

COI Focus

PAKISTAN Security situation

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List of abbreviations used

ACLED	Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project
AK	Azad Kashmir
AI	Amnesty International
BLA	Baloch Liberation Army
BLF	Balochistan Liberation Front
BNA	Baloch Nationalist Army
BRA	Baloch Republican Army
CPEC	China-Pakistan Economic Corridor
CRSS	Center for Research and Security Studies
CTD	Counterterrorism Department
Daesh	See Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP)
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)
EUAA	European Union Agency for Asylum (formerly: European Asylum Support Office, EASO)
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
FC	Frontier Corps
GB	Gilgit-Baltistan
HM	Hizb-ul-Mujahideen
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IBO	Intelligence Based Operation
ICG	International Crisis Group
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IDP	Internally Displaced Person: person or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognised state border ¹
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IRB	Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada
ISI	Inter-Services Intelligence: one of the intelligence agencies of Pakistan, generally considered to be one of the most powerful Pakistani state institutions
ISKP	Islamic State Khorasan Province, also called ISIS, ISIL, IS or <i>Daesh</i>

¹ UNOCHA, Guiding principles on Internal Displacement, September 2004, [url](#)

ISW	Institute for the Study of War
JeM	Jaish-e-Muhammad (Muhammad's Army): Islamist armed insurgent group active in Kashmir ²
JSQM-A	Jeay Sindh Qaumi Mahaz-Aresar
Khyber-IV	Operation launched by the Pakistani army on 16 July 2017 aimed at clearing Rajgal Valley in Khyber Agency of militants ³
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
KPTDs	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa tribal districts
LeT	Lashkar-e Taiba, a Sunni militant group, formed in 1990 and initially trained in the Kunar Province of Afghanistan. LeT fights for the unification of the Kashmir region and its integration into Pakistani territory and also attacks civilian targets in Afghanistan. ⁴
LoC	Line of Control
Malik	Tribal chieftain
NWFP	North-West Frontier Province, the former name for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
OFPRO	Office Français de Protection des Réfugiés et Apatrides
PICCS	Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies
PIPS	Pak Institute for Peace Studies
PML-N	Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz
PPP	Pakistan People's Party
PTI	Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf
<i>Radd-ul Fasaad</i>	Code name for a military operation launched by the Pakistani army on 22 February 2017 ⁵
RFE/RL	Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty
SATP	South Asia Terrorism Portal
SDLA	Sindhudesh Liberation Army
SDRA	Sindhudesh Revolution Army
SRA	Sindhudesh Revolutionary Army
TNN	Tribal News Network
TTP	Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan, (Pakistan Movement of Taliban), the largest militant group in Pakistan. The organisation was founded in 2007 and is an umbrella of most, but not all, Pakistani Taliban groups. TTP pledged allegiance in 2007 to Mullah Omar, the leader of the Taliban in Afghanistan. The main goal behind TTP's establishment was to unite the

² Zahid, F., Profile of Jaish-e-Muhammad and Leader Masood Azhar, April 2019, Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses, [url](#), pp. 1-5

³ Dawn, Army launches Operation Khyber-4 in Rajgal Valley, 16 July 2017, [url](#)

⁴ Stanford University, Mapping Militant Organizations. "Lashkar-e-Taiba.", last updated: June 2018, [url](#)

⁵ Dawn, Pakistan Army launches 'Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad' across the country, 21 June 2017, [url](#)

various factions of the Pakistan Taliban in order to organise synchronised attacks on NATO/ISAF forces in Afghanistan. The group also carries out 'defensive jihad' against Pakistani military forces conducting operations in former FATA.⁶

UBA	United Baloch Army
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
VBMP	Voice for Baloch Missing Persons
<i>Zarb-e Azb</i>	Code name for a military operation launched by the Pakistani army on 15 June 2014 ⁷

⁶ USIP, The Evolution and Potential Resurgence of the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan, May 2021, [url](#), p. 4

⁷ Zulfqar, S., An Overview of Pakistan's Security Situation after Operation Zarb-e-Azb, Islamabad Policy Research Institute October 2017, [url](#), pp. 117-118

Introduction

The purpose of this COI Focus is to assess the security situation in Pakistan. It is a partial update of the *Country of Origin Information Report Pakistan: Security situation* which was drafted by Cedoca and published on 27 October 2021⁸ by the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA). This update is particularly focused on the period from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022. Events that took place during the drafting of this report in January and February 2023 are also included. This report was written according to the EUAA COI Referencing Guide (2023).⁹

The report comprises three parts. The first chapter offers a brief history of the security situation in Pakistan, focusing on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan provinces. In chapter two the current conflict situation and recent political developments in Pakistan are discussed. The final chapter sheds light on the security situation per region. It contains a geographical overview of the violence taking place in Pakistan and reviews the security trends in Pakistan's provinces in detail. Particular attention is given to the regions where a high number of security incidents are reported, for instance Peshawar district and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa tribal districts (KPTDs), formerly referred to as Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). This COI Focus does not contain a detailed description of the actors of violence in Pakistan. On this subject, this COI Focus refers to the European Union Agency for Asylum's October 2021 report *Pakistan - Security situation*¹⁰ and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs' September 2022 report *Algemeen Ambtsbericht Pakistan*.¹¹

This COI Focus uses numerical data on security incidents from the database of the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), a US non-profit organisation that collects, analyses and maps information on conflicts. Experienced researchers collect the data using information from a wide range of local, regional and international news sources and organisations. For Pakistan, the following sources, among others, were used: Pakistan Press, Dawn, Pakistan Today, Express Tribune, Balochistan Times, Frontier Star, Nation and Pakistan Observer.¹² Cedoca collaborated with Office français de protection des réfugiés et apatrides (OFPRA) for the analysis of the numerical data.

The database is publicly available on ACLED's website and is continually updated whenever new information becomes available (previously entered incidents are also updated when relevant).¹³ The ACLED figures used by Cedoca in this COI Focus were retrieved on 11 January 2023. ACLED's inventory shows the type of violent event, actors of violence, a description of the events, their location and number of fatalities.¹⁴ ACLED stresses that because its datasets reflect to some degree the reporting priorities of the media and organisations, the violence may be underestimated.¹⁵

In its Codebook, ACLED explains in detail the methodology applied for coding and the continuous checking of data.¹⁶ Given the methodology, coding and entering of data, ACLED's figures, according to Cedoca, can only be considered as an estimate and indication of trends regarding violence in a given period.

⁸ EUAA, Pakistan: Security Situation, October 2021, [url](#)

⁹ Can be downloaded from the EUAA COI Portal: [url](#)

¹⁰ EUAA, Pakistan: Security Situation, October 2021, [url](#)

¹¹ Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Algemeen Ambtsbericht Pakistan*, September 2022, [url](#)

¹² ACLED, Data Pakistan, via export tool, [url](#)

¹³ ACLED, Coding review Process, 10 April 2019, [url](#)

¹⁴ ACLED, Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED). Codebook, 10 April 2019, [url](#)

¹⁵ ACLED, Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED). Guide for Media Users, 10 April 2019, [url](#)

¹⁶ ACLED, Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED). Codebook, 10 April 2019, [url](#)

This report also relies on data about security incidents and casualties provided by different institutions, which was either published in reports available on their websites or was provided by email to Cedoca.¹⁷ Data on the security incidents provided by Pakistani institutes such as the Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS) and, to a lesser extent, the Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), were used. Because of the use of a different methodology and terminology by each institution, the data on security incidents and casualties can differ between the institutions. For example, while PIPS records 'terrorist attacks', PICSS records 'militant attacks'.

Cedoca continuously monitors the security situation in Pakistan. In the event of fundamental changes or developments that significantly alter the situation on the ground, this COI Focus will be updated as quickly as possible.

¹⁷ PIPS provided a version of the Pakistan Security Report 2022 by email to Cedoca. Rana Amir, M., security and political analyst at PIPS, email, 26 January 2023

1. Brief history

After the US invasion in Afghanistan in late 2001, thousands of Afghan Taliban and al-Qaeda militants crossed the border 'looking for safe havens' in the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), and in parts of the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).¹⁹ Under their influence, several Pakistani groups with a similar ideology collaborated to impose a strict application of conservative Islamic principles in the region. The resulting violence was at first instance directed against uncooperative local residents and later turned against the Pakistani authorities.²⁰ The Pakistan military's 2004 military operation in South Waziristan was the start of multiple military operations against militants in the former FATA.²¹ By 2007, the Pakistani Taliban (also known as the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan, TTP) emerged out of a decentralised network of the different militant groups operating in former FATA.²² Around this timeframe, almost all of FATA and some areas of KPK, including Swat, came under control of TTP militants and/or their allies.²³ As TTP fighters intensified attacks against army and government targets,²⁴ the Pakistani army carried out a number of major counter-offensives to regain control of terrain in Swat, Bajaur, South Waziristan, Orakzai, Kurram, Khyber, Mohmand and North Waziristan.²⁵ Some of these military operations against militant networks were poorly targeted²⁶ and aggravated the human rights and humanitarian crisis being witnessed in FATA since 2004.²⁷ The heavy-handed, often indiscriminate and disproportionate *modus operandi* of the army seriously damaged the area's already weak civilian infrastructure and precipitated the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people.²⁸ The December 2014 TTP attack on an army-run public school in Peshawar, in which 147 students and teachers were killed, gave the Pakistani military further impetus to break the power of the TTP and their affiliated organizations in KP.²⁹ The ensuing counter-terrorism strategies against TTP proved to be one of the main sources of insecurity in the north-west of Pakistan, further alienating the local population³⁰ and causing displacement.³¹

In the long run, the army's counter-insurgency operations in North Waziristan, Khyber and other tribal districts forced militant groups to relocate much of their infrastructure in KPTDs across the border in Afghanistan³² and contributed to a higher level of security in KP and FATA.³³ Whilst years of military campaigns in former FATA broke the TTP's hold over most of the tribal belt, the improvement of security in these areas remained fragile. Millions of residents were displaced, homes were destroyed

¹⁹ USIP, The Evolution and Potential Resurgence of the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan, May 2021, [url](#), p. 4

²⁰ Rashid, A., *Descent into Chaos*, 2008, pp. 265-270; AI, *As if hell fell on me, the human rights crisis in northwest Pakistan*, 10 June 2010, [url](#), pp. 10-11

²¹ Semple, M., *The Pakistan Taliban Movement: An Appraisal*, November 2014, [url](#), p. 5

²² USIP, The Evolution and Potential Resurgence of the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan, May 2021, [url](#), p. 5

²³ Center for Civilians in Conflict, *Civilian harm and conflict in Northwest Pakistan*, 2010, [url](#), p. 16

²⁴ Semple, M., *The Pakistan Taliban Movement: An Appraisal*, November 2014, [url](#), p. 5

²⁵ Center for Civilians in Conflict, *Civilian harm and conflict in Northwest Pakistan*, 2010, [url](#), p. 16; HRW, *Pakistan: Ensure Aid Reaches Displaced in Waziristan*, 10 July 2014, [url](#); Al Jazeera, *Pakistan military warns Pashtun rights group its 'time is up'*, 30 April 2019, [url](#)

²⁶ ICG, *The Worsening IDP Crisis*, 16 September 2010, [url](#), p. 2

²⁷ AI, *'As if hell fell on me': The human rights crisis in northwest Pakistan*, 10 June 2010, [url](#), pp. 7-17

²⁸ AI, *'As if hell fell on me': The human rights crisis in northwest Pakistan*, 10 June 2010, [url](#), p. 13; ICG, *The Worsening IDP Crisis*, 16 September 2010, [url](#), p. 2

²⁹ New York Times (The), *In Pakistan, fears that 'terrorism has returned' as bombing kills 101*, 31 January 2023, [url](#)

³⁰ ICG, *Shaping a New Peace in Pakistan's Tribal Areas*, 20 August 2018, [url](#), p. 5

³¹ ECHO, *Pakistan-Factsheet*, last updated: 31 March 2021, [url](#)

³² PIPS, *Pakistan Security Report 2022*, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p.72

³³ Almeida, C., *EASO, EASO COI Meeting Report: Pakistan*, 16-17 October 2017; Rome, February 2018, [url](#), pp. 21, 46; Brookings, *Terrorism in Pakistan has declined, but the underlying roots of extremism remain*, 15 January 2021, [url](#)

and livelihoods ruined.³⁴ After the summer of 2020, reports emerged of the regrouping of the TTP³⁵ and 'a silent comeback in the tribal districts bordering Afghanistan'.³⁶ During 2020, the Pakistani government conducted secret peace negotiations with the TTP, but in late December 2020 or early January 2021 the talks broke down.³⁷

The Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021 led TTP to ramp up its attacks in Pakistan.³⁸ Cross-border movements by militants from Afghanistan to Pakistan led to increasing numbers of attacks, especially on Pakistan security personnel.³⁹ The resurgence of the TTP, local Taliban groups, and, to a lesser extent, Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) entailed a significant increase of terrorist attacks in Pakistan in 2021.⁴⁰ Khyber Pakhtunkhwa witnessed the highest number of these attacks,⁴¹ especially in North and South Waziristan districts.⁴² TTP and affiliated local Taliban groups perpetrated most of these attacks, but ISKP also claimed a number of the attacks in the province.⁴³ Security forces and law enforcement personnel were the main targets of the increasing number of terrorist attacks in KP in 2021.⁴⁴ In June 2021, Mansur Khan Mahsud described the main targets of TTP in the KPTDs as follows: 'Army, police, pro-government tribal Maliks and elders and civil servants and the TTP militants which have surrendered to the army and are now working for the army are the main target of militant groups in the tribal districts of former FATA.'⁴⁵

In Balochistan province a separatist insurgency has been ongoing since 1948.⁴⁶ The conflict intensified in 2005 and escalated further after the death of nationalist leader Nawab Akbar Bugti in August 2006, prompting military intervention.⁴⁷ Historically, various Baloch insurgent groups carried out low-intensity attacks mainly targeting state infrastructure (such as power pylons and railways tracks), non-Baloch settlers and workers as well as security forces.⁴⁸ In recent years, however, the Baloch insurgency has been marked by increasingly destructive attacks on the security forces.⁴⁹ The development of the Gwadar port in collaboration with China is viewed by Baloch insurgents as a Pakistani state attempt to exploit Balochistan's resources.⁵⁰ The Chinese projects and Chinese workers have become targets of Baloch insurgents.⁵¹

After years of sporadic fighting that caused civilian casualties and local displacement, the Pakistani and Indian armies agreed in February 2021 to restore the 2003 cease-fire across the Line of Control

³⁴ ICG, Shaping a New Peace in Pakistan's Tribal Areas, 20 August 2018, [url](#), p. 2

³⁵ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, The evolution and future of Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, 21 December 2021, [url](#); USIP, The Evolution and Potential Resurgence of the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan, May 2021, [url](#); TRT World, The rebranded 'Pakistani Taliban' may pose a renewed threat, 21 August 2020, [url](#)

³⁶ New America, Whither the Pakistani Taliban: An Assessment of Recent Trends, 31 August 2020, [url](#)

³⁷ Diplomat (The), Spike in Violence Follows Failed Negotiations Between the Pakistani Taliban and Islamabad, 3 April 2021, [url](#)

³⁸ Economist (The), Pakistan got its way in Afghanistan. Now what?, 7 October 2021, [url](#); Agence France-Presse, Pakistan bids to quell rise in TTP attacks, 15 November 2021, [url](#)

³⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 72

⁴⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2021, 2022, [url](#), p.15

⁴¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2021, 2022, [url](#), p.45

⁴² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2021, 2022, [url](#), p.45

⁴³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2021, 2022, [url](#), p.45

⁴⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2021, 2022, [url](#), p.46

⁴⁵ Khan Mahsud, M., email, 11 June 2021

⁴⁶ Hashmi, W., 'Fierce and Warlike': Could the Baloch Separatist Movement Remain Pakistan's Longest Insurgency?, 21 August 2018, [url](#)

⁴⁷ Aamir, A., The Balochistan Insurgency and the Threat to Chinese Interests in Pakistan, 15 February 2019, [url](#)

⁴⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 30

⁴⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 30

⁵⁰ Diplomat (The), How China's presence in Balochistan is intensifying regionalist tendencies, 2 March 2022, [url](#);

Deutsche Welle, Can Pakistan secure Chinese investment in restive Balochistan province?, 14 July 2021, [url](#);

Deutsche Welle, Why Chinese investment is stoking anger in Pakistan's Balochistan province, 15 July 2020, [url](#)

⁵¹ New York Times (The), Rising violence by separatists adds to Pakistan's lethal instability, 5 May 2022, [url](#);

Deutsche Welle, Can Pakistan secure Chinese investment in restive Balochistan province?, 14 July 2021, [url](#)

(LoC) separating both countries. The renewal of the cease-fire allowed for normalization of civilian life in the areas adjoining the LoC.⁵²

The following graph, based on data compiled by PIPS, illustrates the decreasing number of terrorist attacks in Pakistan from 2013 to 2020 and the increasing level of violence witnessed since 2021.⁵³

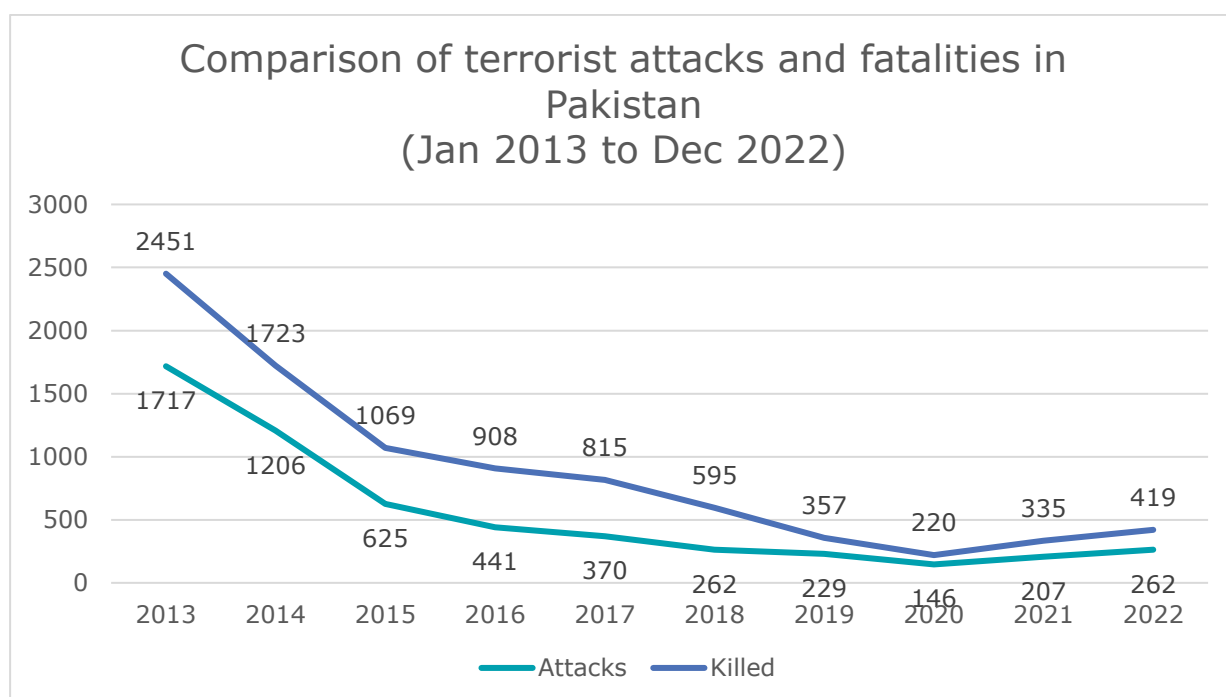


Figure 1: 'Terrorist attacks' in Pakistan – Jan 2013 – Dec 2022 (Data Source: PIPS)⁵⁴

2. Current conflict situation

On 20 January 2022, a bombing on a market in Lahore killed three people. The Baloch Nationalist Army (BNA) claimed responsibility for the attack.⁵⁵ Eight days later, ten soldiers were killed in a Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) attack on a security checkpoint in Kech, Balochistan.⁵⁶ Early 2022, TTP insurgents continued to clash with Pakistani security forces and committed several targeted killings of security forces personnel, particularly in KP.⁵⁷ TTP's use of Afghan territory as a refuge remained a bone of contention between the Pakistani government and the Afghanistan Taliban,⁵⁸ as did the construction of border fences along Nangarhar district at the Afghan border.⁵⁹ ISKP's March 2022

⁵² Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2022 - Pakistani Kashmir*, 24 February 2022, [url](#)

⁵³ DFAT, DFAT Country Information Report Pakistan, 25 January 2022, [url](#), p.14; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2021, 2022, [url](#); PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023

⁵⁴ DFAT, DFAT Country Information Report Pakistan, 25 January 2022, [url](#), p.14; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2021, 2022, [url](#); PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023

⁵⁵ Express Tribune (The), 3 killed as blast rips through Lahore's bustling market, 20 January 2020, [url](#)

⁵⁶ New York Times (The), Separatists kill 10 Pakistani soldiers in attack on outpost, 28 January 2022, [url](#)

⁵⁷ ICG, Pakistan – January 2022, last update: February 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁸ ICG, Pakistan – January 2022, last update: February 2023, [url](#); ICG, Pakistan – February 2022, last update: February 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁹ Foreign Policy, The Taliban pick fight over border with Pakistan, 6 January 2022, [url](#)

suicide attack on a Shia mosque in Peshawar killed 63 people and proved the reinvigorated capability of home-grown terrorists to execute mass-casualty attacks in Pakistan.⁶⁰ An increasing number of attacks on police stations and security forces personnel by TTP, particularly near the Afghan border, were also reported in April 2022 in KP.⁶¹ This spike in attacks and military casualties strained Islamabad's relations with the Afghan Government.⁶² Whilst senior Taliban leadership in Kabul favors good relations with Islamabad, local commanders in the border regions are reluctant to turn on the TTP.⁶³ On 16 April 2022, the Afghan Taliban claimed Pakistani military planes had bombed villages in Kunar and Khost provinces, resulting in dozens of casualties.⁶⁴ On 3 May 2022, TTP militants and the Pakistan military temporarily ceased hostilities for ten days to mark the religious holiday Eid. Despite sporadic incidents in KP, TTP agreed to extend the ceasefire to 30 May 2022.⁶⁵ On 4 May 2022, five people were killed in a BLA suicide attack in Karachi.⁶⁶ On 2 June 2022, TTP formally announced an indefinite ceasefire with Islamabad.⁶⁷ However, a number of attacks on Pakistani soldiers and policemen in KP indicated that some Taliban factions did not support this development and the ensuing negotiations between PTT and the Pakistani authorities.⁶⁸

In the autumn of 2022, violence increased in KP, as PTT committed a number of deadly attacks on security forces personnel, notably in North Waziristan. In response, Pakistan's National Security Council vowed to strengthen counter-terrorism infrastructure in KP.⁶⁹ The killing of a FC soldier at the Chaman border crossing on 13 November 2022 led to an exchange of fire with Afghan Taliban, leaving five of them dead. After further clashes, the Afghan Taliban vowed to punish the perpetrators of further cross-border attacks.⁷⁰ In November and December 2022, TTP attacks escalated sharply, especially in KP.⁷¹ On 28 November 2022, TTP formally announced the end of its truce with the Pakistani government and issued orders to its militants to carry out attacks across the country.⁷² On 18 December 2022, TTP militants stormed a facility run by the Counter-Terrorism Department in Bannu (KP) and held security personnel hostage. Two days later, 33 militants and two soldiers were killed in a security operation freeing the hostages.⁷³ Clashes between Pakistani and Afghan Taliban border forces were also reported.⁷⁴ On 11 December 2022, the use of cross-border artillery by Taliban border forces in Chaman killed at least seven civilians.⁷⁵

In January 2023, TTP maintained high-frequency attacks in KP province, killing over a dozen members of the security forces.⁷⁶ On 30 January 2023, a bombing at a mosque used by security forces and government personnel in Peshawar city killed more than 100 and injured over 200 people.⁷⁷ TTP first

⁶⁰ New York Times (The), ISIS claims bombing of Pakistani mosque, killing dozens, 5 March 2022, [url](#)

⁶¹ ICG, Pakistan – March 2022, last update: February 2023, [url](#); ICG, Pakistan – April 2022, last update: February 2023, [url](#)

⁶² ICG, Pakistan – April 2022, last update: February 2023, [url](#)

⁶³ Economist (The), Pakistan is losing patience with the Taliban, 30 April 2022, [url](#)

⁶⁴ New York Times (The), Death toll from Pakistani airstrike rises to 45, Afghan officials say, 17 April 2022, [url](#)

⁶⁵ Dawn, TTP extends truce to hold peace talks with Pakistan, 12 May 2022, [url](#); ICG, Pakistan – May 2022, last update: February 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁶ New York Times (The), Rising violence by separatists adds to Pakistan's lethal instability, 5 May 2022, [url](#)

⁶⁷ BBC, Pakistani Taliban militants announce indefinite ceasefire with Islamabad, 3 June 2022, [url](#)

⁶⁸ ICG, Pakistan – June 2022, last update: February 2023, [url](#); ICG, Pakistan – July 2022, last update: February 2023, [url](#); ICG, Pakistan – August 2022, last update: February 2023, [url](#)

⁶⁹ ICG, Pakistan – September 2022, last update: February 2023, [url](#); ICG, Pakistan – October 2022, last update: February 2023, [url](#); ICG, Pakistan – November 2022, last update: February 2023, [url](#)

⁷⁰ Al Jazeera, Pakistan reopens border crossing with Afghanistan after shooting, 21 November 2022, [url](#)

⁷¹ ICG, Pakistan – December 2022, last update: February 2023, [url](#)

⁷² Al Jazeera, Pakistan Taliban ends ceasefire with gov't, threatens new attacks, 28 November 2022, [url](#)

⁷³ New York Times (The), Pakistan raids a prison after militants seize a hostage, 20 December 2022, [url](#)

⁷⁴ ICG, Pakistan – December 2022, last update: February 2023, [url](#)

⁷⁵ BBC, Afghanistan-Pakistan border shelling kills civilians, 12 December 2022, [url](#)

⁷⁶ ICG, Pakistan – January 2023, last update: February 2023, [url](#)

⁷⁷ BBC, Pakistan mosque blast: police targeted in suicide attack that kills 59, 30 January 2023, [url](#); Reuters, Suicide bomber kills 59 in mosque used by police, 30 January 2023, [url](#)

claimed and then denied responsibility for this suicide attack.⁷⁸ The bombing raised fears among residents of a possible new army counteroffensive against TTP in KP.⁷⁹

Political developments in 2022

As the relationship between Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan and the high command of the Pakistani army had become increasingly strained,⁸⁰ on 10 April 2022 a bloc of nine opposition parties spearheaded by Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan People's Party (PPP), assisted by a number of dissidents from the ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), ousted Khan through a vote of no-confidence. The next day, Shehbaz Sharif (PML-N) was installed as PM.⁸¹ Khan's claim that a foreign conspiracy ended his regime stoked political tensions and caused protests, including in Karachi, Peshawar and Lahore.⁸² In the following months, PTI anti-government rallies at times turned violent, whilst Khan called for new elections.⁸³ From June up until October 2022 unprecedented monsoon rainfall killed more than a thousand people and displaced 7,9 million people in Pakistan, according to UN estimates.⁸⁴ Khan faced criticism for continuing the PTI's anti-government rallies during this national emergency.⁸⁵

A PTI victory in July in by-elections in Punjab, traditionally a bastion of support for the PML-N, proved Khan's continuing appeal to the Pakistani electorate and was viewed as a defeat for current PM Shehbaz Sharif.⁸⁶ After the Pakistan Election Commission in August 2022 found Khan's PTI party guilty of receiving foreign funds, appeals were made to bar Khan from holding public office.⁸⁷ Following increasingly direct PTI criticism of the army,⁸⁸ Khan's chief of staff Shahbaz Gill was arrested and charged with sedition on 9 August 2022.⁸⁹ Protests broke out in several cities after the Election Commission found Khan guilty of "corrupt practices" and declared his National Assembly seat vacant on 21 October 2022.⁹⁰ On 3 November 2022, Khan was injured in an assassination attempt in Wazirabad, Punjab as he was leading a protest march to Islamabad.⁹¹ Although the shooter was arrested on the scene, Khan accused PM Sharif, the Minister of Interior and a senior intelligence official of conspiring to kill him.⁹² On 24 November 2022, General Asim Munir, with whom Khan clashed during his tenure as head of the powerful spy agency Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), was installed as the

⁷⁸ New York Times (The), Suicide bombing tears through Pakistani mosque, killing dozens, 31 January 2023, [url](#)

⁷⁹ New York Times (The), In Pakistan, fears that 'terrorism has returned' as bombing kills 101, 31 January 2023, [url](#); Al Jazeera, What is behind the rising violent attacks in Pakistan?, 2 February 2023, [url](#)

⁸⁰ ICG, A change of command and political contestation in Pakistan, 27 December 2022, [url](#)

⁸¹ Economist (The), Shehbaz Sharrif is Pakistan's new prime minister, 16 April 2022, [url](#); New York Times (The), Pakistan parliament ousts Imran Khan as prime minister, 9 April, 2022, [url](#)

⁸² Al Jazeera, Protests in Pakistan over Khan's removal, Sharif set to be new PM, 11 April 2022, [url](#)

⁸³ Reuters, Ousted Pakistani PM Khan issues ultimatum after disbanding violent protest march, 26 May 2022, [url](#); Dawn, PTI supporters stage nationwide protests against rising inflation on Imran's call, [url](#)

⁸⁴ Mercy Corps, Devastation in Pakistan: deadly floods displace millions, 5 October 2022, [url](#)

⁸⁵ Guardian (The), Pakistan floods death toll passes 1,000, say officials, 28 August 2022, [url](#); Economist (The), Pakistan has been hit by its worst floods in recent memory, 30 August 2022, [url](#)

⁸⁶ BBC, Pakistan: Former PM Imran Khan stuns rivals with Punjab by-election upset, 18 July 2022, [url](#); Al Jazeera, Pakistan's Imran Khan calls for early polls after Punjab victory, 18 July 2022, [url](#)

⁸⁷ Reuters, Pakistan election agency rules former PM Khan's party got illegal funds, 2 August 2022, [url](#); Express Tribune (The), Sword of Damocles falls on Imran's PTI, 2 August 2022, [url](#)

⁸⁸ ICG, A change of command and political contestation in Pakistan, 27 December 2022, [url](#)

⁸⁹ Dawn, Shahbaz Gil arrested by Islamabad police for sedition, inciting public against state institutions: Sannaullah, 9 August 2022, [url](#)

⁹⁰ Al Jazeera, Pakistan election commission disqualifies former PM Imran Khan, 21 October 2022, [url](#); Reuters, Pakistan ex-PM barred from office, sparking protests, 21 October 2022, [url](#); ICG, Pakistan: Plunging into chaos?, 10 November 2022, [url](#)

⁹¹ BBC, Imran Khan: Pakistan ex-Prime Minister wounded at protest march, 3 November 2022, [url](#)

⁹² Al Jazeera, Imran Khan says Pakistan PM Sharif involved in plot to kill him, 4 November 2022, [url](#); Economist (The), Imran Khan, Pakistan's ex-prime minister survives an attempt on his life, 3 November 2022, [url](#); ICG, Pakistan: Plunging into chaos?, 10 November 2022, [url](#)

new army chief.⁹³ Khan called off the ongoing march to Islamabad and announced a couple of days later that the PTI-led regional parliaments in Punjab and KP would be dissolved.⁹⁴ As Khan's bid to dissolve the Punjab and KP assemblies was decided in court, PTI resumed nationwide protests.⁹⁵ In January 2023, the provincial assemblies of Punjab and KP were dissolved and elections in both provinces in April 2023 were announced.⁹⁶

3. Security situation per region

3.1. Geographical overview of the violence

3.1.1. Trends in regional violence

ACLED provides a publicly available dataset to assess the geographical spread of violent incidents. The maps in this section are based on the ACLED dataset⁹⁷, which contains data about security-related incidents in Pakistan.

In 2022, most security incidents were coded by ACLED in the province of Balochistan (433) and the province of KP (423). The lowest number of security incidents were recorded the province of Punjab (76), in Sindh (59), in the Federal Capital of Islamabad (four) and in Gilgit-Baltistan (two).⁹⁸

According to ACLED, in 2022, the event type battles occurred most in the province of KP (247). Most explosions/remote violence occurred in the provinces Balochistan (83) and KP (45). Violence against civilians occurred the most in the provinces KP (83), Punjab (58) and Balochistan (55).⁹⁹

3.1.2. Regional comparison of violence-related casualties

Regional comparison of violence-related casualties in 2022

This section provides figures of fatalities and attacks at regional level, according to the Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICCS) and, to a lesser extent, the Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS). It is impossible to present the figures in one comparative table, as the three main sources on the security situation use different parameters and definitions.

PIPS only gave regional details for 'terrorist attacks' in its annual report covering 2022. PIPS focused on the number of terrorist attacks (and consequent fatalities per province, and indicated percentage

⁹³ New York Times (The), Pakistan names new army chief, amid political drama centered on the military, 24 November 2022, [url](#); Reuters, Pakistan names Asim Munir as new chief of powerful army, 26 November 2022, [url](#)

⁹⁴ Dawn, PTI huddle resolves to dissolve Punjab, KP assemblies, 29 November 2022, [url](#); Dawn, Punjab, KP assemblies to dissolve on Dec 23: Imran, 17 December 2022, [url](#)

⁹⁵ ICG, A change of command and political contestation in Pakistan, 27 December 2022, [url](#); BBC, Pakistan: Imran Khan's high stakes election gamble, 22 December 2022, [url](#)

⁹⁶ Al Jazeera, Pakistan poll panel announces April elections in two provinces, 26 January 2023, [url](#)

⁹⁷ OFPRA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2022-31 December 2022), update 11 January 2023, [url](#)

⁹⁸ OFPRA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2022-31 December 2022), update 11 January 2023, [url](#)

⁹⁹ OFPRA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2022-31 December 2022), update 11 January 2023, [url](#)

changes in 2022 compared to 2021 [see Figure 2]). Compared to 2021, PIPS observed an increase in 'terrorist incidents' (27 % overall). The number of deaths also increased by 25 % compared to 2021.¹⁰⁰ KP (including former FATA) and Balochistan were the most affected by these attacks in 2022.¹⁰¹

Region	No of terrorist incidents 2022	% change	Persons killed	% change	Persons injured	% change
Balochistan	79	-2 %	106	-22%	271	-21 %
Karachi	6		8		31	
KP (including former FATA)	169	+52%	294	+74%	393	+222%
Punjab	3	-40%	6	-57%	30	-41%
Sindh (excl. Karachi)	2		0		0	
Islamabad	2		5	-	9	
Total	262	+27%	419	+25% ¹⁰²	734	+32% ¹⁰²

Figure 2: 'Terrorist attacks' by region - 2021 vs. 2022, based on PIPS data¹⁰²

CRSS recorded most of the casualties from terrorism or from counter-terrorism operations in KP (including former FATA), followed by Balochistan and Sindh in 2022.¹⁰³ According to CRSS, in comparison with 2021, fatalities in KP went up from 399 in 2021 to 633 in 2022 – a nearly 59% increase.¹⁰⁴ Balochistan recorded a marginal increase of violence by 1 %, whilst violence in all other Pakistan regions dropped. In Punjab province violence declined by 60 %, in Sindh by 50 %.¹⁰⁵

PICSS provides data for the overall incidents (terrorist and other violent incidents) per region. In 2022, 589 incidents in total were observed. In 2022, 904 people were killed and 885 others injured. PICSS documented most of the casualties due to overall incidents in KP, former FATA and Balochistan.¹⁰⁶

3.2. Security trends per geographic subdivision

In the following section, security trends are explained in greater detail, per geographic subdivision. A general description of the province and the districts where most security incidents are reported provides information on the geography and population, on the background of the conflict, including the actors of the conflict in the province. The subsections describe recent trends in the security situation, including the nature of violence, frequency, targets, locations, and victims within a timeframe from 1 January 2022 until 31 December 2022. A separate subsection is dedicated to displacement. Several incidents are described. These should be read as illustrations of trends in the security situation and not as an exhaustive list of incidents.

¹⁰⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), pp. 15-18

¹⁰¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), pp. 15-18

¹⁰² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), pp. 15-18

¹⁰³ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2022, February 2023, [url](#), p. 4

¹⁰⁴ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2022, February 2023, [url](#), p. 4

¹⁰⁵ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2022, February 2023, [url](#), p. 4

¹⁰⁶ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2022, 5 January 2023, [url](#), p.2

3.2.1. Punjab

General description of the province

Punjab province is located in the east of Pakistan. It borders the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir in the north-east, the Indian states of Punjab and Rajasthan in the east, the province of Sindh in the south, Balochistan and KP provinces in the west, Islamabad Federal Capital area and Azad Kashmir in the north.¹⁰⁷ The province of Punjab is divided into 9 divisions and 36 districts.¹⁰⁸ Punjab can be divided into three zones: central, north and south Punjab with Lahore being the provincial capital. The military headquarters are situated in Northern Punjab, and the Pakistani army maintains most of its forces in the province.¹⁰⁹ The southern parts of Punjab are among the poorest areas in the country.¹¹⁰ Lahore is the second largest city of Pakistan, after Karachi in Sindh province.¹¹¹

Punjab is the most populated province of Pakistan and the second largest province by area.¹¹² According to the 2017 population census published by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the province of Punjab has a population of 109, 989, 655.¹¹³ According to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), more than half of the population is living in rural areas.¹¹⁴

Background of the violence and actors in the Punjab

A 2016 report by International Crisis Group cited southern Punjab as a region where militant networks and extremists were present.¹¹⁵ In the aftermath of the Pulwama attack in February 2019, in which Jaish-e Muhammed (JeM) militants killed around 40 Indian soldiers, the Pakistani authorities made arrests and seized assets linked to militants in the south of the province.¹¹⁶ As reported by Gandhara in November 2020, militants from Balochistan and militants linked to the TTP have hideouts in the district of Dera Ghazi Khan in the south of Punjab.¹¹⁷ Associated Press reported in April 2021 that TTP has a presence in areas of Punjab province that border the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and in southern Punjab near southwestern Balochistan province.¹¹⁸ Media agencies reported in May and June 2021 that the CTD carried out operations against militants in various areas of Punjab province.¹¹⁹ In a September 2022 report, International Crisis Group notes the presence of ISKP in several northern and western Punjab districts, including Rawalpindi, Gujrunwala, Faisalabad and Dera Ghazi Khan. Low-level sectarian clashes occur regularly in these regions.¹²⁰ In January 2023, two intelligence officers, known for their involvement in counterterrorism operations, were gunned down in Punjab. No one claimed responsibility for these killings.¹²¹

¹⁰⁷ UNOCHA, Pakistan-Overview map [map], 3 December 2018, [url](#)

¹⁰⁸ Samaa TV, 6 surprises from Pakistan's 2017 census that should worry govt, 12 June 2021, [url](#)

¹⁰⁹ McGill International Review (The), South Punjab – Neglected and Politicized, 4 April 2019, [url](#)

¹¹⁰ Dawn, 20pc of Pakistanis live in 10 cities, census reveals, 29 August 2017, [url](#); McGill International Review (The), South Punjab – Neglected and Politicized, 4 April 2019, [url](#)

¹¹¹ World Population Review, Population of Cities in Pakistan, 11 November 2022, [url](#)

¹¹² UNDP Pakistan, Devolution of Power: Pathways to Actualization, 23 January 2021, [url](#), p. 5

¹¹³ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017-National, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

¹¹⁴ UNDP Pakistan, Devolution of Power: Pathways to Actualization, 23 January 2021, [url](#), p. 5

¹¹⁵ International Crisis Group, Pakistan's Jihadist Heartland: Southern Punjab, 30 May 2016, [url](#)

¹¹⁶ Guardian (The), Pakistan launches major crackdown on extremist groups, 8 March 2019, [url](#); AP, Popular support for militants complicates Pakistan crackdown, 8 March 2019, [url](#)

¹¹⁷ Gandhara, Suspected Al-Qaeda-Linked Militants Killed In Pakistan's Punjab Province, 7 November 2020, [url](#)

¹¹⁸ AP, Pakistani police say wanted militant killed in shootout, 11 April 2021, [url](#)

¹¹⁹ International News (The), CTD conducted 46 operations in seven days, 30 May 2021, [url](#); Dawn, CTD arrests three militants, 20 June 2021, [url](#)

¹²⁰ International Crisis Group, A new era of sectarian violence in Pakistan, 5 September 2022, [url](#), p.7

¹²¹ Al Jazeera, Two Pakistan intelligence officers gunned down in Punjab province, 4 January 2023, [url](#)

Recent security trends and impact on the civilian population

Security incidents

During 2022, there were 76 security incidents recorded by ACLED in Punjab province, of which three were coded as explosions/remote violence and 58 as incidents of violence against civilians.¹²² Out of these 76 security incidents, most occurred in Rawalpindi and Lahore.¹²³ A total of six security incidents in Punjab were attributed directly to ISKP.¹²⁴

In 2022, PIPS counted three 'terrorist attacks' in Punjab, compared to five in 2021. These attacks occurred in Lahore and Rawalpindi.¹²⁵ PICSS observed three 'militant attacks' in 2022, compared to ten 'militant attacks' in the province in 2021 and 2020.¹²⁶

Security trends in 2022

According to PIPS, the three terrorist attacks in Punjab in 2022 claimed six lives and injured 30 more people. Two of these attacks took place in the provincial capital Lahore including a major vehicle-borne bomb attack by BNA targeting security and bank officials in Anarkali bazaar. TTP claimed the third attack, which targeted a policeman in Kallar Syedan, Rawalpindi.¹²⁷ The Counter-Terrorism Department of police set up 25 notable anti-terror operations in Punjab in 2022, PICCS reports. Arrestees during these police actions included members of TTP, ISKP, al-Qaida, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and BNA.¹²⁸

Illustrative incidents in 2022:

- On 21 January 2022, a bomb blast at the Anarkali market in Lahore killed three people and injured 33 others. BNA, a newly emerged terrorist outfit, claimed responsibility.¹²⁹
- On 24 May 2022, a policeman was shot and killed during a raid at a residence in Lahore. The incident coincided with a crackdown against PTI-leaders who were preparing a march to Islamabad the following day.¹³⁰
- On 3 November 2022, former PM Imran Khan was shot in the leg when a gunman opened fire on a convoy carrying the former PM in Wazirabad, eastern Punjab.¹³¹
- On 23 January 2023, TTP militants attacked a police checkpoint and killed two policemen in Taunsa, Punjab. Increased security measures were imposed in the province.¹³²

¹²² OFPRA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2022-31 December 2022), update 11 January 2023, [url](#)

¹²³ OFPRA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2022-31 December 2022), update 11 January 2023, [url](#)

¹²⁴ OFPRA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2022-31 December 2022), update 11 January 2023, [url](#)

¹²⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), pp. 54-56 ; PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2021, 4 January 2022, [url](#), p. 63

¹²⁶ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2022, 5 January 2023, [url](#), p.30

¹²⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), pp. 54-56

¹²⁸ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2022, 5 January 2023, [url](#), p.31

¹²⁹ Dawn, Bomb blast in Lahore market leaves three dead, 21 January 2022, [url](#)

¹³⁰ Express Tribune (The), Govt, PTI accuse each other of cop's death, 24 May 2022, [url](#)

¹³¹ Guardian (The), Imran Khan wounded in 'assassination attempt' in Pakistan, 3 November 2022, [url](#)

¹³² ISW, CT - Critical Threats Project, Salafi-Jihadi Movement Weekly Update, 18 January 2023, [url](#)

Casualties

CRSS recorded in total 28 fatalities from terror or counter-terror incidents in Punjab in 2022, compared to 72 fatalities in 2021.¹³³

Displacement

Unprecedented monsoon rainfall from June up until October 2022 killed more than a thousand people and displaced 7,9 million people in Pakistan, according to UN estimates.¹³⁴ Human Rights Watch (HRW) reports the devastating floods displaced more than 30 million people.¹³⁵ The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) reports 223 people died in Punjab; considerable infrastructural damage was reported, including the full or partial destruction of 67.981 homes. Three districts in Punjab were designed as 'calamity-hit', affecting 4.8 million persons.¹³⁶

Among the consulted sources, no information was found about any conflict-induced displacement from areas in and to Punjab in 2022.¹³⁷

3.2.2. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (including former FATA)

General description of the province

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is situated in the north of Pakistan and borders Afghanistan in the west, Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan in the east and north-east and Punjab province in the south-east.¹³⁸ Peshawar is the provincial capital. The province is divided into 7 divisions and 34 districts.¹³⁹ The population speaks Pashtu, followed by the local languages Hindko and Urdu.¹⁴⁰ The province is the third-largest province of Pakistan by area.¹⁴¹ According to the 2017 population census published by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the province of KP has a population of 30, 508, 920 and former FATA of 4, 993, 044.¹⁴² According to UNDP, approximately 84 % of the population is living in rural areas.¹⁴³

The FATA was a semi-autonomous tribal region in north-western Pakistan, consisting of seven tribal agencies (districts) and six frontier regions, until it was merged with KP on 31 May 2018.¹⁴⁴ The region of former FATA is referred to as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa tribal districts (KPTDs). The tribal agencies and frontier regions in former FATA have been re-designated as districts and subdivisions of KP.¹⁴⁵

Peshawar district and the KP tribal districts are described separately and in detail below.

¹³³ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2022, February 2023, [url](#), p. 5

¹³⁴ Mercy Corps, Devastation in Pakistan: deadly floods displace millions, 5 October 2022, [url](#)

¹³⁵ HRW, World Report 2023 - Pakistan, 12 January 2023, [url](#)

¹³⁶ NDMA, NDMA Floods (2022) Sitrep 2022 – (Daily Sitrep No. 158 Dated 18th November 2022), 18 November 2022, [url](#)

¹³⁷ Websites consulted: <http://www.unocha.org/pakistan>;

<https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/pakistan>; <http://reliefweb.int/country/pak>

¹³⁸ Government of Pakistan, Provincial Disaster Management Authority, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Monsoon Contingency Plan 2019, 6 July 2019, [url](#), pp. 4-7

¹³⁹ Samaa TV, 6 surprises from Pakistan's 2017 census that should worry govt, 12 June 2021, [url](#)

¹⁴⁰ Daily Sabah, Pakistan: A land of many languages, 9 March 2018, [url](#)

¹⁴¹ UNDP Pakistan, Devolution of Power: Pathways to Actualization, 23 January 2021, [url](#), p. 5

¹⁴² Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017-National, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

¹⁴³ UNDP Pakistan, Devolution of Power: Pathways to Actualization, 23 January 2021, [url](#), p. 5

¹⁴⁴ Asia Foundation (The), Dismantling Pakistan's Tribal Areas, 24 October 2018, [url](#)

¹⁴⁵ Express Tribune (The), Tribal areas re-designated as districts, sub-divisions, 12 June 2018, [url](#); Express Tribune (The), Notification issued for composition of new administrative divisions in Mohmand, Khyber, 20 July 2018, [url](#)

Background of the conflict and actors in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (including former FATA)

Since 2004, the Pakistani army has carried out a series of military operations against TTP and their affiliated organizations in KP, mostly in the tribal districts.¹⁴⁶ Although the military campaigns broke TTP's hold of the territory, human rights violations and the destruction of civilian infrastructure displaced hundreds of thousands of residents.¹⁴⁷ In the long run, however, the army's counter-insurgency contributed to a higher level of security in the province,¹⁴⁸ forcing militant groups to relocate across the border to Afghanistan.¹⁴⁹ In May 2019, it was reported that the Pakistani state was exercising control over Mingora city and peace had returned to the Swat valley.¹⁵⁰

In 2019, The New York Times reported that the army rather than civil law enforcement agencies maintained law and order in FATA. Despite the tribal areas' merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2018, FATA residents still did not enjoy the same constitutional rights as other Pakistanis.¹⁵¹ In Afghanistan and in Tank, Dera Ismael Khan and North Waziristan districts, networks of the TTP were still active.¹⁵² In August 2019, Gandhara reported that members of the TTP had returned to Buner district and established checkpoints in the area. In response, the military and the police conducted search and strike operations in the district.¹⁵³ In Bajaur and Mohmand districts, TTP forced local businesses to pay protection money.¹⁵⁴ In October 2020, Gandhara reported the TTP's return to some districts of Malakand Division.¹⁵⁵ Local residents, cited by Gandhara in October 2020, mentioned that several locals received death threats from the Taliban.¹⁵⁶

Although the number of terrorist incidents remained low in KP in 2020,¹⁵⁷ PIPS noted in 2020 that there was no considerable progress in the reform process in former FATA.¹⁵⁸ North Waziristan remained a flashpoint of insecurity and militant violence in 2020 and was the scene of 31 terrorist attacks.¹⁵⁹ In August 2021, analyst Faheed Nabeel named Bajaur, North Waziristan and South Waziristan as the districts most impacted by the increasing number of militant activities by TTP.¹⁶⁰ According to AFP, TTP ramped up attacks in Pakistan since the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021. However, in an attempt to improve its image and distinguish itself from the ISKP's extremism, TTP attempts to spare civilians and focuses its attacks on security and law enforcement officials, AFP reported in November 2021.¹⁶¹ PIPS reported that the number of terrorist attacks in KP rose by 40 % in 2021.¹⁶² North Waziristan, South Waziristan and Bajaur witnessed most terrorist attacks in KP.¹⁶³ Over 71 % of the reported attacks in KP in 2021 targeted security forces and law

¹⁴⁶ Al Jazeera, Pakistan military warns Pashtun rights group its 'time is up', 30 April 2019, [url](#)

¹⁴⁷ ICG, Shaping a New Peace in Pakistan's Tribal Areas, 20 August 2018, [url](#), p. 2 ; Dawn, Swat: an unquiet calm, 21 September 2014, [url](#)

¹⁴⁸ Almeida, C., EASO, EASO COI Meeting Report: Pakistan, 16-17 October 2017; Rome, February 2018, [url](#), pp. 21, 46

¹⁴⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p.72

¹⁵⁰ AA, Swat city center: From bloody square to business hub, 23 May 2019, [url](#)

¹⁵¹ New York Times (The), Pakistan's Tribal Areas Are Still Waiting for Justice as Army Tightens Grip, 11 June 2019, [url](#)

¹⁵² ICG, Shaping a New Peace in Pakistan's Tribal Areas, 20 August 2018, [url](#), pp. 3-4; Mohanty Ranjan, T., Pakistan: Dera Ismail Khan: Tenuous Control, 29 July 2019, SAIR, Volume 18, No. 5, [url](#)

¹⁵³ Gandhara, Taliban See Resurgence In Northwestern Pakistan, 23 August 2019, [url](#)

¹⁵⁴ Gandhara, Taliban Reemerges In Former Pakistani Stronghold, 26 October 2020, [url](#)

¹⁵⁵ Gandhara, Taliban Reemerges In Former Pakistani Stronghold, 26 October 2020, [url](#)

¹⁵⁶ Gandhara, Taliban Reemerges In Former Pakistani Stronghold, 26 October 2020, [url](#)

¹⁵⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 43

¹⁵⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 39

¹⁵⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 3 January 2021, [url](#), p. 43

¹⁶⁰ Nabeel F., email, 4 August 2021

¹⁶¹ Agence France-Presse, Pakistan bids to quell rise in TTP attacks, 15 November 2021, [url](#)

¹⁶² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2021, 2022, [url](#), p. 22

¹⁶³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2021, 2022, [url](#), p. 45

enforcement personnel. Polio vaccination teams or their police escorts, pro-government tribal elders and political leaders were other prime targets.¹⁶⁴

In December 2021, local elections were held in 17 KP districts.¹⁶⁵ Ruling PTI candidates performed poorly and opposition party Pashtun Islamist Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam won the bulk of the seats.¹⁶⁶

The following figure, based on data compiled by South Asia Terrorism Portal, illustrates the evolution of the number of fatalities in terrorist incidents amongst civilians, security forces and insurgents in KP in the 2010-2022 period.¹⁶⁷

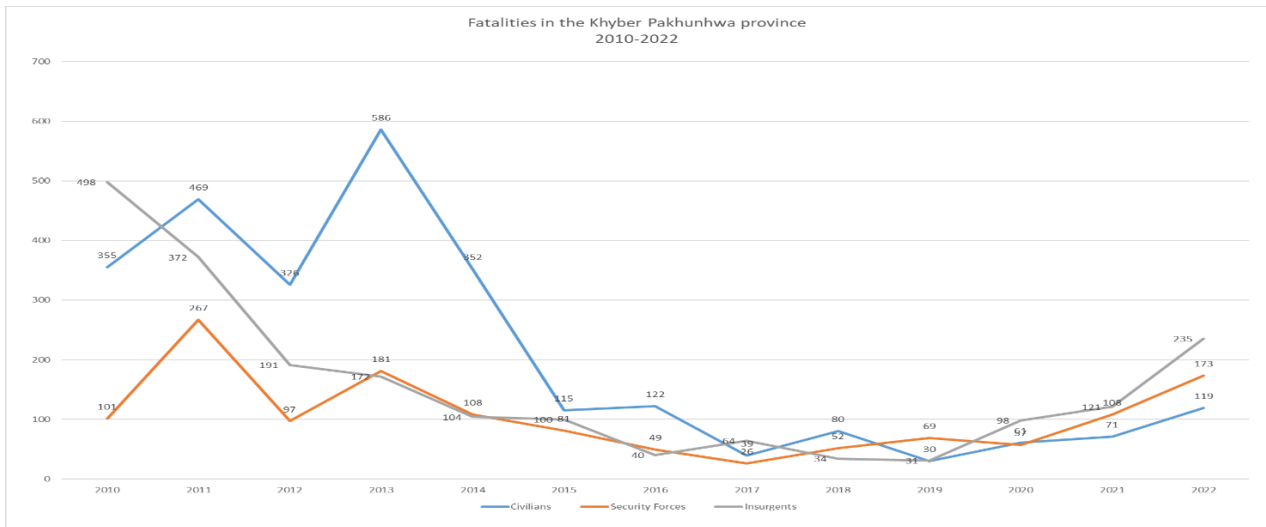


Figure 3: Fatalities in KP in terrorist incidents, 2010-2022, based on SATP data¹⁶⁸

Recent security trends and impact on the civilian population in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (including former FATA)

Security incidents

ACLED collected data on 423 violent events in KP province¹⁶⁹ from reports in open sources in the year 2022, 247 of which were coded as battles, 45 as explosions/remote violence and 83 as violence against civilians. North Waziristan stood out as the district where most incidents were reported with 90 violent events, followed by Peshawar with 60 and Bajaur with 37 violent incidents.¹⁷⁰

The following table illustrates in which KP districts most security incidents were reported in 2022 and indicates the involvement of security forces and/or militant organizations (TTP or ISKP) in these incidents.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2021, 2022, [url](#), p. 46

¹⁶⁵ News International (The), Local government polls: Nepotism, internal rifts behind KP rout, 23 December 2021, [url](#)

¹⁶⁶ ICG, Pakistan – January 2022, last update: February 2023, [url](#)

¹⁶⁷ South Asia Terrorism Portal, Datasheet - Khyber Pakhtunkhwa – Yearly fatalities, 13 February 2023, [url](#)

¹⁶⁸ South Asia Terrorism Portal, Datasheet - Khyber Pakhtunkhwa – Yearly fatalities, 13 February 2023, [url](#)

¹⁶⁹ This number includes the FATA tribal districts

¹⁷⁰ OFPRA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2022-31 December 2022), update 11 January 2023, [url](#)

¹⁷¹ OFPRA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2022-31 December 2022), update 11 January 2023, [url](#)

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	Nombre d'incidents violents	En % du total de la province	Total d'incidents violents liés aux Forces gouvernementales	En % du total de la province	Total d'incidents violents liés aux TTP	% du total d'incidents violents liés aux TTP	Total d'incidents violents liés à Islamic State	% du total d'incidents violents liés à Islamic State
Peshawar	60	14%	41	10%	15	3%	17	4%
Bannu	21	5%	19	4%	16	4%	0	0%
Dera Ismail Khan	38	9%	35	8%	25	6%	0	0%
FR Dera Ismail Khan	1	0%	1	0,2%	1	0,2%	0	0%
North Waziristan	90	21%	77	18%	47	11%	2	0,5%
Nowshera	3	1%	3	1%	3	1%	0	0%
Mardan	7	2%	5	1%	1	0,2%	0	0%
South Waziristan	30	7%	23	5%	14	3%	3	1%
Shangla	2	0%	2	0,5%	1	0,2%	0	0%
Charsadda	9	2%	8	2%	4	1%	0	0%
Khyber	25	6%	19	4%	5	1%	5	1%
Bajaur	37	9%	18	4%	8	2%	20	5%
Hangu	4	1%	3	1%	3	1%	0	0%
Lakki Marwat	30	7%	30	7%	11	3%	0	0%
Lower Dir	5	1%	5	1%	1	0,2%	1	0,2%
Kohat	13	3%	9	2%	2	0,5%	0	0%
Orakzai	2	0%	1	0,2%	0	0%	0	0%
Tank	14	3%	11	3%	8	2%	0	0%
Kurram	12	3%	8	2%	5	1%	0	0%
Swat	8	2%	5	1%	3	1%	0	0%
Swabi	5	1%	2	0,5%	1	0,2%	0	0%
Mohmand	3	1%	2	0,5%	1	0,2%	0	0%
Buner	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Upper Dir	1	0%	1	0,2%	0	0%	0	0%
Haripur	1	0%	1	0,2%	0	0%	0	0%
Mansehra	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
TOTAL	423	100%	329	78%	175	40%	48	11%

 Figure 4: 'Security incidents' by region - KP - 2022, based on ACLED data¹⁷²

PIPS observes a shift in the militant landscape and terrorist activities in Pakistan since the Taliban takeover in Kabul in August 2021. Cross-border movements by militants from Afghanistan to Pakistan have led to increasing numbers of attacks on Pakistan security personnel.¹⁷³ PIPS documented a total of 258 incidents of violence of different types in KP in 2022.¹⁷⁴ As much as 169 'terrorist attacks'¹⁷⁵ took place, including 130 attacks against security/law enforcement agencies, eight attacks against tribal elders or peace committee members supportive of the government, seven attacks targeting civilians and six attacks against health/polio workers and/or their security escorts.¹⁷⁶ Apart from these terrorist attacks, 57 anti-militant operational strikes by security forces and eleven armed clashes between security and law enforcement personnel and militants were recorded. Other conflict-related incidents included nine cross-border attacks from Afghanistan, five foiled or failed terror plots and two inter-militant clashes.¹⁷⁷ PICSS observed 128 militant attacks¹⁷⁸ 179 and 53 'security forces actions' in the province in 2022.¹⁸⁰

Security trends in 2022

According to PIPS, a majority of the 'terrorist attacks' (130 out of 169) in the province in 2022 targeted security/law enforcement agencies. Tribal elders and political leaders were the target of 15 attacks, whilst seven attacks targeted civilians and six attacks were directed against health/polio workers

¹⁷² OFPRA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2022-31 December 2022), update 11 January 2023, [url](#)

¹⁷³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 72

¹⁷⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 37

¹⁷⁵ This number includes the FATA tribal districts

¹⁷⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), pp. 36-37

¹⁷⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 37

¹⁷⁸ This number includes the FATA tribal districts

¹⁷⁹ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2022, 5 January 2023, [url](#), p.27

¹⁸⁰ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2022, 5 January 2023, [url](#), p.19

and/or their security escorts.¹⁸¹ The International News stated that between 2000 and July 2021, 1, 505 police officers were killed in the province.¹⁸²

Despite the rising level of violence in KP, direct attacks against civilians declined in 2022, PIPS reports. Only seven attacks in KP targeted civilians explicitly. This trend, which was observed in previous years as well, is a result of the changing tactics militants employ. Fearful of the public wrath that attacks against the civilian population engender, militants prefer to target security forces, pro-government tribal elders and political leaders, PIPS explains.¹⁸³ Most of the attacks against civilians were reported in the tribal districts of the province. None of these attacks were claimed by TTP.¹⁸⁴ Attacks were also directed against polio/health workers and their police escorts in the province. Two of these attacks took place in North Waziristan. Kohat, Peshawar, Khyber and Tank districts were the scenes of a single attack against polio/health workers. The TTP and local Taliban groups were allegedly involved in these attacks.¹⁸⁵ According to a doctor involved in polio campaigns in the region, as much as 70 polio vaccinators or accompanying policemen have been killed in the region since 2012.¹⁸⁶

PIPS registered three 'sectarian-related attacks' in the province in 2022, including the suicide attack by ISKP on a Shia mosque in Peshawar on March 4 in which 65 worshipers were killed. Two other sectarian attacks were reported in Kurram.¹⁸⁷

In a September 2022 report, ICG observes that ever since its post-2021 resurgence TTP 'has focused its attacks on security and law enforcement personnel in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa'.¹⁸⁸ In comparison, , notwithstanding its presence in tribal areas, ISKP is 'primarily an urban phenomenon seemingly comprised of de-centralised units that target Shia sites rather than directly challenging the state'.¹⁸⁹

Illustrative incidents in 2022:

- On 30 January 2022, unidentified motorcyclists shot dead a priest and injured his companion in the Chamkani Ring Road area of Peshawar.¹⁹⁰
- On 11 April 2022, five policemen were killed when their patrol vehicle was ambushed by militants using RPG-7 shoulder-fired rockets in Dera Ismail Khan.¹⁹¹
- On 13 April 2022, a schoolteacher and member of the political party Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazl was killed in an IED blast in Bajaur.¹⁹²
- On 14 May 2022, two members of the Sikh community were killed in the Sarband area of Peshawar. The attack was claimed by ISKP.¹⁹³
- On 17 May 2022, two prominent members of TTP were killed during an exchange of fire between the security forces and TTP militants in North Waziristan district's Boya area.¹⁹⁴
- In August 2022, residents of Swat district protested against the return of TTP militants in the region. As a consequence, threats of violence and extortion demands surged in the region.¹⁹⁵

¹⁸¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), pp. 36-37

¹⁸² International News (The), 1,505 policemen martyred in KP since 2000, 27 July 2021, [url](#)

¹⁸³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), pp. 40-41

¹⁸⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 41

¹⁸⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 42

¹⁸⁶ IPS, Vaccine Refusal and Floods Impact Polio Drive in Pakistan, 29 November 2022, [url](#)

¹⁸⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 40

¹⁸⁸ ICG, A new era of sectarian violence in Pakistan, 5 September 2022, [url](#), p.7

¹⁸⁹ ICG, A new era of sectarian violence in Pakistan, 5 September 2022, [url](#), p.18

¹⁹⁰ Express Tribune (The), Priest killed, friend injured in Peshawar attack, 30 January 2022, [url](#)

¹⁹¹ Express Tribune (The), Two army men, five policemen martyred in separate attacks, 13 April 2022, [url](#)

¹⁹² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 41

¹⁹³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 43

¹⁹⁴ Dawn, 2 most wanted TTP terrorists killed in North Waziristan: ISPR, 17 May 2022, [url](#)

¹⁹⁵ New York Times (The), In Pakistan, fears that 'terrorism has returned' as bombing kills 101, 31 January 2023, [url](#)

- On 5 September 2022, five soldiers and four militants were killed in a clash between the Pakistani army and militants in the Boya area of North Waziristan.¹⁹⁶
- On 8 November 2022, a militant and a soldier were killed during an 'intelligence-based operation' (IBO) in the Shakas area of Khyber tribal district.¹⁹⁷
- On 17 November 2022, TTP militants opened fire on a police van in the Kurram Par area of Lakki Murwat. Six policemen were killed.¹⁹⁸
- On 18 December 2022, TTP militants detained in a Bannu detention centre broke out of their cells and held security personnel hostage. According to Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif, all 33 hostage-takers and two special forces members were killed during the operation to free the hostages.¹⁹⁹
- On 21 December 2022, dozens of heavily armed militants stormed a police station in Wana, situated in South Waziristan. A number of policemen were taken hostage. The assailants took off with AK-47 rifles.²⁰⁰

Casualties

According to PIPS, 551 people were killed and 541 people wounded in 258 incidents of violence of various types in KP in 2022.²⁰¹ PIPS mentioned that 178 of the casualties in the province were personnel of security forces or law enforcement agencies.²⁰² The 57 anti-militant operational strikes by security forces in the province caused 193 deaths, mostly militants.²⁰³ Of these 57 anti-militant operations, 24 took place in North-Waziristan, causing 85 fatalities.²⁰⁴ In 2022, CRSS recorded in total 633 casualties in KP province.²⁰⁵ According to CRSS, terrorist attacks are concentrated in the Greater Bannu region that is adjacent to Waziristan, Bajaur, and Kurram districts. The abutting Afghan provinces of Kunar, Nangarhar, Paktia and Paktika serve as a springboard for terrorist missions in the Pakistani mainland.²⁰⁶ Security forces remained the primary target of terrorist attacks in KP.²⁰⁷ Fatalities from terror attacks in KP were higher than from security operations.²⁰⁸ CRSS also notes that terrorist attacks caused 345 casualties (196 fatalities, 149 injuries) amongst Pakistani security forces in KP in 2022.²⁰⁹ As many as 97 policemen and 88 soldiers died in terrorist attacks in KP in 2022, CRSS reports.²¹⁰

Displacement

Unprecedented monsoon rainfall from June up until October 2022 killed more than a thousand people and displaced 7,9 million people in Pakistan, according to UN estimates.²¹¹ HRW reports that the devastating floods displaced more than 30 million people.²¹² The NDMA reports that 309 people died in KP; considerable infrastructural damage was reported, including the full or partial destruction of

¹⁹⁶ RFE/RL, Five Pakistani soldiers, four militants killed in shoot-out in North Waziristan, 5 September 2022, [url](#)

¹⁹⁷ Dawn, ISPR says 'terrorist propagated as missing person' killed in Khyber IBO, 8 November 2022, [url](#)

¹⁹⁸ Dawn, Eight law enforcers martyred in Lakki/Bajaur, 17 November 2022, [url](#)

¹⁹⁹ New York Times (The), Pakistan raids a prison after militants seize a hostage, 20 December 2022, [url](#) ; BBC, Pakistan hostages: 33 militants killed at police station, 20 December 2022, [url](#)

²⁰⁰ Dawn, Militants storm Wana police station in South Waziristan, flee with weapons, 21 December 2022, [url](#)

²⁰¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 37

²⁰² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 36

²⁰³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 37

²⁰⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 92

²⁰⁵ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2022, February 2023, [url](#), pp. 32-33

²⁰⁶ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2022, February 2023, [url](#), p.45

²⁰⁷ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2022, February 2023, [url](#), p.45

²⁰⁸ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2022, February 2023, [url](#), p. 32

²⁰⁹ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2022, February 2023, [url](#), p. 27

²¹⁰ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2022, February 2023, [url](#), p. 27

²¹¹ Mercy Corps, Devastation in Pakistan: deadly floods displace millions, 5 October 2022, [url](#)

²¹² HRW, World Report 2023 - Pakistan, 12 January 2023, [url](#)

91.464 homes. As many as 17 districts in KP were designed as 'calamity-hit', affecting 4.3 million persons.²¹³

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) reports that thousands of people have been living in internal displacement since 2014 as a result of military operations in FATA. Although the number of IDPs has fallen in recent years, at least 98,000 people were still unable to return or achieve other forms of durable solutions as of 2020.²¹⁴ In July 2021, TNN reported that the start of the repatriation of IDPs of Tirah-Rajgal from Kokikhel tribe in Khyber tribal district to Zar Manzra and Mehrban Killi, in Tirah-Rajgal had begun after nine years.²¹⁵ According to UNOCHA, 16, 483 families remained displaced in the province as of August 2021.²¹⁶

According to IDMC, conflict displacement is difficult to record in Pakistan because there is no centralized reporting system and media reporting tends to be politicised. Despite the increasing numbers of attacks by TTP, no associated displacement was reported as of IDMC's last update on 19 May 2022.²¹⁷ No data were found among the consulted sources concerning any conflict-induced displacement from areas in and to KP in 2022.²¹⁸ In a Radio Free Europe article from December 2022, a number of inhabitants of North Waziristan discuss their fears of being displaced again because of the increasing number of clashes between TTP and security forces in the district.²¹⁹ The New York Times reported that the January 2023 suicide attack on a mosque in Peshawar led to widespread talk of migrating to comparatively safer cities, such as Islamabad and Lahore.²²⁰

Peshawar district

Situated in the centre of KP, Peshawar district is bordered by the districts Khyber in the west, Mohmand and Charsadda in the north, Nowshera in the north east and Kohat in the south.²²¹ According to the census of 2017, the population of Peshawar district is 4, 267, 198, of which 1, 969, 823 live in urban settings.²²² Most of the inhabitants of Peshawar are Pashtun,²²³ including sizeable numbers of Afghan refugees.²²⁴ Historically, Peshawar is considered as 'the capital of the Afghan diaspora' in Pakistan.²²⁵

²¹³ NDMA, NDMA Floods (2022) Sitrep 2022 – (Daily Sitrep No. 158 Dated 18th November 2022), 18 November 2022, [url](#)

²¹⁴ Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, Country profile: Pakistan, last updated 19 May 2022, [url](#)

²¹⁵ TNN, Repatriation of displaced families of Tirah begins, 10 July 2021, [url](#)

²¹⁶ UNOCHA Pakistan, email, 4 August 2021 - data of PDMA KP - courtesy of UNOCHA Pakistan

²¹⁷ Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, Country profile: Pakistan, last updated 19 May 2022, [url](#)

²¹⁸ Websites consulted: <http://www.unocha.org/pakistan>;

<https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/pakistan>; <http://reliefweb.int/country/pak>

²¹⁹ RFE/RL, 'Clouds Of War Are Gathering': Pakistanis Brace For Bloody Year As TTP Ends Cease-Fire, Intensifies Attacks, 31 December 2022, [url](#)

²²⁰ New York Times (The), 'Terrorism has returned': Pakistan grapples with attack that left 101 dead, 31 January 2023, [url](#)

²²¹ Government of Pakistan, Provincial Disaster Management Authority, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Monsoon Contingency Plan 2019, 6 July 2019, [url](#), pp. 4-7

²²² Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017 -, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

²²³ Britannica, Peshawar, last updated 30 January 2023, [url](#); Minority Rights Group International, Pashtuns, Updated June 2018, [url](#)

²²⁴ EUAA, Pakistan - Situation of Afghan refugees, May 2022, [url](#)

²²⁵ New York Times (The), A nation challenged: Peshawar, a city of exiles dreams of power regained, 11 October 2001, [url](#)

Peshawar city is also home to a significant numbers of Shia Muslims,²²⁶ (including Hazara)²²⁷ and small communities of Sikhs,²²⁸ Christians²²⁹ and Ahmadiyya Muslims²³⁰.

In 2022, PIPS observed a rising level of violence in Peshawar district compared to 2021.²³¹ As much as 17 'terrorist attacks' were registered in 2022 in Peshawar district, causing 275 casualties (74 fatalities, 201 injuries).²³² Pakistani security forces launched six operational attacks against militants in Peshawar district in 2022, resulting in eleven deaths.²³³ A suicide attack carried out by ISKP on 4 March 2022 at a Shia mosque in Koocha Risaldar near Qissa Khwani Bazaar (Peshawar) was the most lethal security incident in Pakistan in 2022. According to PIPS, 65 people were killed and 186 others were injured.²³⁴ On 31 January 2022, a priest was killed and another cleric was wounded after attending Sunday mass in the Martyrs of the All Saints Church in Peshawar.²³⁵ On 6 March 2022, unidentified assailants killed a man and wounded another in an attack on the clinic of an Ahmadi doctor in the Scheme Chowk area of Peshawar.²³⁶ On 14 May 2022, ISKP killed two members of the Sikh community in the Sarband area of Peshawar.²³⁷ Most of the other five terrorist incidents in Peshawar district in 2022 were attributed to local Taliban or TTP.²³⁸ A single attack on a polio/health worker and/or the escorting police was also reported in Peshawar.²³⁹ On 5 October 2022, three terrorists, a soldier and an officer of FC were killed when a military convoy was attacked in the Hassan Khel area of Peshawar.²⁴⁰

On 30 January 2023, a suicide bomber detonated an explosive device in a Peshawar mosque, killing more than 100 people. As the mosque was situated in a heavily guarded neighbourhood near several important government and military buildings, many of the casualties were police officers and government employees.²⁴¹

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa tribal districts (KPTDs)

General

According to PIPS, the government's lack of urgency in introducing reforms in former FATA has left the people questioning the merger of the region with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.²⁴² The growing number of attacks on police personnel and infrastructure in the KPTDs illustrates the need for reforming and capacitating the law enforcement structures of the tribal districts. Whilst the establishment of police stations and training of law enforcement agencies is underway, the process

²²⁶ IRB, Pakistan: Situation and treatment of Shia [Shi'a, Shi'i, Shiite] Muslims, including Hazaras and Turi, particularly in Lahore, Karachi, Islamabad, and Hyderabad; state response to violence against Shias (2017-January 2020) [PAK106393.E], 15 January 2020, [url](#)

²²⁷ Al Jazeera, Hazara community finds safe haven in Peshawar, 12 November 2011, [url](#)

²²⁸ Wire, By failing to secure their security, Pakistan government has failed the Sikh community, 20 May 2022, [url](#)

²²⁹ Reuters, Priest's killing in Pakistan reignites fear in Christian community, 31 January 2022, [url](#)

²³⁰ Dawn, Man killed in attack on Ahmadi doctor's clinic in Peshawar, 6 March 2022, [url](#)

²³¹ In 2021 PIPS registered 8 "terrorist attacks" in Peshawar district, causing 9 deaths.

²³² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 35

²³³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 92

²³⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 12, p. 57

²³⁵ Reuters, Priest's killing in Pakistan reignites fear in Christian community, 31 January 2022, [url](#)

²³⁶ Dawn, Man killed in attack on Ahmadi doctor's clinic in Peshawar, 6 March 2022, [url](#)

²³⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 43

²³⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 42

²³⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 42

²⁴⁰ Dawn, Seven terrorists killed in KP operations: ISPR, 5 October 2022, [url](#)

²⁴¹ New York Times (The), 'Terrorism has returned': Pakistan grapples with attack that left 101 dead, 31 January 2023, [url](#)

²⁴² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 31

needs to be expedited.²⁴³ PIPS further notes that police officers who are deployed in the tribal districts of KP are the main targets of the TTP offensive in the province.²⁴⁴

PICS reports a deterioration of the security situation in the KPTDs since 2019. While violence was witnessed in all tribal districts, North-Waziristan remained the most volatile tribal district with 42 militant attacks recorded in 2022. Most of the notable operations by security forces in the tribal districts took place in that district.²⁴⁵

Below are descriptions of security trends in each tribal district in 2022.

Bajaur tribal district

Bajaur is located in the north of the province of KP and shares a border with Afghanistan's eastern Kunar Province to the north-west, and Mohmand tribal district in the west.²⁴⁶ According to the 2017 census, the population of Bajaur tribal district is 1, 090, 987.²⁴⁷

PIPS counted 11 'terrorist attacks' in Bajaur, killing 18 and injuring eight in 2022.²⁴⁸ According to PIPS, personnel of security forces or law enforcement agencies, tribal elders and political leaders were the targets of militant attacks in Bajaur in 2022.²⁴⁹ Of the eleven terrorist attacks PIPS registered in Bajaur, nine were ascribed to ISKP.²⁵⁰ The main targets of ISKP in Bajaur in 2022 were leaders of Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam, a religious-political party whose ideology resonates with that of the Taliban, ISKP's main rival.²⁵¹ PIPS reported one attack against civilians in Bajaur in 2022. On 28 April 2022, ISKP was believed to have killed a civilian in Bajaur on the suspicion of this person's association with the Taliban.²⁵² In late 2022 ISKP also issued statements seeking support from local tribesmen in Bajaur.²⁵³ In an 11-page message/pamphlet in Urdu, the ISKP urged the people of Bajaur to extend assistance.²⁵⁴ According to counter-terrorism and intelligence officials consulted by ICG, ISKP is moving in both directions across the border between Bajaur and Afghanistan's Kunar and Nangarhar provinces. Calls to extort people in Bajaur often come from Afghan telephone numbers, with callers claiming affiliation with ISKP.²⁵⁵ On 17 November 2022, in the Hilal Khel area of Bajaur near the Afghan border, two soldiers and a militant were killed in an armed battle.²⁵⁶ On 6 January 2023, thousands of people attended a peace rally in Bajaur.²⁵⁷

CRSS reports that security operations led to 101 fatalities in Bajaur in 2022. Terrorism caused 83 deaths in the district in 2022.²⁵⁸ The Bajaur district had the highest number of fatalities from terror and counter-terror operations in KP in 2022, according to CRSS.²⁵⁹

²⁴³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 31

²⁴⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 103

²⁴⁵ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2022, 5 January 2023, [url](#), pp.24-26

²⁴⁶ CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), p. 22

²⁴⁷ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017 – District Tables FATA, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

²⁴⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 35

²⁴⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), pp. 37-43, p. 103

²⁵⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 77

²⁵¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 74

²⁵² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 41, p. 126

²⁵³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 74

²⁵⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 74

²⁵⁵ ICG, A new era of sectarian violence in Pakistan, 5 September 2022, [url](#), p.7

²⁵⁶ Dawn, Eight law enforcers martyred in Lakki/Bajaur, 17 November 2022, [url](#)

²⁵⁷ Dawn, Thousands rally in KP's Bajaur for restoration of lasting peace, 6 January 2023, [url](#)

²⁵⁸ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2022, February 2023, [url](#), p. 32

²⁵⁹ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2022, February 2023, [url](#), p. 32

Khyber tribal district

Khyber tribal district borders Afghanistan to the west, Orakzai tribal district to the south, Kurram tribal district to the south-west and Peshawar in the east. This district is divided into three sub-administrative units: Bara, Jamrud and Landi Kotal.²⁶⁰ According to the 2017 census, Khyber tribal district has a population of 984, 246.²⁶¹ The Pakistani army announced in July 2017 that it had launched a new military operation in Khyber Agency's Rajgal Valley, the operation "Khyber-IV". Hideouts and training camps of militants were destroyed in this offensive.²⁶² The Pakistani army carried out in total four military operations in Khyber.²⁶³ No information on further military operations after July 2017 could be found.

PIPS counted 14 'terrorist attacks' in Khyber, killing 13 and injuring 11 in 2022.²⁶⁴ According to PIPS, personnel of security forces or law enforcement agencies, a tribal elder and a health worker were the targets of militant attacks in Khyber district in 2022.²⁶⁵ Of the 14 terrorist attacks PIPS registered in Khyber district, nine were attacks on members of security and law enforcement agencies, usually executed by TTP or local Taliban.²⁶⁶ PIPS also reports four operational attacks by security forces taking place in Khyber district in 2022.²⁶⁷ In February 2022, security forces recovered a suicide jacket and about 60 kilograms of explosive material hidden underground in the Tirah valley of Khyber district.²⁶⁸ On 3 July 2022, three soldiers were wounded when their military post in the Tirah valley of Khyber district was attacked. During the ensuing search operation at least 13 suspects were picked up for interrogation.²⁶⁹ On 20 January 2023, two policemen and a civilian were killed when militants attacked a police checkpoint in Jamrud Tehsil, Khyber district.²⁷⁰

In September 2022, The Express Tribune reported on the deteriorating law and order situation in Khyber district. The newspaper mentions 'widespread reports' of armed men patrolling parts of Khyber after nightfall.²⁷¹

Kurram tribal district

Kurram shares its border largely with Afghanistan (Nangarhar and Paktia provinces). In the east this agency borders Orakzai and Khyber, and in the south, North Waziristan. It is divided into three administrative units: Lower Kurram, Upper Kurram and Central Kurram. Parachinar is the main capital of Kurram Agency. Kurram has a significant Shia population. Kurram Agency has a history of sectarian violence between the Sunni and the Shia population.²⁷² According to the census of 2017, Kurram tribal district has a population of 615 372.²⁷³

PIPS counted three 'terrorist attacks' in Kurram, killing four and injuring three in 2022.²⁷⁴ According to PIPS, four cross-border attacks or clashes took place at the Pakistan/Afghan border in Kurram in

²⁶⁰ CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), pp. 14-15

²⁶¹ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017 – District Tables FATA, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

²⁶² Dawn, Operation Khyber-IV: army clears terrorist strongholds in Rajgal valley, 23 July 2017, [url](#)

²⁶³ PIPS, Security Report 2017, 7 January 2018, [url](#), p. 122

²⁶⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 35

²⁶⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 103

²⁶⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), pp. 119-124

²⁶⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), pp. 128-129

²⁶⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 99

²⁶⁹ Dawn, 4 'terrorists' killed in military action in KP, 3 July 2022, [url](#)

²⁷⁰ Dawn, Terrorist attack on police post leave three dead in Khyber, 20 January 2023, [url](#)

²⁷¹ Express Tribune (The), Cop killed in Mardan targeted attack, 28 September 2022, [url](#)

²⁷² CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), pp. 16-17

²⁷³ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017 – District Tables FATA, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

²⁷⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 35

2022.²⁷⁵ In June 2022, two sectarian attacks were reported.²⁷⁶ On 6 February 2022, five FC members were killed and four others injured in a clash at the Afghan/Pakistani border in Kurram.²⁷⁷ In mid-June 2022, the chairman of the local peace council and two other persons were killed in Topaki village. After the incident, a video with sacrilegious remarks was circulated on social media, sparking protests in Parachinar.²⁷⁸ On 21 June 2022, unidentified persons killed a man near Sadda in what appeared to be a sectarian attack.²⁷⁹ On 13 September 2022, 'terrorists' from Afghanistan opened fire on Pakistani troops in Kharlachi, Kurram district, killing three soldiers.²⁸⁰ On 30 September 2022, a soldier was killed in an exchange of fire at Kharlachi border crossing in Kurram. TTP militants took aim at Pakistani troops from the Afghan side of the border.²⁸¹ On 19-20 November 2022, three soldiers were hurt and two children were injured when clashes erupted between Pakistan security forces and Afghan Taliban near the villages of Kherlachi and Borki in Kurram. The construction of a road on Pakistani territory by Afghan Taliban caused the skirmish.²⁸² On 25 December 2022, clashes between Para Chamkani and Turi tribesmen left five Para Chamkani tribesmen dead in Kurram. A dispute over the transport of minerals resulted in a kidnapping. After the release of the abductees, a mountain bunker of the Para Chamkani clan was shelled.²⁸³

Because of the sizeable Shia population in the tribal districts of Kurram, counter-terrorism and intelligence officials monitor the growing ISKP threat in the district, ICG reports.²⁸⁴

Mohmand tribal district

Mohmand borders Bajaur in the north and Khyber in the south. In the east, it borders Malakand and Charsadda districts, and in the south-east, Peshawar district.²⁸⁵ According to the 2017 census, Mohmand tribal district has a population of 474, 345.²⁸⁶

According to PIPS, one 'terrorist attack' took place in Mohmand tribal district in 2022, injuring one person.²⁸⁷ On 15 June 2022, a civilian was injured during an attack by unknown militants in Mohmand, PIPS reports.²⁸⁸ PIPS further notes that ISKP is believed to be active in Mohmand.²⁸⁹

Orakzai tribal district

Orakzai shares its borders with Khyber tribal district in the north, Kohat in the east, the districts of Kohat and Hangu in the south, and Kurram tribal district in the west. Administratively, it is divided into Upper and Lower Orakzai.²⁹⁰ According to the 2017 census, the population stands at 254, 303.²⁹¹

²⁷⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 118-119

²⁷⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 129

²⁷⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 118

²⁷⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 40

²⁷⁹ Dawn, Tensions grip Kurram as man killed in attack, 22 June 2022, [url](#); PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 40

²⁸⁰ News International (The), Three soldiers martyred in Kurram, 14 September 2022, [url](#); PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 64

²⁸¹ Dawn, Soldier martyred in cross-border attack from Afghanistan: ISPR, 23 October 2022, [url](#); PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 63

²⁸² Dawn, Three soldiers hurt in firing from across Afghanistan border, 21 November 2022, [url](#)

PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 65

²⁸³ Express Tribune (The), Five killed in Kurram tribal clashes, 25 December 2022, [url](#)

²⁸⁴ ICG, A new era of sectarian violence in Pakistan, 5 September 2022, [url](#), p.7

²⁸⁵ CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally, Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), p. 22

²⁸⁶ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017 – District Tables FATA, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

²⁸⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 35

²⁸⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 126

²⁸⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 7, 73

²⁹⁰ CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), pp. 22-23

²⁹¹ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017 – District Tables FATA, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

According to PIPS, two 'terrorist attacks' took place in Orakzai tribal district in 2022, causing six casualties (three killed, three injured).²⁹² On 2 July 2022, three FC personnel were injured in an attack by local Taliban in Orakzai district, PIPS reports.²⁹³ On 29 August 2022, two civilians and a policeman were killed in an attack by ISKP in Orakzai.²⁹⁴ ISKP issued statements in late 2022 seeking support from local tribesmen in Orakzai district, PIPS notes.²⁹⁵

ICG reports that police and courts in Orakzai tribal district are still not fully set up after the incorporation of the tribal district in KP in 2018.²⁹⁶ The Shia population of Orakzai tribal district is a possible target of ISKP, ICG further notes.²⁹⁷

North Waziristan tribal district

North Waziristan borders Kurram tribal district and Hangu in the north and Karak, Bannu districts in the east, South Waziristan tribal district in the south and Afghanistan in the west.²⁹⁸ According to the 2017 census, North Waziristan has a population of 540, 546.²⁹⁹

Before 2014, North Waziristan was considered as a home base of al-Qaeda, Pakistani Taliban and the Haqqani-network.³⁰⁰ In June 2014, Operation *Zarb-e Azb* was initiated in North Waziristan.³⁰¹ The area was cleared of militants, according to the Pakistani military.³⁰² In the wake of multiple incidents against the security forces and to prevent any 'untoward situation', Section 144 was imposed for thirty days in June 2019.³⁰³ Ahead of the provincial elections, Section 144 was lifted on 8 July 2019.³⁰⁴ Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure empowers district administrations to issue orders in public interest that may place a ban on an activity for a specific period of time.³⁰⁵ In Miranshah, a pamphlet issued by the TTP in July 2019 warned citizens not to play music in public, allow women freedom of movement or vaccinate their children against polio.³⁰⁶ Targeted killings increased in 2020 in North Waziristan.³⁰⁷ Gandhara cited that more than 50 people were killed due to targeted killings in 2020.³⁰⁸ In the first half of 2021, more targeted killings were reported in North Waziristan.³⁰⁹ Reporting on 2021, PIPS describes North Waziristan as 'a major flashpoint of insecurity and militant violence'.³¹⁰ In 2021, North Waziristan was the site of 37 'terrorist attacks'³¹¹ and 22 anti-militant operational strikes by security forces and law enforcement agencies.³¹²

²⁹² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 35

²⁹³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 122

²⁹⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 123

²⁹⁵ The ISKP has in recent months also issued statements seeking support from local tribesmen in Bajaur district.

²⁹⁶ ICG, A new era of sectarian violence in Pakistan, 5 September 2022, [url](#), p.20

²⁹⁷ ICG, A new era of sectarian violence in Pakistan, 5 September 2022, [url](#), p.7

²⁹⁸ CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), p. 20

²⁹⁹ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017 – District Tables FATA, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

³⁰⁰ BBC News, North Waziristan: What happened after militants lost the battle?, 8 March 2017, [url](#)

³⁰¹ Jamestown Foundation, The Successes and Failures of Pakistan's Operation Zarb-e-Azb, 10 July 2015, [url](#);

BBC News, North Waziristan: What happened after militants lost the battle?, 8 March 2017, [url](#)

³⁰² Nation (The), Operation Zarb-e-Azb: Two years of success, 6 September 2016, [url](#); Dawn, After Army's clean-up of North Waziristan, locals want civilian govt to get in action, 18 May 2017, [url](#)

³⁰³ Dawn, Section 144 imposed in North Waziristan due to 'current law and order situation', 10 June 2019, [url](#)

³⁰⁴ TNN, Section 144 lifted in North Waziristan ahead of elections, 8 July 2019, [url](#)

³⁰⁵ Government of Pakistan, Code of Criminal Procedure [Pakistan], Act No. V, 1 July 1898, [url](#)

³⁰⁶ Dawn, TTP warns against playing music, women going out alone in Miranshah, 1 August 2019, [url](#)

³⁰⁷ Gandhara, In Waziristan, Locals Worried Over Taliban Regrouping, 16 September 2020, [url](#); Gandhara,

Pakistan's North Waziristan Plagued By Targeted Killings, 18 January 2021, [url](#)

³⁰⁸ Gandhara, Pakistan's North Waziristan Plagued By Targeted Killings, 18 January 2021, [url](#)

³⁰⁹ BBC News, Mourning the sisters killed as they taught handicrafts, 27 February 2021, [url](#); Express Tribune (The), Targeted killings on the rise in N Waziristan, 11 May 2021, [url](#)

³¹⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2021, 2022, [url](#), p. 17

³¹¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2021, 2022, [url](#), p.17

³¹² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2021, 2022, [url](#), pp. 23-24

According to PIPS, 30 'terrorist attacks' took place in North Waziristan tribal district in 2022, killing 64 and injuring 68 people.³¹³ According to PIPS, most of these attacks targeted security and law enforcement agencies and were carried out by TTP or, to a lesser extent, by local Taliban.³¹⁴ PIPS further reports 24 operational attacks by security forces against militants and insurgents in North Waziristan, causing 85 deaths and 17 injuries.³¹⁵ Security forces came under more frequent attacks in North Waziristan in 2022,³¹⁶ with as much as 22 terrorist attacks on security and law enforcement personnel reported in the district.³¹⁷ A total of nine suicide attacks took place in North-Waziristan, each of them targeting members of security or law enforcement agencies.³¹⁸ On 15 December 2022, three civilians were killed and nine security personnel wounded in a suicide attack targeting a police convoy in the Sargardan area of North Waziristan.³¹⁹ An attack on a political leader and an attack on a tribal elder were also reported in North Waziristan in 2022,³²⁰ as were two attacks on polio/health workers.³²¹ On 28 June 2022, a health worker and two policemen were killed in North Waziristan in an attack by unknown militants.³²²

Cross-border attacks from Afghanistan numbered five in North Waziristan in 2022, leading to eleven fatalities and five injuries.³²³ On 15 April 2022, seven soldiers were killed when their vehicle was ambushed in Datakhel tehsil of North Waziristan, near the Afghan border. The militants used a rocket-propelled grenade launcher to target the soldiers.³²⁴ Four clashes between security forces and militants in North Waziristan in 2022 caused eight casualties (six fatalities, two injuries).³²⁵ On 5 September 2022, five soldiers and four suspected terrorists were killed in an exchange of fire in Boyya, North Waziristan.³²⁶ PIPS reported one incident in North Waziristan in 2022 explicitly targeting civilians: on 13 August 2022, three civilians were killed and five wounded by local Taliban.³²⁷

On 21 January 2023, security forces freed four employees of a local petroleum company in the Mir Ali area of the North Waziristan district. Two militants who were involved in the kidnapping were killed.³²⁸ Later in January 2023, The Guardian reported that the Taliban's presence in Waziristan was being heavily felt again. Locals talk of an influx of TTP fighters from Afghanistan and declare that the main security checkpoints in Waziristan are controlled by TTP militants at night.³²⁹ According to the Jamestown Foundation, the lack of government control in North and South Waziristan provides the TTP with an expansive space to organise and launch operations.³³⁰

South Waziristan tribal district

South Waziristan shares its border in the north with North Waziristan, Bannu and Lakki Marwat districts in the north-east, the tribal area adjoining Tank district and Dera Ismail Khan district in the east, Zhob

³¹³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 35

³¹⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), pp. 119-124

³¹⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 92

³¹⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 37

³¹⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), pp. 119-124

³¹⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), pp. 57-59, p. 118

³¹⁹ Dawn, 3 killed as suicide attacker rams bike into convoy in North Waziristan, 15 December 2022, [url](#)

³²⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), pp. 41-42

³²¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p.42

³²² ACLED, Regional Overview: South Asia and Afghanistan; 25 June-1 July 2022, 7 July 2022, [url](#)

³²³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p.67

³²⁴ Dawn, Eight soldiers martyred in North Waziristan attacks, 15 April 2022, [url](#)

³²⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p.96

³²⁶ Express Tribune (The), Five soldiers martyred in N Waziristan operation, 5 September 2022, [url](#)

³²⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p.126

³²⁸ RFE/RL, Four kidnap victims rescued in Pakistan Northwest, 21 January 2023, [url](#)

³²⁹ Guardian (The), North-west Pakistan in grip of deadly Taliban resurgence, 31 January 2023, [url](#)

³³⁰ Jamestown Foundation, Implications of TTP Attack on Counter Terrorism Department Compound in Bannu, Terrorism Monitor Volume: 21 Issue: 2, 20 January 2023, [url](#)

district of Balochistan Province and Dera Ismail Khan district in the south, and Afghanistan in the west.³³¹ According to the 2017 census, South Waziristan Agency has a population of 675, 215.³³²

In July 2018, RFE/RL reported that there was a noticeable 'renewed Taliban influence in Waziristan'. Locals call this armed group 'the Aman (Peace) Committee, which mostly operated as a government-backed militia'.³³³ Mona Kanwal Sheikh, expert on militant movements in Pakistan, stated the following about the presence of the Taliban in South Waziristan in 2018:

'One "lump" of the Pakistani Taliban is, however, still active in South Waziristan. They are organized in one of the peace committees in the district and are also called the "good Taliban", the ones who the military is not targeting. They are no longer part of the larger umbrella of TTP, and they have been granted the right to control an area in South Waziristan.'³³⁴

According to Kanwal Sheikh, the Taliban in Wana, South Waziristan, were organised under four different commanders and set up 'their own police and public morality "corps" and their own justice system'. They also collected taxes from local businesses.³³⁵ In April 2019, the Taliban in Wana warned the police through pamphlets to leave South Waziristan.³³⁶ At the end of May 2019, Section 144 was imposed for a month in South Waziristan due to a clash between PTM and the army on 26 May 2019 in North Waziristan.³³⁷ In August 2020, Journalist Ihsanullah Tipu Mahsud mentioned that 'surrendered' Taliban returning under a government amnesty scheme were causing an increase in attacks in North Waziristan and South Waziristan.³³⁸ After several attacks claimed by the TTP in February 2021, the security forces issued a curfew in Wana for four days.³³⁹

PIPS reports 12 'terrorist attacks' in South Waziristan tribal district in 2022, killing 20 and injuring six people.³⁴⁰ According to PIPS, security forces came under more frequent attacks in South Waziristan in 2022.³⁴¹ As much as ten terrorist attacks on security and law enforcement personnel were reported in the district in 2022, eight of which were attributed to TTP, one to ISKP.³⁴² No suicide attacks³⁴³ or direct attacks on civilians were reported in the district in 2022.³⁴⁴ In 2022, one attack on a tribal elder was reported in South Waziristan: on 16 July 2022, a tribal elder was killed by local Taliban.³⁴⁵ During a clash between security forces and militants in the Makin area of South Waziristan on 30 March 2022, two soldiers and two militants were killed.³⁴⁶ On 3 December 2022, one man was killed and a security official injured in an attack on the Army Public School for Girls in Azam Warsak, South Waziristan. After security forces retaliated, the unidentified assailants fled to the Afghan border.³⁴⁷ On 21 December 2022, dozens of heavily armed militants stormed a police station in Wana, South-Waziristan. A number of policemen were taken hostage.³⁴⁸ On 5 January 2023, eleven suspected

³³¹ CRSS, FATA Tribes: Finally Out of Colonial Clutches? Past, Present and Future, 12 July 2018, [url](#), p. 17

³³² Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017 – District Tables FATA, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

³³³ RFE/RL, Locals Blame 'Surrendered Taliban' For Waziristan Murder, 24 July 2018, [url](#)

³³⁴ Kanwal Sheikh, M., New conflict lines in Pakistan's tribal areas, 6 July 2018, [url](#)

³³⁵ Kanwal Sheikh, M., New conflict lines in Pakistan's tribal areas, 6 July 2018, [url](#)

³³⁶ Dawn, Pamphlet warns police to leave S. Waziristan in three days, 23 April 2019, [url](#)

³³⁷ Dawn, Section 144 imposed in South Waziristan for 'public safety', 28 May 2019, [url](#)

³³⁸ Arab News, Double-edged sword of 'surrendered' Taliban in Waziristan, 3 August 2020, [url](#)

³³⁹ Gandhara, South Waziristan Bazaar Under Lockdown After Attack On Security Forces, 17 February 2021, [url](#)

³⁴⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p.35

³⁴¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 37

³⁴² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), pp. 119-124

³⁴³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 57

³⁴⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), pp. 125-126

³⁴⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 125

³⁴⁶ News International (The), 8 soldiers martyred, 7 terrorists killed in Tank, S Waziristan, 31 March 2022, [url](#)

³⁴⁷ Express Tribune (The), Three cops martyred in Nowshera terror attack, 3 December 2022, [url](#)

³⁴⁸ Dawn, Militants storm Wana police station in South Waziristan, flee with weapons, 21 December 2022, [url](#)

terrorists were killed in an intelligence-based security operation in Wana, South Waziristan. According to army sources, a high-profile terrorist plot was foiled.³⁴⁹

3.2.3. Balochistan

General description of the province

Balochistan is located in the west of Pakistan. It borders Iran in the west, Afghanistan in the north-west, KP province in the north-east, Punjab province in the east, Sindh province in the south-east, and the Arabian Sea in the south.³⁵⁰ Quetta is the provincial capital.³⁵¹ Balochistan consists of seven divisions and 33 districts.³⁵² Despite various development initiatives, Balochistan remains the poorest province of Pakistan.³⁵³

The majority of the people are Baloch. The second largest group are Pashtun, who dominate the northern areas in the province.³⁵⁴ In addition, more than half a million Hazaras live in Quetta.³⁵⁵ Balochistan is the least populated province of Pakistan but the largest province by area.³⁵⁶ According to the 2017 population census published by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the province of Balochistan has a population of 12, 335, 129.³⁵⁷ According to UNDP, more than 70 % of the population lives in rural areas.³⁵⁸

Background of the conflict and actors in Balochistan

Balochistan province faces various problems such as sectarian violence, Islamist militant attacks and a separatist insurgency.³⁵⁹ These ethno-sectarian and nationalist conflicts are further complicated by the involvement of several foreign states, such as the US, China, India and Iran who have an economic or political stake in Balochistan.³⁶⁰

The separatist insurgency has been ongoing in Balochistan since 1948.³⁶¹ Historical grievances of subjugation, the exploitation of natural resources and the military's harsh response to nationalist demands have fueled the Baloch insurgency. The war in Afghanistan and the construction of the Gwadar mega-port have proven to be further drivers of the conflict.³⁶² Hostilities intensified in 2005 and escalated further in August 2006 upon the death of Nationalist Leader and Tribal Head Nawab

³⁴⁹ News International (The), Four terrorists killed in Peshawar operation: CTD, 7 January 2023, [url](#)

³⁵⁰ UNOCHA, Pakistan-Overview map [map], 3 December 2018, [url](#)

³⁵¹ UNOCHA, Pakistan-Overview map [map], 3 December 2018, [url](#)

³⁵² Samaa TV, 6 surprises from Pakistan's 2017 census that should worry govt, 12 June 2021, [url](#)

³⁵³ Deutsche Welle, Can Pakistan secure Chinese investment in restive Balochistan province?, 14 July 2021, [url](#)

³⁵⁴ Diplomat (The), Fear and Loathing in Balochistan, 25 April 2019, [url](#); Diplomat (The), Pakistan's Balochs Fear Minority Status in Their Own Province, 11 February 2016, [url](#)

³⁵⁵ BBC News, Pakistan Hazara minority protests after bombing in Quetta, 13 April 2019, [url](#)

³⁵⁶ UNICEF, Report of Profiles of Slums/Underserved Areas of Quetta City of Balochistan, Pakistan (July 2020), 27 July 2020, [url](#), p. 3

³⁵⁷ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017-National, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

³⁵⁸ UNDP Pakistan, Devolution of Power: Pathways to Actualization, 23 January 2021, [url](#), p. 5

³⁵⁹ DFAT, DFAT Country Information Report Pakistan, 25 January 2022, [url](#); Amir Rana, M., Militant Landscape of Balochistan, 19 June 2020, [url](#), p. 1

³⁶⁰ Diplomat (The), How China's presence in Balochistan is intensifying regionalist tendencies, 2 March 2022, [url](#); Middle East Institute (Kowalski, P.), Balochistan: From the periphery to the center of attention, 21 October 2019, [url](#)

³⁶¹ Hashmi, W., 'Fierce and Warlike': Could the Baloch Separatist Movement Remain Pakistan's Longest Insurgency?, 21 August 2018, [url](#)

³⁶² International Affairs Review (The), Pakistan's Baloch insurgency: history, conflict drivers and regional implications, 16 May 2022, [url](#)

Akbar Bugti. Ensuing military operations, the harsh tactics used by the security forces (including enforced disappearances)³⁶³ and the building of military cantonments in Balochistan heightened tensions further.³⁶⁴

In April 2019, Gandhara reported that an extensive crackdown by Pakistani security forces relying on anti-nationalist militias, enforced disappearances, and other harsh tactics had weakened the Baloch insurgency, especially in the Makran area.³⁶⁵ According to Kiyya Baloch, a journalist from Balochistan's Makran region, most of the attacks occurred in the remote regions of the province.³⁶⁶ However, the Baloch armed groups were able to carry out a series of violent attacks on Chinese interests in the region in 2019. This is largely due to a transformation of the Baloch armed groups caused by a change in traditional leadership and urbanisation of their operations from small towns to cities outside the province.³⁶⁷

The New York Times observed that by 2020, counterinsurgency operations, rifts among separatist groups, fatigue and government incentives for the militants to lay down their weapons had greatly weakened the Baloch insurgency.³⁶⁸ Around 2020, the insurgency had largely shifted to the south-west of Balochistan.³⁶⁹ According to Muhammad Amir Rana, a security analyst at PIPS, due to the growth of the middle class and higher literacy rate in central and southern Balochistan 'a new cadre of young nationalists also emerged.' Rana stated that they gradually took over control of the insurgency in their region.³⁷⁰ In June 2020, clashes between the Pakistani military and Baloch insurgents intensified due to an increase of attacks perpetrated by Baloch groups.³⁷¹ The same month, the Pakistan military carried out a military operation - Ground Zero Clearance Operation - aimed at destroying the bases of Baloch militant groups in the border regions with Iran.³⁷²

In February 2021, Baloch groups staged demonstrations across Pakistan accusing the government of enforced disappearances and violence.³⁷³ After a TTP attack on the Serena hotel in Quetta in April 2021, analysts suggested that TTP had 'joined the local fight against Chinese interests.'³⁷⁴ In July 2021, PM Imran Khan announced that he was willing to talk with the Baloch insurgent groups.³⁷⁵ On 5 September 2021, several soldiers were killed in a suicide attack on a security checkpoint on the Quetta-Mastung Road, south of Quetta. TTP claimed responsibility for the attack.³⁷⁶ In December 2021, protests lasting several weeks took place in the port town of Gwadar. Baloch communities in the region demanded clean drinking water, uninterrupted access to the sea for fishing and a ban on deep-sea trawling.³⁷⁷

³⁶³ Economist (The), "We only receive back the bodies", 7 April 2012, [url](#)

³⁶⁴ Aamir, A., The Balochistan Insurgency and the Threat to Chinese Interests in Pakistan, 15 February 2019, [url](#)

³⁶⁵ Gandhara, Balochistan's Separatist Insurgency On The Wane Despite Recent Attack, 18 April 2019, [url](#)

³⁶⁶ Gandhara, Balochistan's Separatist Insurgency On The Wane Despite Recent Attack, 18 April 2019, [url](#)

³⁶⁷ Prism, Eight months in, how is Balochistan faring?, 16 August 2019, [url](#)

³⁶⁸ New York Times (The), Rising violence by separatists adds to Pakistan's lethal instability, 5 May 2022, [url](#)

³⁶⁹ Amir Rana, M., Militant Landscape of Balochistan, 19 June 2020, [url](#), p. 2

³⁷⁰ Amir Rana, M., Militant Landscape of Balochistan, 19 June 2020, [url](#), p. 1

³⁷¹ Diplomat (The), Amid a Pandemic, Pakistan Focuses on a Baloch Insurgency, 26 June 2020, [url](#)

³⁷² Arab News Pakistan, 'Ground zero' operation underway against militant hideouts near Pakistan's border with Iran, 6 June 2020, [url](#)

³⁷³ Reuters, Baloch protesters end sit-in after Pakistani prime minister's pledge to meet them, 22 February 2021, [url](#); Al Jazeera, Ending Pakistan's epidemic of enforced disappearances, 9 March 2021, [url](#)

³⁷⁴ Gandhara, The Rise Of The New Pakistani Taliban, 18 May 2021, [url](#)

³⁷⁵ Diplomat (The), Is Pakistan Serious About Peace Talks in Balochistan?, 16 July 2021, [url](#)

³⁷⁶ Al Jazeera, Several soldiers killed in southwestern Pakistan suicide bombing, 5 September 2021, [url](#)

³⁷⁷ Diplomat (The), Gwadar protests highlights CPEC's Achilles heel, 9 December 2021, [url](#)

The New York Times³⁷⁸ and PIPS noted a rising level of violence³⁷⁸ in Balochistan in 2021. Most of the terrorist attacks in the province were committed by Baloch insurgents. The districts of Kech (19 attacks), Quetta (18 attacks), Sibi (seven attacks) and Panjgur (six attacks) saw the largest numbers of such incidents. Most attacks by Baloch insurgents targeted security forces and law enforcement personnel (47 attacks, or 66 percent). Baloch insurgents also frequently targeted civilians (seven attacks), government officials, institutions, state symbols and non-Baloch settlers and workers (five attacks).³⁷⁹ Religiously inspired militant groups such as the TTP and ISKP and some other similar unknown militants were reportedly involved in as many as ten attacks in Balochistan in 2021.³⁸⁰ ACLED observed that 'the resurgence of Baloch separatist violence was preceded by greater unity among Baloch separatist groups, including the formation of trans-province alliances between separatist groups, as well as repression of Baloch civilians by the Pakistani army during security operations.'³⁸¹

An additional factor adding to the Baloch insurgency is the international involvement in Pakistan's efforts to build the Gwadar Port in collaboration with China.³⁸² The Baloch insurgent groups have rejected Chinese involvement in Balochistan. They interpret Chinese involvement and the Gwadar port and other China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)-related projects as an attempt by the state to exploit Balochistan's resources while receiving little in return.³⁸³ The Chinese projects and Chinese workers are regularly targeted by Baloch insurgents.³⁸⁴ In January 2021, Gandhara stated that Pakistan increased security measures in the region to protect the CPEC-related projects.³⁸⁵ In August and December 2021, protests erupted in Gwadar over a severe shortage of water and electricity, threats to livelihoods and access to sea for local communities.³⁸⁶

Sectarian violence is also still present in Balochistan.³⁸⁷ Members of the local Shia community, mostly members of the Hazara community in Quetta, have fallen victim to violence, including targeted killings and suicide attacks.³⁸⁸

The following graph, based on data compiled by South Asia Terrorism Portal, illustrates the evolution of the number of fatalities in terrorist incidents amongst civilians, security forces and insurgents in Balochistan in the 2010-2022 period.³⁸⁹

³⁷⁸ New York Times (The), Rising violence by separatists adds to Pakistan's lethal instability, 5 May 2022, [url](#)

³⁷⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2021, 2022, [url](#), pp. 17-18, pp. 53-60

³⁸⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2021, 2022, [url](#), p. 18, pp. 53-60

³⁸¹ ACLED, Ten conflicts to worry about in 2021, February 2021, [url](#), p. 8

³⁸² Dawn, The geoeconomics of CPEC, 7 April 2019, [url](#)

³⁸³ Diplomat (The), How China's presence in Balochistan is intensifying regionalist tendencies, 2 March 2022, [url](#);

Deutsche Welle, Can Pakistan secure Chinese investment in restive Balochistan province?, 14 July 2021, [url](#);

Deutsche Welle, Why Chinese investment is stoking anger in Pakistan's Balochistan province, 15 July 2020, [url](#)

³⁸⁴ Deutsche Welle, Can Pakistan secure Chinese investment in restive Balochistan province?, 14 July 2021, [url](#)

³⁸⁵ Gandhara, Locals Fear Investors In Chinese Trade Hub Are Pushing Them Out Of Gwadar, 26 January 2021, [url](#)

³⁸⁶ Guardian (The), Protests in Pakistan erupt against China's belt and road plan, 20 August 2021, [url](#); Diplomat (The), Gwadar protests highlights CPEC's Achilles heel, 9 December 2021, [url](#)

³⁸⁷ Asia Times, Pakistan Taliban on a renewed warpath in Balochistan, 5 June 2021, [url](#)

³⁸⁸ DFAT, DFAT Country Information Report Pakistan, 25 January 2022, [url](#), pp. 18-19; Guardian (The), 'Every year we dig mass graves': the slaughter of Pakistan's Hazara, 5 April 2021, [url](#)

³⁸⁹ South Asia Terrorism Portal, Datasheet -Balochistan- Yearly fatalities, 13 February 2023, [url](#)

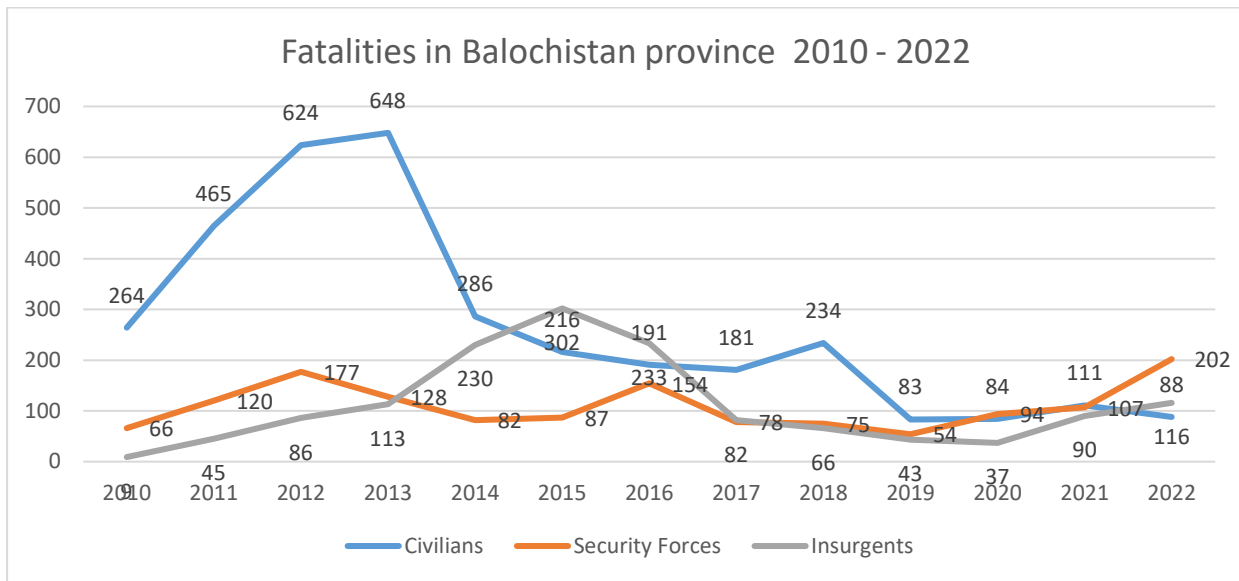


Figure 5: Fatalities in Balochistan in terrorist incidents, 2010-2022, based on SATP data³⁹⁰

Recent security trends and impact on the civilian population

Security incidents

During 2022, there were 433 security incidents recorded by ACLED in Balochistan province, of which 192 were coded as battles, 83 as explosions/remote violence and 55 as incidents of violence against civilians (including five forced disappearances). Kech stood out as the district where most incidents were reported with 116 violent events, followed by Quetta with 54 violent events and Kacchi with 29 violent events.³⁹¹

The following table shows the districts of Balochistan where security incidents were reported in 2022 and indicates the involvement of security forces and/or militant organizations (Baloch Separatist Groups, TTP or ISKP) in these incidents.³⁹²

³⁹⁰ South Asia Terrorism Portal, Datasheet -Balochistan- Yearly fatalities, 13 February 2023, [url](#)

³⁹¹ OFPRA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2022-31 December 2022), update 11 January 2023, [url](#)

³⁹² OFPRA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2022-31 December 2022), update 11 January 2023, [url](#)

Balochistan	Nombre d'incidents violents	En % du total de la province	Total d'incidents violents liés aux Forces gouvernementales	En % du total de la province	Total d'incidents violents liés aux Groupes armés	En % du total de la province	Total d'incidents violents liés à Baloch Separatists	% du total d'incidents violents liés à Baloch Separatists
Chagai	3	1%	2	0,5%	0	0%	0	0%
Khuzdar	20	5%	14	3%	13	3%	12	3%
Panjgur	22	5%	19	4%	18	4%	18	4%
Quetta	54	12%	37	9%	32	7%	20	5%
Kech	116	27%	109	25%	91	21%	90	21%
Kohlu	14	3%	9	2%	10	2%	10	2%
Awaran	22	5%	20	5%	19	4%	19	4%
Kharan	15	3%	13	3%	12	3%	12	3%
Gwadar	16	4%	13	3%	12	3%	12	3%
Killa Abdullah	14	3%	10	2%	5	1%	0	0%
Kachhi	29	7%	24	6%	23	5%	22	5%
Kalat	21	5%	15	3%	17	4%	15	3%
Pishin	3	1%	3	1%	3	1%	1	0%
Harnai	10	2%	6	1%	7	2%	6	1%
Washuk	2	0%	2	0,5%	1	0,2%	1	0%
Nushki	11	3%	8	2%	7	2%	6	1%
Loralai	4	1%	1	0,2%	3	1%	0	0%
Mastung	10	2%	5	1%	5	1%	1	0%
Las Bela	7	2%	2	0,5%	4	1%	3	1%
Nasirabad	7	2%	4	1%	4	1%	4	1%
Jhal Magsi	1	0%	0	0%	1	0,2%	0	0%
Ziarat	4	1%	4	1%	4	1%	4	1%
Dera Bugti	4	1%	2	0,5%	4	1%	2	0%
Jaffarabad	3	1%	2	0,5%	0	0%	0	0%
Sibi	13	3%	10	2%	8	2%	6	1%
Barkhan	2	0%	0	0%	1	0,2%	1	0%
Zhob	5	1%	5	1%	2	0,5%	0	0%
Sohbatpur	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
TOTAL	433	100%	339	78%	306	71%	265	61%

 Figure 5: 'Security incidents' by region - Balochistan - 2022, based on ACLED data³⁹³

PIPS documented 79 'terrorist attacks' in Balochistan in 2022, compared to 81 attacks in the province the previous year.³⁹⁴ Different Baloch insurgent groups, mainly the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) and Balochistan Liberation Front (BLF), perpetrated 71 of these attacks.³⁹⁵ Religiously inspired militant groups, mainly TTP and ISKP, perpetrated seven attacks, including two suicide attacks, in Balochistan in 2022.³⁹⁶ The highest number of attacks for any one Baloch district was recorded in Quetta (16 attacks), followed by Kalat and Kech with six attacks each. Five attacks happened in Khuzdar and Panjgur districts each, and four attacks each took place in Kohlu, Nasirabad and Sibi district.³⁹⁷ PICSS observed 103 'militant attacks' in Balochistan in 2022, as compared to 104 in 2021.³⁹⁸ According to PICSS, the district most affected by militant violence was Quetta, with 21 registered incidents.³⁹⁹

Security trends in 2022

According to PIPS, 42 of the reported 79 terrorist attacks in Balochistan in 2022 (over 53 %) targeted personnel, vehicles and premises of security forces and law enforcement agencies. Seven attacks apparently targeted civilians, four targeted alleged spies, and another six targeted tribal elders.⁴⁰⁰ PIPS differentiated the 'terrorist attacks' carried out by Baloch insurgents groups (71 attacks) from

³⁹³ OFPRA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2022-31 December 2022), update 11 January 2023, [url](#)

³⁹⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 44

³⁹⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 44

³⁹⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 50

³⁹⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 44

³⁹⁸ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2022, 5 January 2023, [url](#), p.21

³⁹⁹ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2022, 5 January 2023, [url](#), p.22

⁴⁰⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 45

those carried out by religiously inspired groups (seven attacks).⁴⁰¹ Baloch insurgents employed multiple attack tactics that included 27 hand grenade blasts, 24 IED blasts, 17 incidents of targeted killings, two gun and bomb attacks, and one rocket attack.⁴⁰² Of the 71 attacks perpetrated by Baloch insurgents, 38 targeted security forces,⁴⁰³ seven targeted tribal elders and peace committee members,⁴⁰⁴ seven targeted civilians⁴⁰⁵ and four targeted alleged spies.⁴⁰⁶ The TTP perpetrated four attacks in Balochistan in 2022, three of which targeted security forces personnel.⁴⁰⁷ ISKP carried out two attacks in Balochistan, one targeting security forces and another targeting members of the Christian community in Mastung.⁴⁰⁸ A sectarian attack on members of the Hazara community in Quetta was also reported,⁴⁰⁹ as was an attack by an unknown religiously inspired group near a girls school in Gwadar.⁴¹⁰ PIPS also reports that 28 operational attacks by security forces took place in Balochistan in 2022, seven of which in Kech, four in Quetta.⁴¹¹

PICCS reported that grenades were used in 32 of the 103 reported militant attacks in 2022, and IEDs were used in 28 attacks.⁴¹² Militants also carried out 20 guerilla type attacks and 15 targeted killings.⁴¹³ Balochistan also witnessed two suicide attacks in 2022, one carried out by ISKP, the other by TTP.⁴¹⁴ PICCS observes that 'TTP is likely to keep Balochistan in its focus with the view to stretch security forces who might be interested to launch offensive against the outfit in erstwhile FATA and KPK'.⁴¹⁵ PICCS further reports 45 'security forces actions' taking place in Balochistan in 2022.⁴¹⁶

In January 2022, two Baloch armed groups, Baloch Republican Army (BRA) and United Baloch Army (UBA) announced their merger and formed the Baloch Nationalist Army (BNA).⁴¹⁷ On 20 January 2022, BNA claimed responsibility for a bombing on a market in Lahore in which three people were killed, indicating the group's capability to strike outside of Balochistan province.⁴¹⁸ After a May 2022 suicide attack in Karachi by a female BLA militant in which four people were killed, The New York Times noted the increasing use of suicide attacks by Baloch insurgents.⁴¹⁹

In a landmark decision, the Islamabad High Court stated in June 2022: "When there is sufficient evidence to conclude that it is, prima facie, a case of 'enforced disappearance' then it becomes an obligation of the State and all its organs to trace the disappeared citizen."⁴²⁰ According to Sammi Deen Baloch, general secretary of the Voice for Baloch Missing Persons (VBMP), enforced disappearances are a decades-old issue in Balochistan. In 2022, the number of missing people amounted to 5,000.⁴²¹

In December 2022, the Jamestown Foundation noted the Pakistani state's unwillingness to engage in negotiations with Baloch nationalists after the kidnapping of two junior army officers in September

⁴⁰¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 44

⁴⁰² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 45

⁴⁰³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 46

⁴⁰⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 48

⁴⁰⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 48

⁴⁰⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 49

⁴⁰⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 50

⁴⁰⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 50

⁴⁰⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 50

⁴¹⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 51

⁴¹¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), pp. 128-129

⁴¹² PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2022, 5 January 2023, [url](#), pp. 22-23

⁴¹³ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2022, 5 January 2023, [url](#), p. 23

⁴¹⁴ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2022, 5 January 2023, [url](#), p. 22

⁴¹⁵ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2022, 5 January 2023, [url](#), p. 23

⁴¹⁶ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2022, 5 January 2023, [url](#), p. 19

⁴¹⁷ Balochistan Post (The), Who is "Baloch Nationalist Army"? – TBP feature report, 16 January 2022, [url](#)

⁴¹⁸ Express Tribune (The), 3 killed as blast rips through Lahore's bustling market, 20 January 2020, [url](#)

⁴¹⁹ New York Times (The), Rising violence by separatists adds to Pakistan's lethal instability, 5 May 2022, [url](#)

⁴²⁰ HRW, Pakistan Court Holds State Responsible for Enforced Disappearances, 28 June 2022, [url](#)

⁴²¹ Baloch, S.D., More than 5,000 people remain missing in Balochistan. I want my father back, 6 July 2022, [url](#)

2022. Rather than accepting the proposed prisoner swap, the army launched an intensive crackdown in the mountains of the Bolan district on October 31 and arrested 13 people, including children and women. According to the Jamestown Foundation, this refusal to hold talks with Baloch militants and address the Baloch minority's grievances indicates 'the situation will not return to normalcy in southwestern Pakistan anytime soon'.⁴²²

Illustrative incidents in 2022:

- On 28 January 2022, ten soldiers were killed in an attack on a security checkpoint in Kech.⁴²³ Baluchistan Liberation Front claimed the attack, in which insurgents used rocket launchers and other sophisticated weapons.⁴²⁴
- On 3 February 2022, insurgents attacked two security forces camps in Panjgur and Naushki. Four insurgents and one soldier were killed.⁴²⁵
- On 15 March 2022, four FC personnel were killed and ten others were injured in an IED attack on a convoy in the Sangan area of Quetta's Sibi district.⁴²⁶
- On 15 August 2022, an insurgent assault on a checkpoint in Khost, Harnai district, caused the death of two soldiers.⁴²⁷
- On 9 August 2022, unidentified gunmen opened fire in Mastung's Christian Colony, killing one person and injuring four others.⁴²⁸ PIPS ascribes the attack to ISKP.⁴²⁹
- On 29 August 2022, one person died and another was injured in a grenade attack at Khuzdar's Khand link road. BLA claimed the attack, stating the victims had collaborated with the security forces.⁴³⁰
- On 24 October 2022, two soldiers were killed and three were injured during an exchange of fire with insurgents in the Margat area of Quetta. An undisclosed number of militants were killed.⁴³¹
- On 8 November 2022, unknown gunmen shot and killed a tribal elder in the Bolan Pass area of Kachhi district.⁴³²
- On 1 December 2022, a TTP suicide attack on the Quetta-Chaman national highway targeting a police truck killed at least four people and injured 24 others. The policemen were providing security to polio workers involved in a vaccination campaign in Quetta.⁴³³
- On 26 December 2022, five soldiers were killed in an IED attack in Kahan, Kohlu district.⁴³⁴
- On 10 February 2023, a roadside bomb killed two soldiers and wounded three others in Kohlu. BLA claimed responsibility.⁴³⁵

Casualties

PIPS reported 106 people were killed and 271 injured in 79 'terrorist attacks' in Balochistan in 2022.⁴³⁶ According to PIPS, 42 of the reported 79 terrorist attacks in Balochistan (over 53 %) targeted personnel, vehicles and premises of security forces and law enforcement agencies, killing 79 and injuring 152 members of the security forces.⁴³⁷ PIPS documented that in 2022, Quetta, the capital,

⁴²² Jamestown Foundation, Baloch Liberation Army Kidnapping Fails to Lead to Negotiations With Islamabad, 16 December 2022, [url](#)

⁴²³ Dawn, Ten soldiers martyred in Kech terrorist attack, 28 January 2022, [url](#)

⁴²⁴ New York Times (The), Separatists kill 10 Pakistani soldiers in attack on outpost, 28 January 2022, [url](#)

⁴²⁵ Express Tribune (The), Forces repulse two terrorist attacks in Balochistan, 3 February 2022, [url](#)

⁴²⁶ Express Tribune (The), Four FC men martyred in Sibi IED blast, 15 March 2022, [url](#)

⁴²⁷ Dawn, Two soldiers martyred in Harnai shootout, 15 August 2022, [url](#)

⁴²⁸ Samaa, Brother of former MPA dies in Mastung Christian colony gun attack, 9 August 2022, [url](#)

⁴²⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 50

⁴³⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 49

⁴³¹ Dawn, Two security men martyred, three injured, 24 October 2022, [url](#)

⁴³² Dawn, Tribal elder gunned down in Dera Murad Jamali, 8 November 2022, [url](#)

⁴³³ Dawn, Four lives lost in TTP-claimed suicide attack, 1 December 2022, [url](#)

⁴³⁴ Dawn, 6 security men martyred in Balochistan terror incidents, 26 December 2022, [url](#)

⁴³⁵ AP News, Bomb hits vehicle, killing 2 troops, wounding 3 in Pakistan, 10 February 2023, [url](#)

⁴³⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), pp. 44-45

⁴³⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 45

lost the highest number of lives in terrorist attacks. In 16 attacks in Quetta 14 people were killed and 99 others were injured. In Kech district, six attacks left 13 people dead and 11 injured.⁴³⁸

PICCS reported almost the same number of 'militant attacks' in Balochistan in 2022 (103) as the previous year. The number of deaths (123) and wounded (303), however, decreased compared to 2021.⁴³⁹ Among those 123 killed in militant attacks, 60 were security forces personnel, 50 were civilians and 14 were militants.⁴⁴⁰ Out of 303 injuries, 220 were civilians and 83 belonged to the security forces. The majority of civilian injuries resulted from IED attacks and grenades. PICCS explains that militant groups target civilians who celebrate 23 March (Pakistan Day) and 14 August (Independence Day). Shops who sell national flags and play patriotic music are also possible targets.⁴⁴¹

In 2022, CRSS recorded 124 security operations and 130 terrorist incidents in Balochistan, causing 254 casualties.⁴⁴² Most security operations took place in Kech (33), Quetta (14) and Panjgur (14). Most terrorist incidents were reported in Quetta (25), Kech (22) and Sibi (13).⁴⁴³

Displacement

Previously unseen monsoon rainfall from June up until October 2022 killed more than a thousand people and displaced 7,9 million people in Pakistan, according to UN estimates.⁴⁴⁴ HRW reports the devastating floods displaced more than 30 million people.⁴⁴⁵ Normally unaffected by the monsoon, Balochistan received five times its annual rainfall average.⁴⁴⁶ NDMA reports that 336 people died in Balochistan; considerable infrastructural damage was reported, including the full or partial destruction of 241,659 homes. As many as 32 districts in Balochistan were designated as 'calamity-hit', affecting 9,1 million persons.⁴⁴⁷

Among the consulted sources, no information was found about any conflict-induced displacement from areas in and to Balochistan in 2022.⁴⁴⁸

3.2.4. Sindh

General description of the province

The province of Sindh is situated in the south-east of Pakistan. It borders the province of Balochistan in the north and in the west, the province of Punjab in the north-east and the Arabian Sea in the south.⁴⁴⁹ The province of Sindh consists of seven divisions and 29 districts.⁴⁵⁰ Karachi is the provincial capital. Karachi is the largest city in Pakistan with approximately 15 to 25 million inhabitants.⁴⁵¹ The two largest ethnic communities living in Sindh are the Sindhis and Mohajirs.⁴⁵²

⁴³⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), pp. 44-45

⁴³⁹ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2022, 5 January 2023, [url](#), p.22

⁴⁴⁰ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2022, 5 January 2023, [url](#), p.22

⁴⁴¹ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2022, 5 January 2023, [url](#), p.22

⁴⁴² CRSS, Annual Security Report 2022, February 2023, [url](#), pp. 30-31

⁴⁴³ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2022, February 2023, [url](#), pp. 30-31

⁴⁴⁴ Mercy Corps, Devastation in Pakistan: deadly floods displace millions, 5 October 2022, [url](#)

⁴⁴⁵ HRW, World Report 2023 - Pakistan, 12 January 2023, [url](#)

⁴⁴⁶ Economist (The), Pakistan has been hit by its worst floods in recent memory, 30 August 2022, [url](#)

⁴⁴⁷ NDMA, NDMA Floods (2022) Sitrep 2022 – (Daily Sitrep No. 158 Dated 18th November 2022), 18 November 2022, [url](#)

⁴⁴⁸ Websites consulted: <http://www.unocha.org/pakistan>;

<https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/pakistan>; <http://reliefweb.int/country/pak>

⁴⁴⁹ Minority Rights Group, Sindhis and Mohajirs, June 2018, [url](#)

⁴⁵⁰ Samaa TV, 6 surprises from Pakistan's 2017 census that should worry govt, 12 June 2021, [url](#)

⁴⁵¹ Express Tribune (The), Pakistan fails to reap demographic dividend, 11 July 2021, [url](#)

⁴⁵² Minority Rights Group, Sindhis and Mohajirs, June 2018, [url](#)

According to the 2017 population census published by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the province of Sindh has a population of 47, 854, 510.⁴⁵³ According to UNDP, about 52 % of the population lives in urban areas.⁴⁵⁴

Background of the conflict and actors in Sindh

In 2017, DFAT reported that Sindh province was relatively free from major terrorist activity outside of Karachi. However, rural Sindh does have a high incidence of crime. Kidnappings and a number of large-scale terrorist attacks have occurred there.⁴⁵⁵ PIPS noted that terror attacks in rural Sindh mainly target Shia community and Sufi shrines. Taliban groups and sectarian outfits have found sanctuary in districts of northern Sindh sharing borders with Balochistan and South Punjab.⁴⁵⁶ Regarding Karachi, DFAT explained that, historically, the city has experienced high levels of violence because of rival ethnic, sectarian, political, business and criminal interests. The implementation of the National Action Plan against Terrorism (launched in 2014) and the highly visible presence of the federal paramilitary police force, the Rangers, have contributed to a considerable decrease of the levels of violence in the city.⁴⁵⁷ The same year, ICG reported that ethno-political and sectarian interests and competition, intensified by internal migration, jihadist influx and unchecked movement of weapons, drugs and black money, had created an explosive mix in Karachi. The heavy-handed, politicised crackdown by paramilitary Rangers was described as aggravating the problems.⁴⁵⁸ In June 2018, CRSS reported that Karachi's security situation had improved dramatically since 2014. Targeted killings alone fell from 1,671 fatalities in 2013 to 84 in 2017. Terror incidents had also reduced drastically.⁴⁵⁹

Reporting on 2020, PIPS noted sustained militancy by Sindhi nationalist groups in the province.⁴⁶⁰ Of the 18 terrorist attacks reported in Sindh in 2020, 15 took place in Karachi and three in interior Sindh, resulting in 20 fatalities. Eleven of these attacks were perpetrated by nationalist insurgents, including ten attacks by Sindhi nationalist groups Sindhudesh Revolution Army (SDRA) and Sindhudesh Liberation Army (SDLA), and one attack was carried out by BLA. Four other attacks in Sindh in 2020 were perpetrated by TTP.⁴⁶¹ Half of the attacks reported from Sindh targeted security and law enforcement personnel.⁴⁶² In May 2020, the government banned the Jeay Sindh Qaumi Mahaz-Aresar (JSQM-A), SDRA and SDLA.⁴⁶³

In 2021, eight terrorist attacks took place in Sindh province, killing 13 people, according to PIPS. Five of these terrorist attacks took place in Karachi and three in interior Sindh.⁴⁶⁴ Six of the reported attacks in Sindh in 2021 were perpetrated by Baloch and Sindhi nationalist insurgents – mainly BLA, BLF and Sindhudesh Revolutionary Army (SRA).⁴⁶⁵ In Karachi, BLF carried out two attacks against Chinese nationals while BLA perpetrated one attack targeting Rangers. The Sindhi insurgent group SRA carried out three attacks, targeting security forces, a railways track, and political leaders.⁴⁶⁶ A March 2021 article of Samaa TV, citing a senior police official, stated that the TTP had 'sleeper cells' in Karachi.⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁵³ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017-National, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

⁴⁵⁴ UNDP Pakistan, Devolution of Power: Pathways to Actualization, 23 January 2021, [url](#), p. 5

⁴⁵⁵ DFAT, DFAT Country Information Report Pakistan, 1 September 2017, [url](#), p. 8

⁴⁵⁶ PIPS, Security Report 2017, 7 January 2018, [url](#), p. 190

⁴⁵⁷ DFAT, DFAT Country Information Report Pakistan, 1 September 2017, [url](#), p. 19

⁴⁵⁸ ICG, Pakistan: Stoking the Fire in Karachi, 15 February 2017, [url](#), p. i

⁴⁵⁹ CRSS, NAP Tracker 2017, 14 June 2018, [url](#), p. 74

⁴⁶⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 2021, [url](#), p. 11

⁴⁶¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 2021, [url](#), p. 14

⁴⁶² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2020, 2021, [url](#), p. 15

⁴⁶³ Dawn, JSQM-A, two separatist outfits in Sindh banned, 12 May 2020, [url](#)

⁴⁶⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2021, 2022, [url](#), p. 60

⁴⁶⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2021, 2022, [url](#), p. 60

⁴⁶⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2021, 2022, [url](#), p. 61

⁴⁶⁷ Samaa TV, Is TTP staging a comeback in Pakistan?, 17 March 2021, [url](#)

Different media reported that the police and Rangers arrested or killed several suspected TTP militants in Karachi, Sukkur and other parts of Sindh in the first half of 2021.⁴⁶⁸ In June 2021, a senior police officer remarked in an interview with the newspaper Dawn that the violence perpetrated by nationalist groups had overtaken the violence committed by religious and sectarian outfits in Sindh.⁴⁶⁹ DFAT pointed out that ethno-nationalist groups in Sindh carry out attacks against the Pakistani military and government, often causing civilian casualties. Independence or greater autonomy remains the goal of these groups.⁴⁷⁰

Criminal activities also pose a security challenge for law enforcement personnel in Sindh.⁴⁷¹ Criminal gangs have their hideouts in the northern districts of the province.⁴⁷² In its annual report of 2021, the Human Rights Commission Pakistan (HRCP) noted that street crime in Karachi was on the rise.⁴⁷³

Recent security trends and impact on the civilian population

Security incidents

During 2022, there were 59 security incidents recorded by ACLED in Sindh province, of which 22 were coded as battles, eight as explosions/remote violence and 24 as incidents of violence against civilians (including three enforced disappearances). Karachi city stood out as the district where most incidents were reported with 22 violent events, followed by Jamshoro with six violent events and Shaheed Benazirabad with four. None of the security incidents in Sindh were directly ascribed to TTP. ISKP committed one terrorist attack in Karachi.⁴⁷⁴

PIPS documented eight terrorist attacks in Sindh province in 2022, six in Karachi and two in interior Sindh, resulting in eight casualties.⁴⁷⁵ PICSS observed 25 'militant attacks' in Sindh in 2022.⁴⁷⁶ As the number of militant attacks increased compared to 2021, security forces intensified their operations in Sindh.⁴⁷⁷

Security trends in 2022

Five of the eight terrorist attacks PIPS registered in Sindh in 2022 were perpetrated by Sindhi nationalist insurgents. The SRA and a newly formed group called Sindhudesh Peoples Army claimed most of these attacks.⁴⁷⁸ Baloch nationalist groups BLA and BNA perpetrated two attacks in Karachi, targeting the Confucius Institute at the Karachi University, and security forces, respectively. The TTP

⁴⁶⁸ Samaa TV, Is TTP staging a comeback in Pakistan?, 17 March 2021, [url](#); Dawn, Three members of 'TTP sleeper cell' held in SITE, 3 May 2021, [url](#); Dawn, 'TTP militant' involved in terror cases arrested in Karachi, 12 March 2021, [url](#)

⁴⁶⁹ Dawn, Nationalists' violence has overtaken religious militancy, says CTD chief, 4 June 2021, [url](#)

⁴⁷⁰ DFAT, DFAT Country Information Report Pakistan, 25 January 2022, [url](#), pp.15-16

⁴⁷¹ Express Tribune (The), Police actions fail to contain street crimes, 10 November 2022, [url](#); Dawn, Karachi street crime, 2 June 2021, [url](#); Dawn, Street crimes register alarming rise in Karachi in Jan-March period, 19 April 2021, [url](#)

⁴⁷² Dawn, Police achieved little success in long fight against gangs in Sindh's riverine areas: report, 21 September 2021, [url](#)

⁴⁷³ HRCP, Human Rights Commission of Pakistan State of Human Rights in 2021, 2022, [url](#), p. 55

⁴⁷⁴ OFPRA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2022-31 December 2022), update 11 January 2023, [url](#)

⁴⁷⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 51

⁴⁷⁶ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2022, 5 January 2023, [url](#), p. 32

⁴⁷⁷ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2022, 5 January 2023, [url](#), pp. 33

⁴⁷⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 51

perpetrated one attack in Karachi, injuring a policeman.⁴⁷⁹ PIPS also registered two 'operational attacks' by security forces in Karachi.⁴⁸⁰

PIPS further noted ethnic tensions flaring up in several Sindh cities after a man was killed in a scuffle at a hotel in Hyderabad on 12 July 2022. Believing the hotel owner to be an Afghan national, Sindh nationalists linked the issue to the influx of (Pashtun) foreigners in Sindh. Despite calls for calm from across the political spectrum, hotels and shops owned by Pashtuns were attacked and forcefully shut in Dadu, Sehwan, Khairpur Nathan Shah, Kotri and Jamshoro.⁴⁸¹

In December 2022, the Jamestown Foundation reported on the developing collaboration between Baloch and Sindh separatist groups. Baloch insurgent groups have reportedly provided training to Sindh separatist groups. In return, Sindh separatists provide logistical support to Baloch separatists. This has allowed Baloch separatists to expand their operational area to Karachi, where they carried out several attacks on Chinese targets.⁴⁸²

Illustrative incidents in 2022:

- On 3 January 2022, TTP militants threw a hand grenade at a policeman on Mauripur Road, Karachi. The policeman lost his fingers in the blast.⁴⁸³
- On 26 April 2022, three Chinese nationals and a Pakistani man were killed in an attack by a female suicide bomber outside the Chinese language centre inside Karachi University. Responsibility for the attack was claimed by BLA.⁴⁸⁴
- On 29 April 2022, SRA militants claimed responsibility for an attack on a high tension electricity pylon in Tando Mohammad Khan.⁴⁸⁵
- On 13 May 2022, a bomb blast on a Daudpota road in Karachi, possibly targeting a passing vehicle from the Pakistan Coast Guards, killed one and injured seven. SRA claimed responsibility for the IED attack through social media.⁴⁸⁶
- On 29 September 2022, a Chinese national was killed and two others injured in an attack on a dental clinic in Karachi.⁴⁸⁷
- On 18 February 2023, TTP militants launched a suicide attack on the police headquarters of Karachi. Two police officers, a ranger and a civilian were killed and 14 others wounded. At least one suicide bomber blew himself up after entering the police building, another terrorist was also killed.⁴⁸⁸

Casualties

According to PIPS, a total of 8 people were killed and 31 injured in eight 'terrorist attacks' in the province in 2022.⁴⁸⁹ PICSS counted 62 casualties (22 killed and 40 injured).⁴⁹⁰

In 2022, CRSS recorded a 50 % drop in violence in Sindh compared to 2021.⁴⁹¹ In total, 115 casualties from terrorism or from counter-terrorism were registered in Sindh (57 fatalities and 58 injuries).⁴⁹²

⁴⁷⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 51

⁴⁸⁰ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), pp. 128-129

⁴⁸¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 54

⁴⁸² Jamestown Foundation, Sindh and Baluch Separatists Team Up to Target Chinese Interests in Pakistan, 2 December 2022, [url](#)

⁴⁸³ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 53

⁴⁸⁴ Express Tribune (The), Female suicide bomber kills three Chinese nationals at KU, 26 April 2022, [url](#)

⁴⁸⁵ Dawn, Blast damages electricity pylon near Tando Mohammad Khan, 29 April 2022, [url](#)

⁴⁸⁶ News International (The), One killed, seven hurt in Karachi blast, 13 May 2022, [url](#)

⁴⁸⁷ News International (The), Chinese national killed, two injured in Karachi attack, 29 September 2022, [url](#)

⁴⁸⁸ Guardian (The), At least four killed as Pakistani Taliban militants storm police HQ in Karachi, 18 February 2023, [url](#)

⁴⁸⁹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 51

⁴⁹⁰ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2022, 5 January 2023, [url](#), p. 32

⁴⁹¹ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2022, February 2023, [url](#), p. 4

⁴⁹² CRSS, Annual Security Report 2022, February 2023, [url](#), p. 4

Security operations (six) led to nine casualties (eight fatalities and one injury)⁴⁹³ Terrorist attacks (48) caused 95 casualties (48 fatalities and 47 injuries).⁴⁹⁴ Twelve of the casualties were policemen (seven fatalities and five injuries).⁴⁹⁵

Displacement

Extreme monsoon rainfall from June up until October 2022 killed more than a thousand people and displaced 7,9 million people in Pakistan, according to UN estimates.⁴⁹⁶ Human Rights Watch reports the devastating floods displaced more than 30 million people.⁴⁹⁷ Receiving nearly six times the 30-year annual average of rainfall, Sindh province was among the hardest hit by the rains.⁴⁹⁸ The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) reports that 799 people died in Sindh; considerable infrastructural damage was reported, including the full or partial destruction of 1,885,029 homes. As many as 24 districts in Sindh were designated as 'calamity-hit', affecting 14,6 million persons.⁴⁹⁹ According to The New Humanitarian, as of early December 2022, 240,000 people remained displaced in Sindh. While most provinces in Pakistan had started to see a decrease in waterborne illnesses, pockets of Sindh and Balochistan continued to report a high number of malaria and cholera cases.⁵⁰⁰

Among the consulted sources, no information was found about any conflict-induced displacement from areas in and to Sindh in 2022.⁵⁰¹

3.2.5. Islamabad capital territory

General description of the territory

Islamabad Capital Territory is situated in the north of Pakistan between the provinces of KP and Punjab, and includes the capital of Pakistan, Islamabad. The administrative status of Islamabad Capital Territory is not very clear. The territory of the Islamabad Capital Territory is not demarcated and separated from adjoining areas.⁵⁰² The total area of Islamabad Capital Territory is around 900 square kilometres.⁵⁰³ Islamabad is an ethnically diverse city. It has an 'eclectic mix of Punjabi, Pakhtun, Seriaki, Sindhi, Kashmiri and Baloch ethnicities'. Islamabad has a relatively big proportion of religious minorities compared to other parts of the country, with 10 % of the inhabitants being non-Muslims.⁵⁰⁴ There are 3,000 Hindus living in the capital.⁵⁰⁵ Islamabad Capital Territory hosts Islamabad International Airport, served by international and domestic scheduled passenger flights.⁵⁰⁶ According to the 2017 population census published by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Islamabad Capital

⁴⁹³ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2022, February 2023, [url](#), p. 13

⁴⁹⁴ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2022, February 2023, [url](#), p. 22

⁴⁹⁵ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2022, February 2023, [url](#), p. 27

⁴⁹⁶ Mercy Corps, Devastation in Pakistan: deadly floods displace millions, 5 October 2022, [url](#)

⁴⁹⁷ HRW, World Report 2023 - Pakistan, 12 January 2023, [url](#)

⁴⁹⁸ New York Times (The), 'Very dire': devastated by floods, Pakistan faces looming food crisis, 14 September 2022, [url](#)

⁴⁹⁹ NDMA, NDMA Floods (2022) Sitrep 2022 - (Daily Sitrep No. 158 Dated 18th November 2022), 18 November 2022, [url](#)

⁵⁰⁰ New Humanitarian (The), 'We would all like to move': Pakistan flood survivors struggle to rebuild, 20 December 2022, [url](#)

⁵⁰¹ Websites consulted: <http://www.unocha.org/pakistan>;

<https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/pakistan>; <http://reliefweb.int/country/pak>

⁵⁰² International News (The), Islamabad: the deprived capital, 30 June 2019, [url](#)

⁵⁰³ UNDP Pakistan, Devolution of Power: Pathways to Actualization, 23 January 2021, [url](#), p. 5

⁵⁰⁴ Friday Times (The), Battleground Islamabad, 22 June 2018, [url](#)

⁵⁰⁵ Al Jazeera, Pakistan's top Islamic body approves construction of Hindu temple, 29 October 2020, [url](#)

⁵⁰⁶ Gulf News, First pictures: New Islamabad airport opens, to handle up to 25m flyers a year, 1 May 2018, [url](#)

Territory has a population of 2, 003, 368.⁵⁰⁷ According to UNDP, half of the population lives in urban areas.⁵⁰⁸

Background of the conflict and actors in Islamabad Capital Territory

According to a report by Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) published in 2020, the capital remains an attractive target due to the prevalence of government institutions, foreign missions and administration officials.⁵⁰⁹ The capital Islamabad is regularly the scene of mass protests.⁵¹⁰

Recent security trends and impact on the civilian population

Security incidents

ACLED collected data on four violent events in Islamabad Capital territory from reports in open sources in the year 2022, one of which was coded as a battle, one as a suicide bomb and two as attacks against civilians.⁵¹¹ In 2022, PIPS recorded two 'terrorist attacks' in Islamabad Capital Territory.⁵¹² PICSS documented two 'militant attacks' in Islamabad Capital Territory in 2022.⁵¹³

Security trends in 2022

The number of 'terrorist attacks' in Islamabad Capital Territory was the same as in 2021, PIPS reports.⁵¹⁴ TTP claimed these attacks, which both targeted the police.⁵¹⁵

Illustrative incidents in 2022:

- On 17 January 2022, TTP militants opened fire at the police during a routine check in the G-8 sector of Islamabad. Two TTP militants and one policeman were killed. Two policemen were wounded.⁵¹⁶
- On 31 January 2022, a police constable was found dead near Chanali village.⁵¹⁷ TTP and ISKP claimed the attack on social media.⁵¹⁸
- On 23 December 2022, TTP militants who were on the verge of carrying out a suicide bombing in Islamabad's government district blew themselves up during a police pursuit, killing one police officer and injuring six others.⁵¹⁹

⁵⁰⁷ Pakistan, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Final Results Census-2017-National, 19 May 2021, [url](#)

⁵⁰⁸ UNDP Pakistan, Devolution of Power: Pathways to Actualization, 23 January 2021, [url](#), p. 5

⁵⁰⁹ OSAC, Pakistan 2020 Crime & Safety Report: Islamabad, 17 April 2020, [url](#)

⁵¹⁰ Express Tribune (The), PTI supporters continue protests in Islamabad, 9 November 2022, [url](#); Express Tribune (The), Islamabad sit-in on cards as opposition mulls 'massive' anti-govt movement, 19 September 2020, [url](#); Dawn, Baloch protesters end Islamabad sit-in after PM Imran's pledge to meet them, 22 February 2021, [url](#)

⁵¹¹ OFPRA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2022-31 December 2022), update 11 January 2023, [url](#)

⁵¹² PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 55

⁵¹³ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2022, 5 January 2023, [url](#), p. 33

⁵¹⁴ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2021, 2022, [url](#), p. 19

⁵¹⁵ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 55

⁵¹⁶ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 54

⁵¹⁷ Dawn, Constable found dead, 31 January 2022, [url](#)

⁵¹⁸ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 55

⁵¹⁹ Reuters, Suspected militants heading for Pakistani govt target blow themselves up, 23 December 2022, [url](#)

Casualties

In 2022, the CRSS annual security report recorded 35 casualties (eight fatalities, 27 injured) from terrorism or counter-terrorism operations in Islamabad Capital Territory.⁵²⁰ Among the fatalities, five were victims of terrorist acts and three died during security operations.⁵²¹

Displacement

Among the consulted sources, no information was found about any conflict-induced displacement from areas in and to Islamabad Capital territory in 2022.⁵²² The monsoon rainfall from June up until October 2022 left Islamabad largely untouched, with only one reported fatality.⁵²³

3.2.6. Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan

General description of the region

The Pakistan-controlled territory of Kashmir consists of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK or commonly called Azad Kashmir, AK) and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB). On 4 August 2020, the Prime Minister of Pakistan revealed a new political map of the area that included Pakistan's national borders as well as the whole of Kashmir, which confirms the political claim to the territory.⁵²⁴ In November 2020, PM Imran Khan announced that GB would get the status of a provisional province.⁵²⁵

AK has an estimated population of about 3 – 4,5 million.⁵²⁶ The majority in AJK are Muslims.⁵²⁷ GB has an estimated population of about two million people.⁵²⁸ GB's population is roughly 40 % Shia.⁵²⁹ GB is governed by a legislative assembly but has few legal powers and the region remains largely governed directly by the federal government.⁵³⁰ Neither GB nor AK have representation in the national parliament.⁵³¹

Background of the conflict and actors in Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan

The territory of Kashmir is a disputed area divided between India, Pakistan and China but claimed in its entirety by Pakistan and India.⁵³² The Pakistan-India relationship has been historically tense for decades.⁵³³ The Line of Control (LoC) is an approximately 724 km-long border separating India-

⁵²⁰ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2022, February 2023, [url](#), p.38

⁵²¹ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2022, February 2023, [url](#), p.39

⁵²² IDMC, GRID 2022 Global Report on Internal Displacement, May 2022, [url](#); Websites consulted: <http://www.unocha.org/pakistan>; <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/pakistan>; <http://reliefweb.int/country/pak>

⁵²³ NDMA, NDMA Floods (2022) Sitrep 2022 – (Daily Sitrep No. 158 Dated 18th November 2022), 18 November 2022, [url](#)

⁵²⁴ Dawn, In landmark move, PM Imran unveils 'new political map' of Pakistan, 4 August 2020, [url](#); Dawn, Pakistan affirms claim to IHK with new map, 5 August 2020, [url](#)

⁵²⁵ Al Jazeera, Pakistan PM vows to grant provisional status to Gilgit-Baltistan, 2 November 2020, [url](#)

⁵²⁶ Reuters, Explainer: Scenic Kashmir at the heart of India-Pakistani animosity, 15 February 2019, [url](#)

⁵²⁷ Reuters, Explainer: Scenic Kashmir at the heart of India-Pakistani animosity, 15 February 2019, [url](#)

⁵²⁸ Al Jazeera, Pakistan PM vows to grant provisional status to Gilgit-Baltistan, 2 November 2020, [url](#)

⁵²⁹ Economic Times (The), Shia majority reduced to minority in Gilgit Baltistan: Barrister Hamid Bashani, 12 November 2020, [url](#)

⁵³⁰ Al Jazeera, Pakistan PM vows to grant provisional status to Gilgit-Baltistan, 2 November 2020, [url](#)

⁵³¹ USDOS, 2021 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Pakistan, 12 April 2022, [url](#)

⁵³² Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Redrawing the Maps in Kashmir. New Geopolitical Realities in the Conflict between China, India, and Pakistan, November 2020, [url](#)

⁵³³ RFE/RL, India Blames Pakistan, Demands Action After Kashmir Attack, 15 February 2019, [url](#); DW, Kashmir: The world's most dangerous conflict, 7 August 2019, [url](#)

administered Kashmir from Pakistan-administered Kashmir, managed by their respective armies on each side.⁵³⁴ It is known as one of the most heavily militarised borders in the world.⁵³⁵

India accuses Pakistan of supporting militant groups like Jaish-e Muhammed (JeM), Lashkar-e Taiba (LeT) and Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM). Their operational bases are in the Pakistan and Indian-administrated Kashmir region.⁵³⁶ HM is a militant group operating in Azad Jammu and Kashmir. It is led by Syed Salahuddin who is based in Pakistan.⁵³⁷ HM has conducted numerous attacks in India-administered Kashmir.⁵³⁸ Also, JeM has attacked high profile Indian targets, including the Indian parliament in New Delhi and the legislative assembly in Indian-administered Kashmir.⁵³⁹ In February 2019, the group claimed the Pulwama attack, killing some 40 Indian soldiers.⁵⁴⁰ A month after the Pulwama attack, in February 2019, Pakistan started 'a crackdown' on groups it claims are linked to banned organisations.⁵⁴¹ In February 2021, the Pakistani and Indian armies agreed to restore the 2003 cease-fire across the LoC. The renewal of the cease-fire allowed for significant normalization of civilian life in the areas adjoining the LoC.⁵⁴² In January 2023, PM Shahbaz Sharrif stated he was eager to hold talks with his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi on the status of Kashmir.⁵⁴³

In July 2021, BBC News Urdu reported that Habib-ur-Rehman, a commander of Mujahideen Gilgit-Baltistan and Kohistan, resurfaced in Gilgit-Baltistan. BBC News Urdu stated that videos which were circulating on social media showed him holding an 'open court' in Diامر district.⁵⁴⁴ According to VoA Urdu, the Pakistani government denied the presence of TTP militants in Gilgit-Baltistan.⁵⁴⁵

Recent security trends and impact on the civilian population

Security incidents

ACLED registered no violent events in Azad Kashmir from open source reports in the year 2022.⁵⁴⁶ PIPS did not mention any 'terrorist attacks' in Azad Kashmir in 2022.⁵⁴⁷ PICSS also reported no militant attacks in 2022 in Azad Kashmir.⁵⁴⁸

⁵³⁴ CFR, Conflict Between India and Pakistan, nidi, [url](#); Kulkarni, T., The escalation of ceasefire violations across the Line of Control, 20 August 2020, [url](#)

⁵³⁵ Kulkarni, T., The escalation of ceasefire violations across the Line of Control, 20 August 2020, [url](#), BBC News, Viewpoint: India and Pakistan up the ante on disputed border, 30 January 2018, [url](#)

⁵³⁶ Al Jazeera, Explainer: Who are Kashmir's armed groups?, 3 March 2019, [url](#)

⁵³⁷ Al Jazeera, Explainer: Who are Kashmir's armed groups?, 3 March 2019, [url](#)

⁵³⁸ Al Jazeera, Explainer: Who are Kashmir's armed groups?, 3 March 2019, [url](#)

⁵³⁹ Al Jazeera, Explainer: Who are Kashmir's armed groups?, 3 March 2019, [url](#)

⁵⁴⁰ Al Jazeera, Explainer: Who are Kashmir's armed groups?, 3 March 2019, [url](#)

⁵⁴¹ Al Jazeera, India-Pakistan tensions: All the latest updates, 10 March 2019, [url](#)

⁵⁴² Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2022 - Pakistani Kashmir*, 24 February 2022, [url](#)

⁵⁴³ Deutsche Welle, India's suspicions towards Pakistan's olive branch, 23 January 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁴⁴ BBC News Urdu, پ س ن د ش د ت م ط ل و ب ا ن ت پ ا ی می ن ب ل ت س ت ا ن گ ل گ ت : ا ر ح م ن ح ب ی ب , [informal translation 'Habib-ur-Rehman: Video of 'open court' with associates of most wanted militant commander in Gilgit-Baltistan'], 8 July 2021, [url](#)

⁵⁴⁵ VoA Urdu, ش د ت می ن و ا ح گ ر د و ا و ر ب ل ت س ت ا ن گ ل گ ت ہ ل ا ک ت کی ا ن چ ی ن ذ ر ز ی نی , [informal translation 'Killing of Chinese engineers, extremists reorganizing in Gilgit-Baltistan and surrounding areas'], 22 July 2021, [url](#)

⁵⁴⁶ OFPRA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2022-31 December 2022), update 11 January 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁴⁷ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 14

⁵⁴⁸ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2022, 5 January 2023, [url](#), p. 33

ACLED collected data on two violent events in Gilgit-Baltistan from reports in open sources in the year 2022, both coded as enforced disappearance/abduction.⁵⁴⁹ According to PICSS, three 'militant attacks' occurred in 2022 in Gilgit-Baltistan.⁵⁵⁰ PIPS recorded one 'terrorist attack' in GB in 2022.⁵⁵¹

Security trends in 2022

In August 2022, two people were killed and 17 others injured in a sectarian clash between two religious groups in Gilgit. The hoisting of a Shia flag at the start of Muharram started the clash.⁵⁵²

All three militant attacks PICSS registered in GB were reported from Diامر district, including a hostage situation, a failed IED-attack and the torching of a girls school. No human losses were reported in these incidents.⁵⁵³

Casualties

In 2022, CRSS counted no fatalities related to incidents of terrorism or counter-terrorism operations in AK and Gilgit Baltistan.⁵⁵⁴

Displacement

Extreme monsoon rainfall from June up until October 2022 killed more than a thousand people and displaced 7.9 million people in Pakistan, according to UN estimates.⁵⁵⁵ HRW reports that the devastating floods displaced more than 30 million people.⁵⁵⁶ NDMA reports 48 people died in AK, 23 in GB. Infrastructural damage included the full or partial destruction of 555 homes in AK and 1,793 homes in GB. In AK, five districts were designed as 'calamity-hit', affecting 53,700 persons. In GB, nine districts were designed as 'calamity-hit', affecting 51,500 persons.⁵⁵⁷

Among the consulted sources, no information was found about any conflict-induced displacement from areas in and to GB or AK in 2022.⁵⁵⁸

⁵⁴⁹ OFPRA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, South Asia (Filters applied: Pakistan; Event types: battles, explosions/remote violence and violence against civilians; 1 January 2020-31 December 2020), update 3 September 2021, [url](#)

⁵⁵⁰ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2022, 5 January 2023, [url](#), p. 33

⁵⁵¹ PIPS, Pakistan Security Report 2022, 6 January 2023, [url](#), p. 14

⁵⁵² Dawn, Two killed, 17 wounded in Gilgit clash, 1 August 2022, [url](#)

⁵⁵³ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2022, 5 January 2023, [url](#), p. 33; Dawn, Miscreants torch girls' school in Diامر, 9 November 2022, [url](#)

⁵⁵⁴ CRSS, Annual Security Report 2022, February 2023, [url](#), p.38

⁵⁵⁵ Mercy Corps, Devastation in Pakistan: deadly floods displace millions, 5 October 2022, [url](#)

⁵⁵⁶ HRW, World Report 2023 - Pakistan, 12 January 2023, [url](#)

⁵⁵⁷ NDMA, NDMA Floods (2022) Sitrep 2022 – (Daily Sitrep No. 158 Dated 18th November 2022), 18 November 2022, [url](#)

⁵⁵⁸ Websites consulted: <http://www.unocha.org/pakistan>; <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/pakistan>; <http://reliefweb.int/country/pak>

Summary

The security situation deteriorated in Pakistan in 2022, a year that saw political unrest as well as unprecedented monsoon rainfall that caused devastating floods. The Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) reported a 27 % rise of 'terrorist incidents' in Pakistan compared to 2021. ACLED coded most security incidents in Pakistan in 2022 in the provinces Balochistan (433) and Pakhtunkhwa (KP) (423).

The Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021 caused a significant increase in violence in KP. Cross-border movements by Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) militants from Afghanistan to Pakistan lead to increasing numbers of attacks, especially on Pakistan security personnel. According to PIPS, a total of 169 'terrorist incidents' were registered in KP in 2022, a rise of 52 % compared to 2021. ACLED collected data on 423 violent events in KP province in 2022. Analysis of these data shows that these security incidents mainly took place in the districts of North Waziristan, Peshawar, Dera Ismail Khan, Bajaur, South Waziristan and Lakki Marwat. Further analysis shows the TTP to be the main actor of anti-state violence in KP, with North Waziristan and Dera Ismail Khan standing out as the districts where TTP is most active. To a lesser extent, ISKP is also present in KP, deploying its terrorist tactics mainly in the districts Bajaur and Peshawar. According to several sources, TTP tries to distinguish itself from the ISKP's extremism by focusing its attacks on security and law enforcement officials and attempting to spare civilian lives. ISKP is primarily an urban phenomenon and is comprised of decentralised units that target Shia sites rather than directly challenging the state. Its March 2022 suicide attack on a Shia mosque in Peshawar showed its capability to carry out mass-casualty attacks. TTP retracted an earlier claim of responsibility for the January 2023 suicide attack on a mosque used by security forces and government personnel in Peshawar that resulted in more than 100 fatalities. As of February 2023, no large-scale conflict-induced displacement from areas in and to KP was reported. The Pakistani army has refrained from any major new counteroffensive against TTP in KP.

In recent years, the insurgency by nationalist militants in Balochistan has been marked by destructive attacks on Pakistan security forces personnel and infrastructure. According to PIPS, a total of 79 'terrorist incidents' were registered in Balochistan in 2022, a decrease of 2 % compared to 2021. According to PIPS, the majority of these terror incidents targeted personnel, vehicles and premises of security forces and law enforcement agencies. ACLED collected data on 433 security incidents in Balochistan in 2022. Analysis of these data shows that violence mainly took place in the districts Kech, Quetta, Kachhi and Panjgur. Further analysis indicates Baloch nationalist groups to be the main actors of violence in the province. Besides security forces personnel and infrastructure, Baloch insurgent groups also targeted Chinese projects and Chinese workers linked to the development of the Gwadar Port in Balochistan. TTP and ISKP carried out a limited number of attacks in Balochistan. TTP's focus on Balochistan is explained by one source as an attempt to stretch the Pakistan security forces and to impede a Pakistani army offensive in KP. Sectarian violence is also still present in Balochistan : the Hazara community of Quetta was targeted by a number of attacks in 2022.

The number of 'terrorist incidents' reported by PIPS in the provinces Punjab, Sindh and Islamabad in 2022 was limited compared to the levels of violence witnessed in KP and Balochistan. Although TTP, Baloch Nationalist Groups and ISKP were responsible for violence outside of KP and Balochistan, ACLED reported low numbers of security incidents in the province of Punjab (76), in Sindh (59), in the Federal Capital of Islamabad (four) and in Gilgit-Baltistan (two). In Sindh, a number of terrorist attacks were committed by Sindhi nationalist groups.

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