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Briefing Notes Summary

Group 62 – Information Centre for Asylum and Migration

Afghanistan – July to December 2024

31 December 2024

01 July 2024

Security situation

According to their own statements, the Afghanistan Freedom Front and the National Resistance Front (NRF) made several attacks on the Taliban in Kabul on 24.06.24. According to the NRF, three of the group's fighters died in a clash with the Taliban at an undisclosed location on 28.06.24.¹

Prosecution situation

According to the U.S. State Department's latest human trafficking report, the Taliban are recruiting child soldiers and practising bacha bazi (sexual exploitation of minors). The report also emphasises the violation of women's rights and the Taliban's restrictions of the work of NGOs.

In the provinces of Ghazni, Paktika, Parwan, and Herat, the Taliban publicly flogged eight people between 24.06. and 30.06.24, accusing them of adultery, "absconding from home" or theft.

After the Afghan team reached the semi-finals of the Cricket World Cup on 25.06.24, the Taliban announced in several provinces, including Kandahar, that people celebrating this success would be arrested. The Taliban did not offer any justification for this announcement. On 25.06.24, the Taliban used water cannons against people celebrating in the streets after the cricket victory in Khost province.

In a village in Badakhshan province, the Taliban and local residents clashed violently on 26.06.24, several people were injured. The villagers claimed that the Taliban had entered their homes without any reason.²

Government business

A UN-organised meeting of delegations from 25 countries, five international organisations and the Taliban will be held in Doha on 30.06. and 01.07.24. The exclusion of Afghan civil society and women's rights activists gave rise to much criticism already in the run-up to the meeting. The Taliban delegation in Doha stressed that restrictions on women were an internal matter. The delegation also called for the lifting of international sanctions in order to stabilise the Afghan economy.

On 24.06.24, the Taliban reportedly summoned owners of photo studios to prohibit them to photograph and film at wedding ceremonies in Ghazni province.³

Humanitarian situation

In the province of Bamiyan, at least 19 people died in floods on 26.06.24. Villages in other provinces are still cut off from the outside world after numerous heavy rainfalls in recent weeks. A total of nine people died in landslides in the provinces of Paktia and Badakhshan on 24.06. and 29.06.24.

According to IOM figures of 28.06.24, 34,000 Afghan nationals from Iran and Pakistan entered Afghanistan within a week.⁴

08 July 2024

Governance and persecution

According to media reports, the absence of Afghan women and civil society representatives was one of the Taliban's conditions for attending the third UN meeting on Afghanistan in Doha (Qatar), which was held from 30.06. to 01.07.24. At the meeting Taliban press spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid emphasised that the issue of women's rights is a "domestic issue" of Afghanistan.

According to media reports, the Taliban have renamed further locations in the capital Kabul. The Kabul neighbourhood of "Deh Afghanan", for example, has been renamed "Farhang Square". The decision was announced by the Taliban-led Ministry of Culture and Information. Since coming to power, the Taliban have renamed many squares and streets, especially those bearing the names of their enemies and former politicians of the republic.

According to media reports, there have been renewed protests against the Taliban in Badakhshan province (Darayim district). It is said that participants in a protest were injured by Taliban gunfire. Recently, the region experienced protests because the Taliban had destroyed the residents' poppy fields (cf. BN of 06.05.24).⁵

Humanitarian situation

According to media reports from 05.07.24, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) will be withdrawing completely from Afghanistan by 2025. Thereafter projects will only be implemented via NGOs. GIZ is thus acting on a decision by the German Federal Government which is its client. Contracts for the approximately 160 Afghan employees will expire at the end of 2024. No German or international staff have been on the ground since the Taliban took power in 2021.⁶

15 July 2024

Persecution situation

The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has published a report on the activities of the Taliban Ministry of Virtue. The report emphasises the ministry's violation of human rights, particularly relating to women.

According to a report from 08.07.24, a former police officer in Kabul has died after having been tortured by the Taliban. He had been accused of possessing weapons and is said to have been buried by the Taliban without his family being informed.

According to reports, the Taliban prevented the Shiite population from celebrating the ceremony to mark the month of Muharram. On 10.07.24, they gave instructions that there should only be three days of mourning for Imam Hussein, who died in the Battle of Karbala, instead of the usual ten. In Kabul, the Taliban destroyed stalls that traditionally serve free drinks and prevented people from attending religious ceremonies, the reports said.⁷

Government affairs

On 08.07.24, the Taliban destroyed a statue of the important Hazara personality, Abdul Ali Mazari, in Kabul. Mazari was an active Hazara political leader in the early 1990s who campaigned for peaceful multi-ethnic coexistence. He was killed by the Taliban in 1995.⁸

Humanitarian situation

On 09.07. and 10.07.24, more than 4,000 people were deported to Afghanistan from Iran and Pakistan.

The UN Coordination Office warns of a deterioration of the humanitarian crisis because of a lack of funds for humanitarian aid. The WFP announced that it is unable to continue supporting many of those affected by the floods of recent weeks due to a lack of funding. A maternity hospital in Badakhshan province had to close down after the WHO was unable to continue funding it. This not only had an impact on medical care, but also left the staff (73 people) unemployed.⁹

22 July 2024

Security situation

According to their own statements, the Afghanistan Freedom Front and the National Resistance Front attacked the Taliban between 17.07. and 21.07.24 in the provinces of Badghis, Baghlan, Herat, Kabul and Parwan.¹⁰

Persecution situation

The Taliban allegedly arbitrarily arrested several people in Kabul on 15.07.24 - a man from Panjshir province and his son and the former director of Panjshir province prison; in Badakhshan province on 16.07.24 - a former soldier; in Kabul on 17.07.24 - a former officer who retired several years ago, a freelance journalist in Kandahar province. Furthermore, the owner of a travel agency from Panjshir province on 21.07.24 in Kabul and the brother of the former head of security in Takhar province. On 20.07.24 it was also reported that the Taliban in Herat province had handed over the body of a man to his family who had been arrested a week earlier for no publicly stated reason. The body was said to show clear signs of torture.

In Sar-e Pol province, at least seven people were injured on 19.07.24 when an unknown person threw a hand grenade at a procession marking Ashura, the Shiite commemoration of the Battle of Karbala and the death of Imam Hussein.

The Taliban are said to have shot dead a ten-year-old in Nangarhar province on 19.07. 24 because, contrary to their instructions, he did not stop collecting fallen branches as firewood after storms.

On 21.07.24, the Taliban in Badakhshan province burnt musical instruments they had confiscated over the past months.¹¹

Humanitarian situation

Storms, heavy rain and flooding in the province of Nangarhar on 15.07. and 16.07.24 are said to have killed 130 people. Storm-related deaths and injuries were also reported in neighbouring provinces. Important infrastructure such as sanitary facilities for people deported from Pakistan at the Torkham border crossing were allegedly destroyed.

At the same time, numerous wells in Kabul have dried up resulting in an acute water shortage. People have to queue for hours to buy canisters of water. The price of water has risen sharply: a canister containing 16 litres of water currently costs about as much as two loaves of bread. Many people must save on food in order to be able to afford water.¹²

29 July 2024

Security situation

According to their own statements, the National Resistance Front (NRF) and the Afghanistan Freedom Front killed a total of eight Taliban in the provinces of Baghlan and Kabul on 23.07. and 24.07.24.¹³

Governance

At a meeting in Kabul on 25.07.24, Abdul Haq Wasiq, the head of the Taliban intelligence agency, announced that all former employees of the country's intelligence directorate - formerly known as the National Directorate of Security (NDS) - had been dismissed and replaced by Taliban. He described the former employees as "undesirable elements from the past" and claimed that they had been "purged" and replaced by "new cadres" from "Islamic society". During the time of the republic most positions in the NDS were held by ethnic Tajiks, who now make up the majority of the NRF. In addition, it is said that a comprehensive law is being drafted to regulate the affairs of the Intelligence Directorate, all provisions of said draft are based on Sharia and Hanafi jurisprudence.¹⁴

Persecution situation

The Taliban publicly flogged three people in Bamyan province. They were accused of adultery and theft. In addition to the floggings, they were sentenced to prison terms of between six months and five years.

The Taliban allegedly shot dead a civilian in Takhar province on 21.07.24 and a former soldier in Khost province on 24.07.24.

According to a report from 23.07.24, a Shiite religious scholar was killed by the Taliban in the Khas Uruzgan district of Uruzgan province on 20.07.24. Thereafter, eight people are said to have been arrested because they had informed the media about the incident. Several arbitrary killings were reported from the Hazara-majority district. On 28.07.24 it was reported that a young Hazara woman from Bamyan province had committed suicide after being released from Taliban detention. She was allegedly abused by the Taliban while in detention. The Taliban are also said to have arbitrarily arrested several people: According to media reports on 23.07.24, the producer of a social media channel was arrested by the Taliban on 14.07.24 without giving a reason. On 20.07.24, the Taliban allegedly beat and arrested a university lecturer in Kabul. He had previously been accused of co-operating with foreign media. According to a report from 24.07.24, the Taliban arrested the office manager of the former governor of Takhar province two months ago. The Taliban did not give any reasons for the arrest. On the same day, the Taliban are said to have arrested the former head of the former army commander's office responsible for combating drug cultivation in Takhar.¹⁵

Education

According to reports from 22.07.24, the Taliban have reduced the salaries of female teachers in secondary schools, who have not been allowed to work since the Taliban took power, by around 50 % to 5,000 AFN (approx. EUR 65, as of 29.07.24) per month. Female teachers interviewed pointed out that they received their salaries only irregularly. According to research by the exile medium Amu TV, there is an increasing number of private secondary schools that are licensed by the Taliban to also teach girls, however, they teach almost exclusively religious content. On 23.07.24, the Taliban Minister for Higher Education, Neda Mohammad Nadeem, submitted a new curriculum for universities to the Taliban government's Council of Ministers for approval. Details of its content were not disclosed.¹⁶

Migration

Deportations from Iran and Pakistan continue. On 24.07.24, more than 2,000 people are said to have been deported from Iran and Pakistan, from 25.07. to 26.07.24 around 3,500 and on 27.07.24 5,300 people. On 24.07.24, the Torkham border crossing was closed by the Pakistani authorities for entries to Afghanistan, even for people with legal documents.¹⁷

05 August 2024

Governance

The Taliban government announced that it will not recognise documents and consular services such as passport issuance, passport renewal stickers, visa stickers and other services provided by Afghan diplomatic missions in Western countries and cities (including London, Belgium, Berlin, Bonn, Switzerland, Austria, France, Italy, Canada and Australia). The Taliban have called on Afghan citizens living abroad and foreign nationals to apply for the necessary documents at Afghan diplomatic missions controlled by them in other countries. Since taking power in 2021, the Taliban have not managed to take control of all diplomatic missions worldwide - especially not in Western countries. Currently, the foreign missions in these countries are still run by diplomats appointed by the previous government of the republic. However, these missions have announced that they will continue to provide services to Afghan citizens.¹⁸

Persecution situation

According to a new report by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), 25 civilians were killed and 43 injured across the country between 01.04. and 30.06.24 - mostly as a result of attacks by the Islamic State of Khorasan Province (ISKP). Furthermore, 60 cases of arbitrary arrest and detention of former government employees and soldiers were registered.¹⁹

12 August 2024

Security situation

According to media reports from 11.08.24, a bomb attack on a minivan in western Kabul (Dasht-e Barchi district, mainly inhabited by ethnic Hazara) killed one person and injured 13 others, among them four women.²⁰

Governance and persecution

Taliban leader Hibatullah Akhundzada issued a new decree requiring all public employees to perform the five daily prayers in the office on time. Anyone who fails to do so without a valid reason is to be penalised.

According to media reports from 07.08.24, two people were publicly flogged in Kabul for "illicit relations". Taliban members are also said to have shot dead two former soldiers who had served in the eastern Afghan province of Parwan at the time of the republic.

According to a new report by the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), religious freedom declined "steadily and significantly" under Taliban rule. Taliban hardliners are silencing clerics and preventing religious minorities from practising their rituals. USCIRF recommends that the US government designate Taliban-ruled Afghanistan as a "country of particular concern" under the International Religious Freedom Act for "serious violations" of religious freedom.²¹

19 August 2024

Security situation

According to media reports, the city of Kabul experienced several explosions. Two are said to have occurred on 13.08.24 in police districts 16 and 17, a third one on 14.08.24 in the Kabul's Darul Aman district. There is no information about any victims or the background; the Taliban issued no official statement. The Islamic State of Khorasan Province (ISKP) has claimed responsibility for the attack in Kabul in the predominantly Shiite neighbourhood of Dasht-e Barchi on 11.08.24 (cf. BN of 12.08.24).²²

Governance and persecution: Third anniversary of the seizure of power

On 15.08.24, the Taliban celebrated the third anniversary of their takeover "as a victory over the Western occupiers". The largest ceremony took place at the former US military base in Bagram, north of Kabul. Home-made bombs, captured military vehicles and weapons were displayed at the parade. Another parade was held in the city of Kandahar in the presence of Emir Akhonzada. The Taliban government is still not officially recognised by any state in the world, but Chinese and Iranian diplomats and other foreign state guests were present – however, no Western diplomats.

Many citizens have defied the order to celebrate the anniversary. There were reports from several provinces (Panjshir, Khost, Takhar, Laghman, Ghazni and Kabul) that the Taliban had forced shopkeepers to display their flags and threatened them with serious consequences if they failed to do so. A shop owner from Khost was reportedly beaten up and arrested for this reason. In Kunduz province, no civilians are said to have taken part in the victory celebrations, apart from teachers and students who were forced to do so. In Bamiyan province, the Taliban forced around 3,000 students and 150 male school headmasters to take part in the celebrations and sing songs.

The London-based successor organisation to the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission, Rawadari, which was dissolved by the Taliban, has published a new semi-annual report on the human rights situation in the country. According to its report, at least 51 former government employees or their family members were injured or killed by the Taliban in the first half of 2024, despite the general amnesty. 35 people from this group were imprisoned indefinitely. In some cases, former government employees who returned to the country at the invitation of the Taliban were later killed. A further 131 civilians (e.g. tribal elders and clerics) suffered the same fate. It is said that the Taliban are not investigating these cases. According to media reports, a former police officer in the province of Bamiyan, who was the head of planning and operations for the Taliban police command there, was arrested by the Taliban. More checkpoints are said to have been set up on the province's main roads.²³

26 August 2024

Security situation

The Afghanistan Freedom Front, the National Resistance Front and the Islamic State province of Khorasan attacked the Taliban in the provinces of Badghis, Kabul and Nangarhar on 22.08. and 23.08.24, according to their own statements.²⁴

Governance

The Taliban have declared 18 August, the day of independence from British rule, a public holiday. At the same time, last month Taliban fighters destroyed the statue of King Amanullah Khan, under whose rule independence was achieved. They accused him of "Western immorality".

On 21.08.24, the Taliban issued a detailed "virtue law". It includes dress codes for men and women and other rules. Women are prohibited from singing, reciting poetry and speaking loudly in public. Homosexual relationships and missing prayers are also punishable by law. The media are not allowed to criticise the Taliban or show pictures or videos of living creatures. Most of the regulations had already been applied before and have now been put into writing. The Ministry of Virtue has extensive powers to punish offences.

The UN-appointed Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Afghanistan, Richard Bennett, declared on 21.08.24 that the Taliban had banned him from entering the country. The Taliban accuse him of spreading "false information and propaganda". Bennett called for dialogue and saw the entry ban as a "worrying signal" for the Taliban's relations to the international community.

On 25.08.24, the Taliban-appointed Minister of Education, Nedamohammad Nadim, banned questions about girls' and women's education.²⁵

Persecution situation

On 21.08.24, the Taliban reportedly arrested a man in Baghlan province on charges of supporting armed resistance. On the same day, the Taliban reportedly shot a former soldier on his doorstep in Paktika province. It was also reported that two weeks earlier, the Taliban arrested a social media activist at Kabul airport as he was returning from Dubai. He is said to have supported education for girls and the tricolour flag of the republic. On 24.08.24, they reportedly arrested a social media activist in Nangarhar province after he criticised the Taliban. On 25.08.24, the Taliban arrested a former soldier after he responded to a Taliban call to return from Iran.²⁶

Humanitarian situation

Several provinces, including Kabul, Kapisa, Nangarhar and Panjshir, suffered floods in which a child died and infrastructure was destroyed.²⁷

02 September 2024

Governance

In the three years since the Taliban takeover all appointees to the cabinet were exclusively Taliban. Media are reporting that Taliban leader Hibatullah Akhundzada has issued 75 decrees during this period dealing with the appointment or reappointment of over 370 Taliban officials. Of these, only 18 were new appointments, while the rest were merely transfers of Taliban office holders from one post to another ("reshuffling").

During Akhundzada's visit to the northern provinces of Badghis and Balkh, some local Taliban officials were transferred to new posts.

The Taliban have arrested Abdul Hamid Khorasani, a controversial Tajik Taliban commander from the province of Panjshir, for "negligence and careless statements" and placed him under house arrest. He had previously labelled the Iranian government as infidels and polytheists.

On 21.08.24, the United Arab Emirates became the second country after the People's Republic of China (cf. BN of 08.04.24) to officially accredit a Taliban ambassador to the country.

After the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) strongly criticised the Taliban's new virtue law, the Taliban officially declared the organisation an "enemy party". They will no longer co-operate with them due to the "false propaganda of UNAMA".²⁸

Persecution situation

According to media reports from 02.09.24, the Taliban have ordered the forced resettlement of dozens of families in the Nawur district of Ghazni province in favour of Kuchi nomads. The displaced people's agricultural and grazing land was handed over to the Kuchis. The district is mainly inhabited by ethnic Hazara. A few days earlier, around 600 Tajik families in the Dowlat Yar district of Ghor province were expelled from their land by the Taliban because they had allegedly acquired it illegally. They were not allowed to take any personal belongings or agricultural produce with them; the properties were handed over to ethnic Pashtuns. A month earlier, the Taliban reportedly ordered ethnic Hazara from the village of Kandir in the Gizab district of Uruzgan province to pay AFN 30 million (approx. EUR 38,417, as of 02.09.24) to Kuchi nomads as compensation for the land they allegedly occupied. As only half of the sum could be raised, the Taliban ordered the affected people to pay the remaining sum within two months to avoid forced resettlement.

According to media reports from 02.09.24, the Taliban secret service in Khost province has banned the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement's (PTM) trademark - the red Pashteen hat. Shop owners in the province have also been banned from selling the hat. Young people were reportedly beaten up by Taliban for wearing the hat. A young member of the PTM was arrested and tortured by the Taliban for promoting the PTM on social media.

Employees of the Taliban's local Ministry of Virtue in Ghazni province have disrupted the wedding celebrations of local residents and fined them for allegedly playing music. Wedding parlours are inspected and monitored on a daily basis. The Taliban's new "virtue law", prohibits playing and listening to music (cf. BN of 26.08.24). According to its 2023 annual report, the Taliban's Ministry of Virtue destroyed over 21,000 musical instruments across the country last year. Media reports say that employees of the regional Ministry of Virtue in Khost province are to explain the rules of the new virtue law to children in grades one to four in schools, according to which they should grow beards as adults, wear white hats and support the Taliban.

In the period from 27.08. to 29.08.24, the Taliban flogged several people in the provinces of Ghazni, Helmand and Khost for various offences (including robbery, running away from home). According to a Taliban press release, 11,000 people (including 1,000 women and 800 children) are being held in their prisons across the country. A further 12,000 people in custody are awaiting sentencing by the courts.

On 28.08.24, the Taliban opened fire on motorists protesting due to rising costs in Herat province. This was confirmed by the press office of the Taliban governor in Herat.²⁹

09 September 2024

Security situation

According to its own information, the National Resistance Front (NRF) killed five Taliban in the provinces of Herat, Kabul and Takhar between 02.09. and 8.09.24.

The media report that the Islamic State of Khorasan Province (ISKP) carried out a bomb attack on the "Directorate for Monitoring Compliance with the Emir's Decrees" (former Attorney General's Office) in Kabul in police district 6 (Qala-e Bakhtiar). The ISKP claimed 45 dead or injured persons; the Taliban reported six dead and 13 injured. The figures cited by the directorate were 34 dead and 22 injured, including 16 prosecutors who had remained in office after the Taliban take-over, this is according to the Association of Afghan Prosecutors. The ISKP justified the act by claiming that they had taken revenge for the Taliban's transfer of imprisoned ISKP members to the prison in Bagram. The directorate also oversees the prisons and prisoner transports in the country.

On 07.09.24 Taliban and Pakistani border guards clashed in Khost province. One Talib was reportedly killed, six Taliban and five civilians were injured.³⁰

Persecution

In Badghis province, the Taliban arrested a member of the local wrestling association, a report from 02.09.24 says. They accused him of not interrupting competitions at prayer time.

In five provinces, the Taliban allegedly flogged a total of 17 people on 02.09. and 07.09.24. Some of them were accused of "running away from home" and sentenced to several years in prison.

In Takhar province, the Taliban reportedly shot dead a former soldier on 04.09.24 while searching for supporters of the NRF in the region. In Kabul, the Taliban are said to have arrested a former government employee and his

brother on the same day. The background is unclear. In Badghis province, the Taliban reportedly arrested a person on 05.09.24 on charges of being a member of the NRF.

In Kandahar province, the Taliban interrupted the transmission of a television station on 04.09.24, accusing it of showing living creatures which the "virtue law" prohibits. In Daikundi province, the Taliban reportedly banned women from working for media companies on 06.09.24.

In Panjshir province, clashes erupted between the Taliban and the local population after a Taliban vehicle collided with a civilian vehicle. The Taliban are said to have arrested at least eleven people on 07.09.24.³¹

Humanitarian situation and migration

According to the IOM, the number of people leaving Afghanistan for Iran and Pakistan is increasing. The figure for the period from 18.08. to 24.08.24 is said to have been 72,000 – a 21 % percent rise against the week before. Many of them cite economic reasons. In the same period, IOM counted 64,950 people travelling to Afghanistan from Pakistan and Iran.

In Badakhshan province, 26 children died of malnutrition within six months.

According to a report from 05.09.24, the Taliban have forced several organisations supporting people with disabilities to stop their work. The reasons for this are unclear.³²

16 September 2024

Security situation

According to media reports, the Islamic State of Khorasan Province (ISKP) attacked Shiite civilians in the province of Ghor. Around 14 people are said to have been killed and another four injured. The victims were travelling to Ghor from the Sangtakht district in Daikundi to welcome pilgrims returning from Karbala (Iraq).

Two bombs exploded in quick succession in the Khair Khana area north of Kabul on 11.09.24. The Afghanistan Freedom Front (AFF) informed that its fighters had twice attacked a Taliban checkpoint in this area of Kabul that day killing five Taliban members and injuring two others. The AFF further claimed to have killed two Taliban fighters in Balkh province on 12.09.24.

According to media reports from 15.09.24, Osama bin Laden's son, Hamza bin Laden, is leading the terrorist organisation al-Qaeda from the province of Nangarhar (Jalalabad) in eastern Afghanistan, protected by 450 militants, including people of Arab and Pakistani origin. The Taliban are said to meet with him there regularly.

According to media reports, 16 Taliban were killed and 27 others injured in exchanges of fire between Pakistani border troops and Taliban soldiers in the border region between the province of Khost and the Pakistani province of Kurram between 07.09. and 09.09.24. Many locals have left their homes out of fear of the fighting.³³

Governance & persecution

According to the Taliban's press spokesman, Zabiullah Mujahid, 80 per cent of the staff of government agencies at the time of the republic are still in service.

The media reported that the Taliban's Ministry of Virtue has asked employees in several ministries to take a religious test based on the Hanafi school of law. The questions are to include, for example, how to wash oneself properly with water (ghusl) or how to clean oneself properly without water (tayammum). Illiterate people would be tested orally. Those who do not pass the test are to be dismissed. The local Ministry of Virtue in Nangarhar province has closed around 20 barber shops in the city of Jalalabad and the districts of Sorkh Rud, Behsud, Ghani Khel and Kuzkunar; allegedly the barbers and their customers were attacked by the Taliban because beards had been trimmed. According to media reports from 05.09.24, all employees of the local Ministry of Virtue (Mutahsibs) and the mullahs of all mosques in Ghazni province met for a three-day meeting to discuss how the Taliban's new "virtue law" could be effectively implemented. Initially, the new regulations should be presented and explained to all residents during Friday prayers on 06.09.24; any violations would be harshly punished. The Taliban Ministry of Information and Culture in Khost province has warned poets that they will be punished if they write critical poems about the Taliban or girls' education.

Reports from Herat province say that former female students are now running around 75 shops in the Ferdowsi market instead of studying in order to earn a living. Allegedly they regularly call on the Taliban to allow them to

resume their studies. According to media reports, Taliban leader Hibatullah Akhunzada recently reiterated that he would never open universities and schools to women again.

According to media reports from 12.09.24, two non-Pashtun commanders from Faryab province have left the Taliban after Akhunzada visited the province and allegedly did not consider them when filling new positions. It is said that one of them is an ethnic Tajik and the other one an ethnic Uzbek.³⁴

Repatriation of undocumented Afghan refugees from Iran

At a press conference of the Iranian National Police on 10.09.24, it was announced that Iran intends to repatriate around 2 million undocumented refugees by the end of March 2025. This will primarily affect Afghan refugees, of whom around 5 million are believed to be in the country according to the Iranian authorities. In the southern city of Kerman, bakeries have been instructed to stop selling bread to Afghan migrants; schools are no longer to accept Afghan pupils. Across the country, Iranian citizens have been banned from employing people of Afghan origin as labourers or renting flats to them. According to media reports, hundreds of undocumented Afghan nationals and people of Baloch origin have already been arrested by the Iranian police in the city of Iranshar and taken to a so-called foreigners' camp, where they are awaiting repatriation.³⁵

23 September 2024

Security situation

The National Resistance Front (NRF) and the Afghanistan Freedom Front (AFF) reported that they killed around eleven Taliban fighters and injured others in several attacks in Kabul and Herat between 16.09. and 21.09.24. According to a report by the UN Secretary-General, the armed opposition assaulted the Taliban 73 times between 14.05. and 31.07.24. The NRF and the AFF were responsible for most of these attacks, but numerous other incidents could not be attributed to any group. The rate of security incidents has increased by 53 % against last year.

On 19.09. and 20.09.24, Pakistani border guards and the Taliban clashed yet again. According to the local population, also civilians were injured.³⁶

Persecution situation

On 16.09 and 18.09.24, the Taliban reportedly arrested a former soldier from Panjshir province in Kabul accusing him of supporting the NRF. In Takhar province, a former police commander was reportedly shot dead by the Taliban on 19.09.24. The latest UN report on the security situation confirms that there are still cases of extrajudicial killings and torture of former government employees and security forces. Between May and July 2024, four killings, nine arrests without trial and six cases of torture were verified.

Between 15.09 and 22.09.24, the Taliban flogged at least eight people in the provinces of Balkh, Faryab, Sar-e Pol and Herat. They were accused of drug offences, sodomy and "running away from home", among other things.

The Taliban allegedly accused six people of theft and shot them dead in Takhar province on 19.09.24. It is said that the bodies were put on public display afterwards.

According to a report from 21.09.24, the Taliban have arrested the editor-in-chief of Radio Baghlan, Jawed Forugh. The background is unclear.

On 20.09.24, Amnesty International drew attention to the fact that education activist Fahim Azizmi had been in Taliban custody for eleven months and that his mental health was deteriorating.³⁷

Government affairs

According to a report of 17.09.24, the Taliban have stopped a polio vaccination campaign without giving reasons.

On 20.09.24, the Taliban banned religious debates and warned against broadcasting such debates in the media. In particular, they emphasised that no critical voices should "confuse" the population and that no alternative interpretations of Islam should be disseminated. Several religious scholars criticised the regulation. On 21.09.24, the Taliban reportedly instructed media representatives in Kabul that all political programmes must be recorded and submitted to the Taliban for censorship ahead of being broadcasted. They also presented a list of 68 people from which guests for political programmes were to be selected.³⁸

30 September 2024

Governance and persecution

According to media reports, on 21.09.24 the Taliban removed a roundabout in Kabul in the western district of Dasht-e Barchi, which is mainly inhabited by Hazaras. The mural with the relief of Hazara leader Ali Mazari located on the roundabout was destroyed in the process. According to the Taliban, the roundabout was removed in order to speed up traffic. Months earlier, the Taliban had already disfigured Mazari's face on the relief. In the province of Herat, the Taliban sawed off the heads of animal statues. Both measures can be interpreted as part of the Taliban's strict interpretation of Islamic law, which prohibits the depiction of living creatures.

In Badakhshan province, the Taliban have expelled 26 students from Badakhshan University for allegedly playing football during prayers, this was reported by the media. In a state television programme, Taliban leader Hibatullah Akhundzada described the faces of women and girls as "a source of temptation" and emphasised that they should be covered in public. In Takhar province, the Taliban shot dead six men for alleged theft and put their bodies on public display in Baharak district.

Ajmal Kohi, a Tajik Taliban commander, was arrested by Taliban intelligence in Faryab province in northern Afghanistan.³⁹

07 October 2024

Security situation

According to their own accounts, the National Resistance Front and the Afghanistan Freedom Front attacked the Taliban in Herat, Kunduz, Kabul and Panjshir provinces on 03.10. and 04.10.24, killing a total of 20 Taliban fighters. The operations included an attack on an important Taliban army base in Panjshir Province in which 13 Taliban were allegedly killed.

On 01.10. and 06.10.24, armed clashes occurred between the Taliban and Pakistani border soldiers once again at the Afghan-Pakistani border. The course of the border is disputed, and attempts to fortify the border are a particularly frequent cause of conflicts.⁴⁰

Persecution

The Taliban reportedly flogged two people for alleged "moral wrongdoings" in Ghazni province on 01.10.24.

On 02.10.24 the Taliban are said to have arrested a driver in Badghis province for transporting women who were not escorted by a male relative (mahram). On the same day, the Taliban reportedly beheaded a former policeman in Badakhshan province. It has also been reported that the Taliban arrested the director of a radio station in Ghazni province on this day. He was accused of having spoken "disrespectfully" about suicide attacks by the Taliban during the era of the Republic.

On 03.10.24 the Taliban reportedly arrested two girls in Ghazni province for filming a wedding. They were released after a number of hours.

On 05.10.24 the Taliban are said to have shot dead a man at a checkpoint in Farah province after he failed to stop his vehicle. On the same day, the Taliban arrested six people in Kabul on charges of leading "illegal relationships".⁴¹

Humanitarian situation

At least one person died and six were injured in flooding in Kunar province on 05.10.24. Around 60 houses and 200 hectares of agricultural land were reportedly destroyed.⁴²

14 October 2024

Security situation

It was reported in the media on 12.10.24 that an explosion had occurred in the western part of Kabul. The Taliban have not commented on the incident. The Afghanistan Freedom Front (AFF) claimed responsibility for the attack, stating that it had killed three Taliban. On the same day, three Taliban were killed in Ghor province by members of Islamic State in Khorasan Province (ISKP).⁴³

Governance and persecution

A former general of the Republic of Afghanistan was killed by the Taliban in Kabul on 11.10.24. It was reported in the media on 12.10.24 that the Taliban had arrested five people in Takhar province for playing music. In Kunar province, the Taliban have had eight people flogged for offences including sodomy and theft. According to reports in the media, in the past three months a total of 14 religious schools have been inaugurated or the construction of such schools has begun in nine of Afghanistan's 34 provinces.⁴⁴

21 October 2024

Security situation

Fighters belonging to the Taliban and the Islamic State in Khorasan Province (ISKP) are reported to have clashed in Ghor province on 13.10.24. The Taliban claim that three high-ranking members of ISKP were killed.

Unknown assailants attacked a vehicle in Faryab province on 17.10.24, killing or injuring eleven people. Two Taliban were among the casualties. By its own account, the Afghanistan Freedom Front attacked the entrance gate to the Taliban's interior ministry in Kabul on 18.10.24, killing four Taliban.⁴⁵

Persecution

Some 30 people were publicly flogged in a number of provinces between 13.10. and 17.10.24 for alleged offences such as "illegal relations", homosexual relations or corruption.

The political analyst Jawed Kohistani was released by the Taliban on 15.10.24 after three weeks in custody. Prior to his arrest, he had criticised the Taliban on numerous occasions. No official charges were brought against him.

A man is reported to have been shot dead by the Taliban at a checkpoint in the city of Herat on 19.10.24. The background remains unclear.⁴⁶

Control of the media

Several TV stations in Takhar province suspended broadcasting on 14.10.24 on account of the ban on showing images of living beings under the so-called "morality law" and its strict implementation by local Taliban representatives. On 20.10.24, journalists in Khost province were prevented from filming a public event at a university after the Taliban-appointed minister of higher education stressed that filming living beings was a sin. According to exile medium Afghanistan International, the Taliban intend to turn state television stations into radio stations.⁴⁷

Migration

According to reports by survivors, Iranian border soldiers seriously wounded or killed some 250 Afghan nationals who were attempting to cross the border between Afghanistan and Iran illegally on 13.10.24. Other sources speculate that the victims may have run across a mine field. The exact number of casualties is unclear.

According to information released by the Taliban on 19.10.24, 1,400 families entered Afghanistan in the space of one week in the context of the expulsions from Iran and Pakistan. According to information from the UNHCR, 733,000 Afghan nationals have entered Afghanistan from Pakistan since the beginning of mass expulsions from Pakistan in September 2023.⁴⁸

Humanitarian situation

According to a report published by the UNDP et al., the poverty rate in Afghanistan has risen by 5.2 % since 2015/16. Children are particularly severely affected. According to new data in the Global Hunger Index, 30.4 % of the population are malnourished and 5.8 % of children die before their fifth birthday. Afghanistan ranks 116th among 127 surveyed countries and is the second most severely affected country in Asia. On 17.10.24 the World Food Programme's national director for Afghanistan described Afghanistan as a "global hunger hotspot", pointing out that three quarters of the population are unable to afford adequate food.⁴⁹

28 October 2024

Security situation

By its own account, the National Resistance Front (NRF) killed three Taliban fighters in an attack in Kabul on 24.10.24. The Afghanistan Freedom Front (AFF) claims to have killed two Taliban in an attack in Faryab province and to have fired a number of missiles at the military area of Kabul Airport on 20.10.24. Residents in Kabul report having heard two explosions at the time. There has been no reporting as to any casualties. It has been reported in the media that a bomb attack took place at a market near to the Pamir cinema in Kabul on 23.10.24, injuring eleven people (including women and children). No-one has claimed responsibility for the attack. According to reports in the media, a further explosion occurred on the same day in police district 8 of Kabul.⁵⁰

Governance and persecution

According to reports in the media on 27.10.24, in Daikundi province the Taliban have begun instructing public-sector employees on the contents of the new morality law. The Taliban have also begun confiscating "forbidden books" in Daikundi. At libraries and book shops in Kabul, the Taliban have handed out a list of 400 banned books, with instructions not to sell or lend out the listed works. The banned books include works on Ahmad Shah Massoud, the Shiite religion or books presenting a positive view of democracy. The Taliban have reportedly extended their ban on presenting images of living beings in media to at least ten provinces of Afghanistan (including Kandahar, Helmand, Urozgan, Kunar, Khost, Takhar, Badghis, Panjshir and Laghman) (cf. BN of 21.10.24). In Nimroz province, the Taliban arrested 40 people after protests in connection with the search of a house in which only women and children lived. Six people were injured in Ghor province when the Taliban opened fire on people who were protesting against the body-searching of local women.⁵¹

04 November 2024

Security situation

According to their own accounts, the National Resistance Front (NRF) and the Afghanistan Freedom Front killed or wounded nine Taliban in Kabul on 28.10. and 01.11.24.⁵²

Persecution

At least 18 people were arrested in Kabul, Farah and Kandahar provinces between 29.10. and 02.11.24 for "moral corruption" (e.g. extra-marital relationships). Such arrests have become more frequent since the so-called "morality law" was passed. Public floggings have also taken place in a number of provinces. An update on the human rights situation which was published on 31.10.24 states that the Taliban carried out corporal punishment in a total of 111 cases between July and September 2024. It was reported on 03.11.24 that the Taliban had expelled students from university in Nangarhar province for failing to wear a beard or turban.

On 26.10.24 the Taliban arrested a former police officer in Kapisa province. No further details have emerged. The former commander of a militia which fought against the Taliban with the army was shot dead by unknown attackers in Sar-e Pol province on 31.10.24.

In a report published on 29.10.24 on the human rights situation in Afghanistan, the UN's special rapporteur, Richard Bennett, draws particular attention to sexual violence against women in the custody of the Taliban.

On 30.10.24 it was reported from Kandahar province that the Taliban had beaten several car salesmen unconscious during a tax collection operation.

On 30.10.24 the Taliban temporarily shut down a radio station in Khost province for using background music in a news programme. The Taliban are calling on journalists not to be influenced by the "international propaganda war" against the Taliban.

It was reported on 31.10.24 that the Taliban had sentenced the former chairman of the provincial council of Panjshir province in absentia and without legal counsel to twelve years' imprisonment. The Taliban accused him of having supported the NRF. He has been held in custody by the Taliban since February 2024. He was previously arrested shortly after the Taliban came to power and subsequently released on bail.

According to reports on 03.11.24, the Taliban in Kabul arrested a man originating from Panjshir province for filming a traffic accident. The Taliban had previously only explicitly prohibited the filming of security incidents.⁵³

Humanitarian situation

It was reported from Kabul on 27.10.24 that the situation with regard to the supply of drinking water is becoming increasingly tense. Many families have to queue for hours on end to buy water at rising prices. The price of firewood has also increased by around 50 % compared to last year. As many households cannot afford the wood, families are increasingly resorting to burning plastic.⁵⁴

11 November 2024

Security situation

It has been reported in the media that the National Resistance Front (NRF) has killed a total of six Taliban fighters in two attacks in Herat province on 06.11. and 09.11.24 respectively. By its own account, the NRF additionally killed five Taliban in an attack in Kabul's Kote Sangi district on 07.11.24. The Taliban killed two of their own members in Ghor province on 07.11.24 for allegedly having cooperated with Islamic State in Khorasan Province (ISKP).⁵⁵

Governance and persecution

In accordance with a new decree issued by Taliban leader Akhundzada, the defence and interior ministries and the general directorate for secret services (headed by Mullah Yaqoob, Sirajuddin Haqqani and Abdul Haq Wasiq respectively) have had their powers to issue weapons, munitions and military equipment removed. Henceforth, only the emir himself is authorised to make decisions on the allocation of military equipment.

The emir has issued a directive for the secret service in Kunar province instructing it to identify and prohibit foreign sources of funding for seminars by the "Ahl-e-Hadith" group. Members of this group who are employed in the civil service are to be discharged.

The Taliban-controlled education ministry announced on 11.11.24 that registrations had begun for the university entrance examination (Kankor) for 2024. Female pupils were prohibited from registering for the third time in succession.

It was reported in the media on 04.11.24 that the Taliban had arrested two Shiite clerics in Herat province and taken them to an unknown location.

In the city of Jalalabad (Nangarhar province), the Taliban have searched houses close to important government buildings (including the police headquarters and the seat of the provincial governor). Similar searches have also been carried out in Kabul, Kapisa, Parwan, Panjshir and other provinces. Also in Nangarhar, the Taliban's local ministry of vice and virtue has expelled students from the local university for failing to wear beards or turbans.

The Taliban secret service has arrested a former agent of the Afghan secret service in the city of Kabul. Nationwide, the Taliban had 46 people flogged in total in the past week up to 06.11.24.⁵⁶

18 November 2024

Governance and persecution

In Paktia province on 13.11.24, the Taliban carried out their sixth public execution since they returned to power in August 2021. A convicted murderer was punished with death as a qisas punishment in accordance with the sharia. According to reports in the media on 18.11.24, the number of cases of corporal punishment administered in public for offences according to the Taliban's interpretation of the sharia has recent increased sharply, in particular since the morality law was passed. In October 2024 a total of 85 people, including 12 women, were flogged throughout the country for various offences. Staff of the Taliban's local ministry of vice and virtue in Logar province have arrested eight people, including one woman, for "moral corruption".

Journalists in Afghanistan are complaining that the ban on filming "living beings" under the morality law means to all intents and purposes that they are no longer able to go about their work. According to reports in the media, this ban is currently being enforced particularly rigidly in Nangarhar, Takhar, Badghis and Khost provinces.

In Herat, the Taliban have arrested Abdul Quddus Yasinzada, a well-known figure from the education sector and founder of the educational foundation Resalat.

After taking over control of the Afghan consulate in the city of Mumbai in India, the Taliban reportedly began issuing passports there on 11.11.24. This step took place only a matter of days after an Indian delegation visited Kabul.⁵⁷

Humanitarian situation

The WFP reports that food security has improved slightly in Afghanistan. Serious concerns nevertheless still apply, in view of the approaching winter. According to the report, almost one quarter of the population, corresponding to some 11.6 million people, are currently affected by food insecurity (IPC phase 3 or higher). This figure represents a drop compared to the total of 15.3 million in 2023. The coming winter months are likely to exacerbate the situation once again, however: The WFP estimates that between November 2024 and March 2025 14.8 million people – roughly 32 % of the population – are likely to be affected by food insecurity.⁵⁸

25 November 2024

Security situation

Unknown persons are said to have shot at a Sufi shrine in Baghlan province on 21.11.24, killing at least ten people. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack. The Taliban have reportedly arrested a number of people. The National Resistance Front claimed on 23.11.24 that it had carried out 41 attacks on the Taliban in eleven provinces in the space of one month, killing 72 Taliban and injuring 43. The Afghanistan Freedom Front also reports further attacks on the Taliban.⁵⁹

Persecution

A report substantiated by satellite images shows that the Taliban have destroyed settlements covering some 1.56 km² in Kabul since they assumed power, driving the residents from their homes. The settlements were inhabited primarily by internally displaced people and other poor segments of the population and the majority of those affected are said to have been ethnic Hazaras and Tajiks. The report cites victims claiming that in some instances people were still in the houses when they were destroyed by the Taliban. As no alternative accommodation was provided, the majority of the families concerned are now homeless.

Between 18.11. and 21.11.24 at least eight people were publicly flogged for "moral corruption" in Baghlan, Khost, Paktika and Samangan provinces.

On 18.11.24 the Taliban are said to have arrested a number of people in Panjshir province once again, including a former member of the security forces and two teachers. It is unclear what accusations they face.⁶⁰

Humanitarian situation

According to information from the UN, one year after the series of earthquakes in Herat province more than 25,000 people are still living in inadequate accommodation and are unprepared for the winter. Adequate humanitarian aid is also lacking, due in part to a shortage of funds.⁶¹

02 December 2024

Security situation

By its own account, the National Resistance Front killed one Talib in an attack in Kabul on 25.11.24.⁶²

Persecution

The Taliban reportedly arrested a woman in Kapisa province on 22.11.24 after she had been raped by five members of her husband's family. Only one of the perpetrators is said to have been arrested by the Taliban.

It was reported on 25.11. and 30.11.24 that the Taliban had arrested one former soldier respectively in Bamiyan province and in Kabul. In Panjshir province they reportedly arrested a former soldier on 30.11.24 who had shortly before been deported from Iran, together with two other people. A man who was arrested in Herat province on 29.11.24 died as a result of the effects of torture on the same day. The background to his arrest is unclear.

A report from the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) on 26.11.24 puts the number of journalists indiscriminately arrested by the Taliban since 15.08.21 at 256. Torture and mistreatment is said to have occurred in at least 130 cases.

It was reported on 27.11.24 that the Taliban had arrested five of their own members for attending a marriage at which music was played. On the same day, eight people were arrested in Laghman province for playing music at a wedding.

There are recent reports of floggings by the Taliban, including the case of a man in Parwan province who was sentenced to 80 lashes for allegedly having falsely accused another man of adultery.⁶³

Economic and humanitarian situation

In a recent statement, the WFP warns of a further worsening of food insecurity. It reports that three out of four families are forced to enter into debt in order to buy food. The WFP itself does not have sufficient financial resources to support all families in need. Women who have begged report of arrests and rape by the Taliban. Three children are reported to have died on 29.11.24 in a cold spell with heavy snowfall in Badakhshan province.

According to a report published by the UN on 27.11.24, opium production has increased by 30 % in 2024 compared to 2023. It nevertheless remains 93 % below the volume before the Taliban's ban on growing opium came into force in 2022. Growing opium is around 60 times more profitable than cultivating other crops. Overall, according to the figures published by the Taliban the economy was weaker in the past six months than in the same period last year.⁶⁴

09 December 2024

Governance and persecution

On 04.12.24 the Taliban held a cabinet meeting in the city of Kandahar to discuss control of the media and the activities of a number of foreign organisations in Afghanistan. Those attending the meeting were reportedly forbidden to take smartphones or any other technical recording devices into the room. The military presence in the city of Kandahar was stepped up substantially during the cabinet meeting.

On 04.12.24 the Taliban shut down the Arezo TV station in the city of Kabul on the grounds that it had violated Islamic values.

It was reported in the media on 02.12.24 that Taliban leader Hibatullah Akhundzada had issued a new directive banning women from visiting medical institutes (including universities, medical further education establishments). This impacts training to become a midwife, for example, and deprives women of one of the final options for taking up further education in the country. The directive is likely to further exacerbate the already critical shortage of female health workers. Under the Taliban's rules, male health workers are not permitted to treat women.

On 02.12.24 the head of the vice and virtue ministry, Khalid Hanafi, resumed his journey around the provinces to drive forward implementation of the morality law, travelling through Helmand and Uruzgan provinces.

On the same day, the Taliban arrested 100 farmers in Badakhshan province for growing opium. It was reported in the media on 06.12.24 that the Taliban had publicly flogged a total of seven people in Khost and Faryab provinces. According to reports in the media, the Taliban built a total of seven new madrasas for religious education in seven provinces (Sar-e Pul, Kapisa, Farah, Badakhshan, Baghlan, Khost and Ghazni) between October and November 2024, at a total cost of AFM 24 million (approx. EUR 330,000 as per 09.12.24).⁶⁵

Humanitarian situation

According to reports in the media, the ban imposed by the Taliban on girls attending school in Afghanistan has led to a 25 % increase in child marriages and a 45 % rise in the birth rate. UNICEF has reported that 22.9 million people in Afghanistan, including 12.4 million children, will be dependent on humanitarian aid in 2025. At the end of November 2024, at least three children aged between nine and twelve froze to death in heavy snowfall on their way from their homes in the village of Nawabad to the nearby village of Calar, in the Raghistan district of Badakhshan province in the north-east of the country.⁶⁶

16 December 2024

Governance and persecution

On 11.12.24 the Taliban minister for refugees, Khalil Haqqani, and three other people were killed in a suicide attack on the grounds of the ministry of refugees in Kabul. Haqqani is an uncle of Sirajuddin Haqqani, the Taliban's interior minister, and a member of the Haqqani network, which has good links to Al Qaeda. Islamic State - Khorasan Province (ISPK) has claimed responsibility for the attack.

It was reported in the media on 12.12., 14.12 and 15.12.24 that the Taliban had publicly flogged a total of eight people in Paktia, Kunduz and Samangan provinces. Nationwide, since the beginning of November 2024 the Taliban have had 133 people, including 19 women, flogged for various offences.

The new report released by the UN Secretary-General on 06.12.24 with regard to the situation in Afghanistan finds that the armed opposition still poses no serious threat to the Taliban. In the period under review from August to October 2024, the report records 2,510 security incidents, representing a rise of around 40 % over the same period in the previous year. The numbers of casualties remain low, however. In the reporting period, 16 civilians (eight men, one woman and seven boys) were killed and 71 (57 men, seven women, six boys and one girl) injured. In addition, a total of 16 civilians (15 boys and one girl) were killed and 35 (nine men, four women, 19 boys and three girls) were injured by unexploded munitions. Contrary to the general amnesty announced by the Taliban, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)

has documented at least five killings, 14 arbitrary arrests and four cases of torture and abuse of former government officials and former members of the Afghanistan security forces by the Taliban. The report also notes an increase in security incidents between Pakistani border soldiers and the Taliban.

The Taliban ministry of higher education announced on 11.12.24 that it had revoked the licences of eleven private colleges for breaching administrative and educational regulations. The ministry announced in a statement that it had established the "existence of bogus teachers and students, sham agreements and a lack of qualified administrative staff".⁶⁷

Humanitarian situation

According to the UN Secretary-General's new report on the situation in Afghanistan (see above), an estimated 23.7 million people in Afghanistan continue to find themselves in a critical humanitarian situation. Only 37.5 % of the total of around US\$ 3 billion targeted for the Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2024 had been contributed as per 11.11.24, however. While the Afghan economy is showing some signs of recovery, it continues to face problems such as unemployment, poverty and a lack of human capital. The AFN continues to be some 25.7 % stronger against the US dollar than in August 2021. In the first six months of the current fiscal year, which began on 22.03.24, public revenue totalled around US\$ 1.6 billion (approx. AFN 110.9 billion as per 06.12.24), representing a 10 % increase over the previous year.

It was reported in the media on 14.12.24 that some 50 homeless people and drug addicts had died of hunger or cold in the city of Zaranj (Nimruz province) in the previous month. There are said to be around 13,000 drug addicts, some 5,000 of whom are homeless, in the province, which has long been a key drug trafficking hub.⁶⁸

23 December 2024

Governance and persecution

Media located outside the country reported on 19.12.24 that a total of twelve private and public-sector media companies (eleven TV stations and one radio station) were closed by the Taliban in 2024. Most recently, on 04.12.24 the TV station Arezo TV was closed and seven employees were arrested (cf. BN of 09.12.24).

It was reported on 18.12.24 that the Taliban's secret service had arrested a former soldier of the National Directorate of Security (NDS) in Panjshir province. The individual concerned initially fled to Iran after the Taliban seized power, but had recently returned.

It has been reported in the media that a former bodyguard of ex-president Ghani from Panjshir province, Rahmdel Hanafi, took his own life after the Taliban had arrested his wife and taken her to an unknown location because they were unable to apprehend him. Hanafi initially fled to Iran after the Taliban seized power, but subsequently returned after receiving guarantees from the Taliban.

Two young women are reported to have taken their own lives in Faryab and Takhar provinces respectively, either for family-related reasons or in order to escape forced marriages. The suicide rate among young women has risen sharply since the Taliban came to power – in 2023, a total of 103 women in 28 provinces took their own lives.⁶⁹

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