

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	792
Land:	Pakistan
Kilde:	Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF)
Titel:	Briefing Notes Summary
Udgivet:	30. juni 2026
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	17. februar 2026



Briefing Notes Summary

Group 62 – Information Centre for Asylum and Migration

Pakistan – January to June 2025

30 June 2025

13 January 2025

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: TTP attack in South Waziristan

On 21.12.24, militants killed 16 security officers and injured eight others in a raid carried out at a security checkpoint in South Waziristan district, according to police sources.

The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which claimed responsibility for the attack, said that 35 Pakistani security officers had been killed. The figures could not be independently confirmed. Neither side said how many militants were killed during the attack.¹

Security situation in 2024

Last year was the deadliest for Pakistani security forces in nearly a decade, according to the Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS). In its annual report, the Islamabad-based think tank reported 685 fatalities among security personnel, an almost 40 percent increase compared to 2023. The number of militant attacks carried out in Pakistan in 2024, meanwhile, rose by 70 percent compared to the year before, according to the Pak Institute of Peace Studies (PIPS). Most of the attacks were carried out by the TTP which is active in northwestern Pakistan, and by the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), a separatist militant group which has wreaked havoc in the southwestern province of Balochistan.

The Taliban takeover of neighbouring Afghanistan in 2021 has boosted the fighting capabilities of armed groups in the region. Militant groups active in Pakistan have access to US military equipment and weapons left behind in Afghanistan after the US Armed Forces' withdrawal. The TTP and Afghan Taliban have close ideological and organisational ties. Pakistan has accused the Afghan Taliban of sheltering the militants operating in Pakistan.²

Military courts hand down another 60 judgements against civilians following mass protests in May 2023

On 26.12.24, a Pakistani military court sentenced 60 people to prison terms ranging between two and 10 years over the mass protests that were sparked in May 2023, the army's media wing said (cf. BN of 23.12.24).³

27 January 2025

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: situation in Kurram

On 20.01.25, Pakistani security forces launched an operation against militants in the Kurram district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on the border with Afghanistan, where recent incidents have included inter-sectarian

clashes. The most recent security-related incident occurred on 17.01.25, when unidentified gunmen ambushed and burned aid trucks, killing two security forces and at least five drivers.

Kurram has been cut off from the rest of the country since November after authorities blocked roads following clashes that broke out between heavily armed Shia and Sunni tribes. Hundreds of thousands of residents have since faced a shortage of food and medicine with aid organisations unable to enter the area. A spokesperson for the provincial government said the operation had become inevitable following the surge in violence. He also said authorities are moving some residents to temporary governmental shelter camps while the operation is ongoing in several areas, including the city of Bagan from where most of the violence has been reported.⁴

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: security situation

On 13.01.25, Pakistani security forces unearthed two hideouts of militant fighters during two raids they carried out in the Tank district and in the Tirah Valley on the border with Afghanistan. The military described the militants killed as "Khwarij", a phrase the government uses for Pakistani Taliban. No further details were given. The Pakistani Taliban, also known as Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, are allied with the Afghan Taliban but are a separate independent group.

On 09.01.25, Pakistani security forces freed at least eight of 16 miners who had been kidnapped in the Lakki Marwat district. Militants had lured the workers' vehicle into an ambush on a narrow road and attacked it. The attack occurred when the men from Lakki Marwat were travelling to a nearby mining project. According to media reports, the mining project where the men worked is related to the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission, though the abducted workers are reportedly not its employees. It was unclear whether the insurgents holding the men suffered casualties. They said an operation is still underway to recover the remaining workers.⁵

Court stops deportation of 150 Afghan musicians

On 10.01.25, a Pakistani court stopped the deportation of 150 Afghan musicians for at least two months and ordered the authorities not to deport them. Since autumn 2023, Afghan migrants in Pakistan have been living in a state of insecurity after the government launched a large-scale repatriation campaign, particularly against Afghan nationals who are not in possession of valid residence documents. This measure has been criticised by the international community.⁶

PTI withdraws from talks

According to party chairman Gohar Ali Khan, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party of the former Prime Minister Imran Khan, who is currently in prison, decided on 23.01.25 to walk out of talks with the government, which began in December 2024, aimed at defusing tensions of recent years. After three rounds of talks, the PTI had asked the government to consider its charter of demands, which it had presented on 16.01.25. The demands included, among other things, the formation of two judicial commissions and the release of PTI supporters imprisoned for political reasons. On 17.01.25, Imran Khan, who is already being detained in Adiala prison in Rawalpindi, was sentenced to 14 years and his wife Bushra Bibi to seven years in prison in a corruption trial. Ali Khan, who is acting chairman of the PTI in the absence of Imran Khan, said the party would continue the protests and co-operate with allied political parties.⁷

Four people sentenced to death for suspected blasphemy; control of social media

A Pakistani court sentenced four people to death for blasphemy on 25.01.25, allegedly because they had posted sacrilegious material on social media about Islamic religious figures and the Koran. Their lawyer said appeal preparations are underway and criticised the lack of evidence. The four defendants were first charged under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act in 2022. Human rights activists criticise the law for restricting freedom of expression in the country. On 23.01.25, the National Assembly, the lower house of Pakistan's parliament, passed an amendment to the law that gives the government even more far-reaching powers to control social media. Under the country's blasphemy laws, anyone found guilty of insulting Islam or its religious figures can be sentenced to death. However, the death penalty has not yet been carried out, yet those accused of blasphemy may face violent attacks by third parties.

According to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, accusations of blasphemy, whether true or false, often lead to lengthy prison sentences on death row in solitary confinement. The laws are

often misused to settle private disputes or to target members of religious minorities. Since 1987, more than 2,000 people have been accused under the blasphemy laws. Almost 100 people have been lynched to death in this context and dozens are on death row.⁸

03 February 2025

Balochistan: BLA attack on security forces

On the night of 01.02.25, eighteen security forces personnel and two dozen insurgents were killed in clashes that erupted after the insurgents blocked a motorway near the town of Mangocher in Kalat district and attacked a vehicle belonging to the paramilitary Frontier Corps operating in the region. The military said up to 80 armed assailants were involved in the attack. The separatist Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) has claimed responsibility for the attack. Six people were killed in a previous BLA bomb attack carried out in January 2025. In addition to security forces, the BLA also targets civilians and Chinese workers.⁹

Protest against the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act

Amendments to the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act came into force at the end of January 2025. The amendments to the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act have triggered protests from media organisations as they further restrict freedom of expression and were passed without the involvement of civil society. Among other things, the regulations provide for penalties of up to three years in prison and fines of up to PKR 2 million (approx. EUR 6,900, as of 03.02.25) for the "spreading of fake news". Furthermore, the creation of a new regulatory authority that will have far-reaching powers not only to block content but also to investigate cases is in the pipeline.¹⁰

10 February 2025

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: attacks and hostilities

On 06.02.25, a group of militants armed with assault rifles attacked a police post in the district of Karak along the border with Afghanistan, killing three police officers and wounding five. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack. Also on the night of 06.02.25, security forces conducted an operation in North Waziristan, a district bordering Afghanistan, triggering an intense shootout in which 12 militants and a soldier were killed, the military said in a statement. Weapons and ammunition were reportedly also recovered from the killed insurgents.¹¹

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: demonstration by opposition parties

On 08.02.25, thousands of supporters of several opposition parties demonstrated in the Swabi district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province to mark the first anniversary of the parliamentary elections held in 2024, which were suspected of being rigged. In the run-up to the demonstration, the federal government in Islamabad and the provincial authorities in Balochistan and Punjab had taken measures to restrict public gatherings, citing security concerns. There were also reports of arrests of PTI leaders. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party of imprisoned former Prime Minister Imran Khan and other opposition parties, including the Grand Democratic Alliance (GDA), Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F), Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) and the Muhajir Qaumi Movement (MQM-Haqiqi), accuse the Pakistani military of rigging the elections on 08.02.24 in favour of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). The military, the PML-N and the Election Commission of Pakistan reject these accusations. Pakistan's Supreme Court has also rejected an application to cancel the parliamentary elections.¹²

17 February 2025

Balochistan: attack on mine workers

On 14.02.25, a vehicle carrying mine workers was hit by a suspected remote-controlled improvised explosive device in the district of Harnai in the province of Balochistan. At least 10 labourers were killed and others injured. Most of the victims are from the northwestern Swat Valley and other parts of the country. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack so far. The Balochistan Liberation Army is the most active group in the region and

regularly carries out attacks on security forces and Pakistani citizens from other provinces. For example, the group has targeted foreign-funded energy projects and accuses outsiders of exploiting the resource-rich region while claiming the inhabitants of this poorest and most backward part of Pakistan are excluded.¹³

Attacks on security forces in Balochistan und Karachi

On 16.02.25, three suspected Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan militants killed a policeman in Karachi (Sindh province). On 16.02.25 and 17.02.25, four security officers were killed and eight others were injured in attacks carried out on checkpoints in the Kalat and Kech districts of Balochistan province. On 17.02.25, a police station in Noshki in Balochistan province was also attacked with a hand grenade hurled by unidentified militants.¹⁴

24 February 2025

Arrests of Afghan nationals on the rise

The Pakistani authorities have stepped up arrests of Afghan nationals in the capital Islamabad. The Pakistani Foreign Ministry justified the measures as an effort to create the conditions for the rapid return of Afghans to their home country. Most recently, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also set a deadline of 31.03.25 for Afghan nationals awaiting resettlement in third countries to leave the country. If their cases are not processed by the respective governments that have agreed to accept them, they also face deportation after the deadline expires. According to the IOM, more than 800,000 Afghan refugees have either returned home voluntarily or have been deported from Pakistan since 2023.¹⁵

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: military operations in Karak and Kurram

On 21.02.25, six suspected Islamist fighters were killed in a military operation in the district of Karak. An operation is also underway in the Kurram district, where fighters have targeted Shia worshippers and security forces escorting aid deliveries for hundreds of thousands of residents in the region in recent months. According to the authorities, 48 suspects allegedly involved in the attacks were arrested between 17.02.25 and 21.02.25. Kurram has been cut off from the rest of the country since November 2024 after the government blocked roads following clashes between heavily armed Shia and Sunni tribes.¹⁶

03 March 2025

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: attack on religious school important to the Taliban

On 28.02.25, at least six people, including a high-ranking cleric, were killed in an explosion at the Jamia Haqqania (Darul Uloom Haqqania) seminary in Akkora Khattak in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa ahead of the fasting month of Ramadan. Several people were injured. The seminary is known for training important Taliban leaders. According to the local authorities, Hamidul Haq Haqqani, a Pakistani politician from the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam party and deputy head of the seminary, was among those killed in the explosion. The provincial police chief explained that, according to initial findings, the explosion was caused by a suicide bomber. He had managed to gain access to the seminary despite strict security precautions. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack. Hamidul Haq Haqqani was the son of Samiul Haq Haqqani, who is known as the "spiritual father of the Taliban". For many years, the latter had been the head of the seminary which his father, Abdul Haq, a well-known Islamic scholar of the Deobandi school and founding member of Jamiat-Ulema-e-Islam Pakistan, had founded in 1947. The Afghan Taliban condemned the attack, which was one of at least four attacks to be carried out across the country, two of them on mosques, which were unusual both in their number and their timing just ahead of the fasting month.¹⁷

Torkham border crossing between Afghanistan and Pakistan closed

Pakistan closed the Afghan-Pakistani border crossing at Torkham on 21.02.25 due to a dispute over the

construction of a border post by Afghanistan. According to media reports issued on 02.03.25, the border crossing was not reopened. Bilateral trade and travel have been interrupted for the second week in a row.¹⁸

10 March 2025

Global Terrorism Index 2025: security situation in 2024

In the Global Terrorism Index 2025, Pakistan ranks second after Burkina Faso, even ahead of Syria. According to this report, the number of security-related incidents rose from 517 in 2023 to 1,099 in 2024. Since the Taliban took power in Afghanistan, security-related incidents in Pakistan have increased significantly again. Armed groups that are suspected of operating from Afghanistan have stepped up their attacks, particularly along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. According to the report, the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan carried out 482 attacks with 558 fatalities (2023: 293 fatalities; this corresponds to around half of all fatalities in 2024). The provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan continue to be the hardest hit. These areas accounted for more than 96 percent of the documented incidents in 2024. The separatist Balochistan Liberation Army was responsible for the deadliest attack of 2024, when a suicide bomber killed at least 25 civilians and security forces at Quetta railway station. The number of attacks carried out by Balochistan armed groups increased from 116 in 2023 to 504 in 2024, and the number of fatalities in the context of these attacks quadrupled from 88 in 2023 to 388 in 2024.¹⁹

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: attack on military facility in Bannu

On 04.03.25, more than a dozen people, including five security personnel, were killed in an attack carried out on a military facility in the district of Bannu in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Two vehicles loaded with explosives were first driven into the wall of the complex, and then attackers stormed the premises. The group Jaish al-Fursan, which is affiliated with the Pakistani Taliban, claimed responsibility for the attack.²⁰

Extension of the repatriation plan to Afghan nationals with ACC cards

According to a statement issued by the Pakistani Ministry of Interior on 07.03.25, Afghan nationals who hold an Afghan Citizen Card (ACC) and persons without secured residence should either leave the country voluntarily by 31.03.25 or they would be forcibly returned from 01.04.25. The repatriation programme for undocumented foreign nationals staying in the country has been formally in force since 01.11.23. The fact that Afghan nationals holding ACC cards are now also to be repatriated goes beyond the previous decision to deport all foreign nationals without authorisation to stay in the country. According to UN data, more than 800,000 Afghans in Pakistan hold ACC status. A further 1.3 million are officially registered with the Pakistani government and have a separate residence permit in the form of a Proof of Registration (PoR) card. The impact on those with PoR cards was not mentioned in the statement. The number of Afghan refugees in Pakistan is estimated by the UN at 3.8 million, while the Pakistani government puts the figure at more than 4.4 million.²¹

17 March 2025

Punjab: court cancels forced marriage and conversion of a Christian woman

In February 2025, a civil court in Bahawalpur in the province of Punjab made a rare decision to annul the forced marriage of an 18-year-old Christian woman. The marriage to her stepfather's brother was declared invalid, and the forced conversion to Islam was annulled, according to the Christian organisation ADF International. She was also issued new identity documents that restored her status as a Christian. According to a study conducted in 2014, around 1,000 women and girls mostly from the country's Hindu and Christian communities are abducted, forcibly married and coerced into converting to Islam in Pakistan every year.²²

Balochistan: military ends train hostage situation

On 12.03.25, security forces stormed the train hijacked by Baloch separatist militants near the Mashkaf railway tunnel in Kachhi district and freed hundreds of hostages. On 11.03.25, Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) militants had blown up railway tracks and fired at the Jaffar Express carrying 440 passengers en route from Quetta to

Peshawar. According to the Pakistani Ministry of the Interior, around 70 to 80 assailants then took control of the train. Insurgents wearing explosive waistcoats mingled with the passengers. The military reportedly sent hundreds of soldiers and also deployed the air force and special units. In the final phase of the operation, special forces first killed the suicide bombers and then the remaining militants. According to the military, 21 hostages and four soldiers were killed. The train driver and several other people were already dead. No information was provided on the exact number of people rescued in the final phase of the operation. A total of 346 passengers are said to have been brought to safety.

Prior to the military's statement, the authorities said that 190 hostages had been rescued. Previously, the BLA, which claimed responsibility for the attack, had declared on 11.03.25 that it had 214 people in its custody and on 12.03.25 that 50 passengers had been killed. On 14.03.25, the government announced that the perpetrators had communicated with contact persons in Afghanistan and that India was the mastermind behind the attack.

The BLA is the largest of several ethnic armed groups fighting against the government in Balochistan on the border with Afghanistan and Iran. In recent months, the BLA has stepped up its activities and increasingly professionalised its tactics.²³

Security situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan

On 15.03.25, Pakistani security forces raided two hideouts of an armed group in the districts of Mohmand and Dera Ismail Khan in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. According to the military, at least two soldiers and nine militants were killed in gun battles.

On the same day, armed militants attacked security forces in the Kurram district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, according to police. No further details are known.

On 16.03.25, Baloch separatists attacked a paramilitary security convoy in the Noshki district, killing at least five people (three security force members and two civilians), according to the authorities. A suicide bomber is said to have blown himself up on a lorry. The BLA stated that more than 90 security force members had been killed in the attack.²⁴

24 March 2025

Torkham border crossing reopened; departure deadline for migrants without a recognised residence permit

Since 19.03.25, the Afghan-Pakistani border crossing at Torkham has been open again, having been closed for almost a month. It is located in the Pakistani province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where frequent clashes erupt between militants and Pakistani security forces. The border crossing has been closed several times in recent years, mainly following clashes that erupted between security forces for reasons including Pakistan's repairs of the border fence.

On 31.03.25, the deadline announced by the Pakistani government for migrants living in the country without a recognised residence permit will expire, which will particularly affect individuals of Afghan origin. According to the Afghan embassy in Pakistan, an increasing number of Afghan nationals have already been arrested in Islamabad and nearby Rawalpindi for deportation purposes.

Pakistan's Special Representative for Afghanistan, Sadiq Khan, is currently on a two-day official visit to Kabul to discuss bilateral issues with the de facto Taliban government.²⁵

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: military operations in several districts

On 20.03.25, a gunbattle broke out during an operation carried out by Pakistani security forces in the Dera Ismail district, according to the military, that left an army captain and 10 militants dead. These were labelled as "Khawarij", a term the government uses for Pakistani Taliban, who are known as Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan. A hideout of militants was also unearthed in Mohmand district.

On the night of 23.03.25, sixteen militants were killed in a military operation carried out in North Waziristan, according to army sources.²⁶

31 March 2025

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: protests due to military operation with civilian casualties

On 29.03.25, the Pakistani authorities announced the deaths of 10 civilians, including women and children, during a military operation carried out in the remote mountainous region of Katlang in the district of Mardan in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It is rare for Pakistan to reveal civilian casualties resulting from anti-militant activities. The victims were members of nomadic tribes from the Swat region who breed cattle in the Shamoza mountains. A statement issued by the provincial government said that several people were killed in the military operation who could have been linked to ongoing militant activities in the region; immediate medical assistance was being provided to the injured and compensation for the families of the deceased was being ensured.

A large number of people attended the funeral of those killed on 30.03.25 in Barikot, in their home region of Swat. A mass rally following the funeral urged the government to take the matter seriously and conduct an inquiry into the deaths. The protesters warned that the entire Gujar community from across the country would gather in Malakand and march to Islamabad to demand justice. The Matorzai tribe from the Charbagh region in Swat also protested.²⁷

07 April 2025

Members of the Ahmadiyya community detained and property attacked

In March 2025 there were several media reports of dozens of members of the Ahmadiyya community being detained. In Punjab Province, in Sialkot district on 28.02.25, roughly two dozen Ahmadis were detained in Daska for offering Friday prayers.

On 08.03.25, six members of the Ahmadiyya community were arrested by the police according to media reports, after roughly two dozen Ahmadis had previously been taken into police custody for their protection because members of the radical Islamic Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) party had gathered outside one of their places of worship in Surjani, Karachi, Sindh Province, in order to prevent them holding Friday prayers.

According to reports of the International Human Rights Desk (IHRD) of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in the UK, in another incident a case had been registered against 23 Ahmadis from Bhagtanwala in Sargodha District in Punjab Province because they had offered Friday prayers. No arrests were made, but a crowd of people reportedly staged a sit-in outside the Bhagtanwala police station, demanding the closure of the local Ahmadi place of worship. On 28.02.25, according to this source, police officers are said to have been captured on video attempting to remove the minaret of the Bait-ul-Zikr mosque in Madrasa Chatha in Gujranwala district in Punjab Province. After resistance on the part of residents, a contingent of approximately 200 police officers were bussed into the village, upon which they took five Ahmadis and four others into custody at the Alipur Chatha police station.

The Community was recently persecuted primarily in Punjab Province by radical Islamic supporters of the TLP party. Ahmadis practice their religious rites in closed buildings as a rule, since their places of worship had repeatedly been the target of attacks, at times causing damage and at times their complete destruction, and there were also repeated reports of official closures. On 08.03.25, in Bahawalnagar in Punjab Province, the authorities removed the minaret of an Ahmadi place of worship in response to pressure from TLP members.

According to a statement of 04.03.25, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan has observed a growing trend towards attacks on the houses of families of religious minorities and their places of prayer; other reports speak of arbitrary detentions and the alleged desecration of graves.²⁸

Baloch Yakjehti Committee leaders detained

Last week, Sammi Deen Baloch, a further leading figure of the Baloch Yakjehti Committee and secretary general of the organisation Voice for Baloch Missing Persons, was arrested. She was re-arrested in Karachi only a few hours after a court had ordered her release because of a protest against the arrest on 22.02.25 in Quetta of human rights

activist Mahrang Baloch. Sammi Baloch had been previously arrested because of a violation of Section 144, a provision of the Pakistani Code of Criminal Procedure to maintain public security and order which provides for a ban on gatherings and the detention of participants in a banned gathering. There were further arrests of participants on the basis of this provision on 24.03.25 in Karachi at a protest which was suppressed after roughly one hour.

Mahrang Baloch, who became known as a result of a campaign against disappearances, stands charged amongst other things of terrorism, incitement to violence and rebellion, as well as property damage.

Since 28.03.25, the Balochistan National Party, an ethnonationalist group, has embarked on a “long march” protest rally. It has mobilised thousands of people from across the whole region. The participants then celebrated Eid al-Fitr, the festival marking the end of Ramadan, near Quetta.

The Baloch Yakjehti Committee has developed to become a civil society platform for the interests of the Baloch minority. Pakistani security forces act with violence towards the organisation at times.²⁹

Security situation

There have been more attacks in Pakistan during the Muslim month of fasting Ramadan than ever before in the past ten years. The Pak Institute for Peace Studies reported on 31.03.25 of at least 84 attacks during the month of fasting, which came to an end on 30.03.25. There were 26 attacks during Ramadan last year. Several militant groups had interrupted their combat activities during this period in recent years.

In November 2022, the Pakistani Taliban unilaterally revoked a ceasefire with the Pakistani government, and the Baloch Liberation Army expanded its capacities to carry out complex attacks. Both have contributed to an increase in security-relevant incidents in recent years. The Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies reported on 03.04.25 that, in March 2025, more than 100 attacks by Islamist or separatist groups and subsequent counterreactions by the security forces had cost 335 lives. This is the largest number of fatalities in one month since August 2015. According to this source, militant groups were responsible for the deaths of 228 people, including 73 members of the security forces, 67 civilians and 88 armed fighters.³⁰

Return of Afghan nationals

The Pakistani government still intends to return an estimated three million Afghan nationals to Afghanistan as part of the plan to repatriate people living in the country illegally which came into force in October 2023. On 31.03.25, the grace period for voluntary departure for the area of the capital city Islamabad and neighbouring Rawalpindi expired. This period also targeted people with Afghan Citizen Cards. Afghan nationals with Proof of Registration Cards are not affected for the time being. The latter cards expire in June 2025 according to current information. Their validity has been repeatedly extended in recent years.

Forced repatriation was originally to start on 01.04.25, but was postponed because of the breaking of the fast after Ramadan (Eid al-Fitr) to 02.04.25, and has since been resumed in key regions, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. According to information provided by the authorities on 03.04.25, two transit points have been set up for repatriation to the Khyber tribal district (Landi Kotal) and to the Peshawar district (Nasir Bagh). 153 Afghan refugees are also said to have voluntarily left the country for Afghanistan via the Torkham border crossing from various parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa after expiry of the deadline on 31.03.25.

Official data revealed that over 470,722 Afghans, including women and children, have so far departed Pakistan through the Torkham border crossing and 698 through the Kharlachi border, and one undocumented person over the southern Pakistani border to China. Another 2,953 Afghan nationals who were living undocumented in other parts of the country left for Afghanistan via Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; 1,561 of them from Islamabad, 1,309 from Punjab, 44 from Sindh and one person from Gilgit-Baltistan. According to these data, of the 477,434 Afghan nationals who have left Pakistan since September 2023, 468,481 left voluntarily, whilst 8,953 were deported by coercive means. In rounded figures, the breakdown includes roughly more than 157,000 men, 111,000 women and nearly 188,000 children.

According to the IOM, roughly 845,000 Afghans have left Pakistan in the past 18 months. According to information from the Pakistani government, roughly three million Afghan nationals have remained: 1,344,584 with a Proof of Registration, and 807,402 with an Afghan Citizen Card. A further one million Afghan nationals are said to be living in the country without documents entitling them to do so.

Another roughly 40,000 Afghans are living in Pakistan as part of resettlement programmes awaiting uncertain

resettlement to third countries, mostly in the West. Many fled after the Taliban assumed power in 2021 fearing retribution in their home country due to their ties with the USA, NATO and other western organisations.³¹

14 April 2025

Repatriation of Afghan migrants

The repatriation of nationals from Pakistan continues unabated (cf. BN of 07.04.25). As part of the Pakistani government's plan, which has entered Phase 2 and now also makes individuals with "Afghan Citizenship Cards" subject to forcible repatriation, thousands of Afghans are reaching the border crossings every day, where packed trucks are reported to be causing long lines. According to Taliban representatives in Karachi, between 2,000 and 3,000 people per day are being expelled to Afghanistan through Torkham.

According to IOM data, more than 11,000 Afghan nationals were repatriated between 01.04. and 08.04.25 alone, after a voluntary return period ended. According to media reports, forced repatriation had officially been in force once again since 10.04.25, having been deferred several times.³²

Military operation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

As was announced from military circles, two militant fighters, including a high-value target, were killed in the night of 10-11.04.25 in a military operation carried out in the Timergara area in the Lower Dir district.³³

28 April 2025

Security situation

On 23.04.25, armed offenders riding a motorbike shot and killed two security officials escorting a polio vaccination team in a residential area in Mastung district in Balochistan province. The medical staff were uninjured.

After the deadly attack on tourists on 22.04.25 in the Indian-administered part of Kashmir, for which India partially blames Pakistan, Pakistani and Indian security forces exchanged fire across the demarcation line known as the Line of Control.

According to Pakistani military sources, 54 armed fighters were killed who had crossed into the country from Afghanistan in the period from 25.04.-27.04.25 in general area Hassan Khel in the North Waziristan district, which is part of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The fighters are alleged to belong to the Pakistani Taliban. In a statement of 27.04.25, the Pakistani government indirectly blamed India for the infiltration of these fighters.³⁴

05 May 2025

Tense bilateral relations

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

already concerning in both countries, as emerges from the Global Press Freedom Index 2025 published on 02.05.25.³⁵

12 May 2025

Ceasefire agreed on; situation in Pakistani-administrated Kashmir

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

Six civilians were killed by Indian shelling in Pakistani-administered Kashmir (Azad Kashmir) in the night of 08.-09.05.25, and homes, schools and hospitals damaged. According to official sources, the shelling had displaced 1,186 families internally. The state of emergency continues to apply in the districts along the line of control. Educational facilities remain closed in the entire region for the time being. Shelling along the line of control has ceased since 11.05.25.³⁶

Member of the Ahmadiyya community killed in Karachi

According to media reports, several hundred supporters of the Islamist political group Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan and other religious parties passed through Saddar neighbourhood in Karachi (Sindh province) on 18.04.25, chanting slogans against members of the Ahmadiyya community who were offering Friday prayers in a place of worship located there. An Ahmadi had subsequently been attacked with sticks and bricks and lost his life. The police are said to have taken more than two dozen Ahmadis into custody for their safety and to have attempted to hold back the crowd of, according to media reports, 600 chanting persons. The latter called on the authorities to close the place of worship and prosecute the Ahmadis.³⁷

BLA attack on security forces in Balochistan

According to information from the Pakistani military of 06.05.25, seven soldiers were killed by an IED in Kacchi district in Balochistan province. The attack was blamed on the separatist Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), which Pakistan accuses of receiving support from India.³⁸

26 May 2025

Indus Waters Treaty suspended

Despite the ceasefire recently agreed with Pakistan, India is holding on to the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty after the attack on an Indian tourist group in Indian-administrated Kashmir (cf. BN of 12.05.25). The Indus is the longest river in south Asia, at more than 3,000 kilometres. The Pakistani government regards any taking of water from the Indus as an “act of war”, since the river is the most important source of water for most Pakistani farms as well as hydroelectric power stations.³⁹

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: alleged drone strikes in several districts

According to media reports, a several-day-long protest has been underway since 19.05.25 because of the alleged killing of four children by drones in Mir Ali in north Waziristan district. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan reported in social media on an alleged drone strike in Hurmuzi village in north Waziristan which left several children dead and injured other people. Both security forces and the militant Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) are known to have been using quadcopters.

In March 2025, at least eleven people were killed in a drone strike in Mardan district according to local eyewitnesses. According to official sources, it had been a targeted operation of the security forces against militant fighters.⁴⁰

Punjab: member of the Ahmadiyya community killed in Sargodha

On 16.05.25, a member of the Ahmadiyya community was shot dead in Sargodha in Punjab province. This was the third targeted killing of an Ahmadi in the space of a few weeks. On 24.04.25, an Ahmadi was killed by unknown assailants in Kasur. An Ahmadi man had been lynched in a market place in Karachi one week previously (cf. BN of 12.05.25). The radical Islamic party Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) has furthermore been carrying out increasing numbers of attacks on revered sites belonging to Ahmadis, including places of worship (ibadatgahs) and graveyards (cf. BN of 07.04.25).⁴¹

Balochistan: security situation

At least five people, including three children, were killed and 35 others injured on 20.05.25 when an explosion was set off by a suicide bomber near a school bus in the Zero Point area of Khuzdar district in Balochistan province. No one has claimed responsibility for this attack so far. There have been a number of armed attacks in the province in the recent past. On 16.05.25, the separatist Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) claimed an attack on security forces in the remote district of Noshki which according to official sources claimed the lives of three soldiers and two civilians; the BLA claimed that the attack had killed 90 soldiers.⁴²

02 June 2025

Security situation

On 27.05.25, according to media reports a police officer who was escorting a polio vaccination team was shot dead in Nushki in Balochistan province. On 29.05.25, two members of the security forces and four Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) fighters lost their lives in a deployment in Rawalakot in Pakistan-held Kashmir according to state sources. Also on 29.05.25, four soldiers and five TTP fighters are said to have been killed in north Waziristan district, which is part of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.⁴³

16 June 2025

Violent killing of a teenage social media influencer

According to media reports, the killing of 17-year-old Sana Yousaf on 02.06.25 has triggered protests by women in Islamabad.

The police stated that they had arrested a 22-year-old male suspect in connection with her death whose friendship she had reportedly rejected. According to the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), the murder was a reminder of the dangers that women and girls face in Pakistan's conservative patriarchal society when they assert autonomy over their lives and choices. The crime is the latest in a series of so-called honour killings committed by Pakistani men on women and girls. In January 2025, police in the city of Quetta charged Anwar ul-Haq with murder after he had confessed to orchestrating the murder of his 14-year-old daughter Hira Anwar because he found her social media presence "offensive" and an affront to his "honour". In October 2024, police in the southern seaport city of Karachi stated that a man had confessed to killing four female relatives over their social media videos.⁴⁴

23 June 2025

Security situation: attacks and drone strikes

According to media reports of 22.06.25, Atta-ur Rehman Mengal, the son of the former prime minister of Baluchistan province, Naseer Mengal, was killed by unknown gunmen in the Khuzdar area. Four other people were said to have been injured in the incident.

According to the police in Swabi district (Mardan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), unknown attackers shot and killed two police officers on the evening of 20.06.25.

A child was killed and five other persons were injured in a drone attack in the Dashka/Makin region in South Waziristan (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) on 20.06.25. Nothing was known as to the identity of the perpetrators. Similar drone strikes had taken place several times in recent months.⁴⁵

Human rights situation: “black magic” bill

Back in March 2025, the standing committee on interior of the Pakistani senate unanimously approved a bill proposing prison sentences for practitioners, promoters and advertisers of “black magic” (including fortune tellers and astrologers), mandating up to seven years in prison. The draft law will now be submitted to the lower house of parliament. It contains the stipulation that individuals offering spiritual healing services must obtain a licence from the ministry of religious affairs. The draft bill’s proponents claim that it is necessary in order to prevent fraud. Spiritual practitioners however fear that the planned law could be abused, should it come into force.⁴⁶

30 June 2025

Security situation: bombings in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

According to military sources, 13 soldiers were killed and another 15 injured on 28.06.25 in North Waziristan in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province in a bombing near the town of Mir Ali. At least 14 civilians were wounded in the attack. The Pakistani military stated that it had killed 14 militants in an operation that had been launched in the region following the attack. The Hafiz Gul Bahadur group, a local Pakistani Taliban faction in North Waziristan, claimed responsibility for the attack. Pakistan closed the Ghulam Khan border crossing with Afghanistan following the attacks.

Two explosions took place in Upper Kurram (KP) on 25.06.25 in Sharmakhel region (Pewar), killing at least four people and wounding four more. No one claimed responsibility for the attack.⁴⁷

Group 62 – Information Centre for Asylum and Migration

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Imprint

Published by

Federal Office for Migration and Refugees
90461 Nuremberg

ISSN

2943-1557

Valid as of

06/2025

Printed by

Federal Office for Migration and Refugees

Design

Federal Office for Migration and Refugees

Reference source

Publications Centre, Federal Office for Migration and Refugees

www.bamf.de/publikationen

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