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Briefing Notes Summary

Group 62 – Information Centre for Asylum and Migration

Afghanistan – January to June 2023

30 June 2023

02 January 2023

Women banned from attending university and working

The announcement by the Taliban on 20.12.22 that women would no longer be allowed to attend universities until further notice was followed by an order issued on 24.12.22 that women would no longer be allowed to work for non-governmental organisations, justifying the move by claiming that some women working for NGOs were not observing the Islamic dress code. This prompted several NGOs to suspend their work. The United Nations has announced that it intends to continue implementing humanitarian aid missions despite the restrictions.

Bombing in the military area of Kabul airport

According to media reports, a suicide bombing took place at the entrance to the military area of Kabul airport on 01.01.23, in which, according to the Taliban, 10 civilians were killed and eight were wounded. According to eyewitness reports, several Taliban insurgents were also killed. No one has claimed responsibility for the attack.

Public floggings

On 28.12.22, a woman and five men were publicly flogged for allegedly engaging in extramarital affairs in the Qarghayi district of eastern Afghanistan's Laghman province, according to a report issued by journalists of Hasht-e Subh, an Afghan newspaper who are living in exile. On 31.12.22, according to Hasht-e Subh, four men and one woman were lashed in Paktia province following a court order convicting them of having sex before marriage and of stealing. On 27.02.22, four men and two women facing similar charges were also flogged in Laghman province. On 26.12.22, ten men were flogged in Herat province for allegedly drinking alcohol, selling or consuming drugs, and for harassing women. As the Taliban's prospects of gaining international recognition fade, they have increasingly reverted to the repressive policies implemented during their first term (1996-2001) (cf. BN of 19.12.22).

"No Depart" order

Journalists of the Afghan Hasht-e Subh newspaper living in exile report that they have gained knowledge of a list containing the names of 11,000 individuals whom the Taliban have banned from leaving the country. They are reportedly individuals who are members of the National Resistance Front (NRF), former national security employees, members of the Islamic State of Khorasan Province (ISKP), judges, security guards and a number of political, cultural and social figures who are considered to be opponents of the Taliban.

09 January 2023

Security situation

According to a report issued by journalists of the Afghan press medium Hasht-e Subh living in exile, the Pakistani military flew airstrikes against positions of the Pakistani Taliban (Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan, TTP) in Afghanistan's

Nangarhar province on 05.01.23. Neither the Pakistani government nor the Taliban have made any comment to date. On the same day, fighting reportedly erupted between Pakistani border guards and the Taliban at the Torkham border crossing. Pakistani soldiers reportedly shot and killed an Afghan civilian. According to media reports issued on 05.01.23, the Taliban launched a concerted operation to excavate Islamic State of Khorasan Province (ISKP) hideouts in the capital Kabul and Nimruz province. Eight ISKP members were killed, and nine others were arrested. They are believed to have been involved in, among other things, the attack carried out on the military section of Kabul airport 01.01.23 (cf. BN of 02.01.23). The ISKP claimed responsibility for this attack on 02.01.23.

Government business and persecution events

According to a report issued by journalists of the Afghan press medium Hasht-e Subh living in exile 05.01.23, the Taliban arrested, tortured and then publicly hanged a former member of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces (ANDSF) in Baghlan province. This was reportedly an act of retaliation. According to a BBC report published on 16.12.22, the Taliban changed the historic name of the town of Charikar in Parwan province to "Imam Abu Hanifah". Various observers see this as a deliberate attempt undertaken by the Taliban to minimise Persian influence in Afghanistan. Imam Abu Hanifah was a jurist in the 8th century and the founder of the Sunni Hanafi school of law, which the Taliban follow.

According to a media report issued by journalists of the Afghan press medium Hasht-e Subh living in exile on 07.01.23, the Taliban Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice of Afghanistan in Zabul province has banned the display and hanging up of images of living creatures. This ban reportedly includes hanging up photos of Taliban leaders. It has advised that noncompliance will be subject to severe punishment. According to a media report issued in the Afghan newspaper Hasht-e Subh on 03.01.23, the Taliban arrested a young man in Ghor province for making comments on Facebook in which he criticised the ban the Taliban have imposed on women attending university.

16 January 2023

Security situation: surge in ISKP attacks against the Taliban continues

According to media reports, a suicide attack was carried out in front of the Foreign Ministry in Kabul on 11.01.2013. At the time, a Chinese delegation was reportedly visiting the Foreign Ministry. About 20 persons were killed and about 40 were injured in the blast. The Islamic State of Khorasan Province (ISKP) has claimed responsibility for the attack. Just recently, the ISKP had carried out an attack on the military section of Kabul airport (cf. BN of 02.01.23 and 09.01.23) and on a hotel in Kabul that is frequented mainly by Chinese tourists (cf. BN of 19.12.22). According to a report by journalists of the Afghan press medium Hasht-e Subh living in exile, three Taliban fighters were killed and another was injured in a car bomb explosion in Kandahar city on 09.01.23. The National Resistance Front (NRF) has claimed responsibility for the attack.

Persecution events and women's rights

On 11.01.2013, a woman was shot dead by the Taliban in Baharak, the capital of Badakhshan province, for going to the market without being accompanied by a male relative (mahram). According to media reports issued on 10.01.23, the Taliban Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice of Afghanistan in Baghlan Province issued a ten-day ultimatum to owners of beauty salons and hair salons to close their businesses because they were allegedly violating Sharia law. At the same time, land and homeowners were warned not to lease any premises to women for these type of businesses in future. Previously, women reportedly closed hair salons in Kunduz, Takhar and Badakhshan provinces. On 11.01.2013, according to a report issued by journalists of the Afghan press medium Hasht-e Subh living in exile, the Taliban curtailed the order, saying that beauty salons and hair salons would now be allowed to remain open in Balkh and Baghlan provinces, but they would need to be moved to another location. According to a report issued on 10.01.23, the Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue in Daikundi province arrested three boys and four girls and sentenced them to jails terms and lashings for partying together in a house without supervision and for performing forbidden acts. One of the boys was sentenced to one year in prison and is to receive 35 lashes, the others received between one month and 10 days in prison and between 15 and 25 lashes. On 16.01.23, it was reported that former Member of Parliament Mursal Nabizada and her bodyguard were shot dead by unknown gunmen at her home in Kabul. The Taliban have said they want to clarify the circumstances of the crime.

Humanitarian situation

After many NGOs suspended their operations because Afghan female employees were forbidden to work (cf. BN of 02.01.23), it is being reported that urgently needed humanitarian aid is not being provided. In addition, villages or entire districts have been cut off from the outside world and thus from humanitarian aid due to heavy snowfall in several provinces. In Ghor province, for instance, it was reported that snowfall was hindering access for medical personnel and was preventing medicine from the provincial capital reaching the districts, putting human lives at risk.

23 January 2023

Security situation: difficulties in China's cooperation with the Taliban

According to media reports issued on 22.01.23, China's Foreign Minister Qin Gang urged the Taliban Foreign Minister to ensure the safety of Chinese nationals in Afghanistan in a telephone conversation they had to mark the occasion of Chinese New Year. In recent weeks, repeated attacks have been carried out by the Islamic State of Khorasan Province (ISKP) on Chinese nationals in Afghanistan (cf. BN of 16.01.23). Previously, on 05.01.23, the Taliban had signed its first international contract for the extraction of oil in the northern Amu-Darya Basin with a subsidiary of the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC). On 22.01.23, it was reported that Taliban authorities in Afghanistan had arrested five men, including two Chinese nationals, who were allegedly trying to smuggle an estimated 1,000 tonnes of lithium-bearing rock from the country to China via Pakistan.

Persecution events: public punishments, detentions

According to media reports, public punishments were held at a football stadium in Kandahar province on 17.01.23. For the first time in their tenure, the Taliban chopped off the hands of four men accused of robbery. Five others were flogged. On the same day, a girl and a boy were flogged in Badakhshan province on charges of being in a premarital relationship. On 16.01.23, according to journalists of the Afghan press medium Hasht-e Subh living in exile, a student was arrested by the Taliban in the city of Ghazni after he criticised the closing of universities to women. On 17.01.23, a list circulated on social media with the names of 13 employees of the former security forces whom the Taliban want to arrest. The Taliban have not confirmed the authenticity of the list. On 18.01.23, according to journalists of the Afghan press medium Hasht-e Subh living in exile, a member of a former special forces unit died in a prison in Paktia province, presumably from the consequences of torture meted out by the Taliban. On 17.01.23, fifteen civilians were reportedly arrested in Panjshir province. The very same day, a man arrested by the Taliban in Panjshir province on charges of collaborating with the National Resistance Front (NRF) died in hospital as a result of torture he suffered. On 17.01.23, the owner of a public bath in Herat was arrested by the Taliban after he opened the bath to women and children who were unable to wash at home due to disruption in the water supply. The Taliban had banned public baths for women in November 2022.

Humanitarian situation: cold snap causing many deaths

Afghanistan is currently experiencing an uncharacteristic cold snap. Temperatures have dropped to -30 degrees Celsius in some places (for instance, in Ghor province). According to a report issued by Al-Jazeera on 18.01.23, around 70 persons have died, and 70,000 livestock have perished in the freezing temperatures so far. In the provinces of Badakhshan, Samangan, Jowzjan, Paktia, Ghazni, Faryab and Sar-e Pol, at least 57 people have reportedly frozen to death because they were unable to heat their homes during the extreme cold spell. Some families report that they have to decide whether to spend what little money they have on heating or food. The casualties consist mainly of women, children and drug addicts. Due to these circumstances, the Taliban in some locations have allowed NGOs in the healthcare sector to hire female helpers again for a short time (cf. BN of 02.01.23).

30 January 2023

Security situation

The National Resistance Front (NRF) claims it killed three Taliban fighters and injured two others in Kapisa province on 24.01.23 and that it captured 13 insurgents in Nuristan province.

Persecution events

According to reports, Musa Shahin, a singer from Panjshir province, was arrested for the second time by the Taliban on 25.01.23. The first time he was detained, he was allegedly tortured by the Taliban. Journalists of the Afghan press medium Hasht-e Subh living in exile, citing a reliable source in Taliban intelligence circles, report that prisoners are being tortured above all at district prisons in Panjshir.

Humanitarian situation and women's rights

Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock announced that Germany will be suspending its humanitarian aid to Afghanistan due to the ban on Afghan women working for international organisations and NGOs. She justified the decision by saying that without the participation of women the aid cannot reach its destination. Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, Amina Mohammad, by contrast, has urged Germany and other EU Member States to continue providing aid, as large sections of the population depend on it, especially in winter.

According to official Taliban figures, at least 166 people have died in recent weeks due to the freezing temperatures (cf. BN of 23.01.23).

06 February 2023

Security situation

Two civilians were injured in a bomb explosion in Kabul on 04.02.23. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack. After a bomb attack was carried out on a mosque on the premises of a police headquarters in the Pakistani city of Peshawar on 30.01.23 in which approx. 84 people (almost all of whom were police officers) were killed, the Pakistani government asked the Afghan Taliban to assist with the investigation. The attack was allegedly planned by the Pakistani Taliban from Afghan soil. Officially, however, no one has claimed responsibility for the attack.

Persecution events and government leadership

According to media reports, a well-known university lecturer was arrested by the Taliban on 03.02.23 for indulging in provocative actions. He had publicly spoken out against the ban on women's university education. On 02.02.23, another university lecturer was detained by the Taliban in Kabul without statement of reasons. On the same day, 16 convicts were publicly flogged by the Taliban in Helmand province. According to reports issued on 03.02.23, the Taliban have banned marriages between Shia and Sunni practitioners in the Nusay district of Badakhshan province. According to a report issued by journalists of the Afghan press medium Hasht-e Subh living in exile on 31.01.23, the Taliban vandalised a painted image of former Hazara leader Abdul Ali Mazari in western Kabul. Saudi Arabia evacuated its embassy in Afghanistan on 06.02.23, possibly because its female employees had been prohibited by the Taliban from working.

13 February 2023

Security situation

After rumours began to spread in Kabul on 08.02.23 that planes would be taking volunteers to Türkiye to help rescue victims of the devastating earthquakes, convoys to the airport began to form. Taliban security personnel at the airport stopped the crowds by firing shots into the air, injuring several people. Videos began circulating on social media in which the Taliban were calling these "helpers" traitors while firing shots into the air as a warning. A bombing was carried out on a mosque in Faryab province also on 08.02.23. There is no information about the number of casualties, and no one has claimed responsibility for the attack.

Government leadership

On 13.02.23, it was reported that the acting Interior Minister, Sirajuddin Haqqani, had publicly criticised the Taliban leadership and its monopolisation of power (through the emir). On 12.02.23, the Taliban's press secretary, Zabihullah Mujahid, said that media outlets spreading "negative news" about the government would no longer be allowed to operate. On 11.02.23, a ceremony was held at the Inter-Continental Hotel in Kabul to mark the 44th anniversary of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, which was also attended by high-ranking Taliban representatives.

On 11.02.23, an Uzbek Taliban commander from the provincial capital of Maimana had threatened to resign if Pashtun Taliban in the region did not stop illegally allocating land belonging to Uzbeks to Pashtun nomads.

Persecution events

On 09.02.23, it was reported that a former regimental commander of the Afghan army from Jowzjan province had died during his detention after being tortured by the Taliban. The same day, the dead body of a young man who had been arrested by the Taliban three days earlier was handed over to his family. On 10.02.23, it was reported that a former intelligence chief, who had been detained by the Taliban five months ago, had gone missing in Herat province. It was reported in the media that on 09.02.23, the Taliban detained and killed a former judge in Helmand province. According to a report issued on 07.02.23, the Taliban continued to carry out house searches in Kabul for several days. The Taliban have not made any statement as to what exactly they are looking for. On 07.02.23, six persons including one woman were charged with engaging in extramarital relations and drinking alcohol and were flogged by the Taliban in Ghor province.

Humanitarian situation

On 13.02.23, a light earthquake was reported to have struck Badakhshan province. There were no casualties. This province and Ghor province have been experiencing heavy snowfall, which has cut off some districts from the provincial capitals. A report issued by Médecins Sans Frontières on 06.02.23 highlighted the dramatic humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, claiming that 95% of the persons interviewed were barely able to afford basic foodstuffs. A large proportion of the population cannot afford medical care either.

20 February 2023

Security situation: Taliban fight against ISKP, support for Pakistan's TTP

The Taliban arrested one of their district governors in Badghis province on 14.02.23. He was accused of collaborating with the Islamic State of Khorasan Province (ISKP). Other sources, however, refer to ethnic conflicts. On 13.02.23, the Taliban claim they attacked an ISKP hideout in Kabul, killing several insurgents. According to a report issued by the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) on 14.02.23, the Taliban are supporting the Pakistani Taliban (Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)) (many of whose leaders operate from Afghanistan) and are endorsing their agenda in Pakistan. In particular, Emir Haibatullah Akhunzada agrees with the TTP that the current Pakistani political system is "un-Islamic". Some members of the Taliban, on the other hand, accuse the Pakistani government of supporting the ISKP in Afghanistan.

Persecution events and government leadership

A year and a half after the Taliban seized power, research conducted by the press medium Aamaj News shows that four-fifths of the cabinet members are Pashtuns; almost all of whom belong to the Taliban. According to the survey, three-quarters of the governors are of Pashtun ethnicity and are members of the Taliban. The Taliban flogged 11 people in Badakhshan province on 17.02.23 for a range of offences.

Humanitarian situation: Taliban impose ban on contraceptives

In some provinces, the Taliban have banned pharmacies and midwives from selling contraceptives. According to a press article released on 17.02.23, the Taliban consider women's use of contraceptives to be "a Western conspiracy to control the Muslim population". As a result, the price of contraceptives bought secretly from private sellers has skyrocketed. In 2022, the maternal mortality rate was about 30% higher than before the Taliban swept into power. Without easy access to contraceptives, the maternal mortality rate is expected to rise even further. At least eight people died due to heavy snowfall in Badakhshan province on 15.02.23.

27 February 2023

Security situation

On 23.02.23, a Taliban district governor and four other Taliban insurgents were killed in a bomb attack carried out in Taloqan city in Takhar province. Furthermore, one civilian was killed and 10 others were injured. On the same day, a Taliban commander was also killed in a bomb attack carried out in the city of Kabul. No group has claimed

responsibility for the attacks. On 26.02.23, the Taliban raided houses in the provincial capital of Zaranj (Nimruz). Another clash erupted between the Taliban and Pakistani border guards at the Torkham border crossing. Both sides closed the crossing temporarily.

Government leadership

On 22.02.23, the Pakistani Defence Minister and the head of the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) travelled to Kabul for talks, prompted by the increase in the number of attacks carried out by the Pakistani Taliban (Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan) (TTP) on the Pakistani government. It is hoped that the Afghan Taliban will bring the TTP back to the negotiating table. The TTP operates from Afghanistan with Taliban support (cf. BN of 20.02.23). According to reports issued on 20.02.23, the Taliban government is planning to convert some former foreign military bases into "economic zones" for commercial activities. According to a source quoted on 26.02.23, the Taliban have officially taken over the Afghan embassy in Tehran with the agreement of the Iranian government. The same is likely to happen in Istanbul, Türkiye, soon.

Persecution events

According to a media report issued on 25.02.23, the local Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice in Balkh province has asked its staff to patrol more frequently. They have been told to remind women of the obligation to wear the veil, to encourage all citizens to pray and to put a stop to music at weddings.

There has been a series of unexplained killings of civilians in Bamiyan province, according to a report issued by the daily Etilaat-Roz on 26.02.23. The Taliban have made no comment on this. According to media reports, the Taliban have detained a total of around 36 former soldiers and civil servants in Helmand province. According to Hasht-e Subh, approximately 50 civilians, including minors and senior citizens, were arrested by the Taliban in Panjshir province on 22.02.23. Nothing is known about the background to the arrests or the detainees' whereabouts. The previous day, a man whose relatives were members of the National Resistance Front (NRF) and died fighting the Taliban was arrested in Kabul. On 21.02.23 and 23.02.23, the Taliban shot dead two men, accusing them of theft, and displayed their bodies in central squares in Herat city. In Sar-e Pul province, 14 men and nine women were publicly flogged. Also on 21.02.23, in Parwan province, two relatives of a former policeman, who is himself living in hiding, were arrested by the Taliban. On the same day, a former policeman was arrested in Kabul. On 21.02.23, the Taliban closed several educational institutions in Bamiyan province that were secretly teaching girls.

06 March 2023

New report by the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan

According to the report presented at the 52nd session of the UN Human Rights Council on 06.03.23, the human rights situation in Afghanistan has continued to deteriorate - especially for women and girls. According to the UN Special Rapporteur, the Taliban's systematic denial of the basic human rights of women and girls amounts to gender-based persecution. The International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague had announced on 31.10.22 that it would authorise the Chief Prosecutor to resume investigations in Afghanistan. On 10.12.22, the Special Rapporteur had attended the ICC launch of the "Policy Papers on the Crime of Gender Persecution" (which calls for the increased application of the 20-year-old offence of "gender persecution" as a crime against humanity under Article 7(1)(h) of the Rome Statute and appealed for relevant investigations to be launched in Afghanistan. The UN Special Rapporteur further criticised the Taliban's increasing use of hudud punishments (such as floggings, executions and amputations of hands and feet), the ousting of ethnic groups other than Pashtuns from important posts, the failure to comply with the general amnesty for former members of the government, the Taliban's lack of state protection for minorities such as Hazaras who are being persecuted by the Islamic State of Khorasan Province (ISKP), and a worrying increase in suicides among young people due to the hopeless situation.

Persecution events

In a statement issued at the 52nd session of the UN Human Rights Council, Amnesty International called on member states to end the impunity of the Taliban for the human rights violations they have committed. The Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) in exile has also said that the Taliban's human rights violations are no longer acceptable.

According to an article published by the newspaper Etilaatroz on 04.03.23, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) said that despite the general amnesty, the Taliban continue to search for, detain and also kill former defence and security forces on a daily basis. On 02.03.23, according to a report issued by Hasht-e Subh, the Taliban shot dead a former member of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces (ANDSF) following a show trial in Paktika province. On 28.02.23, a member of the ANDSF was killed by the Taliban in Kandahar province.

The press medium KabulNow (an offshoot of Etilaatroz) reported in an article published on 23.02.23 that over 98 people (an equal number of men and women) have committed suicide since the Taliban swept to power. Most of these cases occurred in Faryab province, followed by Ghor, Kandahar, Takhar, Paktia and Bamiyan. According to media reports issued on 03.03.23, another young woman hanged herself in Faryab province. On 28.02.23, it was reported in the media, a young woman shot herself in Badghis province and on the same day a young woman hanged herself in Kunduz province.

According to an article published in the Washington Post on 04.03.23, the Taliban have annulled countless divorces filed by women (which were carried out against the will of the mostly "drug-addicted" husbands). The Taliban are accusing women who subsequently married a second time of adultery.

Security situation and government leadership

According to a press release issued on 28.02.23, the National Resistance Front (NRF) carried out an attack on the Taliban headquarters in Takhar province (Dashti Qala district). There is no information available on the number of casualties. In addition to the Afghan embassy in Tehran (Iran), the Taliban have now officially taken over the Afghan embassy in Istanbul (Türkiye) (cf. BN of 27.02.23).

13 March 2023

Security situation: attacks and fighting in Balkh province

On 11.03.23, a bomb went off at an award ceremony held for journalists at a Shia cultural centre in the city of Mazar-e Sharif (Balkh province), killing at least three persons and wounding another 10. The Islamic State in Khorasan Province (ISKP) has claimed responsibility for the attack. On 09.03.23, the Taliban governor was killed in a suicide attack carried out by the ISKP, also in Balkh province. Before his transfer, the governor had led the fight against the ISKP in its stronghold, Nangarhar province. A gunfire exchange also took place between unknown gunmen and the Taliban in Mazar-e Sharif on 07.03.2013. A total of eight people were killed, and two others were injured.

Protests on International Women's Day

On 07.03.23, the EU sanctioned the Taliban-appointed Minister of Higher Education and the Minister for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice in response to the exclusion of women from higher education and from public life. On the same day, public protests by women against the Taliban were held in Kabul. Also on 08.03.23, protests for women's rights took place in several cities. In Firozkoh, capital of Ghor province, the protest was broken up by the Taliban, and at least one woman and her father were arrested.

Persecution events and government leadership

On 13.03.23, the Taliban Minister of Higher Education, Mohammad Nadim, while speaking at a graduation ceremony for Taliban judges in Kandahar city, declared that anyone who takes a stand against the Islamic Emirate (through words, texts or deeds) is a rebel and must be executed.

On 13.03.23, a young woman in Parwan province shot herself on her wedding day because she was being forced to marry against her will. On 10.03.23, a bride was shot dead by the Taliban at a checkpoint in Nangarhar province because she had been playing loud music in the car with the groom. In Taloqan, capital of Takhar province, nine people were arrested on 07.03.23 for failure to attend morning prayers at the mosque. Also in Ghazni province, several people were beaten by the Taliban on 07.03.23 for not attending a prayer service. Ten youths were beaten and arrested by the Taliban in a village in Helmand province on 06.03.23 for meeting up to play music. On the same day, five men and a girl were publicly flogged in Parwan province for allegedly committing offences such as "running away from home" and gambling. A bodyguard of the former government was arrested by the Taliban in Charikar, capital of Parwan province, on 06.03.2023.

Humanitarian situation: Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) 2023

By 2023, 28.3 million people (two-thirds of Afghanistan's population) will be in urgent need of humanitarian assistance in order to survive, according to HRP. The report has identified that 33 out of 34 provinces and 27 out of 34 major cities/provincial capitals are in extreme need. This means USD 4.6 billion in aid will be required in 2023. Last year, only about 59% of the USD 4.4 billion needed was collected, and there are fears that this trend may continue.

20 March 2023

Security situation

According to the Global Terrorism Index (GTI) published on 14.03.23, Afghanistan remains the country most impacted by terrorism for the fourth consecutive year. On 14.03.23, fighters of the National Resistance Front (NRF) claimed to have killed eight Taliban insurgents in Baghlan province. On 16.03.23, the NRF reported killing two Taliban members in Jawzjan province. On 19.03.23, according to media reports, a local Taliban manager of religious affairs and Hajj (pilgrimage) was killed by unknown individuals in Aqcha district (Jawzjan province).

Persecution events

On 15.03.23, five people convicted of various offences were flogged by the Taliban in Paktia province. Afghanistan International reported that the Taliban had paraded people wearing women's clothing who were accused of theft through the streets of Kabul on 15.03.23. The same day, it was reported that a teacher who had posted critical comments about the Taliban on social media was arrested by the Taliban in Takhar province almost three weeks ago. Hasht-e Subh reports that on 14.03.23, two hospital workers of Hazara ethnicity were arrested by the Taliban in Parwan province.

On 13.03.23 and 14.03.23, three former soldiers were arrested by the Taliban in Baghlan and Khost provinces. A video that has been widely circulated on social media claims to show the Taliban suffocating a former soldier by putting a plastic bag over his head and face.

On 13.03.23, it was reported that four Taliban members raped a woman and her 11 and 13-year-old daughters in Sar-e Pul province. When the victims reported the case to local authorities, they were threatened and told not to speak to the media. On the same day, the only women's library in Kabul, which had about 5,000 books, was closed by the Taliban who had already sealed the library three times before, although it is reported that this did not stop women from visiting it.

Government business

On 20.03.23, local employees of the Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice in Daikundi province (which is mainly inhabited by Shia Hazara) declared the Persian New Year festival Nowruz to be un-Islamic and unlawful in the province. They met with worshippers from 35 mosques in the province and warned residents that they would face punishment if they were caught celebrating the festival. In March 2022, the festival had already been removed from the official calendar nationwide by the Taliban. On 18.03.23, the Taliban leader Mullah Haibatullah Akhunzada banned the cultivation of cannabis in Afghanistan by decree. It was reported on the same day that the Taliban had detained around 20 barbers in Farah province the previous week for trimming beards. After the Afghan embassies in Tehran (Iran) and Istanbul (Türkiye), the embassy in Dubai has now been officially handed over to the Taliban with the complicity of the government there (cf. BN of 27.02.23 and 06.03.23). On 15.03.23, the Taliban launched a polio vaccination drive in the country.

27 March 2023

Security situation

The Taliban claim to have destroyed a central Islamic State of Khorasan Province (ISKP) safe house east of Kabul (Butkhak suburb) on 21.03.23, killing three key members.

Government leadership and persecution events

On 26.03.23, it was reported that the Taliban were attempting to take charge of Afghan embassies by sending their diplomats to a further 11 countries. Recently, Taliban officials formally took over the embassies in Iran, Türkiye and

Dubai (cf. BN of 20.03.23). On 20.03.23, the Taliban arrested a local representative of the Pashtun Tahafuz movement, which is mainly active in Pakistan and opposes both the Pakistani government and the Taliban. According to the report issued on 26.03.23, the local Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice of Balkh province is cracking down on people who are reportedly not fasting during Ramadan.

Earthquake in Badakhshan province

According to official figures, at least three people died and 44 others were injured as a result of a severe earthquake that struck Afghanistan on 21.03.23, with its epicentre in Badakhshan province. According to a statement issued by the Taliban on 26.03.23, the earthquake and simultaneous flash floods killed nine people in a total of 23 provinces and destroyed farmland and about 1,700 houses.

Girls' schools remain closed

The new school year began in Afghanistan on 21.03.23, but most girls' secondary schools remain closed. According to a social media report by well-known journalist Secunder Kermani, girls' secondary schools have not reopened even in many places where the Taliban had previously tolerated them. Once again, women took to the streets in West Kabul (in the Hazara neighbourhood of Dasht-e Barchi) to demonstrate against the ban on education, according to the news report issued on 26.03.23. Three protestors were detained by the Taliban.

Persian New Year festival Nowruz banned by the Taliban

Since the Taliban declared the New Year festival of Nowruz to be un-Islamic, the festival, which is otherwise celebrated on a large and public scale, has only been only celebrated in private. In the city of Herat, the staff of the local Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice allegedly prevented people from celebrating the festival in public. Before this, the festival had already been banned in Daikundi province (cf. BN of 20.03.23).

03 April 2023

Security situation

According to media reports on 27.03.23, a bomb attack was carried out near the Taliban's Foreign Ministry, killing six civilians and injuring at least one child and three Taliban members. The Islamic State of Khorasan Province (ISKP) has claimed responsibility for the attack.

On 27.03.23, the Taliban informed that they killed three senior ISKP members in a night raid in Balkh province. The National Resistance Front (NRF) said it has launched its spring offensive with an attack on a Taliban training centre in Pol-e Kharkhi/Kabul.

Government leadership

According to reports on 29.03 and 02.04.23, the Taliban's Ministry of Virtue has closed down all internet cafes and computer/video game arcades in Herat province. It was also reported on 29.03.23 that the Taliban announced plans to build a mosque every 100 km along the Ring Road.

Persecution events

According to a report on 31.03.23, a grenade exploded in a girls' school in Jawzjan province, killing two girls and injuring eleven others. It is not clear whether the children were playing with a grenade they found or whether the Taliban are responsible for the attack. Also on 01.04.23, there was a fire in a girls' school in Faryab province, the background of which is unclear.

On 28.03.23, the Taliban detained activist Matiullah Wesa, who advocates for education, including for girls, with his organisation "Pen Path". Shortly afterwards, his home was raided by the Taliban, his brothers were briefly arrested, and computers were confiscated. The Taliban confirmed the arrest but did not provide any further information on his whereabouts, stating that they had a right to question him. Wesa's arrest has attracted significant international attention.

On 29.03.23 Amnesty International published a new report on the human rights situation in Afghanistan, stating that restrictions on fundamental freedoms (especially for women) are increasing exponentially, and that the Taliban carry out arbitrary arrests and extrajudicial executions with impunity.

17 April 2023

Security and persecution situation

The German domestic intelligence agency (Verfassungsschutz) has warned that the Islamic State of Khorasan Province (ISKP) is gaining strength, which increases the risk of terrorist attacks beyond Afghanistan. The Taliban have claimed to have killed two ISKP members in the province of Nimruz on 09.04.23.

On 11.04.23, the Taliban killed at least six people, including two commanders, in fighting with the Afghanistan Freedom Front (AFF) of Parwan province, Salang district. The Taliban forcibly prevented people from attending their funerals. Around 100 people were reportedly arrested in the district. House searches were carried out in Kabul, Parwan, Kapisa and Panjshir provinces.

There were numerous other arrests and killings by the Taliban: On 04.04.23 a university professor was arrested for criticising the education policy. On 05.04.23, a 16-year-old died after being tortured by the Taliban. On the same day, three journalists were arrested in Baghlan province and released on 07.04.23 under conditions. On 09.04.23, a former intelligence officer committed suicide after being tortured by the Taliban. Also on 09.04.23, a teacher, writer and critic of the Taliban was arrested in Faryab province. He was released three days later. On 10.04.23, a man died after his vehicle was shot at for not stopping at a checkpoint. On the same day, the Taliban killed a farmer when they destroyed his opium field in Nangarhar province. According to their own information, the Taliban arrested seven members of the National Resistance Front (NRF) in Kapisa province on 10.04.23. On 13.04.23, a female doctor was shot dead on the road between Kunduz and Takhar. On 14.04.23, a Talib reportedly shot dead his neighbour in Badakhshan province. On the same day, the Taliban reportedly shot dead a man who was burning the Koran in a family dispute in Baghdis province.

Economic and humanitarian situation

On 05.04.23, the Taliban extended the existing ban on Afghan women working for NGOs to the UN agencies. Following the announcement of the ban, the UN agencies in Afghanistan ordered all staff not to go to work. If the UN stop their activities in Afghanistan, it will result in a humanitarian disaster, as millions of people are dependent on aid.

At least twelve children have died in a measles outbreak in Zabul province.

Government leadership

The Taliban have raised the fees for issuing identity documents: The cost of ID cards with digital features (e-tazkiras) has increased from 100 to 500 AFN; and non-digital ID cards now cost 200 AFN instead of 10 AFN (100 AFN is equivalent to EUR 1.05 as of 17.04.23). There are reports of long waiting times for ID card applications.

24 April 2023

Security situation

A Washington Times report on 22.04.23, based on leaked papers from the US Pentagon, says that IS and the Islamic State of Khorasan Province (ISKP) are preparing attacks in the USA, Asia and Europe from Afghanistan. ISKP's standing within IS has reportedly risen. This is partly due to the ongoing campaign to eradicate IS cells elsewhere. Since the withdrawal of Western troops from Afghanistan, ISKP has reportedly been able to regroup despite persecution by the Taliban.

On 11.04.23, a child was killed by an unknown individual with a scythe in Logar province. Reports link the crime to rising violence and numerous other unsolved murders across the country.

Government leadership

On 18.04.23 on the occasion of the Eid-al-Fitr holiday marking the end of the fasting month of Ramadan, Emir Hibatullah Akhundzada stated, among other things, that the main goal of the Taliban government was the implementation of Islamic law (Sharia) and the religious and moral reform of society. The Taliban have carried out significant reform measures in culture, education, the economy, the media and other areas, and the negative intellectual and moral effects of 20 years of foreign occupation were coming to an end, he said. The law on vice and virtue as the highest duty is currently being implemented, he added, and every Afghan citizen should cooperate with the Ministry of Virtue. Akhundzada said this despite a nationwide ban on education for women and girls, a

massive economic crisis and widespread media censorship. Speaking in Kandahar province on a different event, Akhundzada said he would allow 'no infidel law in Afghanistan, and no interference from outside in the internal affairs of the country'.

Persecution situation

On 17.04.23, four ethnic Turkmen were injured in Faryab province over a land dispute with the Taliban. On the same day, a former prison guard in Ghazni city was reportedly arrested. On 18.04.23, three people were killed by the Taliban in Badakhshan province. Reports differ as to whether all three or two of them were former soldiers. In Herat province, a shepherd was kidnapped with his flock of around 100 sheep. Reports say that close associates of the Taliban-appointed provincial governor were responsible for the assault. Apparently, the shepherd was in conflict with the Taliban. On 19.04.23, a former member of the Panjshir provincial council was reportedly arrested. Throughout the country, there have been increasing reports of suicides by juveniles, with some as young as 12-14 years old. Often, the reasons are family and economic problems. Those who have died come from the provinces of Nangarhar, Ghor, Balkh, Bamiyan and Badakhshan.

Humanitarian situation

After the Taliban banned Afghan women from working for UN agencies (cf. BN of 17.04.23), it remains unclear whether the UN agencies will withdraw from Afghanistan. UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed announced on 18.04.23 that in early May, talks with the Taliban would be held, also including the issue of granting diplomatic recognition to the Taliban. A final decision was announced for 05.05.23. In the meantime, the UN agencies are operating on a very limited basis. Weekly cash transfers of USD 40 million have been suspended. The possible recognition of the Taliban by the UN, as announced by the UN Deputy Secretary General, has been met with massive protest, including from the US government, the EU, the armed resistance in Afghanistan and many other representatives of the international community. According to the WHO, an average of 167 new-born babies die every day due to lack of health care. The WFP reported on 20.04.23 that it would no longer be able to distribute humanitarian aid in Afghanistan in June if donations continued to fail.

08 May 2023

Security situation

The exile media Hasht-e Subh reports that on 01.04.23, the religious scholar Mufti Rohullah, who appears to have close links to the Taliban, was shot dead by unidentified assailants in Kabul. No one has claimed responsibility for the attack. On 02.05.23, two young men were killed by unknown attackers in Farah and Logar provinces, according to media reports. On 06.05.23, another religious scholar was murdered by unknown individuals in Ghor province. Media reports say that unidentified killings and suicides are on the rise throughout the country. On 07.05.23, heavy fighting was reported between the Taliban and the National Resistance Front (NRF) in Baghlan province (Khost district). No casualty figures were reported.

Government leadership

Abdul Malik Haqqani, the Taliban's appointed deputy chief justice said on 04.05.23 that since taking power, the court has imposed 175 qisas (translated as retribution verdicts, here presumably floggings), 37 stonings and four sentences in which the convict is buried by a collapsing wall. Some of the sentences have not yet been carried out. On 05.05.23, it was reported that in Bamiyan province, a couple was sentenced to death by stoning for having an extramarital affair. The sentence has not yet been carried out.

Saied Khosti, the former spokesman of the Taliban's Interior Ministry, called on social media on 02.05.23 to kill opponents of the Taliban inside and outside Afghanistan with knives. He said that there were hundreds of volunteers in Europe and the USA, and that any refugee who preached against the Taliban should be killed. Apparently, this also applied domestically. The tweet has since been deleted.

On 05.04.23, Taliban Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi held trilateral talks with his counterparts from Pakistan and China in Islamabad. The meeting focused on the inclusion of Afghanistan in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Persecution situation

On 27.04.23, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution on the situation of women in Afghanistan, criticising the Taliban's increasing erosion of human rights and fundamental freedoms for women. The Council expressed deep concern by the Taliban's ban on women to work for the UN, saying that would hamper and block the work of the UN. Apparently, a possible withdrawal of the UN from Afghanistan is imminent (cf. BN of 17.04.23 and 24.04.23). In this context, the UN Secretary General António Guterres invited representatives of the UN member states to a conference in Doha, Qatar, on 01.05. and 02.05.23. The Taliban were not invited there. The discussion was about how to deal with the de facto government of Afghanistan and how to exert pressure to lift the ban on women working and girls attending school, as this was the only way the UN could continue to operate in the country. According to a media report on 01.05.23, the local Taliban ministry of virtue in Bamiyan Province closed a sports stadium because the athletes were wearing un-Islamic clothing. Following the closure, the stadium manager was arrested. On 01.05.23, the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) called on the Taliban government to investigate the murder of a pregnant woman by two Taliban fighters in Ghor province. On 30.04.23, the Taliban reportedly arrested a former Afghan army general from Panjshir province in Kabul. Also on 30.04.23, media reported that the Taliban's Information and Culture Department in Ghazni province warned all local media not to broadcast advertisements recorded with female voices, saying that violation would be punished. On 03.05.23, the Taliban's local department of virtue in Herat province warned drivers not to allow women to ride in their cars without veils.

15 May 2023

Security situation

On 09.05.23, armed clashes were reported between fighters of a district governor and the Taliban army in Parwan province. Also on 09.05.23, the Taliban reportedly killed a senior member of the Islamic State of Khorasan Province (ISKP) in Kabul's Shakardara district.

On 08.05.23, a rocket attack targeted the office of the governor of Kapisa province. According to the Afghanistan Freedom Front (AFF), which claimed responsibility for the attack, three Taliban were killed in the incident.

On 07.05.23, the Taliban launched house raids in Khost district, Baghlan province, leading to a ten-hour armed confrontation between members of the National Resistance Front (NRF) and the Taliban. According to various reports, between seven and 25 Taliban fighters and one to three NRF members were killed in the confrontation.

Persecution situation

Media report that on 11.05.23 Mohammad Baqir Moballeghzada, a Hazara commander from Daikundi province who had defected to the Taliban, was arrested by the Taliban. His weapons were confiscated.

On 09.05.23, three directors of media companies and a journalist were arrested by the Taliban in Khost province for allegedly disobeying instructions from the Ministry of Virtue. According to a report on 09.05.23, the Taliban's intelligence service arrested an employee of their Ministry of Martyrs and Disabled Affairs. Both the background to the arrest and the employee's whereabouts are unclear.

On 08.05.23, a former soldier was shot dead in Jabul Seraj district, Parwan province. There is no information on the circumstances of the incident.

22 May 2023

Security situation

Two children were killed in a drone attack on a village in Khost province on 16.05.23. No official explanation was given for the attack, but media reports suggest that it was a Pakistani campaign against the Tehrek-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP).

Persecution situation

The exile media Hasht-e Subh has documented numerous cases of rape, torture, and shootings by the Taliban through interviews with health workers and women released from women's prisons in the three northern provinces of Jowzjan, Faryab and Samangan.

On 15.05.23, a former Ministry of Interior employee and media activist was arrested at Kabul airport. On 16.05.23, the director of a hospital in Mazar-e Sharif was arrested by the Taliban. Media reports indicate that his father was a prominent officer. On the same day, the Taliban arrested the former mayor of the provincial capital of Samangan, Aybak. In Parwan province, an elderly man was arrested by the Taliban on 17.05.23. His son had got into a fight with a Taliban fighter and then escaped. On the same day, the Taliban shot dead a former soldier in front of his family in Takhar province. On 18.05.23, in Panjshir province, the Taliban handed over the dead body of a man they had arrested the day before to his family. The background to the arrest is unclear. On the same day, the headmaster of a school in Parwan province was arrested after criticising the Taliban's education policy.

Humanitarian situation

New cash shipments to fund UN humanitarian aid have begun to arrive in Kabul again. After the UN agencies resumed their work, although the Taliban have not lifted the ban on Afghan women working for UN agencies, Human Rights Watch criticizes the opaque and inconsistent way in which the UN agencies are managing the current arrangement. There have also been new media reports of people complaining that the Taliban control humanitarian aid and that it is not reaching those in need. On 17.05.23, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) reported a significant increase in the number of malnourished children in Helmand province. In Kapisa province, heavy rains have destroyed part of the harvest, up to 70 percent in some districts.

05 June 2023

Government leadership: Kandahar gains influence under the Emir

According to an article in the Washington Post on 04.06.23, there are indication that the Taliban leaders under Emir Akhundzada are making the city of Kandahar their base from which to control the country, signalling the declining influence of the more moderate Taliban members in the capital Kabul, as the regime continues to tighten its repressive policies. In recent months, regime officials have invited delegations from Japan and Qatar to meet them here, rather than to meet with other officials in Kabul. Qatar's Prime Minister Al-Thani met with the Taliban emir in Kandahar earlier this month. The Taliban's top spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, and a second information officer from northern Afghanistan, Inamullah Samangani, were relocated to Kandahar from their offices in Kabul.

Persecution situation: Schoolgirls poisoned in Sar-e Pul province

On 04.06.23, it was reported that around 80 schoolgirls, including four teachers, were poisoned in two separate incidents at public schools in Sancharak district (northern Sar-e-Pul province). The schoolgirls complained of stomach pains, diarrhoea, and headaches. Press reports say that the authorities are still investigating the incidents, and initial inquiries suggest that someone with a grudge against the school paid a third party to carry out the attacks.

Humanitarian situation: Flash floods in several provinces

According to media reports on 30.05.23, flash floods occurred in several regions of Afghanistan after heavy rainfall at the end of May 2023. The provinces of Khost, Paktia, Maidan Wardak, Paktika, Logar and Kapisa were particularly affected. The Taliban stated that 24 people were killed; hundreds of hectares of agricultural land, mainly wheat, were destroyed, houses demolished, and several animals killed.

12 June 2023

Security situation: ISKP attack on Taliban memorial service

Media report that on 08.06.23, a suicide attack was carried out on a memorial service for a Taliban official in Badakhshan province, killing at least 11 people, including a senior Taliban official, and wounding 30 others. The Islamic State of Khorasan Province (ISKP) has claimed responsibility for the attack.

Government leadership: Opium cultivation reduced by up to 80 percent

According to the 05.06.23 report prepared by a leading expert on Afghan drug trade, who worked with Alcis, a British company specialising in satellite analysis, for this report, the annual opium cultivation in the country has fallen by up to 80 percent compared to last year.

19 June 2023

Security situation: Al-Qaida training camp; resettlement of TTP fighters from Pakistan

In its latest report of 09.06.23 the UN Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team disclosed the existence of al-Qaida training camps in five provinces (Helmand, Zabul, Nuristan, Nangarhar and Badghis) and of 'safe houses' in Farah, Helmand, Herat, and Kabul. Between 30 and 60 mostly senior figures are believed to be active in Kabul, Kandahar, Helmand, and Kunar. A further 400 al-Qaida fighters and an estimated 1,600 family members and supporters are apparently operating in the south, east and centre of the country.

The UN team also reported that several al-Qaida members were serving as senior officials within the Taliban's government. For example, the current Taliban governor in Nuristan, Hafiz Muhammad Agha Hakeem, was identified by the sanctions and monitoring team as an al-Qaida leader. According to the report, the training camp in Nuristan was specifically designed 'for the training of suicide bombers'. An al-Qaida 'safe house' in Kabul had been uncovered in July 2022 when the USA killed Ayman al-Zawahiri, the co-founder and former emir of al-Qaida, in a drone strike (cf. BN of 08.08.22).

According to media reports on 15.06.23, around 300 Pakistani Taliban fighters (Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan or TTP) have been resettled by the Taliban to Takhar province (Dasht-e Qala district). Recently, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid confirmed that TTP members are being resettled to Afghanistan, particularly to the north and north-east of the country, following an agreement between the Taliban and the Pakistani government.

Persecution situation

A report published by Amnesty International on 07.06.23 highlights numerous extrajudicial arrests and killings of people by the Taliban in the Panjshir Valley between June 2022 and May 2023 and describes the Taliban's violence against civilians in the province as collective punishment for the attacks on the Taliban by the National Resistance Front (NRF). On 12.06.23 information circulated that an 84-year-old right-wing Austrian national was arrested by the Taliban. He is accused of espionage.

On 13.06.23, the Taliban shot dead three men accused of raping and killing a woman in Herat province. It is unclear whether a trial has taken place.

Government leadership

Three representatives of the Taliban's ministries of interior, foreign affairs and defence have travelled to the Oslo Freedom Forum (13.06.-15.06.23). They are to engage in dialogue with Afghan civil society in exile and representatives of other countries.

In a statement on 19.06.23, the Taliban declared 31.08.21, the day on which the last US soldiers left Afghanistan, a national holiday.

According to a media report on 14.06.23, the head of the Taliban's moral police in Herat has ordered wedding hall owners to allow the playing of simple drums at wedding ceremonies, but not bells. He has instructed wedding hall owners in the city to identify women who are not properly veiled during wedding events. In a recent announcement, the Taliban stated: "Any form of music is forbidden in wedding halls. Playing simple drums is allowed, but bells are forbidden. Men and grooms are not allowed to enter the women's section. Filming, photographing, and taking mobile phones into the women's hall is forbidden. The distribution of food during prayers, especially on Fridays, is forbidden".

Humanitarian situation

According to the Taliban, a severe drought in Herat province has reduced the rice harvest by 80 percent this year. At the same time, several districts in Badakhshan province have been off by heavy rains and flooding.

26 June 2023

New report on the situation of women in Afghanistan

On 20.06.23, UN Special Rapporteur Richard Bennett presented his new joint report with the UN Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls on the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan at the 53rd session of the Human Rights Council. The report highlights that the Taliban's decrees and policies have excluded women from public life and stresses that the discriminatory practices and extreme violence against women and girls in

Afghanistan are totally unacceptable and may amount to crimes against humanity. The Taliban have called the report a propaganda campaign that does not reflect reality.

UN Security Council: discussion of the situation in Afghanistan

On 21.06.23, the UN Security Council discussed the situation in Afghanistan. The main point of criticism was the 'gender apartheid' imposed by the Taliban. There was disagreement among the participants over the continuation of sanctions and the conditions for humanitarian aid. The Taliban's disregard for human rights, particularly of women and girls, was also criticised at a meeting of the UN Human Rights Council on 19.06.23.

Persecution situation

On 19.06.23, it became known that a bodyguard of the former chief executive of the government and chairman of the National Reconciliation Council, Abdullah Abdullah, and his brother were arrested by the Taliban. Both had worked for the security forces before the Taliban took power and are originally from Panjshir province. On 20.06.23, the Taliban arrested the prosecutor of a military court of the former government in Parvan province. Journalist Reza Shahir was released on 19.06.23 after being held in detention for two days. He was allegedly tortured by the Taliban during his detention. The background of his arrest is unclear.

In Sar-e Pul province, Taliban fighters killed a village elder on 21.06.23. The Taliban confirmed the incident and the arrest of a perpetrator. It was said to have been a personal conflict.

According to an unconfirmed Twitter message by Naqibullah Faiq, the former provincial governor under the republic, there have been 22 suicides in Faryab province within the last month, 17 of them of women. The reasons are poverty, unemployment, and forced marriages.

Government leadership

On 20.06.23, the second official public execution took place since the Taliban took power. The man had been found guilty of the murder of five people and was shot in front of an audience of about 2,000 people in a mosque in the town of Sultan Ghassi Baba in Laghman province.

On 20.06.23 it was reported that Meta, the parent company of WhatsApp, had suspended or temporarily disabled numerous WhatsApp accounts belonging to Taliban officials and soldiers. Meta's restrictions on the Taliban are due to US sanctions that make it a criminal offence to provide services to the group.