



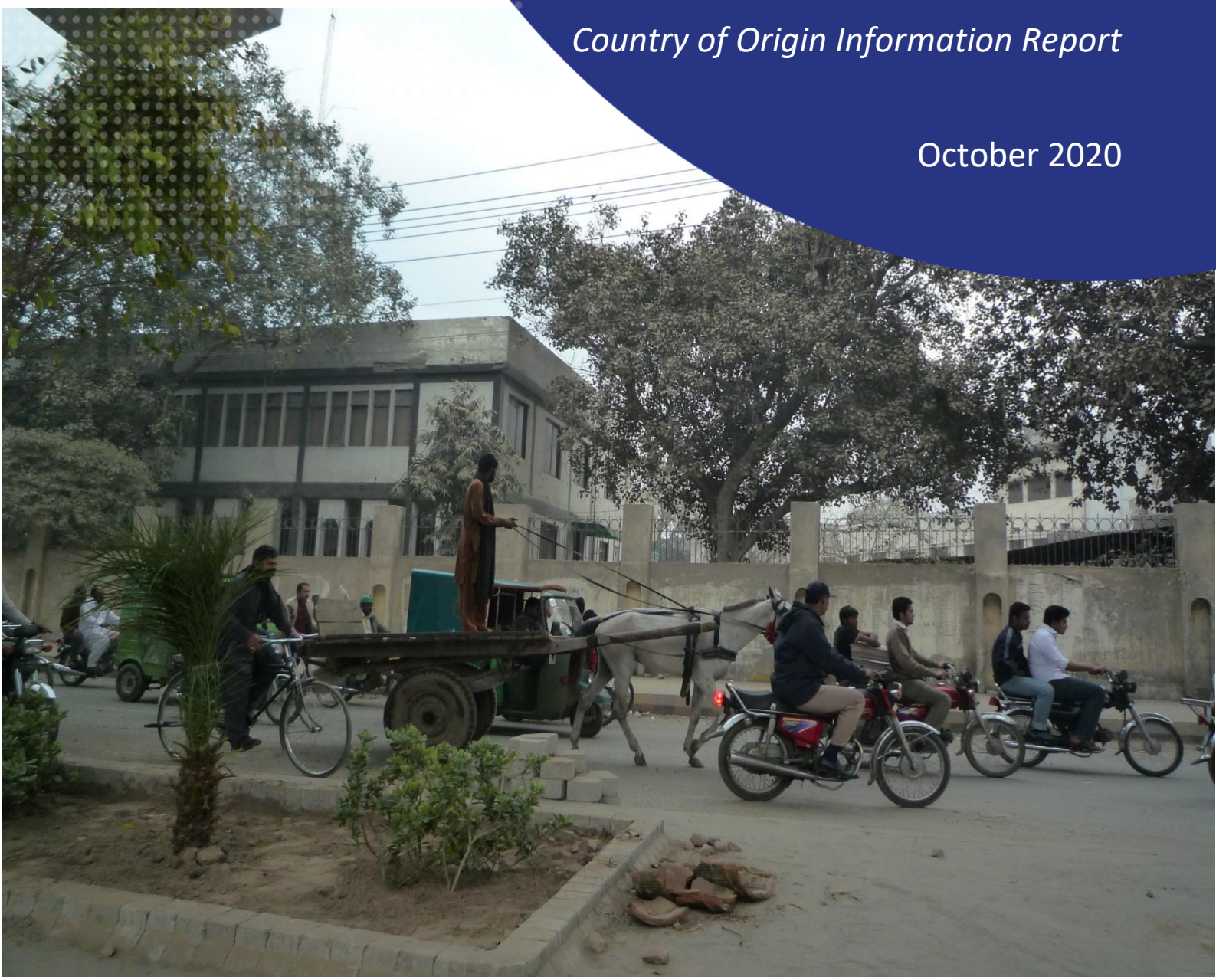
EASO

Pakistan

Security Situation

Country of Origin Information Report

October 2020



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

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Disclaimer

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

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

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

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

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

The drafting of this report was finalised on 14 August 2020. Some additional information was added during the finalisation of this report in response to feedback received during the quality control process, until 18 September 2020. More information on the reference period for this report can be found in the methodology section of the [Introduction](#).

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

Glossary and Abbreviations

ACLED	Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project
AI	Amnesty International
AJK/AK	Azad Jammu and Kashmir/ Azad Kashmir
ANP	Awami National Party
AQIS	Al-Qaeda on the Indian Peninsula
AOAV	Action on Armed Violence
BRP	Baloch Republican Party
BLA	Balochistan Liberation Army
BLF	Baloch Liberation Front
BRA	Baloch Republican Army
BRAS	Baloch Raji Aajoi Sangar
CIED	Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
CPEC	China-Pakistan Economic Corridor
CRPF	Central Reserve Police Force (India)
CRSS	Centre for Research and Security Studies
CTD	Counterterrorism Department
CSCR	Centre for Strategic and Contemporary Research
<i>Daesh</i>	See Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP)
Deobandi	A conservative Sunni religious movement ²
EFSAS	European Foundation of South Asian Studies
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
FC	Frontier Corps
FIDH	International Federation for Human Rights
FRC	FATA Research Center
GB	Gilgit-Baltistan
<i>Haqqani network</i>	Armed insurgent movement led by Sirajuddin Haqqani. This movement is affiliated with the Taliban. Their headquarters are based in North Waziristan tribal district and in south-east Afghanistan, in areas of the Pashtun tribe of the Zadran. ³

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

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

Hazara	Ethnic (primarily) Shia Muslim minority group living predominantly in central Afghanistan, western and northern Pakistan and parts of Iran ⁴
HBC	Higher Border Commission
HM	Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, militant group operating in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, led by Syed Salahuddin ⁵
HuA	Hizbul Ahrar, a breakaway faction of the JuA ⁶
HRCP	Human Rights Commission of Pakistan
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IBO	Intelligence-Based Operation
ICJ	International Commission of Jurists
ICT	Islamabad Capital Territory
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IDP	Internally Displaced Person: person or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognised state border ⁷
IJU	Islamic Jihad Union
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IMU	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan: an armed insurgent movement operating in Afghanistan and other countries with fighters originally from Uzbekistan ⁸
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPRI	Islamabad Policy Research Institute
IPCS	Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies
ISKP	Islamic State Khorasan Province, also called ISIS, ISIL, IS or <i>Daesh</i>
ISPP	Islamic State Pakistan Province
ISI	Inter-Services Intelligence, one of the intelligence agencies of Pakistan, generally considered to be one of the most powerful Pakistani state institutions
ISPR	Inter-Services Public Relations, media wing of the Pakistani Army

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

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

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

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

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

<i>Jamaat-ul Ansar Al-Sharia</i>	An umbrella organisation of Islamist armed insurgent organisations uniting with the aim of reintroducing a platform to reintroduce al-Qaeda ⁹
JuA	Jamaat-ul Ahrar (Assembly of the Free), splinter faction of the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan formed in August 2014 and based in Mohmand tribal district (former FATA) ¹⁰
JeM	Jaish-e Muhammad (Muhammad's Army), Islamist armed insurgent group active in Kashmir ¹¹
<i>Jundullah</i>	Soldiers of Allah, a group linked to the TTP and IS ¹²
JSMM	Jeay Sindh Muttahida Mahaz
<i>Khassadar</i>	Tribal militia, institutionalised by the British. In recent times, they have been made responsible for security in Pashtun areas, and receive a salary by the Pakistani authorities. ¹³
KP ¹⁴	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including former FATA
KPTDs	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts
<i>Lashkars</i>	Pashtun tribal armies or militias that can be mobilised via traditional tribal decision mechanisms ¹⁵
LB	Lashkar-e-Balochistan
Lel	Lashkar-e Islam, a militant Sunni group with a sectarian agenda formed in 2004 under Mufti Shakir. ¹⁶ In 2015, Lashkar-e Islam announced that it was joining Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan. ¹⁷
LeJ	Lashkar-e Jhangvi, an armed Sunni militant group with a sectarian agenda in Pakistan formed in 1996. The group has carried out a number of attacks on minority groups in Pakistan and aims at establishing a Sunni caliphate. ¹⁸
LeT	Lashkar-e Taiba, a Sunni militant group, formed in 1990 and initially trained in the Kunar Province of Afghanistan. LeT fights for the unification of the Kashmir region and its integration into Pakistani territory and also attacks civilian targets in Afghanistan. ¹⁹
LoC	Line of Control, disputed borderline between India and Pakistan in the regions of Jammu and Kashmir.

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

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

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

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

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

¹⁴ In this report KP refers to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with the exception in the abbreviation ISKP where KP means Khorasan Province

¹⁵ Dawn, *Death by lashkar: The forgotten protectors of Adezai village*, 9 May 2016, [url](#)

¹⁶ Dawn, *Pakistan bans 25 militant organisations*, 6 August 2009, [url](#); Express Tribune (The), *List of banned organisations in Pakistan*, 24 October 2012, [url](#)

¹⁷ LWJ, *3 jihadist groups merge with Movement of the Taliban in Pakistan*, 6 May 2015, [url](#)

¹⁸ USDOS, *Country Report on Terrorism 2019*, 24 June 2020, [url](#), pp. 283-284

¹⁹ Stanford University, *Mapping Militant Organizations. "Lashkar-e-Taiba."*, last updated: June 2018, [url](#)

LJA	Lashkar-e Jhangvi Al-Alami, a faction of Lashkar-e Jhangvi ²⁰
LWJ	Long War Journal
Khyber-IV	Operation launched by the Pakistani army on 16 July 2017 aimed at clearing Rajgal Valley in Khyber Agency of militants ²¹
<i>Madrassa</i>	Islamic school
MEI	Middle East Institute
MQM-P	Muttahadi Qaumi Movement- Pakistan
NACTA	National Counter Terrorism Authority
NADRA	National Database & Registration Authority
NAP	National Action Plan, Pakistan government plan to eliminate terrorism ²²
NCA	National Command Authority
NWFP	North West Frontier Province, the former name for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSAC	Overseas Security Advisory Council
PDMA	Provincial Disaster Management Authority
Peace Committee	Often called <i>Aman Jirgas</i> . Members are appointed by the military or police in order to deal with security issues and to bring peace in an area, with the government giving them authority for out-of-court arbitration. ²³
PICSS	Pakistani Institute for Conflict and Security Studies
PIPS	Pak Institute for Peace Studies
PoR	Proof of Registration card: administrative document issued to registered Afghan refugees in Pakistan ²⁴
PPAC	Prime Minister's Prisoners Reforms Committee
PPP	Pakistan People's Party
PTI	Pakistan Tehreek-e Insaf
PTM	Pashtun Tahafuz Movement, or Pashtun Protection Movement, a grassroots Pashtun civil rights movement ²⁵
<i>Radd-ul-Fasaad</i>	Code name for a military operation launched by the Pakistani army on 22 February 2017 ²⁶
<i>Razakar</i>	Pro-government tribal militia ²⁷

²⁰ Jamestown Foundation (The), Lashkar-e-Jhangvi al-Alami: A Pakistani Partner for Islamic State, 27 January 2017, [url](#)

²¹ Dawn, Army launches Operation Khyber-4 in Rajgal Valley, 16 July 2017, [url](#)

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

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

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

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

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

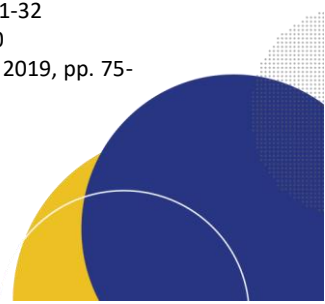
²⁷ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 10

RFE/RL	Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty
RSIS	S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies
SATP	South Asia Terrorism Portal
SDLA	Sindhudesh Liberation Army
SDLF	Sindhu Desh Liberation Front
SDRA	Sindhudesh Revolutionary Army
SMP	Sipah-e Mohammed Pakistan, a Shia militant group ²⁸
SSP	Sipah-e Sahaba Pakistan (Army of the Prophet Followers), a former political party following the Deobandi school in Islam ²⁹
TBIJ	The Bureau of Investigative Journalism
<i>Tehsil</i>	An administrative division in some parts of Pakistan
TNN	Tribal News Network
TTP	Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan, (Pakistan Movement of Taliban), the largest militant group in Pakistan. The organisation was founded in 2007 and is an umbrella of mostly, but not all, Pakistani Taliban groups. TTP had pledged allegiance to Mullah Omar, in 2007 the leader of the Taliban in Afghanistan. The main goal behind TTP's establishment was to unite the various factions of the Pakistan Taliban in order to organise synchronised attacks on NATO/ISAF forces in Afghanistan. The group also carries out 'defensive jihad' against Pakistani military forces conducting operations in former FATA. ³⁰
UBA	United Baloch Army
UNCAT	United Nations Committee Against Torture
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USCIRF	United States Commission on International Religious Freedom
USDOD	United States Department of Defense
USDOS	United States Department of State
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
USIP	United States Institute of Peace
VoA	Voice of America
<i>Zakat</i>	Religious alms

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

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

³⁰ Elahi, N., Terrorism in Pakistan: The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and the Challenge to Security, March 2019, pp. 75-90



Zarb-e-Azb

Code name for a military operation launched by the Pakistani army on 15 June 2014³¹

³¹ Zulfqar, S., An Overview of Pakistan's Security Situation after Operation Zarb-e-Azb, October 2017, Islamabad Policy Research Institute, [url](#), pp. 117-118

Introduction

This report aims to provide information on the security situation in Pakistan, which is relevant for the assessment of international protection status determination, including refugee status and subsidiary protection. The terms of reference can be found in [Annex 2](#).

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

Methodology

This report is an update of the EASO COI report on Pakistan, Security Situation, October 2019.³² The reference period for the events described in this report is from 1 August 2019 until 31 July 2020. To allow a better comparison with the year 2018, for data on violent incidents and civilian casualties, the timeframe taken into account by this report is between 1 January 2019 and 31 December 2019 and from 1 January 2020 until 31 July 2020.

This report is produced in line with the EASO COI Report Methodology (2019)³³ and the EASO COI Writing and Referencing Style Guide (2019).³⁴

Defining the terms of reference

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

Quality control

In order to ensure that the drafter respected the EASO COI Report Methodology, a review was carried out by COI specialists from the countries and organisations listed as reviewers in the [Acknowledgements](#) section. This quality process led to the inclusion of some additional information, in response to feedback received during the respective reviews, until 18 September 2020. All comments made by the reviewers were taken into consideration and most of them were implemented in the final draft of this report.

Sources

The information in this report results from desk research of public specialised paper-based and electronic sources, which were consulted within the time frame and the scope of the research. In addition, the Cedoca researcher, a specialist on Pakistan, sent a query on 10 June 2020 to the following experts. They each responded by email within the reference period of this report.

- Asad Hashim, email, 6 July 2020. Asad Hashim is a Pakistani journalist covering Pakistan.
- Mansur Khan Mahsud, email, 30 June 2020. Mansur Khan Mahsud is the Executive Director of FATA Research Center (FRC).

³² EASO COI reports are available via EASO's website: [url](#)

³³ EASO, EASO Country of Origin Information (COI) Report Methodology, June 2019, [url](#)

³⁴ EASO, Writing and Referencing Guide for EASO Country of Origin Information (COI) Reports, June 2019, [url](#)



- Michael Kugelman, email, 6 August 2020. Michael Kugelman is the Asia Program Deputy Director and Senior Associate for South Asia at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars (United States).

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

This report relies extensively on data about security incidents and casualties provided by different institutions, which was either published in reports available on their websites or was provided by email to EASO/Cedoca.³⁵ Data on the security incidents provided by Pakistani institutes such as the [Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies \(PICSS\)](#), the [Pak Institute for Peace Studies \(PIPS\)](#), [FATA Research Centre \(FRC\)](#) and also the publicly available curated dataset on South Asia from the [Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project \(ACLED\)](#) was used. For civilian casualties, the main sources used are the publications by the [Centre for Research and Security Studies \(CRSS\)](#). Where possible, data on casualties provided by PICSS, PIPS and FRC was also used.

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

The [Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies \(PICSS\)](#) is an independent research think-tank based in Islamabad. PICSS collects statistical data regarding Pakistan-specific anti-state violence.³⁶ PICSS publishes annual security reports and divides incidents of violence mainly in two categories: 1. 'violent militant attacks' and 'Security Forces Actions'. Sectarian violence, general crimes, ethnic or language-based violence are not recorded. The data collected is based on open sources such as newspapers, government sources and own correspondents. PICSS defines violent militant attacks as follows: 'a. Militant Attacks against government, public, or private targets. These targets can be against life or property e.g. government installations such as gas pipelines, electricity transmission lines etc., b. Militant clashes among different militant groups.'³⁷

The [Pak Institute for Peace Studies \(PIPS\)](#), established in Islamabad, was founded in January 2006. One of the founding members is Muhammad Amir Rana, a security and political analyst.³⁸ PIPS monitors relevant incidents in Pakistan on a daily basis, from sources such as correspondents in the different regions, newspapers, magazines, journals and television news channels. The information is gathered in the PIPS conflict/security database and archives which form the base for their annual and monthly reports.³⁹ PIPS divides 'attacks' into five categories:

- '(i) terrorist attacks, including militant attacks, nationalist insurgent attacks and sectarian-related attacks';⁴⁰
- (ii) incidents of ethno-political violence;
- (iii) cross-border attacks;
- (iv) drone attacks; and
- (v) operational attacks by security forces against militants'.⁴¹

PIPS defines 'casualties' as follows: 'casualties include both the number of people killed and injured'.⁴²

The [FATA Research Centre \(FRC\)](#) is a private and apolitical research organisation based in Islamabad and established in 2009. FRC provides only information on the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts

³⁵ PIPS, PICSS and FRC provided data by email to Cedoca. Khan, A. email, 3 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PICSS; Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS; Khan Mahsud, M., email, 8 August 2020 data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of FRC

³⁶ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 1

³⁷ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 2

³⁸ PIPS, PIPS Team, n.d., [url](#)

³⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 7

⁴⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 7

⁴¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 7

⁴² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 8

(KPTDs) previously known as the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan.⁴³ The data collected by FRC is based on sources such as newspapers, government sources and own correspondents in all seven KPTDs. FRC mentions that their research contains certain limitations since the area is undergoing counter-insurgency operations and curfews.⁴⁴ FRC defines 'terrorist attacks' as follows: 'Indiscriminate use of violence by local, non-local, and foreign terrorist outfits'.⁴⁵

The [Centre for Research and Security Studies \(CRSS\)](#) is a Pakistani research institute that analyses politics and security in the country. Executive Director, Imtiaz Gul, founded CRSS in December 2007.⁴⁶ CRSS publishes annually a report on the security situation in Pakistan and also quarterly reports.⁴⁷ CRSS uses open sources such as national printed and electronic media.⁴⁸ The reports mainly contain statistical data on violence-related casualties.⁴⁹

The [Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project \(ACLED\)](#) is a project collecting, analysing and mapping information on crisis and conflict in Africa, south and south-east Asia, the Middle East, East Asia, Central Asia, the Caucasus, Latin America and others and also provides datasets on conflict incidents.⁵⁰

ACLED codes security incidents as follows:

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

⁴³ FRC, About Us, n.d., [url](#); FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. II

⁴⁴ FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. III

⁴⁵ FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. IV

⁴⁶ Imtiaz Gul Official Website, Biography, n.d., [url](#)

⁴⁷ For example: CRSS, CRSS Annual Security Report Special Edition 2013 – 2018, March 2019, [url](#); CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, First Quarter, 2020, 7 April 2020, [url](#)

⁴⁸ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#)

⁴⁹ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 2

⁵⁰ ACLED, About Acled, n.d., [url](#); For more information on ACLED methodology, see ACLED Codebook, [url](#)

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

Data on violent incidents reported in Chapter 2 of this report is based on EASO/Cedoca analysis of ACLED public data extracted on 1 August 2020. For the purpose of this report,⁵² only the following type of events were included in the analysis of the security situation in Pakistan: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians. The ACLED data and maps derived from such data, used in this report refer to the timeframe between 1 January 2019 and 31 December 2019 and 1 January 2020 until 31 July 2020 (based on the ACLED curated dataset for South Asia-updated until 1 August 2020).⁵³

Because of the use of a different methodology and terminology by each institution, the data on security incidents and casualties can differ between the institutions. For example, while PIPS records ‘terrorist attacks’, PICSS records militant attacks. Therefore, chapters [1.4.1 Figures on civilian fatalities](#) and [1.4.2 Figures on casualties 1 January 2020 - 31 July 2020](#) present data from the different sources separately to allow comparison and a clearer understanding of the situation.

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

In the regional description, a government source was used to describe the population figures in the administrative divisions.⁵⁵ This source was used because it provides the most recent population figures in Pakistan. Some sources casted doubts about the results of the 2017 census.⁵⁶

Due to the deteriorating situation for journalists in Pakistan, several sources mentioned difficulties on reporting concerning the security situation. In an interview via email on 6 July 2020, Pakistani journalist, Asad Hashim stated the following:

‘The Pakistani news media, both electronic and print, is now reporting in an environment where it is almost impossible to report critically on security issues in particular, and issues related to the state in general. Censorship is widespread, through the use of punitive measures targeting news organisations financially if they do not comply with the military and government’s directives. The censorship does not necessarily involve blocking reporting of security incidents, but usually takes the form of only allowing the government’s version of events to be published. Critical reporting on political reasons for the armed Baloch fight for independence, for example, is virtually impossible. Criticism of Pakistani security forces approach to responding to security incidents or of alleged rights abuses by them is similarly impossible. In Balochistan and the former tribal districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, journalists continue to face physical threats such as enforced disappearances, harassment and legal cases for reporting critically.’⁵⁷

In an interview via email on 30 June 2020, the Executive Director of FRC, Mansur Khan Mahsud stated the following on the difficulties experienced in the KPTDs:

‘So far journalists can work in Khyber, Kurram, Mohmand, Bajaur and Orakzai tribal districts but it is difficult for journalists to work in North and South Waziristan tribal districts where militants are still present and involved in militant activities and TTP and Gull Bahadur group

⁵² Fatalities collected by ACLED were not used in this report

⁵³ ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (1 August 2020), [url](#)

⁵⁴ UNOCHA Pakistan, email, 9 July 2020; IDMC, GRID 2020 Global Report on Internal Displacement, 28 April 2020, [url](#)

⁵⁵ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Provisional Summary Results of 6th Population & Housing Census-2017, 25 August 2017, [url](#)

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

⁵⁷ Hashim, A., email, 6 July 2020. Asad Hashim is a Pakistani journalist covering Pakistan.

don't like journalists highlighting their militant and criminal activities in North and South Waziristan. TTP has warned the journalists that they should not write against TTP and their allies otherwise they would be targeted by them. TTP claims that most of the journalists works for the government and security forces and print false news about TTP and its allies.⁵⁸

Structure and use of the report

This report provides information on elements and indicators that may help in assessing the need for international protection. In the [first part](#) a general description is given on the security situation in Pakistan. The [second part](#) explains the security situation per province in more detail. A general description of the province contains information on the geography and population, and on the background of the conflict, including the actors active in the province. A description of recent trends in the security situation provides quantitative (numbers) and qualitative information (examples and description of trends). A sub-chapter focuses on the nature of the violence, frequency, targets, locations, and descriptions of incidents within a timeframe 1 August 2019 until 31 July 2020. Another sub-chapter includes information about civilian casualties. Finally, conflict-induced displacements are described in a separate section.

Both the general and regional descriptions provide information from various sources on the relevant elements and indicators. Information on an indicator as such should never be taken as conclusive, but as indicative for the assessment of protection needs, and should be read in conjunction with other indicators and information on the region.

Administrative divisions

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

- The four provinces: Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Balochistan⁵⁹ and Sindh;
- Islamabad Capital Territory;
- The two administrative regions: Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan.⁶⁰

On 28 May 2018, the former President of Pakistan Mamnoon Hussain signed the FATA Interim Governance Regulation (2018) which will govern FATA until it merges with KP by 2020.⁶¹ EASO opted to follow the administrative divisions used by UNOCHA, as they produce very clear maps and use the same division systematically in all their publications.⁶² In this report, following UNOCHA's administrative division, former FATA is described in the section of the province of KP (see [Map 1](#)). In this report, the new names of the KPTDs for each of the former tribal agencies in FATA are used.⁶³ For a better understanding of these tribal districts and because of their impact on the security situation, the KP tribal districts are described in general terms and then in more detail in the relevant chapter (see [2.2.2 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa \(including former FATA\)](#)).

⁵⁸ Mahsud Khan, M., email, 30 June 2020. Mansur Khan Mahsud is the executive director of FRC.

⁵⁹ Balochistan refers to the Pakistani province of Baluchistan (see [Map 1](#))

⁶⁰ [Map 1](#): the two regions are situated in the north of Pakistan. On [Map 1](#), they are indicated in the grey area in the north of Pakistan

⁶¹ Dawn, President signs KP-Fata merger bill into law, 31 May 2018, [url](#); RFE/RL, Pakistani Tribal Areas Face Long Road To Stabilization, 28 May 2018, [url](#)

⁶² All their relevant maps can be found at: UNOCHA, Humanitarian Response, Maps/Infographics, [url](#)

⁶³ Express Tribune (The), Tribal areas re-designated as districts, sub-divisions, 12 June 2018, [url](#); Express Tribune (The), Notification issued for composition of new administrative divisions in Mohmand, Khyber, 20 July 2018, [url](#)



18

1. General description of the security situation in Pakistan

1.1 Overview of recent conflicts in Pakistan

Internal and external security challenges have an influence on the security situation in the country.⁶⁵ The internal security challenges consist of political and economic instability, ethnic and sectarian conflicts, religious extremism and militancy.⁶⁶ The external security challenges are influenced by the relationship of Pakistan with neighbouring countries such as Afghanistan and India.⁶⁷

1.1.1 Background of militancy

Militant violence in Pakistan is mainly caused by the separatist insurgency in Balochistan and the instability in the north-west of the country resulting from the 2001 toppling of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. The Afghan Taliban settled in former FATA and in the North Western Frontier Province (NWFP, currently Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), having fled the invasion of an international coalition led by the United States (US) in Afghanistan.⁶⁸ Under their influence, several Pakistani groups with a similar ideology continued working together in what developed into a federation of armed groups. Taliban policies included a strict application of conservative Islamic principles and resulted in violence against civilians and eventually the Pakistani authorities.⁶⁹ The Pakistan military and intelligence service were reported to support some armed groups. Previously Pakistan supported the mujahideen, and when in 2001 they allied with the US to fight against Taliban, Pakistan had to relinquish their support for some Islamist groups due to pressure from the US.⁷⁰

Since 2007, the Pakistani security forces have carried out several military operations in the tribal districts aimed at breaking the power of the Pakistani Taliban and their affiliated organisations.⁷¹ Military operations against the Pakistani Taliban have been one of the main sources of insecurity, causing a large-scale displacement in the north-west of Pakistan.⁷²

Former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's efforts to negotiate a peace agreement in February 2014⁷³ with the Taliban were unsuccessful.⁷⁴ Soon after, militants attacked an international airport in Karachi on 8 June 2014.⁷⁵ The Pakistani government launched a military offensive on 15 June 2014 against militant strongholds in North Waziristan.⁷⁶ This military operation was code-named *Zarb-e-Azb* (see

⁶⁵ Askari Rizvi, H., Pakistan's internal and external security challenges, 2 March 2020, 24Digital, [url](#); Parry, A.W. and Aalam, K.U., Pakistan Tiptoeing on Security Challenges", 19 July 2019, INSAMER, [url](#), pp. 1-2

⁶⁶ Parry, A.W. and Aalam, K.U., Pakistan Tiptoeing on Security Challenges", 19 July 2019, INSAMER, [url](#), pp. 2-3; Amir Rana, M., Terrorism in Pakistan under Covid-19, NIOC, 24 July 2020, [url](#), p. 18

⁶⁷ Askari Rizvi, H., Pakistan's internal and external security challenges, 2 March 2020, 24Digital, [url](#); Parry, A.W. and Aalam, K.U., Pakistan Tiptoeing on Security Challenges", 19 July 2019, INSAMER, [url](#), pp. 1-2

⁶⁸ Rashid, A., Descent into Chaos, 2008, pp. 265-270; Al, As if hell fell on me, the human rights crisis in northwest Pakistan, 10 June 2010, [url](#), pp. 10-11

⁶⁹ Rashid, A., Descent into Chaos, 2008, pp. 265-270; Al, As if hell fell on me, the human rights crisis in northwest Pakistan, 10 June 2010, [url](#), pp. 10-11

⁷⁰ Deutsche Welle, What is Pakistan's militancy issue all about?, 1 December 2017, [url](#)

⁷¹ Al Jazeera, Pakistan military warns Pashtun rights group its 'time is up', 30 April 2019, [url](#)

⁷² ECHO, Pakistan-Factsheet, last updated: 1 February 2019, [url](#)

⁷³ BBC News, Pakistan enters peace talks with Taliban, 6 February 2014, [url](#)

⁷⁴ Reuters, Peace Talks between Pakistan and Taliban collapse after killings, 17 February 2014, [url](#)

⁷⁵ Dawn, TTP claims attack on Karachi airport, 8 June 2014, [url](#)

⁷⁶ Dawn, Zarb-e-Azb operation: 120 suspected militants killed in N Waziristan, 16 June 2014, [url](#)

sub-chapter [Security operations and armed clashes](#)).⁷⁷ The militants responded with several attacks. On 2 November 2014, a suicide bombing claimed 60 lives at the Wagah border crossing near Lahore, a symbolic and sensitive area.⁷⁸ On 16 December 2014, an attack on the Army Public School in Peshawar killed nearly 150 people, mostly children of army personnel.⁷⁹

On 25 December 2014, after consultation with different political parties, former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif announced a 20-point comprehensive plan of action - the National Action Plan (NAP) - in order to confront the insurgent threat. The plan encompassed the establishment of special courts for the speedy trial of 'terrorist suspects', and a moratorium on capital punishment was revoked, after being instated earlier in December 2014. The plan furthermore stipulated the deployment of a 5 000-strong counterterrorism force across the country. Under the plan, no armed militias would be allowed to function in the country and the funding of terrorist organisations would be 'choked'. The plan also envisaged combatting hate speech. The Pakistani army confirmed that military operations in the tribal areas 'would continue'.⁸⁰

In 2015 and 2016, Operation *Zarb-e-Azb* continued.⁸¹ The Pakistani army was targeting a wide array of militant groups in the tribal areas.⁸² Besides military operations, the Pakistani army was called upon to provide security backup to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).⁸³ In February 2017, a series of 'terrorist attacks' occurred in the country. In response to these attacks, on 22 February 2017, the government of Pakistan announced a countrywide military operation code-named *Radd-ul-Fasaad* (see sub-chapter [Security operations and armed clashes](#)).⁸⁴ In the run-up to the general elections of 25 July 2018, the country witnessed a surge in violent attacks.⁸⁵

In an interview via email on 6 July 2020, Asad Hashim stated the following about the security situation in 2019:

'This reduction in overall violence is consistent with a trend seen since 2014, when Pakistani security forces undertook a widespread military operation targeting the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and its allies. It has displaced those groups from their erstwhile strongholds in North Waziristan and adjoining districts, thereby reducing their operational capacity to carry out attacks on Pakistani soil. Significant threats do, however, remain. Attacks by Improvised Explosive Device (IED), targeted shooting, suicide bombing, hand grenades and rockets all occurred in 2019.'⁸⁶

On 6 August 2020, Michael Kugelman, the Asia Program Deputy Director and Senior Associate for South Asia at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, stated the following about the security situation in the first half of 2020:

'The security situation remained relatively calm during the first half of 2020, comparable to all of 2019. The situation described in the previous response for 2019 also applies for the first half of 2020. However, one key area to watch is the issue of separatist militancy. In the first half of 2020 (though also to an extent in 2019), groups like the Balochistan Liberation Army have become more active and staged some major attacks, including an assault on the stock

⁷⁷ Dawn, *Zarb-e-Azb operation: 120 suspected militants killed in N Waziristan*, 16 June 2014, [url](#); BBC News, *Pakistan army North Waziristan offensive: thousands flee*, 19 June 2014, [url](#); Reuters, *Pakistan army in for long haul in offensive against Taliban*, 17 June 2014, [url](#)

⁷⁸ Dawn, *TTP splinter groups claim Wagah attack: 60 dead*, 3 November 2014, [url](#)

⁷⁹ CNN, *In Pakistan school attack, Taliban terrorists kill 145, mostly children*, 17 December 2014, [url](#); New York Times (The), *Taliban Besiege Pakistan School, Leaving 145 Dead*, 16 December 2014, [url](#)

⁸⁰ Express Tribune (The), *Fight against terrorism: Defining moment*, 25 December 2014, [url](#)

⁸¹ Diplomat (The), *Pakistan's Counterterrorism Operation: Myth vs. Reality*, 27 June 2016, [url](#)

⁸² Nation (The), *Operation Zarb-e-Azb: Two years of success*, 6 September 2016, [url](#)

⁸³ Express Tribune (The), *Pakistan Army leaving no stone turned to protect Chinese investment*, 8 February 2016, [url](#)

⁸⁴ Dawn, *Pakistan Army launches 'Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad' across the country*, 21 June 2017, [url](#)

⁸⁵ BBC News, *Pakistan election: Who's who and why it matters*, 22 July 2018, [url](#)

⁸⁶ Hashim, A., email, 6 July 2020

exchange in Karachi. These Baloch groups appear to be looking to broaden their clout as well. One of the biggest developments so far in the 2020 security environment is the announcement of a new alliance between Baloch separatist groups and nationalists in Sindh province—this interprovincial alliance is unprecedented, and suggests a desire on the part of (non-Islamist) anti-state actors to step up their fight.⁸⁷

1.1.2 Ethnic and sectarian violence

In July 2020, Abdul Basit, research fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), stated that a decline in militant violence is noticeable but that the threat of militancy has not disappeared. Basit mentioned that ‘the structural factors of violence —religious intolerance, abysmal socio-economic conditions and ethno-nationalist grievances —not only remain unaddressed but they have exacerbated further in recent years.’ The geopolitical situation (the intra-Afghan peace process and the India-China border dispute) have implications on the security situation and on anti-Pakistan militant groups, particularly on the ethno-separatist groups, according to Basit.⁸⁸

Examples of ethnic militancy include the case of Karachi (multicultural environment mixed with militant wings of political parties) and the case of Balochistan (Quetta), where the Shia Hazara community has been specifically targeted.⁸⁹ In July 2020, the News on Sunday mentioned that in the province of Sindh, banned separatist groups from Sindh and Balochistan posed a new security challenge.⁹⁰

Militant groups have continuously targeted religious minorities in Pakistan throughout the years. Shias, Hindus, Christians and Ahmadiyya communities were the victims of sectarian violence.⁹¹ PIPS mentioned that not only extremist and sectarian terrorist groups but also groups that promote religious intolerance can put society at risk.⁹² In its 2020 annual report (covering 2019), the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) noted that religious freedom conditions deteriorated in recent years, despite some positive developments in 2019.⁹³ In an email dated 6 August 2020, Michael Kugelman stated about the year 2019 that:

‘While Pakistan has managed to kill many terrorists and destroy their networks, Pakistan continues to provide an enabling environment for radicalization and extremism thanks to the far-reaching prevalence of hate speech and extremist ideologies that emanate from influential information sources ranging from school textbooks, religious leaders, and television shows. And Pakistan continues to harbor ties to terror groups that are used as assets to pursue Islamabad’s interests in Afghanistan and India. They don’t stage attacks in Pakistan, but they are present in Pakistan.’⁹⁴

1.1.3 Political developments

On 25 July 2018, general elections were held in Pakistan. The run-up to the elections was overshadowed by a series of violent incidents in different provinces, by criminal cases opened against members of the ruling party and by the Prime Minister’s accusation that the military had interfered.⁹⁵

⁸⁷ Kugelman, M., email, 6 August 2020. Michael Kugelman is the Asia Program Deputy Director and Senior Associate for South Asia at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars (United States).

⁸⁸ Nation (The), (Basit, A.), A New Wave of Terrorism in Pakistan, 14 July 2020, [url](#)

⁸⁹ Azam, M., Javaid, U., The sources of Militancy in Pakistan, (July - December, 2017), [url](#), pp. 193-194

⁹⁰ News on Sunday (The), A new wave of terror, 5 July 2020, [url](#)

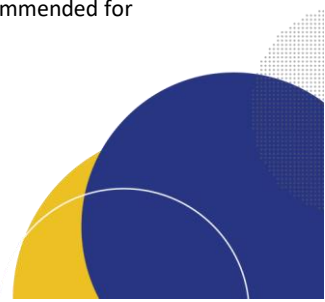
⁹¹ CSW, General Briefing: Pakistan, 1 May 2020, [url](#)

⁹² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 12

⁹³ USCIRF, United States Commission on International Religious Freedom 2020 Annual Report; USCIRF – Recommended for Countries of Particular Concern (CPC): Pakistan, April 2020, [url](#), p. 32, p. 33

⁹⁴ Kugelman, M., email, 6 August 2020

⁹⁵ BBC News, Pakistan election: Who's who and why it matters, 22 July 2018, [url](#)



Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e Insaf (PTI) party won most seats for the National Assembly.⁹⁶ On 18 August 2018, Imran Khan was sworn in as Pakistan's Prime Minister.⁹⁷ On 9 September 2018, Arif Alvi was sworn in as President of Pakistan.⁹⁸

The Pakistani military is a prominent player in Pakistan's politics, particularly with regard to domestic security, foreign policy and economic affairs.⁹⁹ A May 2020 commentary by the European Foundation of South Asian Studies (EFSAS), an Amsterdam-based think tank, stated that in the wake of the 2013 general elections the military dominance in Pakistan increased.¹⁰⁰ Serving and retired military officials were given a number of key functions in the government of Prime Minister Imran Khan.¹⁰¹ In an April 2020 report of the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), analyst Cyril Almeida mentioned that the government of Imran Khan 'struggles to govern and manage the economy'.¹⁰² According to a March 2020 article published by the New York Times, the COVID-19¹⁰³ outbreak in Pakistan demonstrated the tensions between the government and the military.¹⁰⁴

Pakistan witnessed the emerge of the Pashtun Tahafuz (Protection) Movement (PTM), a civil rights movement advocating for rights for the country's Pashtun minority.¹⁰⁵ Sources are unclear about the date when the PTM emerged. According to Al Jazeera, the PTM was founded in 2016.¹⁰⁶ The Diplomat stated that the PTM was 'launched' in 2018.¹⁰⁷ The PTM has the following main demands: the clearance of land mines from the tribal districts; accountability for targeted killings, for extrajudicial killings, for missing persons, and people who have been held without charge or crime by the government.¹⁰⁸ Manzoor Pashteen leads the PTM and the movement holds rallies and sit-ins. The media barely covers these rallies.¹⁰⁹ Two other leaders of the PTM, Mohsin Dawar and Ali Wazir, ran in the general elections in 2018 as independent candidates and each won a seat in the National Assembly.¹¹⁰ During 2018, the PTM and its leadership were labelled as 'traitors, disloyal, and anti-state' by their opponents, according to a 2019 article of the Diplomat. The police and security agencies arrested several members and activists.¹¹¹ The Pakistani military accused the PTM of being funded by India's Research and Analysis Wing (the Indian Intelligence Service) and the Afghan intelligence agency.¹¹² Ali Wazir and eight others were arrested¹¹³ after the military killed three protesters at a checkpoint in North Waziristan on 26 May 2019, according to the PTM. The military, however, said that it responded after the protesters opened fire first.¹¹⁴ Mohsin Dawar was arrested a couple of days later.¹¹⁵ On 21 September 2019 both Wazir and Dawar, were released from prison on bail.¹¹⁶ On

⁹⁶ RFE/RL, Pakistani Opposition Leader Khan Ahead In Early Results, Media Report, 27 July 2018, [url](#)

⁹⁷ Guardian (The), Imran Khan sworn in as prime minister of Pakistan, 18 August 2018, [url](#)

⁹⁸ Dawn, Arif Alvi sworn in as 13th President of Pakistan, 10 September 2018, [url](#)

⁹⁹ New York Times (The), Imran Khan's 'New Pakistan' Is as Good as the Old, 17 July 2019, [url](#)

¹⁰⁰ EFSAS, The Military's overbearing shadow over Pakistan, 15 May 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰¹ Deutsche Welle, Why are Pakistan's generals taking up top civilian posts?, 28 May 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰² Almeida, C. and Olson, R., Pakistan's Looming Coronavirus Crisis, 1 April 2020, USIP, [url](#)

¹⁰³ Coronavirus disease 2019. Pakistan witnessed its first cases of COVID-19 on 26 February 2020; Arab News Pakistan, Pakistan prepares to fight back as two coronavirus cases emerge in country, 26 February 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁴ New York Times (The), 'God Will Protect Us': Coronavirus Spreads Through an Already Struggling Pakistan, 26 March 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁵ BBC News, Manzoor Pashteen: The young tribesman rattling Pakistan's army, 23 April 2018, [url](#)

¹⁰⁶ Al Jazeera, Why is Pakistan's Pashtun movement under attack?, 28 January 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁷ Diplomat (The), Pakistan's Pashtun Rights Movement Suffers First Casualty, 5 February 2019, [url](#)

¹⁰⁸ Al Jazeera, Pakistan military warns Pashtun rights group its 'time is up', 30 April 2019, [url](#)

¹⁰⁹ Diplomat (The), Pakistan's Pashtun Rights Movement Suffers First Casualty, 5 February 2019, [url](#); Brookings, Why is Pakistan's military repressing a huge, nonviolent Pashtun protest movement?, 7 February 2020, [url](#)

¹¹⁰ International News (The), Two PTM leaders make it to NA, 29 July 2018, [url](#)

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

¹¹² Deutsche Welle, Is Pakistan's war-ravaged northwestern region turning against the military?, 7 May 2019, [url](#)

¹¹³ Al Jazeera, Pakistani legislator Dawar surrenders to authorities, 30 May 2019, [url](#)

¹¹⁴ Al Jazeera, Three killed by military gunfire at Pakistan rights protest, 26 May 2019, [url](#)

¹¹⁵ RFE/RL, Pakistan Arrests Second Pashtun Lawmaker Over 'Attack' On Troops, 30 May 2019, [url](#)

¹¹⁶ Dawn, MNAs Ali Wazir, Mohsin Dawar released from jail as bail goes into effect, 21 September 2019, [url](#)

27 January 2020, Manzoor Pashteen was arrested in Peshawar together with nine others of the PTM on charges of sedition and hate speech.¹¹⁷ On 25 February 2020, Manzoor Pashteen was released from prison.¹¹⁸ Arif Wazir, a leader of the PTM and brother of Ali Wazir, was arrested on 17 April 2020. He was 'accused of delivering "anti-Pakistan" remarks during a recent visit to Afghanistan'. Arif Wazir died on 2 May 2020 after he was attacked by unknown gunmen in Wana in South Waziristan tribal district. Members of the PTM accused the state of being the perpetrators of the attack.¹¹⁹ In June 2020, the PTM accepted an invitation by the government of Pakistan for consultation but mentioned that the government should first take confidence-building measures.¹²⁰

1.1.4 International context

In the last decade, relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan have been complex and troubled.¹²¹ Both countries have been blaming each other for sheltering terrorists¹²² and escalating border tensions resulted in Pakistan building a fence on the border to prevent the movement of militants.¹²³ The United States Department of Defense (USDOD) noted that even though Pakistani military operations disrupted some militant safe havens, certain groups, such as the Afghan Taliban and the Haqqani Network enjoyed freedom of movement in Pakistan.¹²⁴ During the US-Taliban negotiations, Pakistan played a key role helping to bring the Taliban to the table.¹²⁵ At the end of June 2019, President Ashraf Ghani visited Pakistan to discuss different topics such as strengthening bilateral cooperation and the role of Pakistan in achieving peace in Afghanistan.¹²⁶ On 9 June 2020, Pakistan's military and intelligence chiefs had a meeting in Kabul which was described as an ice breaker for the relations between the two countries.¹²⁷ The visit occurred within the context of intra-Afghan peace dialogue which was set to begin in mid-June 2020.¹²⁸ In July 2020, Pakistan invited Afghanistan's chief peace negotiator, Abdullah Abdullah, for an official visit to Islamabad. Raoof Hasan, chief executive of Islamabad-based Regional Policy Institute, cited in Voice of America (VoA), mentioned that this invitation is seen 'as a good move and another sign of thaw in bilateral strained relations'.¹²⁹ In July 2020, rockets were fired in the border region between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Afghanistan demanded that Pakistan refrained from these kinds of attacks.¹³⁰ The reopening of trade routes¹³¹ between Afghanistan and Pakistan in July 2020 is seen as a positive and improving sign in the ties between both countries.¹³²

Ties between Pakistan and India deteriorated in 2019 due to a series of events.¹³³ The heightened tensions started with the February 2019 attack in Pulwama in Indian-administered Kashmir claimed by Jaish-e-Muhammed (JeM).¹³⁴ On 26 February 2019, the Indian Air Force conducted airstrikes at Balakot in Pakistan.¹³⁵ On 5 August 2019, India removed Kashmir's special autonomous status (Indian-

¹¹⁷ BBC News, Manzoor Pashteen: Activist who dared to challenge Pakistan army held, 27 January 2020, [url](#)

¹¹⁸ Dawn, PTM's Manzoor Pashteen released from jail, 25 February 2020, [url](#)

¹¹⁹ Gandhara, Lawmaker Sees State-Sponsored Militants Behind Pashtun Activist's Killing, 11 May 2020, [url](#)

¹²⁰ Dawn, PTM says ready for talks but calls for confidence-building measures, 27 June 2020, [url](#)

¹²¹ International News (The), Pakistan and Afghan peace, 28 July 2020, [url](#)

¹²² Daily Pakistan, Pakistan desires peace, stability in Afghanistan: Khawaja Asif, 2 September 2017, [url](#)

¹²³ Dawn, Pakistan holds 'keys to war', says Afghan president, 31 January 2019, [url](#)

¹²⁴ USDOD, Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan, December 2018, [url](#), p. 24

¹²⁵ Afzal, M., Will the Afghan peace process be Pakistan's road to redemption?, Brookings, 25 June 2020, [url](#)

¹²⁶ Al Jazeera, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani arrives in Pakistan for key talks, 27 June 2019, [url](#)

¹²⁷ Express Tribune (The), Afghanistan's Abdullah Abdullah to visit Pakistan soon, 5 July 2020, [url](#)

¹²⁸ AA, Pakistan's military, intelligence chiefs visit Kabul, 9 June 2020, [url](#)

¹²⁹ VoA, Official: Top Afghan Leader to Visit Pakistan Amid Improving Ties, 5 July 2020, [url](#)

¹³⁰ Al Jazeera, Afghanistan condemns cross-border rocket firing by Pakistan, 16 July 2020, [url](#)

¹³¹ Diplomat (The), What Does Afghanistan's Latest Outreach to Pakistan Mean for India?, 27 July 2020, [url](#)

¹³² Express Tribune (The), Afghanistan and our region's stability, 31 July 2020, [url](#)

¹³³ Anadolu Agency, India-Pakistan in 2019: Mistrust plagues relations, 24 December 2019, [url](#)

¹³⁴ Deutsche Welle, India and Pakistan's troubled history, 27 February 2019, [url](#); BBC News, Kashmir attack: Tracing the path that led to Pulwama, 1 May 2019, [url](#)

¹³⁵ BBC News, Balakot: Indian air strikes target militants in Pakistan, 26 February 2019, [url](#)

administered Kashmir) from its constitution with a presidential decree. Pakistan reacted by stating that it will expel India's high commissioner in Islamabad and suspend all trade with India.¹³⁶ In November 2019, the opening of a corridor to allow Indian pilgrims visa-free access to shrines in Kartarpur established hope on a normalisation of the relation between Pakistan and India.¹³⁷ In June 2020, a diplomatic feud between the two countries erupted, leading to reduce the diplomatic staff in both countries by half.¹³⁸ On 30 June 2020, Prime Minister Imran Khan accused India in the parliament of Pakistan of being behind the attack on the stock exchange building in Karachi.¹³⁹ In August 2020, Pakistan asked the US to mediate and to help deescalate the tensions with India.¹⁴⁰

Pakistan and China have long-standing ties.¹⁴¹ In April 2020, Daniel Markey, a senior research professor, stated that the relationship between the two countries centred much more on military and strategic cooperation than on economic development.¹⁴² The Pakistan government reinforced the security forces in order to protect the workers and projects in regards to the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) after the attack in May 2019 on the Pearl Continental Hotel in Gwadar by the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA).¹⁴³ In October 2019, China expressed their support to Pakistan on the issue of Kashmir.¹⁴⁴ In June 2020, both nations were close to signing an agreement on the start of the second phase of CPEC.¹⁴⁵

A June 2020 article of the Diplomat stated that the relationship between Pakistan and Iran is 'both complex and important'.¹⁴⁶ In April 2019, Pakistan and Iran agreed to set up a joint security force to police the border and to increase bilateral security co-operation.¹⁴⁷ In the aftermath of an attack on Pakistani security forces on 8 May 2020 in the border region with Iran, General Qamar Bajwa, asked his Iranian counterpart to take action against local militant groups operating in Iran.¹⁴⁸

The relationship between the United States and Pakistan is one of ups and downs.¹⁴⁹ According to a statement of the Foreign Minister of Pakistan in September 2019, ties between the United States and Pakistan were improving.¹⁵⁰ In June 2020, Al Jazeera stated that the US mentioned that the US Special Representative for Afghan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad 'expressed his appreciation' in Pakistan efforts in the United States - Afghan peace deal signed in February 2020 in Doha.¹⁵¹ A March 2020 policy paper published by the Middle East Institute (MEI) described the relationship as 'relatively calm'. This policy paper emphasised the strategic differences in how both countries view one another and their different interests in the region.¹⁵²

¹³⁶ BBC News, Kashmir dispute: Pakistan downgrades ties with India, 7 August 2019, [url](#); International Crisis Group, Raising the Stakes in Jammu and Kashmir, 5 August 2020, [url](#)

¹³⁷ Anadolu Agency, India-Pakistan in 2019: Mistrust plagues relations, 24 December 2019, [url](#)

¹³⁸ VoA, Pakistan, India in Diplomatic Feud, 23 June 2020, [url](#)

¹³⁹ Deutsche Welle, Pakistan's Imran Khan blames India for stock exchange attack, 30 June 2020, [url](#)

¹⁴⁰ Dawn, Pakistan urges US to help de-escalate tensions with India, 12 August 2020, [url](#)

¹⁴¹ Diplomat (The), Pakistan's Burgeoning Relationship with China, 24 January 2018, [url](#)

¹⁴² Markey, D., How the United States Should Deal With China in Pakistan, 8 April 2020, The Carnegie-Tsinghua Center for Global Policy, [url](#), p. 8

¹⁴³ Fatima, A., CPEC Security in 2019, 16 June 2020, [url](#), pp. 1-2

¹⁴⁴ Deutsche Welle, Pakistan thanks China for 'support on Kashmir issue', 9 October 2019, [url](#)

¹⁴⁵ Pakistan Today, CPEC second phase all set to commence, Gen (r) Bajwa announces, 18 June 2020, [url](#)

¹⁴⁶ Diplomat (The), Iran and Pakistan: Placing Border Problems in Context, 12 June 2020, [url](#)

¹⁴⁷ Deutsche Welle, Iran, Pakistan agree to joint border 'reaction force', 22 April 2020, [url](#)

¹⁴⁸ Dawn, 6 FC personnel martyred in IED blast near Pak-Iran border, 8 May 2020, [url](#); Al-Monitor, Pakistan calls for tighter security on Iran border following fatal attack, 21 May 2020, [url](#)

¹⁴⁹ Afzal, M., Will the Afghan peace process be Pakistan's road to redemption?, Brookings, 25 June 2020, [url](#)

¹⁵⁰ VoA, Relations With US Improving, Pakistan's Foreign Minister Says, 26 September 2019, [url](#)

¹⁵¹ Al Jazeera, Pakistan, US hold talks on restarting intra-Afghan peace talks, 8 June 2020, [url](#)

¹⁵² Weinbaum, G.M. and Mohammed, Ali S., Seizing the Moment for Change: Pathways to a Sustainable US-Pakistan Relationship, 3 March 2020, MEI, [url](#), p. 1

1.2 Actors in the conflict

1.2.1 State forces

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

Armed Forces

According to the 2020 Global Fire Power Index, Pakistan's military strength was ranked 15th in the world out of 138 countries.¹⁵³ The Global Fire Power Index estimated the total military strength at approximately 1.2 million with 654 000 active personnel and 550 000 reserves.¹⁵⁴ Operational control rests with the National Command Authority (NCA). Pakistan's nuclear and conventional forces have traditionally been oriented and structured against a threat from India. Since 2008, a priority for the army has been counter-insurgency operations, mainly against Islamist groups, for which forces were redeployed from the Indian border.¹⁵⁵

The Pakistani army consists of 26 combat divisions falling under the control of nine army corps. Most divisions are infantry divisions. Pakistan has 425 combat aircraft and has seven airborne early warning and control aircraft.¹⁵⁶ The navy consists of nine frigates, eight submarines, seventeen patrol and coastal vessels, and eight combat capable aircraft according to an article of Reuters.¹⁵⁷ According to the 2018 US Department of Labor report on Child Labor for Pakistan, there is no conscription and no standing military.¹⁵⁸

Since November 2016, the Pakistan army is led by General Qamar Jawed Bajwa.¹⁵⁹ In August 2019, the government of Pakistan extended the tenure of General Bajwa with three years. This move came three months before his tenure would end in November 2019.¹⁶⁰ On 28 November 2019, the Supreme Court of Pakistan granted a six-month extension after initially blocking the government's decision to extend the tenure of General Bajwa.¹⁶¹ On 7 January 2020, the National Assembly passed three bills 'to set a higher retirement age for the chiefs of the Pakistani army, navy and air force'.¹⁶²

Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI)

The ISI is one of several intelligence services in Pakistan. The ISI's task is coordinating intelligence between the branches of the military, collecting foreign and domestic intelligence, and conducting covert offensive operations.¹⁶³ In June 2019, the Pakistani newspaper Dawn reported that Lieutenant-General Faiz Hameed replaced Lieutenant-General Asim Munir as the new head of the ISI.¹⁶⁴

According to Hein Kiessling, a political scientist and historian, the ISI reportedly has close ties with a number of extremist Islamist groups.¹⁶⁵ In the 1990s, the ISI established close relationships with

¹⁵³ Global Fire Power, Pakistan Military Strength (2020), n.d., [url](#)

¹⁵⁴ Global Fire Power, 'Pakistan Military Strength (2020) - Manpower, n.d., [url](#)

¹⁵⁵ IISS, The Military Balance 2018, 14 February 2018, [url](#), p. 291

¹⁵⁶ Reuters, Factbox - Pakistan, India troop strength and weapons, 19 February 2019, [url](#); IISS, The Military Balance 2018, 14 February 2018, [url](#), p. 291

¹⁵⁷ Reuters, Factbox - Pakistan, India troop strength and weapons, 19 February 2019, [url](#); IISS, The Military Balance 2018, 14 February 2018, [url](#), p. 291

¹⁵⁸ US Department of Labor, 2018 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor: Pakistan, 27 December 2018, [url](#), p. 4

¹⁵⁹ New York Times (The), Pakistan Army 'Has Greatly Increased Its Clout' Under New Chief, 28 January 2018, [url](#)

¹⁶⁰ Brookings, The curious case of the Pakistani army chief's extension, 4 December 2019, [url](#)

¹⁶¹ Al Jazeera, Pakistan's top court grants extension to army chief's tenure 28 November 2019, [url](#)

¹⁶² Al Jazeera, Pakistan passes bill legalising extensions for military chiefs, 8 January 2020, [url](#)

¹⁶³ Global Security, ISI Organization, 15 December 2016, [url](#)

¹⁶⁴ Dawn, Faiz made ISI chief in military shake-up, 17 June 2019, [url](#)

¹⁶⁵ Kiessling, H., Faith, Unity, Discipline The Inter-Service-Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan, October 2016, pp. 1-11

groups such as Lashkar-e Taiba (LeT)¹⁶⁶ and JeM to put pressure on India.¹⁶⁷ The US has accused the ISI of supporting groups such as the Afghan Taliban, the Haqqani Network and Pakistani jihadist groups allied with al-Qaeda.¹⁶⁸ The Diplomat stated in October 2018 that former ISI chief Amrullah Salah mentioned that the ISI supports 'terrorist groups'.¹⁶⁹ An April 2020 article published by Al Jazeera stated that 'international rights groups such as Amnesty International have repeatedly accused the ISI of using its surveillance programmes to abduct rights activists alongside legitimate security targets.'¹⁷⁰

The Frontier Corps (FC)

The Frontier Corps (FC) is an auxiliary paramilitary force, formally under the authority of the Interior Ministry.¹⁷¹ According to the US Department of State (USDOS), the Frontier Corps 'reports to the Interior Ministry in peacetime and to the Pakistan army in times of conflict'.¹⁷² Their strength is around 70 000.¹⁷³ There are two major subdivisions, one stationed in KP and one stationed in the province of Balochistan. The FC helps local law enforcement to maintain law and order, to provide assistance with border control and fight against organised crime.¹⁷⁴

Levies and Khassadars

Following the integration of FATA into KP, 'the police began to operate alongside paramilitary forces in the former FATA. Paramilitary forces present in the former FATA included the Frontier Corps, the Frontier Constabulary, Khassadars (hereditary tribal police), and the FATA Levies Force, which reported to deputy commissioners (the appointed administrative heads of each tribal agency)'.¹⁷⁵ In April 2019, the provincial government of KP announced the merger of former FATA Levies and Khassadar forces into KP police.¹⁷⁶ At the end of June 2020, the integration process of the Levies and Khassadar forces was for 90 % completed according to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Inspector General of Police (IGP) Sanaullah Abbasi.¹⁷⁷ In December 2019, the Express Tribune stated that in the province of Balochistan the strength of the Levies is 30 000. The provincial government in Balochistan is in the process of modernising the Levies Force. Several wings of the Levies Force were created, including a CPEC wing, a Quick Reaction Force and an investigation wing.¹⁷⁸

The Rangers

The Rangers are a paramilitary force under the authority of the Interior Ministry. There are two major subdivisions: the Punjabi Rangers headquartered in Lahore and the Sindh Rangers headquartered in Karachi. The Rangers help local law enforcement, provide border security and fight smuggling. According to a March 2016 publication of the government of Pakistan, their total strength is about 23 515 personnel in Punjab and 27 778 in Sindh.¹⁷⁹ No recent figures could be found in the reference period of this report. In April 2020, the Sindh government decided to prolong 'the special policing

¹⁶⁶ BBC News, Hafiz Saeed: Will Pakistan's 'terror cleric' stay in jail?, 13 February 2020, [url](#)

¹⁶⁷ Kiessling, H., Faith, Unity, Discipline The Inter-Service-Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan, October 2016, pp. 1-11

¹⁶⁸ Reuters, Mattis says will try to work with Pakistan 'one more time', 3 October 2017, [url](#); Al Jazeera, Pakistan appoints new head of powerful intelligence agency, 10 October 2018, [url](#)

¹⁶⁹ Diplomat (The), Why Pakistan Isn't Changing Its Taliban Policy, 25 October 2018, [url](#)

¹⁷⁰ Al Jazeera, Pakistan using intelligence services to track coronavirus cases, 24 April 2020, [url](#)

¹⁷¹ IISS, The Military Balance 2018, 14 February 2018, [url](#), p. 294

¹⁷² USDOS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2019 - Pakistan, 11 March 2020, [url](#), p. 1

¹⁷³ IISS, The Military Balance 2018, 14 February 2018, [url](#), p. 294

¹⁷⁴ Jaffrelot, C., Pakistan at the Crossroads Domestic Dynamics and External Pressures, April 2016, pp. 140-141; USDOS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2019 - Pakistan, 11 March 2020, [url](#), p. 1

¹⁷⁵ USDOS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2018 - Pakistan, 13 March 2019, [url](#), p. 9

¹⁷⁶ Nation (The), Khasadar, Levies forces merged into KP police, 9 April 2019, [url](#)

¹⁷⁷ TNN, 90% process of integrating Levies, Khassadars into KP Police completed: IGP, 30 June 2020, [url](#)

¹⁷⁸ Express Tribune (The), Govt modernising Levies force, 22 December 2019, [url](#)

¹⁷⁹ National Commission for Government Reforms Prime Minister's office Government of Pakistan, A functional and legal classification of Corporations, autonomous bodies and attached departments under the federal government, March 2016, [url](#), p. 69

powers¹⁸⁰ of the Rangers in Sindh, extending by three months their deployment and mandate in Karachi.¹⁸¹

The Pakistani police

The Pakistani police, as a primary domestic security force, is responsible for most parts of the country. USDOS reported that the local police are under the jurisdiction of provincial governments.¹⁸² Policing is a provincial subject: each of the federating units has its own police force.¹⁸³ According to USIP, the Pakistani police is underfunded, and has shortfalls in facilities and equipment. They are facing the difficult task of fighting rising crime.¹⁸⁴ The police is perceived as 'inefficient, corrupt, brutal, unprofessional and politicised'.¹⁸⁵ In July 2019, Dawn stated that instead of structural reforms such as capacity building and financing, the focus has been on increasing the force's numerical strength.¹⁸⁶

Pro-government militia

Tribal militias (so-called *Lashkars*) emerged in 2008 in the tribal belt. The Pakistani military counted on the tribal militias 'to work as localized forces' and to help fight the Taliban in the tribal area in 2008.¹⁸⁷ In May 2016, according to Dawn, the provincial government of KP decided to discontinue their financing.¹⁸⁸

1.2.2 Armed groups

Cyril Almeida, former assistant editor and journalist of Dawn newspaper stated in his presentation during a workshop organised by EASO in October 2017, that armed groups in Pakistan can broadly be divided into five major groups:

- **Anti-Pakistan militants:** groups that have taken up arms against the state and carry out attacks inside Pakistan. The main group is the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP);
- **India-centric militants:** main examples are LeT and JeM;
- **Afghan-centric militants:** mostly Pashtun militants with bases on Pakistani territory such as the Afghan Taliban and the Haqqani network;
- **Sectarian groups:** examples are the Punjabi Taliban, Sipah-e Sahaba Pakistan (SSP), and Lashkar-e Jhangvi (LeJ);
- **Foreign groups:** al-Qaeda, the Arab militants, the Uzbeks and the Chechens are examples of foreign groups. According to Cyril Almeida, the numbers of foreign groups are rather small.¹⁸⁹

A January 2019 report by RSIS stated that 'one of the key characteristics of Pakistan's terrorist landscape is that it is not static and evolves in the short-term – with shifting allegiances, emergence of decentralised networks and cells.'¹⁹⁰ Further, the RSIS report mentioned that the militant groups are 'continuously evolving and reviving in a changing security environment'. They try 'to consolidate

¹⁸⁰ Daily Times, Rangers' special powers extended by another 90 days in Karachi, 5 May 2020, [url](#)

¹⁸¹ Dawn, Rangers' powers in Karachi extended for 90 more days, 6 April 2020, [url](#)

¹⁸² USDOS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2019 - Pakistan, 11 March 2020, [url](#), p. 1

¹⁸³ Daily Times, Police service-challenges and reforms, 6 October 2018, [url](#); HRCP and FIDH, Punished for being vulnerable; How Pakistan executes the poorest and the most marginalized in society, 8 October 2019, [url](#), p. 9

¹⁸⁴ USIP, A Counterterrorism Role for Pakistan's Police Stations, 18 August 2014, [url](#), pp. 3-4

¹⁸⁵ Dawn, Sisyphean task, 21 July 2019, [url](#); International News (The), Inefficiency, corruption smears police department, 12 March 2018, [url](#); International News (The), Inefficiency and corruption blotch police, 17 June 2019, [url](#)

¹⁸⁶ Dawn, Sisyphean task, 21 July 2019, [url](#)

¹⁸⁷ New York Times (The), Pakistan Uses Tribal Militias in Taliban War, 23 October 2008, [url](#); USDOS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2018 - Pakistan, 13 March 2019, [url](#), p. 8

¹⁸⁸ Dawn, Death by lashkar: The forgotten protectors of Adezai village, 9 May 2016, [url](#)

¹⁸⁹ Almeida, C., EASO, COI Meeting Report: Pakistan; 16-17 October 2017, Rome, February 2018, [url](#), pp. 22-23

¹⁹⁰ RSIS, Annual Threat Assessment-South Asia, January 2019, [url](#), p. 52

their operational strengths, as they compete with each other, and face counterterrorism operations'.¹⁹¹

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

Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP)

The TTP (also called Pakistani Taliban) was founded in 2007 by Baitullah Mehsud, who was killed in 2009 by a US drone strike. The initial objectives of the organisation were the implementation of Sharia law, the ousting of coalition forces from Afghanistan and a 'defensive jihad against Pakistani security forces'.¹⁹² The group was banned in August 2008 by the government of Pakistan.¹⁹³ The term Pakistani Taliban was also used to describe various groups.¹⁹⁴ The TTP is an umbrella organisation that was formed out of about 13 distinct Pakistani Taliban factions.¹⁹⁵ In 2013, the nomination of hardliner Mullah Fazlullah as successor for B. Mehsud was considered a rejection of possible peace talks with the Pakistani authorities.¹⁹⁶

Military operations during 2011-2015 eliminated the strongholds of the TTP in the former FATA. Under the strain of military operations in North Waziristan in 2014, the rise of ISKP and tensions within the group over the leadership of Fazlullah, the TTP split into different factions.¹⁹⁷ The TTP is a Pakistan- and Afghanistan-based terrorist organisation and operates in both Pakistan and Afghanistan.¹⁹⁸

In June 2018, the TTP confirmed that TTP leader Mullah Fazlullah was killed by a US drone strike in the province of Kunar in Afghanistan.¹⁹⁹ The TTP appointed Mufti Noor Wali Mehsud as the new 'emir' or TTP leader. According to analyst and managing editor of the Long War Journal (LWJ) Bill Roggio, the leadership of the TTP hereby returned to the Mehsud tribe in its home base of North and South Waziristan.²⁰⁰ Mufti Hazratullah was named deputy emir.²⁰¹ In September 2018, the TTP released a redefined code of conduct to outline internal procedures, tactics and efforts to seek unification of the different factions.²⁰² An expert on terrorism in Pakistan, Farhan Zahid, stated in April 2019 that the challenges for Mufti Noor Wali Mehsud are to reunite various TTP factions and to establish his authority over them while re-establishing TTP's organisational infrastructure in Pakistan.²⁰³ Different sources indicated that the TTP was going through a resurgence and becoming operationally active again.²⁰⁴ In the first half of 2018 and especially in the run-up to the general elections, the TTP claimed responsibility for two attacks in July 2018. According to the source, this indicated the operational strength of the TTP.²⁰⁵ A breakaway group of the TTP was also active in South Waziristan where they were organised in one of the peace committees.²⁰⁶ The 2019 annual security report of PIPS stated that

¹⁹¹ RSIS, Annual Threat Assessment-South Asia, January 2019, [url](#), pp. 52-53

¹⁹² RSIS, Annual Threat Assessment-South Asia, January 2019, [url](#), pp. 52-53

¹⁹³ Stanford University, Mapping Militant Organizations. "TTP.", last updated: July 2018, [url](#)

¹⁹⁴ IPCS, Pakistan's Militant Groups in 2015, January 2015, [url](#), p. 4

¹⁹⁵ Jeffery, F., Documenting: Jihadist groups operating in Afghanistan, Aurora Intel, 2 June 2019, [url](#)

¹⁹⁶ Guardian (The), Pakistani Taliban select hardliner Mullah Fazlullah as new leader, 8 November 2013, [url](#)

¹⁹⁷ Jaffrelot, C., The Pakistan Paradox: Instability and Resilience, April 2015, p. 212; Jeffery, F., Documenting: Jihadist groups operating in Afghanistan, Aurora Intel, 2 June 2019, [url](#)

¹⁹⁸ USDOS, Country Report on Terrorism 2019, 24 June 2020, [url](#), pp. 300-301

¹⁹⁹ Dawn, TTP chief targeted in Afghan drone strike: US, 15 June 2018, [url](#); LWJ, Pakistani Taliban appoints new emir after confirming death of Mullah Fazlullah, 23 June 2018, [url](#)

²⁰⁰ LWJ, Pakistani Taliban appoints new emir after confirming death of Mullah Fazlullah, 23 June 2018, [url](#)

²⁰¹ Jamestown Foundation (The), Pakistani Taliban: Mullah Fazlullah's Death Revives Mehsud Clan Fortunes, 13 July 2018, [url](#)

²⁰² Ur Rehman, Z., Pakistani Taliban: Between infighting, government crackdowns and Daesh, TRT World, 18 April 2019, [url](#); RSIS, Annual Threat Assessment-South Asia, January 2019, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, [url](#), p. 53; Refslund Hamming, T., Jihadists' Code of Conduct in the Era of ISIS, Middle East Institute, 29 April 2019, [url](#)

²⁰³ Zahid, F., Profile of New TTP Chief Mufti Noor Wali Mehsud: Challenges and Implications, 15 April 2019, PIPS, [url](#)

²⁰⁴ RSIS, Annual Threat Assessment-South Asia, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, January 2019, [url](#), p. 53; Baloch, H., TTP's Ambush on Pakistan Army, The Beginning of a Resurgence?, ITCT, 28 September 2018, [url](#)

²⁰⁵ RSIS, Annual Threat Assessment-South Asia, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, January 2019, [url](#), p. 53

²⁰⁶ Kanwal Sheikh, M., New conflict lines in Pakistan's tribal areas, 6 July 2018, [url](#)

the group is 'apparently also struggling to come back to its traditional hub in South and North Waziristan'.²⁰⁷ The TTP tried 'to re-cultivate its support base in these areas of KP'.²⁰⁸ In September 2019, the US Department of State included Mufti Noor Wali Mehsud in its Specially Designated Global Terrorist list.²⁰⁹ In February 2020, the TTP has suffered some losses. Some senior TTP leaders were killed in Afghanistan.²¹⁰ On 16 July 2020, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) added emir Mufti Noor Wali Mehsud to its list of terrorist leaders and operatives who associated with al-Qaeda.²¹¹ In July 2020, the TTP announced that the Hakimullah Mehsud group returned to the TTP.²¹² In August 2020, the splinter groups JuA and HuA rejoined the TTP.²¹³

Referring to a 2019 USDOD report, security analyst Faran Jeffery, reported that the TTP consists of an estimated number of 3 000 to 5 000 active militants in Afghanistan. While holding sanctuaries across the border in eastern Afghanistan, the TTP has 'some sleeper cells and sympathizers left in Pakistan'.²¹⁴ Afghanistan is the base of operations but the group is generally not conducting attacks in Afghanistan. The TTP focuses on fighting the Pakistani government.²¹⁵ According to a May 2020 report by the UNSC, the TTP is 'thought to have approximately 500 fighters in Kunar and about 180 in Nangarhar'. The TTP holds a presence in the Lal Pura district, near the border area of Mohmand Darah, Pakistan.²¹⁶ A July 2020 report by the UNSC stated that between 6 000 and 6 500 Pakistani insurgents are hiding in Afghanistan, most of them belonging the TTP. The report mentioned that the TTP has linked up with the Afghan-based affiliate of Islamic State. Some of the former TTP's members joined the IS affiliate according to the UNSC.²¹⁷ The annual report of 2019, published in January 2020, by PICSS cited sources claiming that the TTP shifted its operational command from Kunar province to the area adjacent to Waziristan.²¹⁸ The LWJ stated that 'over the past year, the TTP began to assert itself in its traditional stronghold of South Waziristan'.²¹⁹ In June 2020, Dawn reported that the Awami National Party (ANP) accused local tribal leaders in South Waziristan of 'handing over responsibility to maintain peace' to the local Taliban.²²⁰

In 2019, according to PIPS, the TTP was involved in 82 'terrorist attacks', compared to 79 in 2018.²²¹ These attacks were concentrated in KP and Balochistan in 2019.²²² Asad Hashim stated in July 2020 about the TTP that 'the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) remains a threat to security, mainly in north-western KP province and Punjab province'.²²³ LWJ stated in July 2020 that fighting between the TTP

²⁰⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 69

²⁰⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 69

²⁰⁹ USDOS, Terrorist Designations under Amended Executive Order to Modernize Sanctions to Combat Terrorism, 10 September 2019, [url](#)

²¹⁰ Dawn, TTP confirms killing of key member, aide in Afghanistan, 9 February 2020, [url](#); Dawn, Senior TTP leader killed in Kunar bomb blast, 14 February 2020, [url](#)

²¹¹ UNSC, Noor Wali Mehsud, 16 July 2020, [url](#)

²¹² Diplomat (The), The Resurgence of the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, 18 July 2020, [url](#)

²¹³ Al Jazeera, Pakistan Taliban reunites with two splinter groups, 18 August 2020, [url](#)

²¹⁴ Jeffery, F., Documenting: Jihadist groups operating in Afghanistan, Aurora Intel, 2 June 2019, [url](#)

²¹⁵ USDOD, Operation Freedom's Sentinel Lead Inspector General report to the United States Congress January 1, 2019-March 31, 2019, 5 August 2019, [url](#), p. 24

²¹⁶ UNSC, Letter dated 19 May 2020 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) addressed to the President of the Security Council, 27 May 2020, [url](#), p. 20

²¹⁷ UNSC, Letter dated 16 July 2020 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities addressed to the President of the Security Council, 23 July 2020, [url](#), p. 16

²¹⁸ PICSS, 2019 Annual Security Assessment Report, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 30

²¹⁹ LWJ, UN sanctions emir of the Pakistani Taliban, 17 July 2020, [url](#)

²²⁰ Dawn, ANP plans legal action against tribal elders of South Waziristan, 5 June 2020, [url](#)

²²¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 74; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 68

²²² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 68

²²³ Hashim, A., email, 6 July 2020

and the Pakistani military intensified in North Waziristan and were concentrated around the TTP strongholds in Datta Khel and Miramshah.²²⁴

Jamaat-ul Ahrar (JuA)

The JuA is a faction of the TTP but operates with a degree of autonomy.²²⁵ In the summer of 2014, the JuA split from the TTP.²²⁶ In March 2015, the group re-joined the TTP but released its own statements on attacks.²²⁷ The Diplomat reported in March 2017 that the group is operating from Lalpur in Nangarhar province in Afghanistan.²²⁸ The US government estimated that approximately 200 JuA militants were present in Afghanistan.²²⁹

The leadership of JuA reportedly had ties to al-Qaeda and its emir, Ayman al Zawahiri.²³⁰ In 2017, JuA was led by Omar Khalid al Khurasani, a Taliban commander from Mohmand Agency. A spokesperson for the group revealed that Khurasani was killed in October 2017 in a US drone strike in Afghanistan.²³¹ However, Khurasani reportedly released a statement, just days after his presumed death. The US also did not confirm his death.²³² In August 2020, JuA rejoined the TTP.²³³

In August 2016, USDOS added the group to its list of global terrorists organisations.²³⁴ In July 2017, JuA was listed as a terrorist group by the UNSC.²³⁵ In February 2017, JuA announced its strategy for 2017 and named their action plan Operation Ghazi.²³⁶ The group encountered internal rivalry and a faction led by former spokesperson Mukarram formed a separate group called HuA in November 2017.²³⁷ Different sources stated that since then the JuA is losing operational strength and human resources.²³⁸ According to PIPS the weak organisational structure is due to internal rivalry and the loss of important commanders to the security forces and the TTP.²³⁹ The main targets of the group were military and law enforcement personnel, government buildings, politicians, minority groups and lawyers.²⁴⁰ PIPS documented that in 2019, the JuA was involved in 1 'terrorist attack' compared to 15 in 2018.²⁴¹ This single attack by JuA in 2019 was reported from KP province.²⁴²

Hizbul Ahrar (HuA)

Hizbul Ahrar is a breakaway faction of the JuA. In November 2017, Mukkaram Khan announced the formation of HuA in a video message.²⁴³ Mukkaram Khan is a commander originating from Mohmand

²²⁴ LWJ, UN sanctions emir of the Pakistani Taliban, 17 July 2020, [url](#)

²²⁵ LWJ, Mehsud faction rejoins the Movement of the Taliban in Pakistan, 4 February 2017, [url](#)

²²⁶ LWJ, Taliban splinter group Jamaat-ul-Ahrar forms in northwestern Pakistan, 26 August 2014, [url](#); Nation (The), Ex-TTP spokesman surrender a major breakthrough, 18 April 2017, [url](#)

²²⁷ Roggio, B. and Weiss, C., Pakistani Taliban faction showcases training camp, suicide attacks, 2 February 2017, [url](#)

²²⁸ Diplomat (The), Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the 'Good Taliban', 10 March 2017, [url](#)

²²⁹ USDOD, Operation Freedom's Sentinel Lead Inspector General report to the United States Congress January 1, 2019-March 31, 2019, 5 August 2019, [url](#), p. 25

²³⁰ Roggio, B. and Weiss, C., Pakistani Taliban faction showcases training camp, suicide attacks, 2 February 2017, [url](#)

²³¹ Express Tribune (The), Khorasani confirmed dead in US drone strike, 19 October 2017, [url](#)

²³² LWJ, Leader of Jamaat-ul-Ahrar emerges after reports of his death, 22 October 2017, [url](#)

²³³ Al Jazeera, Pakistan Taliban reunites with two splinter groups, 18 August 2020, [url](#)

²³⁴ USDOS, State Department Terrorist Designations and State sponsors of terrorism, 19 May 2019, [url](#)

²³⁵ Dawn, Pakistan welcomes UNSC sanctions on Jamaat-ul-Ahrar, 7 July 2017, [url](#)

²³⁶ FRC, Strategic Code of Conduct for "Operation Ghazi", 16 February 2017, [url](#)

²³⁷ Dawn, Taliban splinter group splits further, 13 November 2017, [url](#)

²³⁸ RSIS, Annual Threat Assessment-South Asia, January 2019, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, [url](#), p. 54; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 74; PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2018, 19 April 2019, [url](#), pp. 23-24

²³⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 69

²⁴⁰ Dawn, Pakistan welcomes UNSC sanctions on Jamaat-ul-Ahrar, 7 July 2017, [url](#)

²⁴¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 74; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 69

²⁴² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 68

²⁴³ Dawn, Taliban splinter group splits further, 13 November 2017, [url](#)

tribal district. This group is orientated against the US and its allies.²⁴⁴ In April 2018, HuA announced Operation Ibne Qasim²⁴⁵, directed against the Pakistani security forces while promising not to harm civilians, according to Farhan Jeffery on Twitter in April 2018.²⁴⁶ In September 2018, the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) claimed that it had neutralised a network of HuA.²⁴⁷ In February 2019, HuA announced an operation against the Pakistani security forces named Operation Shamzai.²⁴⁸ In January 2020, HuA announced a new operation named Operation Haqqani.²⁴⁹

In August 2019, HuA was banned in Pakistan under Section 11-B of Pakistan's Anti-Terrorism Act.²⁵⁰ In an article of December 2019 expert Animesh Roul stated that HuA carried out 'targeted attacks in regular intervals'. In 2019, the HuA killed several Pakistani soldiers and police officers in targeted attacks.²⁵¹ Roul stated further that 'one of the core strengths of HuA remains its cross-border presence and ability to launch attacks on Pakistani forces from Afghan soil by employing suicide bombers and hit and run tactics.'²⁵² In February 2020, BBC News reported that the Afghan forces conducted a raid on HuA in the province of Nangarhar in Afghanistan. The fact that the Afghan forces attacked HuA caused disbelief by members of HuA because they never carried out attacks in Afghanistan.²⁵³ In August 2020, HuA rejoined the TTP.²⁵⁴

According to PIPS, in 2019 the group was involved in 14 'terrorist attacks' and claimed responsibility of 1 attack in Balochistan, 3 attacks each in Punjab and 10 in KP province.²⁵⁵ In January 2020, HuA claimed a bomb blast that hit a paramilitary force vehicle.²⁵⁶ According to Gandhara, HuA claimed responsibility for an attack on two police officers in Islamabad at the end of May 2020.²⁵⁷

The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)

The original aim of IMU is to overthrow the Uzbek government.²⁵⁸ The IMU has been active in the Pakistani tribal region since late 2001, where it regrouped after sustaining heavy losses fighting alongside the Taliban during the US invasion of Afghanistan. Under the leadership of Toher Yuldash the group targeted the Pakistani security forces from its bases in North and South Waziristan. Since 2007, the IMU formed an alliance with the TTP and fought alongside them. In 2009, Yuldashev was killed in a drone attack. Pakistan's military operations forced the IMU to flee to North Waziristan where it started to cooperate with the Haqqani Network. Osman Odil became the new leader of the organisation in 2010. In 2015, a radical splinter group of IMU - the Islamic Jihad Union (IJU) - tried to export terrorism from its Pakistan base.²⁵⁹ On 8 June 2014, IMU militants staged a major attack on Karachi Airport.²⁶⁰ The Pakistani army subsequently made it a priority to eradicate the group. Most of its militants fled to Afghanistan.²⁶¹ At the end of March 2015, the IMU reportedly pledged allegiance

²⁴⁴ Pakistan Today, Hizbul Ahrar takes birth as internal rifts tear Jamaatul Ahrar apart, 13 November 2017, [url](#)

²⁴⁵ ITCT, Hizbul Ahrar, n.d., [url](#)

²⁴⁶ FJ [Twitter], posted on: 24 April 2018, [url](#)

²⁴⁷ Dawn, CTD Punjab 'breaks' TTP, Hizbul Ahrar network, 18 September 2018, [url](#)

²⁴⁸ Jeffery, F., Documenting: Jihadist groups operating in Afghanistan, Aurora Intel, 2 June 2019, [url](#)

²⁴⁹ PICSS, 2019 Annual Security Assessment Report, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 32

²⁵⁰ Dawn, Nacta slaps ban on two more organisations, 23 August 2019, [url](#)

²⁵¹ Roul, A., Hizb ul-Ahrar: Pakistan's Cross-border Taliban Problem Remains Critical, 17 December 2019, Terrorism Monitor, volume 17, issue 23, [url](#)

²⁵² Roul, A., Hizb ul-Ahrar: Pakistan's Cross-border Taliban Problem Remains Critical, 17 December 2019, Terrorism Monitor, volume 17, issue 23, [url](#)

²⁵³ BBC News, Crackdown on militants as US and Afghan Taliban seek deal, 15 February 2020, [url](#)

²⁵⁴ Al Jazeera, Pakistan Taliban reunites with two splinter groups, 18 August 2020, [url](#)

²⁵⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 69

²⁵⁶ RFE/RL, Pakistan Mosque Blast Kills 15, Including Senior Police Officer, 10 January 2020, [url](#)

²⁵⁷ Gandhara, Suspected Militants Kill Two Pakistani Policemen In Islamabad, 27 May 2020, [url](#)

²⁵⁸ RFE/RL, What Next For The Islamic Movement Of Uzbekistan?, 23 August 2015, [url](#)

²⁵⁹ RFE/RL, What Next For The Islamic Movement Of Uzbekistan?, 23 August 2015, [url](#)

²⁶⁰ BBC News, Karachi airport: Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan claims attack, 11 June 2014, [url](#)

²⁶¹ RFE/RL, What Next For The Islamic Movement Of Uzbekistan?, 23 August 2015, [url](#)

to ISKP.²⁶² 'However, some elements within IMU retained the name of the group along with its alliance with al-Qaeda, the Afghan Taliban and the TTP. Remnants of IMU continue to fight alongside the Taliban in Afghanistan.'²⁶³ A June 2020 report of USDOS mentioned that exact numbers of IMU's strength are unknown.²⁶⁴ In July 2020, a brief in Terrorism Monitor stated that the IMU 'is largely defunct and the relationship with the Taliban has been severely damaged by defections to IS-K[...]'.²⁶⁵

Al-Qaeda

Following the US invasion of Afghanistan, many al-Qaeda operatives withdrew to the Pakistani tribal regions. By 2008, they were so deeply entrenched in Waziristan that, according to American intelligence officials, the area had become al-Qaeda's 'international operations hub'.²⁶⁶ Among their ranks were also Arabs, Uzbeks, Chechens and Chinese Muslims.²⁶⁷

In former FATA, al-Qaeda had aligned itself with several militant groups, offering support with manpower, training and propaganda. It also attacked the government of Pakistan, which was viewed as apostate for allying itself with the US-led war on terrorism. Al-Qaeda in Waziristan attempted to develop privileged relations with the IUJ.²⁶⁸ According to Farhan Zahid, al-Qaeda has suffered losses and setbacks. In August 2017, al-Qaeda was attempting to resurrect itself in Pakistan, possibly with the help of the Jamaat-ul Ansar al-Sharia.²⁶⁹ According to an article published by Combating Terrorism Center in September 2017, the presence of al-Qaeda in Karachi 'appears to have grown in recent years'.²⁷⁰ According to PIPS, Pakistani officials consider al-Qaeda still as a potential threat.²⁷¹ In October 2019, Dawn cited the CTD in Karachi, who claimed that al-Qaeda was regrouping in Karachi and trying to activate their sleeper cells.²⁷² In December 2019, the CTD Punjab arrested five members and closed down a media cell of al-Qaeda in Gujranwala.²⁷³ In April 2020, four members of al-Qaeda were arrested in Karachi. According to an article of Dawn, this indicates that the group still has a presence and that law enforcement agencies have to be vigilant.²⁷⁴

According to PIPS, al-Qaeda was not attributed any 'terrorist attack' in 2019 in Pakistan.²⁷⁵

Jamaat-ul Ansar Al-Sharia

Jamaat-ul Ansar Al-Sharia is believed to be an umbrella organisation of Islamist terrorist organisations endeavouring to converge into a platform to reintroduce al-Qaeda and restart armed activities under its banner.²⁷⁶ It emerged in Pakistan in April 2017. The mastermind of the group is allegedly Abdul Karim Saroush Siddiqui and militants are educated with sound technical knowledge of the media. A security official, cited in Dawn, stated that the exact date of the formation of this group was still not known though it was initially believed that 'the genesis of the group could be traced to Pakistanis fighting in Syria.' This group is believed to operate in urban centres, particularly Karachi. The same

²⁶² Stanford University, Mapping Militant Organizations, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, last updated August 2018, [url](#)

²⁶³ Jeffery, F., Documenting: Jihadist groups operating in Afghanistan, Aurora Intel, 2 June 2019, [url](#)

²⁶⁴ USDOS, Country Report on Terrorism 2019, 24 June 2020, [url](#), p. 264

²⁶⁵ Perkins, M.B., What Will Come of Uzbek and Central Asian Militant Groups Fighting Alongside the Taliban?, 28 July 2020, Terrorism Monitor, volume: 18, issue: 15, [url](#)

²⁶⁶ Guardian (The), Waziristan: the hub of al-Qaida operations, 7 January 2008, [url](#); Rashid, A., Descent into Chaos, 2008, pp. 268-269

²⁶⁷ Reuters Alertnet, Analysis - The ties that kill: Pakistan militant groups uniting, 30 May 2010, [url](#)

²⁶⁸ CSIS, Religion and militancy in Pakistan and Afghanistan, 29 June 2012, [url](#), pp. 67-68

²⁶⁹ Zahid, F., The Return of Al-Qaeda to Pakistan, Middle East Institute, 24 August 2017, [url](#)

²⁷⁰ Combating Terrorism Center, Al-Qa'ida in Pakistan: A Metric Problem?, September 2017, [url](#)

²⁷¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 71

²⁷² Dawn, CTD says splinter group of outlawed AQIS regrouping in Karachi, 15 October 2019, [url](#)

²⁷³ Dawn, Militant outfit's media cell in Gujranwala busted, 27 December 2019, [url](#)

²⁷⁴ Dawn, AQIS cell busted, 21 April 2020, [url](#)

²⁷⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 71

²⁷⁶ Zahid, F., Jamaat ul Ansar al-Sharia: The New al-Qaeda Threat in Pakistan Publication, Terrorism Monitor Volume: 15 Issue: 18, 22 September 2017, [url](#); Zahid, F., The Return of Al-Qaeda to Pakistan, Middle East Institute, 24 August 2017, [url](#)

article mentioned that the group had basically been neutralised in a wave of arrests in September 2017.²⁷⁷

PIPS did not attribute any attack to this group in the 2019 annual security report.²⁷⁸ No further information could be found about the Jamaat-ul Ansar Al-Sharia in Pakistan during the reference period.

The Punjabi Taliban

‘The Punjabi Taliban network is a loose conglomeration of members of banned militant groups of Punjabi origin’, mostly sectarian and previously Kashmir insurgency focused, who have developed strong links with the TTP. The major factions of this network include operatives from LeJ, Sipah-e Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) and JeM and their splinter groups (for details on these groups, see their separate sections in this chapter).²⁷⁹ In 2014, the TTP Punjab chapter was led by Maulana Asmatullah Muawiya.²⁸⁰ In September 2014, Muawiya first intended to shift his militant activities from Pakistan to Afghanistan, and then some days later announced he would give up armed struggle in Pakistan entirely and use peaceful means instead.²⁸¹ In April 2016, it was reported that the Punjabi Taliban was considered weakened and scattered.²⁸² No further information could be found about the Punjabi Taliban in Pakistan during the reference period.

Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP)

The first reports about ISKP (also called ISIS, ISIL, IS, or Daesh) appearing in Pakistan date back to the beginning of 2015.²⁸³ IS envisaged global expansion of the caliphate and designated the region of Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran and the Central Asian republics Wilayat Khorasan (ISKP – Islamic State Khorasan Province).²⁸⁴ In May 2019, Islamic State announced Wilayat Pakistan (Islamic State Pakistan Province, ISPP)²⁸⁵ after claiming multiple attacks in the province of Balochistan.²⁸⁶ A former TTP commander from Karachi, Daud Mehsud, has appointed as ‘emir’ of ISPP.²⁸⁷ Antonio Giustozzi, an independent researcher and a visiting professor at King’s College London, stated in February 2016 that ISKP had an estimated 2 000 to 3 000 members in Pakistan, including ‘fighters and support elements’.²⁸⁸ Different militant groups such as Tehrik-e-Khilafat Pakistan, the Shahidullah Shahid Group of TTP, Jundullah and IMU pledged allegiance to the leader of IS, al-Baghdadi.²⁸⁹ The group has strong alliances with anti-Shia Sunni militant groups.²⁹⁰

Farhan Zahid stated that ISKP had managed to increase its influence by forming ‘tactical alliances’ with similar local militant groups. ISKP asserted its dominance through local affiliates in urban centres of

²⁷⁷ Dawn, The rise and ‘fall’ of Ansarul Sharia Pakistan, 9 September 2017, [url](#)

²⁷⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020 [url](#)

²⁷⁹ Abbas, H., Defining the Punjabi Taliban Network, 15 April 2009, [url](#)

²⁸⁰ Ur Rehman, Z., Pakistani Taliban: Between infighting, government crackdowns and Daesh, TRT World, 18 April 2019, [url](#)

²⁸¹ Dawn, Punjabi Taliban call off armed struggle in Pakistan, 13 September 2014, [url](#); Dawn, Punjabi Taliban give up ‘armed struggle’, 14 September 2014, [url](#)

²⁸² International News (The), Who are Punjabi Taliban?, 24 April 2016, [url](#)

²⁸³ Henry Jackson Society (The), ISIS Khorasan: Presence and potential in the Afghanistan Pakistan- region, October 2017, [url](#), pp. 4-7; USIP, The Islamic State in Pakistan, 21 September 2016, [url](#)

²⁸⁴ Jamestown Foundation, Islamic State in Afghanistan Ready to Capitalize on Mullah Omar’s Death, 3 September 2015, [url](#)

²⁸⁵ Throughout this report reference is made to ISKP

²⁸⁶ Jeffery, F., What Does Islamic State’s Wilayat al-Hind & Wilayat Pakistan Mean?, ITCT, 20 May 2019, [url](#)

²⁸⁷ RSIS, Annual Threat Assessment-South Asia, January 2020, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, [url](#), p. 58

²⁸⁸ Giustozzi, A., The Islamic State in ‘Khorasan’: A Nuanced View, RUSSI commentary, 5 February 2016, [url](#)

²⁸⁹ Jamestown Foundation (The), ‘Growing Evidence of Islamic State in Pakistan’, 4 February 2016, [url](#); Diplomat (The), The Islamic State Threat Is Real in Pakistan, 18 February 2016, [url](#)

²⁹⁰ RSIS, Annual Threat Assessment-South Asia, January 2020, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, [url](#), p. 58; Basit, A., The US-Taliban Deal and Expected US Exit from Afghanistan: Impact on South Asian Militant Landscape, June 2020, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, volume 12, issue 4, [url](#), p. 13

Pakistan.²⁹¹ Different sources reported that ISKP in 2016- 2017 had recruitment networks in several major urban regions such as Peshawar and Karachi.²⁹² In a report of May 2019 by Huzaifa Baloch, a writer on security issues, it is stated that ISKP has ex-TTP commanders within its ranks and this makes it easy for this group to carry out attacks in Pakistan.²⁹³

According to a January 2020 report by RSIS, ISKP has 'primarily' a presence in the province of Balochistan.²⁹⁴ According to PIPS 2019 annual security situation report, law enforcement agencies conducted multiple operations in Balochistan against ISKP.²⁹⁵ In June 2019, the CTD of Punjab killed two ISKP militants and closed 'a big chapter' of ISKP in the province.²⁹⁶ In May 2020, four members linked to an ISKP group were killed in Bahawalpur in the province of Punjab.²⁹⁷

PIPS documented that ISKP was responsible for one 'terrorist attack' in 2019, compared to five in 2018.²⁹⁸ In the past two years, ISKP claimed some of the deadliest attacks in Pakistan²⁹⁹, including the attack on the Mastung election rally which killed more than 130 people and injured 300 in July 2018.³⁰⁰ ISKP claimed a series of deadly attacks in Balochistan in May 2019.³⁰¹

Haqqani Network

The Haqqani network is an insurgent group that was formed in the late 1980s.³⁰² Afghan warlord Jalaluddin Haqqani founded the Haqqani Network.³⁰³ In September 2018, Jalaluddin Haqqani reportedly died aged 71.³⁰⁴ In July 2015, Sirajuddin Haqqani was appointed as one of two deputy heads of the Afghan Taliban.³⁰⁵ The group's leadership historically maintained a power base around Pakistan's tribal areas.³⁰⁶ According to a USDOD report of May 2020:

'The DIA also told the DoD OIG that Pakistan continues to harbor the Taliban and associated militant groups in Pakistan, such as the Haqqani Network, which maintains the ability to conduct attacks against Afghan interests.'³⁰⁷

It was reported in 2017 that the Haqqani Network also had a long-standing relationship with the ISI, which led to frictions between Pakistan and the US.³⁰⁸ The Haqqani network was also believed to have ties with al-Qaeda.³⁰⁹ A United States general stated in November 2014 that ongoing Pakistani military

²⁹¹ Zahid, F., 'IS Footprint in Pakistan: Nature of Presence, Method of Recruitment, and Future Outlook', Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, Volume 9, Issue 5, May 2017, [url](#)

²⁹² Jamestown Foundation (The), 'Growing Evidence of Islamic State in Pakistan', 4 February 2016, [url](#); IRIN, Islamic State ramps up recruitment in Pakistan, 11 January 2017, [url](#); Wall Street Journal (The), Pakistan Frets Over Potential Appeal of Islamic State, 23 February 2016, [url](#); VoA, Islamic State Takes Root, Grows Along Afghan-Pakistan Border, 1 March 2017, [url](#)

²⁹³ Baloch, H., Peace Talks, ISKP and TTP--The Future in Question, ITCT, 6 May 2019, [url](#)

²⁹⁴ RSIS, Annual Threat Assessment-South Asia, January 2020, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, [url](#), p. 58

²⁹⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 70-71

²⁹⁶ VoA, Pakistan Says it Struck a Blow Against Islamic State-Khorasan, 21 June 2019, [url](#)

²⁹⁷ AP, Pakistan kills 4 Islamic State-linked militants in shootout, 17 May 2020, [url](#)

²⁹⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), pp. 75-76; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 70

²⁹⁹ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2018, 19 April 2019, [url](#), p. 25

³⁰⁰ Baloch, H., Peace Talks, ISKP and TTP--The Future in Question, ITCT, 6 May 2019, [url](#)

³⁰¹ Jeffery, F., What Does Islamic State's Wilayat al-Hind & Wilayat Pakistan Mean?, ITCT, 20 May 2019, [url](#); Express Tribune (The), Blast hits Hazara community's shoe market in Quetta, 6 August 2019, [url](#)

³⁰² USDOS Country Report on Terrorism 2019, 24 June 2020, [url](#), p. 258

³⁰³ Deutsche Welle, Taliban: Haqqani network leader dead, 4 September 2018, [url](#)

³⁰⁴ AP News (Gannon, K.), Death of Afghan group's founder unlikely to weaken militants, 4 September 2018, [url](#)

³⁰⁵ Ruttig, T., The New Taleban Deputy Leaders: Is there an obvious successor to Akhtar Mansur?, 10 February 2016, AAN, [url](#)

³⁰⁶ VoA, What Is the Haqqani Network?, 1 June 2017, [url](#); Economic Times (The), US asks Pakistan to act against Haqqani network, other terror groups, 27 February 2018, [url](#)

³⁰⁷ USDOD, Lead Inspector General for Operation Freedom's Sentinel I Quarterly Report to the United States Congress I January 1, 2020 - March 31, 2020, 19 May 2020, [url](#), p. 5

³⁰⁸ VoA, Haqqani Network Remains Primary Source of Pakistan-US Tensions, 29 November 2017, [url](#)

³⁰⁹ CSIS, Religion and militancy in Pakistan and Afghanistan, 29 June 2012, [url](#), p. 63

operations in North Waziristan have 'disrupted' the military capabilities of the Haqqani Network.³¹⁰ The group is active along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border and across much of south-eastern Afghanistan, particularly in Loya Paktia.³¹¹ The Haqqani Network relocated in 2014 from North Waziristan to Kurram under pressure of these military operations.³¹² No information could be found during the reference period of attacks carried out by the Haqqani Network in Pakistan.

Sipah-e Sahaba Pakistan (SSP)

SSP is a former Deobandi political party founded in the early 1980s. Sunni cleric Maulana Haq Nawaz Jhangvi founded Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, the militant wing of SSP in Jhang, Punjab.³¹³ Its principal aim is to fight Shia influence in Pakistan.³¹⁴ Jhangvi was assassinated in 1991³¹⁵ and replaced by Maulana Azam Tariq.³¹⁶ Tariq was killed in 2003.³¹⁷ In July 2005, Dawn identified Maulana Ali Sher Hyderi [Haideri] as a leader of the SSP.³¹⁸ It was reported that the organisation had close ties with the Jihadi organisation JeM and the TTP, and was a part of the Punjabi Taliban network. Several reports labelled SSP as a violent group. At the beginning of the century, it was responsible for the murder of Shia militants, ordinary Shia citizens and attacks on Shia mosques. Although the group denied involvement in violence, former President Musharraf banned it in 2002.³¹⁹ A part of SSP rebranded itself as Ah-le Sunnat Wal Jama'at, which under the leadership of Maulana Muhammad Ahmed Ludhianvi became a political party.³²⁰

Other members left SSP to form Lashkar-e Jhangvi (LeJ), which observers said was even more radical than the SSP.³²¹ Other extremist splinter groups of SSP include the Jhangvi Tigers, Al-Haq Tigers, Tanzeem-ul Haq, Al-Farooq and the Al-Badr Foundation.³²² The core of SSP supporters was made up of Sunni peasantry in the rural Jhang, merchant and trader classes in the urban centres. The *madrassas* were a major recruiting ground for SSP. The group's cadres received *jihadi* training in Afghanistan. To fund its organisation and activities, SSP relied on contributions from its supporters in the form of *zakat*. Sunni business people contributed as well. Observers believed that SSP received considerable financial and logistic backing from Saudi donors who wanted to curb Iran's influence over the Shia population in Pakistan.³²³ SSP reportedly had a political party; it also had a student wing, an insurance company, many offices in all districts of the Punjab and a nationwide network.³²⁴

Lashkar-e Jhangvi (LeJ)

LeJ is a Deobandi militant group founded in 1996, when a number of militants led by Riaz Basra, Akram Lahori and Malik Ishaq broke away from SSP Pakistan. LeJ is not a political party but a purely paramilitary organisation.³²⁵ USDOS noted in September 2018 that LeJ was formed as the militant wing

³¹⁰ Dawn, Operation Zarb-e-Azb disrupted Haqqani network; US general, 6 November 2014, [url](#)

³¹¹ USDOS, Country Report on Terrorism 2018, 1 November 2019, [url](#), p. 282

³¹² LWJ, US drones target jihadist 'hideouts' in Pakistan's tribal areas, 22 February 2016, [url](#)

³¹³ Nelson, M., EASO, EASO COI Meeting Report: Pakistan; 16-17 October 2017, Rome, February 2018, [url](#), p. 30

³¹⁴ Nelson, M., EASO, EASO COI Meeting Report: Pakistan; 16-17 October 2017, Rome, February 2018, [url](#), p. 30

³¹⁵ Jamestown Foundation (The), 'Sipah-e-Sahaba: Fomenting Sectarian Violence in Pakistan', 5 May 2005, [url](#)

³¹⁶ Jamestown Foundation (The), 'Sipah-e-Sahaba: Fomenting Sectarian Violence in Pakistan', 5 May 2005, [url](#)

³¹⁷ GEO News TV, Suspect in Maulana Azam Tariq's murder arrested from Islamabad airport, 11 May 2017, [url](#)

³¹⁸ Dawn, Hunt intensified; 200 held: Prominent SSP leader arrested in Khairpur, 21 July 2005, [url](#)

³¹⁹ Dawn, 2009: Southern Punjab extremism battle between haves and have-nots, 21 May 2011, [url](#); NOREF, Sectarian violence: Pakistan's greatest security threat?, 9 August 2012, [url](#); Rashid, A., Descent into Chaos, 2008, pp. 227-228; Jamestown Foundation (The), 'Sipah-e-Sahaba: Fomenting Sectarian Violence in Pakistan', 5 May 2005, [url](#); Abbas, H., Defining the Punjabi Taliban Network, 15 April 2009, [url](#)

³²⁰ Nelson, M., EASO, EASO COI Meeting Report: Pakistan; 16-17 October 2017, Rome, February 2018, [url](#), p. 30

³²¹ CSIS, Religion and militancy in Pakistan and Afghanistan, June 2012, [url](#), p. 38

³²² CSIS, Religion and militancy in Pakistan and Afghanistan, 29 June 2012, [url](#), p. 38

³²³ CSIS, Religion and militancy in Pakistan and Afghanistan, 29 June 2012, [url](#), p. 39

³²⁴ Hussain, Z., Frontline Pakistan, The struggle with militant Islam, 2007, p. 92

³²⁵ BBC News, Profile: Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, 11 January 2013, [url](#); Stanford University, Mapping Militant Organizations. "Lashkar-e-Jhangvi.", last updated: August 2018, [url](#)

of SSP to attack the Shia community and that it became independent when it gained more proficiency.³²⁶ USDOS stated that LeJ 'works closely' together with the TTP.³²⁷ LeJ was openly supported by the ISI, which used the group as a proxy in Afghanistan and India as well to counter Shia militant groups in 2000 and 2001.³²⁸ LeJ was banned by the Pakistan government in 2001 and was placed on the US terrorist list in 2003.³²⁹ Its underground violent activities continued, especially against Shias and members of the Hazara community in Quetta.³³⁰

Although most of the violence used by LeJ targets Shias, the organisation also cultivated a radical stance against Christians, Ahmadi and Sufi Muslims.³³¹ A substantial number of the leadership of LeJ have either been killed, including Malik Ishaq in 2015³³², or captured in 2017, like Naeem Bukhari.³³³ On 19 January 2017, LeJ's commander Asif Chotu was killed in an encounter with law enforcement agencies.³³⁴ In May 2018, security forces killed the commander of LeJ's Balochistan chapter Salman Badeni.³³⁵ According to PIPS, in 2018, LeJ had lost its operational strength.³³⁶

According to PIPS, LeJ was responsible for eight 'terrorist attacks' in 2019 in Pakistan, compared to seven of such attacks in 2018.³³⁷ Five of these attacks took place in Karachi and three in Balochistan.³³⁸ In its 2019 annual security report, PIPS mentioned that 'several reports indicated that LeJ is once again focusing on Karachi.'³³⁹

Lashkar-e Jhangvi Al-Alami (LJA)

Over the past decade, LeJ broke up in different factions as a result of the military operations of the Pakistan state.³⁴⁰ One of those emerging factions is LeJ Al-Alami (LJA)³⁴¹, designated by Pakistan as a 'terrorist organisation' in November 2016.³⁴² The main difference between LeJ and LJA is that LeJ only targets minority groups whilst LJA also carries out attacks on law enforcement agencies and government installations.³⁴³ The Jamestown Foundation reported in January 2017 that the group was led by Yousaf Mansoor Khurasani.³⁴⁴ In 2019, PIPS did not mention any attack claimed by LJA.³⁴⁵

Lashkar-e Islam (LI)

LI is a militant group that is active in Khyber tribal district.³⁴⁶ A 2016 article of Afghanistan Analysts Network (AAN) estimated the size of the group 'at no fewer than 500 in the past three years'.³⁴⁷ The

³²⁶ USDOS, Country Report on Terrorism 2019, 24 June 2020, [url](#), p. 282

³²⁷ USDOS, Country Report on Terrorism 2019, 24 June 2020, [url](#), p. 282

³²⁸ Reuters, Special Report: Pakistan's threat within - the Sunni-Shia divide, 24 October 2012, [url](#); National (The), Pakistan arrests 97 Al Qaeda and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi militants, 12 February 2016, [url](#); Guardian (The), Pakistan military intelligence under fire for failing to prevent Quetta bombing, 18 February 2013, [url](#)

³²⁹ USDOS, Country Report on Terrorism 2019, 24 June 2020, [url](#), p. 183

³³⁰ RFE/RL, Pakistan's Army Kills Commander Of Islamist Militant Group In Balochistan, 17 May 2018, [url](#)

³³¹ LWJ, State designates leader of Lashkar-e-Jhanghvi as global terrorist, 6 February 2014, [url](#)

³³² LWJ, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi emir killed in shootout with Pakistani police, 29 July 2015, [url](#)

³³³ Daily Times, LeJ leads international terrorist organisations in Pakistan, 10 March 2017, [url](#)

³³⁴ Express Tribune (The), Sheikhpura raid: LeJ chief Asif Chotu, three aides killed in gunfight, 19 January 2017, [url](#)

³³⁵ Nation (The), Security forces kill senior Lashkar-e-Jhangvi militant in Balochistan raid, 17 May 2018, [url](#)

³³⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 73

³³⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 78; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 71

³³⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 71

³³⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 71

³⁴⁰ RFE/RL, Pakistani Extremists Carve A Sanctuary In Southern Afghanistan, 23 January 2017, [url](#)

³⁴¹ Jamestown Foundation (The), 'Lashkar-e-Jhangvi al-Alami: A Pakistani Partner for Islamic State', 27 January 2017, [url](#)

³⁴² Daily Times, From sectarian to anti-state outfit, journey of al-Alami, 2 April 2017, [url](#)

³⁴³ Jamestown Foundation (The), 'Lashkar-e-Jhangvi al-Alami: A Pakistani Partner for Islamic State', 27 January 2017, [url](#)

³⁴⁴ Jamestown Foundation (The), 'Lashkar-e-Jhangvi al-Alami: A Pakistani Partner for Islamic State', 27 January 2017, [url](#)

³⁴⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 70

³⁴⁶ Stanford University, Mapping Militant Organizations. "Lashkar-e-Islam.", last updated: August 2019, [url](#)

³⁴⁷ Osman, B., The Islamic State in 'Khorasan': How it began and where it stands now in Nangarhar, AAN, 27 July 2016, [url](#)

government of Pakistan banned LI in June 2008.³⁴⁸ Pakistani military operations in 2014 reportedly crippled the group's operational capabilities in Khyber district. As a result, members of LI relocated to Afghanistan.³⁴⁹ It has been reported that LI works together with ISKP in Afghanistan and both are 'important allies'.³⁵⁰ In 2015, LI announced its merger with the TTP.³⁵¹ The leader of LI, Mangal Bagh, was reportedly killed in a drone attack in Afghanistan in the summer of 2016.³⁵² This was not confirmed by the Pakistani government or by experts. A regional expert told VoA in February 2018 that Mangal Bagh was still alive and active in eastern Afghanistan.³⁵³ A May 2020 UNSC report mentioned that the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement works together with LI.³⁵⁴

LI was involved in two 'terrorist attacks' in 2019 compared to 10 in 2018 according to PIPS.³⁵⁵ PIPS reported that LI is losing its strength due to the deaths of important commanders and due to internal fighting in Pakistan and Afghanistan.³⁵⁶

Sipah-e Muhammad Pakistan (SMP)

SMP is a Shia militant group whose aim is to protect the Shia community and target hostile Sunni Deobandi organisations such as SSP and LeJ. SMP is an armed offshoot of a mainstream Shia political party, the Tehrik-Nifaz-e-Fiqh-e-Jafaria (TNFJ).³⁵⁷ The origins are unclear, but it was probably founded around 1993 by Maulana Mureed Abbas Yazdani. SMP was banned in Pakistan in August 2001.³⁵⁸

In 2019, PIPS stated that a Shia militant group was activated in Karachi 'after a long interval in 2019'. The group was found involved in 'two terrorist incidents' in Karachi.³⁵⁹

Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM)

JeM was founded late 2000 by former Harakat ul-Mujahideen leader Masood Azhar.³⁶⁰ USDOS stated in June 2020 that 'the group aims to annex the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir to Pakistan and expel international forces from Afghanistan. JeM has openly declared war against the United States.'³⁶¹ JeM and the Pakistani army have been accused of having an alliance.³⁶² According to Pakistani security analyst, Azaz Syed, cited by Farhan Zahid in an article of 2019, JeM has an estimated strength of 40 000 militants.³⁶³ JeM has relations with multiple militant groups operating in Pakistan such as the TTP and LeJ. The structure of the organisation can be categorised as cell-based and

³⁴⁸ Dawn, Pakistan bans 25 militant organisations, 6 August 2009, [url](#); Express Tribune (The), List of banned organisations in Pakistan, 24 October 2012, [url](#)

³⁴⁹ PIPS, Security Report 2016, 10 January 2017, [url](#), p. 68

³⁵⁰ RSIS, Annual Threat Assessment-South Asia, January 2019, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, [url](#), p. 37; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 75

³⁵¹ LWJ, 3 jihadist groups merge with Movement of the Taliban in Pakistan, 6 May 2015, [url](#)

³⁵² Nation (The), Mangal Bagh 'is dead', 25 July 2016, [url](#)

³⁵³ VoA, IS, Lashkar-e-Islam Clash in Eastern Afghanistan, 11 February 2018, [url](#)

³⁵⁴ UNSC, Letter dated 19 May 2020 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) addressed to the President of the Security Council, 27 May 2020, [url](#), p. 21

³⁵⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 75; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 69

³⁵⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 69

³⁵⁷ Dawn, Pakistan bans 25 militant organisations, 6 August 2009, [url](#); Jamestown Foundation (The), 'Sipah-e-Sahaba: Fomenting Sectarian Violence in Pakistan', 5 May 2005, [url](#)

³⁵⁸ Express Tribune (The), List of banned organisations in Pakistan, 24 October 2012, [url](#)

³⁵⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 71

³⁶⁰ Zahid, F., Profile of Jaish-e-Muhammad and Leader Masood Azhar, April 2019, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, [url](#), pp. 1-5

³⁶¹ USDOS, Country Report on Terrorism 2019, 24 June 2020, [url](#), p. 276

³⁶² Lowy Institute, Pakistan and Jaish-e-Mohammad: An unholy alliance, 7 July 2017, [url](#); Diplomat (The), Jaish-e-Mohammed: Under the Hood, 13 March 2019, [url](#)

³⁶³ Zahid, F., Profile of Jaish-e-Muhammad and Leader Masood Azhar, April 2019, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, [url](#), p. 5

operated in Pakistan Punjab's southern districts.³⁶⁴ According to a May 2020 UNSC report, citing Afghan interlocutors, 'JeM and Lashkar-e-Tayyiba facilitate the trafficking of terrorist fighters into Afghanistan, who act as advisers, trainers and specialists in improvised explosive devices.'³⁶⁵

JeM was also active in Indian Kashmir since the Pathankot airbase attack in 2016. Since then, it steadily increased its presence and activities in Kashmir according to security analysts.³⁶⁶ On 14 February 2019, JeM carried out an attack on a convoy of vehicles carrying security personnel in Pulwama in Indian-administrated Kashmir. In this attack, 46 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel were killed and 80 others wounded.³⁶⁷ India blamed Pakistan for this attack, which triggered an escalation of tensions between India and Pakistan.³⁶⁸ The leader of JeM, Masood Azhar was placed on the list of 'global terrorists' by the United Nations on 1 May 2019.³⁶⁹

Lashkar-e Taiba (LeT)

LeT was founded in the late 1980s as a 'terrorist'³⁷⁰ and military wing of the religious organisation Markaz Dawa-ul-Irshad.³⁷¹ The group was founded by Hafiz Muhammad Saeed, who is still its current leader.³⁷² In the 1990s, the ISI established close relationships with groups such as LeT³⁷³, and the group reportedly enjoys ongoing clandestine support by elements of Pakistani military and intelligence services.³⁷⁴ In 2001, LeT was designated as an Foreign Terrorist Organisation (FTO) by the US. To circumvent sanctions, Saeed changed the group's name to Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JUD)³⁷⁵, however, the group continues to operate in the country through its charitable organisations, including Jamaat-ud-Dawa.³⁷⁶ LeT aims to unite Kashmir with Pakistan and impose Sharia law rule in South Asia.³⁷⁷ It is based in Punjab and present in both Indian and Pakistan-administered Kashmir.³⁷⁸ LeT is considered one most prominent armed groups operating on Pakistani soil, reportedly sending fighters across the Line of Control into Indian-administered Kashmir; the groups has carried out several attacks against the Indian security forces. In 2018, it was blamed for a Mumbai attacks that killed over 160 people.³⁷⁹ According to Indian government source, the group has 129 active fighters in Indian-administered Kashmir.³⁸⁰ LeT claims to maintain over 2 000 offices in Pakistan³⁸¹, however the groups does not

³⁶⁴ Zahid, F., Profile of Jaish-e-Muhammad and Leader Masood Azhar, April 2019, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, [url](#), p. 5

³⁶⁵ UNSC, Letter dated 19 May 2020 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) addressed to the President of the Security Council, 27 May 2020, [url](#), p. 20

³⁶⁶ Basit, A. and Mahmood, S., Implications of Possible United States Withdrawal on the South Asian Militant Landscape, April 2019, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, [url](#), p. 21

³⁶⁷ BBC News, Pulwama attack: India will 'completely isolate' Pakistan, 15 February 2019, [url](#); Zahid, F., Profile of Jaish-e-Muhammad and Leader Masood Azhar, April 2019, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, [url](#), p. 1

³⁶⁸ Zahid, F., Profile of Jaish-e-Muhammad and Leader Masood Azhar, April 2019, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, [url](#), p. 1

³⁶⁹ Al Jazeera, UN puts Pakistani armed group chief Masood Azhar on 'terror' list, 1 May 2019, [url](#)

³⁷⁰ USDOS, Country reports on Terrorism 2019, 24 June 2020, [url](#)

³⁷¹ EFSAS, Pakistan Army and Terrorism; an unholy alliance, n.d., [url](#); FAS, Lashkar-e-Taiba Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (Army of the Righteous), n.d., [url](#);

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

³⁷³ BBC News, Hafiz Saeed: Will Pakistan's 'terror cleric' stay in jail?, 13 February 2020, [url](#)

³⁷⁴ CEP, Lashkar-e-Taiba, n.d., [url](#)

³⁷⁵ USDOS, Country reports on Terrorism 2019, 24 June 2020, [url](#)

³⁷⁶ Al Jazeera, Explainer: Who are Kashmir's armed groups?, 3 March 2019, [url](#); CEP, Pakistan, n.d., [url](#); CIA, World Factbook, Pakistan, [url](#)

³⁷⁷ CIA, World Factbook, Pakistan, [url](#)

³⁷⁸ CIA, World Factbook, Pakistan, [url](#)

³⁷⁹ Al Jazeera, Explainer: Who are Kashmir's armed groups?, 3 March 2019, [url](#)

³⁸⁰ Al Jazeera, Explainer: Who are Kashmir's armed groups?, 3 March 2019, [url](#)

³⁸¹ EFSAS, Pakistan Army and Terrorism; an unholy alliance, n.d., [url](#)

conduct attacks against Pakistan.³⁸² In 2018, group's members ran as independent candidates in Pakistani elections.³⁸³

Nationalist movements in Sindh

The Sindhi nationalist groups include the Sindhu Desh Liberation Army (SDLA), also known as Sindhu Desh Liberation Front (SDLF), and the Sindhu Desh Revolutionary Army (SDRA).³⁸⁴ The government of Pakistan banned both organisations in May 2020.³⁸⁵ According to PIPS, in 2019 both groups were involved in two terrorist attacks in inner Sindh.³⁸⁶ A March 2020 article by the News stated that both organisations have weakened but have not fully disappeared in Sindh.³⁸⁷ According to a July 2020 report by Muhammed Amir Rana, a security analyst, the activities of these groups have increased since the outbreak of COVID-19 in Pakistan.³⁸⁸

Sindhu Desh Liberation Army (SDLA)

According to Muhammed Amir Rana, a security analyst, the SDLA has ties with the Jeay Sindh Muttahida Mahaz (JSMH), a Sindhi nationalist party headed by Shafi Burfat, who lives in exile in Europe.³⁸⁹ The SDLA reportedly collaborated with the BLA and BLF in targeting Chinese nationals.³⁹⁰

Sindhu Desh Revolutionary Army (SDRA)

Syed Asghar Shah, a leader within the SDLA left the group after developing differences with Shafi Burfat over funds and leadership.³⁹¹ Syed Asghar Shah established the SDRA in 2010.³⁹² On 25 July 2020, the Baloch Raji Ajoi Sangar (BRAS) announced an operational alliance with the SDRA.³⁹³ Fahad Nabeel, a senior research associate at the Centre for Strategic and Contemporary Research (CSCR), stated that the strength of this alliance is estimated at approximately 1 000 to 2 000 militants.³⁹⁴

A June 2020 article by Tushar Ranjan Mohanty mentioned that since its formation in 2010, the SDRA was involved in thirteen attacks. In June 2020, the SDRA claimed responsibility for six attacks, mostly on security force personnel in Sindh.³⁹⁵ On 5 August 2020, a grenade explosion targeted a political rally in Karachi. At least 39 people were injured. The SDRA claimed responsibility for the attack.³⁹⁶

Nationalist movements in Balochistan

PIPS 2019 annual security situation report stated that there are approximately seven Baloch nationalist movements active in Balochistan. The operational capabilities of these groups differ from group to group. The areas where they are active, are reduced to pockets.³⁹⁷ The Baloch movements

³⁸² CEP, Pakistan, n.d., [url](#); CIA, World Factbook, Pakistan, [url](#)

³⁸³ Al Jazeera, Explainer: Who are Kashmir's armed groups?, 3 March 2019, [url](#)

³⁸⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 73

³⁸⁵ Dawn, JSQM-A, two separatist outfits in Sindh banned, 12 May 2020, [url](#)

³⁸⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 73

³⁸⁷ International News (The), Sindhi separatist offshoot sets alarm bells ringing for law enforcement agencies, 10 March 2020, [url](#)

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

³⁸⁹ Amir Rana, M., Terrorism in Pakistan under Covid-19, NIOC, 24 July 2020, [url](#), p. 13; News on Sunday (The), A new wave of terror, 5 July 2020, [url](#); Mohanty Ranjan, T., Pakistan: Sindh: Hardening Separatism, 29 June 2020, SAIR, volume 19, no. 1, [url](#)

³⁹⁰ Nabeel, F., Interpreting BRAS-SRA Alliance, 27 July 2020, CSCR, [url](#)

³⁹¹ Amir Rana, M., Terrorism in Pakistan under Covid-19, NIOC, 24 July 2020, [url](#), p. 12

³⁹² Mohanty Ranjan, T., Pakistan: Sindh: Hardening Separatism, 29 June 2020, SAIR, volume 19, no. 1, [url](#)

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

³⁹⁴ Nabeel, F., Interpreting BRAS-SRA Alliance, 27 July 2020, CSCR, [url](#)

³⁹⁵ Mohanty Ranjan, T., Pakistan: Sindh: Hardening Separatism, 29 June 2020, SAIR, volume 19, no. 1, [url](#)

³⁹⁶ Al Jazeera, Dozens wounded in grenade attack at pro-Kashmir Karachi rally, 5 August 2020, [url](#)

³⁹⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 72

have been using Afghanistan and Iran as their hideouts and operate and launch their attacks from there.³⁹⁸

On 6 July 2020, Asad Hashim stated the following about the Baloch nationalist movements in 2020:

‘In 2020, Baloch nationalist armed groups have emerged as perhaps the most prominent threat to security, carrying out attacks targeting security forces in Balochistan and expanding their reach to carry out the Pakistan Stock Exchange attack in Karachi in June. The attack in Karachi bore the hallmarks of a similar attack in 2019, when Baloch separatist gunmen attempted to storm the Chinese consulate in that city, killing two people. The Pakistan Stock Exchange attack, however, is significantly different from that previous attack in that it involved targeting a facility of Pakistani civilians. The attackers were heavily armed and carried food rations, indicating that their intentions were to carry out a prolonged siege. (Note: the choice of target has also revealed apparent rifts within the BLA, with a faction of the group expressing its rejection of the move to target civilians in a statement released after the attack.)’³⁹⁹

Below the most prominent Baloch nationalist groups are described.

The Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA)

The objective of the BLA is an independent Balochistan, free of Pakistani and Iranian rule. Because of its violent methods, such as bomb attacks, it was banned in Pakistan in April 2006.⁴⁰⁰ The BLA first emerged in the late 1990s.⁴⁰¹ The BLA is led by Harbiyar Marri, who lives in the United Kingdom.⁴⁰² PIPS stated on the other hand that the BLA has ‘two offshoots’. One group is led by Harbiyar Marri and another group is comprised of insurgents who were led by Aslam Achu⁴⁰³ until he was killed in Afghanistan in December 2018.⁴⁰⁴ Aslam Achu has set up the Majeed Brigade.⁴⁰⁵ The Majeed Brigade is an elite unit within the BLA.⁴⁰⁶ One of the leading figures of the second group is Commander Bashir Zeb.⁴⁰⁷ Security analyst Abdul Basit stated that the BLA is one of the strongest threats to China’s investments, due to its prominent physical strength (2 000 to 3 000 militants) and that the group is capable to operate out of Afghanistan, in Iran and in Balochistan’s mountainous areas.⁴⁰⁸ In July 2019, USDOS designated the BLA as a terrorist organisation.⁴⁰⁹

PIPS stated that the BLA carried out 27 ‘terrorist attacks’ in Balochistan in 2019, which is a slight increase compared to 2018 when they carried out 25 attacks.⁴¹⁰ The majority of the attacks in 2019 took place in Balochistan (25 attacks) and one each in south Punjab and interior Sindh.⁴¹¹ In November 2018, three BLA gunmen killed at least five people in an attack targeting the Chinese consulate in Karachi in the province of Sindh.⁴¹² This was the second time the group carried out a suicide attack, instead of their ‘normal’ operating tactics such as mortar attacks and ambushes. According to an

³⁹⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 72-73

³⁹⁹ Hashim, A., email, 6 July 2020

⁴⁰⁰ Dawn, Pakistan bans 25 militant organisations, 6 August 2009, [url](#); Express Tribune (The), List of banned organisations in Pakistan, 24 October 2012, [url](#)

⁴⁰¹ Gandhara, Baluch Separatist Insurgency Torn By Internal Conflict Over Class, 4 July 2020, [url](#)

⁴⁰² South China Morning Post (Basit, A.), Attacks on Chinese nationals and interests in Pakistan are likely to continue. Here’s why, 27 November 2018, [url](#)

⁴⁰³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 93

⁴⁰⁴ CSCR, Aslam Baloch’s killing: Implications for Balochistan Insurgency, 28 December 2018, [url](#)

⁴⁰⁵ Gandhara, Baluch Separatist Insurgency Torn By Internal Conflict Over Class, 4 July 2020, [url](#)

⁴⁰⁶ Balochistan Post (The), TBP Report: Majeed Brigade – The Inside Story, 20 July 2020, [url](#)

⁴⁰⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 93

⁴⁰⁸ South China Morning Post (Basit, A.), Attacks on Chinese nationals and interests in Pakistan are likely to continue. Here’s why, 27 November 2018, [url](#)

⁴⁰⁹ RFE/RL, U.S. Designates Pakistan’s Balochistan Liberation Army As Terrorist Group, 3 July 2019, [url](#)

⁴¹⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 78; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 73

⁴¹¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 73

⁴¹² Al Jazeera, Gunmen attack Chinese consulate in Karachi, 23 November 2018, [url](#)

article of RSIS this attack signified a willingness to learn from other terrorist groups and to evolve.⁴¹³ On 10 May 2019, the BLA killed at least five people in a gun and bomb attack on a coal mine in Harnai district in Balochistan.⁴¹⁴ On 12 May 2019, militants of the BLA attacked the Pearl Continental Hotel in Gwadar, killing at least five people.⁴¹⁵ On 29 June 2020, militants of the BLA attacked the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) building in Karachi in the province of Sindh. At least four people were killed and seven injured.⁴¹⁶

The Baloch Liberation Front (BLF)

The BLF is an insurgent group, led by Allah Nazar Baloch.⁴¹⁷ This group operated across Balochistan, but was primarily active in the Makran belt.⁴¹⁸ The BLF was banned in September 2010.⁴¹⁹ In October 2017, the BLF accused local journalists of collaborating with the Pakistani army, and also threatened and boycotted the local media.⁴²⁰

According to PIPS, the BLF has its base in the central and south-western districts of Balochistan. The group has gone into hiding, either in the areas close to the Iranian border or across the border near Iran or Afghanistan.⁴²¹ In 2019, the BLF claimed responsibility for 11 'terrorist attacks' compared to 22 in 2018.⁴²²

The Baloch Republican Army (BRA)

The banned BRA is the militant wing of the separatist Baloch Republican Party (BRP) and was at the end of 2018 reportedly headed by Brahumdag Bugti.⁴²³ The most prominent BRA attack was in January 2015 against the electricity network of Pakistan, which caused a blackout in 80 % of Pakistan.⁴²⁴

In 2019, the BRA carried out 6 'terrorist attacks' compared to 12 attacks in 2018. The attacks in 2019 occurred in Dera Bugti and Kholu districts of Balochistan and one attack was reported from south Punjab.⁴²⁵

United Baloch Army (UBA)

The UBA is a nationalist insurgent group in Balochistan and a splinter group of the BLA.⁴²⁶ In 2015, the UBA was led by Mehran Marri.⁴²⁷ The Balochistan Post reported in February 2018 that the BRA, the UBA and the Lashkar-e-Balochistan (LB) work together for an independent Balochistan.⁴²⁸

⁴¹³ RSIS, Annual Threat Assessment-South Asia, January 2019, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, [url](#), p. 57

⁴¹⁴ Al Jazeera, Pakistan: Five dead as Baloch separatist gunmen attack coal mine, 10 May 2019, [url](#)

⁴¹⁵ Al Jazeera, Pakistan military says five killed in hotel attack in Gwadar, 12 May 2019, [url](#)

⁴¹⁶ Al Jazeera, Pakistan: 4 killed in attack on Karachi stock exchange, 29 June 2020, [url](#)

⁴¹⁷ South China Morning Post (Basit, A.), Attacks on Chinese nationals and interests in Pakistan are likely to continue. Here's why, 27 November 2018, [url](#)

⁴¹⁸ RFE/RL, Pakistan's Balochistan Conflict Reverberates In Europe, 7 December 2017, [url](#)

⁴¹⁹ Express Tribune (The), List of banned organisations in Pakistan, 24 October 2012, [url](#)

⁴²⁰ BBC News, Balochistan journalists caught 'between the stick and the gun', 26 November 2017, [url](#)

⁴²¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 94

⁴²² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 73

⁴²³ South China Morning Post (Basit, A.), Attacks on Chinese nationals and interests in Pakistan are likely to continue. Here's why, 27 November 2018, [url](#)

⁴²⁴ Diplomat (The), Understanding Pakistan's Baloch Insurgency, 24 June 2015, [url](#)

⁴²⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 79; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 73

⁴²⁶ RFE/RL, Pakistan's Balochistan Conflict Reverberates In Europe, 7 December 2017, [url](#); Dawn, Situationer: Who's who of Baloch insurgency, 1 June 2015, [url](#)

⁴²⁷ Dawn, Situationer: Who's who of Baloch insurgency, 1 June 2015, [url](#)

⁴²⁸ Balochistan Post (The), Baloch pro-freedom groups to work unitedly, 25 February 2018, [url](#)

Baloch Raji Ajoji Sangar (BRAS)

The Baloch Raji Ajoji Sangar (BRAS), also known as the Baloch People Liberation Coalition, is a coalition of the BLA, the BLF and the Baloch Republican Guards after publicly disagreeing for years.⁴²⁹ This coalition was launched in November 2018.⁴³⁰ According to an article published by CSCR, ‘unification and consolidation of the national strength is the only way forward to get rid of Pakistani occupation of Balochistan.’ The coalition aims to direct ‘coordinated attacks against Pakistani military, Chinese interests in Balochistan and CPEC sites’.⁴³¹ According to the Pakistani Foreign Minister, training and logistical camps are established in the Iranian region bordering Pakistan.⁴³² Farhan Zahid, a security analyst, stated in September 2019 that the group operates in the south-western part of Balochistan and has ‘safe havens’ in Kacha, DG Khan and Koh Suleman. The primary targets of BRAS are Chinese workers and CPEC projects in Baluchistan. BRAS also targeted military and paramilitary security force personnel near the Makran coast.⁴³³ On 18 July 2020, the police in Karachi claimed to have arrested six members of BRAS.⁴³⁴ On 25 July 2020, BRAS announced an operational alliance with the SDRA.⁴³⁵

According to PIPS, since the establishment of BRAS, the group was responsible for 4 attacks until the end of 2019.⁴³⁶ On 18 April 2019, BRAS killed 14 bus passengers after several buses were ambushed in the remote Ormara area of Balochistan.⁴³⁷

1.3 Recent security trends and armed confrontations

1.3.1 Security incidents

In the first two sub-sections below, the number of security incidents by ACLED, PIPS and PICSS are described for 2019 and the first seven months of 2020 respectively. Due to different methodologies used by these three sources, the number of security incidents reported below are described per each source for ease of comparison. For more detailed information on the methodology applied by the sources, see the [Introduction](#).

In general, according to sources systematically collecting information on militant and anti-state violence in Pakistan, the overall security situation improved in 2019 compared to previous years.⁴³⁸

Security incidents in 2019

According to ACLED⁴³⁹, there were 972 security incidents recorded in Pakistan in 2019: 394 were coded as battles, 184 as explosions/remote violence and 394 as violence against civilians.⁴⁴⁰

See [Figure 1](#) for an evolution of the security incidents in 2019 in Pakistan by ACLED.

⁴²⁹ CSCR (Nabeel, F.), Identity as a Pretext of Terror: Brief Backgrounder of Baloch Raaji Aajoi Sangar, 18 April 2019, [url](#); Gandhara, Balochistan’s Separatist Insurgency On The Wane Despite Recent Attack, 18 April 2019, [url](#)

⁴³⁰ CSCR (Nabeel, F.), Identity as a Pretext of Terror: Brief Backgrounder of Baloch Raaji Aajoi Sangar, 18 April 2019, [url](#)

⁴³¹ CSCR (Nabeel, F.), Identity as a Pretext of Terror: Brief Backgrounder of Baloch Raaji Aajoi Sangar, 18 April 2019, [url](#)

⁴³² Reuters, Pakistan asks Iran to act on militants behind Baluchistan killings, 20 April 2019, [url](#)

⁴³³ Zahid, F., Baluch Raji Ajoji Sangar: Emergence of a New Baluch Separatist Alliance, 20 September 2019, Terrorism Monitor, volume: 17, issue: 18, [url](#)

⁴³⁴ Pakistan Today, Six RAW-linked terrorists arrested in Karachi, 18 July 2020, [url](#)

⁴³⁵ Nabeel, F., Interpreting BRAS-SRA Alliance, 27 July 2020, CSCR, [url](#)

⁴³⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 92

⁴³⁷ Al Jazeera, Gunmen kill 14 bus passengers in Pakistan’s Balochistan, 18 April 2019, [url](#)

⁴³⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 11-12; PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 13-14

⁴³⁹ For a description of this source, see the [introduction](#)

⁴⁴⁰ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2019-31 December 2019), [url](#)

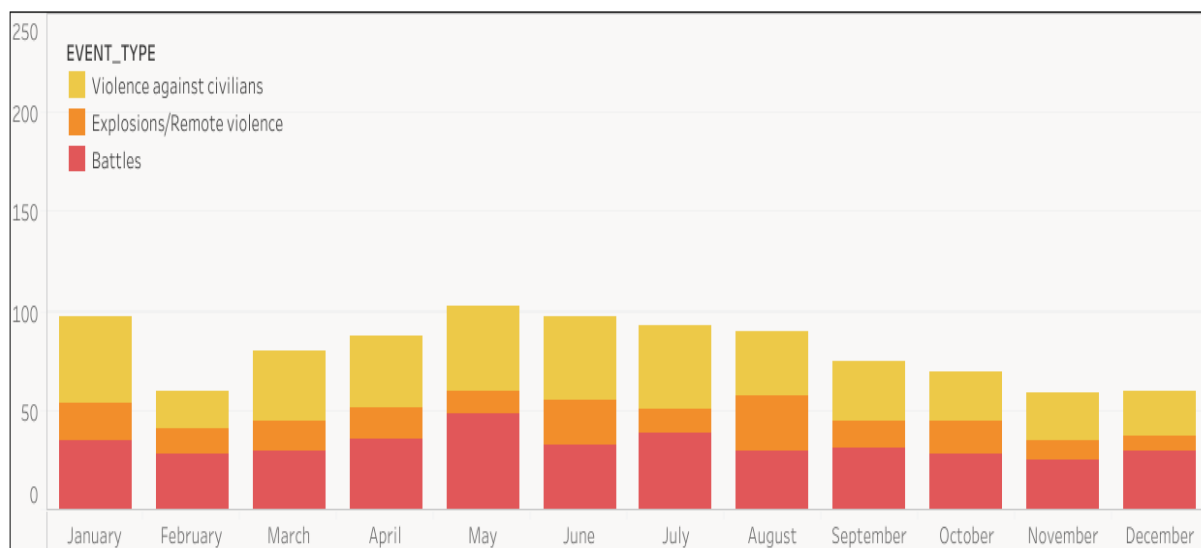


Figure 1. Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians in 2019 in Pakistan, based on ACLED data⁴⁴¹

In 2019, PICSS⁴⁴² recorded in total 270 incidents perpetrated by militants (159) and counter-insurgency operations (111) by the Pakistani government, in which 393 people were killed: 110 militants, 133 civilians, 150 security forces personnel.⁴⁴³ A total of 687 people were injured including 506 civilians, one militant, two *razakars* and 178 security forces personnel. Compared to 2018, this represents a 33 % decrease in the number of incidents.⁴⁴⁴

PIPS⁴⁴⁵ documented 433 incidents of violence in 2019. The overall incidents of violence resulted in 588 deaths and 1 030 injured.⁴⁴⁶ More than half of the number of violent incidents (229 incidents) were labelled as ‘terrorist attacks’⁴⁴⁷, according to PIPS. Compared to 2018, the number of violent incidents decreased by approximately 15 %.⁴⁴⁸

Security incidents 1 January 2020 – 31 July 2020

In the first seven months of 2020, ACLED recorded 260 security incidents in Pakistan: 161 battles, 50 explosions/remote violence and 49 incidents of violence against civilians.⁴⁴⁹

See [Figure 2](#) for an evolution of the security incidents the first seven months of 2020 in Pakistan by ACLED.

⁴⁴¹ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2019-31 December 2019), [url](#)

⁴⁴² For a description of this source, see the [introduction](#)

⁴⁴³ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 12

⁴⁴⁴ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 15

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

⁴⁴⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 20-21

⁴⁴⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 9

⁴⁴⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 20-21

⁴⁴⁹ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 July 2020), [url](#)

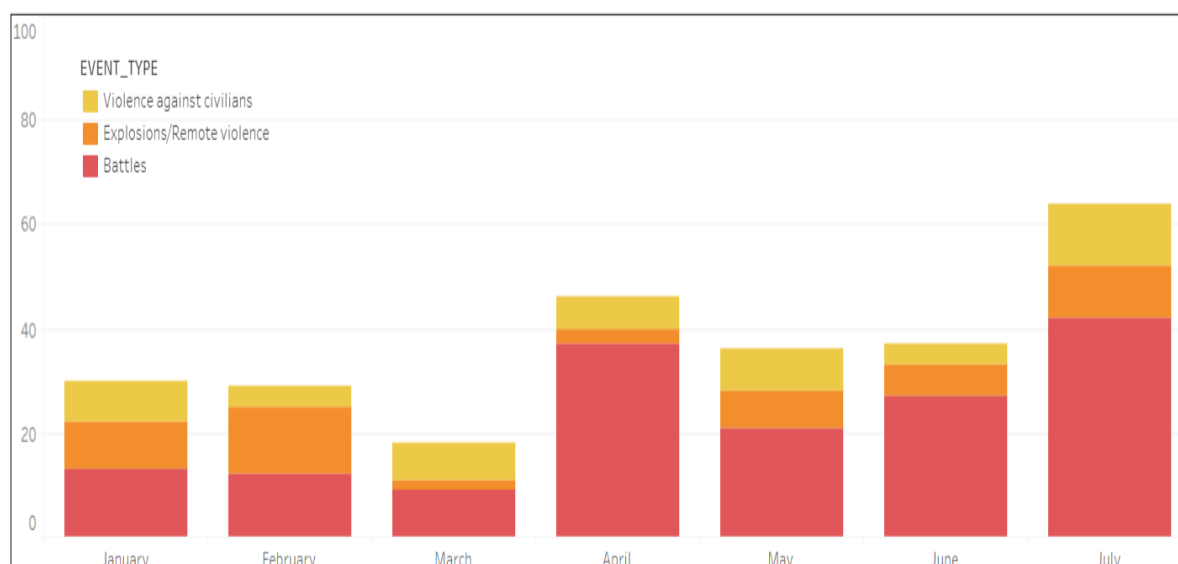


Figure 2. Evolution of security events coded battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians in the first seven months of 2020 in Pakistan, based on ACLED data⁴⁵⁰

In the period 1 January 2020 - 31 July 2020 PICSS recorded 187 incidents of anti-state violence by militants (100) and counter-insurgency operations (87) by the Pakistani government, during which 260 people were killed (106 militants, 76 civilians, 78 security forces personnel). A total of 231 people were injured including 155 civilians, 5 militants and 71 security forces personnel.⁴⁵¹

In the period 1 January 2020 - 31 July 2020 PIPS⁴⁵² documented 233 incidents of violence, resulting in 308 deaths and injured 402. Of the total 233 incidents of violence, 88 incidents were labelled as 'terrorist attacks'⁴⁵³, according to PIPS.⁴⁵⁴

1.3.2 Nature of security incidents

General

The nature of the violence in 2019 and in the first seven months of 2020 was diverse and is described in detail in the following sections. The 2019 annual security situation report by PIPS listed a breakdown of the nature of the violent incidents and the number of casualties in 2019 (see [Figure 3](#)).

Nature of violence incidents 2019	No. of incidents	No. of killed	No. of injured
'Terrorist attacks'	229	357	729
Political / election-related violence	8	6	7
Clashes & encounters between security forces & militants	25	44	9

⁴⁵⁰ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 July 2020), [url](#)

⁴⁵¹ Khan, A. email, 3 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PICSS

⁴⁵² For a description of this source, see the [introduction](#)

⁴⁵³ Sectarian and political (etc.) 'terrorist attacks' are counted as 'terrorist attacks' and not included in the other categories; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 7

⁴⁵⁴ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

Cross-border clashes/attacks	128	91	245
Operational attacks by sec. forces	28	81	19
Plot/foiled terror attempts	12	3	7
Targeted attacks (not by 'terrorists')	2	2	0
Protests/clashes with security forces	1	4	14
Total 2019	433	588	1 030
Total 2018	497	869	1 516

Figure 3. Breakdown nature of all incidents of violence in 2019, based on PIPS data⁴⁵⁵

Figure 4 presents a breakdown of the nature of violent incidents and the number of casualties recorded by PIPS in the first seven months of 2020.

Nature of violence incidents 1 January 2020 – 31 July 2020	No. of incidents	No. of killed	No. of injured
'Terrorist attacks'	88	124	229
Political / ethnic violence	-	-	-
Clashes & encounters between security forces & militants	10	27	6
Cross-border clashes/attacks	81	30	113
Operational attacks by sec. forces	30	100	13
Inter-militant clashes/attacks	3	4	10
Communal/faith- based violence	1	1	0
Plot/foiled terror attempts	11	0	0
Recovery of dead bodies	1	4	0
Targeted attacks (not by 'terrorists')	7	10	1
Protests/clashes with security forces	1	8	30
Total 1 January 2020 -31 July 2020	233	308	402

Figure 4. Breakdown nature of all incidents of violence in 2019 based on PIPS data⁴⁵⁶

In the following sections the nature of the violent incidents in Pakistan are described in detail. For further information on the varying numbers of civilian casualties and the various methodologies used by these research institutions, see the [Introduction](#) and [1.4.1 Figures on casualties in 2019](#) and [1.4.2 Figures on casualties 1 January 2020 - 31 July 2020](#).

Security operations and armed clashes

In the past, the Pakistan armed forces conducted major security operations in the country. These operations are described here below. In addition, a description of the nature of security operations in 2019 and the first half of 2020 is provided.

⁴⁵⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 20-21

⁴⁵⁶ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

Operation Zarb-e-Azb

Operation *Zarb-e-Azb* was launched on 15 June 2014 by the Pakistani armed forces in the province of KP and in the former FATA. The purpose of the operation was to target the militants in North Waziristan.⁴⁵⁷ Operation *Zarb-e-Azb* reduced the levels of militant violence, but at the cost of high levels of violence on behalf of security forces that affected the civilian population.⁴⁵⁸ Most areas were cleared of militants, except a few pockets and sleeper cells. Therefore, the Pakistani state has regained public trust to some extent, but the operation was conducted 'in a violent manner'. The operation also caused internal displacement.⁴⁵⁹ Critics of the operation claim it did not destroy the TTP, who were able to relocate to Afghanistan to carry out attacks from there.⁴⁶⁰

Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad

Operation *Radd-ul-Fasaad* was launched on 22 February 2017, after a series of attacks in the country in the beginning of 2017. This operation has not been confined to one area, but carried out across the whole of Pakistan.⁴⁶¹ The operation is aimed at eliminating the threat of terrorism and at consolidating the gains of Operation *Zarb-e-Azb*. It also aimed at ensuring the security of Pakistan's borders. The operation included the involvement of Pakistan's air force, Pakistan's navy, Pakistan's police and other civil armed forces.⁴⁶² The Rangers were given 'special powers' to operate in Lahore and different parts in the province of Punjab.⁴⁶³ The strategy of the operation is to use Intelligence-Based Operations (IBOs). 'IBOs use[d] information from multiple intelligence agencies to find and eliminate militant hideouts across the country.' Operation *Radd-ul-Fasaad* reduced the level of violence but failed to prevent militant attacks on security forces and civilians.⁴⁶⁴ This military operation led to criticism that some groups such as Pashtuns, including Afghan migrants in the country were indiscriminately targeted.⁴⁶⁵ Anti-militant operations as part of *Radd-ul-Fasaad* continued in 2018 and the first half of 2019.⁴⁶⁶ Since the start of the operation in 2017, 'more than 400 terrorist plots' were prevented. In February 2020, a defence analyst stated in the Express Tribune that the operation 'helped Pakistan to establish complete control over tribal areas'.⁴⁶⁷

Operation Khyber-IV

In July 2017, the Pakistani army launched Operation Khyber-IV to clear Rajgal Valley in of militants in Khyber tribal district.⁴⁶⁸ The main goal of Operation Khyber-IV was to eradicate the threat of IS in Khyber tribal district, although security forces also targeted other militant groups and focused on the border security at the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.⁴⁶⁹ The Pakistani army announced the completion of Operation Khyber-IV on 21 August 2017.⁴⁷⁰

⁴⁵⁷ Zulfqar, S., An Overview of Pakistan's Security Situation after Operation Zarb-e-Azb, October 2017, Islamabad Policy Research Institute, [url](#), pp. 117-118

⁴⁵⁸ Diplomat (The), Pakistan's Counterterrorism Operation: Myth vs. Reality, 27 June 2016, [url](#); BBC News, Uncovering Pakistan's secret human rights abuses, 2 June 2019, [url](#)

⁴⁵⁹ Dawn, Nearly 40pc IDPs have returned to North Waziristan, army chief told, 19 December 2015, [url](#)

⁴⁶⁰ Diplomat (The), Pakistan's Counterterrorism Operation: Myth vs. Reality, 27 June 2016, [url](#)

⁴⁶¹ Express Tribune (The), Army launches Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad against terrorists across the country, 22 February 2017, [url](#)

⁴⁶² Dawn, Pakistan Army launches 'Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad' across the country, 21 June 2017, [url](#)

⁴⁶³ Al, Pakistan: Wave of violence shows a horrific disregard for human life, 23 February 2017, [url](#)

⁴⁶⁴ Critical Threats, Pakistan's Counter-Militant Offensive: Operation Raddul Fasaad, 25 August 2017, [url](#)

⁴⁶⁵ Express Tribune (The), Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad: 'Punjab police focus on Pakhtuns and Afghans', 4 March 2017, [url](#)

⁴⁶⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 83; Nation (The), Forces ready to respond to any threat: COAS, 13 June 2019, [url](#)

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

⁴⁶⁸ Dawn, Army launches Operation Khyber-4 in Rajgal Valley, 16 July 2017, [url](#)

⁴⁶⁹ PIPS, Security Report 2017, 7 January 2018, [url](#), pp. 98-99

⁴⁷⁰ Express Tribune (The), Rajgal cleansed of terrorists as military concludes Operation Khyber-IV, 21 August 2017, [url](#)

According to PIPS, security operations and armed clashes were reported in all four provinces of Pakistan in 2019. Security forces carried out 28 operations and raids against militants in 2019, compared to 31 operations and raids against militants in 2018.⁴⁷¹ Most of these operational strikes in 2019 were carried out in KP (15), followed by Balochistan (11) and one each in Punjab and Sindh.⁴⁷² According to PIPS, 81 people were killed (compared to 77 in 2018), including 75 militants and 6 security forces personnel.⁴⁷³

Besides these operational attacks, security forces engaged also in 25 armed clashes with militants in 2019 compared to 22 armed clashes in 2018.⁴⁷⁴ The armed clashes in 2019 claimed 44 lives (38 militants, 6 security forces personnel). In total 9 people were injured, all security forces personnel.⁴⁷⁵

PIPS stated that in the first seven months of 2020, the security forces carried out 30 operations against militants. According to PIPS, 100 people were killed and 13 injured. Besides these operational attacks, security forces engaged in 4 armed clashes and 6 encounters with militants in the first seven months of 2020. PIPS mentioned in the same timeframe also one clash/protest with security forces.⁴⁷⁶

On the question regarding what measures have been adopted by the Pakistan armed forces to respond to the security situation in 2020, Asad Hashim stated on 6 July 2020 the following:

‘Pakistan’s military has continued to carry out what it terms ‘Intelligence-Based Operations’ (IBOs) as its primary form of response to security threats in 2019 and 2020. According to one military source, the uptick in violence in North Waziristan district has been a response to an increase in IBO’s targeting TTP sleeper cells in that district. Military operations against Baloch nationalist groups continue in that province. Rights groups say the military continues to commit enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings as a matter of routine in its security operations. There is no accountability for such alleged abuses.’⁴⁷⁷

Mansur Khan Mahsud stated on 30 June 2020 the following about the measures by the Pakistan armed forces to respond to the security situation in 2020 in the KPTDs:

‘There is a large number of Pakistani security forces present in all the seven tribal districts of former FATA. At the same time the government has built a good intelligence network in the former areas of FATA. The government has also formed peace committees in almost all the areas of former FATA to keep the law and order situation under control. The government is also involved in the uplift of the area to provide jobs and create business environment in the area so that the local people don’t need to turn to militant groups for money etc. Secondly tribal elders and religious scholars are also used by the government to educate the local people that militancy is not good for them or for their areas.’⁴⁷⁸

According to Michael Kugelman, the army is not been actively involved in new security measures. He stated:

‘With Pakistan’s security situation in a relatively good place in 2020, and with the main policy focus on a struggling economy and the pandemic—combined with the fact that the military, faced with the reality of a ruling party inexperienced with national governance, has taken on

⁴⁷¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 20 -21, p. 77; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), pp. 23; 83-84

⁴⁷² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 77

⁴⁷³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 20 -21; 77; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), pp. 23; 83-84

⁴⁷⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 79; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 23; pp. 85-86

⁴⁷⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 79

⁴⁷⁶ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

⁴⁷⁷ Hashim, A., email, 6 July 2020

⁴⁷⁸ Khan Mahsud, M., email, 30 June 2020



a more active role in tackling these challenges—the armed forces have not been active on the front of new security measures. We can be sure that they have authorized steps to beef up security around CPEC projects, Chinese nationals, electricity grids, and other targets that could be hit by separatist militants. But otherwise, the armed forces’ focus during the first half of 2020 has been in other areas.⁴⁷⁹

Attacks by militant groups

Militant groups continued to conduct attacks in 2019 and the first seven months of 2020. Tactics used were targeted killings, different types of IEDs, suicide attacks, kidnappings, grenade blasts, rocket attacks, and sabotage acts.⁴⁸⁰ Figures on these attacks and a description of the most common tactics and weapons used by militants are provided below.

Figures of attacks by militant groups

According to PICSS 2019 annual report, 159 militant attacks occurred in 2019 compared to 229 in 2018. PICSS mentioned that in 2019 these militant attacks killed 305 people and injured 662.⁴⁸¹

According to the PIPS 2019 annual security report, 229 ‘terrorist attacks’ were carried out by militant, nationalist, insurgent and violent sectarian groups in Pakistan in 2019. This is a 13 % decrease compared to 2018 (262 ‘terrorist attacks’).⁴⁸² PIPS mentioned that in 2019 those attacks killed 357 and injured 729 people. The number of people killed decreased by 40 % compared to 2018.⁴⁸³ Those killed in these ‘terrorist attacks’ in 2019 included 164 civilians, 163 security forces personnel and 30 militants, whilst those injured included 519 civilians, 208 security forces and 2 militants.⁴⁸⁴

In the first seven months of 2020, PICSS observed 100 militant attacks. PICSS noticed that in this timeframe these militant attacks killed 154 people and injured 217. Most targeted were civilians (76 killed and 155 injured), followed by security force personnel (62 killed, 61 injured) and militants (16 killed, 1 injured).⁴⁸⁵

PIPS counted 88 ‘terrorist attacks’ in the first seven months of 2020. PIPS mentioned that in 2020 those attacks killed 124 and injured 229 people.⁴⁸⁶

Tactics and weapons used by militants

PICSS made a breakdown of the tactics used by militants in 2019 in its annual report. PICSS reported suicide attacks, IED attacks, militant assaults, kidnapping, rocket attacks and grenade attacks.⁴⁸⁷ The same tactics were also observed in the first half of 2020.⁴⁸⁸

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

Suicide attacks

The PICSS 2019 annual report stated that militants carried out 6 suicide attacks in which 45 people were killed and 112 were injured. According to PICSS, the number of suicide attacks in 2019 decreased with 67 % compared to 2018 (18 suicide attacks).⁴⁸⁹ According to PIPS, 4 suicide attacks took place in

⁴⁷⁹ Kugelman M., email, 6 August 2020

⁴⁸⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 18; PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 22

⁴⁸¹ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 18

⁴⁸² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 17

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

⁴⁸⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 17

⁴⁸⁵ Khan, A. email, 3 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PICSS

⁴⁸⁶ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

⁴⁸⁷ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 22

⁴⁸⁸ Khan, A. email, 3 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PICSS

⁴⁸⁹ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 23

2019 in which 55 people were killed and injured 122.⁴⁹⁰ The CRSS 2019 annual report recorded 9 suicide attacks which killed 56 people.⁴⁹¹

The majority of the suicide attacks counted by PIPS in 2019, occurred in the province of Balochistan (two), followed by one each in the provinces of Punjab and KP.⁴⁹²

In the period from 1 January 2020 until 31 July 2020, PICSS and PIPS observed two suicide attacks in the province of Balochistan in which 25 people were killed and 39 injured.⁴⁹³

Bomb explosions and Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs)

PIPS stated that in 2019 militants used various types of IEDs in 123 attacks compared to 118 attacks in 2018.⁴⁹⁴ PICSS reported that in 2019, 84 incidents with IEDs occurred in which 112 people were killed and 441 were injured. The number of IED attacks decreased slightly in 2019 compared to 2018 (87 IED attacks).⁴⁹⁵ CRSS reported that in 2019, 87 'explosive attacks'⁴⁹⁶ took place in which 104 people were killed.⁴⁹⁷ The highest number of IED explosions in 2019 was recorded in the province of Balochistan followed by the tribal districts of KP according to PICSS.⁴⁹⁸ According to the 2019 annual report of FATA Research Centre (FRC), IEDs were 'the most preferred tool' of attacks carried out by militants targeting civilians, security forces and member of civil militia in the tribal districts of KP.⁴⁹⁹

In the period from 1 January 2020 until 31 July 2020, PICSS reported 42 incidents with IEDs in which 37 people were killed and 117 were injured. Civilians and security personnel were the victims of IEDs.⁵⁰⁰

Targeted killings

According to PICSS, 24 targeted killings occurred in 2019. In these attacks, 43 people were killed and 9 injured.⁵⁰¹ PICSS reported that most of the targeted killings took place in Balochistan province, followed by the provinces of KP and Sindh.⁵⁰² CRSS stated that in the terrorist attacks that occurred in 2019, 177 incidents were targeted killings in which 219 people were killed and 51 injured.⁵⁰³

In the period from 1 January 2020 until 31 July 2020, PICSS mentioned 23 targeted killings in which 35 people were killed and 6 injured.⁵⁰⁴

Kidnappings

PICSS counted in 2019 two kidnappings by militants.⁵⁰⁵ The 2019 annual report by FRC recorded four kidnappings in 2019 in tribal districts.⁵⁰⁶ Abduction was reported as a method used by the Pakistani security establishment to silence anyone who tried to question and expose their actions. Regularly

⁴⁹⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 22

⁴⁹¹ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 21

⁴⁹² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 22

⁴⁹³ Khan, A. email, 3 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PICSS; Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

⁴⁹⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 18; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 18

⁴⁹⁵ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 25

⁴⁹⁶ According to CRSS definition of explosive attacks: bombs, IEDs, landmines, CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 21

⁴⁹⁷ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 21

⁴⁹⁸ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 25-26

⁴⁹⁹ FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. 12

⁵⁰⁰ Khan, A. email, 3 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PICSS

⁵⁰¹ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 28-29

⁵⁰² PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 28

⁵⁰³ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 17

⁵⁰⁴ Khan, A. email, 3 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PICSS

⁵⁰⁵ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 29

⁵⁰⁶ FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. 13

there were reports of abductions of journalists or activists.⁵⁰⁷ In July 2019, Deutsche Welle reported enforced disappearances of Shiite Muslims that were reportedly carried out by the country's intelligence agencies. This happened in the context of Shiites who went to Iraq, Iran or Syria, though there is no evidence that they took part in violent acts.⁵⁰⁸

In the period from 1 January 2020 until 31 July 2020, PICSS counted in total three incidents of kidnapping and killing.⁵⁰⁹

Sectarian-related violence

According to PIPS, 14 incidents of sectarian-related violence occurred in 2019. Compared to 2018, PIPS counted 12 incidents of sectarian-related violence.⁵¹⁰ In 2019, 38 were killed and 78 were injured in those incidents.⁵¹¹ Most of the sectarian attacks and clashes (9) in 2019 were incidents of targeted killing or firing while four attacks employed IEDs and one hand grenade blast.⁵¹² Geographically, most sectarian attacks occurred in Balochistan, mainly in Quetta (7), followed by Karachi in Sindh (6) and one in D.I. Khan in KP.⁵¹³ In 2019, the sectarian attack that caused the most casualties was the attack on 12 April 2019 that targeted the Hazara community in Quetta at the Hazarganji vegetable market killing 21 people and wounding 48 others.⁵¹⁴

In contrast, CRSS documented 203 sectarian-related casualties in 2019 with 44 killed and 120 wounded.⁵¹⁵ Balochistan and Sindh were the provinces where most casualties fell in 2019.⁵¹⁶ Most of the sectarian violence in 2019 was directed against the Shia community (Hazara).⁵¹⁷ According to PIPS, the main perpetrators in 2019 were mainly factions of LeJ and SeM and also affiliates of IS.⁵¹⁸

In the period from 1 January 2020 until 31 July 2020 PIPS counted 3 sectarian-related 'terrorist attacks'. In these incidents, 2 people were killed and 15 injured.⁵¹⁹ In the first quarter of 2020 counted CRSS in total 45 casualties of sectarian violence. CRSS mentioned that sectarian violence occurred in Balochistan and Punjab.⁵²⁰ In the second quarter of 2020, CRSS documented sectarian violence in the province of KP, more specifically in Kurram tribal district. Two persons were killed and one injured.⁵²¹

Political violence

PIPS counted 8 incidents of political and election-related violence in 2019. Besides this, PIPS also counted 9 'terrorist attacks' against political leaders and workers. Overall, these 17 incidents claimed the lives of 17 people and injured 26 in 2019.⁵²² Compared to 2018 (an election year), the figures of 2019 represented a significant decline.⁵²³

For a more extensive assessment of the violence in the run-up to the general elections of 25 July 2018, please refer to the [EASO Country of Origin Information Report Pakistan Security Situation](#) of October

⁵⁰⁷ Al Jazeera, Pakistani activist abduction sparks fear of crackdown on dissent, 6 June 2018, [url](#)

⁵⁰⁸ DW, Why are Pakistani Shiites 'disappearing'?, 9 July 2019, [url](#)

⁵⁰⁹ Khan, A. email, 3 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PICSS

⁵¹⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 17, p. 53; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 53

⁵¹¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 17, p. 53

⁵¹² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 54

⁵¹³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 54

⁵¹⁴ Al Jazeera, Pakistan: Deadly explosion rips through Quetta market, 13 April 2019, [url](#)

⁵¹⁵ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 30

⁵¹⁶ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 31

⁵¹⁷ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 30

⁵¹⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 53

⁵¹⁹ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

⁵²⁰ CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, First Quarter, 2020, 7 April 2020, [url](#)

⁵²¹ CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, Second Quarter, 2020, 16 July 2020, [url](#)

⁵²² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 56

⁵²³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 56

2018.⁵²⁴ In the period from 1 January 2020 until 31 July 2020, PIPS did not record any political violence.⁵²⁵

Border attacks

In 2019, PIPS counted in total 128 cross-border attacks at the borders with Afghanistan, India and Iran by foreign forces, Pakistani forces and militants. This is a decrease of 2 % in comparison to 2018 (131 cross-border attacks).⁵²⁶ Most of these attacks (123) took place at the border with India, followed by four attacks at the Pakistan-Afghanistan border and one attack at the Pakistan-Iran border.⁵²⁷ The main victims were civilians, followed by army personnel. A combined total of 91 people were killed in these attacks and 245 injured.⁵²⁸ In the period from 1 January 2020 until 31 July 2020, PIPS mentioned in total 81 cross-border attacks at the borders with Afghanistan, India and Iran. All of these attacks took place at the border with India (75) and Afghanistan (6). Not a single cross-border attack was counted at the border with Iran. A combined total of 30 people were killed in these attacks and 113 were injured.⁵²⁹

According to the Pakistan military, cited in the New York Times, the fencing of the border improved the security situation in Pakistan.⁵³⁰ At the end of 2017, the Pakistani army started fencing the border and building border fortifications.⁵³¹ These attempts to improve security at the border triggered numerous border clashes.⁵³² According to PIPS, 4 cross-border attacks at the border with Afghanistan killed 6 and injured 19 people in the border area in 2019, mostly army personnel.⁵³³ In the first seven months of 2020, clashes at the Pakistan-Afghanistan border continued. PIPS reported six attacks in the first seven months of 2020. These attacks killed 12 people and injured 12.⁵³⁴ On 30 July 2020, cross-border shelling by Pakistan killed 15 civilians in Afghanistan. The shelling occurred after clashes between Pakistani and Afghan security forces at the closed Chaman-Spin Boldak border crossing in the province of Balochistan.⁵³⁵ On 6 August 2020, the Pakistan army stated that one soldier was killed and two others wounded by cross-border shelling from Afghanistan.⁵³⁶

The situation at the LoC and the de facto border between the Indian and Pakistani-controlled parts of Kashmir stayed 'relatively more volatile' in terms of the number of cross-border violations documented in 2019, according to PIPS. At the Pakistan-India border 123 cross-border attacks occurred, claiming the lives of 85 and injuring 226.⁵³⁷ In total in the first seven months of 2020, 75 cross-border attacks caused the death of 18 people and injured 101.⁵³⁸ In June 2020, multiple incidents were recorded at the LoC.⁵³⁹ In July 2020, the Pakistan army stated that there was an escalation in firing and shelling across the LoC.⁵⁴⁰

⁵²⁴ EASO, COI Report: Pakistan Security Situation, October 2018, [url](#), p. 39

⁵²⁵ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

⁵²⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 58; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 62

⁵²⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 58

⁵²⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 58

⁵²⁹ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

⁵³⁰ New York Times (The), Pakistan Builds Border Fence, Limiting Militants and Families Alike, 15 March 2020, [url](#)

⁵³¹ RFE/RL, Afghanistan Returns Captured, Dead Pakistani Soldiers After Cross-Border Clash, 16 April 2018, [url](#); Los Angeles Times, This border barrier got built — and it's upended lives in Pakistan and Afghanistan, 26 May 2019, [url](#)

⁵³² RFE/RL, Afghanistan Returns Captured, Dead Pakistani Soldiers After Cross-Border Clash, 16 April 2018, [url](#)

⁵³³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 59

⁵³⁴ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 — data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

⁵³⁵ RFE/RL, Pakistani Shelling Kills 15 Afghan Civilians, Kabul Says, After Clashes At Closed Border, 31 July 2020, [url](#)

⁵³⁶ Gandhara, Pakistani Army Claims Cross-Border Firing From Afghanistan Killed Soldier, 6 August 2020, [url](#)

⁵³⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 58, p. 59

⁵³⁸ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 — data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

⁵³⁹ Dawn, Four injured along LoC in Indian shelling, 10 June 2020, [url](#); Dawn, Protest lodged with India over ceasefire violations, 11 June 2020, [url](#); Dawn, Woman killed in shelling from across LoC, 13 June 2020, [url](#)

⁵⁴⁰ Gandhara, In Disputed Kashmir, Pakistan Accuses India Of Increased Shelling, 23 July 2020, [url](#)

In 2019, Iranian border security forces carried out one cross-border attack in the Talab area of Chagai district in Balochistan. No casualties were reported.⁵⁴¹ In April 2019, Iran and Pakistan announced the establishment of a joint border security force.⁵⁴² Iran and Pakistan formed the Higher Border Commission (HBC) which is a mechanism for consultations between the two countries to discuss all border-related issues for enhanced coordination at different levels. In July 2019, the Pakistan-Iran HBC decided to improve the coordination and to take the 'appropriate' measures including physical installations such as fencing.⁵⁴³ PIPS documented not a single cross-border attack in the first seven months of 2020.⁵⁴⁴ In May 2020, six FC soldiers were killed in an IED blast near the Pakistan-Iran border.⁵⁴⁵ According to Al-Monitor, after this attack General Bajwa called his Iranian counterpart to demanded action and enhance border security and curb the attacks on Pakistani security forces by militants operating from the Iranian side of the border.⁵⁴⁶ In June 2020, Pakistan conducted an IBO operation alongside the Pakistan-Iranian border.⁵⁴⁷

Drone strikes

The first US drone strike in Pakistan took place in the Waziristan region in 2004. The number of drone strikes between 2004 and 2014, and casualties, varied according to the source consulted.⁵⁴⁸ Most of the US drone strikes in Pakistan took place in former FATA, where the US military believed al-Qaeda, Taliban and other militant groups sought refuge.⁵⁴⁹ Under the Trump administration, aerial drone strikes in Pakistan continued after a pause of nine months under the Obama administration.⁵⁵⁰ A study published in March 2019 by Action on Armed Violence (AOAV) that examined the relationship between drone strikes and suicide attacks in Pakistan, stated that between January 2011 and January 2019 there were 199 confirmed drone strikes in Pakistan. This study stated that US-led drone strikes in Pakistan may be fuelling 'terrorist attacks' – both of which were linked to high levels of civilian harm.⁵⁵¹

The Bureau of Investigative Journalism (BIJ) compiled its own data on aerial drone strikes until February 2020. In 2018, BIJ recorded five strikes. These US drone strikes killed between four and nine people. In four out of these five drone strikes, the victims were militants. In one drone attack, BIJ stated that there was the possibility that civilians were injured.⁵⁵² The last drone strike occurred on 4 July 2018, when a US drone killed a commander of the TTP near North Waziristan.⁵⁵³ Among the consulted sources, there were no drone attacks reported in 2019 or in the first seven months of 2020.⁵⁵⁴

⁵⁴¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 64

⁵⁴² Al Jazeera, Pakistan and Iran to form rapid reaction force along border area, 22 April 2019, [url](#)

⁵⁴³ International News (The), Pakistan, Iran agree on border fencing, 19 July 2019, [url](#)

⁵⁴⁴ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

⁵⁴⁵ Dawn, 6 FC personnel martyred in IED blast near Pak-Iran border, 8 May 2020, [url](#)

⁵⁴⁶ Al-Monitor, Pakistan calls for tighter security on Iran border following fatal attack, 21 May 2020, [url](#)

⁵⁴⁷ Arab News Pakistan, 'Ground zero' operation underway against militant hideouts near Pakistan's border with Iran, 6 June 2020, [url](#)

⁵⁴⁸ Watson Institute for International Studies, Costs of War: War-related Death, Injury, and Displacement in Afghanistan and Pakistan 2001-2014, 22 May 2015, [url](#), p. 11

⁵⁴⁹ Express Tribune (The), Explore the data: Drone strikes in Pakistan, 9 February 2018, [url](#); Dawn, Thousands killed in drone strikes, terror attacks since 2004, 9 November 2018, [url](#)

⁵⁵⁰ New America, Drone strikes: Pakistan, n.d., [url](#)

⁵⁵¹ AOAV, Drone strikes and suicide attacks in Pakistan: an analysis, 29 March 2019, [url](#), p. 1

⁵⁵² BIJ, Pakistan: reported US strikes 2018, n.d., [url](#)

⁵⁵³ Dawn, Taliban commander killed in suspected US drone strike near Pak-Afghan border, 5 July 2018, [url](#)

⁵⁵⁴ BIJ, Pakistan: reported US strikes 2018, n.d., [url](#); New America, Drone strikes: Pakistan, n.d., [url](#); Pakistan Today, No US drone strike in Pakistan in 2019: report, 30 December 2019, [url](#)

In September 2015, for the first time, the Pakistani army launched a Pakistani-made drone, a Burraq Drone, to strike at terrorists in Shawal Valley in former FATA.⁵⁵⁵ No further information could be found during the reporting period.

1.3.3 Impact of COVID-19 on the security situation

On 26 February 2020, the first case of COVID-19 was reported from Karachi in the province of Sindh. The virus spread into various regions nationwide. In mid-March, the government closed all schools, banned public gatherings and transport links, locked the national economy, sealed land borders and limited international flights.⁵⁵⁶ On 10 August 2020, partial lockdown measures were lifted.⁵⁵⁷

Asad Hashim stated on 6 July 2020 about the impact of COVID-19 on the security situation in Pakistan that:

‘COVID-19 has dominated the headlines in Pakistan, as elsewhere in the world, but it has not significantly impacted reporting on security incidents, in my opinion. There have, however, been reports of at least three journalists – two in Balochistan and one in KP province – being abducted, assaulted and released by security forces allegedly because of their coverage being critical of the government’s coronavirus response measures.’⁵⁵⁸

Mansur Khan Mahsud stated the following on 30 June 2020 about COVID-19 and the security situation in the KPTDs:

‘It was not easy to report on security situation in the tribal districts of former FATA before COVID-19 and now due to the outbreak of COVID-19 it has made it more difficult because of the lockdown and fear in the area. Public transport was closed for many weeks and it was very difficult to travel from one place to another in the area and secondly people most of the time remained indoor in their houses to save themselves from the deadly virus and nobody is ready to sit with journalists for interviews or information sharing. COVID-19 has benefited the militants to move from one place to another and sneak back into their former areas in different tribal districts of former FATA because the security forces were busy in controlling the spread of COVID 19 along the civilian institutions, the local people remained indoor which gave a perfect chance to the militants in their movement from one place to another in the area.’⁵⁵⁹

A July 2020 report about terrorism in Pakistan during COVID-19 stated that sectarian groups have used the pandemic to encourage sectarian hate.⁵⁶⁰ In May and June 2020, the frequency and intensity of militant attacks increased in Pakistan, according to the source, however, is it hard to link this increase to the outbreak of the virus. The report stated that it shows that militant groups are still able to carry out attacks and try to exploit the socio-economic instability and the preoccupation of the security forces with managing the outbreak of the virus.⁵⁶¹

1.4 Impact of the violence on the civilian population

The first section below describes the figures on casualties of violence in 2019 and the first seven months of 2020. There are several Pakistani organisations that keep count on the casualties⁵⁶² of

⁵⁵⁵ Express Tribune (The), Why Pakistan's first drone strike should worry Obama, 1 October 2015, [url](#)

⁵⁵⁶ VoA, Pakistan Lifts Lockdowns, Top UN Diplomat Lauds Anti-Virus Gains, 10 August 2020, [url](#)

⁵⁵⁷ Al Jazeera, Pakistan partial lockdown measures to lift, 10 August 2020, [url](#)

⁵⁵⁸ Hashim, A., email, 6 July 2020. Asad Hashim is a Pakistani journalist covering Pakistan.

⁵⁵⁹ Mahsud Khan, M., email, 30 June 2020. Mansur Khan Mahsud is the executive director of FRC.

⁵⁶⁰ Amir Rana, M., Terrorism in Pakistan under Covid-19, NIOC, 24 July 2020, [url](#), p. 19

⁵⁶¹ Amir Rana, M., Terrorism in Pakistan under Covid-19, NIOC, 24 July 2020, [url](#), p. 5

⁵⁶² In this report the term casualties means the sum of the fatalities and injured persons

violence (PIPS, PICSS and CRSS); however, the figures vary between organisations. This is related to the fact that these organisations have varying methods, ground presence and access to information.⁵⁶³ Separate sections describe the targets of violence, the effects of violent incidents on society and the situation of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees.

1.4.1 Figures on casualties in 2019

In 2019, PIPS recorded 433 violent incidents, resulting in 588 deaths and 1 030 injured (including deaths and injured from 'terrorist attacks').⁵⁶⁴ According to PIPS, 235 civilians, 144 militants and 209 security personnel were killed in 2019.⁵⁶⁵ The number of people killed in overall incidents of violence in Pakistan decreased by 32 %, from 869 in 2018 to 588 in 2019. The number of people injured in overall incidents of violence decreased by 32 % from 1 516 in 2018 to 1 030 in 2019.⁵⁶⁶ A downward trend was also recorded for the number of deaths of militants: 144 militants in 2019, compared to 191 in 2018, a decrease of 25 %. The number of civilians killed (235) in these violent incidents, also decreased by about 48 % as compared to 2018 (456). Fatalities among security forces personnel in 2019 (209) were 6 % less than the previous year's fatalities among them (222).⁵⁶⁷ In addition, the PIPS data showed that 'terrorist attacks' (229) accounted for more than half of all violent incidents in 2019. The number of people killed in these 'terrorist attacks' in 2019 decreased by 40 % compared to 2018.⁵⁶⁸

PICSS recorded 270 incidents of violence carried out by militants and during counter-insurgency operations by the state in 2019. In total 393 people were killed: 110 militants, 133 civilians, 150 security forces personnel.⁵⁶⁹ PICSS reported 687 injured: 506 civilians, 1 militant, 178 security forces personnel and 2 *razakars*. Compared to 2018, a more than 43 % decline in deaths and an almost 30 % decrease in injured people.⁵⁷⁰

Data provided by CRSS showed 679 fatalities and 765 injured from violence in 2019.⁵⁷¹ This included the deaths of 328 civilians, 155 militants, and 196 security officials.⁵⁷² Compared to 2018, the number of violence-related fatalities decreased by 31 % according to CRSS.⁵⁷³ CRSS counted 519 fatalities from 'terror attacks' in 2019.⁵⁷⁴

[Figure 5](#) gives a comparison of the persons killed in 2018 and in 2019 between the three sources based on the definitions described in the [introduction](#).

2018 by source	Total killed	Civilians killed	Militants killed	Security forces killed
PIPS ⁵⁷⁵	869	456	191	222
CRSS ⁵⁷⁶	981	521	221	239

⁵⁶³ For a description of these sources, see the [introduction](#)

⁵⁶⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 21

⁵⁶⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 24-25

⁵⁶⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 21

⁵⁶⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 24-25

⁵⁶⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 17

⁵⁶⁹ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 14

⁵⁷⁰ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 15

⁵⁷¹ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 5

⁵⁷² CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 8-9

⁵⁷³ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 7

⁵⁷⁴ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 15

⁵⁷⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 24

⁵⁷⁶ CRSS, CRSS Annual Security Report Special Edition 2013 – 2018, March 2019, [url](#), p. 12; CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 8-9

PICSS ⁵⁷⁷	694	356	164	174
2019 by source	Total killed	Civilians killed	Militants killed	Security forces killed
PIPS ⁵⁷⁸	588	235	144	209
CRSS ⁵⁷⁹	679	328	155	196
PICSS ⁵⁸⁰	393	133	110	150

Figure 5. Comparison of the number of fatalities in 2018 and 2019, based on PIPS, CRSS, PICSS data⁵⁸¹

Patterns of casualties in 2019⁵⁸²

Data compiled by CRSS shows certain stability in the number of fatalities throughout most of the year 2019. Most fatalities occurred in January, April and May 2019. December 2019 witnessed the least fatalities of the year.⁵⁸³

Data compiled by PICSS shows the highest number of fatalities in July and April 2019. PICSS noted an increase in the numbers of fatalities in the month of October 2019.⁵⁸⁴

1.4.2 Figures on casualties 1 January 2020 - 31 July 2020

In the first seven months of 2020, PIPS recorded 233 violent incidents, resulting in 710 casualties (308 deaths and 402 injured) (including 124 deaths and 224 injured from 'terrorist attacks').⁵⁸⁵

PICSS recorded 187 incidents of violence carried out by militants and during counter-insurgency operations by the state in 2020. These incidents of violence resulted in 491 casualties (260 deaths, 231 injured).⁵⁸⁶

Data provided by CRSS showed in total 279 fatalities and 130 injured from violence in the first and second quarter of 2020 in Pakistan.⁵⁸⁷ The total number of casualties for both quarters stood at 409 casualties. CRSS counted the deaths of 89 civilians, 111 militants, and 69 security and government officials in the first and second quarter of 2020.⁵⁸⁸

Patterns of casualties 1 January 2020 - 31 July 2020

Data compiled by PICSS showed the highest number of casualties in January 2020. PICSS noted an increase in the numbers of casualties from April 2020 onwards.⁵⁸⁹

⁵⁷⁷ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2018, 19 April 2019, [url](#), pp. 14-15

⁵⁷⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 24-25

⁵⁷⁹ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 8-9

⁵⁸⁰ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2018, 19 April 2019, [url](#), p. 14

⁵⁸¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 24; SATP, Fatalities in Terrorist Violence in Pakistan 2000-2019, last updated: 5 August 2019, [url](#); CRSS, CRSS Annual Security Report Special Edition 2013 – 2018, March 2019, [url](#), p. 12; PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2018, 19 April 2019, [url](#), pp. 14-15; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 24-25; PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 14; CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 8-9

⁵⁸² In this section the data compiled by CRSS and PICSS are compared, as both sources have collected data throughout 2018 for each month.

⁵⁸³ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 7

⁵⁸⁴ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 16

⁵⁸⁵ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 – data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

⁵⁸⁶ Khan, A. email, 3 August 2020 – data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PICSS

⁵⁸⁷ Figures fatalities and injured counted together for the first and second quarter- CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, First Quarter, 2020, 7 April 2020, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, Second Quarter, 2020, 16 July 2020, [url](#)

⁵⁸⁸ Figures fatalities counted together for the first and second quarter- CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, First Quarter, 2020, 7 April 2020, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, Second Quarter, 2020, 16 July 2020, [url](#)

⁵⁸⁹ Khan, A. email, 3 August 2020 – data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PICSS

Data compiled by CRSS for the first seven months shows that most fatalities occurred in February 2020 followed by January 2020. The least fatalities fell in March 2020.⁵⁹⁰ According to CRSS, in the second quarter of 2020 a decrease in casualties (185 casualties in total)⁵⁹¹ was recorded compared to the first quarter of 2020 (224 casualties in total).⁵⁹² The number of fatalities and injured in Pakistan in the second quarter of 2020 was lower than in the first quarter of 2020. In the second quarter of 2020, the number of casualties were higher in KP including former FATA, in Sindh and ICT compared to the first quarter of 2020. In Balochistan and Punjab the number of casualties in the second quarter were less high than in the first quarter of 2020 (see [Figure 6](#)).⁵⁹³

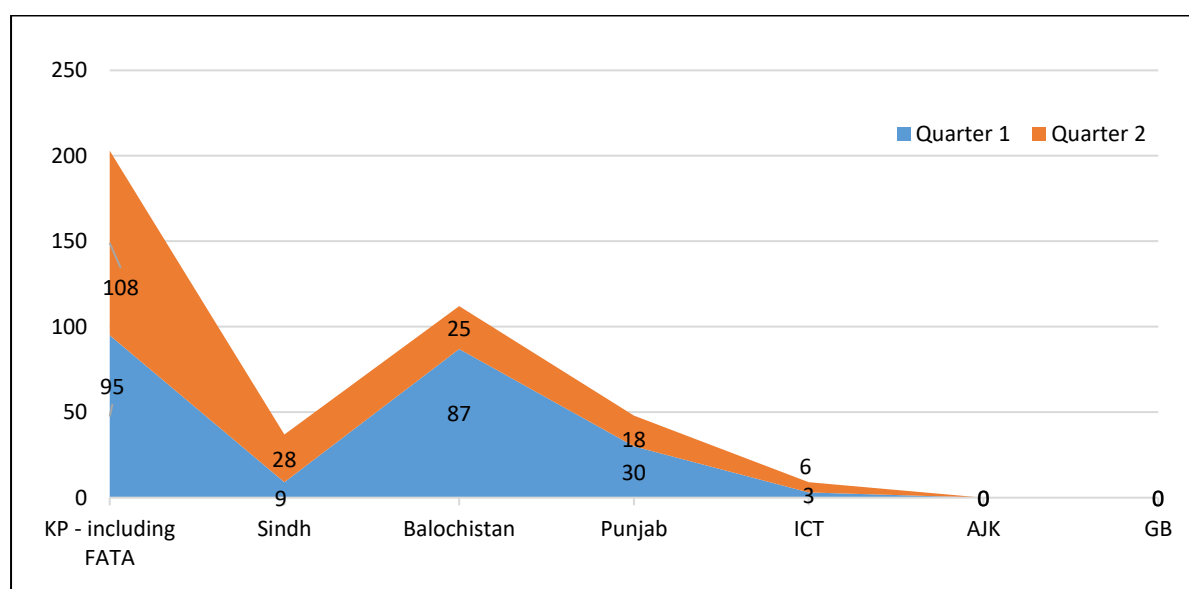


Figure 6. Violence-related casualties by region Q1, 2020 vs Q2, 2020 based on CRSS data⁵⁹⁴

1.4.3 Targets of attacks

Both PIPS and CRSS provided more in-depth information about the affiliations of the victims⁵⁹⁵ of ‘terrorist attacks’ and security operations in Pakistan during the year 2019.

PIPS counted 229 ‘terrorist attacks’ in 2019 in which 357 people were killed and 729 injured. Figure 7 shows in detail the targets of ‘terrorist attacks’ provided by PIPS.

Targets of ‘terrorist attacks’ 2019	No. of incidents	No. killed	No. of injured
Security forces/law enforcement	118	209	346
Education/institutions/teachers	2	2	4
Non-Baloch settlers/workers	1	3	1

⁵⁹⁰ CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, First Quarter, 2020, 7 April 2020, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, Second Quarter, 2020, 16 July 2020, [url](#)

⁵⁹¹ Figures fatalities and injured counted together

⁵⁹² Figures fatalities and injured counted together

⁵⁹³ CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, First Quarter, 2020, 7 April 2020, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, Second Quarter, 2020, 16 July 2020, [url](#)

⁵⁹⁴ CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, First Quarter, 2020, 7 April 2020, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, Second Quarter, 2020, 16 July 2020, [url](#)

⁵⁹⁵ A broader description than merely civilians, security personnel and militants

Gas pipelines	3	0	0
Tribal elders	2	3	3
Civilians	39	34	123
Shia religious scholars/community	11	32	72
Worship places/shrines/imam bargahs	2	9	53
Government offices/public property	1	0	10
Sunni religious leaders/community	5	8	3
Political leaders/workers	9	11	19
NGO/civil society	1	2	0
Foreign interest/Diplomats/Foreigners	1	0	0
Unknown	4	3	1
Media/journalists	2	0	3
Health/polio workers, security escorts	6	8	1
Pro-government tribesmen/committee members	11	13	47
Bohra community	1	3	4
Judges/lawyers/courts	1	0	2
Former militants	2	3	0
Railway tracks/trains	3	4	30
Member of banned groups	1	2	0
Development, explorations projects, companies, workers	2	8	6
NATO/US supply vehicles	1	0	1

Figure 7. Targets attacked in 'terrorist attacks' in 2019, based on PIPS data⁵⁹⁶

According to CRSS 'ordinary citizens' were the most targeted by militancy, making up almost half of the total fatalities in 2019, followed by security personnel and militants.⁵⁹⁷ CRSS noticed that in the second quarter of 2020, fatalities of security personnel and militants rose compared to the first quarter of 2020. On the other hand, fatalities of civilians declined in the second quarter compared to the first quarter of 2020.⁵⁹⁸

Figure 8 shows in detail the victims of 'terrorist attacks' and counterterrorism operations provided by CRSS in 2019 and in the first and second quarter of 2020.

⁵⁹⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 18

⁵⁹⁷ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 9

⁵⁹⁸ CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, Second Quarter, 2020, 16 July 2020, [url](#)

Targets of overall incidents	No. of fatalities 2019	No. of fatalities Q1 2020	No. of fatalities Q2 2020
Militants	103	39	41
Criminals	37	11	6
Insurgents	11	3	11
Foreign militants	0	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
Others	4	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
Security officials	3	24	43
Government officials	193	1	1
Civilians (total of below)	328	62	37
Citizens	281	57	32
Politicians	29	0	3
Religious persons	8	2	1
Religious party member	4	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
Foreigners	3	1	0
Media persons	3	2	1
Social activists	0	Not mentioned	Not mentioned

Figure 8. Victims of 'terrorist attacks' and counterterrorism operations in 2019, Q1 2020 and Q2 2020, by CRSS⁵⁹⁹

Michael Kugelman stated on 6 August 2020 the following about the main targets of militants in 2020:

'Religious minorities continue to be targeted violently in Pakistan, but fortunately not at the levels of previous years. However, this doesn't mean they're not threatened—Shias and especially Ahmadis, along with Christians and Hindus, continue to face systematic discrimination. There are reports of religious conversions of Hindus under questionable circumstances. And blasphemy laws have continued to be exploited by hardliners to target religious minorities. Pakistan remains a very intolerant place, even if it's not as violent as it used to be. Pakistani state targets continued to be vulnerable, as evidenced by the stock exchange attack. So do Chinese targets (the BLA justified its attack on the stock exchange in part by noting all the Chinese companies listed in Pakistan's stock exchange). CPEC workers and other Chinese nationals will continue to be vulnerable amid this upsurge in separatist militant sentiment.'⁶⁰⁰

1.4.4 Effects of violent incidents on society in Pakistan

Landmines, IEDs and other unexploded remnants remain a risk for the population in the tribal districts and especially for the children.⁶⁰¹ In the past residents of the tribal districts addressed this problem.⁶⁰²

⁵⁹⁹ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 9; CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, Second Quarter, 2020, 16 July 2020, [url](#)

⁶⁰⁰ Kugelman, M., email, 6 August 2020

⁶⁰¹ Dawn, Special report: Toying with death, 1 March 2020, [url](#)

⁶⁰² Al Jazeera, Landmines killing people in Pakistan's South Waziristan, 5 February 2018, [url](#); Dawn, Landmines still a threat in tribal region, claim speakers, 6 April 2019, [url](#)

When the IDPs returned to the tribal districts, the landmines and IEDs were not all removed.⁶⁰³ The PTM made the clearance of landmines one of its main demands.⁶⁰⁴ In March 2020, Dawn cited an activist from Ladha in South Waziristan, who stated that since 2013 landmines in Waziristan caused 110 incidents in which people got injured or killed. The majority of the victims are civilians (especially children women) and security personnel.⁶⁰⁵ The Landmine Monitor Report of 2019 recorded 'numerous antipersonnel mine incidents in Balochistan and KP'.⁶⁰⁶ In the summer of 2019, multiple incidents with landmines claimed the lives of several civilians and security personnel in North and South Waziristan.⁶⁰⁷ Four children were critically injured after a landmine exploded in North Waziristan on 31 July 2019.⁶⁰⁸ On 24 August 2019, TNN reported that three children were injured in a landmine explosion in Mohmand tribal districts.⁶⁰⁹ On 31 August 2019, three children were injured in two separate IED explosions in North and South Waziristan.⁶¹⁰ In May 2020, a landmine explosion in Kalat in the province of Balochistan killed a boy and injured his father.⁶¹¹ In June 2020, AOAV recorded 19 civilian casualties due to IEDs.⁶¹² On 21 July 2020, 5 children were injured due to a landmine blast in Ladha, South Waziristan.⁶¹³

Muhammad Nawaz Khan, a research officer at the Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI), stated in January 2020 that 'owing to the increased militancy and subsequent military operations in Swat, South and North Waziristan and other parts of Pakistan, the local residents in the conflict areas – particularly the women and children – have been severely affected by social, mental, physical and psychological trauma and abuse.'⁶¹⁴

In 2017 and 2018, Human Rights Watch reported that militant attacks had a devastating impact on education.⁶¹⁵ Human Rights Watch stated that Islamist militant violence had disrupted 'the education of hundreds of thousands of children, particularly girls'.⁶¹⁶ According to the same source, the government of Pakistan fails 'to stop or mitigate' attacks on educational institutes. In November 2018, Human Rights Watch stated that many girls have no access to education, mainly because of a shortage of government schools and insecurity.⁶¹⁷ The organisation also reported that militant attacks had a devastating impact on education. Islamist militant violence disrupted 'the education of hundreds of thousands of children, particularly girls'. The government failed to protect schools from such attacks and prosecute perpetrators.⁶¹⁸ Many girls had no access to education because of the insecurity.⁶¹⁹

⁶⁰³ IPS, Displaced Pashtuns Return to Find Homes "Teeming" with Landmines, 26 April 2018, [url](#)

⁶⁰⁴ Al Jazeera, Pakistan military warns Pashtun rights group its 'time is up', 30 April 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁰⁵ Dawn, Special report: Toying with death, 1 March 2020, [url](#)

⁶⁰⁶ International Campaign to Ban Landmines and Cluster Munition Coalition, Landmine Monitor Report 2019, 21 November 2019, [url](#), p. 13

⁶⁰⁷ Arab News, Landmine blasts kill five in Pakistan's tribal areas, 21 August 2019, [url](#); TNN, 3 children injured in Mohmand landmine blast, 24 August 2019, [url](#); TNN, 3 children injured in 2 landmine blasts in Waziristan, 31 August 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁰⁸ Dawn, Four children hurt in landmine blast, 1 August 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁰⁹ TNN, 3 children injured in Mohmand landmine blast, 24 August 2019, [url](#)

⁶¹⁰ TNN, 3 children injured in 2 landmine blasts in Waziristan, 31 August 2019, [url](#)

⁶¹¹ Express Tribune (The), Landmine blast kills boy, injures father, 14 May 2020, [url](#)

⁶¹² AOAV, Explosive violence in June 2020, 8 July 2020, [url](#)

⁶¹³ VOA DEEWA, [Twitter], posted on: 21 July 2020, [url](#)

⁶¹⁴ Nawaz Khan, M., The socio-psychological impact of terrorism on Pakistani society, 30 January 2020, The Asia Dialogue, [url](#)

⁶¹⁵ HRW, Dreams Turned into Nightmares: Attacks on Students, Teachers, and Schools in Pakistan, 27 March 2017, [url](#); HRW, Pakistan: Surge in Militant Attacks on Schools, 3 August 2018, [url](#); HRW, Rise in Militant Attacks on Schools in Pakistan, 14 May 2018, [url](#); HRW, Pakistan: Surge in Militant Attacks on Schools, 3 August 2018, [url](#)

⁶¹⁶ HRW, Pakistan: Surge in Militant Attacks on Schools, 3 August 2018, [url](#)

⁶¹⁷ HRW, Rise in Militant Attacks on Schools in Pakistan, 14 May 2018, [url](#); HRW, Pakistan: Surge in Militant Attacks on Schools, 3 August 2018, [url](#); HRW, "Shall I Feed My Daughter, or Educate Her?" Barriers to Girls' Education in Pakistan, 12 November 2018, [url](#)

⁶¹⁸ HRW, Dreams Turned into Nightmares: Attacks on Students, Teachers, and Schools in Pakistan, 27 March 2017, [url](#); HRW, Rise in Militant Attacks on Schools in Pakistan, 14 May 2018, [url](#); HRW, Pakistan: Surge in Militant Attacks on Schools, 3 August 2018, [url](#)

⁶¹⁹ HRW, "Shall I Feed My Daughter, or Educate Her?" Barriers to Girls' Education in Pakistan, 12 November 2018, [url](#)

During the year 2019, PIPS reported two ‘terrorist attacks’ on educational institutions in the country which resulted in two deaths and four injured. Both of these attacks occurred in the province of KP.⁶²⁰

1.4.5 Internally Displaced Persons and refugees

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

In its 2020 Global Report on Internal Displacement, the International Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) stated that as of 31 December 2019 the total number of IDPs in Pakistan due to conflict stands at 106 000.⁶²¹ IDMC recorded more than 16 000 displacements associated with conflict and violence in Pakistan in 2019. Of the total, 15 000 displacements were caused by an increase in shelling across the LoC. ‘Intercommunal violence against Hindu communities in Ghotki city and Christian communities in Karachi displaced hundreds of families in Sindh province.’ The 2020 Global Report on Internal Displacement stated that violence between different armed groups in the border area between Afghanistan and north-west Pakistan ended in 2017, but that more than 101 000 people were still living in displacement in the province of KP at the end of 2019 as a result of law enforcement operations.⁶²²

The IDP data presented in Figure 9 was provided by UNOCHA Pakistan and shows the latest statistics of IDP families until 9 July 2020.⁶²³ Until 9 July 2020, there were still 16 780 families displaced. The majority of this number are displaced from North Waziristan tribal district (15 666 families) followed by Khyber tribal district (1 114 families).⁶²⁴

District	Total Verified Families by NADRA	Total Verified Return	Total Remaining Families as IDPs	Return %
Bajaur	72 897	72 897	0	100 %
Mohmand	36 759	36 759	0	100 %
Khyber	91 689	90 575	1 114	99 %
Orakzai	35 823	35 823	0	100 %
Kurram	33 024	33 024	0	100 %
North Waziristan	108 041	92 375	15 666	85 %
South Waziristan	71 124	71 124	0	100 %
Frontier Region Tank	2 228	2 228	0	100 %
Total	45 1585	43 4805	16 780	96 %

Figure 9. Overview IDPs Pakistan until 9 July 2020, based on UNOCHA Pakistan data⁶²⁵

USDOS reported in its Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2019 that:

‘Many IDPs reportedly wanted to return home, despite the lack of local infrastructure, housing, and available service delivery and the strict control that security forces maintained over returnees’ movements through extensive checkpoints. Other IDP families delayed their

⁶²⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 18, p. 36

⁶²¹ IDMC, GRID 2020 Global Report on Internal Displacement, 28 April 2020, [url](#), p. 104

⁶²² IDMC, GRID 2020 Global Report on Internal Displacement, 28 April 2020, [url](#), p. 50

⁶²³ UNOCHA Pakistan, email, 9 July 2020

⁶²⁴ UNOCHA Pakistan, email, 9 July 2020

⁶²⁵ UNOCHA Pakistan, email, 9 July 2020

return or chose some family members to remain in the settled areas of KP where regular access to health care, education, and other social services were available.’⁶²⁶

Media reports frequently reported in 2019 about the difficult living conditions in IDP camps in Hangu and Bannu.⁶²⁷ In September 2019, people from Kurram tribal district protested because they still had not received a compensation for their homes and businesses which were destroyed due to the violence in the region.⁶²⁸ In June 2019, the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) announced that 220 million Pakistani rupees would be provided for the people affected by war in Kurram, Orakzai and the Frontier Region Tank. The money would be provided to those families who have returned voluntarily to their areas before March 2015.⁶²⁹ In June 2020, TNN cited the President of the Kokikhel Youth Alliance, stating that ‘the displaced people of Tirah, Kokikhel are living a miserable life due to displacement from their area for the last eight years.’⁶³⁰

In the second part of this report, internal displacements are explained in detail and by geographic division (see [2. Security situation per region](#)).

Afghan refugees

Detailed information about the situation and living conditions of Afghan refugees in Pakistan is available in the [EASO COI Report: Pakistan- Situation of Afghan refugees \(May 2020\)](#).

Throughout 2019, there were 6 220 individual voluntary returns from Pakistan to Afghanistan with the assistance of UNHCR.⁶³¹ UNHCR reported that between 1 January 2020 and 30 June 2020, 28 registered Afghans returned to Afghanistan.⁶³² In an UNHCR border monitoring update of 11 August 2020, it was stated that IOM reported that since 1 January 2020 1 963 undocumented Afghan refugees had returned.⁶³³

1.5 State ability to secure law and order

In the Rule of Law Index 2020 carried out by the World Justice Project, Pakistan was ranked 120 out of 128 countries in the world on overall rule-of-law scores. This index was composed based on a set of questionnaires sent to experts and to the public. Pakistan scored very low in several categories: ‘right to life and security’, ‘due process of law’, ‘sanctions for official misconduct’, ‘effective investigations’ and ‘no improper government influence’ in the criminal justice system.⁶³⁴

Muhammad Amir Rana stated in 2018 that Pakistan had ‘a comprehensive constitutional framework and accompanying legal procedures’ but in practice the rule of law was confined to ‘conventional concepts of internal security and law enforcement’.⁶³⁵ According to a report by Freedom House that covered 2019, the military had an ‘enormous influence’ on national security, foreign policy and economic policy.⁶³⁶ Freedom House further stated that corruption, lack of accountability and lack of transparency were pervasive problems at all levels of government, in politics, and in the military.⁶³⁷

⁶²⁶ USDOS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2019 - Pakistan, 11 March 2020, [url](#), p. 28

⁶²⁷ TNN, IDPs suffer as rain damages tents at refugees camps, 3 March 2020, [url](#); Dawn, North Waziristan IDPs to return in two months, 31 January 2019, [url](#)

⁶²⁸ TNN, Hundreds of Kurram families awaiting compensation, 19 September 2019, [url](#)

⁶²⁹ TNN, PDMA releases Rs 220 mln for resettlement of IDPs, 13 June 2019, [url](#)

⁶³⁰ TNN, Kokikhel affectees demand honourable repatriation and compensation, 25 June 2020, [url](#)

⁶³¹ UNHCR, Pakistan: Afghan Refugee Return Monitoring Update (1 Oct - 31 Dec 2019), 20 January 2020, [url](#)

⁶³² UNHCR, Pakistan - Country Fact sheet, Monthly Update (June 2020), 28 July 2020, [url](#), p. 1

⁶³³ UNHCR, UNHCR Afghanistan : Border Monitoring Update - 26 July - 08 August 2020, 11 August 2020, [url](#), p. 1

⁶³⁴ World Justice Project, Rule of Law Index 2020, 11 March 2020, [url](#), p. 5, p. 121

⁶³⁵ Amir Rana, M., The rule of law: concept and practices in Pakistan, 26 September 2018, PIPS, [url](#), p. 1

⁶³⁶ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2020-Pakistan, 4 March 2020, [url](#)

⁶³⁷ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2020-Pakistan, 4 March 2020, [url](#)

1.5.1 Security forces

General

The security forces in Pakistan include the Pakistan Armed Forces, the police, the Pakistan Rangers, the Levies, the Frontier Corps, Khassadars and others. For a description of these forces, see [1.2.1 State armed forces](#).

According to Mohammad Amir Rana, the government of Pakistan engaged, parallel to the security forces, paramilitary forces to fight terrorism and other security threats. Each province in Pakistan had such parallel security forces.⁶³⁸ The military and the paramilitary forces also took up the role of law enforcement. Mohammad Amir Rana stated further that such 'temporary or situational arrangement's' contributed in the state's lack of political will to reform and empower civilian law enforcement structures.⁶³⁹ One example was the Rangers in Karachi; another example was the FC and army in Balochistan and tribal districts who took control of security as well as law enforcement, 'parallel to existing, though weak, law enforcement structures'.⁶⁴⁰

As many as 118 'terrorist attacks' or 52 % of the total number of 'terrorist attacks' (229) reported in 2019 by PIPS, targeted security forces and law-enforcement agencies across Pakistan.⁶⁴¹ In 2019, 209 security force personnel were killed and 346 injured in 'terrorist attacks' according to PIPS.⁶⁴² As stated by PICSS, in the first seven months of 2020, 78 security force personnel were killed and 71 injured.⁶⁴³

Capacity

According to an article by the Express Tribune in June 2019, the federal government proposed about a 12 % increase in the defence budget for 2020-2021. Most of the defence budget, apart from fighting terrorism, is Indian-centric.⁶⁴⁴ The capacity building of law enforcement agencies, especially the police, was a long-standing problem.⁶⁴⁵ The Pakistani police was under-resourced, and lacked equipment.⁶⁴⁶ Efforts were made to reform the police but as of Mid-2018, effective police reforms were still not in place.⁶⁴⁷ In light of the COVID-19 outbreak in Pakistan, an article published by USIP stated that the police is under-resourced and poorly trained to cope with the health restrictions. USIP stated: 'With only outdated legal frameworks and conventional training and education to rely on, the police have largely responded to violations with corporal punishment, detentions, and arrests—actions that have been reported by the media and widely condemned.'⁶⁴⁸ Paramilitary forces such as the FC, the Levies and the Khassadars in former FATA lacked training and capacity building.⁶⁴⁹ After the merger of Khassadars and Levies forces with the KP police, personnel of both forces began training in May 2019 in order to be able to perform responsibilities in tribal districts in an efficient manner.⁶⁵⁰

In September 2018, Mohammad Amir Rana described the effectiveness of the security forces as follows:

⁶³⁸ Amir Rana, M., The rule of law: concept and practices in Pakistan, 26 September 2018, PIPS, [url](#), p. 2

⁶³⁹ Amir Rana, M., The rule of law: concept and practices in Pakistan, 26 September 2018, PIPS, [url](#), pp. 1-2

⁶⁴⁰ Amir Rana, M., The rule of law: concept and practices in Pakistan, 26 September 2018, PIPS, [url](#), pp. 1-2

⁶⁴¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 17

⁶⁴² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 18

⁶⁴³ Khan, A. email, 3 August 2020 – data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PICSS

⁶⁴⁴ Express Tribune (The), Defence budget up by 11.9% amid tensions with India, 12 June 2020, [url](#)

⁶⁴⁵ Amir Rana, M., The rule of law: concept and practices in Pakistan, 26 September 2018, PIPS, [url](#), pp. 2-3

⁶⁴⁶ Amir Rana, M., The rule of law: concept and practices in Pakistan, 26 September 2018, PIPS, [url](#), p. 3

⁶⁴⁷ Sarfraz, Z., Revisiting Police Reforms in Pakistan: A Critical Analysis, 2018, Journal of the Punjab University Historical Society Volume No. 31, Issue No. 1, January - June 2018, [url](#), p. 259

⁶⁴⁸ Waseem, Z. and Rafiq, A., Coronavirus Pandemic Puts Police in the Spotlight in Pakistan, 16 June 2020, USIP, [url](#)

⁶⁴⁹ Dawn, Policing Fata, 5 April 2018, [url](#)

⁶⁵⁰ TNN, KP police start training Khasadar, levies personnel, 16 May 2019, [url](#)

‘The interaction and coordination between military and civilian law enforcement agencies has also not been good, thus exposing some deeper structural issues linked to the rule of law and law enforcement in the country. Indeed, paramilitary forces have been encroaching on civilian law-and-order affairs and strengthening their institutional and moral authority. On the other hand, civilian law-enforcement agencies have become so weak that they cannot even clarify their position in certain instances where they could not act due to dominant role played by paramilitaries.’⁶⁵¹

USIP stated in April 2019 that the Pakistani police had been struggling with a ‘poor relationship with the public categorized by mistrust and mistreatment’. As a result, ‘effective policing’ was hindered.⁶⁵² Freedom House stated in March 2020 that the police was ‘accused of biased or arbitrary handling of initial criminal complaints’. Both the police and the prosecution service were ‘criticised for a chronic failure to prosecute terrorism cases’.⁶⁵³ An October 2019 joint report of the Human Rights Commission Pakistan (HRCP) and the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) stated that the police lacks training to handle evidence in criminal cases.⁶⁵⁴

Integrity

HRCP and FIDH stated that police officers are susceptible to pressure of the community to arrest and ensure convictions, especially in high level cases.⁶⁵⁵ Corruption also exist within the police force in Pakistan.⁶⁵⁶ According to Newsline Magazine, the Pakistani police has the reputation of lacking internal and external accountability, of corruption at the highest levels and for being influenced by politicians.⁶⁵⁷ In April 2020, Tribal News Network (TNN) reported that for the first time in the tribal districts the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police suspended approximately 70 policemen and dismissed three others in Khyber tribal district over charges of corruption.⁶⁵⁸

The Pakistani military was involved in many spheres of the economy. Besides this, the Pakistani Army played a dominant role in domestic politics.⁶⁵⁹ The balance between the civilian government and the military leadership was complex. The army was accused of meddling in the elections in 2018.⁶⁶⁰ In February 2019, the Supreme Court of Pakistan criticised the army for its role and for exceeding their mandate in the blasphemy protests of 2017.⁶⁶¹ The Diplomat stated in June 2019 that sympathisers of jihadist groups like Islamic State and LeJ are present within the army.⁶⁶²

Abuse of power, ill treatment, use of excessive force, disappearances, and extrajudicial killings

Security forces reportedly engaged in arrests without warrants, detention for long periods before seeing a judge and detaining people in secret locations.⁶⁶³ The PTM movement accused the army of using excessive force during a demonstration on 26 May 2019 when at least three people were killed as a result of violence between Pashtun activists and the army.⁶⁶⁴

⁶⁵¹ Amir Rana, M., The rule of law: concept and practices in Pakistan, 26 September 2018, PIPS, [url](#), p. 4

⁶⁵² USIP, The Current Situation in Pakistan A USIP Fact Sheet, 1 April 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁵³ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2020-Pakistan, 4 March 2020, [url](#)

⁶⁵⁴ HRCP and FIDH, Punished for being vulnerable; How Pakistan executes the poorest and the most marginalized in society, 8 October 2019, [url](#), p. 18

⁶⁵⁵ HRCP and FIDH, Punished for being vulnerable; How Pakistan executes the poorest and the most marginalized in society, 8 October 2019, [url](#), p. 20

⁶⁵⁶ International News (The), Inefficiency and corruption blotch police, 17 June 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁵⁷ Newsline Magazine (Sumbul, D.), Seeds of Police Reform, 20 May 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁵⁸ TNN, First time policemen in merged districts face axe over corruption, 21 April 2020, [url](#)

⁶⁵⁹ Foreign Policy, Poor Nation, Rich Army, 21 March 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁶⁰ New York Times (The), Military's Influence Casts a Shadow Over Pakistan's Election, [url](#); BBC Reality Check, The political influence of Pakistan's powerful army [online video], 18 August 2018, [url](#)

⁶⁶¹ Gandhara, Pakistan's Top Court Tells Army To Stay Out Of Politics, Media, 6 February 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁶² Diplomat (The), Islamic State Comes for South Asia, 18 June 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁶³ New York Times (The), In Pakistan, Detainees Are Vanishing in Covert Jails, 26 July 2015, [url](#)

⁶⁶⁴ HRW, Pakistan: Investigate North Waziristan Deaths Uphold Rights of Region's Pashtun Population, 30 May 2019, [url](#)

Unlawful and extrajudicial killings by Pakistani law enforcement agencies were also reported by Amnesty International.⁶⁶⁵ HRCP documented police-encounters in Punjab and KP in 2019.⁶⁶⁶ In January 2019, the police shot a family in their car near Sahiwal, reportedly acting upon intelligence that claimed the family was accompanied by a 'terrorist'.⁶⁶⁷

BBC News reported in May 2018 on disappearances and unlawful detentions of Shia's, Sunni jihadists, ethnic nationalist activists, and secular critics of the Pakistani military establishment.⁶⁶⁸ In addition, Deutsche Welle reported in July 2019 about the disappearances of Shiites apparently carried out by the country's intelligence agencies as stated by Shiite organisations and activists.⁶⁶⁹ At the end of June 2020, protest broke out in Sindh because of the fact that more than 200 Sindhis and Mohajirs belonging to MQM and different groups of Jiye Sindh have been arrested and not brought before court.⁶⁷⁰

Between 2011 and end of May 2020, the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances (CIED; an official commission of inquiry on enforced disappearances, led by a retired judge) registered 6 674 people as missing. At the end of May 2020, 2 130 cases were still pending with the Commission.⁶⁷¹ According to Freedom House, there was 'no sign of the commission's deliberations leading to any effective sanctions against the agencies undertaking the disappearances'.⁶⁷² According to a report of AI covering 2019 political activists, students, journalists, human rights defenders and Shi'a Muslims are the victims of enforced disappearances, particularly in Sindh and Balochistan.⁶⁷³

Torture and ill treatment in detention to obtain confessions or during investigations continued to remain a serious issue according to sources.⁶⁷⁴ On 2 June 2019, BBC News published a report that discussed Pakistan's long battle with militants in the past. The report stated that 'tens of thousands of people' had been killed during Pakistan's long battle with militants as part of the post-9/11 war on terror and that 'evidence of murder and torture by soldiers and insurgents is emerging'.⁶⁷⁵ In September 2019, Deutsche Welle stated that there is no reliable data on custodial deaths in Pakistan, but 'human rights groups point to a spike in police torture cases.' According to Deutsche Welle 'they say that the "culture" of police torture is more prevalent in Pakistan's most populous Punjab province than in other parts of the country'.⁶⁷⁶

Pakistan has not yet enacted a law to criminalise custodial torture, however Pakistan is a signatory to the UN Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UNCAT).⁶⁷⁷ In October 2019, Human Rights Watch stated that Pakistan introduced a bill, The Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention and Punishment) Act 2019, to make torture by the police a criminal offense for the first time.⁶⁷⁸ The Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention and Punishment) Bill 2020, tabled in February 2020, is pending before a Senate committee.⁶⁷⁹

⁶⁶⁵ AI, Sahiwal shootings: The rot goes as deep as the roots, 31 January 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁶⁶ HRCP, State of Human Rights in 2019, 30 April 2020, [url](#), p. 26, p. 125

⁶⁶⁷ BBC News, Sahiwal shooting: How a Pakistani boy exposed police for killing his family, 23 January 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁶⁸ BBC News, The story of Pakistan's 'disappeared' Shias, 31 May 2018, [url](#)

⁶⁶⁹ DW, Why are Pakistani Shiites 'disappearing'?, 9 July 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁷⁰ WION, Massive protest in Karachi against enforced disappearances in Sindh, 28 June 2020, [url](#)

⁶⁷¹ Dawn, Thousands still missing, 4 June 2020, [url](#)

⁶⁷² Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2020-Pakistan, 4 March 2020, [url](#)

⁶⁷³ AI, Human Rights in Asia-Pacific Review of 2019 - Pakistan, 30 January 2020, [url](#)

⁶⁷⁴ BBC News, Uncovering Pakistan's secret human rights abuses, 2 June 2019, [url](#); Dawn, View from the courtroom: No legislation yet to criminalise custodial torture accessed, 1 July 2019, [url](#); News on Sunday (The), Police's third degree methods, 15 March 2020, [url](#)

⁶⁷⁵ BBC News, Uncovering Pakistan's secret human rights abuses, 2 June 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁷⁶ DW, Deaths in custody — the culture of police torture in Pakistan, 18 September 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁷⁷ Dawn, View from the courtroom: No legislation yet to criminalise custodial torture accessed, 1 July 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁷⁸ HRW, Pakistan Could Make Torture A Crime, 10 October 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁷⁹ International News (The), Call to criminalise police torture, 26 June 2020, [url](#)

1.5.2 Judiciary and legal system

Structure of the judiciary

The formal court system, as established by the Constitution, consists of the Supreme Court, High Courts in the four provinces and Islamabad, session courts in each district and a federal Shariat Court.⁶⁸⁰

Capacity

In December 2019, an article published by The Asia Foundation stated that around 1.7 million cases were pending in the courts in Pakistan.⁶⁸¹ As of 15 January 2020, 42 927 cases were pending with the Supreme Court, according to the Express Tribune.⁶⁸² The lack of capacity in the judiciary to deal with cases was also rooted in vast numbers of detainees, detentions without documentation, slow legal processing times, lack of use of bail provisions, and lack of information sharing.⁶⁸³ According to The Nation, Pakistan lacks a severe amount of judges and many posts are vacant in the district and high courts.⁶⁸⁴

Pakistanis in some rural areas avoided Pakistani civil and criminal courts and instead relied on tribal dispute settlement of private issues, especially in rural areas. This was largely due to lack of access to justice, lack of trust in the judiciary or because of lack of social status and financial resources for some parts of the population.⁶⁸⁵

Integrity

The Pakistan judiciary is susceptible to corruption, bribery, political interference, and pressure from political groups and the army.⁶⁸⁶ Appointments and court decisions were influenced by political influence and favouritism.⁶⁸⁷ The Pakistani judiciary was described by several sources as having restricted independence and impartiality with a weak and dependent nature.⁶⁸⁸ Judicial officials and lawyers faced 'significant pressure', intimidation, and violence, particularly for cases of organised crime, corruption or related to blasphemy.⁶⁸⁹

1.5.3 Anti-Terrorism Acts and military courts

Anti-Terrorism Acts

On 24 February 2014, the government announced an internal security policy for a five-year period. This policy focused mainly on securing urban centres, while it often did not mention the situation in former FATA and Balochistan. It referred to dialogue with all stakeholders for *madrassa* reforms,

⁶⁸⁰ Courting the Law, Criminal Justice System In Pakistan: A Critical Analysis, 15 February 2017, [url](#); Government of Pakistan, The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 13 February 2019, [url](#), article 175, article 213

⁶⁸¹ Asia Foundation (The), Alternative Dispute Resolution Gains Traction in Pakistan, 18 December 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁸² Express Tribune (The), Pendency of cases in SC hits highest level in country's history, 7 February 2020, [url](#)

⁶⁸³ UN Human Rights Committee, Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan, 23 August 2017, [url](#), par. 31; Express Tribune (The), Judicial reforms for a competitive Pakistan, 16 January 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁸⁴ Nation (The), Shortage of judges increasing burden on judiciary, 22 January 2020, [url](#)

⁶⁸⁵ NPR, Tribal Council Orders 'Revenge Rape' In Pakistan, 27 June 2017, [url](#); Asia Foundation (The), Alternative Dispute Resolution Gains Traction in Pakistan, 18 December 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁸⁶ RFE/RL, Pakistani Lawyers Protest Gov't Case Against Top Judge, 3 June 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁸⁷ Pakistan Today, Political influence, favouritism behind elevation of high court judges, suggest lawyers, 29 April 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁸⁸ Nation (The), Pakistan's flawed justice system, 19 June 2018, [url](#); Daily Times, Reforming the judicial system, 8 March 2019, [url](#); Daily Times, Modern justice system and Pakistan, 21 February 2019, [url](#); Dawn, Crisis of the judiciary, 17 July 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁸⁹ International News (The), Recent incidents targeting Pakistani, global judges and family members, 16 April 2019, [url](#); HRCP and FIDH, Punished for being vulnerable; How Pakistan executes the poorest and the most marginalized in society, 8 October 2019, [url](#), pp. 22-23

militants' rehabilitation and deradicalisation.⁶⁹⁰ A primary target of the security policy was isolating terrorists. The National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) was supposed to carry out tasks ranging from counterterrorism to political and operational interventions. In February 2014, the government was still engaged in peace talks with the Taliban, and the security policy proved insufficient once the military operation in North Waziristan started and the country fell victim to retaliatory attacks by the militants.⁶⁹¹

The December 2014 militant attack on the Peshawar Army Public School served as a catalyst for political consensus when former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif convened an all parties' conference the day after the attack.⁶⁹² This led, in the same month, to consultation with all political parties, to the establishment of a National Action Plan (NAP) to eliminate terrorism from Pakistan.⁶⁹³ Later in December 2014, Nawaz Sharif announced the formation of a federal counterterrorism force with immediate effect.⁶⁹⁴ The political and security establishment set up temporary military courts to try terrorism-related offences instead of pursuing the cases via an independent judiciary.⁶⁹⁵ The implementation of the NAP was not effective in 2019.⁶⁹⁶ PIPS evaluated that it had only met its goals in some areas. In November 2018, the government of Pakistan announced the formation of 'a new version' of the NAP and to restructure the NACTA to effectively tackle internal threats to security.⁶⁹⁷

Military courts

In January 2015, the 21st Constitutional Amendment Bill and the Pakistani Army Amendment Act 2015 were signed. Those amendments gave military courts the jurisdiction for two years to convict civilians for terrorism-related offences.⁶⁹⁸ In August 2015, the Supreme Court upheld the parliamentary bill.⁶⁹⁹ The military courts were disbanded on 7 January 2017 after the legal provision expired. In March 2017, the Parliament, the Senate and the President passed legislation to reinstate the military courts for a two-year period.⁷⁰⁰ On 30 March 2019, the military courts' jurisdiction over civilians for terrorism-related offences ceased.⁷⁰¹ The government failed to get support from opposition parties for a constitutional amendment to extend the jurisdiction of military courts again.⁷⁰² No information was found on new legislation on this matter. According to a report by the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) of January 2019, military courts had since January 2015 convicted 641 people for terrorism-related offences, out of which 345 people were sentenced to death and 296 people were given prison sentences. At least 56 people were hanged while only five people were acquitted.⁷⁰³ Sources criticised the establishment of the military courts in the past and warned that those courts could be used as a mechanism against political dissidents or groups that had disturbed the military.⁷⁰⁴

⁶⁹⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2014, 2015, [url](#), pp. 42-43

⁶⁹¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2014, 2015, [url](#), pp. 42-43

⁶⁹² Express Tribune (The), Fight against terrorism: Defining moment, 25 December 2014, [url](#)

⁶⁹³ Express Tribune (The), Fight against terrorism: Defining moment, 25 December 2014, [url](#); CRSS, The NAP Tracker The Third Year Audit of the National Action Plan, June 2018, [url](#)

⁶⁹⁴ Dawn, Nawaz constitutes special committee to implement national Action Plan, 26 December 2014, [url](#)

⁶⁹⁵ Dawn, Military Courts part of National Action Plan: PM Nawaz, 30 December 2014, [url](#); Economist (The), The man with the plan: Pakistan after the school massacre, 24 January 2015, [url](#)

⁶⁹⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 13, p. 29

⁶⁹⁷ Dawn, Interior ministry to unveil a new version of National Action Plan, 28 November 2018, [url](#)

⁶⁹⁸ International Crisis Group, Revisiting Counter-terrorism Strategies in Pakistan: Opportunities and Pitfalls n°271, 22 July 2015, [url](#), p. 3

⁶⁹⁹ DW, Pakistan's military courts - a solution or a problem?, 7 August 2015, [url](#)

⁷⁰⁰ BBC News, Pakistan to reinstate secret military courts despite criticism, 22 March 2017, [url](#); Dawn, Military courts resume in Pakistan, 31 March 2017, [url](#)

⁷⁰¹ ICJ, Military Injustice in Pakistan-Briefing Paper, January 2019, [url](#), p. 3; Dawn, Military courts cease to function today, 31 March 2019, [url](#)

⁷⁰² Dawn, Military courts cease to function today, 31 March 2019, [url](#)

⁷⁰³ ICJ, Military Injustice in Pakistan-Briefing Paper, January 2019, [url](#), p. 5

⁷⁰⁴ Dawn, Govt, opposition discussing military courts' extension, 14 March 2019, [url](#); HRCP, Military courts are anti-democratic, 12 January 2019, [url](#)

1.5.4 Detention and death penalty

Detention

According to statistics provided by the International Committee of the Red Cross, the total prison population of Pakistan as of 30 September 2019, including pre-trial detainees and remand prisoners was 77 275.⁷⁰⁵ According to the Express Tribune 65 % of the prison population in Pakistan are under trial prisoners. A report by the Prime Minister's Prisoners Reforms Committee (PPAC) stated that is due to a slow judiciary systemic and failure of the criminal justice system. The staff in prisons are underpaid, under-trained and overburdened.⁷⁰⁶

Several sources reported that security, overcrowding, and health and hygiene conditions continued to be a challenge in prisons.⁷⁰⁷ Torture remained a widespread practice in police detention, interrogation cells and in prisons.⁷⁰⁸

Death penalty

In December 2014, in the aftermath of the attack on a school in Peshawar, the Pakistan authorities partially lifted a 'de facto informal moratorium' on the death penalty that had been in place since 2008. On 10 March 2015, the Pakistani government declared that executions would resume for all capital crimes.⁷⁰⁹

According to data of Justice Project Pakistan, a non-profit human rights law firm based in Pakistan, in 2019, Pakistan's official death row population stood at 4 225.⁷¹⁰ An October 2019 joint report of HRCP and FIDH stated that a death row prisoner spends an average of eleven years in prison. This is due to the backlog in cases.⁷¹¹

Pakistan was the leading country in the Asia-Pacific region that imposed and carried out state executions according to Amnesty International's 2020 report on death sentences and executions (covering 2019).⁷¹² According to data compiled by Justice Project Pakistan, Pakistan executed 518 prisoners since December 2014 until December 2019.⁷¹³ Amnesty International (AI) recorded in 2019 in the country 'at least' 14 executions. This is the same number as compared to 2018.⁷¹⁴

⁷⁰⁵ World Prison Brief, World Prison Brief data, Pakistan, last updated: 30 September 2019, [url](#)

⁷⁰⁶ Express Tribune (The), Under-trial prisoners 'victims of slow judicial system', 10 February 2020, [url](#)

⁷⁰⁷ National Counter Terrorism Agency, Cursor of Development and Education Pakistan, International Committee of the Red Cross, May 2018, Addressing Overcrowding in Prisons by Reducing Pre-Conviction Detention in Pakistan, [url](#); Express Tribune (The), Under-trial prisoners 'victims of slow judicial system', 10 February 2020, [url](#); HRCP, State of Human Rights in 2019, 30 April 2020, [url](#), p. 9; HRCP, Citizens-COVID 19-Government: Pakistan's Response, 19 July 2020, [url](#), pp. 28-29

⁷⁰⁸ Dawn, Speakers call for legislation on torture, 27 June 2019, [url](#)

⁷⁰⁹ Diplomat (The), Pakistan and the Death Penalty, 21 April 2016, [url](#); Economist (The), The man with the plan: Pakistan after the school massacre, 24 January 2015, [url](#); Justice Project Pakistan, Counting Executions, 6 July 2017, [url](#), p. 1

⁷¹⁰ Justice Project Pakistan, Pakistan's Reported Death Row Population Over The Years, n.d., [url](#)

⁷¹¹ HRCP and FIDH, Punished for being vulnerable; How Pakistan executes the poorest and the most marginalized in society, 8 October 2019, [url](#), p. 28

⁷¹² AI, Death sentences and executions 2019, 21 April 2020, [url](#), p. 21

⁷¹³ Justice Project Pakistan, Death Penalty Database (Executions), n.d., [url](#)

⁷¹⁴ AI, Death sentences and executions 2019, 21 April 2020, [url](#), p. 28

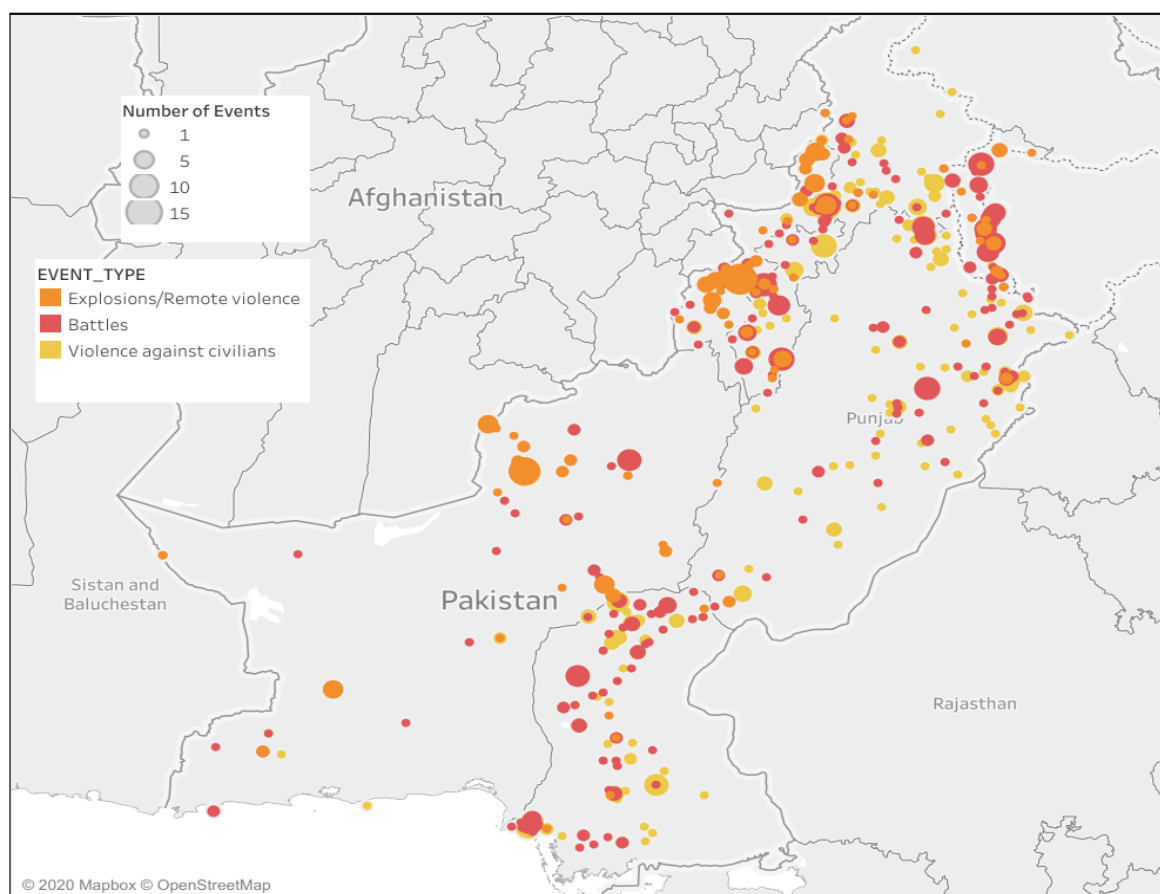
2. Security situation per region

2.1 Geographical overview of the violence

2.1.1 Trends in regional violence

ACLED provides a publicly available dataset to assess the geographical spread of violent incidents. The maps in this section are based on the ACLED dataset⁷¹⁵, which contains data about security-related incidents in Pakistan.

Map 2 and Map 3 show an overview of the violence in Pakistan by type of event for 2019 and the first seven months of 2020: battles, Explosions/Remote violence and violence against civilians.



Map 2: Battles, violence against civilians and explosions/remote violence in Pakistan 2019, based on ACLED data⁷¹⁶

In 2019, most security incidents were coded by ACLED in the province of KP (349), the province of Sindh (209), the province of Punjab (182) and the province of Balochistan (121). The lowest number

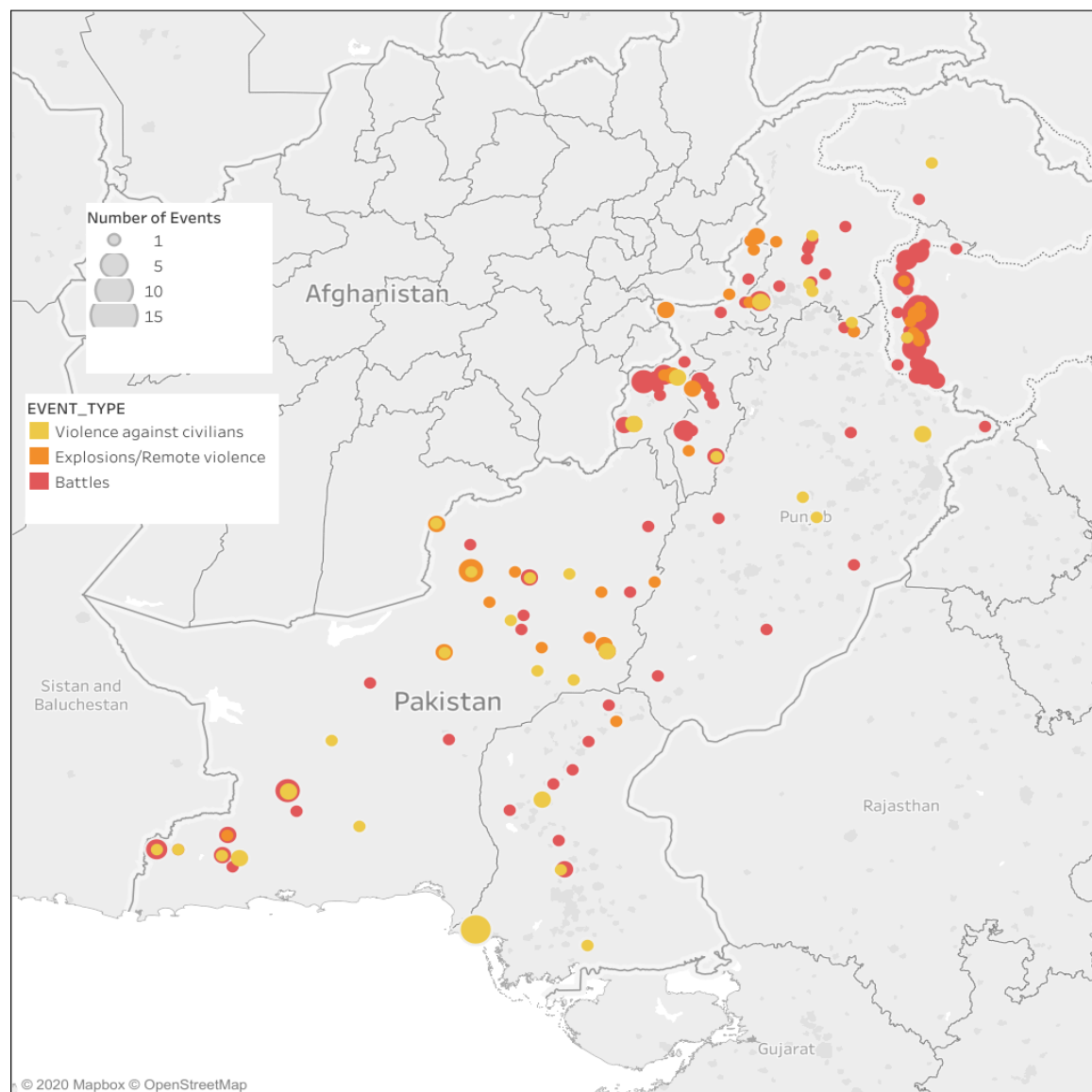
⁷¹⁵ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2019-31 July 2020), [url](#)

⁷¹⁶ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2019-31 December 2019), [url](#)

of security incidents were recorded in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (96), the Federal Capital of Islamabad (13) and Gilgit-Baltistan (2).⁷¹⁷

According to ACLED in 2019, (see Map 2) the event type battles occurred the most in the provinces KP (122), Sindh (87) and in Azad Kashmir (71). Most explosions/remote violence occurred in the provinces KP (103), Balochistan (51) and in Azad Kashmir (19). Violence against civilians occurred the most in the provinces KP (124), Sindh (117) and in Punjab (113).⁷¹⁸

Map 3 shows the violence by type of event for the first seven months of 2020.



Map 3: Battles, violence against civilians and explosions/remote violence in Pakistan, 01/01/2020-31/07/2020, based on ACLED data⁷¹⁹

⁷¹⁷ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2019-31 December 2019), [url](#)

⁷¹⁸ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2019-31 December 2019), [url](#)

⁷¹⁹ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 July 2020), [url](#)

Most security incidents in the first half of 2020 were recorded in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (78), the province of KP (73), the province Balochistan (65) and the province of Sindh (28). The lowest number of security incidents were recorded in Punjab (12) the Federal Capital of Islamabad (2) and Gilgit-Baltistan (2).⁷²⁰

According to ACLED in the time period 1 January until 31 July 2020 (see Map 3), the event type battles occurred the most in the provinces Azad Kashmir (68), KP (44) and Balochistan (27). Most explosions/remote violence in the provinces Balochistan (18), KP (17) and in Azad Kashmir (9). Violence against civilians occurred the most in the provinces Balochistan (19), Sindh (12) and in KP (11).⁷²¹

2.1.2 Regional comparison of violence-related casualties

Regional comparison of violence-related casualties in 2019

This section provides figures of fatalities and attacks at regional level, according to the four sources as described in the [Introduction](#). It is impossible to present the figures in one comparative table, as the three main sources about the security situation use different parameters and definitions.

PIPS only gave regional details for ‘terrorist attacks’ in its year report of 2019, which made up about 53 % of all violent incidents. PIPS focused on the number of terrorist attacks (and consequent fatalities per province, and indicated percentage changes in 2019 compared to 2018, see Figure 10). Compared to 2018, PIPS observed a decrease in ‘terrorist incidents’ (13 % overall). The number of deaths and injured also decreased. Balochistan and KP (including former FATA) were most affected by these attacks in 2019 (see Figure 10).⁷²²

Region	No of terrorist incidents 2019	% change	No of killed	% change	No of injured	% change
Balochistan	84	27% ↓	171	52% ↓	436	25% ↓
Karachi	10	11% ↑	14	22% ↓	2	87% ↓
KP (including former FATA)	125	No Change	145	26% ↓	249	34% ↓
Punjab	5	25% ↑	21	5% ↑	41	5% ↑
Sindh (excl. Karachi)	4	33% ↑	4	300% ↑	0	100% ↓
Islamabad	1	-	2	-	1	-
Total	229	13 % ↓	357	40% ↓	729	29% ↓

Figure 10. ‘Terrorist attacks’ by region - 2019 vs. 2018, based on PIPS data⁷²³

⁷²⁰ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 July 2020), [url](#)

⁷²¹ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 July 2020), [url](#)

⁷²² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 22

⁷²³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 20, p. 22

CRSS recorded most of the casualties in Balochistan, followed by KP (including former FATA) and Balochistan in 2019.⁷²⁴ According to CRSS, in comparison with 2018, the province of Punjab witnessed more casualties in 2019.⁷²⁵

Figure 11 presents a comparative regional analysis by CRSS of violence-related casualties in Pakistan in 2019.⁷²⁶

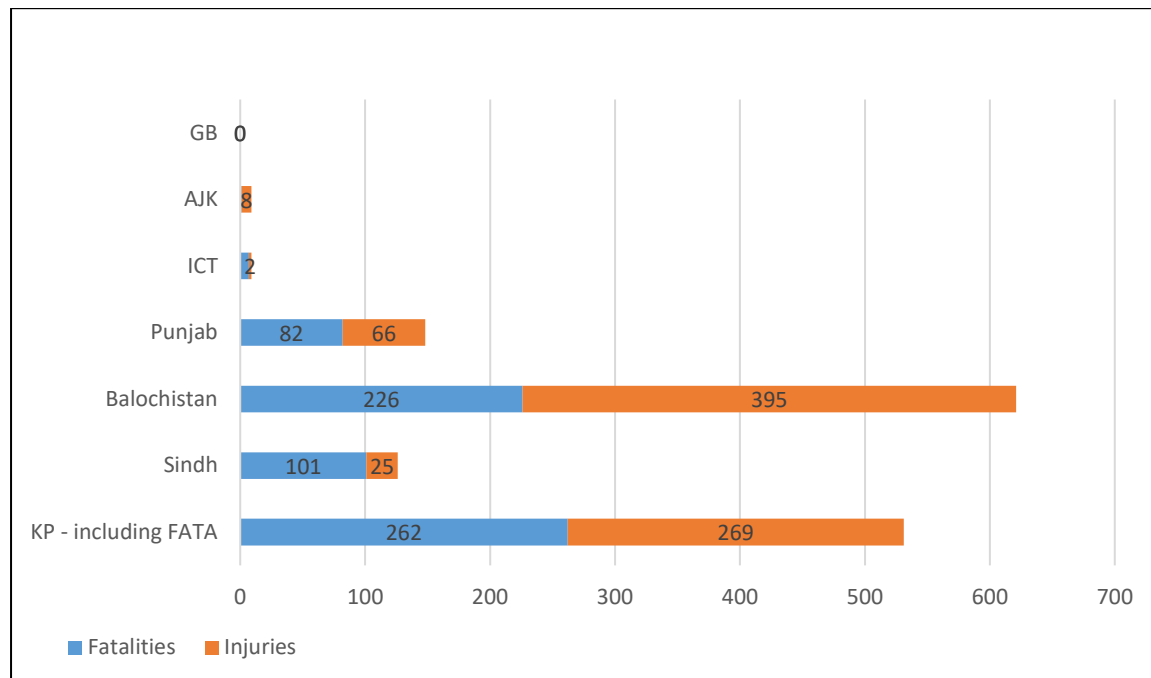


Figure 11. Comparative regional analysis casualties 2019, based on CRSS data⁷²⁷

PICSS gives data for the overall incidents per region. In 2019, in total 270 overall incidents were observed. In 2019, 393 people were killed and 687 others injured. PICSS documented most of the casualties due to overall incidents (terrorist and other violent incidents) in Balochistan, followed by former FATA and the province of KP.⁷²⁸

Regional comparison of violence-related casualties 1 January – 31 July 2020

710 casualties were recorded by PIPS in 233 incidents of overall violence during the first seven months of 2020. Data from PIPS indicated that most casualties of overall incidents in the first half of 2020 took place in KP (276 casualties), followed by Balochistan (239 casualties) and Azad Kashmir (118 casualties).⁷²⁹

According to PICSS in total 491 casualties were recorded in 187 incidents of overall violence in the first seven months of 2020. According to PICSS most casualties were counted in the province of KP (243 casualties), the province of Balochistan (181) and the province of Punjab (35).⁷³⁰

According to the first and the second quarterly report of CRSS, most casualties in the first half of 2020 occurred in KP including former FATA followed by Balochistan and Punjab.⁷³¹

⁷²⁴ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 5

⁷²⁵ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 5

⁷²⁶ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 6

⁷²⁷ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 6

⁷²⁸ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 16-17

⁷²⁹ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

⁷³⁰ Khan, A. email, 3 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PICSS

⁷³¹ CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, First Quarter, 2020, 7 April 2020, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, Second Quarter, 2020, 16 July 2020, [url](#)

Figure 12 presents a comparative regional analysis by CRSS of violence-related casualties in Pakistan in the first half of 2020 (quarter 1 and quarter 2 of 2020).

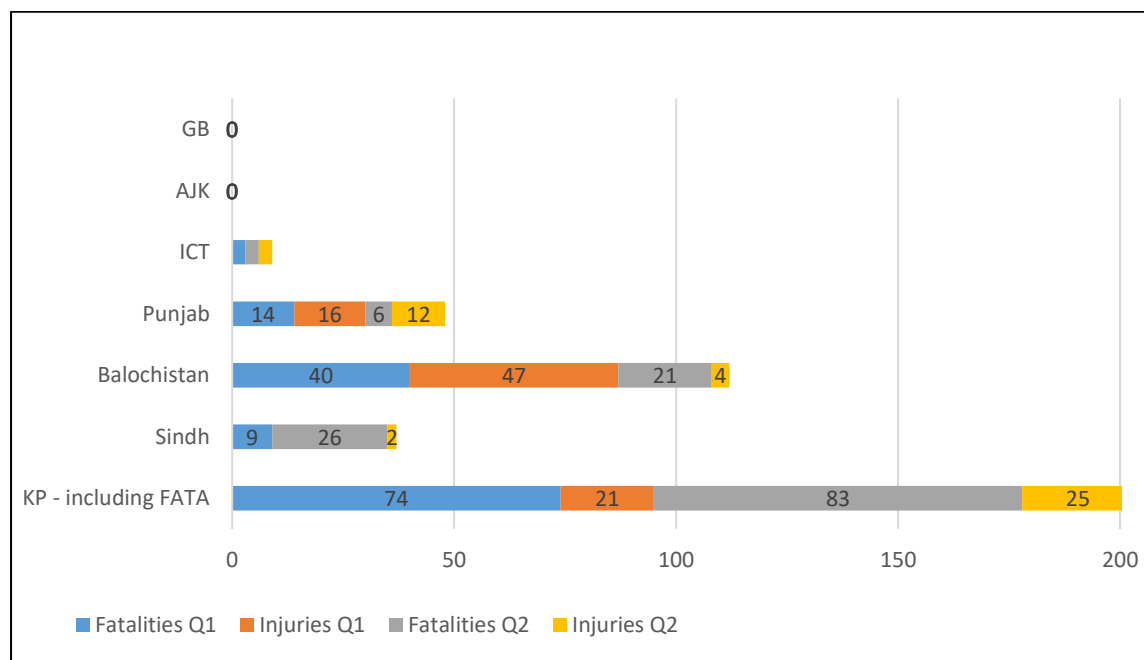


Figure 12. Comparative regional analysis of the casualties Q1, 2020 and Q2, 2020, based on CRSS data⁷³²

2.2 Security trends per geographic subdivision

In the following sections, security trends are explained in greater detail, per geographic subdivision. In each provincial section, a general description of the province contains information on the geography and population, on the background of the conflict, including the actors of the conflict in the province. The subsections describe recent trends in the security situation, including the nature of violence, frequency, targets, locations, and victims within a timeframe from 1 August 2019 until 31 July 2020. A separate part is dedicated to displacements. Under the subsections several incidents are described. These should be read as illustrations of trends in the security situation and not as an exhaustive list of incidents.

2.2.1 Punjab

General description of the province

Punjab province (see [Map 1](#)) is located in the east of Pakistan. It borders the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir in the north-east, the Indian states of Punjab and Rajasthan in the east, the province of Sindh in the south, Balochistan and KP provinces in the west, Islamabad Federal Capital area and Azad Kashmir in the north.⁷³³ Punjab can be distinguished in three zones: central, north and south Punjab with Lahore being the provincial capital. 'The military headquarters are in Northern Punjab, and it maintains most of its forces in the province.' The southern parts of Punjab are among the poorest areas in the country.⁷³⁴ Lahore is the second biggest city of Pakistan, after Karachi (Sindh province).⁷³⁵

⁷³² CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, First Quarter, 2020, 7 April 2020, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, Second Quarter, 2020, 16 July 2020, [url](#)

⁷³³ Diplomat (The), How Land Reform Can Help Reduce Terrorism in Pakistan, 21 June 2018, [url](#); UNOCHA, Pakistan-Overview map [map], 3 December 2018, [url](#)

⁷³⁴ Dawn, 20pc of Pakistanis live in 10 cities, census reveals, 29 August 2017, [url](#); McGill International Review (The), South Punjab – Neglected and Politicized, 4 April 2019, [url](#)

⁷³⁵ Dawn, 20pc of Pakistanis live in 10 cities, census reveals, 29 August 2017, [url](#)

Lahore is seen as the ‘heart of political and economic activity’ in Pakistan.⁷³⁶ Lahore has strong development capacities and a good infrastructure.⁷³⁷ According to the latest population census figures published by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics in 2017, the population of the province was approximately 110 million.⁷³⁸

Background of the violence and actors in the Punjab

International Crisis Group mentioned in 2016 that southern Punjab was considered as the region where militant networks and extremists were present in the province of Punjab.⁷³⁹ Anti-India groups such as LeT⁷⁴⁰ and JeM have their headquarters and religious facilities in southern Punjab.⁷⁴¹ In March 2019, in response to the Pulwama attack in Indian-administrated Kashmir, the Pakistani authorities made arrests and seized assets linked to militants to this attack in the province of Punjab.⁷⁴² The newspaper the Nation stated in April 2018 that the TTP, al-Qaeda and ISKP were posing ‘a serious threat’ to the province.⁷⁴³ According to PIPS, arrests of ISKP militants confirmed the group’s presence in Punjab province during 2018.⁷⁴⁴ The CTD of Punjab continued with operations against militants in Punjab province during 2019 and the first half of 2020. Media agencies reported about arrests or killings of suspicious militants of the TTP, HuA, LeJ and ISKP by the Punjab CTD.⁷⁴⁵

Description of recent security trends

ACLED collected data on 182 violent events in Punjab province in the year 2019, 63 of which were coded as battles, 6 as explosions/remote violence and 113 as violence against civilians. Lahore stood out as the district where most incidents were reported with 30 violent events, followed by Rawalpindi with 25 violent events.⁷⁴⁶

In 2019, PIPS counted five ‘terrorist attacks’, compared to four in 2018.⁷⁴⁷ Three attacks were carried out by HuA and two by BLA and BRAS. These attacks occurred in Lahore, Rawalpindi and the southern districts Rahim Yar Khan and Rajanpur.⁷⁴⁸ PICSS observed also five militant attacks in 2019, the same number as compared to 2018.⁷⁴⁹

Asad Hashim stated on 6 July 2020 about the security situation in 2019: ‘In Punjab province, the country’s most populous region, security incidents were relatively limited in 2019. A major suicide bombing targeting a Sufi shrine in the provincial capital Lahore killed 13 people in May 2019. Most major attacks in Punjab were claimed by the HuA splinter faction of the TTP.’⁷⁵⁰

⁷³⁶ South Asian Voices, What the case of Punjab says about Pakistan’s counterterrorism policy, 29 June 2018, [url](#)

⁷³⁷ McGill International Review (The), South Punjab – Neglected and Politicized, 4 April 2019, [url](#)

⁷³⁸ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Provisional Summary Results of 6th Population & Housing Census-2017, 25 August 2017, [url](#)

⁷³⁹ International Crisis Group, Pakistan’s Jihadist Heartland: Southern Punjab, 30 May 2016, [url](#)

⁷⁴⁰ Jamestown Foundation (The), Pakistan’s Jamaat-ud-Dawa Positions Itself for Politics, 12 October 2017, [url](#)

⁷⁴¹ Reuters, Explainer: Jaish-e-Mohammad, the Pakistan-based militants, at heart of tension with India, 15 February 2019, [url](#)

⁷⁴² Guardian (The), Pakistan launches major crackdown on extremist groups, 8 March 2019, [url](#)

⁷⁴³ Guardian (The), Pakistan launches major crackdown on extremist groups, 8 March 2019, [url](#); AP News (Gannon, K.), Popular support for militants complicates Pakistan crackdown, 8 March 2019, [url](#)

⁷⁴⁴ Nation (The), Qaeda, TTP, Daesh posing serious threat to Punjab: CTD head, 5 April 2018, [url](#)

⁷⁴⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 112

⁷⁴⁶ Dunya News, CTD arrests three terrorists of banned outfit from Sialkot, DG Khan, 27 May 2019, [url](#); VoA, Pakistan Says it Struck a Blow Against Islamic State-Khorasan, 21 June 2019, [url](#); Dawn, CTD arrests three suspects in Punjab, 16 November 2019, [url](#); Dawn, CTD arrests three militants, seizes arms, explosives, 4 February 2020, [url](#)

⁷⁴⁷ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Punjab; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2019-31 December 2019), [url](#)

⁷⁴⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 50; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 49

⁷⁴⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 51

⁷⁵⁰ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 48

⁷⁵⁰ Hashim, A., email, 6 July 2020

From 1 January 2020 to 31 July 2020 ACLED coded 12 violent events in Punjab province. 7 of which were coded as battles, 1 as explosions/remote violence and 4 as violence against civilians.⁷⁵¹ In this timeframe in the districts of Rawalpindi and Guranwala two violent events in each of the districts were counted.⁷⁵²

From 1 January to 31 July 2020, PIPS counted 9 incidents of which 5 were recorded as ‘terrorist attacks’ in Punjab.⁷⁵³ PICSS mentioned 16 incidents of overall violence and 7 out of these 16 incidents were marked as militant attacks.⁷⁵⁴

In January 2020, two policemen were killed in a shootout in Saddar, Rawalpindi. Dawn stated that the perpetrators were linked to JuA.⁷⁵⁵ On 12 March 2020, seven persons were injured, when an IED exploded in Saddar Bazaar area in Rawalpindi.⁷⁵⁶ On 12 June 2020, a similar incident occurred in Saddar Bazaar in Rawalpindi, which killed one person and injured fifteen.⁷⁵⁷

Impact of the violence on the civilian population

CRSS counted 148 casualties (82 fatalities and 66 injured) in Punjab in 2019, a considerable decrease compared to 2018 (288 casualties).⁷⁵⁸ According to different sources, most casualties were security forces and civilians, followed by militants.⁷⁵⁹

CRSS counted in total 48 casualties (20 fatalities, 28 injured) in the first and second quarter analysis report of 2020. In the second quarter of 2020, fatalities decreased in the province by approximately 57 % (from 14 to 6 fatalities) compared to the first quarter of 2020. The number of injured also decreased (from 16 to 12 injured) during the second quarter of 2020.⁷⁶⁰

Displacement

Among the consulted sources there was no information found about any conflict-induced displacement from areas in and to Punjab in 2019 and the first seven months of 2020.⁷⁶¹

2.2.2 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (including former FATA)

General description of the province

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (see [Map 1](#)) is situated in the north of Pakistan and borders Afghanistan in the west, Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan in the east and north-east and Punjab province in the south-

⁷⁵¹ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Punjab; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 July 2020), [url](#)

⁷⁵² Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 July 2020), [url](#)

⁷⁵³ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

⁷⁵⁴ Khan, A. email, 3 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PICSS

⁷⁵⁵ Dawn, Two policemen martyred in Saddar, suspected shooter killed, 8 January 2020, [url](#); Dawn, Suspected shooter in Saddar attack affiliated with Jamaatul Ahrar: police, 9 January 2020, [url](#)

⁷⁵⁶ Dawn, Blast leaves seven injured in Rawalpindi, 13 March 2020, [url](#)

⁷⁵⁷ Express Tribune (The), One dead, 15 injured in Pindi blast, 12 June 2020, [url](#)

⁷⁵⁸ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 27; CRSS, CRSS Annual Security Report Special Edition 2013 – 2018, March 2019, [url](#), p. 12

⁷⁵⁹ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 27; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 51; PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 49

⁷⁶⁰ CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, First Quarter, 2020, 7 April 2020, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, Second Quarter, 2020, 16 July 2020, [url](#)

⁷⁶¹ IDMC, GRID 2020 Global Report on Internal Displacement, 28 April 2020, [url](#), p. 50; Websites consulted: <http://www.unocha.org/pakistan>; <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/pakistan>; <http://reliefweb.int/country/pak>

east.⁷⁶² The provincial capital is Peshawar.⁷⁶³ The province has abundant resources. In 2017, the province contribution in the country's natural resources was 55 percent.⁷⁶⁴ The population speaks Pashtu, followed by the local languages Hindko and Urdu.⁷⁶⁵ The population of the province (including former FATA) is around 35.5 million.⁷⁶⁶

The FATA was a semi-autonomous tribal region in north-western Pakistan, consisting of seven tribal agencies (districts) and six frontier regions, until being merged with KP on 31 May 2018.⁷⁶⁷ The region of former FATA is referred to as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa tribal districts (KPTDs). The tribal agencies and frontier regions in former FATA have been re-designated as districts and subdivisions of KP.⁷⁶⁸

The KP tribal districts are described separately and in detail below.

Background of the conflict and actors in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (including former FATA)

In 2009, the Pakistani army engaged in a military operation against the TTP in KP. This offensive was marked by human rights violations and arbitrary arrests according to local residents.⁷⁶⁹ The army's counter-insurgency operations such as *Zarb-e-Azb* and *Radd-ul-Fasaad* in KP (including former FATA) contributed to a higher level of security in the province in the long-run.⁷⁷⁰ The Pakistani state is exercising control over Mingora city and peace returned to the Swat valley in 2019.⁷⁷¹ In Dera Ismael Khan, multiple security operations were carried out in the past but the area still continues to serve as 'a fertile ground for extremists to breed and thrive'.⁷⁷² In August 2019, Gandhara reported that members of the TTP have returned to Buner district and established checkpoints according to Bakht Afsar, a resident of Buner's Sultan Wass village. Gandhara cited locals, who are unsure of the treat that the TTP in Buner may pose. The military and the police were conducting search and strike operations.⁷⁷³

At the end of May 2018, the FATA merged with KP. The newly merged tribal districts are governed under provincial laws of KP. According to a report of International Crisis Group in August 2018, years of military operations in former FATA broke the TTP's hold over most of the tribal belt but also displaced millions of residents, destroyed homes and ruined livelihoods. Security in those areas has 'improved but remains fragile' according to International Crisis Group.⁷⁷⁴ The networks of the TTP are still active either in Afghanistan or in districts of KP such as Tank, Dera Ismael Khan, North and South Waziristan.⁷⁷⁵ On 20 July 2019, provincial elections were held amid heightened security measures, including the deployment of police officers and soldiers in the region.⁷⁷⁶ The election process was peaceful with no major security incidents.⁷⁷⁷

⁷⁶² Government of Pakistan, Provincial Disaster Management Authority, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Monsoon Contingency Plan 2019, 6 July 2019, [url](#), pp. 4-7

⁷⁶³ Alhasan Systems, Pakistan Development Perspective - City district Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 31 December 2015, [url](#), p. 17

⁷⁶⁴ International News (The), KP has abundant natural resources, 25 June 2017, [url](#)

⁷⁶⁵ Daily Sabah, Pakistan: A land of many languages, 9 March 2018, [url](#)

⁷⁶⁶ Government of Pakistan, Provincial Disaster Management Authority, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Monsoon Contingency Plan 2019, 6 July 2019, [url](#), p. 7

⁷⁶⁷ Asia Foundation (The), Dismantling Pakistan's Tribal Areas, 24 October 2018, [url](#)

⁷⁶⁸ Express Tribune (The), Tribal areas re-designated as districts, sub-divisions, 12 June 2018, [url](#); Express Tribune (The), Notification issued for composition of new administrative divisions in Mohmand, Khyber, 20 July 2018, [url](#)

⁷⁶⁹ Dawn, Swat: an unquiet calm, 21 September 2014, [url](#)

⁷⁷⁰ Almeida, C., EASO, EASO COI Meeting Report: Pakistan, 16-17 October 2017; Rome, February 2018, [url](#), p. 21, p. 46

⁷⁷¹ Anadolu Agency, Swat city center: From bloody square to business hub, 23 May 2019, [url](#)

⁷⁷² Mohanty Ranjan, T., Pakistan: Dera Ismail Khan: Tenuous Control, 29 July 2019, SAIR, Volume 18, No. 5, [url](#)

⁷⁷³ Gandhara, Taliban See Resurgence In Northwestern Pakistan, 23 August 2019, [url](#)

⁷⁷⁴ International Crisis Group, Shaping a New Peace in Pakistan's Tribal Areas, 20 August 2018, [url](#), p. 2

⁷⁷⁵ International Crisis Group, Shaping a New Peace in Pakistan's Tribal Areas, 20 August 2018, [url](#), p. 3; New York Times (The), Pakistan's Tribal Areas Are Still Waiting for Justice as Army Tightens Grip, 11 June 2019, [url](#)

⁷⁷⁶ RFE/RL, Pakistan's Restive Tribal Region Holds First Local Elections, 20 July 2019, [url](#)

⁷⁷⁷ Dawn, Win for ex-Fata, 23 July 2019, [url](#)

Description of recent security trends

ACLED collected data on 349 violent events in KP province⁷⁷⁸ from reports in open sources in the year 2019, 122 of which were coded as battles, 103 as explosions/remote violence and 124 as violence against civilians. North Waziristan stood out as the district where most incidents were reported with 69 violent events, followed by Peshawar with 37 violent events.⁷⁷⁹

PIPS documented a total of 170 incidents of violence⁷⁸⁰ in the province in 2019. This is a slight decrease compared to 2018 (183). This included 'terrorist attacks', anti-militant operational strikes by security forces, armed clashes/ encounters between security/law enforcement personnel and militants, inter-militant clashes and cross-border attacks.⁷⁸¹ PIPS counted 125 'terrorist attacks'⁷⁸² in 2019.⁷⁸³ PICSS observed 82 militant attacks⁷⁸⁴ in 2019.⁷⁸⁵

PIPS observed that militants in 2019 used tactics such as suicide bombings, firearms, IEDs, and hand grenades and rockets.⁷⁸⁶ The trend of militants attacking civilians, government officials and institutions, tribal elders and security personnel continued during 2019.⁷⁸⁷ The KP districts where most 'terrorist attacks' happened in 2019 includes North Waziristan (53 attacks), Dera Ismael Khan (14 attacks) and Bajaur (11 attacks).⁷⁸⁸

From 1 January 2020 to 31 July 2020 ACLED coded 73 violent events in KP. 44 of which were coded as battles, 18 as explosions/remote violence and 11 as violence against civilians.⁷⁸⁹ In this timeframe in the most incidents were reported in North Waziristan (18 violent events), Peshawar (8 violent events) and South Waziristan (6 violent events).⁷⁹⁰

In the first seven months of 2020, PIPS observed 100 overall incidents of which 49 were mentioned as 'terrorist attacks' in the province.⁷⁹¹ In the first seven months of 2020 the KP districts where most 'terrorist attacks' took place are: North Waziristan, Bajaur and Peshawar.⁷⁹² PICSS counted 103 incidents of violence. More than half of these incidents (60) were militant attacks.⁷⁹³

In January 2020, at least nine people got injured in a hand grenade attack near the Karkhano police checkpoint in Peshawar.⁷⁹⁴ In February 2020, an IED explosion occurred near a police car in Kulachi area of Dera Ismail Khan. At least one police officer got killed and two injured. The police car was targeted while policemen were being deployed to provide security to polio workers.⁷⁹⁵ In May 2020,

⁷⁷⁸ This number includes former FATA agencies

⁷⁷⁹ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2019-31 December 2019), [url](#)

⁷⁸⁰ This number includes former FATA agencies; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 36; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 36

⁷⁸¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 36

⁷⁸² This number includes former FATA agencies; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 35

⁷⁸³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 2020, [url](#), p. 35

⁷⁸⁴ This number includes former FATA agencies; PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 20

⁷⁸⁵ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 20

⁷⁸⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 35

⁷⁸⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 36

⁷⁸⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 35

⁷⁸⁹ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 July 2020), [url](#)

⁷⁹⁰ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 July 2020), [url](#)

⁷⁹¹ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

⁷⁹² Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

⁷⁹³ Khan, A. email, 3 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PICSS

⁷⁹⁴ Dawn, 9 injured in hand grenade explosion near Karkhano police checkpoint in Peshawar, 14 January 2020, [url](#)

⁷⁹⁵ Dawn, 1 policeman martyred, 2 injured in IED blast near police van in DI Khan, 18 February 2020, [url](#)

an IED explosion in Peshawar injured seven people.⁷⁹⁶ On 10 June 2020, the police killed an important TTP militant identified as Ameen Shah in Bannu.⁷⁹⁷

Impact of the violence on the civilian population

According to PIPS in 170 incidents of violence of various types 216 people were killed and 301 people wounded in the province in 2019. The majority of the casualties were security force personnel.⁷⁹⁸ CRSS documented 531 casualties in the province of KP⁷⁹⁹ (262 fatalities and 269 injuries) in 2019.⁸⁰⁰

According to data provided by CRSS in their first and second quarter analysis report of 2020, 203 casualties (157 fatalities, 46 injured) were counted for the province.⁸⁰¹ The total number of casualties in the province increased slightly in the second quarter of 2020 (108 casualties) compared to the first quarter (95 casualties).⁸⁰²

Displacement

According to UNOCHA, 16 780 families remain displaced as of November 2019 in the province.⁸⁰³ According to IDMC 'more than 101,000 people were still living in displacement in the northern province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa at the end of 2019 as a result of law enforcement operations.'⁸⁰⁴ Among the consulted sources there was no information found about any conflict-induced displacement from areas in KP in 2019 and the first seven months of 2020.⁸⁰⁵

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa tribal districts (KPTDs)

For a better understanding of the security situation in this region, the KP tribal districts are first described in general terms and further in more detail.

General

Mansur Khan Mahsud described the security situation for the KPTDs on 30 June 2020:

'There is no big change in the tribal districts of former FATA since 2019. Except in South and North Waziristan tribal districts where militants have sneaked in from Afghanistan since 2018. Also, in 2020 militant attacks have increased in Bajaur tribal district. Bajaur tribal district was second after North Waziristan tribal district in regard to militants' attacks and casualties. It seems that the situation would remain the same in the district in the next six months of 2020.'⁸⁰⁶

In an August 2020 article, Ihsanullah Tipu Meshud, an Islamabad-based journalist who covers security issues, also noticed that in 'recent months' militants of the Taliban established themselves in North and South Waziristan. They relocated from across the Afghan border.⁸⁰⁷

⁷⁹⁶ Dawn, Two traffic policemen among five injured in Peshawar blast, 12 May 2020, [url](#)

⁷⁹⁷ Pakistan Today, Suspected murderer of Canadian reporter killed in encounter, 10 June 2020, [url](#)

⁷⁹⁸ These numbers includes former FATA agencies; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 2020, [url](#), p. 36

⁷⁹⁹ These numbers include Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and former FATA, numbers used from table 1 CRSS: CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 5

⁸⁰⁰ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 27

⁸⁰¹ These numbers include Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and former FATA; CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, First Quarter, 2020, 7 April 2020, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, Second Quarter, 2020, 16 July 2020, [url](#)

⁸⁰² CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, First Quarter, 2020, 7 April 2020, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, Second Quarter, 2020, 16 July 2020, [url](#)

⁸⁰³ UNOCHA, Pakistan: Humanitarian Dashboard - Transition 2019 1 January - 30 November 2019, 2 January 2020, [url](#)

⁸⁰⁴ IDMC, GRID 2020 Global Report on Internal Displacement, 28 April 2020, [url](#), p. 50

⁸⁰⁵ IDMC, GRID 2020 Global Report on Internal Displacement, 28 April 2020, [url](#), p. 50; Websites consulted: <http://www.unocha.org/pakistan>; <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/pakistan>; <http://reliefweb.int/country/pak>

⁸⁰⁶ Khan Mahsud, M., email, 30 June 2020

⁸⁰⁷ Arab News Pakistan, Double-edged sword of 'surrendered' Taliban in Waziristan, 3 August 2020, [url](#)

FRC states in its annual report of 2019 that compared to 2018 there was a decrease of 16 % in 'terrorist incidents' and a decrease of 82 % in counterterrorism incidents in 2019. In total FRC counted 160 violent incidents (106 terrorism and 54 counterterrorism incidents) in 2019.⁸⁰⁸ According to data provided by FRC, in the time period 1 January 2020 - 31 July 2020 68 violent incidents (57 terrorism and 11 counterterrorism incidents) occurred.⁸⁰⁹

Figure 13. Overview of the violent incidents in the KPTDS in 2019 and the first seven months of 2020, based on FRC data⁸¹⁰ Figure 13 shows an overview of the violent incidents in the KPTDS in 2019 and the first seven months of 2020.

Violent incidents in the KPTDs	2019			01/01/2020-31/07/2020		
	No. Incidents	No. Killed	No. Injured	No. Incidents	No. Killed	No. Injured
Bajaur	15	8	13	17	26	12
Mohmand	6	6	15	1	3	-
Kurram	1	0	2	3	1	18
Khyber	12	9	7	7	7	-
Orakzai	1	5	3	3	4	2
North Waziristan	45	55	105	25	66	23
South Waziristan	27	17	29	12	7	18
Total	106	100	174	68	114	73

Figure 13. Overview of the violent incidents in the KPTDS in 2019 and the first seven months of 2020, based on FRC data⁸¹⁰

Figure 14 (see below) gives an overview of the nature of violence in the tribal districts in 2018, 2019 and the first seven months of 2020 showing that the nature of the incidents is diverse: from search operations by the military to attacks on civilians and security force personnel by militants. In 2019, the number of attacks on civilians and security forces decreased compared to 2018.⁸¹¹

Nature of violent incidents in the KPTDs	No. of incidents 2018	No. of incidents 2019	No. of incidents 01/01/2020- 31/07/2020
Attacks on civilians	58	48	31
Attacks on security forces	63	54	22
Attacks on peace forces	5	4	4

⁸⁰⁸ FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. 1

⁸⁰⁹ Khan Mahsud, M., email, 8 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of FRC

⁸¹⁰ KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 4-11; Khan Mahsud, M., email, 8 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of FRC

⁸¹¹ FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts annual security situation 2018, 15 January 2019, [url](#), p. 1; FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. 1

Clashes between militant groups	1	0	0
Search operations	136	54	11
Aerial strikes	0	0	0
Drone attacks	1	0	0
Total	264	160	68

Figure 14. Nature of violent incidents in the FATA in 2018 and 2019, based on FRC data⁸¹²

Figure 15 (see below) gives an overview of the nature of the casualties in the tribal districts in 2018, 2019 and the first seven months of 2020. In 2019, FRC counted a total of 281 casualties (110 killed and 171 injured) in all the KPTDs, marking a significant decrease of 24 % in overall casualties compared to 2018. According to Figure 15 security forces were the most affected target during the year 2019. In the first seven months of 2020, most casualties were civilians followed by security forces (see Figure 15).⁸¹³

Nature of casualties in the KPTDs	No. of casualties 2018		No. of casualties 2019		No. of casualties 01/01/2020-31/01/2020	
	Killed	Injured	Killed	Injured	Killed	Injured
Militants	28	2	16	10	43	3
Civilians	75	117	34	52	38	37
Security forces	44	92	54	107	26	30
Peace forces/Aman Lashkar	5	3	6	2	7	3
Total	152	214	110	171	114	73

Figure 15. Nature of casualties in the tribal districts in 2018 and 2019, based on FRC data⁸¹⁴

On 30 June 2020, Mansur Khan Mahsud stated the following on the main targets of militant groups in the KPTDs:

‘In 2019 and 2020 security forces, pro-government tribal elders, government officials and local peace committees’ members are on the hit list of the militant groups active in the former tribal districts of FATA. Those militants who have renounced militancy and has surrendered to the government are also on the hit list of the militants. Dozens of militants affiliated with the

⁸¹² FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts annual security situation 2018, 15 January 2019, [url](#), p. 1; FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. 1; Khan Mahsud, M., email, 8 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of FRC

⁸¹³ FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. 2

⁸¹⁴ Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts annual security situation 2018, 15 January 2019, [url](#), p. 2; FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. 1; Khan Mahsud, M., email, 8 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of FRC

TTP and Gull Bahadur group who have surrendered to the government have been killed in target killing incidents in South and North Waziristan in 2019 and 2020.⁸¹⁵

Methods used by militants included IEDs, suicide attacks, cross-border attacks, clashes between militant groups and militant ambushes on security personnel (see Figure 16). Just as in 2018, the use of IEDs remained the most used tactic by militants in 2019 and the first seven months of 2020. These are observed in all tribal districts.⁸¹⁶

Militant tactics in KPTDS	No. of incidents 2018	No. of incidents 2019	No. of incidents 01/01/2020-31/07/2020
IEDs	70	53	27
Targeted killings	20	25	16
Suicide attacks	1	0	0
Cross-border attacks	24	6	5
Ambush	10	15	4
Kidnapping	-	4	4

Figure 16. Militant tactics in the tribal districts in 2018 and 2019, based on FRC data⁸¹⁷

Below a description is given of the recent security trends in each tribal district in 2019 and the first seven months of 2020.

Bajaur tribal district

Bajaur is located in the north of the province of KP and shares a border with Afghanistan's eastern Kunar Province to the north-west, and Mohmand tribal district in the west.⁸¹⁸ The population of Bajaur tribal district is 1 093 684.⁸¹⁹ In Bajaur, the first district courts were set up in the merged tribal districts at the end of June 2019.⁸²⁰

FRC documented 15 violent incidents in 2019 in Bajaur. This is a decrease of 29 % in terms of incidents compared to 2018 (21 violent incidents). According to FRC, 21 casualties were counted in 2019 (8 killed and 13 injured).⁸²¹ Of the 21 casualties, 11 were civilians.⁸²² PIPS counted 11 'terrorist attacks' in Bajaur killing 8 and injuring 14 in 2019.⁸²³ FRC stated that in 2019 counter terrorism operations

⁸¹⁵ Khan Mahsud, M., email, 30 June 2020

⁸¹⁶ FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts annual security situation 2018, 15 January 2019, [url](#), p. 15; FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. 13

⁸¹⁷ FRC, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts annual security situation 2018, 15 January 2019, [url](#), p. 15; FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. 13; Khan Mahsud, M., email, 8 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of FRC

⁸¹⁸ CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), p. 22

⁸¹⁹ CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), p. 22

⁸²⁰ TNN, District court starts functioning in Bajaur, 29 June 2019, [url](#)

⁸²¹ FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. 4

⁸²² FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 14-15

⁸²³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 2020, [url](#), p. 35

occurred in Bajaur.⁸²⁴ IEDs were used in 8 violent incidents in 2019.⁸²⁵ In September 2019, local residents of Bajaur feared a return of the TTP because of multiple incidents with IEDs.⁸²⁶

From 1 January 2020 to 31 July 2020, FRC documented 17 violent incidents in Bajaur which caused 38 casualties (26 killed and 12 injured).⁸²⁷ From 1 January 2020 to 31 July 2020, PIPS counted 7 'terrorist attacks' in Bajaur tribal district. 4 people were killed and 3 injured. PIPS mentioned that JuA, HuA and local Taliban were responsible for these attacks.⁸²⁸

According to reporting by TNN, more violent incidents occurred in Bajaur since May 2020.⁸²⁹ On 22 May 2020, one person was killed and another injured in a bomb blast in Nawagai *tehsil*.⁸³⁰ On 2 July 2020, a person was killed in a bomb blast in Mamond *tehsil* of Bajaur tribal district.⁸³¹ Shelling from Afghanistan into Bajaur district was also reported. One person was killed and another injured when a mortar shell fired from Afghan side landed in Salarzai *tehsil*.⁸³² A cross-border attack occurred on 28 June 2020, in which three persons were injured in Charmang *tehsil*.⁸³³

Khyber tribal district

Khyber tribal district borders Afghanistan to the west, Orakzai tribal district to the south, Kurram tribal district to the south-west and Peshawar in the east. This district is divided into three sub-administrative units: Bara, Jamrud and Landi Kotal.⁸³⁴ Khyber tribal district has a population of 986 973.⁸³⁵

The Pakistani army carried out four military operations in Khyber.⁸³⁶ The Pakistani army announced in July 2017 that it had launched a new military operation in Khyber Agency's Rajgal Valley, the operation Khyber-IV. Hideouts and training camps of militants were destroyed in this offensive.⁸³⁷ No information on further military operations after July 2017 could be found.

In 2019, FRC stated that 12 violent incidents occurred in Khyber tribal district. This is a decline of 33 % compared to 2018 when 18 violent incidents were reported by FRC.⁸³⁸ According to FRC 16 casualties were counted in 2019 (9 killed and 7 injured).⁸³⁹ Of the 16 casualties, 6 were civilians.⁸⁴⁰ PIPS counted 4 'terrorist attacks' in Khyber killing 3 and injuring 4 in 2019.⁸⁴¹

From 1 January 2020 to 31 July 2020, FRC documented seven violent incidents in Khyber which caused seven casualties (seven killed).⁸⁴² In the first seven months of 2020, PIPS counted not a single 'terrorist attack' in Khyber tribal district.⁸⁴³ According to TNN, two tribesmen, including a tribal elder, were killed after they were kidnapped in Jamrud *tehsil* in January 2020.⁸⁴⁴

⁸²⁴ FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. 2

⁸²⁵ FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. 16

⁸²⁶ Gandhara, Pakistan: New Attacks Raise Fears Of A Taliban Return, 5 September 2019, [url](#)

⁸²⁷ Khan Mahsud, M., email, 8 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of FRC

⁸²⁸ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

⁸²⁹ TNN, Market watchman killed in Bajaur blast, 2 July 2020, [url](#)

⁸³⁰ TNN, One killed, another injured in Bajaur blast, 22 May 2020, [url](#)

⁸³¹ TNN, Market watchman killed in Bajaur blast, 2 July 2020, [url](#)

⁸³² TNN, One killed as mortar fired from Afghanistan lands in Bajaur, 28 May 2020, [url](#)

⁸³³ TNN, 3 labourers injured in Bajaur in firing from Afghan side, 28 June 2020, [url](#)

⁸³⁴ CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), pp. 14-15

⁸³⁵ CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), p. 14

⁸³⁶ PIPS, Security Report 2017, 7 January 2018, [url](#), p. 122

⁸³⁷ Dawn, Operation Khyber-IV: army clears terrorist strongholds in Rajgal valley, 23 July 2017, [url](#)

⁸³⁸ FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. 7

⁸³⁹ FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. 7

⁸⁴⁰ FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 14-15

⁸⁴¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 July 2020, [url](#), p. 35

⁸⁴² Khan Mahsud, M., email, 8 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of FRC

⁸⁴³ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

⁸⁴⁴ TNN, 'Damaged schools in Khyber to be rebuilt on priority basis', 26 January 2020, [url](#)

Kurram tribal district

Kurram shares its border largely with Afghanistan (Nangarhar and Paktia province). In the east this agency borders Orakzai, Khyber and North Waziristan in the south. It is divided into three administrative units: Lower Kurram, Upper Kurram and Central Kurram. Parachinar is the main capital of Kurram Agency. Kurram has a significant Shia population. Kurram Agency has a history of sectarian violence between the Sunni and the Shia population.⁸⁴⁵ Kurram tribal district has a population of 619 553.⁸⁴⁶

In 2019, a decrease in violent incidents was observed by FRC in this tribal district compared to 2018. In total, FRC counted one violent incident in 2019 compared to three in 2018.⁸⁴⁷ The same downwards trend was noted in the number of casualties in 2019. FRC counted two casualties (two injured) in 2019 compared to 21 casualties (8 killed, 13 injured) in 2018.⁸⁴⁸ PIPS did not mention any 'terrorist attack' in 2019 in Kurram.⁸⁴⁹

From 1 January 2020 to 31 July 2020, FRC documented 3 violent incidents in Kurram which caused 19 casualties (1 killed and 18 injured).⁸⁵⁰ From 1 January until 31 July 2020, PIPS counted three 'terrorist attacks' in Kurram tribal district in which one person got killed and eighteen were injured. The attacks were attributed to rival sectarian groups and unknown militants.⁸⁵¹

In May 2020, a bomb blast occurred in an *imambargah* in Kurram tribal district. At least one person got injured.⁸⁵² At the end of June 2020, a tribal clash between two tribes erupted and evolved into a sectarian clash according to the Nation. At least five people were killed and over 20 injured.⁸⁵³ According to reporting of TNN on 2 July 2020, 14 were killed and 40 injured in this tribal clash.⁸⁵⁴ On 23 July 2020, a bomb explosion occurred at a local market in Parachinar, wounding 18 people. After this incident, people protested and blamed the security forces for the violence in the region.⁸⁵⁵

Mohmand tribal district

Mohmand borders Bajaur in the north and Khyber in the south. In the east, it borders Malakand and Charsadda districts and Peshawar district in the south-east.⁸⁵⁶ Mohmand tribal district has a population of 466 984.⁸⁵⁷

FRC counted 6 violent incidents during 2019, killing 6 people and injuring 15. Compared to 2018, the situation in this agency slightly improved in 2019 in terms of violent incidents but the number of casualties has risen in 2019.⁸⁵⁸ Of the 21 casualties, 10 were civilians.⁸⁵⁹ According to PIPS, five 'terrorist attacks' have taken place in Mohmand tribal district in 2019 killing four and injuring four people.⁸⁶⁰

⁸⁴⁵ CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), pp. 16-17

⁸⁴⁶ CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), p. 16

⁸⁴⁷ FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. 8

⁸⁴⁸ FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. 8

⁸⁴⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 35

⁸⁵⁰ Khan Mahsud, M., email, 8 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of FRC

⁸⁵¹ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

⁸⁵² Dawn, At least 1 injured in explosion at imambargah in Lower Kurram, 5 May 2020, [url](#)

⁸⁵³ Nation (The), Tribes land disputes claim 5 lives in Kurram, 1 July 2020, [url](#)

⁸⁵⁴ TNN, Death toll in rival tribes' clashes in Kurram reaches 14, 2 July 2020, [url](#)

⁸⁵⁵ DW, Pakistan: Protests erupt over Parachinar bomb attack, 24 July 2020, [url](#)

⁸⁵⁶ CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally, Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), p. 22

⁸⁵⁷ CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), p. 22

⁸⁵⁸ FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 5-6

⁸⁵⁹ FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 14-15

⁸⁶⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 35

From 1 January 2020 to 31 July 2020 FRC documented one violent incident in Mohmand which caused 3 casualties (3 killed).⁸⁶¹ From 1 January 2020 to 31 July 2020, PIPS counted one 'terrorist attack' in Mohmand tribal district perpetrated by the local Taliban.⁸⁶²

The Rehmat Kor area in Mohmand tribal district was declared safe in February 2020 and 76 displaced families returned to this area.⁸⁶³ In April 2020, Dawn stated that during a security operation, the security forces killed three suspected militants during a raid in Mohmand tribal district.⁸⁶⁴

Orakzai tribal district

Orakzai shares its borders with Khyber tribal district in the north, Kohat in the east, the districts of Kohat and Hangu in the south, and Kurram tribal district in the west. Administratively, it is divided into Upper and Lower Orakzai.⁸⁶⁵ The population is 245 356.⁸⁶⁶

One incident of violence was counted by FRC during 2019 compared to three in 2018. FRC reported eight casualties (five killed, three injured) in 2019.⁸⁶⁷ According to PIPS, no 'terrorist attacks' have taken place in Orakzai tribal district in 2019.⁸⁶⁸

From 1 January 2020 to 31 July 2020, FRC documented 3 violent incidents in Orakzai which caused six casualties (four killed and two injured).⁸⁶⁹ From 1 January until 31 July 2020, PIPS counted two 'terrorist attacks' in Orakzai tribal district in which two people were killed and two injured. The attacks were attributed to JuA and local Taliban.⁸⁷⁰

In March 2020, armed men attacked a police station in the Arghunja area of Orakzai tribal district killing two police officers.⁸⁷¹

North Waziristan tribal district

North Waziristan borders Kurram tribal district and Hangu in the north and Karak and Bannu districts in the east, South Waziristan tribal district in the south and Afghanistan in the west.⁸⁷² North Waziristan has a population of 543 254.⁸⁷³

Before 2014, North Waziristan was considered as a home base of al-Qaeda, Pakistani Taliban and the Haqqani-network.⁸⁷⁴ In June 2014, Operation *Zarb-e-Azb* was initiated in North Waziristan.⁸⁷⁵ The area was cleared of militants according to the Pakistani military.⁸⁷⁶ In the wake of multiple incidents against the security forces and to prevent any 'untoward situation', Section 144 was imposed for thirty days in June 2019.⁸⁷⁷ Ahead of the provincial elections, Section 144 was lifted on 8 July 2019.⁸⁷⁸ Section 144

⁸⁶¹ Khan Mahsud, M., email, 8 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of FRC

⁸⁶² Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

⁸⁶³ TNN, 76 families return as Rehmat Kor in Mohmand district declared 'clear', 27 February 2020, [url](#)

⁸⁶⁴ Dawn, Seven terror suspects killed in two operations in KP, 8 April 2020, [url](#)

⁸⁶⁵ CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), pp. 22-23

⁸⁶⁶ CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), p. 23

⁸⁶⁷ FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. 9

⁸⁶⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 35

⁸⁶⁹ Khan Mahsud, M., email, 8 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of FRC

⁸⁷⁰ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

⁸⁷¹ Dawn, Two constables martyred in attack on police station, 20 March 2020, [url](#)

⁸⁷² CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), p. 20

⁸⁷³ CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), p. 20

⁸⁷⁴ BBC News, North Waziristan: What happened after militants lost the battle?, 8 March 2017, [url](#)

⁸⁷⁵ Jamestown Foundation, The Successes and Failures of Pakistan's Operation Zarb-e-Azb, 10 July 2015, [url](#); BBC News, North Waziristan: What happened after militants lost the battle?, 8 March 2017, [url](#)

⁸⁷⁶ Nation (The), Operation Zarb-e-Azb: Two years of success, 6 September 2016, [url](#); Dawn, After Army's clean-up of North Waziristan, locals want civilian govt to get in action, 18 May 2017, [url](#)

⁸⁷⁷ Dawn, Section 144 imposed in North Waziristan due to 'current law and order situation', 10 June 2019, [url](#)

⁸⁷⁸ TNN, Section 144 lifted in North Waziristan ahead of elections, 8 July 2019, [url](#)

of the Code of Criminal Procedure empowers district administrations to issue orders in public interest that may place a ban on an activity for a specific period of time.⁸⁷⁹

PIPS stated the following about the TTP in 2019:

‘The TTP is apparently also struggling to come back to its traditional hub in South and North Waziristan. Apart from perpetrating terrorist attacks against the security forces and tribal elders, it was also trying to re-cultivate its support base in these areas of KP. It has started issuing warnings to local tribesmen and instructions to impose its social-ideological order.’⁸⁸⁰

In Miranshah, a pamphlet issued by the TTP in July 2019 warns citizens not to play music in public, allow women freedom of movement or vaccinate their children against polio, or ‘face the consequences’.⁸⁸¹

FRC describes the security situation in North Waziristan as ‘turbulent’ in 2019. FRC noted a decrease in violent incidents and a slight increase in casualties in 2019 compared to 2018.⁸⁸² In 2019, FRC counted 45 violent incidents compared to 57 violent incidents in 2018. FRC counted 160 casualties (55 killed, 105 injured) in 2019 compared to 152 casualties (55 killed, 97 injured) in 2018.⁸⁸³ In 2019, most civilian casualties (41) were counted by FRC in North Waziristan. According to FRC, the high number of civilian casualties was due to targeted killings and IED attacks.⁸⁸⁴ According to PIPS, 53 ‘terrorist attacks’ have taken place in North Waziristan tribal district in 2019 killing 57 and injuring 93 people.⁸⁸⁵ According to PIPS, 38 of the 53 ‘terrorist attacks’ targeted security and law enforcement agencies.⁸⁸⁶

From 1 January 2020 to 31 July 2020, FRC documented 25 violent incidents in North Waziristan which caused 89 casualties (66 killed and 23 injured).⁸⁸⁷ In the first seven months of 2020, PIPS counted 18 ‘terrorist attacks’ in North Waziristan tribal district. In total PIPS counted 47 casualties (24 killed and 23 injured). The attacks were carried out by local Taliban, the TTP and unknown militants.⁸⁸⁸

In March and April 2020, clashes were noted between security forces personnel and militants. On 18 March 2020, a clash took place in the area of Datta Khel in which four security force personnel and seven militants were killed.⁸⁸⁹ On 7 April 2020, Pakistani security forces killed four militants in a raid.⁸⁹⁰ In May 2020, Dawn stated that a rise in targeted killings on civilians and attacks on security forces in North Waziristan and South Waziristan districts have caused fear among the local population.⁸⁹¹ On 24 May 2020, at least three people, including two government officials, were killed in an attack by unknown gunmen near Hassu Khel village of Mir Ali town.⁸⁹² After this incident, political elders of the area gathered and expressed their concern about the security situation in North Waziristan. They asked the government to take action to reduce the increase in violence.⁸⁹³ Attacks on the security forces continued. On 12 June 2020, one soldier was killed in Mir Ali.⁸⁹⁴ On 27 June 2020, two soldiers

⁸⁷⁹ Government of Pakistan, Code of Criminal Procedure [Pakistan], Act No. V, 1 July 1898, [url](#)

⁸⁸⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 69

⁸⁸¹ Dawn, TTP warns against playing music, women going out alone in Miramshah, 1 August 2019, [url](#)

⁸⁸² FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. 10

⁸⁸³ FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. 10

⁸⁸⁴ FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. 15

⁸⁸⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 35

⁸⁸⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 37

⁸⁸⁷ Khan Mahsud, M., email, 8 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of FRC

⁸⁸⁸ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

⁸⁸⁹ RFE/RL, Four Pakistani Troops, Seven Militants Killed In North Waziristan Clash, 18 March 2020, [url](#)

⁸⁹⁰ RFE/RL, Pakistani Security Forces Say Seven Militants Killed Near Afghanistan, 7 April 2020, [url](#)

⁸⁹¹ Dawn, Five die in North Waziristan targeted attacks, 7 May 2020, [url](#)

⁸⁹² Gandhara, Gunmen Kill Two Officials At Eid Celebration In Northwest Pakistan, 25 May 2020, [url](#)

⁸⁹³ Dawn, CSP officer among three shot dead in North Waziristan, 25 May 2020, [url](#)

⁸⁹⁴ TNN, Soldier martyred in North Waziristan firing, 12 June 2020, [url](#)

got injured due to a bomb blast in Khadi area of Mir Ali.⁸⁹⁵ On 24 July 2020, one soldier was killed and three others were injured in a remote control blast on a vehicle of the security forces in Mir Ali.⁸⁹⁶

South Waziristan tribal district

South Waziristan shares its border in the north with North Waziristan, and borders Bannu and Lakki Marwat districts in the north-east, the tribal area adjoining Tank district and Dera Ismail Khan district in the east, Zhob district of Balochistan Province and Dera Ismail Khan district in the south, and Afghanistan in the west.⁸⁹⁷ South Waziristan Agency has a population of 543 356.⁸⁹⁸

RFE/RL reported in July 2018 that there is a 'renewed Taliban influence in Waziristan' noticeable. Locals call this armed group 'the *Aman* (Peace) Committee, which mostly operates as a government-backed militia'.⁸⁹⁹ Mona Kanwal Sheikh, expert on militant movements in Pakistan stated about the presence of the Taliban in South Waziristan:

'One "lump" of the Pakistani Taliban is, however, still active in South Waziristan. They are organized in one of the peace committees in the district and are also called the "good Taliban", the ones who the military is not targeting. They are no longer part of the larger umbrella of TTP, and they have been granted the right to control an area in South Waziristan.'⁹⁰⁰

According to Kanwal Sheikh, the Taliban in Wana, in South Waziristan, is organised under four different commanders and with 'their own police and public morality "corps" and their own justice system'. They also collect taxes from local businesses.⁹⁰¹ In April 2019, the Taliban in Wana warned the police through pamphlets to leave South Waziristan.⁹⁰² At the end of May 2019, Section 144 was imposed for a month in South Waziristan due to the clash between PTM and the army on 26 May 2019 in North Waziristan.⁹⁰³

FRC stated that the situation in South Waziristan remained 'disturbed' because the frequency of the violent incidents increased in 2019.⁹⁰⁴ FRC recorded 27 violent incidents in 2019, compared to 2018 (16 violent incidents), which is an increase of almost 50 %.⁹⁰⁵ FRC counted 46 casualties (17 killed, 29 injured) in 2019. This is a slight decrease compared to 2018 when FRC counted 45 casualties in 2018 (32 killed, 13 injured).⁹⁰⁶ According to FRC, IEDs and targeted killings remained the main cause of civilian casualties, although there was a reduction noted compared to 2018 in these attacks.⁹⁰⁷ According to PIPS, 5 'terrorist attacks' have taken place in North Waziristan tribal district in 2019, killing 7 and injuring 10 people.⁹⁰⁸

From 1 January 2020 to 31 July 2020 FRC documented 12 violent incidents in South Waziristan which caused 25 casualties (7 killed and 18 injured).⁹⁰⁹ From 1 January until 31 July 2020, PIPS counted 2 'terrorist attacks' in South Waziristan tribal district in which 4 people were injured. The attacks were carried out by the TTP and unknown militants.⁹¹⁰

⁸⁹⁵ TNN, Two soldiers injured in North Waziristan blast, 27 June 2020, [url](#)

⁸⁹⁶ TNN, One soldier martyred, three injured in North Waziristan blast, 24 July 2020, [url](#)

⁸⁹⁷ CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), p. 17

⁸⁹⁸ CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), p. 17

⁸⁹⁹ RFE/RL, Locals Blame 'Surrendered Taliban' For Waziristan Murder, 24 July 2018, [url](#)

⁹⁰⁰ Kanwal Sheikh, M., New conflict lines in Pakistan's tribal areas, 6 July 2018, [url](#)

⁹⁰¹ Kanwal Sheikh, M., New conflict lines in Pakistan's tribal areas, 6 July 2018, [url](#)

⁹⁰² Dawn, Pamphlet warns police to leave S. Waziristan in three days, 23 April 2019, [url](#)

⁹⁰³ Dawn, Section 144 imposed in South Waziristan for 'public safety', 28 May 2019, [url](#)

⁹⁰⁴ FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. 10

⁹⁰⁵ FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. 10

⁹⁰⁶ FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. 10

⁹⁰⁷ FRC, KPTD Annual Security Report 2019, 13 January 2020, [url](#), p. 17

⁹⁰⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 35

⁹⁰⁹ Khan Mahsud, M., email, 8 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of FRC

⁹¹⁰ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

On 1 May 2020, Sardar Arif Wazir, an activist of the PTM was attacked in Wanna by unidentified persons. A day later, Wazir died because of injuries sustained during the attack.⁹¹¹ In July 2020, four people including a tribal elder, were killed when armed men opened fire at their vehicle in Merna area.⁹¹² On 11 August 2020, four soldiers were injured due to a suicide attack. The TTP claimed responsibility.⁹¹³

2.2.3 Balochistan

General description of the province

Balochistan (see [Map 1](#)) is located in the west of Pakistan. It borders Iran in the west, Afghanistan in the north-west, KP province in the north-east, Punjab province in the east, Sindh province in the south-east, and the Arabian Sea in the south.⁹¹⁴ The province is rich in natural resources such as gas, coal and other minerals.⁹¹⁵ The province of Balochistan is prone to environmental hazards including earthquakes, floods, and drought.⁹¹⁶ The province is of strategic importance to the government of Pakistan because of the CPEC project.⁹¹⁷ The CPEC project includes a 3 000 km network of roads, railway and pipelines running from Balochistan's Gwadar Port to the Xinjiang region in China.⁹¹⁸

The majority of the people are Baloch, but the second largest group are Pashtun who dominate the northern areas.⁹¹⁹ The provincial capital Quetta is also the home of a large part of the Hazara community in Pakistan.⁹²⁰ An October 2019 report of HRCP stated that Balochistan is the largest province of Pakistan but the least populated.⁹²¹ According to the latest population census figures published by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the population of the province is around 12.3 million.⁹²²

Background of the conflict and actors in Balochistan

The province of Balochistan experiences multiple problems such as sectarian violence, Islamist militant attacks and a separatist insurgency.⁹²³ These conflicts are further complicated by the involvement of several foreign states, such as China, India and Iran, with an economic or political stake in the province.⁹²⁴

The separatist insurgency has been going on in Balochistan for decades. Different nationalist groups complained about the unfair distribution of royalties from the exploitation of natural minerals in the province.⁹²⁵ The conflict intensified in 2005 and escalated further in August 2006 with the death of Nationalist Leader and Tribal Head Nawab Akbar Bugti. The government of Pakistan reacted with a military operation. The building of military cantonments in Balochistan and the development of

⁹¹¹ RFE/RL, Pashtun Rights Activist Dies After Shooting Attack In Pakistan's Tribal Areas, 2 May 2020, [url](#)

⁹¹² Dawn, South Waziristan attack leaves four dead, 4 July 2020, [url](#)

⁹¹³ Dawn, Brigadier, three soldiers injured in suicide attack, 12 August 2020, [url](#)

⁹¹⁴ Diplomat (The), A Brief History of Balochistan, 12 February 2016, [url](#)

⁹¹⁵ UNDP Pakistan, Balochistan: Challenges & Opportunities, 17 April 2019, [url](#), p. 2, p. 14

⁹¹⁶ Government of Pakistan, Provincial Disaster Management Authority Balochistan, Balochistan Drought Needs Assessment (BDNA) Report February 2019, 28 February 2019, [url](#), p. 5

⁹¹⁷ UNDP Pakistan, Balochistan: Challenges & Opportunities, 17 April 2019, [url](#), p. 2

⁹¹⁸ Nation (The), Gwadar: Economic prosperity of Pakistan, 6 July 2019, [url](#)

⁹¹⁹ Diplomat (The), Fear and Loathing in Balochistan, 25 April 2019, [url](#); Diplomat (The), Pakistan's Balochs Fear Minority Status in Their Own Province, 11 February 2016, [url](#)

⁹²⁰ Reuters, 'Under siege': Fear and defiance mark life for Pakistan's minority Hazaras, 5 July 2019, [url](#)

⁹²¹ HRCP, Balochistan: Neglected Still. An HRCP Fact-Finding Report, 28 October 2019, [url](#), p. 2

⁹²² Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Provisional Summary Results of 6th Population & Housing Census-2017, 25 August 2017, [url](#)

⁹²³ Amir Rana, M., Militant Landscape of Balochistan, 19 June 2020, [url](#), p. 1

⁹²⁴ Reuters, Pakistan asks Iran to act on militants behind Baluchistan killings, 20 April 2019, [url](#); Diplomat (The), Trouble at the Pakistan-Iran Border, 30 October 2018, [url](#)

⁹²⁵ DW, China consulate attack: Why Pakistan's Baloch separatists are against Beijing, 23 November 2018, [url](#)

Gwadar port by China also became reasons for conflict.⁹²⁶ A series of attacks on government targets and on Punjabi settlers spiked during the insurgency after 2006.⁹²⁷

In April 2019, Gandhara noticed: 'Independent observers and Baluch nationalists say an extensive crackdown by Pakistani security forces relying on anti-nationalist militias, enforced disappearances, and other harsh tactics has weakened the insurgency', especially in the Makran area.⁹²⁸ According to Kiyya Baloch, a journalist from Balochistan's Makran region most of the attacks occur in the remote regions of the province.⁹²⁹ Still, the Baloch armed groups were able to carry out a series of violent attacks on Chinese interests in the region in the last two years. This is largely due to a transformation of the Baloch armed groups caused by a change in traditional leadership and urbanisation of their operations from small towns to cities outside the province.⁹³⁰ According to Muhammad Amir Rana, a security analyst, due to the growth of the middle class and higher literacy rate in central and southern Balochistan 'a new cadre of young nationalists also emerged.' Rana stated that they gradually took over control of the insurgency in their region.⁹³¹ The insurgency has largely shifted to the south-west of Balochistan.⁹³² In June 2020, clashes between the Pakistani military and Baloch insurgents aggravated due to an increase of attacks perpetrated by Baloch groups.⁹³³ The Pakistan military carried out a military operation - Ground Zero Clearance Operation - aimed at destroying the bases of Baloch militant groups in the border regions with Iran.⁹³⁴

An issue that has continuously fuelled the insurgency in Balochistan is the enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings.⁹³⁵ A May 2020 article of Gandhara stated that 'Baloch activists say they have seen a renewed crackdown on educated youth...'⁹³⁶ According to Voice for Baloch Missing Persons (VBMP), cited in the Diplomat, at least 47 000 Balochs have gone missing since 2000.⁹³⁷

Another factor contributing to the conflict in Balochistan in recent years is the international involvement in Pakistan's efforts to build the Gwadar Port in collaboration with China.⁹³⁸ The Baloch insurgent groups have condemned the CPEC project. They interpret the project as an attempt by the state to exploit Balochistan's resources while receiving little in return.⁹³⁹ To protect the CPEC project, Pakistan increased its security personnel in the region.⁹⁴⁰

Different Islamist militant groups are also active in the province. According to PIPS annual security situation report of 2019 the TPP, HuA, affiliates of IS and some other similar unknown militants were able to carry out attacks in the province.⁹⁴¹ In April 2019, TRT World mentioned 'although the TTP has been pushed to the peripheries after the military operations, they still carry out attacks intermittently. The current state of the organisation is scattered, but in recent times most of their attacks seem to be centred in and around Balochistan.'⁹⁴² Security sources believe that Zhob district is emerging as the

⁹²⁶ Aamir, A., The Balochistan Insurgency and the Threat to Chinese Interests in Pakistan, 15 February 2019, China Brief, volume: 19, issue: 4, [url](#)

⁹²⁷ Gandhara, Balochistan's Separatist Insurgency On The Wane Despite Recent Attack, 18 April 2019, [url](#)

⁹²⁸ Gandhara, Balochistan's Separatist Insurgency On The Wane Despite Recent Attack, 18 April 2019, [url](#)

⁹²⁹ Gandhara, Balochistan's Separatist Insurgency On The Wane Despite Recent Attack, 18 April 2019, [url](#)

⁹³⁰ Prism, Eight months in, how is Balochistan faring?, 5 April 2019, [url](#)

⁹³¹ Amir Rana, M., Militant Landscape of Balochistan, 19 June 2020, [url](#), p. 1

⁹³² Amir Rana, M., Militant Landscape of Balochistan, 19 June 2020, [url](#), p. 2

⁹³³ Diplomat (The), Amid a Pandemic, Pakistan Focuses on a Baloch Insurgency, 26 June 2020, [url](#)

⁹³⁴ Arab News Pakistan, 'Ground zero' operation underway against militant hideouts near Pakistan's border with Iran, 6 June 2020, [url](#)

⁹³⁵ Al, Pakistan: Enduring Enforced Disappearances, 27 March 2019, [url](#); Gandhara, Educated Youth Still Turn To Separatist Violence In Restive Pakistani Province, 14 May 2020, [url](#)

⁹³⁶ Gandhara, Educated Youth Still Turn To Separatist Violence In Restive Pakistani Province, 14 May 2020, [url](#)

⁹³⁷ Diplomat (The), Pakistan's 'Occupied Balochistan', 22 June 2020, [url](#)

⁹³⁸ Dawn, The geoeconomics of CPEC, 7 April 2019, [url](#)

⁹³⁹ International Crisis Group, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: Opportunities and Risks, 29 June 2018, [url](#);

⁹⁴⁰ Dawn, How Gwadar's CPEC development might leave its people behind, 28 June 2018, [url](#)

⁹⁴¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 40-41

⁹⁴² Ur Rehman, Z., Pakistani Taliban: Between infighting, government crackdowns and Daesh, 18 April 2019, TRT World, [url](#)

new hub of TTP activity where the group is establishing hideouts and safe havens.⁹⁴³ Sectarian violence is still present in Balochistan but is relatively less frequent and less intense in recent years.⁹⁴⁴ Members of the local Shia community, mostly members of the Hazara community in Quetta have fallen victim of violent attacks, targeted killings and suicide attacks.⁹⁴⁵ In addition, members of the Sunni and Bohra community members were targeted in 2019.⁹⁴⁶

Description of recent security trends

ACLED collected data on 121 violent events in Balochistan from reports in open sources in the year 2019, of which 45 were coded as battles, 51 as explosions/remote violence and 25 as violence against civilians. Quetta stood out as the district where most incidents were reported with 36 violent events, followed by Nasirabad with 9 violent events and Killah Abdullah with also 9 violent events.⁹⁴⁷

PIPS documented 106 incidents of various types of violence in the province in 2019: 84 'terrorist attacks', 11 anti-militant operational attacks by security forces, 6 armed clashes and encounters between security forces and militants, and 4 major terror bids, among others.⁹⁴⁸ Compared to 2018, the number of terrorist attacks dropped by 27 % (115 'terrorist attacks' in 2018 and 84 in 2019).⁹⁴⁹ PIPS differentiated the 'terrorist attacks' in 2019 between attacks carried out by religious inspired groups (26 attacks), Baloch insurgents groups (51 attacks) and sectarian-related attacks (7).⁹⁵⁰ PICSS mentioned that militants in 2019 used suicide bombings, firearms, IEDs, hand grenades and rockets. Targeted killings and kidnappings were also observed. IEDs were used in the majority of the attacks.⁹⁵¹

From 1 January to 31 July 2020, ACLED coded 65 violent events in Balochistan. 27 of which were coded as battles, 19 as explosions/remote violence and 19 as violence against civilians.⁹⁵² In this timeframe, the majority of incidents were reported in Kech (16 violent events), Dera Bughti (7 violent events) and Panjgur (7 violent events).⁹⁵³

In the first seven months of 2020, PIPS observed 37 overall incidents, 23 of which were indicated as 'terrorist attacks' in the province.⁹⁵⁴ During the same period, the districts where most 'terrorist attacks' took place are: Kech, Quetta and Qilla Abdullah.⁹⁵⁵ PICSS counted 30 incidents of violence. More than half of these incidents (21) were militant attacks.⁹⁵⁶

⁹⁴³ International News (The), TTP expands footprint in Balochistan as Quetta Safe City project remains in limbo, 10 April 2019, [url](#)

⁹⁴⁴ Amir Rana, M., Militant Landscape of Balochistan, 19 June 2020, [url](#), p. 15

⁹⁴⁵ Diplomat (The), Hazaras Gripped by Religious Extremism in Balochistan, 16 April 2019, [url](#); PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 47

⁹⁴⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 47

⁹⁴⁷ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Balochistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2019-31 December 2019), [url](#)

⁹⁴⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 41

⁹⁴⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 40; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 40

⁹⁵⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 40-41

⁹⁵¹ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 39

⁹⁵² Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Balochistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 July 2020), [url](#)

⁹⁵³ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Balochistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 July 2020), [url](#)

⁹⁵⁴ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

⁹⁵⁵ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

⁹⁵⁶ Khan, A. email, 3 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PICSS

In the first months of 2020, a rise in attacks of Baloch insurgent groups on the security forces was observed.⁹⁵⁷ On 18 May 2020, one soldier was killed in an exchange of fire with militants in the Mand area of the Kech district.⁹⁵⁸ On 19 May 2020, a military convoy was hit by a roadside bomb blast in Pir Ghaib area in the south-east of Quetta, killing six soldiers.⁹⁵⁹ On 14 July 2020, the BLF claimed responsibility for attacking a military convoy in Panjgur district. Three soldiers were killed and eight injured.⁹⁶⁰

Attacks by Islamic militant groups were also observed in the first half of 2020. On 7 January 2020, a motorcycle bombing occurred near a Frontier Corps vehicle in Quetta. The attack killed at least two and injured several others according to Waseem Baig, spokesman for the city's main government hospital.⁹⁶¹ According to reports, HuA claimed responsibility.⁹⁶² On 10 January 2020, a suicide bomber inside a Taliban-run mosque in Quetta killed at least 15 people and injured at least 19 people.⁹⁶³ According to VoA this attack was claimed by ISKP.⁹⁶⁴ On 17 February 2020, a suicide bombing occurred in Quetta in the vicinity of a Sunni extremist religious rally near a press club. At least 8 people, including three police officers, were killed and another 16 people were injured.⁹⁶⁵

Impact of the violence on the civilian population

PIPS reported that 225 people were killed and 456 injured in 2019 in 106 incidents.⁹⁶⁶ According to PIPS, among the reported 84 'terrorist attacks' in Balochistan most casualties fell within the security forces, civilians and the Shia community.⁹⁶⁷ PIPS documented that in 2019 the capital, Quetta, lost the highest number of lives due to violence. Other districts that suffered high casualties from violence were Kech, Qilla Abdullah, Nasirabad and Loralai.⁹⁶⁸ PICSS noted a decline in militant attacks and casualties in 2019 compared to 2018 in Balochistan.⁹⁶⁹

CRSS counted 624 casualties (226 fatalities and 395 injured) in the province of Balochistan in 2019, a lower number compared to 2018 (937 casualties).⁹⁷⁰ Civilians were most targeted, followed by security personnel and militants/insurgents.⁹⁷¹ According to CRSS, Balochistan together with Sindh had the highest number of sectarian conflict fatalities. The Sunni and the Shia community were targeted in 2019.⁹⁷²

According to data issued by CRSS in its 2020 first and second quarter analysis report, a total of 112 casualties (61 fatalities, 51 injured) were counted in Balochistan. In the second quarter of 2020, fatalities and injured decreased in the province compared to the first quarter of 2020.⁹⁷³

⁹⁵⁷ Diplomat (The), Amid a Pandemic, Pakistan Focuses on a Baloch Insurgency, 26 June 2020, [url](#); Mohanty Ranjan, T., Pakistan: Violent Retaliation In Balochistan – Analysis, 8 June 2020, South Asia Intelligence Review (SAIR), volume 18, no. 50, [url](#)

⁹⁵⁸ Gandhara, Eight Paramilitary Troops Killed In Pakistan Bombings, Shooting 19 May 2020, [url](#)

⁹⁵⁹ Al Jazeera, Soldiers killed in two separate attacks in Pakistan's Balochistan, 19 May 2020, [url](#)

⁹⁶⁰ VoA, Militant Ambush Kills 3 Pakistani Troops in Baluchistan, 14 July 2020, [url](#)

⁹⁶¹ Al Jazeera, Blast in Pakistan's Quetta kills two, wounds many: Officials, 7 January 2020, [url](#)

⁹⁶² Dawn, 2 killed, over a dozen injured as blast targets FC vehicle in Quetta, 7 January 2020, [url](#)

⁹⁶³ Dawn, Blast inside Quetta mosque claims 15 lives, injures 19, 10 January 2020, [url](#)

⁹⁶⁴ VoA, Pakistan Mosque Bombing Kills 15, 10 January 2020, [url](#)

⁹⁶⁵ Gandhara, Suicide Bomber Kills Eight, Wounds 16 At Radical Sunni Islamist Rally In Pakistan, 17 February 2020, [url](#)

⁹⁶⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 41

⁹⁶⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 41

⁹⁶⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 41

⁹⁶⁹ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 38

⁹⁷⁰ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 5, p. 23; CRSS, CRSS Annual Security Report Special Edition 2013 – 2018, March 2019, [url](#), p. 12

⁹⁷¹ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 23

⁹⁷² CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 31

⁹⁷³ CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, First Quarter, 2020, 7 April 2020, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, Second Quarter, 2020, 16 July 2020, [url](#)

Displacement

IDMC did not mention any displacement in 2019.⁹⁷⁴ Among the consulted sources, no further information was found about any conflict-induced displacement from areas in and to Balochistan in 2019 and the first seven months of 2020.⁹⁷⁵

2.2.4 Sindh

General description of the province

The province of Sindh (see [Map 1](#)) is situated in the south-east of Pakistan. It borders the province of Balochistan in the north and in the west, the province of Punjab in the north-east and the Arabian Sea in the south.⁹⁷⁶ The provincial capital, Karachi is the largest city in Pakistan with approximately 15 to 20 million people.⁹⁷⁷ According to the 2017 census, the number is 14.9 million people officially. But more realistic estimates put it between 20 and 25 million.⁹⁷⁸ The province is divided in six administrative divisions and six cantonment areas. These cantonment areas are subdivisions of the Karachi division.⁹⁷⁹ Karachi is the part of Sindh where significant sectarian, ethnic and political violence occurs. However, the security situation in the city improved gradually during the last years.⁹⁸⁰ Karachi attracts migration from every major ethnic and linguistic group in Pakistan owing to the city's economic potential.⁹⁸¹ The population consists of Muhajir and Pashtun⁹⁸², Punjabi, Sindhi and Baloch people.⁹⁸³ According to the last population census figures of 2017 published by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the population of Sindh is 47.9 million.⁹⁸⁴

Background of the conflict and actors in Sindh

Since 5 September 2013, a security operation is ongoing in Sindh, mainly focusing on the capital Karachi. According to the 2019 security report PIPS, the purpose of this operation is to tackle four categories of violent groups involved in violence in the city: the Pakistani Taliban, sectarian armed groups, armed wings of ethno-political parties and criminal gangs.⁹⁸⁵ The Rangers have been given 'special powers' to tackle the variety of violence, not just ethno-political, but also sectarian violence and extortion.⁹⁸⁶ In April 2020, these 'special powers' were renewed for another 90 days.⁹⁸⁷

In the first half of 2019 multiple security agencies in Sindh warned of attacks on foreign consulates, foreign engineers working for China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), security forces, sensitive areas such as airports, political and religious leaders and places of worship of minorities. Most attacks were planned by the TTP, according to the Sindh police.⁹⁸⁸ In the last years, rural Sindh especially has

⁹⁷⁴ IDMC, GRID 2020 Global Report on Internal Displacement, 28 April 2020, [url](#), p. 50

⁹⁷⁵ IDMC, GRID 2020 Global Report on Internal Displacement, 28 April 2020, [url](#), p. 50; Websites consulted: <http://www.unocha.org/pakistan>; <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/pakistan>; <http://reliefweb.int/country/pak>

⁹⁷⁶ Fazli, S., EASO, EASO COI Meeting Report: Pakistan; 16-17 October 2017, Rome, February 2018, [url](#), pp. 87-88

⁹⁷⁷ Guardian (The), 'Inspired by Central Park': the new city for a million outside Karachi, 8 July 2019, [url](#)

⁹⁷⁸ Fazli, S., EASO, EASO COI Meeting Report: Pakistan; 16-17 October 2017, Rome, February 2018, [url](#), p. 88

⁹⁷⁹ Express Tribune (The), Sindh's six divisions see fractional change in population, 28 August 2017, [url](#)

⁹⁸⁰ International News (The), Karachi's improving law and order situation, facts and figures, 9 July 2019, [url](#)

⁹⁸¹ Newline Magazine, The Invisible Half, November 2019, [url](#); Fazli, S., EASO, EASO COI Meeting Report: Pakistan; 16-17 October 2017, Rome, February 2018, [url](#), p. 88; Bol News, Karachi – A Case Study Of The Impacts Of Rural To Urban Migration, 18 December 2019, [url](#); IISS, Urban drivers of political violence: declining state authority and armed groups in Mogadishu, Nairobi, Kabul and Karachi, 18 May 2020, [url](#), p. 22

⁹⁸² Fazli, S., EASO, EASO COI Meeting Report: Pakistan; 16-17 October 2017, Rome, February 2018, [url](#), p. 88;

⁹⁸³ Diplomat (The), Karachi's Migrants and Militants, 14 November 2017, [url](#)

⁹⁸⁴ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Provisional Summary Results of 6th Population & Housing Census-2017, 25 August 2017, [url](#)

⁹⁸⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), pp. 125-126

⁹⁸⁶ Fazli, S., EASO, EASO COI Meeting Report: Pakistan; 16-17 October 2017; Rome, February 2018, [url](#), p. 93

⁹⁸⁷ International News (The), Rangers' powers extended till June 30, 5 May 2020, [url](#)

⁹⁸⁸ Express Tribune (The), Police foil 105 terrorist attacks, 7 July 2019, [url](#)

emerged as ‘a new hotbed of militancy’, where several militant groups, particularly the TTP and the LeJ, have become active through their support and use of a local militant group led by Hafeez Brohi.⁹⁸⁹ According to PIPS, most attacks in the province in 2019 were carried out by unknown militants, Sindhi nationalist groups such as SDLA and SDRA and the BLA.⁹⁹⁰ Muhammad Amir Rana, a security analyst, stated in July 2020 in Dawn that there is an increase in violence in Sindh since June 2020.⁹⁹¹ The SDRA and the SDLA carried out five attacks in June and July 2020 in different areas of the province (Karachi, Larkana and Ghotki). The Rangers were the main target.⁹⁹² The Sindhi nationalists groups have developed a connection with the BLA which is providing training to their militants in return for logistical support for its operations in Karachi.⁹⁹³ In July 2020, The News on Sunday stated that a new militant group, the Mohajir Freedom Fighters (MFF) emerged.⁹⁹⁴ Abdul Basit, a security analyst, stated that ‘the attacks have geopolitical underpinnings and should be seen in the context of India-China border dispute and the intra-Afghan peace process.’⁹⁹⁵

Besides militancy, the province and especially the city of Karachi witnessed a lot of political, ethnic and gang-related violence.⁹⁹⁶ The power struggle remains between the political parties of the main ethnic groups.⁹⁹⁷ Apart from this political violence, crime is present in Karachi.⁹⁹⁸

Description of recent security trends

ACLED collected data on 209 violent events in Sindh from reports in open sources in the year 2019, 87 of which were coded as battles, 5 as explosions/remote violence and 117 as violence against civilians. Karachi stood out as the district where most incidents were reported with 62 violent events, followed by Shikarpur with 17 violent events and Dadu with 16 violent events.⁹⁹⁹

In 2019, PIPS recorded 14 ‘terrorist attacks’ across the province, ten of these attacks took place in Karachi and four in interior Sindh. This is a slight increase compared to 2018 when 12 ‘terrorist attacks’ occurred.¹⁰⁰⁰ Among those attacks, there were both sectarian-related and nationalist-inspired attacks.¹⁰⁰¹ PICSS observed in 2019, four militant attacks. This included incidents of one physical assault, one IED-based attack, one cracker attack and one incident of targeted killing.¹⁰⁰²

From 1 January to 31 July 2020, ACLED coded 28 violent events in Sindh; 13 of which were coded as battles, 3 as explosions/remote violence and 12 as violence against civilians.¹⁰⁰³ In this timeframe, most of the incidents were reported in Karachi (15 violent events), Naushahro Feroze (3 violent events) and Matiari (3 violent events).¹⁰⁰⁴

⁹⁸⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), pp. 129-130

⁹⁹⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 21

⁹⁹¹ Amir Rana, M., Missing political approaches, 12 July 2020, Dawn, [url](#)

⁹⁹² Amir Rana, M., Missing political approaches, 12 July 2020, Dawn, [url](#)

⁹⁹³ Amir Rana, M., Missing political approaches, 12 July 2020, Dawn, [url](#); Arab News, Sindhi, Baloch ‘separatists’ forming ties in Sindh, Pakistani officials say, 13 July 2020, [url](#)

⁹⁹⁴ News on Sunday (The), A new wave of terror, 5 July 2020, [url](#)

⁹⁹⁵ News on Sunday (The), A new wave of terror, 5 July 2020, [url](#)

⁹⁹⁶ International News (The), Ethnic divisions termed threat to Karachi’s peace, 30 June 2019, [url](#)

⁹⁹⁷ Dawn, ‘Hitmen’ allegedly involved in attacks on MQM-P, PSP arrested: Sindh Rangers, 25 February 2019, [url](#)

⁹⁹⁸ Dawn, Karachi crime’s changing face, 27 November 2018, [url](#)

⁹⁹⁹ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Sindh; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2019-31 December 2019), [url](#)

¹⁰⁰⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 48

¹⁰⁰¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 48

¹⁰⁰² PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 50

¹⁰⁰³ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Sindh; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 July 2020), [url](#)

¹⁰⁰⁴ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Sindh; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2019-31 July 2020), [url](#)

In the first seven months of 2020, PIPS observed 13 overall incidents of which 11 were mentioned as ‘terrorist attacks’ in the province.¹⁰⁰⁵ In the first seven months of 2020, the districts where most ‘terrorist attacks’ took place are: Karachi and Larkana.¹⁰⁰⁶ PICSS counted 34 incidents of violence. Less than half of these incidents (11) were militant attacks.¹⁰⁰⁷

As mentioned above, in June 2020, multiple attacks on the Rangers were documented. On 18 June 2020, two Rangers were killed and another injured in three separate attacks in Ghotki, Karachi and Larkana. The SDRA claimed responsibility for all these attacks.¹⁰⁰⁸ On 29 June 2020, four militants of the BLA attacked the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) building in Karachi. At least three security guards and a police sub-inspector were killed, while seven people were injured during the attack. The four militants were also killed.¹⁰⁰⁹

Impact of the violence on the civilian population

According to PIPS, in 14 ‘terrorist attacks’ a total of 18 people were killed and two injured in the province in 2019.¹⁰¹⁰ PICSS counted six casualties (four killed and two injured).¹⁰¹¹ CRSS counted 126 casualties (101 fatalities and 25 injured) in the province of Sindh in 2019, a serious decline compared to 2018 (278 casualties).¹⁰¹² The majority of the casualties were civilians (67) and security officials (25).¹⁰¹³

CRSS counted in total 37 casualties (35 fatalities, 2 injured) in the first and second quarter analysis report of 2020. In the second quarter of 2020, casualties (28) increased in the province when compared to the first quarter of 2019 (9).¹⁰¹⁴

Displacement

In April 2020, IDMC stated in its GRID 2020 Global Report on Internal Displacement that Intercommunal violence against Hindu communities in Ghotki city and Christian communities in Karachi displaced hundreds of families in 2019.¹⁰¹⁵ Among the consulted sources there was no further information found about any conflict-induced displacement from areas in and to Sindh in 2019 and the first seven months of 2020.¹⁰¹⁶

2.2.5 Islamabad Capital Territory

General description of the territory

Islamabad Capital Territory (see [Map 1](#)) is situated in the north of Pakistan between the provinces of KP and Punjab and includes the capital of Pakistan, Islamabad. The administrative status of Islamabad Capital Territory is not very clear. The territory of the Islamabad Capital Territory is not demarcated and separated from adjoining areas.¹⁰¹⁷ Islamabad has an ‘eclectic mix of Punjabi, Pakhtun, Seriaki,

¹⁰⁰⁵ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

¹⁰⁰⁶ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

¹⁰⁰⁷ Khan, A. email, 3 August 2020 – data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PICSS

¹⁰⁰⁸ Express Tribune (The), People in Moro protest attacks on Sindh Rangers, 21 June 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁰⁹ Al Jazeera, Pakistan: 4 killed in attack on Karachi stock exchange, 29 June 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰¹⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 48

¹⁰¹¹ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 50

¹⁰¹² CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 28; CRSS, CRSS Annual Security Report Special Edition 2013 – 2018, March 2019, [url](#), p. 12

¹⁰¹³ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 28

¹⁰¹⁴ CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, First Quarter, 2020, 7 April 2020, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, Second Quarter, 2020, 16 July 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰¹⁵ IDMC, GRID 2020 Global Report on Internal Displacement, 28 April 2020, [url](#), p. 50

¹⁰¹⁶ IDMC, GRID 2020 Global Report on Internal Displacement, 28 April 2020, [url](#), p. 50; Websites consulted: <http://www.unocha.org/pakistan>; <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/pakistan>; <http://reliefweb.int/country/pak>

¹⁰¹⁷ International News (The), Islamabad: the deprived capital, 30 June 2019, [url](#)

Sindhi, Kashmiri and Baloch ethnicities'. Islamabad has a relatively big proportion of religious minorities compared to other parts of the country, with 10 % of the inhabitants being non-Muslims.¹⁰¹⁸

According to the last population census figures published in 2017 by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the population of Islamabad Capital Territory is 2 million.¹⁰¹⁹ Half of the population is living in urban areas.¹⁰²⁰

Background of the conflict and actors in Islamabad Capital Territory

According to a report by Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) published on 17 April 2020, the level of security in Islamabad is high. The capital remains an attractive target due to the prevalence of government institutions, foreign missions, and administration officials.¹⁰²¹ In the aftermath of the attack on the Karachi Stock Exchange, security measures were increased in Islamabad.¹⁰²²

Description of recent security trends

ACLED collected data on 13 violent events in Islamabad Capital territory from reports in open sources in the year 2019, 6 of which were coded as battles, none as explosions/remote violence and 7 as violence against civilians.¹⁰²³

In 2019, PIPS recorded one 'terrorist attack' in Islamabad Capital Territory. In comparison, PIPS did not count a single 'terrorist attack' in 2018.¹⁰²⁴

From 1 January to 31 July 2020, ACLED coded 2 violent events in Islamabad Capital Territory 1 of which were coded as battles, and 1 as violence against civilians.¹⁰²⁵ In the first seven months of 2020, PIPS observed no violent incidents in the province.¹⁰²⁶ PICSS counted 3 incidents of violence in this timeframe.¹⁰²⁷

On 26 May 2020, two policemen were killed in the outskirts of the capital. HuA claimed responsibility for the attack.¹⁰²⁸

Impact of the violence on the civilian population

In 2019, the CRSS annual security report recorded 9 casualties (7 fatalities, 2 injured) from violence in Islamabad Capital Territory.¹⁰²⁹ Among the casualties were four security personnel and three civilians (an unknown person, an activist of SSP and a Chinese national).¹⁰³⁰

According to CRSS data, in the first and second quarter analysis report of 2020, in total 9 casualties (6 fatalities, 3 injured) were counted.¹⁰³¹

¹⁰¹⁸ Friday Times (The), Battleground Islamabad, 22 June 2018, [url](#)

¹⁰¹⁹ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Provisional Summary Results of 6th Population & Housing Census-2017, 25 August 2017, [url](#)

¹⁰²⁰ International News (The), Islamabad: the deprived capital, 30 June 2019, [url](#)

¹⁰²¹ OSAC, Pakistan 2020 Crime & Safety Report: Islamabad, 17 April 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰²² International News (The), Security beefed up in Islamabad, 30 June 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰²³ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Islamabad; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2019-31 December 2019), [url](#)

¹⁰²⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 20; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#)

¹⁰²⁵ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Islamabad; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 July 2020), [url](#)

¹⁰²⁶ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

¹⁰²⁷ Khan, A. email, 3 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PICSS

¹⁰²⁸ Gandhara, Suspected Militants Kill Two Pakistani Policemen In Islamabad, 27 May 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰²⁹ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 29

¹⁰³⁰ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 29

¹⁰³¹ CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, First Quarter, 2020, 7 April 2020, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, Second Quarter, 2020, 16 July 2020, [url](#)

Displacement

Among the consulted sources, no information was found about any conflict-induced displacement from areas in and to Islamabad Capital territory in 2019 and the first seven months of 2020.¹⁰³²

2.2.6 Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan

General description of the region

The Pakistan-controlled territory of Kashmir consists of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK or commonly called Azad Kashmir, AK) and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) (see [Map 1](#)).¹⁰³³ Both regions have a partially autonomous administration.¹⁰³⁴ However, the influence of the government of Pakistan is far-reaching. The Kashmir council (where the federal state has the power) has been reduced to an advisory role.¹⁰³⁵ AK has a population of about 3-4.5 million.¹⁰³⁶ The majority in AJK is Muslim.¹⁰³⁷ GB has approximately 1.5 million inhabitants.¹⁰³⁸ GB has three administrative divisions: Chilas, Gilgit and Baltistan and is further divided into ten districts.¹⁰³⁹ The population of GB are mostly Shia.¹⁰⁴⁰ According to an article by researcher Ajit Kumar Singh, the region of GB is 'now dominated by Urdu and Punjabi speaking Sunnis'. This occurred due to demographic change fostered by the federal government.¹⁰⁴¹

Background of the conflict and actors in Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan

The territory of Kashmir is a disputed area divided between India, Pakistan and China but claimed in its entirety by Pakistan and India. The Pakistan-India relationship has been historically tense for decades.¹⁰⁴² India accuses Pakistan of supporting militant groups¹⁰⁴³ like JeM, LeT and Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM) and having their operational bases in the Pakistan and Indian-administrated Kashmir region.¹⁰⁴⁴ Militant groups in the region of Indian-administrated Kashmir address their discontent about the status of the area and recruit young people.¹⁰⁴⁵ A month after the Pulwama attack, in February 2019, Pakistan started 'a crackdown' on groups it claims are linked to banned organisations.¹⁰⁴⁶ In April 2020, an increase in violence across the LoC was remarked.¹⁰⁴⁷

According to the Jamestown Foundation, the wave of attacks in August 2018 in Gilgit-Baltistan showed that the area is vulnerable to militant attacks. The article suggested further the resurgence of the TTP in the Gilgit-Baltistan region. The wave of attacks in August 2018 demonstrated the group's possibility

¹⁰³² IDMC, GRID 2020 Global Report on Internal Displacement, 28 April 2020, [url](http://www.unocha.org/pakistan), p. 50; Websites consulted: <http://www.unocha.org/pakistan>; <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/pakistan>; <http://reliefweb.int/country/pak>

¹⁰³³ OHCHR, Update of the Situation of Human Rights in Indian-Administered Kashmir and Pakistan-Administered Kashmir from May 2018 to April 2019, 8 July 2019, [url](http://www.unhcr.org/refugees/pakistan), p. 34; Reuters, Kashmiris oppose Pakistan's Northern Areas package, 31 August 2019, [url](http://www.reuters.com)

¹⁰³⁴ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2019 - Pakistani Kashmir, 4 February 2019, [url](http://www.freedomhouse.org)

¹⁰³⁵ OHCHR, Update of the Situation of Human Rights in Indian-Administered Kashmir and Pakistan-Administered Kashmir from May 2018 to April 2019, 8 July 2019, [url](http://www.unhcr.org/refugees/pakistan), p. 34

¹⁰³⁶ Reuters, Explainer: Scenic Kashmir at the heart of India-Pakistani animosity, 15 February 2019, [url](http://www.reuters.com); Nation (The), Census 2017: AJK population rises to over 4m, 27 August 2017, [url](http://www.nation.com.pk)

¹⁰³⁷ Reuters, Explainer: Scenic Kashmir at the heart of India-Pakistani animosity, 15 February 2019, [url](http://www.reuters.com)

¹⁰³⁸ Nation (The), The importance of Gilgit Baltistan, 14 November 2018, [url](http://www.nation.com.pk)

¹⁰³⁹ Nation (The), The importance of Gilgit Baltistan, 14 November 2018, [url](http://www.nation.com.pk)

¹⁰⁴⁰ Binodkumar Singh, S., Pakistan: Gilgit Baltistan: Deception, 13 August 2018, SAIR, volume 17, number 7, [url](http://www.sair.org)

¹⁰⁴¹ Kumar Singh, A., Gilgit Baltistan: Changing the Status, 23 March 2020, SAIR, volume 18, no. 39, [url](http://www.sair.org)

¹⁰⁴² RFE/RL, India Blames Pakistan, Demands Action After Kashmir Attack, 15 February 2019, [url](http://www.rferl.org); DW, Kashmir: The world's most dangerous conflict, 7 August 2019, [url](http://www.dw.com)

¹⁰⁴³ RFE/RL, India Blames Pakistan, Demands Action After Kashmir Attack, 15 February 2019, [url](http://www.rferl.org)

¹⁰⁴⁴ Al Jazeera, Explainer: Who are Kashmir's armed groups?, 3 March 2019, [url](http://www.aljazeera.com)

¹⁰⁴⁵ Diplomat (The), Kashmir's Teenage Militants, 27 December 2018, [url](http://www.diplomat.com)

¹⁰⁴⁶ Al Jazeera, India-Pakistan tensions: All the latest updates, 10 March 2019, [url](http://www.aljazeera.com)

¹⁰⁴⁷ Dalton, T., How Different Is the "New Normal" from the Old Normal in South Asian Crises?, 8 May 2020, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, [url](http://www.carnegieendowment.org)

to recruit people as well as its ability and willingness to conduct a variety of attacks.¹⁰⁴⁸ Elections in Gilgit-Baltistan were foreseen for 18 August 2020 but this was postponed until 28 October 2020.¹⁰⁴⁹

Description of recent security trends

ACLED collected data on 96 violent events in Azad Kashmir from open source reports in the year 2019, 71 of which were coded as battles, 19 as explosions/remote violence and 6 as violence against civilians.¹⁰⁵⁰

PIPS did not mention any 'terrorist attack' in Azad Kashmir in 2019 compared to one 'terrorist attack' in 2018.¹⁰⁵¹ PICSS reported one militant attack in 2019 and described the security situation in Azad Kashmir as 'stable'.¹⁰⁵² However, the situation at the LoC remained 'relatively more volatile' in 2019, according to PIPS.¹⁰⁵³ PIPS counted 123 cross-border attacks from the border with India.¹⁰⁵⁴

Following a suicide attack claimed by JeM on an Indian paramilitary convoy on 14 February 2019, which killed 42 soldiers in Pulwama (Indian-administered Kashmir), tensions rose between Pakistan and India.¹⁰⁵⁵ The Pakistani newspaper Dawn reported that on 31 July 2019 along the LoC at the side of Azad Kashmir Indian troops resorted to what officials described as 'carpet bombing'.¹⁰⁵⁶ Two civilians were killed and at least 19 others were wounded in upper and lower belts of Neelum valley.¹⁰⁵⁷ The UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan observed and reported an increase in military activity at the LoC in the beginning of August 2019.¹⁰⁵⁸ On 5 August 2019, India revoked Indian-administered Kashmir's special autonomy through a presidential decree.¹⁰⁵⁹ Pakistan reacted by stating that it would 'exercise all possible options to counter the illegal steps' taken by India regarding Indian-administered Kashmir.¹⁰⁶⁰

From 1 January 2020 to 31 July 2020, ACLED coded 78 violent events in Azad Kashmir; 68 of which were coded as battles, 9 as explosions/remote violence and 1 as violence against civilians.¹⁰⁶¹ In this timeframe most incidents were reported in Haveli (24 violent events), Khotli (21 violent events) and Bhimber (11 violent events).¹⁰⁶²

In the first seven months of 2020, PIPS observed 74 overall incidents. None were classified as 'terrorist attacks'.¹⁰⁶³ PICSS did not mention any violent incidents in 2020.¹⁰⁶⁴ In the same period PIPS recorded

¹⁰⁴⁸ Zahid, F., Recent Wave of Terrorism in Pakistan's Gilgit-Baltistan Region, 2 November 2018, in Terrorism Monitor, Volume 16, Issue 21, [url](#)

¹⁰⁴⁹ International News (The), Gilgit-Baltistan elections postponed, 10 July 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁵⁰ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Azad Kashmir; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2019-31 December 2019), [url](#)

¹⁰⁵¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2018, 6 January 2019, [url](#), p. 51; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 20

¹⁰⁵² PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 51

¹⁰⁵³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 23

¹⁰⁵⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 59-60

¹⁰⁵⁵ Al Jazeera, Kashmir suicide attack kills dozens of Indian security forces, 14 February 2019, [url](#)

¹⁰⁵⁶ Dawn, 2 killed, at least 19 injured due to 'carpet bombing' by Indian troops along LoC, 31 July 2019, [url](#)

¹⁰⁵⁷ Dawn, 2 killed, at least 19 injured due to 'carpet bombing' by Indian troops along LoC, 31 July 2019, [url](#)

¹⁰⁵⁸ GEO News TV, UN appeals to India, Pakistan to exercise restraint as tensions mount in Kashmir, 5 August 2019, [url](#)

¹⁰⁵⁹ Dawn, India revokes occupied Kashmir's special autonomy through rushed presidential decree, 5 August 2019, [url](#)

¹⁰⁶⁰ Dawn, Pakistan says it will exercise all possible options to counter 'illegal steps' taken by India in loK, 5 August 2019, [url](#)

¹⁰⁶¹ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Azad Kashmir; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 July 2020), [url](#)

¹⁰⁶² Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Azad Kashmir; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 July 2020), [url](#)

¹⁰⁶³ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

¹⁰⁶⁴ Khan, A. email, 3 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PICSS

75 incidents of violence at the Pakistan-India border.¹⁰⁶⁵ Toby Dalton, an expert on South Asia and East Asia, stated the following in an article of May 2020:

‘Indian media reports suggest an increase in terrorist group infiltrations over the Line of Control from Pakistan. Cross-border shelling incidents between the Indian and Pakistan Armies are rising in frequency.’¹⁰⁶⁶

In July 2020, the Pakistan army stated that there has been an escalation in firing and shelling across the LoC. According to the army there were approximately 1 800 violations since 2020. The increase of incidents during the summer season since June 2020 has been more noticeable than in previous years.¹⁰⁶⁷

ACLED collected data on two violent events in Gilgit-Baltistan from reports in open sources in the year 2019, of which both were coded as violence against civilians.¹⁰⁶⁸ According to PICSS, not a single militant attack occurred in 2019 in Gilgit-Baltistan.¹⁰⁶⁹ PIPS recorded also no ‘terrorist attacks’ in the area in 2019.¹⁰⁷⁰

From 1 January to 31 July 2020, ACLED coded two violent events in Azad Kashmir, one of which was coded as battles, and the other as violence against civilians.¹⁰⁷¹ In the first seven months of 2020, PIPS observed no incidents.¹⁰⁷² PICSS mentions only one violent incident without casualties in 2020.¹⁰⁷³

Impact of the violence on the civilian population

In 2019, CRSS documented nine casualties (one fatality, eight injured) of violence in Azad Kashmir.¹⁰⁷⁴ In July 2020, CRSS compiled a report on the civilian casualties due to the Pakistan-Indian border conflict in the period from 2016 until May 2020. According to CRSS, from 2016 until May 2020, 876 Pakistani casualties were reported (325 fatalities, 552 injured). The majority of the casualties were civilians (724).¹⁰⁷⁵ Five sectors (Poonch, Nakyal, Bhimber, Muzaffarabad and Rawlakot) faced frequent cross-border shelling and firing, resulting in a higher number of casualties compared to other sectors in 2016-May 2020.¹⁰⁷⁶ PIPS documented 123 incidents at the LoC, in which 85 people were killed and 226 injured in 2019.¹⁰⁷⁷

A July 2019 report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) stated that people living in Azad as well as in Gilgit-Baltistan are deprived of fundamental human rights, particularly the freedoms of expression and opinion.¹⁰⁷⁸ Ceasefire infringements in 2018 and

¹⁰⁶⁵ Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

¹⁰⁶⁶ Dalton, T., How Different Is the “New Normal” from the Old Normal in South Asian Crises?, 8 May 2020, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, [url](#)

¹⁰⁶⁷ Gandhara, In Disputed Kashmir, Pakistan Accuses India Of Increased Shelling, 23 July 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁶⁸ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Gilgit Baltistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2019-31 December 2019), [url](#)

¹⁰⁶⁹ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2019, 9 January 2020, [url](#), p. 52

¹⁰⁷⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), p. 20

¹⁰⁷¹ Cedoca analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Gilgit Baltistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 July 2020), [url](#)

¹⁰⁷² Rana Amir, M., email, 4 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PIPS

¹⁰⁷³ Khan, A. email, 3 August 2020 - data 01/01/2020-31/07/2020 courtesy of PICSS

¹⁰⁷⁴ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 29

¹⁰⁷⁵ CRSS, Pakistan-India Border Conflict: Civilian Casualty Report (2016 – 2020), 3 July 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁷⁶ CRSS, Pakistan-India Border Conflict: Civilian Casualty Report (2016 – 2020), 3 July 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁷⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2019, 5 January 2020, [url](#), pp. 59-60

¹⁰⁷⁸ OHCHR, Update of the Situation of Human Rights in Indian-Administered Kashmir and Pakistan-Administered Kashmir from May 2018 to April 2019, 8 July 2019, [url](#), pp. 34-43

2019 resulted in the killing of civilians, destruction of civilian property and displacement of people in Pakistan-administered Kashmir, according to OHCHR.¹⁰⁷⁹

According to data in the first and second quarter analysis report of 2020 conducted by CRSS, no casualties of violence were reported in AK.¹⁰⁸⁰ Figures released by the Pakistani Foreign Office and cited by Dawn in July 2020, showed that since the beginning of 2020 India made 1 595 ceasefire violations, during which 14 people were killed and 121 were injured.¹⁰⁸¹ Locals living closely the LoC stated that shelling and firing occur nearly on a daily basis.¹⁰⁸² In May 2020, seven people got injured in Bhimber and Poonch after shelling.¹⁰⁸³ On 18 June 2020, four civilians were killed due to shelling from the Indian side in Nakyal region and Baghsar area.¹⁰⁸⁴

CRSS documented no casualties due to violence in Gilgit-Baltistan in 2019.¹⁰⁸⁵ In the first and second quarter of 2020 CRSS also counted no casualties.¹⁰⁸⁶

Displacement

A GRID 2020 Global Report by IDMC stated that 15 000 displacements were caused in 2019 by an increase in shelling across the LoC. Those who fled stayed with host families or in camps, and most returned to their homes within a week.¹⁰⁸⁷ Among the consulted sources no information was found about any conflict-induced displacement from areas in and to Gilgit-Baltistan in 2019 and the first seven months of 2020.¹⁰⁸⁸

¹⁰⁷⁹ OHCHR, Update of the Situation of Human Rights in Indian-Administered Kashmir and Pakistan-Administered Kashmir from May 2018 to April 2019, 8 July 2019, [url](#), p. 41

¹⁰⁸⁰ CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, First Quarter, 2020, 7 April 2020, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, Second Quarter, 2020, 16 July 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁸¹ Dawn, FO summons Indian envoy to register 'strong protest' after 5 injured by firing across LoC, 6 July 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁸² Gandhara, In Disputed Kashmir, Pakistan Accuses India Of Increased Shelling, 23 July 2020, [url](#)

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¹⁰⁸⁴ Al Jazeera, Pakistan says four civilians killed by Indian shelling across LoC, 18 June 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁸⁵ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2019, 28 January 2020, [url](#), p. 7, p. 29

¹⁰⁸⁶ CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, First Quarter, 2020, 7 April 2020, [url](#); CRSS, Quarterly Security Report 2020, Second Quarter, 2020, 16 July 2020, [url](#)

¹⁰⁸⁷ IDMC, GRID 2020 Global Report on Internal Displacement, 28 April 2020, [url](#), p. 50

¹⁰⁸⁸ IDMC, GRID 2020 Global Report on Internal Displacement, 28 April 2020, [url](#), p. 50; Websites consulted: <http://www.unocha.org/pakistan>; <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/pakistan>; <http://reliefweb.int/country/pak>

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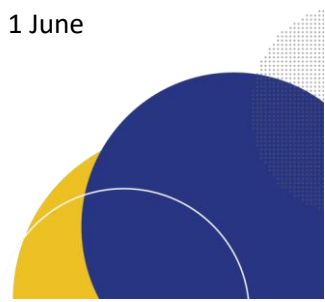
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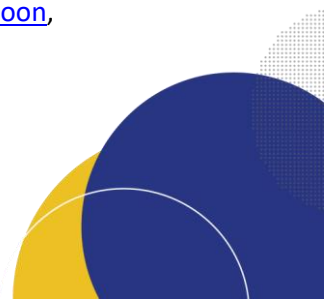
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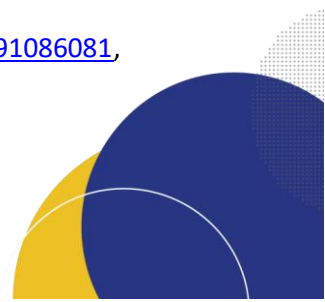
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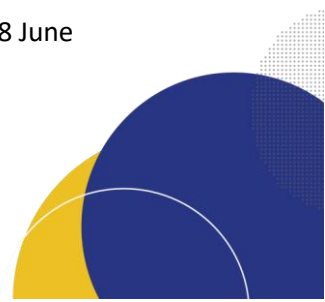
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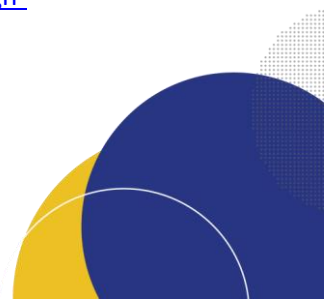
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Annex 2: Terms of Reference

The report aims to provide information on the security situation in Pakistan, which is relevant for the assessment of international protection status determination, including refugee status and subsidiary protection. An important goal of this report is to provide detailed information on a regional, provincial or even district level. The reporting period for incidents and events illustrating the general trends of the conflict, is 1 August 2019 until 31 July 2020. The terms of reference were drafted by Cedoca in consultation with EASO and the COI Specialist Network on Pakistan.

The content of the report should contain information on the following topics:

General description of the security situation:

- Background of the conflict
 - Overview of recent conflicts
- Actors in/Parties to the conflict
- Recent security trends and security trends
- Impact of the violence
 - Civilian population: casualties, IDPs, refugees
 - State ability to secure Law and Order: security forces, justice, detention
 - Geographical overview of the security situation

Regional description of the security situation:

- Punjab
 - Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (including former FATA and a description of the KP tribal districts in detail)
 - Sindh
 - Balochistan
 - Islamabad
 - Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan

For each region, a short description of the region (terrain, urban areas, population) should be included, followed by information on:

- General description of the region
- Background of insecurity in the region: actors, type of violence
- Recent security trends (focus on 2019 and first seven months of 2020) according to the four main sources (number of incidents, example of the kind of violence, effects of the violence)
- Displacement/return

Annex 3: Query list

The following questions were sent by email to the following experts: Asad Hasim and Michael Kugelman.

1. Description of the security situation in all the provinces of Pakistan during 2019
2. Description of the security situation in all the provinces of Pakistan during the first half of 2020
3. What are the main evolutions in the security situation in 2020 compared to 2019 in Pakistan?
4. Which militant groups have been the main actors of instability in Pakistan in 2020 and can you elaborate on the reasons why?
5. Who or what have been the main targets of militant groups in Pakistan during 2019 and 2020?
- 6a. The situation for journalists has reportedly deteriorated. What impact has this situation had on media reporting on the security situation in Pakistan?
- 6b. Has the COVID-19 outbreak had an impact on media reporting on the security situation, and how?
7. What measures have been adopted by the Pakistan armed forces to respond to the security situation in 2020?

The following questions were sent by email to the following experts: Mansur Khan Mahsud.

1. Description of the security situation in all the tribal districts of Pakistan 2019
2. Description of the security situation in all the tribal districts of Pakistan 2020
3. What are the main evolutions in the security situation in the tribal districts in 2020 compared to 2019?
4. Which militant groups have been the main actors of instability in the tribal districts in 2020 and can you elaborate on the reasons why?
5. Who or what have been the main targets of militant groups in the tribal districts during 2019 and 2020?
- 6a. The situation for journalists has reportedly deteriorated. What impact has this situation had on media reporting on the security situation in Pakistan?
- 6b. Has the COVID-19 outbreak had an impact on media reporting on the security situation, and how?
7. What measures have been adopted by the Pakistan armed forces to respond to the security situation in 2020 in the tribal districts?



