



Briefing Notes Summary

Group 62 – Information Centre for Asylum and Migration

India – January to June 2025

30 June 2025

13 January 2025

Security situation in Chhattisgarh

On 06.01.25, at least 8 security officers and their driver were killed in Bijapur district in the state of Chhattisgarh when a roadside bomb planted by Maoist rebels hit their vehicle. Earlier, four rebels and a soldier were killed in an operation carried out against the insurgents on 04.01.25. The Maoist rebels, also known as Naxalites after the district where their armed campaign began in 1967, were inspired by the Chinese revolutionary leader Mao Zedong. According to its own sources, the Indian government wants to crack down on the armed rebellion by the beginning of 2026 and has stepped up its efforts to end the long-standing armed conflict. According to official figures, a total of 287 suspected rebels were killed and around 1,000 were arrested in 2024; 837 are said to have surrendered.¹

20 January 2025

Operations against Maoist rebels in Chhattisgarh

Since 15.01.25, at least 3,000 Indian security forces have stepped up efforts to quell the Maoist rebellion by the so-called Naxalites in the state of Chhattisgarh. On 16.01.25, twelve, according to other reports 17, rebels were killed during an operation carried out in Bijapur. In Sukma district, at least three Maoist rebels, including an explosives expert suspected of being responsible for the deaths of several security personnel, were killed in another operation carried out a week earlier.²

10 February 2025

Chhattisgarh: military operations against Maoist rebels

On 09.02.25, more than two dozen suspected Maoist rebels were killed in an operation carried out by Indian security forces in the Indravati region in the central Indian state of Chhattisgarh. Two police officials were also killed in the firefight. The rebels, who are also known as Naxalites, are inspired by Mao Zedong and have been waging a guerrilla

war against the government for decades, particularly in central and eastern India, leading to regular clashes and casualties on both sides.³

24 February 2025

Jammu and Kashmir: tensions between the population and Indian security forces

The suicide of a Muslim man from Kathua district in the Indian-administered Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir sparked tension between the population and the Indian security forces in the region. On 05.02.25, after being released from police custody, the man recorded a video message in which he announced that he would take his own life so that no one else in the region would be subjected to "torture" by the police, who he said suspected him of being "associated with militants", the term used by the authorities for rebels fighting against Indian control of the region, which is also claimed by Pakistan. On 07.02.25, the Indian authorities stated that the man had only been interrogated for having "suspicious contacts in Pakistan and other countries" and denied that he had been tortured or physically abused while in custody.

A day after the man's suicide, a lorry driver from Sopore district in north Kashmir was also killed by the army. According to military sources, the man had driven through a security checkpoint on the Srinagar-Baramulla motorway and failed to stop despite repeated warnings. The vehicle was then chased for more than 20 kilometres, and the driver was finally shot dead.

Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Omar Abdullah – who was elected in the region's first general elections to be held in a decade in October 2024 – called the latest incidents "highly regrettable" and said he had discussed the matter with the central government in New Delhi and "insisted that both incidents be investigated in a timely and transparent manner". In Kashmir, however, the powers the regional chief minister has over the police have been drastically limited since the autonomous status of Jammu and Kashmir was revoked in 2019, as they are directly controlled by the Indian federal government. The spokesperson for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party in Kashmir said his party wants to form a high-level committee to investigate the deaths of the two civilians.

On 03.02.25, more than 500 Kashmiris were also arrested for the killing of a retired army officer. He was allegedly shot dead by rebels, and his wife and niece were injured in the attack in Kulgam in southern Kashmir. Following the killing, authorities arrested young men from several districts in south Kashmir, most of whom had previously been accused of participating in anti-government protests or armed insurgency. Photos of vehicles and people being searched by the armed forces at various checkpoints went viral on social media.⁴

28 April 2025

Reactions after attack on group of tourists in Kashmir

India is blaming Pakistan for the attack on a group of tourists in the Indian-administered part of Kashmir near Pahalgam in Anantnag district, 50 km southeast of the regional capital Srinagar, on 22.04.25. 26 people were killed in the attack, 24 of them Indian nationals, one from Nepal and a local tour guide. More than one dozen more were injured. It was the most serious attack on civilians for years in the region, which has been claimed by both countries. According to the Indian government, the attack had cross-border connections to Pakistan, but no proof of this has been presented. The historically-tense diplomatic relations between the two countries were further exacerbated by the incident. India suspended its participation in an important water-sharing agreement. Furthermore, diplomatic staff in the Pakistani High Commission in New Delhi have been called on to leave the country, whilst Indian High Commission staff have been pulled back from Pakistan. Both countries also revoked visas that had already been issued to one another's nationals and called on them to leave the country.

On 23.04.25, the Indian military launched a search for the alleged offenders. Tens of thousands of additional security forces spread throughout the region and set up checkpoints. They searched vehicles, used helicopters to search wooded mountains, and in some areas called in former militants for questioning in police stations. Large numbers of shops were closed.

The Indian investigation authorities called the attack a “terrorist attack”, and blamed it on militant separatists who are fighting against Indian rule. In social media, the militant group “The Resistance Front”, alleged to be an offshoot of the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba, claimed responsibility for the attack, stating that the Indian authorities had settled more than 85,000 Indian nationals in the region. It went on to claim that the individuals attacked had not been ordinary tourists, but had links to Indian security authorities. This information could not be independently verified.

The government of the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir stated in early April that 83,742 Indian nationals had been given the right to acquire land and property in Kashmir in the last two years. Only locals were permitted to do so until the Indian-administered part of the region was stripped of its special semi-autonomous status in 2019.⁵

05 May 2025

Tense bilateral relations

Bilateral relations between the two nuclear-armed powers India and Pakistan remain tense following the attack on 22.04.25 in Indian-administered Kashmir (cf. BN of 28.04.25). Both sides regularly exchanged fire along the demarcation line (Line of Control) running through Kashmir. The Pakistani government reported on 30.04.25 that it had received intelligence information regarding an immanent Indian military strike, and carried out a missile test. The international community is calling for de-escalation. India has imposed an import ban on goods from Pakistan. According to media reports, the tensions have also led to press censorship being stepped up. By exerting a targeted influence, authorities in both countries were trying to present the media reporting on the attack in such a way that it fits the respective government narrative. In a letter, India furthermore also criticised Western news agencies for the terms they used when characterising the attackers, and blocked Pakistani mainstream media and video channels in social media. According to Reporters without Frontiers, the situation with regard to the freedom of the press is already concerning in both countries, as emerges from the Global Press Freedom Index 2025 published on 02.05.25.⁶

12 May 2025

Ceasefire agreed on; situation in Pakistani-administrated Kashmir

On 10.05.25, India and Pakistan agreed on a US-mediated ceasefire, which so far seems to be largely holding. Victory celebrations were held in both countries on 11.05.25. Bilateral relations had previously been extremely tense after a deadly 22.04.25 attack on a group of tourists in Indian-administered Kashmir and the ensuing military escalation (cf. BN of 05.05.25 and 28.04.25). Pakistan reported targeted airstrikes by the Indian military in the period from 06.05. to 08.05.25, including in Kotli, Bahawalpur, Muridke, Bagh and Muzaffarabad. More than thirty Pakistani civilians had been killed in the strikes, according to Pakistani media reports, including 16 in Muridke and Bahawalpur. Dozens more people had also been injured. Pakistani media reported downing five Indian fighter jets. There were also reports of ongoing exchanges of fire up to 09.05.25 along the demarcation line (line of control) that runs through Kashmir.

Six civilians were killed by Indian shelling in Pakistani-administered Kashmir (Azad Kashmir) in the night of 08.-09.05.25, and homes, schools and hospitals damaged. According to official sources, the shelling had displaced 1,186 families internally. The state of emergency continues to apply in the districts along the line of control. Educational facilities remain closed in the entire region for the time being. Shelling along the line of control has ceased since 11.05.25.⁷

19 May 2025

Military operations in the Naxalite belt

On 14.05.25, the Indian union home minister posted on social media that security forces had killed 31 fighters as

part of several-week-long operations against Maoist rebels in the Karreguttalu Hills, which are situated on the border between the states of Chhattisgarh and Telangana.

The Karreguttalu Hills had been regarded as the unified headquarters of several organisations of the Maoist-inspired Naxalites, where rebels were provided with weapons and strategic training. They refer to their rebellion as defence of the rights of the tribal people living in the region. According to government sources, Indian soldiers had killed at least 400 rebels since 2024. According to a news release by the Indian foreign office, a total of 718 Naxalites had surrendered in the first four months of 2025.⁸

26 May 2025

Indus Waters Treaty suspended

Despite the ceasefire recently agreed with Pakistan, India is holding on to the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty after the attack on an Indian tourist group in Indian-administrated Kashmir (cf. BN of 12.05.25). The Indus is the longest river in south Asia, at more than 3,000 kilometres. The Pakistani government regards any taking of water from the Indus as an “act of war”, since the river is the most important source of water for most Pakistani farms as well as hydroelectric power stations.⁹

30 June 2025

Census 2026: India plans first caste census since colonial era

According to recent media reports, caste is to be counted on an obligatory basis in the census that is planned to take place in 2026 for the first time since the colonial era in 1931. An April 2025 government press release did not include any detail on how the caste data would be collected, or when exactly the census would take place (it has been repeatedly delayed from its original 2021 date). Although caste discrimination was banned by law as long ago as 1950, approx. 95 % of marriages in India still take place on an intra-caste basis. These persistent discrepancies have fuelled rising demand for a caste census. Proponents argue that data could be used to secure greater government aid and allocate resources to the needy castes. Observers consider the timing for the venture to coincide with the results of the national election in 2024, from which prime minister Modi’s governing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) emerged as the strongest power, but failed to win an absolute majority. In particular the rising discontent among underprivileged castes is said to have boosted opposition parties. According to critics, the planned caste census is a political manoeuvre on the part of the government to shore up support in upcoming elections in individual states, particularly in Bihar. A caste census in Bihar from 2023 had for instance found that there were far more people in marginalised castes than had previously been presumed. Several other states also took their own surveys.¹⁰

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