidents and targeted killings between 1999 and late 2017. The South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) recorded 383 deaths due to attacks between 2006 and 2021. The SATP recorded a peak of attacks in 2012 (42), which have subsequently declined to an average of 4 per year (see [Security situation](#)).
- 2.4.16 In April 2019, an attack claimed by LeJ and Islamic State targeted the Hazara community at a market in Quetta, killing 9 Hazaras and at least 10 others. In August 2019, one Hazara was killed in an explosion at a shoe

market in an area of Quetta where the shops are mostly owned by Hazaras. No one claimed responsibility. In January 2021, the Islamic State group claimed responsibility for abducting and killing 10 Hazara miners in Mach, about 50km east of Quetta (see [Security situation](#)).

- 2.4.17 For further guidance on assessing risk, see the Asylum Instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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## 2.5 Protection

- 2.5.1 Where the person has a well-founded fear of persecution from the state they will not, in general, be able to obtain protection from the authorities.
- 2.5.2 Where the person has a well-founded fear from non-state actors, the state is, in general, willing and able to provide effective protection, which is accessible, to Hazaras. A person's reluctance to seek protection does not mean that effective protection is not available. Each case must be considered on its facts, with the onus on the person to demonstrate that protection is not available.
- 2.5.3 The government has taken reasonable steps to operate an effective legal system for the detection, prosecution and punishment of criminal acts ([Country Policy and Information Note on Pakistan: Actors of protection](#)). This includes measures to limit the capability of terrorist groups that target the general public as well as Shia Muslims. Security forces have also provided some protection specifically to Hazaras, particularly those living in Quetta, including check points around the Hazara enclaves and security escorts outside of the enclaves and during religious processions. The government reported to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, in January 2022, the measures it has undertaken to enhance protection including the investigation of all incidents and violence against the Hazara community ([Provision of security](#)).
- 2.5.4 The reported case of [AW \(sufficiency of protection\) Pakistan \[2011\] UKUT 31 \(IAC\) \(26 January 2011\)](#), heard on 11 November 2010, found that 'Notwithstanding systemic sufficiency of state protection, a claimant may still have a well founded fear of persecution if authorities know or ought to know of circumstances particular to his/her case giving rise to the fear, but are unlikely to provide the additional protection the particular circumstances reasonably require (per Auld LJ at paragraph 55(vi))' (headnote 2).
- 2.5.5 Decision makers must also take particular account of past persecution (if any) and consider whether there are good reasons to consider that such persecution (and past lack of sufficient protection) is likely to be repeated (see headnote 3 of [AW](#)).
- 2.5.6 For further guidance on assessing state protection, see the Asylum Instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#) and the [Country Policy and Information Note on Pakistan: Actors of protection](#).

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## 2.6 Internal relocation

- 2.6.1 Where the person has a well-founded fear of persecution or serious harm from the state, they are unlikely to be able to relocate to escape that risk. Where the person's fear is of persecution or serious harm by non-state actors, in general, there are parts of the country where a person would not have a well-founded fear of persecution or real risk of serious harm and it will be reasonable for them to relocate. Each must be considered on its individual facts.
- 2.6.2 Whilst freedom of movement, particularly in and around Quetta, is limited due to security concerns, travel is still possible. There are a number of Hazara communities across Pakistan, including in larger cities such as Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad, and the country is large and diverse with no general barriers to freedom of movement (see [Population](#), [Location](#), [Security situation](#) and the [Country Policy and Information Note on Pakistan: Background information, including internal relocation](#)).
- 2.6.3 Hazaras can face difficulty in accessing employment because of discrimination by employers within the non-Hazara population, while Hazara women face additional obstacles due to prevailing patriarchal attitudes and cultural norms (see [Employment](#) and, for assessment on internal relocation for women, the [Country Policy and Information Note Pakistan: Women fearing gender-based violence](#)).
- 2.6.4 For further guidance on considering internal relocation and factors to be taken into account see the Asylum Instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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## 2.7 Certification

- 2.7.1 Where a claim is refused, it is unlikely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded' under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.
- 2.7.2 For further guidance on certification, see [Certification of Protection and Human Rights claims under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 \(clearly unfounded claims\)](#).

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# Country information

This section was updated on 24 June 2022

## 3. Legal context

### 3.1 Constitution

3.1.1 Article 25 of the Constitution guarantees equality of all citizens<sup>1</sup>. Article 36 provides for the protection of minorities<sup>2</sup>. Article 20 provides for freedom of religion ‘subject to law, public order and morality.’<sup>3</sup> Article 28 provides that ‘any section of citizens having a distinct language, script or culture shall have the right to preserve and promote the same and, subject to law, establish institutions for that purpose.’<sup>4</sup>

3.1.2 According to an October 2016 report on freedom of religion or belief in Pakistan, by Minority Rights Group International (MRGI), a UK-based non-governmental organisation (NGO), which works to secure the rights of minorities and indigenous peoples:

‘While in the Pakistani Constitution several references are made to “minorities”, no clear definition for this term is set out, resulting in ambiguity regarding what constitutes a “minority”. However, “minority” in the Pakistani context is commonly understood to refer to religious minorities specifically, thereby limiting the constitutionally recognized minority groups to those such as Hindus, Christians and Sikhs. This has implications for “internal minorities” such as Shi’a who, while Muslim, are a sectarian minority, as well as for ethnic, linguistic and national minorities who are not clearly constitutionally recognized as such. Particularly vulnerable are those groups, such as Hazara Shi’a, who face intersectional discrimination on account of their ethnicity and religious identity, but also those who face caste discrimination, all of which fall outside of the commonly accepted definition of “minority” in Pakistan.’<sup>5</sup>

See also [Discrimination and harassment](#).

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This section was updated on 24 June 2022

## 4. The Pakistan-Hazara community

### 4.1 Population

4.1.1 Pakistan’s population was estimated at nearly 243 million as of 2022<sup>6</sup>. According to the most recent national census conducted in 2017, 96% of the population are Muslim, generally believed to be 80% to 85% Sunni and 15% to 20% Shia, according to the US Department of State (USSD)<sup>7</sup>. The

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<sup>1</sup> [The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan](#) (Article 25), 1973

<sup>2</sup> [The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan](#) (Article 36), 1973

<sup>3</sup> [The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan](#) (Article 20), 1973

<sup>4</sup> [The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan](#) (Article 28), 1973

<sup>5</sup> MRGI, ‘[Freedom of religion or belief in Pakistan](#)’, October 2016

<sup>6</sup> CIA, ‘[The World Factbook – Pakistan](#)’ (People and society), 4 May 2022

<sup>7</sup> USSD, ‘[2021 Report on International Religious Freedom: Pakistan](#)’ (section I), 2 June 2022

majority of ethnic Hazaras are Shia Muslim<sup>8</sup>, mostly of the Twelver Sect, although a small number are Sunni and some belong to the Ismaeli sect<sup>9</sup>. According to MRGI, reporting in June 2018, ‘Hazaras are an ethnic group predominantly based in Afghanistan, but also with a large population in Pakistan...’<sup>10</sup>

- 4.1.2 The European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) (formerly: European Asylum Support Office, EASO) report on Pakistan, dated August 2015 (EUAA Pakistan report 2015), based on a range of sources, noted:

‘Historically, Hazara migrated to Pakistan from central Afghanistan. Some Hazara families’ origins in Quetta can be traced back to the late 19th century, though the majority of the community immigrated in two waves – the first during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan from 1979 onwards, and the second in 1996, when the Taliban regime in Afghanistan began to target the Hazara. Existing local networks enabled the Afghan Hazara to avoid staying in refugee camps and to integrate better into Pakistani society.’<sup>11</sup>

- 4.1.3 Sources estimated 600,000 to one million Hazaras lived across the whole of Pakistan<sup>12 13</sup>, with 500,000 residing in Balochistan’s city of Quetta<sup>14 15</sup>, which had a total population of around 1.1 million (2017 census)<sup>16</sup>.
- 4.1.4 On 7 February 2022, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) recorded that, of the 117,547 new arrivals into Pakistan from Afghanistan since January 2021, 17% [just under 20,000] were Hazara<sup>17</sup>. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), an independent organisation which monitors the human rights situation in Pakistan, noted in its 2021 annual report that after the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021, a ‘significant number’ of Hazara refugees took ‘temporary shelter’ in Hazara Town and Mariabad, which are areas in Quetta<sup>18</sup>.

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## 4.2 Location

- 4.2.1 Pakistan’s National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) study on Hazaras, published February 2018 and based on a sample of data from 85 respondents including ‘Senators from different political parties, Home department of Balochistan, Police, Notables, Civil Society, Hazara community leaders, Asylum seekers, students, activists, journalists and people from other sects’ in the location of Alamdar Road (Mariabad) and Hazara town districts of Balochistan, noted that Hazaras resided in different areas of Pakistan, ‘including, Parachinar, Karachi, Sanghar, Nawabshah, Hyderabad, different parts of Punjab and Gilgit Baltistan.’ The report also

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<sup>8</sup> EUAA/EASO, ‘[Pakistan Country Overview](#)’ (page 101), August 2015

<sup>9</sup> DFAT, ‘[Country Information Report Pakistan](#)’ (paragraph 3.3), 25 January 2022

<sup>10</sup> MRGI, ‘[Pakistan Shi’a and Hazaras](#)’, June 2018

<sup>11</sup> EUAA/EASO, ‘[Pakistan Country Overview](#)’ (page 101), August 2015

<sup>12</sup> DFAT, ‘[Country Information Report Pakistan](#)’ (paragraph 3.3), 25 January 2022

<sup>13</sup> MRGI, ‘[Pakistan Shi’a and Hazaras](#)’, June 2018

<sup>14</sup> HRW, ‘[“We are the Walking Dead”: Killings of Shia Hazara in Balochistan, Pakistan](#)’, 29 June 2014

<sup>15</sup> MRGI, ‘[Pakistan Shi’a and Hazaras](#)’, June 2018

<sup>16</sup> PBS, ‘[Population census – District wise – Quetta](#)’ (Table 25), 2017

<sup>17</sup> UNHCR, ‘[Pakistan: New Arrivals from Afghanistan Update \(7 February 2022\)](#)’, 11 February 2022

<sup>18</sup> HRCP, ‘[State of Human Rights in 2021](#)’ (page 115), 2022

noted that, due to the violence faced in Quetta, some Hazaras, particularly youths, felt inclined to relocate to Punjab or Islamabad. The same source said that, aside from Quetta, other areas of Balochistan in which Hazaras lived included Sanjawi, Much, Zhob, Harnai, Loralai, and Dukki.<sup>19</sup>

- 4.2.2 The Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, in its January 2022 Country Information Report Pakistan (DFAT 2022 report), which draws on DFAT's on-the-ground knowledge and discussions with a range of sources in Pakistan and elsewhere, as well as open source information, noted that 'Most [Hazaras] live in enclaves in Quetta due to the security situation in Balochistan. Smaller populations live in Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad. Hazaras outside Quetta tend not to live in enclaves to reduce the risk of ethnic profiling, discrimination and attack.'<sup>20</sup> According to the same source, the 2 enclaves in Quetta were called 'Hazara town and Mariabad.'<sup>21</sup>
- 4.2.3 In its February 2019 report, DFAT noted that that Hazara Town was located to the west of the city of Quetta, near the cantonment and Benazir hospital, whilst Mariabad was to the east, near the Pakistan air force base<sup>22</sup>.
- 4.2.4 A December 2020 report based on a study of 44 Shia Hazara participants in Quetta, by the Coalition for Religious Equality and Inclusive Development (CREID), an international research consortium led by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), noted that:
- 'Mari Abad is the oldest Hazara locality in Pakistan while Hazara Town started developing in the 1990s as a result of population growth. Mari Abad is surrounded with rugged tall mountain ranges on two sides, an army cantonment on the third side and is connected to the main city on its fourth dimension. Hazara Town is located along the western bypass and is surrounded by Pashtun and Baloch populations. There is a 12–12.5km route connecting the two neighbourhoods.'<sup>23</sup>
- 4.2.5 The Diplomat, a current affairs magazine for the Asia-Pacific region, reported on 16 April 2019, that the 2 districts of Hazara Town and Mariabad were connected via Spini Road – a distance of 11.6 kilometres<sup>24</sup>.

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### 4.3 Identifying characteristics

- 4.3.1 The EUAA Pakistan report 2015 noted, 'Those living in rural areas speak Hazaragi, an eastern dialect of the Persian (Farsi) language, while many Hazara in urban areas of Pakistan also speak other languages including standard Persian, Urdu and English.'<sup>25</sup>
- 4.3.2 According to Ethnologue: Languages of the World, a comprehensive reference work that provides information and statistics for all of the world's

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<sup>19</sup> NCHR, 'Understanding the Agonies...', (pages 4 and 10), February 2018. Available on request

<sup>20</sup> DFAT, '[Country Information Report Pakistan](#)' (paragraph 3.4), 25 January 2022

<sup>21</sup> DFAT, '[Country Information Report Pakistan](#)' (paragraph 3.6), 25 January 2022

<sup>22</sup> DFAT, '[Country Information Report Pakistan](#)' (paragraph 3.2.8), 20 February 2019

<sup>23</sup> CREID, '[The Multi-Layered Minority: Exploring the Intersection...](#)' (page 10), 1 December 2020

<sup>24</sup> The Diplomat, '[Hazaras Gripped by Religious Extremism in Balochistan](#)', 16 April 2019

<sup>25</sup> EUAA/EASO, '[Pakistan Country Overview](#)' (page 101), August 2015



known living languages, as of 2018 Hazaragi was spoken by 97,600 users in Pakistan in Quetta district, Karachi and Islamabad<sup>26</sup>.

- 4.3.3 MRGI noted that Hazaras have ‘clearly identifiable features’<sup>27</sup>. The NCHR report noted that Hazara people have ‘unique facial features [that] distinguish them from others.’<sup>28</sup> The EUAA Pakistan report 2015 stated, ‘The Hazara are an ethnic group of Eurasian origin which makes them visibly distinct from many other Pakistanis...’<sup>29</sup> The DFAT 2022 report noted, ‘The Hazaras are an ethnic group of distinctive East Asian appearance, native to the Hazarajat region of Afghanistan.’<sup>30</sup> The CREID report described the Hazara as having ‘Mongolian facial features.’<sup>31</sup>

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#### 4.4 Socio-economic situation

- 4.4.1 The CREID report noted that:

‘Hazaras commute to both enclaves [Hazara Town and Mariabad, Quetta] on a daily basis for work or to meet their extended family. Hazaras in Quetta do not own agricultural, industrial or commercial lands, and a vast majority of them rely on government/private sector jobs while the remaining bulk are either unskilled labour or they have small businesses. Most of the population comprises middle-class or lower middle-class families with the exception of a very small number of families who are either pre-partition migrants or have more than two family members working abroad.’<sup>32</sup>

- 4.4.2 The same source stated that ‘Mari Abad and Hazara Town are not the wealthiest enclaves in Quetta but are (particularly Mari Abad) one of the most advanced and highly organised localities in Balochistan in terms of education levels, urban administrative mechanisms and cleanliness.’<sup>33</sup>

- 4.4.3 According to the US Department of State (USSD) human rights report for 2021, ‘Community members complained that increased security measures had turned their neighborhoods into ghettos, resulting in economic exploitation. Consumer goods in those enclaves were available only at inflated prices, and Hazaras reported an inability to find employment or pursue higher education.’<sup>34</sup>

- 4.4.4 The DFAT 2022 report noted ‘Medical, education and other services inside the enclaves are basic. Food and other essentials must be brought in from outside, and prices are reportedly double those elsewhere in Quetta.’<sup>35</sup>

See also [Access to, and treatment in, services](#).

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<sup>26</sup> Eberhard D M and others, ‘[Ethnologue: Languages of the World](#)’ (Pakistan), 2022

<sup>27</sup> MRGI, ‘[Pakistan Shi’a and Hazaras](#)’, June 2018

<sup>28</sup> NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies...’, (page 3), February 2018. Available on request

<sup>29</sup> EUAA/EASO, ‘[Pakistan Country Overview](#)’ (page 101), August 2015

<sup>30</sup> DFAT, ‘[Country Information Report Pakistan](#)’ (paragraph 3.3), 25 January 2022

<sup>31</sup> CREID, ‘[The Multi-Layered Minority: Exploring the Intersection...](#)’ (page 60), 1 December 2020

<sup>32</sup> CREID, ‘[The Multi-Layered Minority: Exploring the Intersection...](#)’ (page 10), 1 December 2020

<sup>33</sup> CREID, ‘[The Multi-Layered Minority: Exploring the Intersection...](#)’ (page 11), 1 December 2020

<sup>34</sup> USSD, ‘[2021 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Pakistan](#)’ (section 6), 12 April 2022

<sup>35</sup> DFAT, ‘[Country Information Report Pakistan](#)’ (paragraph 3.7), 25 January 2022

## 4.5 Documentation

- 4.5.1 According to an HRCP report on a fact-finding mission conducted in August 2019 in Pakistan's Balochistan province: 'Obstacles to what should be tasks the average Pakistani citizen might take for granted – such as having passports and national identity cards issued – remain a key problem for the Shia Hazara community. Government authorities ask them to prove that they are indeed "Pakistanis" and that they have not "emigrated" from Afghanistan. The community believes this is indicative of systemic discrimination.'<sup>36</sup>
- 4.5.2 The DFAT 2022 report noted that 'Some Hazaras are documented Pakistani citizens or possess other forms of documentation that permit them to legally reside in Pakistan. Others are undocumented. Whether a Hazara is legally entitled to access public services and the like depends partly on their documented status..., although other factors may curtail access regardless, including the security situation for Hazaras in Pakistan.'<sup>37</sup>
- 4.5.3 According to the same report 'While most Hazaras in Pakistan can obtain formal identification such as Computerised National Identity Cards (CNICs), Hazaras claim National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) officials at times cause delays for Hazaras. Hazaras have suffered lethal attacks outside the NADRA office in Quetta while trying to obtain passports and CNICs. As a result, many Hazaras do not feel safe leaving the enclaves to apply for documentation.'<sup>38</sup>

See also Treatment by the state – [Discrimination and harassment](#) and [Access to, and treatment in, services](#).

For further information on CNICs see the [Country Information Note on Pakistan: Documentation](#).

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## 4.6 Political representation

- 4.6.1 The Hazara community in Balochistan is represented by the Hazara Democratic Party (HDP), who have 2 provincial assembly representatives<sup>39</sup>. The Tehreek-e-Suba Hazara, located in Abbottabad, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), is a registered political party with the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP)<sup>40</sup>, but holds no seats in the KP provincial assembly<sup>41</sup>. The Majlis Wahdat-e-Muslimeen (MWM) was reported to be the most prominent voice for the Shia community<sup>42</sup>, and holds 11 seats in the Balochistan assembly<sup>43</sup>. The DFAT 2022 report noted in regard to Shia Muslims (not specifically ethnic Hazara) that, 'They are well represented in parliament and regularly contest elections for mainstream political parties.'<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> HRCP, '[Balochistan Neglected Still](#)' (page 9), 2019

<sup>37</sup> DFAT, '[Country Information Report Pakistan](#)' (paragraph 3.4), 25 January 2022

<sup>38</sup> DFAT, '[Country Information Report Pakistan](#)' (paragraph 3.4), 25 January 2022

<sup>39</sup> Balochistan Provincial Assembly, '[Members](#)', no date

<sup>40</sup> ECP, '[List of Political Parties enlisted with ECP](#)', 7 January 2022

<sup>41</sup> Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, '[Members Directory – By Party](#)', no date

<sup>42</sup> News International, '[Survival is a luxury Hazaras in Karachi can afford](#)', 20 May 2015

<sup>43</sup> Balochistan Provincial Assembly, '[Members](#)', no date

<sup>44</sup> DFAT, '[Country Information Report Pakistan](#)' (paragraph 3.57), 25 January 2022



## 5. Treatment by the state

### 5.1 Discrimination and harassment

#### 5.1.1 The USSD human rights report for 2020 noted:

‘On March 25 [2020], the Balochistan chief secretary announced, that these two enclaves, Hazara-town and Marriabad, were to be sealed off in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, alleging that residents of the enclaves had contracted the virus in greater numbers. Although no Hazara government employee had at the time tested positive for COVID-19, according to media sources, he further furloughed all Balochistan government “staff ... belong(ing) to the Hazara tribe.”<sup>45</sup>

#### 5.1.2 On 31 March 2020, the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) Commissioner Anurima Bhargava stated ““We are troubled that government officials in Balochistan are scapegoating the already vulnerable and marginalized Hazara Shi’a community for this public health crisis... This virus does not recognize religion, ethnicity, or border and should not be used as an excuse to discriminate against a single community”.<sup>46</sup>

#### 5.1.3 On 17 April 2020, the IDS reported on discrimination faced by Hazaras after the spread of COVID-19 in Pakistan was largely blamed on Shia pilgrims returning from Iran, despite the fact that Hazaras comprised only a small proportion of both Shia and non-Shia returns from Iran:

‘In Balochistan, measures specifically targeting and restricting the movements of Hazara Shia began to be announced by a number of public authorities, prior to any formal overall lockdown. Notifications by the Inspector General of Police, Balochistan, sent members of Shia Hazara community “on leave to prevent the outbreak of covid-19” while the Water and Sanitation Authority (WASA) stated that “Employees belonging to Hazara tribe and residing in Marriabad and Hazara Town should be restricted to their areas”. Finally, the Chief Secretary, the most senior administrative authority in Balochistan, announced that Quetta will be cordoned off from rest of the province and Hazara localities within it will be cordoned off from the rest of Quetta.

‘There are also many cases of targeted discrimination which are not being publicly reported. Mohammad Aman, a prominent activist from the Hazara community, informed us that in some institutions and offices, employees belonging to the community were forced to go on leave, whilst their non-Shia colleagues continued to go to work.’<sup>47</sup>

#### 5.1.4 Dawn news, however, suggested that such targeting was in response to concern about increased risk, stating the Balochistan provincial apex committee’s decision to restrict movement and conduct testing ‘on a massive level’ in Hazara Town and Mariabad related to the large number of people

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<sup>45</sup> USSD, [‘2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Pakistan’](#) (section 6), 30 March 2021

<sup>46</sup> USCIRF, [‘USCIRF Troubled with Targeting of Hazara Shi’a in Pakistan amid...’](#), 31 March 2020

<sup>47</sup> IDS, [‘Pakistan’s Hazara Shia minority blamed for spread of Covid-19’](#), 17 April 2020

who had recently returned to these areas from Iran<sup>48</sup>. Hazaras were nevertheless targeted with hate speech on social media following detection of early cases of COVID-19 amongst members of the community in Balochistan<sup>49 50</sup>.

5.1.5 No recent reports of discrimination against Hazaras in relation to COVID-19 could be found amongst the sources consulted (see [Bibliography](#)).

See also [Anti-Shia Hazara sentiment](#) and [Healthcare](#).

5.1.6 The USSD human rights report for 2021 stated that ‘Community members also alleged government agencies discriminated against Hazaras in issuing identification cards and passports.’<sup>51</sup>

5.1.7 The CREID report noted that residents of Hazara town were ‘... harassed by security officials on the pretext of checking CNICs [Computerised National Identity Cards] more often than the inhabitants of Mari Abad. This is because Hazara Town is relatively newly developed and is home to some Afghan Hazara refugees.’<sup>52</sup> The report added ‘... there is a political and administrative campaign (structural discrimination) trying to prove that all Hazaras are refugees. Doing so decreases the legitimacy of Hazaras and hinders their access to legal documents, and they are looked at with suspicion and asked to prove that they are pre-1979 migrants.’<sup>53</sup>

5.1.8 The CREID report noted that:

‘... those who travelled outside Hazara areas shared that they had to face an extra layer of policing. Initially, when these check posts were installed around all the major gateways to Mari Abad and Hazara Town, the Frontier Corps (FC) guards (a paramilitary force) on duty were non-locals and were noted for inappropriate behaviour with people in general and women in particular. All Hazaras – male and female – need to pass through one of these check posts either to enter the city areas or to go home. With vehicles carrying women, the guards often take the opportunity to intimidate them by looking at them steadily and intently. Sometimes the women would be asked irrelevant questions just for the purpose of buying time to look at them. Most of the women would not talk about it owing to power imagery attached to the FC and some internalised it as if it is normal and acceptable to be harassed at check posts.’<sup>54</sup>

5.1.9 A participant in the CREID study implied that only holders of a Cantt (military cantonment) pass could enter the enclaves reserved for Hazaras. The participant indicated that the checks made by the Frontier Corps, who manned the checkpoints, were more strictly enforced for Hazaras. For example, when travelling to college, students, even when carrying a student

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<sup>48</sup> Dawn, ‘[Balochistan top body reviews post-lockdown situation](#)’, 26 March 2020

<sup>49</sup> USSD, ‘[2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Pakistan](#)’ (section 6), 30 March 2021

<sup>50</sup> HRCP, ‘[Citizens – COVID 19 – Government: Pakistan’s Response](#)’ (page 26), July 2020

<sup>51</sup> USSD, ‘[2021 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Pakistan](#)’ (section 6), 12 April 2022

<sup>52</sup> CREID, ‘[The Multi-Layered Minority: Exploring the Intersection...](#)’ (page 60), 1 December 2020

<sup>53</sup> CREID, ‘[The Multi-Layered Minority: Exploring the Intersection...](#)’ (page 45), 1 December 2020

<sup>54</sup> CREID, ‘[The Multi-Layered Minority: Exploring the Intersection...](#)’ (pages 20, 21), 1 December 2020

card, were individually checked on a daily basis whereas other vehicles appeared to pass through without incident<sup>55</sup>.

See also [Documentation](#) and [Provision of security](#).

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## 6. Societal treatment and attitudes

### 6.1 Community relations

#### 6.1.1 The 2018 NCHR report noted that:

‘Senator Kabeer Muhammad Shahi, a Baloch nationalist leader from National Party (NP), told NCHR that there is no issue between Hazara and Sunni community in Balochistan. We have lived peacefully and had marriage relations with each other. It is an international agenda to foment sectarian violence in Balochistan, he added. Similarly some members of civil society also said that, “the persecution of Hazara community is not a religious/sectarian issue, there is something else behind the killing of this community”.’<sup>56</sup>

#### 6.1.2 The CREID report stated that:

‘Hazaras have cordial relationships with the non-Hazara population of the city that are mainly either Bloch [sic] or Pashtun, and have social, business and work ties with them. However, there is an exceptionally low (almost zero) trend of intermarriage between Hazara and non-Hazara ethnic groups. Even if someone chooses to do so, it is disapproved of by the community. One of the main reasons for this is sectarian identity as the non-Hazara ethnic groups hail mainly from the Sunni sect.’<sup>57</sup>

#### 6.1.3 A Pashtun man, identified as 23 year-old Bilal Noorzai was killed in an attack in Hazara Town in May 2020<sup>58 59</sup>. The USSD 2020 human rights report stated ‘On May 29 [2020], a mob in Quetta’s Hazara town killed a young Pashtun man and seriously injured two others. Accounts varied regarding the cause of the attack. According to one version, the Pashtun men were harassing Hazara women, while another attributed the violence to a monetary dispute. Authorities arrested 12 suspects for their alleged involvement in the attack.’<sup>60</sup>

#### 6.1.4 According to the IDS, ‘In the days following the attack, Muhammad Hadi, a Hazara traffic police constable on duty, was allegedly beaten up by a Pashtun mob. In another incident, a Hazara teen, Syed Ismail, was shot dead by unknown assailants in an incident which police considers a case of tribal revenge.’<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> CREID, ‘[The Multi-Layered Minority: Exploring the Intersection...](#)’ (page 21), 1 December 2020

<sup>56</sup> NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies...’, (page 7), February 2018. Available on request

<sup>57</sup> CREID, ‘[The Multi-Layered Minority: Exploring the Intersection...](#)’ (page 11), 1 December 2020

<sup>58</sup> 24news, ‘[12 arrested over Hazara Town lynching in Quetta](#)’, 30 May 2020

<sup>59</sup> Naya Daur, ‘[Pashtun Man’s Brutal Murder Intensifies Sectarian Hatred In Quetta](#)’, 1 June 2020

<sup>60</sup> USSD, ‘[2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Pakistan](#)’ (section 6), 30 March 2021

<sup>61</sup> IDS, ‘[Hazara Women: The Lynching That We Didn’t Do](#)’, 9 September 2020

## 6.2 Anti-Shia Hazara sentiment

- 6.2.1 The USSD human rights report for 2020 noted that, after the outbreak of Covid-19, Hazaras, ‘... were harassed online by social media users who referred to the virus as the “Shia virus” and alleged that Hazara migrants from Iran had introduced the virus to the country.’<sup>62</sup>
- 6.2.2 In a report on the Pakistan government’s response to COVID-19 the HRCP described in further detail the situation and its effect on religious minorities: ‘... the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in Pakistan was that of a young man returning from pilgrimage to Iran. This was followed by a slew of cases stemming from the quarantine camp in Taftan – again, among pilgrims returning from Iran. Thus, the first wave of confirmed cases in Pakistan was concentrated disproportionately among pilgrims from Iran, who were almost all Shia Muslims. Many of those who travel to Iran overland through Balochistan are members of the Hazara community, which has been the target of a concerted hate campaign by multiple groups for some time. The detection of cases in the Shia community led to an outpouring of hate speech and discrimination against them. Social media sites such as Twitter were inundated with messages targeting the Shia community in general, and Hazaras in particular.’<sup>63</sup>
- 6.2.3 As noted in the CREID report: ‘The hate talk against Shia Hazara includes derogatory terms using animal names (culturally it is derogatory to call someone a dog or pig) and abusive words. Whenever there is mention of a woman, it has abusive sexual connotations. There is a huge trend of takfir, a practice of calling another sect heretic, in which Sunni extremist groups raise slogans against Shias and called them Kafir (infidel). Hazaras are also referred to as Kafir, which was recently visible in the anti-Hazara protest led by Pashtuns against the lynching of Noor [Bilal Noorzai, attacked and killed in Hazara Town in May 2020<sup>64 65</sup>], where they were also called “the most cursed creature”.’<sup>66</sup>
- 6.2.4 Media sources reported on the protests which followed Noorzai’s murder, where ‘protestors chanted slogans against the murderers’, demanding the arrest of the perpetrators<sup>67 68</sup>.
- 6.2.5 The IDS noted that the lynching of Bilal Noorzai ‘... was followed by an unprecedented torrent of hate speech against Hazara Shias. Videos from Pashtun social media users openly urging for tribal and sectarian revenge went viral.’<sup>69</sup> Naya Daur, a bi-lingual digital media platform, reported ‘Following the incident, social media was abuzz with hateful posts from both sides where users were promoting sectarianism and ethnic hatred. Some

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<sup>62</sup> USSD, ‘[2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Pakistan](#)’ (section 6), 30 March 2021

<sup>63</sup> HRCP, ‘[Citizens – COVID 19 – Government: Pakistan’s Response](#)’ (page 26), July 2020

<sup>64</sup> 24news, ‘[12 arrested over Hazara Town lynching in Quetta](#)’, 30 May 2020

<sup>65</sup> Naya Daur, ‘[Pashtun Man’s Brutal Murder Intensifies Sectarian Hatred In Quetta](#)’, 1 June 2020

<sup>66</sup> CREID, ‘[The Multi-Layered Minority: Exploring the Intersection...](#)’ (page 50), 1 December 2020

<sup>67</sup> Express Tribune, ‘[Lynching of youth sparks tensions in Quetta](#)’, 31 May 2020

<sup>68</sup> Balochistan Post, ‘[Civilians protest against the Quetta incident near the CM house](#)’, 30 May 2020

<sup>69</sup> IDS, ‘[Hazara Women: The Lynching That We Didn’t Do](#)’, 9 September 2020

generalised [sic] the Hazara community as evil and others accused the Pashtun community of playing the victim card.<sup>70</sup>

- 6.2.6 According to Digital Rights Monitor (DRM), the internet was shut down in Quetta for 2 days to quell the online hate speech<sup>71</sup>, though other sources said the reason for the shutdown was not known<sup>72 73</sup>.
- 6.2.7 The US Department of State's International Religious Freedom report for 2021 (USSD IRF 2021) noted that 'Sunni groups held large sectarian rallies in Peshawar and Karachi in September and October, with speakers warning religious minorities, including Shia and Ahmadi Muslims, of dire consequences if anything they said was deemed blasphemous against the Prophet Mohammed's companions.'<sup>74</sup>

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This section was updated on 24 June 2022

## 7. Security situation

### 7.1 Militant threats and attacks

#### 7.1.1 The USSD IRF 2021 noted:

'Armed sectarian groups, including Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), and the once-banned anti-Shia group Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP), which is connected to other organizations banned by the government as extremist, and groups designated as terrorist organizations by the United States and other governments, continued to stage attacks targeting Shia Muslims, including the predominantly Shia Hazara community.'<sup>75</sup>

#### 7.1.2 According to the SATP's datasheet (which didn't specify ethnicity), sectarian attacks decreased from 10 incidents in 2020 to 5 in 2021<sup>76</sup>.

#### 7.1.3 The USSD IRF 2021 cited the SATP data but noted 'Data on sectarian attacks varied because no standardized definition existed of what constituted a sectarian attack among reporting organizations. According to journalists, when reporting on attacks with a suspected sectarian motive, media often refrained from reporting the victim's sectarian identity in an effort to avoid stoking tension among sectarian groups.'<sup>77</sup>

#### 7.1.4 According to respondents in the NCHR study, published 2018, 'Most members of Hazara community were of the view that their persecution is not just sectarian. They explained that other Shia groups are living peacefully in Dera Murad Jamali and Jafarabad in Balochistan, which gives weight to the view that these killings are not religiously-motivated against Shias as only Hazaras are being targeted.'<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Naya Daur, '[Pashtun Man's Brutal Murder Intensifies Sectarian Hatred In Quetta](#)', 1 June 2020

<sup>71</sup> DRM, '[Mobile Internet suspended in Quetta amid protests to "stop the spread..."](#)', 2 June 2020

<sup>72</sup> The Balochistan Post, '[Mobile services suspiciously shut down in Quetta](#)', 2 June 2020

<sup>73</sup> DRF, '[Quetta Internet Shutdown](#)', 11 June 2020

<sup>74</sup> USSD, '[2021 Report on International Religious Freedom: Pakistan](#)' (Exec summary), 2 June 2022

<sup>75</sup> USSD, '[2021 Report on International Religious Freedom: Pakistan](#)' (Exec summary), 2 June 2022

<sup>76</sup> SATP, '[Incidents of Sectarian Violence Pakistan](#)', no date

<sup>77</sup> USSD, '[2021 Report on International Religious Freedom: Pakistan](#)' (Section III), 2 June 2022

<sup>78</sup> NCHR, 'Understanding the Agonies...', (page 6), February 2018. Available on request



7.1.5 The 2018 NCHR report further noted:

‘According to Hazara community members one of the reasons for their persecution could be associated with the socio-economic prosperity which they enjoy. They explained that Hazaras have built shops, markets, buildings and shopping malls in the hub of city and also progressed rapidly in Balochistan, in all spheres of life, economy, trade; education, sports etc as compared to other native communities. That is why land mafia could be involved in their killing, forcing them to abandon their running business and prime properties, leaving Quetta for other parts of the country. However, among non-Hazara respondents, no one identified the involvement of land Mafia in the killings of Hazaras in Quetta.

‘Some respondents from Hazara community have indicated the possibility that some persons of Hazara community could also be involved in the killings of their own community. Moreover, some non-Hazara respondents also endorsed this view. However, no credible information or evidence has been provided to substantiate the claim.’<sup>79</sup>

7.1.6 The 2018 NCHR report added ‘However, there were some respondents from Hazara community who declared their persecution as a sectarian issue. They were of the view that Hazara are affiliated to Shia sect and consequently to present day Iran, a declared Shia State.’<sup>80</sup>

7.1.7 The Home and Tribal affairs department of Balochistan told the NCHR that:

‘... terrorists infiltrating from Afghanistan are involved in Hazara killings. There have been fewer incidents of target killings of Hazaras since 2014 as compared to previous years as federal and provincial governments have taken measures to control the sectarian issue. The District Superintendent Police (DSP) legal Quetta, Najam-Us-Saqib also told NCHR that terrorists involved in Hazara killings come from Afghanistan. He further said that these terrorists hire native people for this purpose. According to him the violence against Hazaras has been minimized to a good extent.’<sup>81</sup>

7.1.8 The NCHR report noted that, according to Senator Usman Kakar, ‘... in Quetta Hazaras are not the only target, but Balochs, Pashtuns, and other communities are unsafe too. This view was supported by some of the Hazara representatives, who were of the view that they should focus on collective struggle for their emancipation from violence, rather than migrating place to place which adversely affects their identity.’<sup>82</sup>

7.1.9 The DFAT 2022 report noted that militant organisations including, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), ‘... a radical Sunni militant group that follows the Deobandi school of Islam’ and ‘seeks to eradicate Shi’a influence from Pakistan’<sup>83</sup>, and the terrorist group, Islamic State (IS) ‘... consider the Hazaras “infidels” who are “worthy of killing”.’<sup>84</sup>

<sup>79</sup> NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies...’, (page 7), February 2018. Available on request

<sup>80</sup> NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies...’, (page 7), February 2018. Available on request

<sup>81</sup> NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies...’, (pages 7 to 8), February 2018. Available on request

<sup>82</sup> NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies...’, (page 11), February 2018. Available on request

<sup>83</sup> DFAT, ‘[Country Information Report Pakistan](#)’ (paragraph 2.41), 25 January 2022

<sup>84</sup> DFAT, ‘[Country Information Report Pakistan](#)’ (paragraph 3.5), 25 January 2022

- 7.1.10 Data on the number of fatalities varied according to sources, depending on their method of recording – which was not always clear – and the timescales cited.
- 7.1.11 The 2018 NCHR report said that at least 2,000 Hazaras had been killed by militants since 1999<sup>85</sup>. The report documented 47 attacks (bomb blasts, suicide attacks and alleged targeted killings), which resulted in over 500 deaths between October 1999 and October 2017. Media sources were cited in some, but not all of NCHR’s recordings<sup>86</sup>. The Home Department of Balochistan told the NCHR that, “Since January 2012 to date [October 2017], 509 individuals, from Hazara community, have been killed and 627 injured in different incidents of sectarian violence, which mostly took place in District Quetta.”<sup>87</sup>
- 7.1.12 According to data provided by the South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP), between 2006 and 2021 there were 78 attacks against Hazaras in Balochistan resulting in 480 injuries and 383 deaths, nearly half of which occurred in 2013 when 198 people were killed. Attacks appeared to peak in 2012, when SATP recorded 42 incidents. Between 2015 and 2021, attacks averaged 4 per year<sup>88</sup>. For wider context of the general security situation in Balochistan, during the same period (2006 to 2021) the SATP recorded 2,574 incidents resulting in 3,969 civilian fatalities<sup>89</sup>.
- 7.1.13 The Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), a think tank which produces annual security reports mapping conflict and violence in Pakistan, based on field research and media publications<sup>90</sup>, recorded 81 Hazara casualties (24 deaths and 57 injured) from sectarian violence in Balochistan in 2019<sup>91</sup>, though did not provide any detail nor note whether these casualties were from a single or multiple attacks.
- 7.1.14 The Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), a research and advocacy think tank, security report for 2019, based on sources including newspapers, magazines, journals, field sources and screening of official records, cited ‘A major sectarian-related suicide attack targeted Hazara community members in Quetta causing significant casualties (21 deaths; 48 injured).’<sup>92</sup> (see [Security situation in Quetta](#)).
- 7.1.15 The CRSS, SATP and PIPS did not record any specific attacks against Hazaras in 2020<sup>93 94 95</sup>. However, the HRCP noted that there were 4 sectarian attacks against Hazaras in Balochistan during 2020<sup>96</sup>, though did not provide further details. The USSD IRF 2020 report stated, without

<sup>85</sup> NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies...’, (Chairman message), February 2018. Available on request

<sup>86</sup> NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies...’, (pages 18 to 24), February 2018. Available on request

<sup>87</sup> NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies...’, (page 5), February 2018. Available on request

<sup>88</sup> SATP, ‘[Civilian Data: Attacks on Hazaras Balochistan](#)’, no date

<sup>89</sup> SATP, ‘[Datashet Balochistan: Yearly fatalities](#)’, data till 21 June 2022

<sup>90</sup> CRSS, ‘[Annual Security Report – Project summary](#)’, no date

<sup>91</sup> CRSS, ‘[Annual Security Report 2019](#)’ (pages 30 to 31), 2020

<sup>92</sup> PIPS, ‘[Pakistan Security Report 2019](#)’ (page 25), 5 January 2020

<sup>93</sup> CRSS, ‘[Annual Security Report 2020](#)’, February 2021

<sup>94</sup> SATP, ‘[Civilian Data: Attacks on Hazaras Balochistan](#)’, no date

<sup>95</sup> PIPS, ‘[Pakistan Security Report 2020](#)’, 15 June 2021

<sup>96</sup> HRCP, ‘[State of Human Rights in 2020](#)’ (page 114), 2021

elaborating, that, 'Throughout the year, unidentified individuals targeted and killed Shia Muslims, including ethnic Hazaras...'<sup>97</sup>

See also [Societal treatment and attitudes](#).

- 7.1.16 Whilst not explicitly mentioning Hazaras, the USSD IRF 2020 report referred to ethnicity, noting 'There were multiple reports of targeted killings of Shia Muslims in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, although because religion and ethnicity were often closely related, it was difficult to categorize some incidents as being solely based on religious identity.'<sup>98</sup>
- 7.1.17 In 2021, at least 10 Hazara coal miners were killed in Balochistan after being kidnapped by IS<sup>99</sup> <sup>100</sup>. For further details, see [Security situation outside of Quetta](#).

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## 7.2 Security situation in Quetta

- 7.2.1 Referring to Hazaras living in Quetta, the MRGI stated in June 2018 'Because of their clearly identifiable features, it is dangerous for them to travel out of their neighbourhoods.' Commenting on the freedom of movement for Hazaras, that same source said that this was '... heavily restricted due to threat of attack' and that '... the Hazara community in Quetta has been effectively ghettoized to two predominantly Hazara areas, namely Hazara Town and Alamdar Road. Insecurity has in turn affected other areas of their everyday life, including access to education and employment.'<sup>101</sup>
- 7.2.2 The NCHR 2018 report noted:  
'The existing situation of Hazara community is precarious, who are facing enormous difficulties in exercising their fundamental human rights i.e. right to life, freedom of movement, right to higher education, and right to participate in the earning of their daily living and access to necessities of life. They are also having limited social opportunities due to fear of violence. During the field work, a Hazara student expressed that, "A Hazara cannot visit the whole city of Quetta without inviting danger to his life".<sup>24</sup> They feel threatened and targeted while going to Iran for pilgrimages. They also feel fearful to go to shopping centers and earn livelihood in Quetta as their movement is limited to a few safe areas of Quetta.'<sup>102</sup>
- 7.2.3 The same source added:  
'In the wake of security situation in Quetta, threat perception has reached to such a level amongst the Hazara community that according to some community members, Hazaras always try to hide their identity while travelling and dealing outside their communities. The Hazara respondents explained that while going outside their areas they have to conceal their identity by covering their heads. The bike riders usually wear helmet in order

<sup>97</sup> USSD, '[2020 Report on International Religious Freedom: Pakistan](#)' (Exec summary), 12 May 2021

<sup>98</sup> USSD, '[2020 Report on International Religious Freedom: Pakistan](#)' (section II), 12 May 2021

<sup>99</sup> Al Jazeera, '[Pakistani Hazara families refuse to bury dead after attack](#)', 4 January 2021

<sup>100</sup> PIPS, '[Pakistan Security Report 2021](#)' (page 60), 4 January 2022

<sup>101</sup> MRGI, '[Pakistan Shi'a and Hazaras](#)', June 2018

<sup>102</sup> NCHR, 'Understanding the Agonies...', (page 5), February 2018. Available on request



to conceal their identity instead of wearing helmet for safety. The unique facial features i.e. cheek bones, Sian eyes; nose and language make the Hazaras easily identifiable. They said that they cannot offer prayers in open areas, as their prayers differ from other sects which expose their identity. The respondents said sometimes they represent themselves as Uzbeks when asked, and omit words from their names to conceal their Shia Hazara identity. The respondents further added that Hazaras are known for cleanliness but the situation has forced them to such an extent that in order to conceal their identity and avoid attacks they intentionally keep their vehicles unclean while traveling in the city.’<sup>103</sup>

7.2.4 As noted in the HRCP report on a 2019 fact-finding mission:

‘In Quetta, the Shia Hazara community resides primarily on Alamdar Road and Hazara Town. Their movement outside these areas is managed by security forces, including the FC [Frontier Corps]. Their access to education and employment remains limited, their businesses have suffered and many other aspects of their lives have been affected severely. There is insufficient access to well-functioning hospitals and universities in these areas. A campus of Balochistan University was to have been set up on Alamdar Road, but there has been no progress in this regard. HDP [Hazara Democratic Party] leaders were of the view that this was because no land was available; they claimed that the authorities of the cantonment area, which is adjacent to Alamdar Road, should be approached and asked to provide land to make the prospect of a campus viable as soon as possible.’<sup>104</sup>

7.2.5 Reporting on an attack in April 2019, the English language news site, Dawn, stated that 9 Hazaras and 10 other civilians were killed by an improvised explosive device (IED) in Quetta’s Hazarganji market on 12 April 2019<sup>105</sup>. Reuters stated that 8 Hazaras died, adding that ‘The attack came after a lull of at least a year in violence against the mainly Shi’ite Hazara minority in the province, though there have been isolated shootings. The blast took place at Hazar Ganji, a fruit and vegetable market on the outskirts of Quetta.’<sup>106</sup> The Global Terrorism Database (GTD), which provides information on terrorist events based on reports from a variety of open media sources<sup>107</sup>, stated ‘In addition to the bomber, at least 20 people, including a Frontier Corps (FC) member, were killed and 48 people were injured in the blast.’<sup>108</sup>

7.2.6 According to Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Abdul Razzaq Cheema, the market blast targeted the Hazara community. However, Home Minister Ziaullah Langove believed no specific community was targeted<sup>109</sup>. Langove later said that the explosion stemmed from a suicide attack, not an IED<sup>110</sup>. Both the Islamic State and the Tehrik-i-Taliban (TTP) separately claimed

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<sup>103</sup> NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies...’, (page 10), February 2018. Available on request

<sup>104</sup> HRCP, ‘[Balochistan Neglected Still](#)’ (page 8), 2019

<sup>105</sup> Dawn, ‘[20 killed, 48 injured in attack targeting Hazara community in Quetta](#)’, 12 April 2019

<sup>106</sup> Reuters, ‘[Pakistan market suicide bombing kills 18, half of them minority Hazaras](#)’, 12 April 2019

<sup>107</sup> GTD, ‘[Overview of the GTD](#)’, no date

<sup>108</sup> GTD, ‘[GTD ID: 201904120002](#)’, 12 April 2019

<sup>109</sup> Dawn, ‘[20 killed, 48 injured in attack targeting Hazara community in Quetta](#)’, 12 April 2019

<sup>110</sup> Reuters, ‘[Pakistan market suicide bombing kills 18, half of them minority Hazaras](#)’, 12 April 2019

responsibility for the attack<sup>111</sup>, although, according to Dawn news, ‘a little known faction of the Taliban had claimed responsibility for the blast, saying it collaborated with Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ).’<sup>112</sup> The GTD noted ‘A TTP spokesperson later denied any involvement in the incident.’<sup>113</sup>

- 7.2.7 In August 2019, The Express Tribune reported that a blast outside a shoe market on Mission Road, Quetta, killed one Hazara and injured 13 others, most of whom were ethnic Hazaras, according to Quetta’s Detective Inspector General (DIG)<sup>114</sup>. The News International noted that the explosion killed 2 and injured another 10<sup>115</sup>. Dawn news noted that most of the shops around the area that was hit were owned by Hazaras<sup>116</sup>. However, according to The Express Tribune, the DIG stated “‘I don’t think Hazara community has been targeted because many people belonging to other communities were also among the injured.’”<sup>117</sup> At the time the incident was reported, no group had claimed responsibility<sup>118 119</sup>.
- 7.2.8 Security force personnel were hit by a suicide bomber on 5 September 2021 near an FC check point on Quetta-Mustang Road, as they gathered to head to Hazarganji market to provide security to Hazara vendors. The TTP claimed responsibility<sup>120</sup>.

See also [Provision of security](#).

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### 7.3 Security situation outside of Quetta

- 7.3.1 Dawn reported on the deaths of 2 Hazaras in an explosion in Balochistan’s Ziarat district in June 2019. The blast, which targeted their vehicle, also injured 7 other Hazaras. The group, from Quetta, were visiting Ziarat for sightseeing<sup>121</sup>. The GTD reported that the explosive device detonated in Ziarat and was attached to the vehicle carrying Hazara civilians, killing 3 and injuring 4 others<sup>122</sup>.
- 7.3.2 Reporting on an attack against Hazara miners in January 2021, Al Jazeera noted that ‘Unidentified gunmen stormed a coal mine near the town of Mach, about 50km east of Quetta, on [2 January], pulling out ethnic Hazaras... from their residential quarters.’ Although earlier reports stated that the death toll was 11, a senior security official told Al Jazeera that 10 Hazaras were killed, after they were marched to nearby mountains and shot<sup>123</sup>. According to the

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<sup>111</sup> GTD, ‘[GTD ID: 201904120002](#)’, 12 April 2019

<sup>112</sup> Dawn, ‘[Islamic State says it was behind Quetta’s Hazarganji market bombing](#)’, 13 April 2019

<sup>113</sup> GTD, ‘[GTD ID: 201904120002](#)’, 12 April 2019

<sup>114</sup> Express Tribune, ‘[Blast hits Hazara community’s shoe market in Quetta](#)’, 6 August 2019

<sup>115</sup> The News International, ‘[Quetta blast kills two, leaves 10 injured](#)’, 6 August 2019

<sup>116</sup> Dawn, ‘[One killed, 10 injured in blast on Quetta’s Mission Road](#)’, 6 August 2019

<sup>117</sup> Express Tribune, ‘[Blast hits Hazara community’s shoe market in Quetta](#)’, 6 August 2019

<sup>118</sup> Express Tribune, ‘[Blast hits Hazara community’s shoe market in Quetta](#)’, 6 August 2019

<sup>119</sup> The News International, ‘[Quetta blast kills two, leaves 10 injured](#)’, 6 August 2019

<sup>120</sup> PIPS, ‘[Pakistan Security Report 2021](#)’ (page 60), 4 January 2022

<sup>121</sup> Dawn, ‘[2 Hazara tourists from Quetta killed in blast in Balochistan’s Ziarat](#)’, 8 June 2019

<sup>122</sup> GTD, ‘[GTD ID: 201906080001](#)’, 7 June 2019

<sup>123</sup> Al Jazeera, ‘[Pakistani Hazara families refuse to bury dead after attack](#)’, 4 January 2021

think tank, the Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), 4 other miners were injured in the attack, for which IS claimed responsibility<sup>124</sup>.

- 7.3.3 The DFAT 2022 report noted ‘While there have been no attacks outside Balochistan since 2014, Hazaras have previously been targeted in Karachi, Peshawar and elsewhere. Militant groups retain the intent and capacity to attack Hazaras throughout Pakistan.’<sup>125</sup>
- 7.3.4 The same source said, ‘Large urban centres such as Karachi, Islamabad and Lahore have ethnically and religiously diverse populations, and offer some anonymity for people fleeing violence by non-state actors... Hazaras... avoid living in enclaves to reduce the risk of being targeted.’<sup>126</sup>

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This section was updated on 24 June 2022

## 8. State protection

### 8.1 Provision of security

#### 8.1.1 The 2018 NCHR report noted:

‘According to Home Department of Balochistan, special measures for the security of Hazara community have been ensured including:

‘(1) 19 platoons of FC [Frontier Corps] personnels [sic] deployed for the security of Hazara community living in Marri Abad and Hazara town.

‘(2) Permanent check posts established at the entry/ exit points of the areas where Hazara community lives.

‘(3) Permanent FC/Police patrolling frequent routes where Hazara community moves from Hazara town to Marri Abad and back via Spini road.

‘(4) 410 FC personnel, 310 Police personnel, 393 Levies personnel, 126 Vehicles, 16 Jamming vehicles, and 7 Levies APCs, provided on permanent basis for the safe movement of Shia Zaireen enroute from Quetta to Taftan and back.

‘(5) Permanent FC/ Police escorting Hazara shopkeepers proceeding to markets for purchase of goods/service.’<sup>127</sup>

#### 8.1.2 The 2018 NCHR report noted that ‘The [Hazara] community also questioned the measures taken by the Provincial Government for their protection; instead of giving them protection, L.E.As [law enforcement agencies] are often engaged in unnecessary searching and checking of Hazaras themselves at various check posts.’<sup>128</sup>

#### 8.1.3 The NCHR were told in a brief statement by Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed Chairman Parliamentary Committee on China-Pakistan Economic

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<sup>124</sup> CRSS, ‘[Annual Security Report 2021](#)’ (page 30), 2022

<sup>125</sup> DFAT, ‘[Country Information Report Pakistan](#)’ (paragraph 3.5), 25 January 2022

<sup>126</sup> DFAT, ‘[Country Information Report Pakistan](#)’ (paragraph 5.24), 25 January 2022

<sup>127</sup> NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies...’, (pages 5 to 6), February 2018. Available on request

<sup>128</sup> NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies...’, (page 6), February 2018. Available on request

Corridor (CPEC), in regard to the killings of Hazara, that ‘... it is ethnic cleansing of Hazara community and we have failed to protect them.’<sup>129</sup>

8.1.4 The USSD IRF 2021 report noted that:

‘The government continued to implement its National Action Plan against terrorism, by countering sectarian hate speech and extremism and by conducting military and law enforcement operations against violent groups... Civil society groups continued to express concerns about the safety of religious minorities. Multiple civil society groups and faith community leaders stated the government had increased efforts to provide enhanced security at religious minority places of worship.’<sup>130</sup>

8.1.5 According to the USSD human rights report for 2021 ‘Hazara contacts reported increased surveillance by authorities due to the arrival of Hazaras from Afghanistan following the August 2021 Taliban takeover... Authorities provided enhanced security for Shia religious processions but confined the public observances to the Hazara enclaves.’<sup>131</sup> The CREID report noted that ‘heavy security arranged by the state’ was provided during religious processions for Ashura, Chehlum and Yom-e-Ali<sup>132</sup>.

8.1.6 The Austrian Centre for Country of Origin & Asylum Research and Documentation (ACCORD) noted in a report on religious minorities in Pakistan, based on a range of sources and published in March 2021:

‘Referring to the situation of Hazaras, HRCP in June 2020 provides the following information on state protection available:

“The plight of Quetta’s Hazara community continued in 2019, though with lesser intensity than previous years, with one major attack against the distinct Shia community. [...] The relentless attacks on the community and the state’s failure to stem them has forced the majority of Hazaras into two enclaves inside the provincial capital, from where they mostly move out under the protection of law enforcement agencies in a convoy just to get groceries. It was members of this convoy that became the target of a bomb attack in April 2019, killing 20 people and injuring over 40, including several Hazaras. Following the attack in Hazar Ganji’s fruit and vegetable market, members of the beleaguered community staged a sit-in against the government for failing to protect them despite repeated attacks and called for the true implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP). After several days of protest, Prime Minister Imran Khan visited the protesters, assuring them of justice and NAP’s complete implementation”...’<sup>133</sup>

8.1.7 The same report noted:

‘France 24 reports in January 2021 that after an attack claimed by the Islamic State group in which eleven coal miners from the Hazara community were killed, up to 2,500 Hazara blocked a road on the outskirts of Quetta refusing to bury the dead and demanding better protection. France 24 quotes an activist as saying that “[t]his is systematic ethnic cleansing of

<sup>129</sup> NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies...’, (page 8), February 2018. Available on request

<sup>130</sup> USSD, ‘[2021 Report on International Religious Freedom: Pakistan](#)’ (Exec summary), 2 June 2022

<sup>131</sup> USSD, ‘[2021 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Pakistan](#)’ (section 6), 12 April 2022

<sup>132</sup> CREID, ‘[The Multi-Layered Minority: Exploring the Intersection...](#)’ (page 42), 1 December 2020

<sup>133</sup> ACCORD, ‘[Pakistan: Religious minorities](#)’ (page 101), March 2021

Hazaras in Balochistan and our security forces are behaving like lame ducks, doing nothing”...’

- 8.1.8 On 7 January 2021 it was reported on the Balochistan government website that ‘The Government of Balochistan has decided in principle to conduct an inquiry into the alleged negligence of all the concerned departments committed in the Mach tragedy. In this regard, the Chief Minister has directed to constitute Joint Investigation Team (JIT) to probe into the Mach incident.’<sup>134</sup>
- 8.1.9 Al Jazeera stated in January 2021 that ‘Both enclaves [Hazara Town and Alamdar Road] are surrounded by high walls and barbed wire, with security personnel heavily restricting entry to non-Hazaras. The government says it can guarantee members of the community’s safety within the walls of the enclave, but that they remain at risk if they leave.’<sup>135</sup>
- 8.1.10 The Government of Pakistan’s (GoP) February 2022 report to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UNCERD), noted: ‘With respect to the Hazara communities, the Government has held high-level meetings with all relevant stakeholders in order to provide protection to this community. In January 2021, PKR 2.5 million [approximately £9,900<sup>136</sup>] was paid to each victim family as compensation for the killing of 11 coal miners in Mach, Balochistan. Judicial probes are carried out immediately as a matter of state policy if any member of religious minority has his or her rights infringed. Moreover, special measures taken by the Home Department of Balochistan for the Hazara community include the deployment of 19 platoons of security personnel for the security of Hazara community living in Marri Abad and Hazara town, establishment of permanent check posts at the entry/exit points of areas where Hazara community lives, permanent police escorting of Hazara shopkeepers proceeding to markets for purchase of goods/services etc.’<sup>137</sup>
- 8.1.11 According to the GoP, ‘In case of any incident of violence against [the] Hazara community, action is taken by the law enforcement institutions under the law of land... All cases or incidents and violence against ... Hazaras... are being investigated and perpetrators are held accountable.’<sup>138</sup>
- 8.1.12 In June 2021, the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) Balochistan conducted an operation in Quetta to arrest IS terrorist Fazal ur Rehman, alias Shaan, but he was killed in the ensuing fire exchange. Shaan was allegedly directly involved in the killing of Hazara coal miners in January 2021<sup>139</sup>.
- 8.1.13 See also [Security situation](#) and the [Country Policy and Information Note on Pakistan: Actors of protection](#), for information on the state criminal justice system generally.

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<sup>134</sup> Government of Balochistan, ‘[High level meeting regarding law & order situation](#)’, 7 January 2021

<sup>135</sup> Al Jazeera, ‘[Pakistani Hazara families refuse to bury dead after attack](#)’, 4 January 2021

<sup>136</sup> Xe.com, ‘[2,500,000 PKR to GBP - Convert Pakistani Rupees to British Pounds](#)’, as at 25 May 2022

<sup>137</sup> GoP, ‘[Combined twenty-fourth to twenty-sixth periodic...](#)’ (paragraph 56), 10 February 2022

<sup>138</sup> GoP, ‘[Combined twenty-fourth to twenty-sixth periodic...](#)’ (paragraph 61), 10 February 2022

<sup>139</sup> The News International, ‘[Terrorist wanted in Machh massacre killed](#)’, 23 June 2021



## 9. Access to, and treatment in, services

### 9.1 Education

9.1.1 The CREID report indicated that ‘Quality of and access to education both physically and financially, and security issues are some of the main challenges related to education mentioned by the participants for Shia Hazaras, particularly for women in Quetta. Teenage participants who were students complained of discriminatory attitudes in educational institutes both by non-Hazara and non-Shia teachers and students.’<sup>140</sup>

9.1.2 The CREID report indicated that access to higher education was difficult in Quetta due to the security situation, but also noted that the quality of education was lower than other regions, ‘Besides security, one of the reasons behind the significant presence of Hazaras in urban centres such as Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad is the unavailability of quality education in Quetta.’<sup>141</sup> The report added:

‘... there are only three main universities in Quetta. All three of them have been made inaccessible for Hazaras as the student buses for the Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUIITEMS) and Sardar Bahadur Khan Women’s University (SBK) were attacked, and the University of Balochistan is considered a no-go zone for them as many people from their community have been attacked and killed there by terrorists... During the discussion some of the participants estimated that around 80–90 per cent of higher education students dropped out of universities after university buses carrying mostly Hazara students were bombed in 2012 and 2013.’<sup>142</sup>

9.1.3 As noted in the DFAT 2022 report, ‘Schools exist within the enclaves, but there is little opportunity for higher education. Many Hazara students have abandoned the hope of higher education due to the risk of travelling. A small number of wealthier Hazaras send their children to study at universities in Lahore or Islamabad, where they reportedly feel safer.’<sup>143</sup>

9.1.4 Due to security threats in Quetta, Hazara women have faced greater restrictions on accessing education as their movement has been curtailed by family members, as noted in the CREID report, which added that the law and order situation made it ‘... extremely difficult for Hazara girls to get an education outside of their Hazara-populated towns.’<sup>144</sup> One participant in the CREID study stated that mobility was restricted for both men and women due to the ‘unfavourable security situation.’<sup>145</sup>

9.1.5 Participants in the CREID study also stated that Hazara students faced discrimination by non-Hazara teachers, staff and students, particularly at

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<sup>140</sup> CREID, [‘The Multi-Layered Minority: Exploring the Intersection...’](#) (page 18), 1 December 2020

<sup>141</sup> CREID, [‘The Multi-Layered Minority: Exploring the Intersection...’](#) (page 19), 1 December 2020

<sup>142</sup> CREID, [‘The Multi-Layered Minority: Exploring the Intersection...’](#) (page 19, 20), 1 December 2020

<sup>143</sup> DFAT, [‘Country Information Report Pakistan’](#) (paragraph 3.8), 25 January 2022

<sup>144</sup> CREID, [‘The Multi-Layered Minority: Exploring the Intersection...’](#) (page 20), 1 December 2020

<sup>145</sup> CREID, [‘The Multi-Layered Minority: Exploring the Intersection...’](#) (page 20), 1 December 2020

university. They said that they were not given opportunities for growth and development and faced discrimination on sectarian grounds, for instance, being called ‘kafir’ (infidels)<sup>146</sup>.

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## 9.2 Employment

### 9.2.1 The CREID report noted:

‘The overall security situation has severely affected the economic conditions of the community permanently. Although both men and women experience lack of job opportunities due to restriction on mobility, security risk, stereotypes against the community, and because the presence of Hazaras places non-Hazaras at risk of violence. Private sector organisations either released or denied hiring Hazaras as they believed that their office or vehicles could be targeted if a Hazara was there...’<sup>147</sup>

### 9.2.2 The CREID report noted that Hazara women faced greater challenges in seeking employment, not least from their own community due to prevailing patriarchal attitudes and cultural norms:

‘For Hazara women, the challenges are double as they also face discrimination at the hands of the community in the form of moral policing and tribal honour that prevents them from exploring job and work opportunities. This also encompasses searching for jobs, going to work, and interaction with the non-Hazara population...’

‘The idea of shame and honour associated with women and the stereotype that a working woman brings shame to the family’s name is also something quite common in the community that restricts women from becoming financially independent and pushes them towards further marginalisation.’<sup>148</sup>

### 9.2.3 The same source noted ‘In general, there are fewer job opportunities in Quetta. But for poor Shia Hazara men and women it is even more difficult as they cannot commute freely to all parts of the city nor will people hire them due to security risks, leading to economic havoc for the community.’<sup>149</sup>

### 9.2.4 According to the DFAT report:

‘Many Hazaras in Quetta provide services to their own communities within the enclaves; others move to other cities across Pakistan to work. Whether a Hazara can relocate strongly depends on their personal resources and family connections. In the past Hazaras were often employed in the military and public service, but few now apply for these jobs due to discrimination and fear of attacks. Since the IS attack in Mach in January 2021, Hazaras are reportedly too scared to work in the Baloch mining industry, previously an important source of income. High rates of unemployment and limited prospects have reportedly led to a sense of hopelessness among Hazara youth in Quetta.’<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> CREID, [‘The Multi-Layered Minority: Exploring the ...’](#) (pages 21 to 23), 1 December 2020

<sup>147</sup> CREID, [‘The Multi-Layered Minority: Exploring the Intersection...’](#) (page 29), 1 December 2020

<sup>148</sup> CREID, [‘The Multi-Layered Minority: Exploring the...’](#) (pages 29 to 31), 1 December 2020

<sup>149</sup> CREID, [‘The Multi-Layered Minority: Exploring the Intersection...’](#) (page 35), 1 December 2020

<sup>150</sup> DFAT, [‘Country Information Report Pakistan’](#) (paragraph 3.9), 25 January 2022

See [Security situation outside of Quetta](#) for information on the attack on miners in Mach.

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### 9.3 Healthcare

- 9.3.1 The 2018 NCHR report noted that, according to Hazara community members, the 2 main government hospitals – Bolan Medical Complex and Civil Hospital – were located in unsafe areas and people feared travelling there for treatment. The private hospitals in Hazara areas were often unaffordable. The report stated that Hazaras ‘... have limited access to healthcare facilities, as government hospitals are situated outside the areas in which they reside.’<sup>151</sup>
- 9.3.2 On 9 July 2020, the IDS reported on the discrimination faced by Hazaras attempting to access healthcare facilities. One Hazara women explained she had to go for a pregnancy-related ultrasound scan ‘in disguise’ and with the help of a non-Hazara woman to speak on her behalf. The gynaecologist who referred her for the scan said he had been told not to make such referrals to the scan doctor so he told his Hazara patients to disguise themselves<sup>152</sup>.
- 9.3.3 Sources reported in 2020 that Hazaras faced discrimination during the COVID-19 pandemic after they were blamed by some for bringing the virus into Pakistan<sup>153 154</sup>.
- 9.3.4 The IDS gave examples of 2 Hazara men who, in April 2020, sought hospital treatment for non-Covid-related reasons but were denied. One of the men said he was told by a doctor at the Civil Hospital in Quetta that they were not allowed to treat patients from Mariabad. In response, ‘... the Director of Medical Services of the Civil Hospital, Dr. Javed Akhtar, denied any formal discrimination. “There has been no official or otherwise [discriminatory] statement by the administration and the hospital is fully functional and open to all. There’s a general fear regarding the outbreak and local doctors are not immune to that fear. But someone might have said something in their personal capacity”.’<sup>155</sup>
- 9.3.5 According to the DFAT 2022 report, ‘Those [Hazaras] who can afford to travel to Karachi for medical treatment do so, while others must attend Quetta hospitals outside the enclaves, where they have been attacked in the past.’<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies...’, (pages 9 to 10), February 2018. Available on request

<sup>152</sup> IDS, [“Go in disguise to receive medical treatment”- religious discrimination in...](#), 9 July 2020

<sup>153</sup> USSD, [‘2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Pakistan’](#) (section 6), 30 March 2021

<sup>154</sup> IDS, [‘Pakistan’s Hazara Shia minority blamed for spread of Covid-19’](#), 17 April 2020

<sup>155</sup> IDS, [“Go in disguise to receive medical treatment”- religious discrimination in...](#), 9 July 2020

<sup>156</sup> DFAT, [‘Country Information Report Pakistan’](#) (paragraph 3.7), 25 January 2022



# Terms of Reference

A 'Terms of Reference' (ToR) is a broad outline of what the CPIN seeks to cover. They form the basis for the [country information section](#). The Home Office's Country Policy and Information Team uses some standardised ToR, depending on the subject, and these are then adapted depending on the country concerned.

For this particular CPIN, the following topics were identified prior to drafting as relevant and on which research was undertaken:

- Legal rights
- The Hazara community in Pakistan
  - Demography – population distribution, religion
  - Identifying characteristics – language, features
  - Political representation
- Security situation
  - Hazaras living outside of Quetta
  - Hazaras living in Quetta
  - Attacks and casualties
  - Motivation
  - Road safety
- State response, treatment
  - Provision of security and redress
  - Discrimination and harassment
- Societal treatment and attitudes
  - Community relations
  - Anti-Hazara sentiment
- Access to and treatment in services,
  - Employment and education
  - Health

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# Version control

## Clearance

Below is information on when this note was cleared:

- version **3.0**
- valid from **15 July 2022**

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### **Official – sensitive: Start of section**

The information on this page has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home Office use.

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### **Official – sensitive: End of section**

## Changes from last version of this note

Updated country information and assessment.

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