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Briefing Notes

Group 62 – Information Centre for Asylum and Migration

13 November 2023

Afghanistan

Expulsion of Afghan refugees from Pakistan

At a press conference on 08.11.23, Pakistan's interim prime minister Kakar stated that Pakistan would not be stopping the expulsion of illegally resident Afghan refugees to Afghanistan. He said that since the Taliban assumed power in 2021 there had been a dramatic rise in terrorist attacks in Pakistan, first and foremost by the Pakistani Taliban (TTP). He noted that the Afghan Taliban should decide whether they wanted to cooperate with the Pakistani government or with the TTP. According to information from the UN, approx. 280,000 refugees have already returned to Afghanistan, the majority of their own volition. According to information from Pakistan, by 01.11.23 approx. 7,400 illegally resident Afghans had been registered and deported to Afghanistan at the Landikotal holding camp in Pakistan, close to the Torkham border crossing. On the Afghan side there is a large refugee camp in Torkham which is being run by the Taliban. There is also the Chaman holding camp at the Spin Boldak border crossing point (cf. BN of 30.10. and 06.11.23).¹

Security situation: ISKP attacks on Hazaras

It was reported on 08.11.23 that there had again been a bomb attack by Islamic State in Khorasan Province (ISKP) in the west of Kabul (Dasht-e Barchi district). The attack on a bus carrying passengers killed eight people and injured 37. Ethnic Hazaras make up the majority of the population in the district concerned. The ISKP had previously carried out an attack in Dasht-e Barchi on 26.10.23, when a number of people were killed or injured at a boxing club (cf. BN of 30.10.23). On 13.10.23 there was an attack on a Shiite mosque in the city of Pul-e-Khumri in Baghlan province (cf. BN of 16.10.23). The current prevalence of reports indicates that the ISKP is stepping up attacks on Hazaras once again, after having broken with this strategy for a time and focusing instead on Taliban governors and foreign state visitors of the Taliban.²

Bangladesh

Textile workers strike and stage protests, some involving violent clashes

For around two weeks now, textile workers in Bangladesh have been demonstrating for higher wages. In some instances, the demonstrations have turned violent. The demonstrators are demanding a three-fold increase in their present pay, in order to be able to meet the increased costs of accommodation, food, healthcare and school fees. On 07.11.23, a government-appointed commission announced a roughly 56 % increase in the minimum wage as of December – the first such increase for five years. The textile workers' union rejected this as unacceptable. Prime minister Sheikh Hasina has ruled out any further increases in pay. On 08.11.23 the protests – which coincided with continuing demonstrations protesting against Sheikh Hasina and calling for free and fair parliamentary elections (cf. BN of 06.11.23) – erupted into violence when clashes occurred with the police. The police subsequently used