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2019 Trafficking in Persons Report: Pakistan

PAKISTAN: Tier 2

The Government of Pakistan does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so. The government demonstrated overall increasing efforts compared to the previous reporting period; therefore Pakistan remained on Tier 2. These efforts included passing the country's first comprehensive human trafficking law that criminalized all forms of sex trafficking and labor trafficking; securing its first conviction in 10 years of an official complicit in human trafficking; and identifying and referring an increased number of trafficking victims to care. However, the government did not meet the minimum standards in several key areas. Overall law enforcement efforts against labor trafficking remained inadequate compared to the scale of the problem. Punjab continued to be the only province to report convictions for bonded labor, and those convictions decreased significantly. While the government took action in two cases of official complicity in trafficking that garnered national attention, it did not address widespread reports of local officials' pervasive involvement in bonded labor, and some provincial government officials denied the existence of bonded labor. Government protection efforts remained inconsistent; officials did not refer the majority of identified trafficking victims to care, and the lack of protective services for bonded labor victims contributed to their re-trafficking.

PRIORITIZED RECOMMENDATIONS

At both the federal and provincial levels, increase prosecutions and convictions, particularly of forced labor—including bonded labor—and cases involving allegedly complicit officials, and stringently punish perpetrators. • Finalize, disseminate, and train officials on the implementing rules for the 2018 Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act (PTPA). • Designate specialized prosecutors and judges to hear trafficking cases. • Increase trafficking-specific services for victims, including for males, and ensure victims are not penalized for acts traffickers compelled them to commit. • Create, disseminate, and train officials—including provincial police, labor inspectors, and social services—on standard operating procedures (SOPs) for victim identification and referral to rehabilitation services. • Expand services for bonded laborers, including shelter, identity documents, and legal assistance. • Register and inspect brick kilns in accordance with relevant laws regulating factories, and refer suspected bonded labor to law enforcement. • Take steps to eliminate all recruitment fees charged to workers. • Train government officials to clearly distinguish between human trafficking and migrant

smuggling. • Remove the provisions in the 2018 PTPA that allow judges to prescribe only fines to convicted traffickers. • Lift restrictions on female migration while negotiating female worker protections with destination country governments. • Improve efforts to collect and accurately report anti-trafficking data. • Accede to the 2000 UN TIP Protocol.

PROSECUTION

The government demonstrated mixed overall law enforcement efforts against trafficking. Pakistani laws criminalized sex trafficking and labor trafficking. During the reporting period, the government repealed the Prevention and Control of Human Trafficking Ordinance (PACHTO) and replaced it with the 2018 (PTPA). The 2018 PTPA criminalized sex trafficking and labor trafficking and prescribed penalties of up to seven years' imprisonment, a fine of up to 1 million Pakistani rupees (PKR) (\$7,220), or both for trafficking offenses involving an adult male victim, and penalties of between two and 10 years' imprisonment, a fine of up to 1 million PKR (\$7,220), or both for those involving adult female or child victims. These penalties were sufficiently stringent. However, with regard to sex trafficking, by allowing for a fine in lieu of imprisonment, these penalties were not commensurate with those for other serious crimes, such as rape. The government continued to use other sections of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) that criminalized some forms of human trafficking. For example, Section 371A and 371B criminalized the buying and selling of a person for prostitution and prescribed penalties of up to 25 years' imprisonment and fines. Section 374 criminalized unlawful compulsory labor and prescribed penalties of up to five years' imprisonment, a fine, or both. Section 366A criminalized procurement of a “minor girl under 18” and prescribed penalties of up to 10 years' imprisonment and a fine. Section 370 criminalized buying or disposing of any person as a slave and prescribed penalties of up to seven years' imprisonment and a fine, and Section 371 criminalized habitual dealing in slaves and prescribed penalties of up to life imprisonment and a fine if the imprisonment was less than 10 years. These penalties were sufficiently stringent and, with respect to sex trafficking, commensurate with those prescribed for other grave crimes, such as rape. The federal Bonded Labor System (Abolition) Act (BLSA) criminalized bonded labor, with prescribed penalties ranging from two to five years' imprisonment, a fine, or both; these penalties were sufficiently stringent. Most of the provincial governments have adopted their own labor laws, including anti-bonded labor laws, under a devolution process that began in 2010. However, federal laws apply until corresponding provincial laws are enacted.

The 2018 PTPA replaced PACHTO in May 2018 and the government did not finalize implementing rules for the 2018 PTPA by the close of the reporting period; thus, it did not report any investigations, prosecutions, or convictions under either the 2018 PTPA or PACHTO, compared to 90 investigations, 53 prosecutions, and 29 convictions under PACHTO in 2017. Despite efforts to differentiate human trafficking and migrant smuggling in law and policies, some law enforcement officials continued to conflate the two crimes. The government reported data on trafficking investigations, prosecutions, and convictions under the PPC by province and special administrative area. Overall, the government reported investigating 2,367 alleged sex trafficking cases and initiating prosecutions in 2,212 cases, an increase from investigation of 1,647 sex trafficking cases

and prosecution of 1,540 the previous reporting period. The vast majority of sex trafficking convictions took place in Punjab under Section 371A of the PPC for “Selling person for purposes of prostitution etc.” The overall number of sex trafficking convictions remained unclear. The government had reported 72 sex trafficking convictions the previous reporting period. The government did not report sentences for the convictions. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, and the Islamabad Capital Territory decreased sex trafficking investigations, prosecutions, and convictions compared to the previous reporting period. Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan did not report any investigations, prosecutions, or convictions for trafficking offenses. Punjab continued to report the vast majority of law enforcement action against sex trafficking; of the national statistics on sex trafficking, Punjab reported 98 percent of the country's investigations, 99 percent of prosecutions, and 100 percent of convictions.

The government's law enforcement action on labor trafficking remained severely inadequate compared with the scale of forced labor, including bonded labor, in the country; and investigations, prosecutions, and convictions for bonded labor decreased significantly. While Sindh reported one investigation and prosecution for bonded labor, Punjab remained the only province to secure convictions under the BLSA. Punjab authorities investigated 23 cases of bonded labor, initiated prosecutions in 22 cases, and convicted three traffickers—a significant decrease from 197 investigations, 182 prosecutions, and 37 convictions during the previous reporting period. Punjab convicted the fewest number of traffickers for bonded labor since 2015. An international organization stated the BLSA was not adequately enforced because of police inaction on complaints and lower court judges' lack of understanding of the law. No province, including Punjab, reported law enforcement action on forced labor under PPC Section 374, unlawful compulsory labor—a decrease from one investigation in Punjab the previous reporting period. Additionally, Punjab significantly decreased investigations and prosecutions under Section 369A, trafficking in human beings, from 79 case investigations, 79 prosecutions, and 17 convictions in 2017 to four, three, and zero, respectively, during the reporting period, although this is partly explained by removal of Section 369A after passage of the 2018 PTPA. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa reported one investigation under Section 369A. While media reported Sindh police conducted at least 66 raids on brick kilns during the reporting period—largely in response to Supreme Court directives—the province only reported prosecution of one bonded labor case. Sindh initiated two additional investigations and prosecutions under PPC Section 370 for buying or disposing of any person as a slave and Section 371 for habitual dealing in slaves. While this was similar to three cases under Sections 370 and 371 in the previous reporting period, it remained a significant decrease from investigation of 19 alleged traffickers and prosecution of 16 in 2016 and low compared to the scale of the problem. The government also reported data on several penal code sections that criminalized labor trafficking and other non-trafficking crimes but did not disaggregate the data to specify which cases under these sections were for labor trafficking versus non-trafficking offenses.

The Federal Investigative Agency (FIA) remained the government's lead reporting and coordinating entity on human trafficking. The agency focused on transnational offenses, while provincial police generally investigated internal human trafficking cases. While FIA and provincial police coordinated on an ad hoc basis, overall collaboration remained

weak and complicated law enforcement efforts and data collection. FIA investigated human trafficking and migrant smuggling cases through its 27 anti-trafficking law enforcement joint task forces at the federal, provincial, and local levels. FIA's basic training for new recruits included information on human trafficking and migrant smuggling. Foreign governments and international organizations funded trafficking-specific trainings for police, investigators, prosecutors, and FIA officials during the reporting period; and government agencies contributed in-kind support to some of the trainings. NGOs noted provincial police were reluctant to file First Information Reports—required to launch criminal investigations—into many crimes, including trafficking, and some police requested bribes to register legitimate complaints and accepted bribes to not register complaints. Furthermore, observers cited the country's overburdened prosecutors and judges, who frequently lacked adequate training, as a contributing factor to lengthy trafficking trials and low conviction rates.

Official complicity in trafficking remained a significant concern. However, for the first time in 10 years, the government convicted an official for a human trafficking-related offense. In April 2018, the court convicted a former district judge and his wife for cruelty to a child for subjecting a 10-year-old girl to torture and domestic servitude. The court prescribed a sentence of one year of imprisonment and a fine of 50,000 PKR (\$360) each. The couple appealed the case to the Islamabad High Court, which dismissed the appeal, increased the sentence to three years' imprisonment and a 500,000 PKR (\$3,610) fine, and ordered the former judge's wife to pay the victim 500,000 PKR (\$3,610) in restitution. In October 2018, police removed a 10-year-old domestic worker from the house of a Pakistani army major after allegations of torture and domestic servitude; police arrested the army major's husband, and the military reportedly initiated an investigation. In addition, the police suspended an assistant sub-inspector of police for the failure to file a police report when a neighbor first reported the case. While the government took action in these cases, it did not report vigorous efforts to address numerous other credible allegations of official complicity in trafficking, especially local officials' reportedly endemic perpetuation of bonded labor, which created a culture of impunity for offenders. During the reporting period, NGOs increasingly reported that feudal landlords and brick kiln owners used their political connections to facilitate their use of forced labor. In some cases, when bonded laborers attempted to escape or seek legal redress, police refused to file a case and returned bonded laborers to their traffickers. NGOs continued to report perpetrators of bonded labor successfully filed false charges against victims leading to their arrest and imprisonment, at times in collusion with police. Some police reportedly assisted employers in kidnapping bonded laborers that authorities or NGOs had previously removed from exploitation. Police reportedly demonstrated reluctance to investigate cases of potential bonded labor when wealthy and influential individuals, such as local politicians, were the alleged perpetrators. Some police reportedly acted against trafficking only when pressured by media and activists. Observers alleged police accepted bribes to ignore prostitution crimes, some of which may have included sex trafficking. A research study of Pakistan's garment sector published in January 2019 revealed that some garment factory workers reported forced overtime, underpayment of wages, and abuse—indicators of forced labor—and some of those factories paid monthly bribes to labor department officials to avoid inspections. In February 2018, Australian media reported that the High Commissioner for Pakistan in Australia allegedly subjected her domestic worker to

forced labor for 18 months; according to media reports, the government of Australia investigated the allegations and granted the victim protected status. The Government of Pakistan did not report criminally or administratively investigating these claims.

PROTECTION

The government increased efforts to identify and refer trafficking victims to care but protection efforts remained inadequate, especially for bonded labor victims. FIA did not identify any trafficking victims, a decrease from 17 victims identified in the previous reporting period. Provincial police identified 19,723 victims, an increase from 14,588 victims identified in 2017. The government did not disaggregate the data by forms of trafficking or province. The government reported some law enforcement, immigration, and social service personnel had SOPs for the identification of trafficking victims within their respective departments; however, it was unclear how widely officials disseminated and employed these SOPs. Several provincial government officials and law enforcement noted they had never received, and did not employ, SOPs, and other law enforcement reported use of SOPs on an ad hoc basis.

Provincial police reported referring 2,697 trafficking victims to care, a considerable increase from 303 victims referred to care in 2017 but still low compared to the total number of victims identified. Observers attributed the increase in part to better reporting on such referrals. Police reported some victims declined to avail themselves of government services, but availability of services was an issue, with a lack of shelter and services available in many regions, particularly for male victims. Government-run shelters for women experiencing a range of difficult circumstances, including trafficking, were the most predominately available service. Punjab operated women’s shelters in each of its 36 districts; Sindh operated five women’s shelters in its 29 districts and four centers that offered women in distress medical and legal aid and shelter for up to 72 hours; Khyber Pakhtunkhwa operated women’s shelters in six of its 26 districts and 10 welfare homes for exploited children; Balochistan operated one women’s shelter and one shelter for destitute male citizens among its 32 districts; and the Islamabad Capital Territory had one family and rehabilitation center that served women and children. NGOs and local politicians continued to note concerns about the low quality of victim care at many government-run shelters, including their lack of basic resources such as showers. There were also reports government-run women’s shelters continued to limit victims’ freedom of movement. Punjab continued to operate its wholly integrated center that provided shelter, medical and psychological support, and legal assistance for female victims of violence. While all female victims of violence could access the center, including trafficking victims, the government did not report whether it assisted any trafficking victims. Some government officials and NGOs continued to note the lack of shelters and services for trafficking victims. Child trafficking cases in which parents might have been complicit were of particular concern, since authorities often returned potential child trafficking victims to their families immediately following identification without effective methods to ensure families would not subject their children to trafficking again. Boys could access government shelters in many provinces, but the government only identified one shelter in the country that adult males could access. Several government officials denied that male trafficking victims, if identified, would

require care. Both government and NGO contacts noted that, due to cultural norms, male victims were less likely to seek or accept assistance. Civil society continued to provide some victim services, largely without government support. In part due to lack of dissemination and training on SOPs, authorities may have charged sex trafficking victims with moral crimes.

Provincial child protection units (CPUs) in Punjab, Sindh, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa identified and referred children in exploitative or vulnerable labor situations to NGO and government care. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa established four new CPUs during the reporting period, for a total of 12. Balochistan had not yet established any CPUs, despite passing legislation in November 2016 to establish such units in all districts. The Punjab Child Protection and Welfare Bureau (CPWB) housed children in child protection shelters. CPWB operated open reception centers to identify and register children living on the street and identified and referred 10,203 child beggars to the shelters during the reporting period, an increase from 6,474 children in 2017. Authorities did not report how many of these children were identified as victims of forced begging. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa continued to fund and operate a shelter for homeless children.

The BLSA required districts to establish bonded labor vigilance committees (DVCs) to ensure implementation of the BLSA and provide assistance to bonded labor victims. Punjab maintained 36 DVCs. While Sindh noted it had 10 functional DVCs, NGOs countered that the majority did not function and those that did operate did so minimally in response to international pressure. In addition, one Sindh official claimed bonded labor no longer existed in the province, and another downplayed the prevalence of the practice, indicating there was no need for the provincial government to dedicate additional personnel or resources to combat the problem. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan did not have DVCs. Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa could provide free legal aid to bonded laborers who requested assistance.

NGOs noted most cases of bonded labor ended with financial settlement in lieu of criminal prosecution, in part because police and the judiciary often ceased support for victims after authorities had removed the victim from exploitation and did not guide them through how to pursue a formal civil or criminal case. Bonded laborers whom authorities had released from exploitation frequently had no alternative employment or housing and sometimes returned to brick kilns or farms and assumed more debt. Those who lacked identity documents were even more vulnerable, since they could not access government services such as health care and food stipends. Some NGO-run shelters could accommodate bonded laborers, including entire families, but often had insufficient resources to provide long-term housing. Government policy included protections for those cooperating in trafficking-related investigations; however, the government did not report how often it granted protection. Victims expressed reluctance to testify against their traffickers due to threats of violence against them and their families. The 2018 PTPA and sections of the PPC provide for victim restitution. The Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment (BEOE) within the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resources Development (OPHRD) employed 19 community welfare attaches in 14 destination countries to provide support and information to Pakistani migrant workers; BEOE did not report if the attachés identified or assisted any trafficking victims. The Ministry of Interior had the authority to grant extensions for

foreign victims to stay in the country until the Federal Review Board of the Supreme Court reached a decision on repatriation; it did not report whether it allowed permanent legal alternatives to removal to countries in which victims would face retribution or hardship.

PREVENTION

The government maintained efforts to prevent trafficking. The government continued implementation of the 2015-2020 national strategic framework against trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling, although lack of resources continued to hamper efforts. FIA's research and analysis center reportedly collaborated with an international organization to create quarterly newsletters on human trafficking and migrant smuggling, although it did not make these reports publicly available. The federal government did not collect or provide comprehensive data on labor law enforcement; while provinces reportedly collected such information at the district level, authorities lacked a centralized repository for the data and mechanisms to report it to the federal government. Labor inspectors did not have the authority to assess penalties for labor law infractions; they reported infractions to labor courts, which could assess penalties. NGOs continued to report inadequate training and funding for labor inspectors, including lack of funds for transportation, impeded inspectors' ability to monitor working conditions in brick kilns and other factories—sectors in which forced and bonded labor occurred. Labor inspectors did not have the authority to remove children or bonded laborers from exploitative situations. Inspectors should refer potential child or bonded labor cases to law enforcement; however, NGOs reported a lack of coordination between labor inspectors, law enforcement, and social services, including the absence of a standardized referral mechanism. Thus, it was unknown if labor inspectors or courts referred any potential bonded labor cases to law enforcement or victims to care. NGOs noted that despite high incidences of child and forced labor in agriculture and domestic work, the majority of provincial labor laws did not allow labor inspectors to inspect these worksites for infractions. Brick kilns fall under the Factories Act of 1934 and are subject to the same regulations as other factories, including workers' rights provisions. However, these regulations were rarely enforced, and the majority of the estimated 18,000 kilns continued to operate without registration and the required benefits for workers.

Punjab prosecuted 3,953 brick kilns for lack of compliance with labor laws, including non-payment and illegal deductions from wages, and imposed fines totaling 288 million PKR (\$2.08 million). This is a significant increase from prosecution of 1,516 brick kiln owners the previous reporting period and comparable to the prosecution of 3,989 brick kiln owners in 2016. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's labor department did not report any dedicated funding for its specialized inspection team within the office on child and bonded labor—a decrease from 7 million PKR (\$50,510) devoted to this team the previous reporting period. During the reporting period, Punjab reportedly halted implementation of its multi-year project to eliminate child and bonded labor and birth registration program for brick kiln workers as it assessed policy priorities. It did, however, continue efforts to provide identity cards to brick kiln workers. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, and Sindh continued to fund and implement some multi-year

programs focused on combating the worst forms of child labor and other labor abuses, although fewer programs than in previous years. With technical assistance from an international organization and some provincial government funding, four provinces began surveys to assess the prevalence of child labor, including child bonded labor.

BEOE issued licenses to private employment promoters and monitored workers who migrated through licensed agencies. The Emigration Ordinance of 1979 prohibited the role of unregulated and unregistered sub-agents; however, sub-agents continued to operate widely with impunity. The government allowed licensed employment promoters to charge migrant workers a service fee of 6,000 PKR (\$43) for a welfare fund to compensate workers' families in case of the workers' death abroad, and workers to pay all the costs associated with overseas employment. While the government stipulated employers should provide workers with a receipt for these costs, the government did not specify any cost limit and did not consistently review migrant workers' receipts. BEOE cancelled licenses of 54 registered employment promoters, compared to cancellation of 29 licenses and suspension of 41 during the previous reporting period; BEOE did not provide details of the agencies' violations. BEOE referred 285 complaints against recruitment agencies to FIA for criminal investigation, an increase from 160 referrals in 2017. The government continued to ban female migrant workers younger than 30 from migrating for domestic work and required females 30-35 to obtain special approval from OPHRD. The UN and members of civil society argued any ban on female migration increased the likelihood such women would migrate illegally and therefore heighten their vulnerability to human trafficking. BEOE required migrant workers to attend a pre-departure briefing at one of its seven offices that included information on what to do if the migrant worker encountered problems; however, observers asserted these centers did not provide sufficient information on the risks of, and assistance to combat, trafficking.

In July 2017, the governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan agreed to provide Afghan Citizen Cards (ACCs) to the estimated one million undocumented Afghans living in Pakistan. The government received approximately 880,000 applications for ACCs, which provided legal protection from deportation under Pakistan's Foreigners' Act, and as of March 2019 had distributed more than 423,000 ACCs, valid through April 30, 2019. The government continued to grant previously registered Afghan refugees an extension of proof of registration (POR) cards but did so in short-term extensions, which created an environment of uncertainty for refugees. The government extended validity of POR cards through June 30, 2019. The government did not make efforts to reduce the demand for commercial sex acts or forced labor. The government provided anti-trafficking training for its diplomatic and peacekeeping personnel. During the reporting period, the UN continued to investigate two allegations of sex trafficking by Pakistani peacekeepers, one from the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2017 and one from the UN Mission in Liberia in 2011-2012; the government did not report if it investigated the allegations. Pakistan is not a party to the 2000 UN TIP Protocol.

TRAFFICKING PROFILE

As reported over the past five years, human traffickers exploit domestic and foreign victims in Pakistan, and traffickers exploit victims from Pakistan abroad. The country's largest human trafficking problem is bonded labor, in which an initial debt assumed by a worker as part of the terms of employment is exploited, ultimately entrapping other family members, sometimes for generations. Bonded labor is concentrated predominately in Sindh province in agriculture and Punjab province in brick kilns but also occurs in other sectors in those provinces and in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces in agriculture and brick-making and, to a lesser extent, in fisheries, mining, and textile-, bangle-, and carpet-making. Observers reported employers in Sindh are beginning to move carpet- and bangle-making productions into private homes to further increase the difficulty in monitoring labor conditions. Some feudal landlords and brick kiln owners affiliated with political parties use their influence to protect their involvement in bonded labor. Landlords exploit widespread illiteracy among workers and manipulate accounting records to continue to the cycle of bonded labor. Observers also reported some brick kiln owners buy and sell workers among one another. Children are bought, sold, rented, or kidnapped and placed in organized begging rings, domestic servitude, small shops, and sex trafficking. According to a prominent child rights NGO, the majority of children working in the streets in Pakistan are subjected to forced begging. Begging ringmasters sometimes maim children to earn more money and sometimes force children to steal. NGOs report traffickers subject boys to sex trafficking around hotels, truck stops, bus stations, and shrines. There are reports of widespread sexual exploitation of boys in one coalmining community in Balochistan. Boys as young as six years old from Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Afghanistan, are purportedly lured to work in the mines but then subjected to sex trafficking; in some cases, parents are complicit in sending their children to the mines for sex trafficking. Within Pakistan, NGOs and police report some employers, including in restaurants and factories, require boy child laborers to provide sexual favors in order to obtain a job with the employer, to keep the job, and/or for accommodation. An NGO reported multiple cases of forced labor by students in government-run schools.

Observers report some police accept bribes to ignore prostitution in general, some of which may include sex trafficking. Some factories pay monthly bribes to labor department officials to avoid inspections. Illegal labor agents charge high recruitment fees to parents in return for employing their children, some of whom are subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking. In previous years, trafficking experts have described a structured system for exploiting women, girls, and LGBTI individuals in sex trafficking, including offering victims for sale in physical markets. Women and girls are sold into forced marriages; in some cases, their new “husbands” force them into prostitution in Iran, Afghanistan, or China. In other cases, including some organized by extra-judicial courts, girls are used as chattel to settle debts or disputes. Some Pakistani traffickers lure women and girls away from their families with promises of marriage, create fraudulent marriage certificates, and exploit the women and girls in sex trafficking. Additionally, some traffickers force the victims to take drugs and exploit the drug addiction to keep them in sex trafficking. Those displaced internally due to natural disasters and domestic military operations are vulnerable to trafficking.

Some organizations reported that non-state armed groups that had a presence in Pakistan recruited and used child soldiers in Afghanistan, although there is no evidence that the Government of Pakistan was complicit in the recruitment and use of child soldiers. Non-state militant groups kidnap children, buy them from destitute parents, coerce parents with threats or fraudulent promises into giving their children away, or recruit children from *madrassahs*; these armed groups force children to spy, fight, and conduct suicide attacks in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Traffickers have promised Pakistani boys admittance to Afghan religious schools but sold them to members of the Afghan security forces for *bacha bazi*, a form of sex trafficking. Iranian authorities coerce some undocumented and impoverished Pakistani adult migrants to fight for Iranian-backed militias in Syria.

Pakistani men and women migrate overseas voluntarily, particularly to the Gulf states and Europe, for low-skilled employment such as agriculture, domestic service, driving, and construction work; traffickers exploit some of them in labor trafficking. False job offers and high recruitment fees charged by illegal labor agents or sub-agents of licensed Pakistani overseas employment promoters entrap Pakistanis in sex trafficking and bonded labor, including in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Traffickers have exploited Pakistani girls in sex trafficking in Kenya. During the reporting period, Pakistani traffickers brought 35 Pakistani adults—including 14 individuals with disabilities—to the UAE and forced them to beg. Pakistani boys are vulnerable to sex trafficking in Greece. Some traffickers, including organized criminal groups, subject Pakistani adults and children to forced labor in domestic work, construction, and begging in Iran; some traffickers have targeted Pakistanis with disabilities for forced begging. During the reporting period, some Chinese nationals residing in Pakistan took Pakistani girls to China through fraudulent marriages and exploited them in prostitution. Pakistan is a destination country for men, women, and children subjected to forced labor—particularly from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. Chinese men working in construction may be vulnerable to forced labor in Pakistan. Traffickers exploit women and girls—and, to a lesser extent, boys—from Afghanistan, Iran, and other Asian countries in sex trafficking in Pakistan. Refugees from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Burma, as well as religious and ethnic minorities such as Christians and Hazaras, are particularly vulnerable to trafficking in Pakistan. Traffickers exploit Rohingya refugees in forced labor in Pakistan.

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