



European Asylum Support Office

EASO COI Meeting Report

Pakistan

16-17 October 2017

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SUPPORT IS OUR MISSION



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Lahore, Pakistan - May 5, 2013: Muslim women participating at a public event wearing colorful headscarves, duppattas and hijabs

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Disclaimer

This meeting report has been drafted by EASO on the basis of presentations, discussions, and participants' notes to highlight the main content of the meeting and does not purport to reflect the entire proceedings. Content from the meeting has been adapted for readability and usability within this report. Variations in style, terminology, and spellings used by different speakers may also appear.

The external speakers validated the information in this report and have given their consent to be quoted publicly from this report. Information provided by an external speaker in this report should be cited under the name of the speaker and the context in which it was delivered. For example:

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The target users for this report are asylum caseworkers, COI researchers, policymakers, and decision-making authorities.

Glossary and Abbreviations

ACTED	A French NGO and international relief agency
Ahl-i Hadith	A Sunni religious movement
Ahmediyya	Islamic religious movement
AJK Kashmir	Azad Jammu and Kashmir; the Pakistan-controlled side of Kashmir
ANP	Awami National Party; a Pashtun-dominated political party
Ansar-ul Shariah	Militant group
AQIS	Al Qaida in the Indian Subcontinent; militant group
ASWJ	Ahl-e-Sunnat-wal-Jamaat; a sectarian Sunni group formerly known as SSP
AVR	Assisted Voluntary Return
AVRR	Assisted Voluntary Returns & Reintegration
<i>Azadi</i>	Freedom
Barelvi	A Sunni religious movement
Bihari	Urdu speaking Bangladeshis who migrated to Pakistan
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party, an Indian Hindu nationalist party led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi
BLA	Balochistan Liberation Army; a Baloch militant group
BLF	Balochistan Liberation Front; a Baloch militant group
BRA	Baloch Republican Army; a Baloch militant group
Christian Study Center Pakistan	An institution for research in Christianity and Islam in Pakistan
CLAAS Pakistan	Centre for Legal Aid Assistance & Settlement Pakistan; provides aid to victims of religious intolerance
CMR	Central Mediterranean route
Courting The Law	Pakistani legal news and analysis portal
CPDI	Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives, Pakistani NGO
CPEC	The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor
CRSS	Center for Research & Security Studies Pakistan
Dawat-e-Islami	A Barelvi missionary movement
Deobandi	A conservative Sunni religious movement
DHA	Defence Housing Authority; real estate and property development organisation administered by the Pakistan Army
<i>Diyat</i>	Blood money law
ECHO Pakistan	The European Commission's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations department in Pakistan

ECL	Exit Control List
EMR	Eastern Mediterranean route
ERIN-program	The European Reintegration Network (ERIN) Specific Action Program aims to implement sustainable return and reintegration of third country nationals in their country of origin
<i>Fard</i>	The certificate of possession
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
Fazlullah	Leader of the TTP
<i>Fedayeen</i>	A militant willing to sacrifice himself
FIA	Federal Investigation Agency; a border control, counter-intelligence and security agency
FIF	Falah-i-Insaniyat Foundation; another name for Jamaat-ud-Dawa, the charity front of the LeT
FIR	First Information Reports
FRC	FATA Research Centre
Gawkadal massacre	On 21 January 1990 Indian troops opened fire on protestors in Kashmir
HANDS	A Pakistani NGO
Haqqani Network	Afghan armed insurgent movement based in North Waziristan led by Sirajuddin Haqqani, affiliated with the Afghan Taliban
Harakat-ul-Mujahideen	Militant group
Hazara	Ethnic group that migrated from Afghanistan, living in the Balochistan province of Pakistan
Hizb-ul-Mujahideen	A Kashmiri separatist militant group
HRCP Pakistan	Human Rights Commission of Pakistan; Pakistani NGO
Hudood Ordinances	A series of ordinances enacted in 1977 to implement Shariah law in Pakistan
Ikhwan Kashmir	A pro-government militia in the Indian state Jammu and Kashmir
<i>Imambargah</i>	A congregation hall for Shia commemoration ceremonies
<i>Intaqalaat</i>	The registration of land (register of mutation)
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IS group	The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, or Daesh; militant group
Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan	Islamic political party
JuA	Jamaat-ul-Ahrar; splinter faction of the TTP
<i>Jamabandi</i>	The record that establishes the right to property

JeM	Jaish-e-Mohammad; a pro-Pakistan militant group in Kashmir
<i>Jirgas</i>	An assembly of local elders that often take decisions and administers justice on a local level among Pashtun tribes
JKLF	Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front; a pro-independence Kashmiri separatist organisation
JKNC party	Jammu & Kashmir National Conference; an Indian political party
JuD	Jamaat-ud-Dawah; LeT's charitable wing.
JUI	Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam; a Sunni Deobandi political party split into two factions, JUI-F and JUI-S, where the last letters stand for the name of the respective leader
JUP	Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Pakistan (Assembly of Pakistani Clergy); a Barelvi political party
Kargil war	An armed conflict between India and Pakistan that took place between May and July 1990 in Kargil district, Kashmir.
Kashmiri Pandits	A Hindu community in Kashmir
<i>Katchi abadis</i>	Shanty town housing
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
Lashkar-e-Islam	Militant group active in Khyber Agency
LeJ	Lashkar-e-Jhangvi; a SSP splinter militant group
LeJ (al-Alami)	Lashkar-e-Jhangvi al-Alami; a faction of LeJ
LeT	Lashkar-e-Taiba; militant group
Quetta Shura	Leadership council of the Afghan Taliban
Madrassa	Islamic school
Majlis-e-Tahaffuz-e-Khatm-e-Nabuwwat	A mostly Barelvi political party
Majlis-ul-Ahrar-e-Islam	A former Deobandi, anti-Ahmadi political party
<i>Malik</i>	Leader
Malik Ishaq	Co-founder and leader of LeJ
Malik Riaz	A Pakistani businessperson and billionaire
Milli Muslim League	A party founded by members of the Jamaat-ud-Dawa, an offshoot of LeT
MNA	Member of National Assembly, Pakistan
<i>Mohajir</i>	Urdu speaking migrants from India and their descendants
MQM	Muttahida Qaumi Movement; political party founded by Altaf Hussain. Previously known as Muhajir Qaumi Movement
MUF	Muslim United Front; a coalition of Islamic Kashmiri political parties in the 1980s

Mumtaz Qadri	Bodyguard of Governor of Punjab Salmaan Taseer, whom he assassinated
MWM	Majlis-e-Wahdat-e-Muslimeen; Shia political organisation
Nawar Sharif	Former Prime Minister of Pakistan
NAZ-foundation	Indian NGO with hiv/aids and sexual health focus
NCJP	National Commission for Justice and Peace; a Catholic human rights advocacy group
Nizam-e-Adl Regulation 2009 2009	An act that established Shariah in the Malakand division in 2009
Norwegian Church Aid	A humanitarian and ecumenical organisation
Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad	A military offensive launched on 22 February 2017 across Pakistan
Operation Rajgal	Later known as Operation Khyber-4
Operation Zarb-e-Azab	ZEB; A military offensive launched in North Waziristan on 15 June
PAC	People's Aman Committee; a Karachi based militant group with ties to the PPP
<i>Panchayats</i>	Assembly of elders traditionally settling disputes
PATA	Provincially Administered Tribal Areas
<i>Patwari</i>	The local revenue official at the level of the village
PDP	The People's Democratic Party, a Kashmiri political party
PICSS	Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies
PIPS	Pakistan Institute For Peace Studies
PML-N	The Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz); political party
PPP	Pakistan Peoples Party, a centre-left political party
PTI	Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf; political party founded by Imran Khan
Punjabi Taliban	A network consisting of members of banned militant groups from Punjab
<i>Qabza groups</i>	Land-grabbing groups
<i>Qisas</i>	The law of retribution
<i>Razinama</i>	A compromise outside of court
<i>Riwaj</i>	Customary laws
SACH	Struggle for Change; a Pakistani NGO focusing on torture and human rights abuses
<i>Shahid</i>	Martyr
<i>Shariah</i>	Islamic law
Sipah-e-Mohammed	A Shia militant group and former political party

SPARC	Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child; a Pakistani NGO focused on the rights of children
SSP	Sipah-e-Sahaba of Pakistan; a Sunni sectarian organisation
Sufi sheiks	A Sufi spiritual leader
Sufi	Islamic mysticism
Sunni Tehreek	Barelvi Sunni militant group
Tehreek-e-Nafaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi	A militant group active in the regions along the Afghan border
<i>Tehsildar</i>	The revenue official at the level of the town
TTP	Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (Pakistan Movement of Taliban); an active formation of armed militant groups
TYL	Tehreek Labaik Ya Rasool Allah, a Barelvi political party and religious movement
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the UN Refugee Agency
Wahhabi	Conservative Islamic doctrine
WELDO	International NGO based in Pakistan
ZEB	Operation Zarb-e-Azb
Zia-ul-Haq, Muhammad	President of Pakistan 1978-1988
<i>Zina</i>	Unlawful sexual intercourse, according to Islamic law

Introduction

On 16 and 17 October 2017, EASO organised a Practical Cooperation Conference on Pakistan in Rome, in the framework of EASO's Operating Plan in Italy.

Following the need expressed by the Italian National Asylum Commission and other EU+ countries for accurate information on specific topics on Pakistan, and in view of a more harmonised approach to Country of Origin Information (COI) and decision practice in the EU+, EASO brought together around 100 participants, including COI specialists, caseworkers and decision-makers from many EU+ countries, Italian members of courts and tribunals, EU institutions, UNHCR and IOM.

EASO invited the guest speakers mentioned in the Acknowledgement section of this report, to share their expertise and field knowledge on Pakistan on selected topics and recent developments in the country.

This Conference Report includes reworked transcripts of the presentations.

Map



Map of Pakistan: © United Nations ⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ UN, *Map No 4181 Rev. 1*, January 2004 (<http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/pakistan.pdf>), accessed 16 January 2018.

1. Overview of the current political and security situation in Pakistan

Cyril Almeida, Assistant editor and journalist, Dawn newspaper, Pakistan

My name is Cyril Almeida and I work for Dawn newspaper. Before plunging into the presentation I will give you a little background about myself and the newspaper. Dawn is Pakistan's oldest and largest English language daily. We consider ourselves to be a secular, democratic and liberal newspaper in the Pakistani context, espousing the values of the founder of the country Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who was the founder of our newspaper, before partition. It's my tenth year at Dawn paper. I started out as editorial writer down in Karachi and now I am living in Islamabad, for about 8 years. I largely cover, in the Pakistani context, security and national politics. Security for us means internal militancy, regional conflicts in India and Afghanistan, and national politics of course. That means I don't particularly look at provincial or third tier local government issues, but over the last 10 years I think any major incident that has happened in Pakistan, I've probably written a Dawn editorial about the subject.

I also report for the newspaper and over the last 10 years I travelled through, I believe, roughly about 75% of Pakistan. I've taken trips from my home in Islamabad all the way to Mazar-i-Sharif, via the Khyber Pass and the Torkham border. At the last election, I travelled around in my own car through Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. I spent three weeks on the road, drove 4500 Miles and covered about 10-12 constituencies. So that is my reporting background.

As some of you may have heard, last year at this exact day I was barred from leaving Pakistan. Because our newspaper ran a report which I had filed covering an issue between the Civil government and the military leadership where the civilian government, according to our report, was trying to convince the military establishment, as we call it in Pakistan, that unless certain actions were taken against certain additional militant groups, Pakistan was on the verge of facing international sanctions or perhaps further isolation. This caused a larger kerfuffle inside Pakistan than we had imagined, leading to me being put on the Exit Control List. This was the first time in the history of the country a journalist had ever been put on the ECL.

I will talk about three broad areas: one is politics in Pakistan and where it stands today, political parties and elections etc. We have an election possibly coming up next year. The next section will be a geographical overview of Pakistan and the security situation relative to the four provinces: Sindh, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab. Further presentations will give much more details but I will give a primer on where we stand today, or at least my view on where we stand today. And the final section will be essentially an overview of the different types of militancy we have in Pakistan. Sectarian, anti-Pakistan, India-centric, Afghan-centric, and foreign groups - what I would call the five broad categories of militancy, terrorism and extremism in the country and where those stand.

I think it's important to state at the outset that Pakistan today feels a lot more stable to anyone who's been covering Pakistan than it has been for a number of years. This is not to suggest that Pakistan is a normal country by any stretch today, but the depths between 2008 and 2011, I think those were dark days. For some of us it was a question of touch-and-go almost, where but for the grace of God we could have been Syria before Syria became Syria. There is an enormous amount of stability that has been re-established in Pakistan over the last 4-6 years. Having said that, I also think it's important to emphasize that Pakistan is still

not a normal country. This veneer of normality can be snatched away at any moment. It can in some ways be mystifying, we can go for months or maybe a longer stretch of relative calm and stability in the country until something happens and everyone is reminded again that Pakistan is not really a stable country.

In addition to that, for the sake of full disclosure, please note that if you follow the media or the press in Pakistan, you cannot truly understand Pakistan because there are many areas and subjects which are no-go areas. There are topics and issues that don't get the coverage that they should, sometimes because there are no resources because of the media's own constraints, but often because of pressure from all sides - State pressure, militancy pressure and extremism pressure. A couple of newspapers, for example, have been unofficially banned in military cantonments in the country. That is something not discussed publicly, but there are a range of issues and pressures that exist in Pakistan that a reader may not necessarily get a sense of just by consuming media coverage in the country.

1.1 The political process

Besides cricket I think the true national sport in Pakistan is politics. Pakistanis love their politics. Next year on June 5th 2018, the current parliament will complete its 5-year term and so there will have to be a general election in Pakistan within 60 days. If this government complete its term, and this government seems adamant to complete its term, we are looking at a general election in Pakistan somewhere between July and late August next year. That means that for the foreseeable future, the election will dominate most of the narrative in Pakistan, at least internally. This would be a historic completion of a full term. The last government, the PPP-led Coalition, was the first one that managed to complete its full 5-years term. If this government, and I say if because it's not clear that this government will choose to continue to the end of its 5 years and there is currently some concern about whether they will be allowed to complete its 5-years term. If this government completes its 5-years term it will be the second successful peaceful transfer of power in Pakistan's history, on time and on schedule, and I believe that would be a profound event in Pakistan's history. Having said that, there has never been a prime minister who has completed a full term so we're still not there completely in a democratic sense. The Parliament might complete its term but no prime minister has served a full term yet.

Pakistani politics is a strange animal because at one level it is relatively easy to predict, but at another level it's not. To try and explain that, in 2008, for example, it was fairly clear at the outset that the PPP was the favourite and it went on to form a government. In 2013, it was fairly clear ahead of the election the PML-N was the favourite and it went on to form a government. But Pakistan's politics has fractured in the last decade or so, it has become more regional. There's no truly dominant national party and this has created a bit of complexity in the system which we didn't have before. We're really in an era of coalition governments. The PPP in 2008 did not manage to secure a majority. In 2013 the PML-N did win a majority, but it was an astounding event for many of us that the PML-N in 2013 managed to get a full outright majority in Parliament by sweeping Punjab. That seems like an extraordinary event unlikely to be repeated again. You must remember that even in 2013 when the PML-N came to power, they actually had to bring over a number of independent candidates, who were independently elected to Parliament, before they were able to form a majority.

That instability is, I think, something that people must keep in mind in looking at Pakistani politics, that what we really are looking at is possibly a continuation of an era of Coalition politics that started in 2008. That makes things very complicated because in the next election the three largest parties are most likely to be the PML-N, the PTI and the PPP. But if none of them are able to individually win a parliamentary majority there is no obvious combination of those parties that could form a government. That could mean not just a hung Parliament but

also severely fractured Pakistani politics going forward. This is not to cast a dire prediction, but it is worth keeping in mind.

On elections itself, Pakistani elections tend to be relatively short affairs. The campaign cycles tend to last about 6 weeks before the Election Day itself. They're fast paced, they're furious and they follow more or less the pattern of UK campaigns. It's not an American style long presidential campaign, and Pakistani elections tend to be dominated by one or two big issues. In 2013, it was a referendum on electricity and inflation. If we have an election in 2018, it is not clear at this point what exactly will be the key issues. The current problems that former prime minister Nawaz Sharif is having, his legal troubles, his war with some of the State institutions, suggest that the party might be forced into a defensive posture, rather than having a re-election bid that would be designed around his accomplishments while in office. There is that uncertainty right now: what will our next election revolve around at the national level?

Regionally, there are different factors at play. For example, in 2013 the PPP tried the south Punjab gambit and called for the creation of a new province inside Punjab. In 2018, or at the next elections, regional factors could be FATA Reforms that have stalled under the current government. Technically, the federal government has signed off on unification, a merger between KP and FATA, but there is a resistance within the PML-N and in KP to it, and FATA parliamentarians are not very clear on how to proceed. That could be one of the more regional, explosive issues that could swing votes in that region.

If you look at the four provinces you could start with the KP. It's an interesting province electorally because the last three elections have produced three very different governments. In 2002 there was a right wing coalition, in 2008 there was the ANP which is a liberal secular party, and in 2013 there was Imran Khan and his PTI. KP is a strange grab-bag of politics where no party seems to be able to hold on to power. At the moment it's not clear which way the province will swing next year.

Balochistan is another big mystery. Balochistan at the national level is relatively small; Balochistan has 14 out of 272 directly elected seats in the national assembly. But at the moment, Balochistan is a giant mystery to a lot of us because its politics are overshadowed by a long-running, low-level separatist insurgency and the dominance of the military establishment in the province. It's hard to predict which way electoral politics in Balochistan will go because a lot of it is connected to the influence of arguably un-democratic forces.

Sindh is fascinating because of Karachi. Because of the Karachi operation, a strange disconnect has opened where the Muhajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) still enjoys strong electoral support, but the leader of the party, Altaf Hussain, has been banned from the airways and party members loyal to Altaf Hussain are not allowed to organise in Karachi and Hyderabad, in urban Pakistan. The Muttahida Qaumi Movement led by Altaf Hussein is essentially a banned organisation but it has a great deal of support amongst the voters. Meanwhile, there are factions of the MQM that are supported by the Pakistani establishment but those factions do not have proven voter support.

Inside Sindh itself, what we call interior Sindh, the Sindhi-speaking part of Sindh, the electoral position is fairly straightforward. The PPP will be the dominant force. Not necessarily because the PPP is a greatly beloved political party but there is no organised political opposition to the PPP in interior Sindh. The PTI has shown no interest and the PML-N for historical reasons, because of the enmity between Benazir and Nawar Sharif and of course the PML-N because it's been a Punjabi party, doesn't really have a chance in interior Sindh. The PPP is the de-facto majority party in Sindh, because in its bastion and its support base there is no organised and no foreseeable organised political opposition.

Punjab is the big one. That's where the war between PTI and PML-N will be fought. Punjab is where both parties are gearing up for a fierce fight. When I say fight, I don't mean there would be a violent election, I think Punjab's politics can be violent at the margins but the electoral fight between PML-N and PTI should be perhaps one of the ugliest electoral contests we have seen in Pakistani history. Some of us are looking forward to it with a mixture of trepidation and excitement, because Imran Khan feels this might be his last shot at power and PML-N is now caught in a fight for survival. Over the next 12 months or so, we'll find out a great deal on how things go with the Sharifs' legal troubles, both Nawaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz, and what the military establishment indicates its electoral preferences are. Punjab is what decides our elections.

Just before moving on to the security situation in Pakistan, I will point out something about the elections that is worth keeping in mind. There has been a census in Pakistan recently and on the basis of that census it may require constitutional change. Pakistan's National Assembly Parliament does not have a fixed number of seats. The seats are determined on the basis of the last census. So if they get around to finalizing the census numbers and agreeing on a constitutional amendment you could have a larger assembly the next time around, in the next elections. That would change things potentially radically because it would mean completely new constituencies. The census will also reduce the percentage of Punjab's population as a percentage of overall Pakistan, so the overall dynamic of electoral power especially could change.

And finally, a new set of electoral laws have been passed, which means the Election Commission of Pakistan should have a greater role and more authority to deal with election-related violence.

1.2 Security and violence in Pakistan

A quick security survey of the country according to geographical regions: the four provinces, AJK, Gilgit-Baltistan and of course FATA. Over the last few years it may look like Operation Zarb-e-Azb, ZEB, as we call it in Pakistan in its short form, launched by general Raheel Sharif in June 2014, is what caused a significant turnaround in the security situation in Pakistan and that Pakistan was on the verge of chaos before ZEB. But Zarb-e-Azb itself was a culmination of a longer strategy and so it should not be seen in isolation. By the time ZEB happened in North Waziristan agency, it was the final agency in which a military operation had been launched by the military. If you go back to 2007, 2008 and 2009, the overall military strategy had always envisaged North Waziristan being the final area in which a counter-insurgency campaign would be waged.

So the great benefits that people have seen in terms of the marked decline in violence in Pakistan is often attributed to Zarb-e-Azb and that particular operation. But it was because of a number of military operations, counter-insurgency campaigns, that were carried out before and counter terrorism operations in the cities that have combined to create a sense of relative security in the country. If you look at the numbers in the South Asian terrorism portal, 2007 to 2010 were the worst years in terms of losses suffered because of terrorism. This year there has been 448 security forces personnel killed so far. In 2013, it was 3000. So you're seeing a significant decline.

What has changed though is that while there are fewer incidents of violence, the death toll in some attacks have been enormous. Fewer, but big attacks have continued. We have seen bombings this year in Parachinar and in Khyber Agency and just this month in Balochistan at a Shrine. Less frequent attacks can mean a sense of relative calm during the lulls, but when an attack does happen it causes a great deal of damage.

1.2.1 Balochistan province

Moving on to Balochistan province. It is an unstable province for a range of reasons. It is essentially a no-go area for a journalist. A no-go area is a Pakistan term for where you are not welcome and if you do turn up there you will be quickly escorted out of the area. The Pashtun-dominated areas of Balochistan, Quetta and everything north of Quetta, has been largely violence free. The violence and the troubles in Balochistan are in Quetta and south of Quetta, which are the Baloch dominated areas. I last went down from Quetta to Mastung district, which is part of the area hit by the Baloch insurgency, maybe 5 years ago. I don't think I'd be able to make that drive again today.

The Baloch insurgency itself is a low level simmering insurgency where the State believes, the Pakistani military believes, that it has come to grips with the level of violence. The Baloch separatist militants are mostly unable to carry around large or sensational attacks. But many parts of the Baloch-dominated districts in the province do continue to suffer violence and are essentially cut off from the rest of the country.

This is the longest running insurgency that we've had in Balochistan, a fifth insurgency in the province that can be traced back to 2001. Previously, the insurgencies had a tribal character but this insurgency, in spreading to the coastal Balochistan districts, has a middle class, non-tribal element to it too. The security challenges in Balochistan are not limited to the Baloch insurgency. Because Balochistan has a border with Iran, where there are smuggling issues and violence in Iran's Sistan and Baluchestan province, and another border with Afghanistan, where the Taliban strongholds are, there is a regional dimension to the security problems in Balochistan. Moreover, the Hazara population in Balochistan is under attack and there are both sectarian and ethnic types of violence.

Balochistan remains arguably a province where bad news has diminished, but that is also because the whole area is essentially cut off. We don't really know, as journalists, as independent researchers, what is happening because access to the areas is very difficult. The State has a suffocating security presence in the province and they are managing to keep a modicum of stability but Balochistan is a problem that, they've sort of kicked the can down the road. There is no great urgency to find permanent solutions to peace in Balochistan.

1.2.2 FATA

Since Zarb-e-Azb, in June 2014 in North Waziristan, FATA is a lot more stable than it has been before because the main sanctuaries of the Taleban, the Tehrik-e-Taleban (TTP), have been eliminated. The last big Taliban sanctuary they was in Kurram Agency where there was an operation called Operation Rajgal. It was in the last 250 square kilometres in Rajgal valley which is a really dense mountainous area.

At its peak, the military deployment in FATA was believed to be around 200,000 troops, an estimate because official figures have not been provided. The number of troops deployed in FATA has now been reduced because the Taliban strongholds have mostly been eliminated. But there remains a problem of TTP sanctuaries across the border in eastern Afghanistan and there is no likelihood of the military being able to withdraw from FATA anytime soon.

There is a dispute going on about the future of FATA between the civilian government and the military leadership which is about FATA reforms and some of you may have heard of it. This particular PML-N government has dragged its feet on FATA reforms because of disagreements among political allies of the PML-N whether FATA should be merged with the province of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. Meanwhile, the military leadership is publicly supporting FATA reforms, but it is not clear if a heavy military presence in FATA will allow civilian administrative structures to eventually assume control. Overall, FATA is likely to be a security challenged region for many years to come. There will be a heavy military presence, with attempts by the

militants to regroup and reassert themselves and it will be an area from which Pakistan proper, i.e. the provinces, will continue to be vulnerable.

1.2.3 Punjab

Punjab can be divided into three zones: Central, North and Southern Punjab. Southern Punjab must be familiar to a number of you for its so-called ties to sectarian militancy like Jaish-e-Mohammad. But while South Punjab may dominate the headlines, the infrastructure of militants and extremist groups has spread across all zones of Punjab, central and north too. The militancy and extremism threat has spread up and down Punjab, across cities, towns and villages. And the State does not currently appear to have a strategy or the capacity to address the threat.

As an outsider you could ask why is the State always saying that we need to accommodate these groups in Punjab. The answer may lie in the pattern of violence in Punjab. Lahore, the provincial capital, has been struck by militants a number of times and the police in particular have faced militant attacks in the city, but if you look to the other big cities and towns in Punjab, for example, Faisalabad, Sialkot, Gujranwala and Sheikhpura, they have not been attacked by militants despite the presence of militant and extremist networks in those cities.

So while the State is aware a large militant infrastructure exists in Punjab, the state is also aware that the militants in Punjab have not attacked in most of the province yet.

Another factor that prevents the state from dealing with the militant threat in Punjab is that the threat may already be so large that it frightens the State itself. As long capacity of the state to respond to the militant threat, in terms of counter-terrorism capabilities, policing strength and paramilitary forces, is less than the militant threat, the state may be willing to delay dealing with militancy and extremism in Punjab.

1.2.4 Sindh

Sindh is a tale of two halves. You have Karachi, Hyderabad, and Urdu-speaking Sindh, and then you have Sindhi-speaking Sindh, what is also referred to as Interior Sindh. One of the great untold stories of recent years is the penetration of militancy and extremism. The growth of Islamist networks and the number of madrassas and the social welfare networks in northern Sindh has been rapid. Despite the PPP politically dominating the region and a relatively open society, extremism has gained ground in Interior Sindh. The State is only now awakening to the problem and does not appear to fully understand the extent of the threat.

1.2.5 Karachi

In Karachi there is virtually every kind militancy, terrorism or extremism present, much like there are people from all parts of the country who live there. On top of that are the problems unique to Karachi such as political and gang-related violence. In September 2013, the PML-N federal government launched what is known as the Karachi operation, designed to curb soaring political and gang-related violence in the city as well as to dismantle militant infrastructure in the city. Violence in Karachi has been reduced significantly, but it is not clear if long term the different strands of violence in the city will be defeated.

1.2.6 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is the province that has suffered the most from militancy. It is adjacent to FATA and contains the district of Swat, with some of the most violent militancy and required a massive military operation to bring back under control. The marked reduction in violence in KP is real, but it is difficult to argue that the province is no longer vulnerable in a big way to militant violence.

1.3 Militancy in Pakistan

Militancy in Pakistan can broadly be described in five categories.

1.3.1 Anti-Pakistan

Anti-Pakistan militants, referred to as such by the State, are groups that have taken up arms against the State and that have carried out violent attacks inside Pakistan. Primarily, this means the TTP, the target of military operations for more than a decade. TTP itself is an umbrella organisation. There is much factionalism and in-fighting in the TTP and new factions claiming responsibility for militant attacks frequently appear. The anti-Pakistan militants are the group of militants that have faced the most pressure from the State and for more than a decade have been the target of most counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism efforts.

1.3.2 India-centric militants

A second category is India-centric militants, highlighted by Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM). These groups have not seen any meaningful action taken against them. There's no attempt being made to try and rein in these networks or to curtail their activities. It should be noted, however, that Hafiz Saeed is under house arrest since January. In terms of State policy, there has been some discussion about mainstreaming such militant groups. That means to allow them to become part of the political process and eventually curb their militant and extremist activities. These groups do not generally launch attacks inside Pakistan and as long as that continues to be the case, the State will likely remain reluctant to take action against such groups.

1.3.3 Afghan-centric

The third category of militants is the Afghan-centric. The Afghan Taliban, the Haqqani network and affiliated militants who are fighting in Afghanistan against the Afghan government and foreign forces. These groups too have not in any meaningful way faced any action by the Pakistani State. Over the years they've had an uneasy relationship with the Pakistani State. They clearly do exist in Pakistan, there are sanctuaries, centres where the leadership does exist on Pakistani soil, but it's not as close and straightforward a relationship as is often assumed. The Afghan-centric militants are tolerated on Pakistani soil, more because of the strategic need to do with Afghanistan itself as opposed to some kind of great affection or liking for these groups. These groups are a bulwark against what the State believes is Indian influence in Afghanistan. In addition, the Afghan-centric militants are Pashtun, a group that is the dominant population in Afghanistan and of whom there are a large number in Pakistan.

1.3.4 Sectarian groups

The fourth group is the sectarian groups. The Punjabi Taliban, SSP and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi. These groups have periodically faced State action. The sectarian groups inside Pakistan are not clearly aligned, or haven't been for a long time aligned with the Pakistani State. There are no rational or clear linkages in terms of overt support, but they go through phases. There are phases when sectarian groups inside Pakistan are attacked by the State, and then there are phases when there's a lull, and that allows also the terrorists to regroup and reorganise. The sectarian groups have perhaps the most complicated relationship with the Pakistani State. They go through periods when they are under severe repression both by the military establishment and the civilians. In fact, in the 1990s, the second Nawaz Sharif government launched a crackdown on sectarian militants in Punjab. It was extremely violent and vicious and they killed a number of them. In this government too, in 2015 one of the sectarian kingpins, Malik Ishaq, was mysteriously murdered. No official explanation has been offered

for his death. Sectarian group exists and they face State action but not in any concerted and sustained manner.

1.3.5 Foreign groups

The fifth category of militants in the Pakistani context are the foreign militants. Al Qaeda, the Arab militants, the Uzbeks and the Chechens. Mostly concentrated in Fata and aligned with Al Qaeda, but military operations in FATA pushed most such militants outside the borders of Pakistan. Nevertheless, because the number of foreign militants has always been small, a few foreign militants are likely to still be hiding in Pakistan, perhaps along the border region between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The five categories of militants in Pakistan broadly speaking help explain seemingly conflicting explanations of how far the State has gone in the fight against militancy. Some groups face sustained action by the State, others periodic crackdowns and yet others have faced no action at all. Looking at the five different categories of militants can give a full picture of the state of militancy in Pakistan.

2. Sectarian politics

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A lot of my research focuses on politics and Islam in South Asia generally, but I focus particularly on Pakistan and increasingly also on Bangladesh, and I have been at SOAS, the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, for the last 10 years or so, and travelling frequently to Pakistan. I will be there for most of next year as well. I have been asked to speak about just one slice of the story: the sectarian politics in Pakistan and, like the EASO report *Pakistan Security Situation* ⁽²⁾ that was mentioned earlier today, which I think is an excellent report, I am approaching the topic of sectarian politics in a very general way. I will be talking about religious differences - Muslim/non-Muslim, as well as sectarian differences, strictly speaking, Sunni-Shia. In addition to that, doctrinal cleavages (doctrinal disagreements amongst Sunnis) and how that religious disagreement unfolds and relates to conflict. I will also mention a few things about the Ahmadiyya, which of course figures very prominently in the landscape of asylum claims.

In addition to a basic introduction to the sectarian landscape, I will try to give you a little bit of a feel of how sectarian politics works on the ground in Pakistan, and this will relate to some of the local and private conflicts about land or local politics that sometimes take on a sectarian personality. I will try to give you a very brief sense of how that looks.

So I am going to attempt to give you a little hint of the doctrinal content, the doctrinal disagreements, the religious disagreements involved in sectarian politics. It is very helpful to keep in mind that sectarian politics are never strictly a matter of religious doctrine. They are tied up with sociological, economic, political, sometimes geostrategic differences as well. So we have to keep that complex space in mind. For instance, in one of the central Punjab Districts called Jhang, we will see on the one hand Shia landowners, and on the other hand Sunni merchants or shopkeepers disagreeing in both class terms and also in sectarian terms. And the relationship between the economic and the sectarian is important; they are difficult to tease apart. Sometimes we will also see people referencing political party leaders in terms of their sectarian identities: Shia identities, Sunni identities. We do not assume that the PPP is a Shia party or that the PML-N is a Sunni party. And they are not. However, some people might build into their understanding of the PPP and the PML-N references to the sectarian identities of their leadership. So, again, the political and the sectarian overlap. And of course, geo-strategically – I think this will become increasingly important in our understanding of sectarian politics in Pakistan. We, of course, have the ongoing rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia, a Shia-Sunni rivalry. Both countries continue to vie for influence, in some way, within Pakistan and Afghanistan, as they do in Iraq, in Syria, in Yemen, and so on. So this geostrategic dimension, while somewhat remote from the ground realities in Pakistan, is useful to keep in mind.

We often see sociological cleavages – economic or political cleavages – overlapping with some form of sectarian identities, sometimes with international influence but usually without cross-cutting pressures from the State, like the police stepping in to avoid sectarian violence. Where you see this overlapping sociological and religious conflict *without* protective influence from the State, you sometimes see violence. This year, during the Shia month of Muharram, we

⁽²⁾ EASO, *Pakistan Security Situation Report*, August 2017 (<https://coi.easo.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/PakistanSecuritySituation2017.pdf>), accessed 27 February 2018.

saw a greater police presence to protect certain processions than we have seen in previous years. And the level of sectarian violence during Muharram was down partly because the police were more on the front foot in trying to prevent some of that violence. This is not always the case. This year, the police were more present. In previous years, less so. So I think, as you are looking for spikes and valleys in violence, you want to keep an eye on the role of the State and whether the State is putting its foot forward to try to prevent some of that violence.

2.1 Constitution

Even apart from these sociological dimensions, I just want to mention very briefly some of the deep constitutional conundrums that sort of fit into sectarian politics in Pakistan. I think some of these are overlooked, but I want to highlight them. With reference to the Constitution, and I will say more about this later, we often hear about the second amendment in the Constitution. This is the amendment that basically rejected the Ahmadi self-identification as Muslims, and it is a constitutional amendment saying that, although the Ahmadiyya may identify *themselves* as Muslim, the state will not legally recognize them as Muslim.

We hear a lot about this amendment and it is important and I'll come back to it. But there are two other elements of the Constitution that I just want to mention – I think they deserve a little more attention than they usually receive. The first one concerns certain public offices like the Head of State in Pakistan – constitutionally, the Head of State is an office that can only be held by a Muslim. Now a clause like this ensures that almost inevitably the State will become embroiled in efforts to define who counts as a Muslim. They have to say who is a Muslim and who is not a Muslim in order to identify eligibility for this office. And the question as it unfolds, historically, in Pakistan is often, “well, if it has to be a Muslim, what counts as a Muslim?” And then those cleavages, those divides about what counts as a Muslim become a little bit politicized. That has become most apparent in the case of the Ahmadi, but it is an underlying question that feeds into a lot of tension in the country. What are the limits of this category ‘Muslim’?

The other clause, which I actually think is more salient, is somewhat surprisingly the religious freedom clause concerning fundamental rights in Pakistan. And this clause, just as in the European convention - this is a clause in Pakistan that is drawn explicitly from the Irish Constitution, the Indian Constitution and from many international conventions, and it says that religious freedom is protected ‘subject to public order’. It is actually this second phrase, the derogation phrase ‘subject to public order’, that has become more interesting and important. In the past, religious vigilantes who would attack religious minorities in Pakistan were accused of disturbing the peace for acting against religious minorities in defiance of State authority. Nowadays this pattern is increasingly reversed. Religious minorities, the Ahmadi, figured prominently here. The minority is often considered a disruptive provocateur and thus a source of public disorder. That religious difference is regarded as agitating the public, and the difference, on its own, is regarded as ‘provoking’ the rest of the population. This means that the State becomes implicated in identifying potential provocation as a source of public disorder, and then trying to reduce the provocation. Reducing the provocation sometimes means restricting the religious freedoms of the minority in order to prevent public disorder.

Basically, this notion that religious freedom is protected subject to public order gets turned around. So, where there is a risk of public disorder, the ‘religious freedom’ (regarded as a provocation) can be derogated. That is a complex legal development that I think deserves more attention. The clauses in the Pakistan Constitution about religious freedom are usually regarded as a space of protection for religious minorities. This is not always the case where the religious minority is regarded as a provocation to public disorder.

2.2 Doctrine and intermediation

At this point, I am just going to spend a little bit of time on the doctrinal differences, not just between Sunni and Shia, but also amongst Sunnis. I think a basic understanding of some of the religious cleavages can be helpful. Who is persecuted by whom and why? What are the religious reasons that people come up with? The word I would like you to keep in mind in order to illuminate this part of the story is 'intermediation', or intercession. If Islam at some basic level involves a direct relationship between the individual believer and God, the word 'intermediation' or intercession involves the space in between the individual and God. What authorities, what patterns of religious authority are considered acceptable or considered appropriate in this space? Is it the Shia imams? Is it the Sufi sheikh? Is it the Internet?

There are all kinds of 'authority' that try to place themselves between the individual and God to help mediate that relationship. Sunnis, for instance, who have a sectarian orientation, will often criticize the degree to which the Shia describe the prophet's nephew or son-in-law Ali as an important figure intermediating between the individual and God (even to the point of venerating Ali and particularly Ali's son Hussein). And the criticism from some Sunnis, is that this focus on Ali unfolds *instead* of God. And there is a criticism from certain Sunnis that the Shia are focusing on Ali too much instead of God. And the idea is that this level of veneration is seen as heresy as it confuses the direct relationship between the individual and God by placing Ali or Hussein in the middle. And this heresy is said by some to risk corrupting the faith of the community - corrupting the doctrine of the community.

But the point I am trying to make is that, often, disagreements amongst Sunnis themselves take on a similar character, a similar concern about this intermediating space, and it works like this: In order to understand some of the disagreements amongst Sunnis about forms of authority in the Muslim community, I need to spend just a moment telling you about Sufi practice and Sufi ideas in the Pakistani or South Asian context. And basically, what I need to tell you about are Sufi sheiks (Sufi spiritual guides) and the shrines that then commemorate some of these especially prominent Sufi sheiks. Basically speaking, Sufi practice boils down to a spiritual quest to unify with God, to bring the individual close to God and not be so egotistical, self-absorbed and focused on oneself. In order to do this, in order to practice this quest, Sufis will engage in spiritual exercises in order to focus the mind on God. And they do many things, but one thing that they might do is just recite the 99 names of God many, many times. So, for instance, you will see people reading what looks like a rosary of the names of God, and it is basically doing a recitation of names and so on in order to focus the mind on God. And the one who prescribes your regimen of spiritual exercises, is your spiritual guide, your Sufi sheik. And your Sufi sheikh might say, 'in order to move in the direction of God, follow these exercises,' and they would tailor the exercise regime for you. And that Sufi sheikh is regarded as particularly influential and inspirational in a religious sense.

The idea is that these practices will again channel your mind in the direction of God. Eventually, a particular sheikh might have a huge following of people who find that sheikh influential and inspirational and, lo and behold, that sheikh dies and a shrine is built to commemorate that sheikh. And that shrine becomes a space of pilgrimage where people continue to visit the shrine to attract the charisma and the inspiration of that departed sheikh. Over time, in order to appreciate that sheikh and that shrine, some people will give gifts to the shrine. Sometimes, lots of land, and, as some of the shrines have been around for hundreds of years, they accumulate lots of land and sometimes the tenants, or farmers, who work on that land will also be devotees of the family descending from that sheikh. So at this point, there is both a religious dimension and an economic dimension that come together around that shrine.

Some families descended from these sheikhs who also then control lots of land surrounding that shrine become politically influential as well. In Southern Punjab around Multan, for instance, you will see some politically important families associated with shrines. Sometimes, these politically influential people, as landowners, also encourage their tenants to vote for particular candidates. So, at this point, you have the religious dimension, the familiar landowner economic dimension, and the political dimension all coming together. And you can see how the *sociology* of Sufism in terms of economics and politics begins to overlap with the religious dimension. In Pakistan, the debate amongst Sunnis involves those who embrace Sufi sheikhs and shrines, and those who reject these as an inappropriate intermediary. And I want to introduce you now to these three groups: the Barelvis, the Deobandis and the Ahl-i Hadith or Salafi.

2.2.1 Barelvi

The Barelvi group in Pakistan are often but not by any means always associated with rural shrines, sometimes urban shrines. They are a religious Sunni community that feels an attraction to both Sufi sheikhs and their shrines, and will frequently visit shrines in the ways that I mentioned. The Barelvis are also associated with a particular focus on the religious significance of the prophet, and a sense that the prophet is still omnipresent. The prophet is always with us, the prophet lives on as, they say, noor, pure light. And the idea is that the prophet inhabits the world we live in even now. This is sort of a mystical understanding.

2.2.2 Deobandi

The Deobandi Ulema, the Deobandi Sunni community, is often critical of certain aspects of what I just said. The Deobandi Sunni community, will often have some appreciation for living Sufi sheikhs, people who can help other Muslims on their spiritual quest. But the Deobandis are ferociously critical of shrines. They think visiting the shrine of a dead sheikh is basically placing another figure in between the individual and God, and people who go to receive religious inspiration at the Shrine are regarded as venerating something other than God. They go to the shrine, not God. So the criticism is like the criticism of the Shia - too much attention on Ali. In this case, the criticism is too much attention on this sheikh at the shrine and so on.

2.2.3 Salafi

The last group, the Ahl-i Hadith, in South Asia this term Ahl-i Hadith can be broadly translated to make it relevant for the rest of the world as sort of the Salafi group. They consider themselves, rightly or wrongly, purists who want to clean out the space in between the individual and God by focusing neither on sheikhs nor on shrines. So those who sort of focus their religious energy on sheikhs could be regarded as misguided. Those who visit shrines and who focus their religious emphasis on the shrine, misguided. What the Salafis place in between the individual and God is, of course, themselves. They think their own doctrine is the only appropriate doctrine, and their own doctrine is critical of sheikhs and shrines.

These three groups, all Sunni, ferociously disagree with one another and compete for attention within the Sunni community, and sometimes they compete with violence.

DISAGREEMENTS RE: 'INTERMEDIATION'**Shi'i** (intermediating Ali)**Sunni** (intermediating Sufi shaikhs and shrines)**Barelwi:** shaikhs + shrines (+ special focus on the Prophet)**Deobandi:** living shaikhs (~~no shrines~~)**Ahl-e-Hadith (Salafi):** (~~neither shaikhs nor shrines~~)

Barelvis, given their particular focus on the prophet, have been particularly energetic in recent years in attacks on the Ahmadiyya. The Ahmadiyya are regarded as a group that has what might be called 'a latter-day prophet'. But the Barelvis, as I said, have a particular focus on the prophet, so any alternative understanding of how prophecy works will be regarded as particularly concerning for them.

The Deobandis have been active in blowing up shrines, the shrines of Sufi sheikhs, the shrines of Pashtun poets and so on. They have also been involved in attacking Shia and I will say more about that later. To some extent, they have also been involved in attacks on non-Muslims, Pakistani Christians and so on. So the Deobandis have quite a broad spectrum of targets.

2.2.4 Lashkar-e-Taiba

The last group, just very briefly, is Lashkar-e-Taiba (LET), a Salafi militant group. It is a Salafi Ahl-i Hadith group that, with particular support and consideration from the Pakistan Army, is associated with targets associated with India and I will come to that later.

2.3 Ahmadiyya

Even beyond the intermediating space of sheikhs and shrines, the idea of intermediation for the *Ahmadiyya* stretches to the space of prophecy itself, including what might be described as a latter-day prophet, known as Ghulam Ahmad, who emerged in the Punjab in the late 19th century. And just to familiarise you with the concept that they have - you may be familiar with the Mormon community in the Christian context, and the idea of the Mormons like The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. The idea that there are subsequent inspirations after Jesus Christ. And the Ahmadiyya, I don't want to make the comparison too close, but the idea is that after Mohammed there is a further iteration of prophecy. And this idea that there is a later prophecy is regarded by other Muslims as a form of heresy. The idea is that the prophet Muhammad is the seal of the prophets; he is the last prophet, never to have a further prophecy. So the idea that there could be a Latter Day prophecy filling in the space of guidance is regarded as heresy.

Naturally, the Ahmadiyya have been associated very closely with a strong defence of the idea of religious freedom. Interestingly, a little factoid: in 1948, when the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was being drafted, the Pakistan foreign minister, who was present in New York during the drafting of the universal declaration, happened to be an Ahmadi. And, actually, he got into a very intense disagreement with the Saudi delegation about freedom of religion and what should be specified in the Universal Declaration. So this issue has a very interesting history for us all. The Ahmadiyya are also sometimes accused of their close attachments to the British colonial regime, largely owing to land-related issues—the British colonial regime being very conscientious about land and attacks on land. So the Ahmadiyya had some land

ownership prominence and, therefore, were close to the British in that sense. And today they attract a lot of attention, understandably, from human rights defenders.

Just briefly to give you some background of how the situation for the Ahmadiyya has unfolded – this is relevant for the Ahmadiyya, but the sequence of change also has implications for other groups, other religious minorities, including other Muslim minorities in Pakistan, like the Shia. So ... follow the sequence of events for the Ahmadiyya, but think about what is happening legally, politically and conceptually, in a more general sense too. This is a story about how violence against religious minorities is (and then is not) prevented by the State. As I mentioned earlier, during Muharram this year, the Shia month of Muharram, the State was very active in helping to prevent sectarian violence. Earlier in Pakistan, the State was very active in protecting the Ahmadiyya, but that protection faded over time. So this may be a lesson for other groups.

In 1952, there were some religious leaders who wanted to enhance their political profile, their sense of the appreciation they received from the population. And they launched a series of violent protests against the Ahmadiyya, basically trying to say that, as religious leaders, they can speak for the whole Muslim community. And they wanted to convey the idea that the Muslim community should agree that it is bound together by an agreement that the Ahmadiyya are not Muslim. There may be nothing else that binds the Sunni, the Shia, and the different groups of Sunnis together, except their common sense that the Ahmadiyya are not Muslim. And they tried to hold up this point in order to attract attention to themselves. And they had protests against the Ahmadiyya, particularly, against the Foreign Minister that I mentioned earlier, saying that he should be removed from his post. Eventually, their riots were read as a threat to public order and the State stepped in, declared martial law (a tragedy for the subsequent political history in Pakistan), and one of the key leaders in these riots was actually charged with treason for defying the State.

Later on, in 1969, the Supreme Court was hearing a case about a magazine that was published by one of the groups that led the 1952 riots against the Ahmadiyya. They said this magazine continues to provoke public disorder, this magazine which continues to criticize the Ahmadiyya and encourage the public to take action against the Ahmadiyya. The Supreme Court said that this magazine, which might be protected as a case of free speech, should not be protected as a case of free speech because it incites violence. So the State shut down that publication and the Supreme Court upheld that decision. Basically, the Supreme Court said that provoking the public against the Ahmadiyya is not protected by free speech, it is actually a case of reducing the religious freedom of the Ahmadiyya, indeed that the source of public disorder is the publication.

In 1974, there were again public disturbances on a relatively wide scale. These public disturbances prompted a parliamentary debate about how to address the issue of public disturbance and the Ahmadiyya and, this time, the parliamentary debate culminated in a unanimous vote for a constitutional amendment. There were a few abstentions, but otherwise a unanimous vote for a constitutional amendment legally redefining the Ahmadiyya as non-Muslim. So again, the Ahmadiyya might define themselves as Muslim, but the state would not accept that self-identification. Even then, in 1978, this is after Zia-ul-Haq came to power in 1978, the Supreme Court again decided that, although constitutionally the Ahmadiyya were now not Muslim, they were still entitled to religious freedom. The Ahmadiyya still, as citizens, have the right to religious freedom and can practice their religion peacefully as they wish. So the constitutional amendment was a difference of nomenclature. Just the naming – Muslim or non-Muslim. Religious freedom is still accessible for all.

Unfortunately, this decision, this Supreme Court decision holding on to a conventional understanding of religious freedom, prompted a series of amendments in the Pakistan penal

code. The amendments in the Pakistan penal code basically made the Ahmadi peaceful practice of their religion a crime. Now, how do they make the peaceful practice of religion a crime? Basically, what they said is that the Ahmadiyya are “posing as Muslims” by calling themselves Muslims, and this is regarded as outraging the feelings of other Muslims. They have, basically, a claim to ‘false identity’. And this outrages the rest of the community, and so these changes in the penal code are regarded as efforts to protect public order. Protect against public disorder that might emerge from the outraged population. So, in order to protect public order, we have to criminalize provocation.

Finally, in 1993 there is a landmark judgment, a Supreme Court judgment in the case Zaheeruddin. Zaheeruddin is a case that upheld the constitutionality of these penal code amendments. And they were upheld because the amendments were said to protect public order. And therefore, criminalizing the peaceful practice of the Ahmadis was not a violation of a fundamental right to religious freedom because a fundamental right to religious freedom is protected only subject to public order. So if the law privileges public order, it is not inconsistent with the right to religious freedom. So in order to protect public order, the Ahmadiyya practice “must be restricted.”

When you are reading the background for the persecution of the Ahmadi, a careful understanding of a radical reinterpretation of global human rights language on religious freedom ‘subject to public order’ is important. It is an inversion of the clause. Public order first and *maybe* religious freedom. I think this needs to be better understood. I think this public order-based derogation of religious freedom is becoming increasingly common around the world. I am working on a piece now that compares this in Pakistan and Malaysia, as well as China, as well as Indonesia and many, many other countries. So, watch this space.

2.4 Sectarianism and violence

I mentioned Deoband before. During the 1980s, there is a Deobandi political party called the Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam, the Party of the Ulema of Islam, and that political party actually has been part of many coalition governments. As Cyril said, we are headed into an age of coalition government in Pakistan. The JUI has been a member of many different coalition governments. They have an amazing survival capacity within the context of coalition governments. But basically this political party spawned a new wing, a new branch known as the Sipah-e-Sahaba of Pakistan (SSP)—sort of a splinter group that emerged largely to balance what they considered Shia assertiveness after the 1979 Iranian revolution.

The SSP has a particular anti-Shia focus. The SSP itself now has two faces, if you will. The SSP itself is not something we run into as much anymore. Instead, we have a mainstream political wing known as the Ahl-e-Sunnat-wal-Jamaat (ASWJ), and we also have a militant face, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LEJ). Both of them emerged from the SSP. I think Cyril mentioned that ASWJ has a history, particularly in southern Punjab, of negotiating politically with the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz, PML-N. They have what are called seat adjustments. Seat adjustments basically amount to – I don’t want to overplay this – but a situation in which areas where the ASWJ is popular, they agree to step back during elections and actually allow their support base to vote for the PML-N, and the quid-pro-quo is that later on, the PML-N will not give them a hard time. The PML-N will give them a little more space to maneuver.

The Ahl-e-Sunnat-wal-Jamaat is no longer just associated with southern Punjab, it is also increasingly appearing in Karachi. But apart from the ASWJ, this sort of political party, we also have the militant wing, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (the Army of Jhang). Jhang is a district in the middle of Punjab. This militant wing was formed by Maulana Haq Nawaz Jhangvi. But in later years, more recently, it was led by Malik Ishaq. Malik Ishaq is important because, like these other groups, he had a militant anti-Shia politics, and at one point, he declared his intention to

collaborate with the aggressively anti-Shia Islamic State. And when Malik Ishaq suggested that maybe his anti-Shia politics would overlap with the anti-Shia politics of the Islamic State, he was killed in a Punjab police encounter. A police encounter basically means he is arrested by the police and then, ‘accidentally’, he finds himself in a space where he is trying to escape and the police need to apprehend or kill him. So he was killed by the Punjab police. Again, the official story is hard to ascertain, but it is basically an extra-judicial killing. Extra-judicial killings in Pakistan are not often followed up. As an American, I have to say that a lot of extra-judicial killings are not followed up, and we see this a little bit in America as well.

Lashkar-e-Jhangvi is known for attacks on Pakistani and Afghan Shia, including attacks in 2013 in Quetta that killed more than 200 Hazara Shia in a short space of time. So LeJ is very important for advancing anti-Shia sectarian militancy in Pakistan.

Apart from these anti-Shia Deobandis, I have to stress that the sort of shrine-friendly Barelvis have not been immune from violence. In Karachi, particularly, a Barelvi Sunni militant group known as the Sunni Tehreek has engaged in tit-for-tat battles with Deobandi groups—complex battles. Basically, the sociology and the religion overlap. Sometimes you will see Deobandis and Barelvis fighting one another for urban real estate. The mosques, the madrassas controlled by one another, urban real estate in Karachi is very valuable. When they fight to take over the other group’s mosques, they are fighting both for property and they also add a doctrinal gloss to their competition.

Mumtaz Qadri achieved certain notoriety in 2011 when he assassinated his boss. Mumtaz Qadri was a bodyguard for the governor of Punjab, Salmaan Taseer, and Mumtaz Qadri eventually killed the governor, because the governor described the blasphemy laws in Pakistan as “black laws”. Black laws that are evil. A lot of people think that those laws, in some sense, are holy laws, which is ridiculous because they are derived from the colonial blasphemy laws that the British set up. They regarded this as an offense to their religious sensibility, calling a blasphemy law a black law, and Mumtaz Qadri killed the governor of Punjab. Now, Qadri was affiliated with a Barelvi movement called Dawat-e-Islami. Dawat-e-Islami is basically a Barelvi missionary movement that runs around to different communities and tries to bring Muslims to Barelvi mosques to be better Muslims in a Barelvi sense.

So Mumtaz Qadri was an enthusiastic active member of Dawat-e-Islami, which is a Barelvi group. He confessed to killing the governor of Punjab, he was arrested, he was convicted of murder and eventually he was executed by the state for that murder. Now, in great Barelvi fashion, there is a burgeoning shrine growing up at his grave. A shrine that is visited by many, many people. I think the state could safely be described as wondering what to do about this shrine. Earlier this year, Sunni Tehreek also called for the prosecution and then execution of Salmaan Taseer’s son, again for blasphemy.

Most importantly, I want to mention a group—not a strictly Barelvi group (but largely Barelvi)—known as the Majlis-e-Tahaffuz-e-Khatm-e-Nabuwwat, the society to protect the finality of the prophethood of Mohammed. This group is known for targeting the Ahmediyya, not only in Pakistan, but abroad. The UK recently has struggled with a couple of very important cases where activists associated with Khatm-e-Nabuwwat have killed Ahmadis in Glasgow, for instance.

Moving to the Shia, within Pakistan the Shia have been somewhat less involved in violence lately. Under certain conditions, this could change. I am now in the realm of speculation. Earlier, after the Iranian revolution in 1979, so early 1980s, there was a Shia militant group called Sipah-e-Mohammed that emerged to compete with the Deobandi anti-Shia group, Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan, the SSP (mentioned under the Deobandis). In recent years, Shia activism has also had sort of a mainstream party face and a militant face yet to express itself as much. The party face has emerged to compete with Deobandi political parties, like the

ASWJ. And that political party is the Majlis-e-Wahdat-e-Muslimeen (MWM), a very small political party. But you will hear about this party in Quetta, you will hear about it in different districts in Punjab and so on. A political party competing for votes.

Some people worry—again at the level of speculation—that, potentially, a growing threat from the Islamic State in Pakistan (or even the rising geopolitical prominence of Iran, which we see), that these factors might generate a revival of some form of competitive Shia violence in Pakistan. We have not seen that yet, but the conditions suggest it could emerge.

SECTARIANISM AND VIOLENCE	
DEOBAND	(Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam / JUI)
ANTI-AHMADI	Majlis-ul-Ahrar-e-Islam
ANTI-SHIA	Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP)
	Ahl-e-Sunnat-wal-Jamaat (ASWJ) (Ludhianvi): ‘electoral’
	Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) (Jhangvi; Ishaq): ‘militant’
BARELWI	
ANTI-AHMADI	Majlis-e-Tahaffuz-e-Khatm-e-Nabuwwat
PRO-BARELWI	Dawat-e-Islami (e.g. Mumtaz Qadri)
	Sunni Tehreek
SHIA	
ANTI-DEOBANDI/SSP	Sipah-e-Mohammad
ANTI-ASWJ	Majlis-e-Wahdat-e-Muslimeen (MWM)

2.5 District Chakwal

Very quickly before I turn to non-Muslims, I am just going to give you a sense of what I think a lot of this feels like on the ground, day to day. I am going to read 200 words from an article I wrote about grassroots sectarian politics. And this is about a district in North-Central Punjab called Chakwal. It is not a district we read about in the news very often. It is kind of off the radar. This is what I wrote. I said:

“In Chakwal district, established Shia landowners have long battled rising Sunnis—Sunnis whose improving circumstances have been tied both to migrant labour in the Arab Gulf. So, a lot of Sunnis have joined that wave of migration to the Arab Gulf. But, also in Chakwal, these Sunnis have seen, over decades, military engagement, and therefore military employment, in the Pakistan army. And both migration to the Gulf and employment in the army have improved the economic fortunes of these Sunnis. The Shia still have a pretty stable, landed presence. The Shia of Chakwal, the Shia landowners of Chakwal, typically support the PPP, the Pakistan People’s Party and, especially, lately, a pro-Shia party known as Majlis-e-Wahdat-e-Muslimeen (as I just mentioned). The Sunnis are divided politically. They are drawn to the PML-N, the

Pakistan Muslim League and, at a local level, also the Deobandi Ahl-e-Sunnat-wal-Jamaat. So you see a political divide overlapping with the economic and sectarian divide. And this is where it gets more interesting.

Within Chakwal, Ghulam Abbas has been an important Shia politician for years, holding key positions like that of the Chakwal district mayor, the local mayor. But since 1985, his main Sunni rival, the retired general Majeed Malik, has controlled the local National Assembly seat. So both the Shia and the Sunni have some political position: local district mayor, distant National Assembly leader.

For decades, Chakwal's Shia elite have used their local control over Chakwal's district headquarters: the District mayor is close to the District headquarters, where you have the District administration, the District police, the District jail and the District bureaucracy. They have influence at the District headquarters level, and the Shia have used that influence, people say, to seize property illegally.

They use their local-level power with the police to deploy forms of intimidation, maybe forging documents that they can then use to protect their land seizures in court. Forged documents find their way through the courts, and what was an 'illegal' seizure of land turns into a 'legal' seizure with a court judgment based on forged documents. So, Shia local influence matters. But other people say that Chakwal's Shia have merely sought to recover what a Sunni land mafia associated with Majeed Malik has seized illegally over time. The Shia are just trying to recover what the Sunni land mafia took away from them." ⁽³⁾

My point here is not that Chakwal is defined by a Sunni-Shia sectarian conflict. My point is that there is a relationship between a traditional Shia elite and a rising Sunni elite that feeds itself through sectarian differences, political party cleavages, local influence over the state machinery and violence. If you want to seize land, you want to have some militant muscle to help you do it. And, sometimes, sectarian militants help to provide the muscle you need to seize the land.

That is, very briefly, how it fits together. This happens all across Punjab. This is Chakwal, but you see this in Rahim Yar Khan, you see this in Bhakkar, you see this in Gujrat, Bahawalnagar, Faisalabad, Lahore, Multan, Mianwali, D.G. Khan, there are lots of different places where local conflicts will have some of this sectarian flavour.

2.6 Shia borders

Quite accidentally, we also tend to find some very important Shia pockets in sensitive border areas. So in FATA, for instance, you will see Kurram agency, or Orakzai agency, which have a significant number of Shia. In northern Pakistan, on the sensitive border with China, you will see Gilgit agency where you have a majority of Ismaili Shia. On the sensitive border with India, you have Baltistan, where you have a majority of Twelver Shia. In Balochistan, we have already heard, you have a pocket of Hazara Shia. I don't want to make too much of this. Even without any Sunni-Shia politics, these would be sensitive border areas – the borders with Afghanistan, the borders with China and the borders with India. When you add this dimension, when you add this local conflict, these areas basically attract even more attention from the State. Previously, I said, if the State is involved, the State can restrict sectarian violence. In these areas, it is not always the case that State involvement will restrict sectarian conflict. However,

⁽³⁾ Nelson, Matthew, 'Informal Agencies of Influence: The Interdependence of Social, Religious, and Political Trends in Pakistan' in: *Mapping Pakistan's Internal Dynamics*, National Bureau of Asian Research, Seattle, 2016, pp. 59-78.

broadly speaking, a State presence does tend to reduce sectarian violence. I do not want to make too much out of these ‘Shia borders’, but it is worth mentioning.

2.7 Non-Muslims

What is nice about this report is that it addresses sectarian conflict in a way that also includes religious conflicts – Muslim/non-Muslim. Muslim/non-Muslim conflict comes up in this text under the label Religious and Sectarian Conflict, so I will mention something here about it. The first thing I should say is that we don’t yet know if the current census will clarify the percentages associated with religious minorities - Hindus, Sikh, Christians and so on. That is important for all of us to watch.

Regarding Hindus, I just want to say that there is often an assumption that Pakistan follows what is known as a personal law system like in India which means that you have Hindu law for Hindus, Muslim law for Muslims, Christian law for Christians, and that the State enforces all of these different types of law. Technically speaking, Pakistan does have that type of system. But in practice this system has deteriorated over decades. Law students do not learn what is known as Anglo-Indian law or Hindu law. So there are not many lawyers, who are not themselves Hindu, who can speak to Hindu law issues. Until very recently, the Hindu personal laws, Hindu laws for marriage, divorce, adoption, custody and inheritance, were still 1920’s laws, from the colonial State. Until very recently and, to a certain extent, even now, laws covering Christians are still 1870’s laws, from the colonial State. So in practice, Hindus for a while were left with no formal, practical and legal cover for their marriages, divorces and so on. But in 2016, this legal loophole was partially filled. In 2016, you saw the emergence of new Hindu personal laws for Sindh and the other parts of Pakistan.

Typically, in countries where you have a personal law system, the whole country will have the same Hindu laws for Hindus, the same Muslim laws for Muslims, but in Pakistan this also was provincialised so that Sindh has its own version of Hindu laws, and other provinces have their own version of these new Hindu laws. This is very unusual. Malaysia has something that is a bit similar, but it is unusual.

Converts from Islam to Christianity, surprisingly, also face a legal loophole. And the loophole is that Pakistan still has no formal statutory law governing Muslim apostasy. If you look at the legal landscape and you say, “What is the law governing someone who leaves Islam to become say Christian?” There is no law for that. Maybe that is a good thing.

But what it means is that there is a space of informal engagement. The social persecution of converts from Islam to Christianity or something else is quite severe. But if you need to change your ID card, and you need to suddenly say, “I am not a Muslim,” informally you might be able to change your ID card. A little bit of negotiation. So, informal politics. This is not common, this is not easy, but this may be possible.

In recent years, I have mentioned here terrorists, both the anti-Pakistan Taliban, the TTP (Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan), and a branch offshoot called Jamaat-ul-Ahrar, they have perpetrated major attacks on Christians in Peshawar against a church in 2015, in Lahore at a park, and so on. This risk is not likely to disappear anytime soon, so terrorism will continue to affect the Christian community. But, more importantly, allegations of blasphemy will also continue to target the Christian community. Having said that, it is crucially important to note that, although Christians and especially the Ahmadiyya are targeted with blasphemy allegations, the majority of blasphemy allegations still target other Muslims. As a proportion of their population, the Ahmadiyya are vastly over-represented in allegations concerning blasphemy. As a proportion of the population, Christians are vastly over-represented in these allegations of blasphemy. But, in total numbers, the difficulties surrounding Pakistan’s blasphemy laws affect Muslims more.

3. Private conflicts

Shehryar Fazli, Senior Analyst and Regional Editor, International Crisis Group

I am the South Asian Regional Editor and Senior Analyst for the International Crisis Group. I have been working with the International Crisis Group more or less since 2003, with a brief break in between.

I just want to pick up from what Matthew was saying earlier, which is emphasizing how crucial the role of the State actually is, and when it decides to intervene and on what side can determine the outcome of any dispute at the local level. We have been talking at the level of legislation, at the level of national policy, where sometimes the State has played a positive and progressive role, and sometimes it has not. But, as we get closer to the local level, we find increasing levels of corruption, collusion with violent actors, collusion with people who have money to burn, and collusion with people who are in positions of political influence. That ends up affecting people in private disputes who are without all those things.

3.1 Legal protections

Article 23 of the Constitution: “Every citizen shall have the right to acquire, hold and dispose of property in any part of Pakistan, subject to the Constitution and any reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the public interest.”

Article 24: “No person shall be compulsorily deprived of his property save in accordance with law... No property shall be compulsorily acquired or taken possession of save for a public purpose, and save by the authority of the law which provides for compensation therefore and either fixes the amount of compensation or specifies the principles on and the manner in which compensation is to be determined and given.”

Articles 172 and 173 also refer to private property rights.

In 2005, the Parliament passed the Illegal Dispossession Act, under which citizens and residents can file suits and complaints in the event of dispossession of property.

I should have said at the outset that one of the reasons why I think it is very valuable to focus on land disputes is because how central it is to citizen-State relations and citizens’ ability to live a normal, economic and dignified life. The State’s ability or its willingness to protect these rights relates directly to questions about its willingness to ensure equal access to justice and rule of law.

3.2 Contextualising private conflicts

Just to take a step back and contextualize how I perceive and how I think it should be perceived, how to examine private conflicts in Pakistan. First of all, we have an overly legally permissive environment and a weak justice system. I think a good way to describe the essence of Pakistan’s criminal justice system is through a couple of pictures. Pakistan has vastly overcrowded prisons, and yet the vast majority of those in prison are un-convicted, they are still on trial. The approach, the orientation of the criminal justice system is to pick people up, lock them up for a couple of years and then let them back on the streets, without access to a fair trial, which is a constitutional right.

Then we have a very warped legal and administrative framework and apparatus for dispute resolution that lends itself to exploitation by those with money, political influence, or willingness to use force. The slow pace of court cases in both criminal and civil matters, but especially in this case, since we are talking about civil cases to begin with, will often turn a civil case into a criminal case. In other words, parties to a dispute – because they do not see the prospect of resolution in the next several years of whatever dispute it is – they will take matters into their own hands. So civil cases turn into criminal ones. The flipside of that is that criminal cases can often turn into civil ones, including capital criminal cases such as murder. The reason for that is some of the legal reforms that were introduced in the late 1970s - 80s by the military regime of Zia-ul-Haq – this is the vast body of Islamic legislation that Pakistan lives with today.

3.3 Discriminatory laws

One of those laws is called the Qisas and Diyat law - Qisas is retribution, Diyat is blood money. It allows the heirs (wali) of a murder victim to pardon the murderer in return for compensation. What this law did until recent reforms, is legitimized honour killings because typically an honour killing is the killing of a person, usually a woman, by a close relative who could then benefit from this because the family supported the murder, would end up pardoning him, and therefore, many people – until some legal reforms were introduced more recently – had legal cover to commit honour crimes.

The Hudood Ordinances, meanwhile, were introduced in 1979 and institutionalized gender discrimination into the justice system. Later, the blasphemy and anti-Ahmadi laws, sections 295 and 298 of the Pakistani Penal Code. I will just give one example to flesh out what Matthew was talking about earlier today – how these laws can be used in essentially private matters, and the way that those can be distorted into criminal cases.

In the early 2000's, an Ahmadi – there was a First Information Reports (FIR) filed against an Ahmadi in some private dispute - while he was in jail, he was seen saying his prayers facing Mecca, and another in-mate saw him and said, "This man is pretending to be Muslim," which is exactly what section 298 of the Penal Code prohibits. An Ahmadi cannot pose as a Muslim. Because this particular man was facing Mecca while praying, he was accused of and then convicted of pretending to be a Muslim under section 298, and sentenced to death. He was a British Pakistani, and after some very robust intervention by Tony Blair's government, 13 years later he was released. But that is 13 years of death row later, and you can imagine the psychological and other effects of that time.

3.4 Structural challenges

Structural challenges - a deteriorating, under-resourced and very corrupt justice system, especially at the lower level, which deals with the vast majority of cases. A Supreme Court justice, Jawwad Khawaja, in an interview last year said that the average case takes 25 years to be resolved, which is just an abomination, and it contradicts the very concept of justice. Now, instead of formal alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, in place of formal arbitration and mediation mechanisms, we have a plethora of informal, illegal systems that include tribal councils that go by the name of 'jirgas' and 'panchayats', depending on where you are in the country. In Punjab, you would refer to them as 'panchayats'. The problem with these is that they reflect the local power structures that discriminate against women, and the less privileged.

Another structural problem is that Pakistan seems to be drunk on parallel governance. We have already heard about FATA, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas and there is also PATA, the Provincially Administered Tribal Areas, which includes Swat and the Malakand

region, where just like FATA, any law passed by the National Assembly or the KP Provincial Assembly, the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Provincial Assembly, does not automatically apply, unless the President specifically extends its jurisdiction to that area. So any new laws, progressive laws being passed related to sexual harassment, related to protection to women, do not automatically apply in these areas.

Then there is Gilgit-Baltistan, which is governed differently. In Balochistan, we have what we call A and B areas. One of the distinctions is that in a Balochistan B area, the police does not have jurisdiction.

Meanwhile, there are parallel legal frameworks, including Shariah, the Federal Shariat Court. Then the Nizam-e-Adl, which imposes Shariah in the PATA. The Frontier Crimes Regulations apply to FATA, a colonial-era and highly oppressive body of law. Then multiple instruments that give security agencies including military agencies unchecked powers of arrest and detention that apply to FATA and PATA. We have anti-terrorism courts and we have military courts. The reason I mention these at the outset is that amid this debate about, for example, trying to mainstream FATA, trying to bring these marginalized areas and communities into the constitutional mainstream, what we are actually getting at the same time in practice is more and more of the country slipping out of the mainstream, and this has very serious implications for access to justice.

3.5 Land

The most important, along with water perhaps, resource in the country. It is important to note that the majority of land is owned by small farmers. Pakistan often gets the reputation for being a very feudal country and feudal society. That used to be more true in the early decades, but there have been land reforms. The Islamic laws of inheritance are almost a natural form of land reform in that with the death of anyone, his or her lands are divided amongst family members who operate the land very differently. The average farm size is 6.4 acres, which is, by no means, what we associate with feudal sizes. 6.7 million acres operated by owners compared to 916,000 by tenants and 604,000 by owner-cum-tenant (agricultural census 2010, GoP).

The patterns of land use are also changing. This affects large land holdings in particular. We have had in recent years the experience of extreme weather, whether as drought or as flooding, and often both occur in the same areas and reinforce each other. The drought scorches the land, and then when there is a flood, because the land is now hard as a rock, it does not absorb the water, so you get more flooding. Together with inflation in the price of agricultural inputs, land has become a lot less productive. Large landowners are laying off their tenant farmers, so many sharecroppers and many tenant farmers are ending up landless and have to move to cities.

3.6 Land disputes

Now, competition over land is one of the primary sources of local conflict in Pakistan, and it overlaps with a lot of what we have been talking about. For the situation in Karachi, see chapter 10 in this report. The estimates vary, but credible sources, including bar associations, will say that 60 to 80% of civil cases relate to land; well over a million cases clogging the courts right now. So that should give you a sense of how much of a problem land disputes are, and their impact on the delivery of justice and dispute resolution.

Regarding the local State machinery, one of the most important terms when we are talking about land in Pakistan is the ‘patwari’ – that is the local revenue official at the level of the village, and the ‘tehsildar’, who is the revenue official at the level of the town. Even the police, who are in cahoots with these players, are not neutral arbiters. In the vast majority of cases,

they are partisan parties to a land dispute. Therefore, an individual's ability to seek a neutral state intervention in a dispute is extremely limited.

3.7 Source of patwari influence

All of my friends who deal with land issues have a 'patwari', a local revenue official in their pay. They practically hired this state official who, by the way, is a very low-level official, a grade five official (the highest grade is 22, so a grade 5 should tell you how low down the bureaucratic ladder they are).

The sources of the patwari's influence are paper records. Only until very recently and that too, only in two provinces, have we seen computerization of land records. There are a couple of documents that are worth noting. One of them is called the 'jamabandi', which is the record that establishes the right to property; and then there is the 'intaqalaat', which is the registration of that land. These are two very fraught processes to establish the right to a particular piece of land. As I said, lack of digitalization and deeds, inaccurate or fraudulent land records, erroneous boundary descriptions that create overlapping claims, and multiple registrations to the same land by different parties. Because the patwari is the ultimate arbiter of these things at the local level – you can always go to the courts, but your case is going to take 25 years to resolve – because of the patwari's role in settling these matters, that official's power is disproportionate and we have even had an instance of a patwari, who – let me stress again – is a very low level official, becoming a senator because of ultimately being able to either buy his seat or having enough politicians who own him favours to then give him a party ticket.

The most elusive document with respect to land is called the 'fard'. This is the certificate of possession, and it serves a range of purposes: guarantee for furnishing bail in court cases; proof of permanent residence in order to obtain a domicile certificate, as well as loans from financial institutes; proof of changed ownership through inheritance; and recording the ownership of land through sale, purchase, mortgage, lease or gift. The sole authority is with the patwari to grant this document. Unsurprisingly, people seeking a fard are vulnerable to extortion. Those who fail to get one will find it very difficult to maintain a healthy economic life, even if they were to move to another part of the country. Bribes paid to the patwari vary according to an individual's finances and the kind of documents required.

The patwaris are on the payroll of influential people, and that limits the ability for anyone to hold them to account. When the International Crisis Group researched this a few years ago, in fact if I had the report on me I would just quote you some very juicy quotes from people who have tried, and they say that if you are a serious police officer and you detain a patwari, you will eventually get a phone call from some influential politician saying "lay off my patwari." When a new regime comes into office, one of the things they do is replace a whole tier of patwaris with their own. So it is a highly, highly lucrative position, it is politically contested, and a big source of the problems that the ordinary citizen faces.

3.8 Considerations relevant for casework

For international protection status determination it may be relevant to take the following into consideration:

- False FIRs may be registered against them by a rival in a dispute who has the police and the patwari in his (it is usually a he, but it can be a she as well) pay, intimidation, death threats and even violent retribution including murder.
- People who have been dispossessed will find it very difficult to establish livelihoods elsewhere in the country, especially if they now lack the fard, the right to any property, their ability to get a loan, anything is going to be severely constrained.

- Many accusations of blasphemy involve other things, and one of the primary ones is land disputes. Other private disputes as well, but land disputes in particular, and in particular when that dispute involves a member of a religious or sectarian minority. I include the Ahmadis in that category.

3.9 Primary sources of conflict

Why and when do conflicts over land arise? Not just in terms of “I own this, you don’t” – but slightly more complex issues too.

Water is becoming increasingly scarce and, therefore, an increasingly contested commodity. There is a very famous book called *My Feudal Lord*, by Tehmina Durrani, in which she describes her ex-husband, Mustafa Khar, who was the most powerful politician in Punjab in the 70s, and explained that his reason for first entering politics was over water. When water that was due to their lands was being diverted by a neighbour with political influence, Mustafa Khar decided to get into politics for that reason alone. If water was scarce back then, it is even scarcer today. What you end up seeing is people who have, in this case, Irrigation Department officials in their pay, or who owe them a favour; in collusion with those officials they would re-direct irrigation water to their lands. Sometimes in the dead of night, they would go and play around with the tunnels and the pipes, and create several illegal structures. Even if we are not dealing with the person who is being deprived of his or her land, he or she is being deprived of irrigated land. And when they try to file a case, or contest this, the justice system flips and works against them – an FIR filed against them, and again they face intimidation, death threats, etc.

The second major source of conflict rises over inherited property when somebody passes away. It creates a lot of clashes within the family over the spoils of that death, so to speak. Women are often denied their legal right to inheritance. They are pressured to give up that right.

Recently, since 2009 and 2010, with these military operations that we heard Cyril talk about, and flooding – not only was there a lot of displacement, but a lot of destruction in villages and in rural areas. The markers of land boundaries are often physical, like a tree or a wall. If that was destroyed, then it was not clear where your boundary, or the boundary to your land ends and your neighbour’s one begins – that also created conflict and again, the patwari is the person who comes in and settles it at a price.

An even more important recent phenomenon, which relates to urbanization, is property developers, housing societies that are coming in and seizing property either by pressuring the original owners to sell at a very low price and, if they see resistance, just outright dispossessing them through the use of force, and also, in collusion with local bureaucrats, acquiring public property as well.

We have organized, violent groups (see also the section on land mafias in Karachi in another chapter) that we call in Urdu ‘qabza’ groups, basically land-grabbing groups.

Then there is also the local police, judiciary bureaucrats, who operate basically at the service of these land mafias and qabza groups. There has been quite a lot of reporting on how – when qabza groups show up to seize a particular property – they are often accompanied by police. Once again, there goes your neutral state.

Bonded labour is another issue, slightly less prevalent than it was decades earlier because now more attention is paid to it. But this is basically where you have sharecroppers who incur unaffordable levels of debt to a landlord, who will exploit their illiteracy by.... It is sort of like sub-prime mortgages – where there is fine print, so to speak, that includes exorbitant interests and the sharecroppers are unable to really benefit from their own work, in that they do not

get a cut of the profits from their production because the landlord says, “You owe it to me, it is part of the interest that you owe me.” That is another extremely vulnerable community.

In all these cases it is the same thing - false FIRs, intimidation, death threats and vendetta killings. So the key question is - how effective is the State in protecting people who are at risk of violent retribution in these disputes? And what kind of action is then taken against qabza groups and other organized groups that are willing to use violence to dispossess somebody of land? High profile cases – you will see some action, but in general, the action is extremely limited, and those who are responsible for dispossession are often very close to the people in charge.

3.10 Urbanization, Development and Dispossession

In late 2009 and early 2010, there was a judicial inquiry that produced a 115-page report that found three developers, including the most famous tycoon and property-developing company Bahria and its don Malik Riaz, who is perhaps Pakistan’s richest man, illegally acquiring, and this is the unit of measurement that we use in Pakistan - kanals, 29,650 kanals (one kanal is 1/8 of an acre) in and around Islamabad, through intimidation, killing, human rights abuses, collusion with police and local bureaucracy. And often accompanied to those sites by police and local bureaucrats.

We are seeing mini-Malik Riazes in small towns and villages and peri-urban areas across the country. Interestingly, one of the concerns raised is CPEC, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, which we conceive of as this big infrastructure project. There will be power plants and roads networks - it will give the Chinese access to the Arabian Sea, etc. A leaked plan of CPEC was printed in the newspaper Dawn:

“...[T]housands of acres of agricultural land will be leased out to Chinese enterprises to set up ‘demonstration projects’ in areas ranging from seed varieties to irrigation technology. (...) But the main thrust of the plan actually lies in agriculture, contrary to the image of CPEC as a massive industrial and transport undertaking, involving power plants and highways. The plan acquires its greatest specificity, and lays out the largest number of projects and plans for their facilitation, in agriculture.”⁽⁴⁾

The gist of it is that actually a major focus is going to be agricultural development projects. What does that involve? Chinese enterprises acquiring land? Those who are in positions of influence and able to resist pressure will be able to sell this land at a good market rate. Those without influence are likely – and we are already seeing signs of this – to be either compelled to sell at a very low rate and, if they resist, will simply be expelled. And because the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor has become a national security project, and the State, including the military, has basically given this top priority, the likelihood of the State coming to the service of the smaller, less influential landowners is highly questionable and highly unlikely.

We have, in the past, over land issues, seen organized resistance. In the district of Okara in Punjab, back in the early 2000s, tenant farmers and sharecroppers on military farms in that district, Okara, were not satisfied with the new terms of the military farms that were being imposed on them and then organized and resisted and were met with very brutal retaliation. I am not going to predict that this is certain to happen, but it is certainly a concern. In general, with urbanization and this development craze that Pakistan is in, dispossession of small landowners is going to be a regular story.

⁽⁴⁾ Dawn, *Exclusive: CPEC master plan revealed*, 21 June 2017 (<https://www.dawn.com/news/1333101>), accessed 27 February 2018.

3.11 Honour crimes

Statistics are quite depressing. Over a thousand women killed in 2015 by close relatives; in 2016, 527 females and 162 males were killed by relatives in what we can assume to be honour killings, and have been categorized as honour killings by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP). Because I was told that there would be interest in interfaith marriages and what kind of risks that brings, it is worth pointing out that 311, the highest number of these killings, were for illicit relations. The second highest, 173, is for marriage choice, who you decided to marry. FIRs have been confirmed in 412 cases, which might be a little bit over the majority of those cases. In itself, not terrible, but not terribly encouraging either, but FIRs are just the beginning of it. Convictions are non-existent; as I said earlier, generally the story of Pakistan's criminal justice system – we do not get convictions, we lock people up, but we do not keep them there. The deterrent effect of the State is extremely limited.

With respect to the role of the State, at a national level, at the legislative level, there is some good news. One of the bright spots came last year, when Parliament finally, after a good deal of pressure from civil society, passed a law that closed the last loophole that allowed honour killers to get away with that crime. So it now prevents honour crimes from benefitting from the Qisas and Diyat laws. The Qisas and Diyat laws – the retribution and blood money law – is no longer applicable in honour killings; and also, stricter punishments for honour killings. But beyond good legislation – and we can certainly welcome it, it counts as one of the major successes of this democratic transition, and certainly of this current Parliament – there is still no signal from the State that this kind of crime is unacceptable and will be acted against and punished. You might have come across the name Qandeel Baloch, who was a social media star killed by her brother. The brother has confessed to the crime on video explaining why he killed his sister. Qandeel Baloch's parents have said that they want action taken against him - they want their son to be convicted - and still the case is progressing at a very slow pace. Four investigating officers have been removed because they failed to frame charges against the brother. On the one hand, it is good that they have been removed because oftentimes, in these cases, nobody would even be aware that the case is not progressing. In Qandeel Baloch's case, because it is such a high-profile case and there is a lot of questions being asked about where it is going, inevitably, the State had to do something about the fact that the case was not coming to court. But it does still tell you something about police on the ground who are dealing with such crimes.

So there are still problems of whatever you want to call it - sociological factors and influences - but I think the main problem is the lack of accountability, so that when a police person or a prosecutor fails to uphold the law, action taken against that person is very rare. While it might take a generation to reform thinking and make everybody progressive, if that is even possible, at the very least, the State can do more about holding derelict officials to account.

Evidence that the changes to the law are not necessarily having the full impact, even though the numbers are coming down – and that is good, but it is still 94 women too many in KPK alone in 2017 killed by close family members. I used that statistic because it is the only credible one, from a credible organization, that I could find.

The idea of so-called honour finds an ally in the law when you have laws like the ones I described, and when you have these structures, even though they are informal and illegal, 'jirgas' and 'panchayats' that reinforce and legitimise discriminatory customs. Those who are acting in protection, on behalf of their family's honour find allies in formal and informal law and end up getting away with the crime.

One other positive legal reform is the Protection of Women Act that passed in 2006, a reform the part of the Hudood Ordinances, that were introduced by the Zia-ul-Haq government as part of his Islamization scheme, connecting rape and extra-marital fornication (zina). So that

if women accused someone of rape and were unable to prove it by the highest standards on the Islamic law, which is four male witnesses, if they were not able to meet that threshold, they were accused of extra-marital fornication, and punished for it. In 2006, the Protection of Women Act returned rape to the penal code, so it was no longer a Hudood Ordinance offence. It was no longer linked to fornication, but the Hudood Ordinances nevertheless remain in place, and women are still subject to accusations of extra-marital fornication.

3.12 Interfaith marriages

Anytime we are talking about religious minorities, I would examine it in the context of pluralism under attack. I hear a lot of talk and analyses about how Pakistan is becoming more conservative or becoming more extreme. I have not seen any data supporting that. What we are seeing is a legally permissive environment, in which those who are most extreme, those who are willing to resort to violence know that they can do so and get away with it – the State will not get them. Whereas, those who want to speak out against them are putting themselves at risk, and have no confidence in the government or the State to protect them against violent retribution, and also know that if they were, for example, killed, the State would probably not catch their killer. We are looking at these issues in a very warped environment, which is not about the numbers; it is not about Pakistanis becoming more conservative or more extreme, it is about the role the State has – in either deterring or in its failure to deter – in encouraging violent behaviour.

Not under Pakistani law, but under customary law, a Muslim woman should not marry a non-Muslim man. A person who converts out of Islam will be accused of apostasy. There is no law against it, but it lends itself to accusations of blasphemy, or under these vague interpretations of Shariah as being a punishable offense. A person that converts from another religion, such as Christianity, will often be ostracized by his (it is usually a 'he') community and not accepted by the girl's family as a Muslim. The family still sees that as an outrage to their honour for not marrying a man who was more acceptable to them, and the result can often be quite severe for both the man and the woman. So what you end up seeing are marriages happening in secret, and that will be civil instead of under Islam family law. The result being that it is not fully accepted by family and community. It endangers these women and makes them vulnerable to the 'zina' provision and accusations of illicit relations. The legal framework can be deployed against a vulnerable community, a vulnerable person. Illicit relations and marital choice annually account for the largest share of honour killings.

Assuming that you receive cases of couples who say that it is too dangerous for them to live as a couple back home, I think some of the statistics, and also some of the stories that we have heard when conducting our research, that colleagues of mine have heard – do, please, take those cases seriously because the threats are indeed very real.

Additional comment by Matthew Nelson, Reader in Politics, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London

Following up on Shehryar’s excellent presentation, I thought I would make a shameless pitch for a book I wrote which is about those disputes. The book is called “In the Shadow of Shariah”, it is a 2011 book. Most of it is an academic book but Chapter 5 might be interesting. I just wanted to mention briefly one or two insights from that project, because it covers an issue that many of you are focusing on. The book is about land disputes, but particularly inheritance disputes. The reason these disputes are interesting is because the law in Pakistan, for most Muslims in inheritance cases, is an Islamic law of inheritance, and in the Islamic law of inheritance, women receive very specific shares of every family estate. But many families actually prefer to avoid Shariah; they prefer tribal customs, *Riwaj*. According to those tribal customs, the property stays with the men. So there is a conflict between the Shariah, which is the State law, and the informal custom that the family follows. The Shariah favours the women – this is somewhat counter-intuitive for the conventional wisdom regarding Shariah – and the custom provides property only for men.

When people are trying to avoid giving property to women, sometimes they end up in disputes, and one of the tactics that is used is again counter-intuitive. Some of the people who are trying to avoid Shariah, which is the State law, they actually file a case, in some cases a fake case, against their opponents. If they are trying to avoid Shariah, why would they file a case? The reason is because they know the courts are very expensive and very slow, and the number of cases in court that end up with a judgment that is enforced is extremely low. The reason you file a case is to harass your opponent. To force them to waste months, years or decades in court, to cost them a generation’s worth of their family fortune, to bankrupt your opponent in the court, and eventually your opponent agrees to a compromise outside of court – a *razinama*. That compromise usually follows the terms of custom; in effect, they “agree” that the property will go to the man.

So the court is not a place where, in the end, you will always find a solution according to the law. The court, in many cases, is just a space of pressure, a tactic you can use. So many people who are complaining of fake cases, they are absolutely right. Many of these cases have nothing to do with a solution according to the law. My book gives some context and history for all of that.

Another important factor here is that the people who are most powerful in court are the people who are most politically connected. They are able to use and manipulate the bureaucracy with political connections to come up with fake documents, forged documents etc. that can be used in court. These are the *fards* that Shehryar was talking about. Many of the people who have the weakest case in technical terms actually have the strongest legal documents, which are fake.

So there are two lives in court: there is the life of the law, and then there is the life of tactics and the life of political influence. When people are electing their leaders, local representatives, etc., they want to elect people who will give them influence in court—*not* necessarily influence in terms of the law (here, Shariah-based laws).

I just wanted to give you a somewhat more complex understanding of how some of these fake cases are related to land disputes and are related to a lot of the issues that Shehryar nicely laid out: the *jamabandi*, the *fard*, and all these key documents, as well as some of the informal politics beyond that.

4. Fact Finding Mission to Pakistan

Nathalie Boschman, COI Expert, Cedoca, Belgium

I'm a researcher at Cedoca, the Country of Origin Information (COI) desk of the Commissioner-general's office for refugees and stateless persons (CGRS) in Belgium. I started in 2011 as a protection officer at the CGRS and in 2015 I became a researcher at Cedoca.

I have been asked to present the results of a Fact-finding mission to Pakistan in April 2017. Together with a senior caseworker, I went to Pakistan for two weeks [02-16 April 2017]. This mission was sponsored by AMIF (the European Commission's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund). We chose Islamabad and Lahore because most of the organisations we wanted to visit are based in those two cities. We spent the first week in Islamabad and then went by car via the Grand Truck-road to Lahore for four days. We came back by car via the Motorway to Islamabad for the remaining days and for a visit to Rawalpindi. To travel to Lahore via the Grand Truck Road gave us the opportunity to visit some smaller and rural cities such as Jhelum, Lalamusa and Gujranwala. Besides visiting our contact persons, we had the opportunity to attend Wagah border ceremony, visit Badshahi mosque, Lahore Fort and surroundings, and Rohtas Fort.

4.1 Aim of fact-finding mission

The first goal of the Fact-finding mission was to establish a new durable contact network. The second goal was to try to find information about:

1. Different topics where we had specific questions in mind:

Religion, LGBT, polio-eradication and return conditions

2. The judiciary in Pakistan
3. The security situation

These are topics that case-workers in Belgium are frequently confronted with in dealing with Pakistani asylum claims. I will try to deal with them separately though you will appreciate that they are interconnected and are also linked to the presentations by other speakers today.

4.2 Sources

To find answers to our questions we have met with a variety of sources. We have chosen for international organisations such as: World Health Organization, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, United Nations Children's Fund, UNHCR Pakistan, IOM Pakistan, ECHO Pakistan and International Crisis Group. Most of the representatives of these organisations we have met in Islamabad, in the diplomatic enclave or at the Belgian Embassy.

Besides those, we have spoken to representatives of local Pakistani organisations such as: WELDO, Courting The Law, CPDI, CLAAS, NCJP, Christian Study Center, CRSS, PICSS, PIPS, FRC, SACH, SPARC, HRCF Pakistan and NAZ-foundation. We have met these representatives at their own offices in Lahore or Islamabad.

Also we had the opportunity to do some interviews with individual persons such as lawyers, human rights activists (for example: Asma Jahangir), journalists (for example: Cyril Almeida, Umer Ali) and police officers in Lahore and Islamabad.

4.3 Topics

I will start with the results of some specific themes. We have chosen to meet interlocutors who could help us with the topics of religion, LGBT, polio-eradication and return conditions. For each of these topics we had prepared some specific questions with regards to specific asylum claims.

4.3.1 Religion

Within the topic of religion we were interested in the situation for Ahmadiyya and Christians. All the interlocutors we have met agreed that the situation for the Ahmadiyya community is the worst among minorities in Pakistan. The persecution of Ahmadiyya is embedded in national law [hence the blasphemy laws: articles 295-298c of the Pakistani Penal Code]. The sources agreed that they face discrimination by the authorities and by society.

Also Christians in Pakistan face a number of challenges. Christians living in Pakistan have traditionally been an underprivileged class. They live isolated and segregated from local communities. They like to live in their own restricted neighborhoods and they support their own relatives. In recent years, Pakistani Christian communities have been regularly targeted with violence. But also in mundane aspects of daily life, leave them feeling isolated and neglected. Many struggle to find jobs (most of them are employed as sanitary workers) and are discriminated in their educational life.

Christian school and Christian textbook: the role of religious minorities from textbooks is removed and textbooks are reviewed by each provincial education board. Christian schools are obliged to buy the same books as the Muslims and each textbook starts with an explanation of Islam, even textbooks on chemist or biology

4.3.2 LGBT

There is an LGBT community in Pakistan that fights for survival every day and behind closed doors, there is a sense of community and identity for them. Sources stated that it is common for straight men to indulge in Male to Male sex (MSM) and there is general acceptance within the society for this particular act. Naz Male Health Alliance; is one of the only organizations working with the LGBT community. This organisation provides LGBT's a platform where they can be counselled and treated for Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs). The transgender community in Pakistan faces violence but the country has made small progressive steps towards the transgender community (including trans people in the census, issuing of third gender passports in June 2017). During our stay in Lahore, we have seen men, walking hand in hand with other men, without problems.

4.3.3 Polio-eradication

In the Belgian caseload we saw a rise of Pakistani asylum candidates who claimed to be polio workers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa or in the FATA. So we were particularly interested to find some more information about the formation of polio-workers, in the vaccine-methods in Pakistan, the polio-campaigns and the security situation for polio workers. Just before our arrival in Islamabad, there was a vaccination campaign going on. At the doors of people, we saw a grid, when a polio-team visited a house. One of our sources explained us in detail what the abbreviations were (this is particularly interesting for case workers to question polio-workers in detail). Furthermore we received information about the education level of polio workers, how they vaccinate and that in the past polio workers were targeted but the violence is directed towards the campaign, it is not violence directed towards the individual person.

4.3.4 Return Conditions

We arrived and departed at the Islamabad airport, so we could experience a bit what happens upon arrival and departure at the Islamabad airport. There are separate rows for men, women, and diplomats. We were checked by FIA-personnel and we saw that some people were interrogated by FIA personnel in a separate room. Belgium works together with WELDO, under the ERIN-program and WELDO provides a number of services: Pre-departure Counseling, Reception Service at the airport, Onward travel assistance, Technical and Vocational Training Assistance, Job Placement Assistance, Business Start Up Assistance, Medical Facilitation Assistance, Temporary Accommodation etc. They do regularly a follow up of the returnees, sometimes up to a year. Every returnee is interviewed by FIA officials upon arrival at the port of entry. It is emphasized that in general returnees are considered as victims and not as offenders. Legal actions are initiated against those returnees who had left the territory of Pakistan using forged or fraudulently obtained documents with the aim of finding those corrupt officials who might have provided assistance.

4.4 The judiciary

The second topic I'm going to address relates to the judiciary in Pakistan.

In recent years, Pakistan's judiciary has undergone a rapid metamorphosis. There is an improvement noticeable in the education of lawyers and judges, due to education and formation abroad. The courts are more and more providing online-case management on their websites.

In general, the Judiciary cannot be considered independent; both judges and attorneys are intimidated, especially in high profile cases or blasphemy cases. All sources agreed that military courts don't provide any transparency.

Sadly, the judicial system of Pakistan is also marred by corruption. According to our interlocutors, the main problem lays mainly with the law clerks, who write down the case process and who are easily influenced (bribes, blackmail, threats, violence). Corruption delays also the judicial process. Document fraud is also a problem; documents can be easily forged by anyone.

In terms of accessibility, lawyers in Pakistan are easily accessible, but their quality differs a lot. The access to justice is also very different for different profiles, for example minorities often do an appeal on their internal organisations or other organisations to help them with their legal cases. Also to get documents of the different steps in a legal case is not easy. The document that they can get easily is a first information report; all the other documents like petitions, summons, and case verdicts are harder to get a copy of.

4.5 Security situation

The third topic is the security situation in Pakistan. In general, the level of violence is declining in the whole of Pakistan compared to previous years and has significantly improved in the last three years. Just to give an idea of the level of violence, PIPS recorded in 2016, 1624 overall incidents of anti-state violence by militants. This is a decline of 15 percent in the number of incidents compared to 2015.

The situation improved after the government launched the military Operation Zarb-e-Azab in North Waziristan Agency of Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) region of the country in April 2014. Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad was launched on 22 February 2017, after a series of attacks conducted by Jamaat-ul-Ahrar (JuA) in the country in the beginning of 2017. This operation is not confined to one area, but is carried out across the whole of Pakistan. In the meantime, relationships with Afghanistan and India started deteriorating.

But still in 2017 violent attacks continued with mass casualties, especially in the FATA and Balochistan. Hot spots seem to be especially Quetta (capital of Balochistan) and Kurram agency (agency in FATA, bordering Afghanistan).

Main actor is still the TTP; the group is fragmented but still active and dangerous. Another group that frequently claims attacks is Jamaat-ul-Ahrar (JuA), a splinter-group of the TTP. A question that came up during interviews was the presence of Islamic State in Pakistan. Some interlocutors stated that Islamic State is present in Pakistan and that the support for Islamic State is growing. Other interlocutors stated that some groups use the name of Islamic State but that there is no evidence of the presence of Islamic State in Pakistan.

The main targets are still police and government personnel; educational and religious institutions. The attacks have become more deadly. This points at more spectacular attacks, and at an increasing effectiveness of violent groups. Just before our arrival in Pakistan, there were attacks in Lahore, Kurram agency and Quetta.

4.6 Pakistan Security Situation report

The EASO *Pakistan Security Situation* ⁽⁵⁾ report was written in accordance with the EASO COI Report Methodology and was based on this Fact-finding mission and desk research of public specialised paper-based and electronic sources. It was reviewed by COI experts from EASO, Norway and by Asylum Research Consultancy in order to ensure the highest quality. The report provides a general description of the security situation in Pakistan, covering the following topics: a brief background on the conflict in the country; actors in the conflict; an overview of recent security trends; the impact of the violence on the civilian population; and the impact of the violence on the state ability to secure law and order. The second part of the report provides a geographical overview of the security situation and a more detailed description of the different regions in Pakistan.

The main findings of the report include the continuation of airstrikes and ground operations by the Pakistani military forces against militant groups in different provinces in 2016. The military operation in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and FATA, Zarb-e-Azb, which started in 2014, ended early 2017. A new operation, called Radd-ul-Fasaad, was launched in different regions of the country. At the same time, militant or terrorist attacks continued to occur, as well as targeted killings. The situation at Pakistan's borders with India and Afghanistan was tense. Overall, sources reported a decrease in total numbers of violent incidents and casualties throughout 2016 and 2017.

[The report is available in the EASO COI Portal.](#)

⁽⁵⁾ EASO, *Pakistan Security Situation*, 4 August 2017 (<https://coi.easo.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/PakistanSecuritySituation2017.pdf>), accessed 16 January 2018.

5. Religious minorities

Muhammad Amir Rana, Director, Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS)

Currently, there is a public discussion in the media and in Parliament on the issue of the finality of the prophethood of Muhammad. For the first time, this issue is impacting and encroaching, already deteriorating the civil-military relations in Pakistan. The son-in-law of the former Prime Minister recently gave a statement in Parliament, where he accused the Ahmadiyya community of acting against national interest and said that their entry into the military and the sensitive institutions should be banned. Just a week before, the Army Chief in Karachi had acknowledged the contributions of the Ahmadiyya community in the military and to nation-building in Pakistan. All major political parties condemned the remarks by the former Prime Minister's son-in-law, and the former Prime Minister distanced himself from the statement. The way the institutions are responding to this issue may be conceived as a positive development. But can such responses and reactions change the state of religious minorities in Pakistan? In my view, religious intolerance is a deep-rooted issue and it is a major challenge for us to respond to.

We're here not only to find the answers of the state of religious minorities in Pakistan, but also to find its links to migration and asylum seekers mainly from Pakistan. The data helps us by explaining a lot of things. See for instance the EASO report on Pakistan, an excellent report which explains many trends. But at the same time we know that sometimes data doesn't help us to understand the context of the individual, and in some cases of the groups. In many cases it misleads us. How to overcome these problems? We know that asylum seekers have lots of stories to tell and they have their narratives, and sometimes you believe in their stories and we contextualize their stories to understand a broader perspective. However, are these perspectives complete and do they help us understand the ethnic or religious communities of the asylum seekers? I will also focus on few narratives from Pakistan, which may help you to understand the stories you hear from asylum seekers from Pakistan.

Let me start with stories about four journalists in Pakistan. The first story is about a vigilant journalist, who is working for a media outlet in the US now. When he received the first threat by the Taleban in 2008, he immediately applied for asylum in the US. The second journalist is from Khyber Agency in FATA. He had religious credentials, maintained a good relationship with religious scholars of his area, and was confident that the Taleban would not harm him, but he was killed in 2012 by the militants. The third journalist was based in Swat, and the Taliban in this area had already killed many journalists. This journalist sensed the threat and relocated, together with his family, to Islamabad. Now he is a prominent journalist in Islamabad. The fourth journalist was so confident, despite receiving threats, that that he could survive in North Waziristan because of his tribal credentials, because of his good relationship with both the security forces and the Taleban. He is still surviving and is contributing to an English daily. These four stories tell us how the journalists perceived threats and how they responded. Now it is up to you to connect these stories with your own perspectives.

But my key argument is that data tells us that the Shia and the Christians are the major victims of the violence in Pakistan. If you go to look at civilian casualties in Pakistan, Shias are at the top. They've been targeted all across the country, from tribal areas to Karachi, from Balochistan to Punjab. And among them, the Hazara Shia community is the most vulnerable community in Pakistan. We also know the Christians are facing similar threats in Pakistan.

Let's change the perspective. We have talked about the Ahmadiyya community issue before. We also know the challenges the Hindu community are facing in Pakistan. Even if the militants do not target these communities, that doesn't mean they are not having problems in Pakistan. The legal and social discrimination, and the marginalization these communities are experiencing, make them the most vulnerable communities in Pakistan.

What triggers migration? Does the militant violence trigger migration? Or is it the social, legal and religious discrimination that triggers migration, forcing people to migrate and apply for asylum in other countries, mainly in the West?

In 2016, 3,000 Hindu families applied for citizenship in India. What triggers this migration? The discrimination or the violence? When the military launched their operation in the Pakistani tribal areas, it caused huge internal displacement, but I don't know how many of these internally displaced people from tribal areas and Swat region had tried to get out of Pakistan. But we know that the socio-religious discrimination in Punjab province and in Karachi cause disappointment among minorities. When the social profile changes, when one becomes educated or economically empowered, the level of insecurity also increases. It is possible that insecurity triggers migration or it may be the insecurity of unemployment, it may be the insecurity of discrimination, especially in the case you belong to a marginalized community. Does data explain which group prefers to relocate to safe areas or to safe countries? This is important. And at what level does discrimination and marginalization contribute to relocation? It may be the perception that if you can get asylum, or change your citizenship, your economic and social profile will change. It may lead to taking risks to travel illegally.

5.1 Religious extremism

To find out the answers to these questions, we have conducted a small research study in March and April 2017 for the Norwegian Church Aid. Basically, they wanted to see the behaviour of the majority ethnic and religious groups toward minority groups. We chose five districts all across Pakistan, to make our sample more representative.

These cities include the capitals of KP and Punjab provinces; Omerkot, a Hindu dominated district from Sindh; Faisalabad, which is a district in Punjab with a very sizable Christian population; and Multan, which is part of South Punjab, where large Hindu and Christian communities live.

Most of the conflicts in Lahore, Multan, Faisalabad, Punjab, and Omerkot were structured around religion and mainly driven by Islamist militants and religious extremists.

Inter-religious tensions	Mostly Muslims against non-Muslims
Inter-sectarian	Mostly Sunni extremists against others
Inter-sectarian	Mostly Deobandi extremists against others
Sectarian assertion	Members of sects asserting themselves publicly, on different issues and events

- One of the emerging facets of militancy/radicalization is sectarianism. Why?
 - Many militant groups are sectarian internally
 - Presence of madrassas subscribing to one of the five sectarian boards
 - Geopolitics of the Middle East
 - Facilitates entry of sect-based groups like IS, explains the sectarian discourse
 - Mainstream parties also back or ally with sectarian parties
- Resultantly, besides physical attacks, even day-to-day conversation is increasingly getting sectarian in nature. Hot spots include Punjab's towns, with diverse sects

What we identified as inter-religious tension is mostly Muslims against non-Muslims, inter-sectarian is mostly Sunni extremists against others, intra-sectarian is mostly about Deobandi extremism against others, and sectarian assertion refers to members of sects asserting themselves publicly on different issues.

5.2 Inter-religious drivers

There can be both physical and psychological aspects to the inter-religious drivers in the conflicts in these five districts. Most of the discrimination against the non-Muslim communities was rooted in their status of second-class citizenship and the majority's social behaviours, which they inherited and which are yet to be transformed.

The perception matrix was complicated. If something happens in the West, the majority start believing that the minorities are the faith fellows of the West and deserve discrimination and anger. In some particular cases like Prophet Muhammad caricatures, the risk of mob violence against religious minorities increased. Whenever something happens in Europe, it puts a lot of pressure on local law enforcement agencies, especially at district levels where they have sizable religious minority populations. When the beef lynching started in India, the hate crimes against the Hindus in Omarkot district also increased. This is quite interesting, how the narratives contribute to the increase in insecurity at the local level in Pakistan.

And we know that different militant groups have different agendas. Right now there are 247 religious organizations operating in Pakistan and just six months ago there were 234. Suddenly, 13 organizations have been added to this number. And what kinds are these organizations? Out of 247, 84 have a pure sectarian agenda, whether it is against the Shia community, the Ahmadiyya community, or against Hindus and Christians. Gradually, what we have observed is that these groups are encroaching on mainstream politics. Even certain organizations focus on converting the religious minorities into Muslims, especially the Hindus. They are the prime targets of many religious groups, whether they have a militant agenda or a non-militant agenda.

What is the reason the majority community mistrusts the Hindus? It is perceived that Hindus are sympathetic towards India. Though, we have seen many times a Hindu community leader, their Members of Parliament, or their community leaders trying to assure that they are Pakistani first and Hindus second. This mistrust leads certain religious organizations to initiate relief projects in Hindu majority area where the basic motive is to convert them. Many such organizations have set up schools and hospitals in Hindu areas. They may not be openly inviting them or forcing them to convert, but their networks are growing in these Hindu populated areas, mainly in Omerkot and Sindh, and the response from the State indicates that this behaviour has been nurtured both by the State and the civil society over the years. It is considered a normal discourse that some religious organizations are purely working in the Hindu majority areas, and in Omerkot there are five sub-districts where the Hindu population

is more than 55%, with two sub-districts with a population of 85-95% Hindus, and these organizations are working even in these areas.

5.3 Sectarian assertion

This is the sectarian divide I think. In South Asia, a social transformation process is going on. It may have a different outlook in Bangladesh, and India is going through a similar process which is nurturing ultra-nationalism, but in Pakistan's case, this change is manifesting in the form of the sectarian divide. The sectarian divide is increasing in the country and the number of sectarian organizations is increasing and influencing society. These groups do not just form a group for advocacy purposes, but with the passage of time, they expand their outreach in other domains as well, from politics to education and social welfare. That means they increase their influence by increasing their institutional outreach. One organization will have some subsidiaries, the madrassas, the charity operations, maybe other properties, launching some housing societies not only to generate funds but also to create a sense of community within their sectarian identity. This is how they expand.

5.4 Deepening sectarianism

As I mentioned about the increasing number of sectarian organizations, 11 out of these belong to the Barelvi school of thought. What we've seen in Pakistan is a new trend in the sectarian divide; it's the rise of the Barelvi awakening. They may not have militant wings like other sects, but these Barelvi groups have certain violent expressions. And, this is important to understand, these groups are concentrated in Central and North Punjab and even in Peshawar valley. These are the regions from where most of the migration triggers towards the West and North America. These organizations are operating mainly in the areas where religious and sectarian minorities are concentrated and where the risk of a mob or organized violence has increased.

5.5 Impact on districts

Can the mass violence trigger the wave of migration, or will its impact remain confined to a specific territory? What we have seen specifically in Faisalabad district when we talked to the people, especially those from the Christian community that have been socially and economically empowered recently. Because of their better education they get good jobs or they have set up their business. They are more scared of the changing religious landscape because of two incidents in 2011, which were not against Christians but between two Sunni sects. But these incidents created a fear in them that the anger of these two competing groups could be diverted against them, and they started thinking about relocating. This particular Christian community is quite integrated within the local Muslim communities; we have found their churches and mosques together, the Fathers and the Mullahs eat together - this is the kind of culture they have. Their fear was the possibility that some religious group will try to exploit the situation and turn the anger towards Christians.

Impact on districts

- Pluralistic cultural and religious expressions -> narrow religious expressions, often sect-based.
- In response to religious extremism, there is a rise of distinct class, liberals allied with targeted communities
- Youth bulge, growing in a sect-oriented surrounding
- Outsider-insider debate over seeds of radicalization
 - In all districts, residents blame influx of migrants, displaced people, and Afghan refugees for bringing insecurity.
 - Nostalgia for by-gone eras, felt by all residents living there for generations, no matter which faith

5.6 District-specific issues of religious minorities

What triggers asylum? We know how all these very common factors, the presence of the madrassa networks and religious politics, impact Pakistan. We asked the religious minorities in five districts about their major issues and received quite diverse responses. Though they had many stories to tell us, in Peshawar, mostly the Sikh and Hindu communities were quite afraid of terrorist attacks. And we know that a small number of Hindu Sikhs that were living in the Pakistan tribal areas, and were doing good business there, have been forced to relocate because of conflicts in different Agencies. Many of them settled in Peshawar and those who were more resourceful moved to the Rawalpindi district.

The sectarian divide is a major issue, sometimes it is difficult to understand the gravity of the situation, especially when one is living in the heart of the conflict. “If something happens in Peshawar, we are the most vulnerable”, one respondent told us. The law enforcement agencies and Shia communities remain more vulnerable, but it also trigger a sense of insecurity among the Hindu and Sikh community in the city. Abduction – many militant organizations depend on criminal activities for their financial resources. There were many cases being reported about Hindu traders being abducted from this region. This was their second major worry.

In Faisalabad, social discrimination in workplaces is an issue. More Christians are working in services sector because of an increase in literacy rates, but discrimination in workplaces is an emerging challenge for them. Especially during Ramadan, the holy month of fasting of the Muslims, they feel segregated and that they are discriminated against.

The school curriculum is another issue for religious minorities in Pakistan. Most of the Christians and Hindus have complained that the existing curriculum is inciting hatred against them. In many educational institutions, they have been forced to learn the Quran and take Islamic studies. Though they have the option to take other alternative subjects like ethics, they then have a lot of issues. The administration says they do not have the teachers or the resources, and this creates issues for them, and their youth feel more alienated within the society.

Political rights are another area of concern, and religious minorities complained about constitutional discrimination, as non-Muslims cannot become the head of state. The Christian community has a few other issues which are linked to internal political differences within the community. For example, the patronage of a specific group in their community by the state or by major political parties, that the majority of the community do not trust. Such groups are beneficiary of the joint electorate, but many Christian respondents opt for a joint electorate, though they have both the separate and the joint.

Lahore - the socio-political discrimination, it is again the same issue, but religious minorities were concerned about religious freedom. We have not encountered much of this question in other districts, but equal rights and freedom of expression were quite evident in their demands.

In Multan the lack of religious worship places was an issue. In Multan, Jati Hindus (those who have caste) have issues of interaction with schedule caste (low caste) Hindus. Schedule cast Hindus are not allowed the burning of dead bodies in the river or the use of Jati Hindu cemeteries, and the government is not allocating separate cemeteries for them. There are the issues for the religious places. They want more temples as the population is growing. Another issue is the targeting of these lower caste Hindus.

District-specific issues of religious minorities
Peshawar: Terrorism, abductions and crimes (mostly Sikhs and Hindus)
Faisalabad: Social discriminations, curriculum, and political rights (mostly Christians)
Lahore: Socio-political discrimination, religious freedom and worship places (Hindus and Christians)
Multan: Religious worship places and religious freedom
Omerkot: Forced conversion and increasing crimes target religious minorities (Hindus)

The question remains, can all these issues trigger the wave of asylum seekers to the West? Maybe the security situation in Pakistan is quite fluid. One thing we can say more confidently is that the sectarian divide is creating many problems in Pakistan.

One important question asked in the survey to those who are from the lower middle class of religious minorities was “Where would you prefer to relocate, if you encountered a crisis?” And 40% say Karachi would be their destination. Lahore was the second choice, and a very few favoured Islamabad. Nobody said that he would migrate to the West, India or East Asia or any other part of the world.

6. Security situation in different regions and emerging trends

Muhammad Amir Rana, Director, Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS)

The focus of this presentation will be on identifying the correlation between instability and insecurity. If they are competing concepts, then what triggers the sense of insecurity? At a certain level both concepts contribute to shaping the threat perception of an individual or a group. Physical threats create instability, but non-physical threats - for example majority behaviour towards the minority - also cause insecurity. If both is combined it can create chaos, which can trigger migration. First however, I will focus on emerging security trends in Pakistan.

6.1 Recent security trends

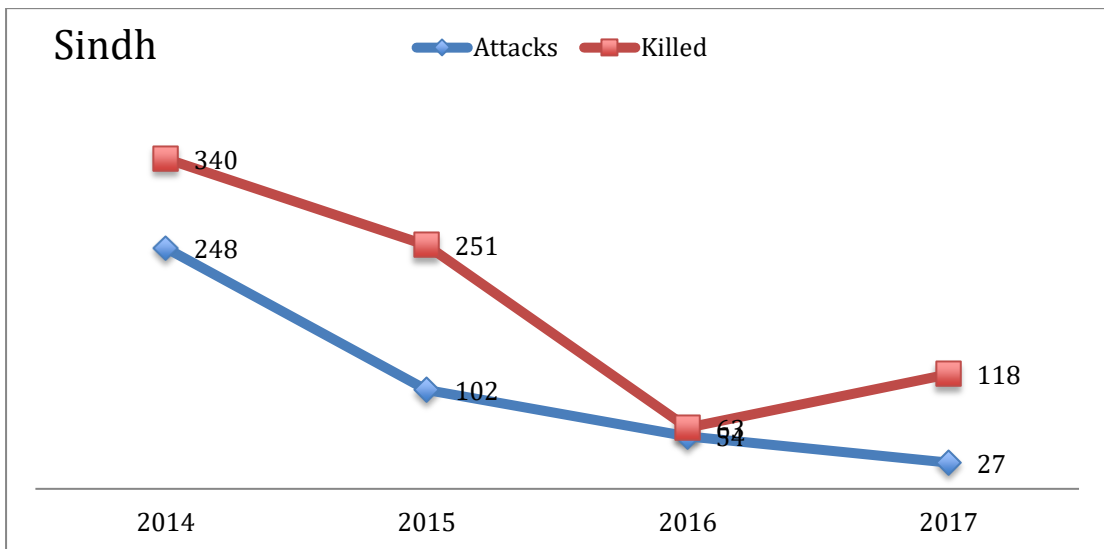
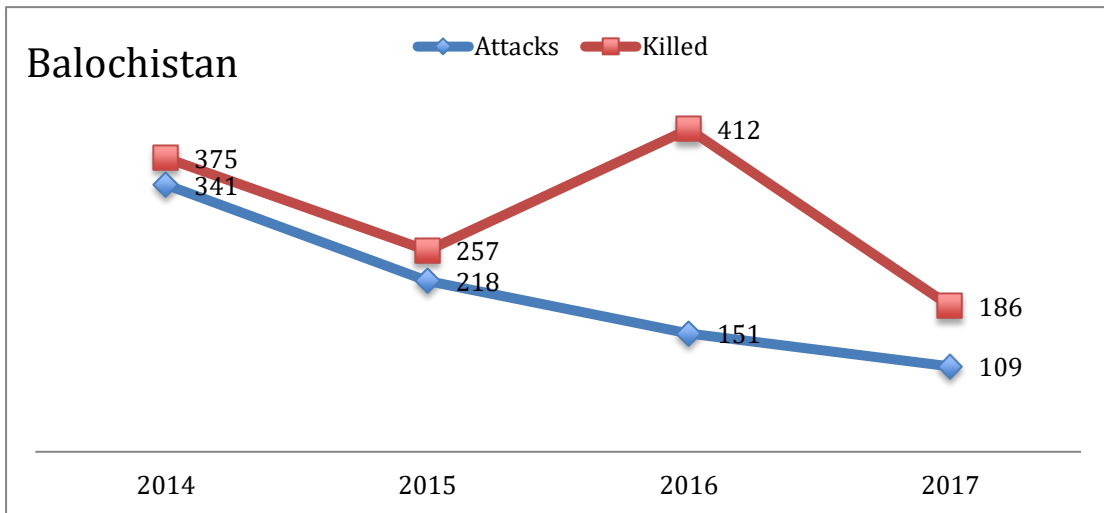
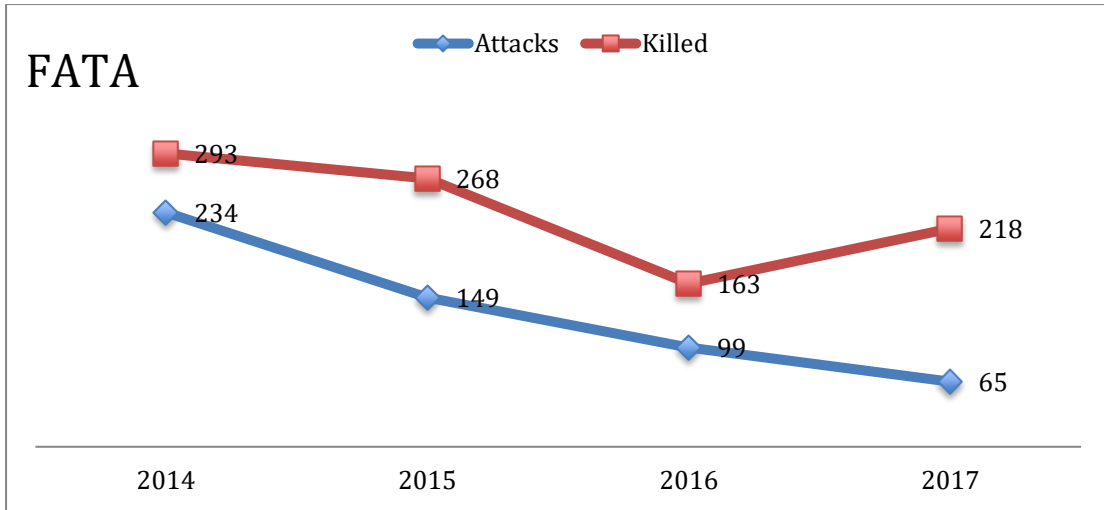
Terrorist attacks since January 2014 ⁽⁶⁾:

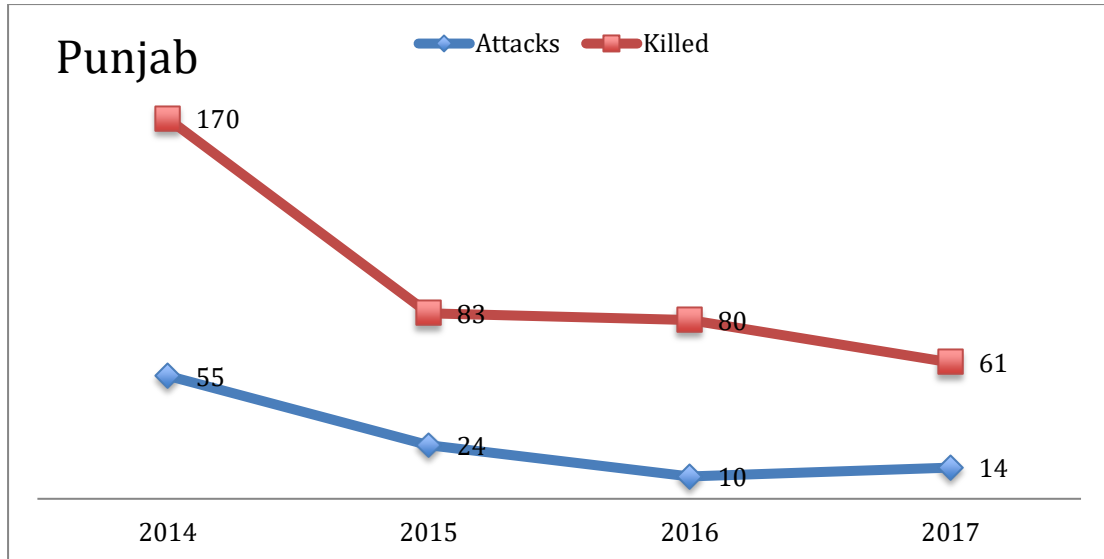
Year	Attacks	Killed
2014	1209	1724
2015	622	1065
2016	441	907
2017	277	661

As the graph shows, the security situation is improving in Pakistan and the number of terrorist attacks is decreasing. In 2017, a 50% decrease in terrorist attacks has been recorded so far and in the last 4 years we have seen a quite significant improvement.

The geographical distribution reflects that Punjab has seen a slight increasing trend in first six months of the year. This is mainly because of the terrorist attacks reported in Lahore by sectarian organisations or by the emerging terrorist threat of the Islamic State (IS) in Pakistan. A similar upward trend was also evident in both FATA and in Sindh, which indicates that the terrorists are adopting more sophisticated ways of killing. A variation in their tactics have also been observed in these regions. In Balochistan, the number of casualties are decreasing at least for now. Low scale insurgency is ongoing, and the number of casualties are decreasing gradually. In Balochistan three major type of groups are operating - the Nationalist insurgents, the sectarian groups and the Taliban or their breakaway factions.

⁽⁶⁾ All data used in this presentation is courtesy of PIPS.

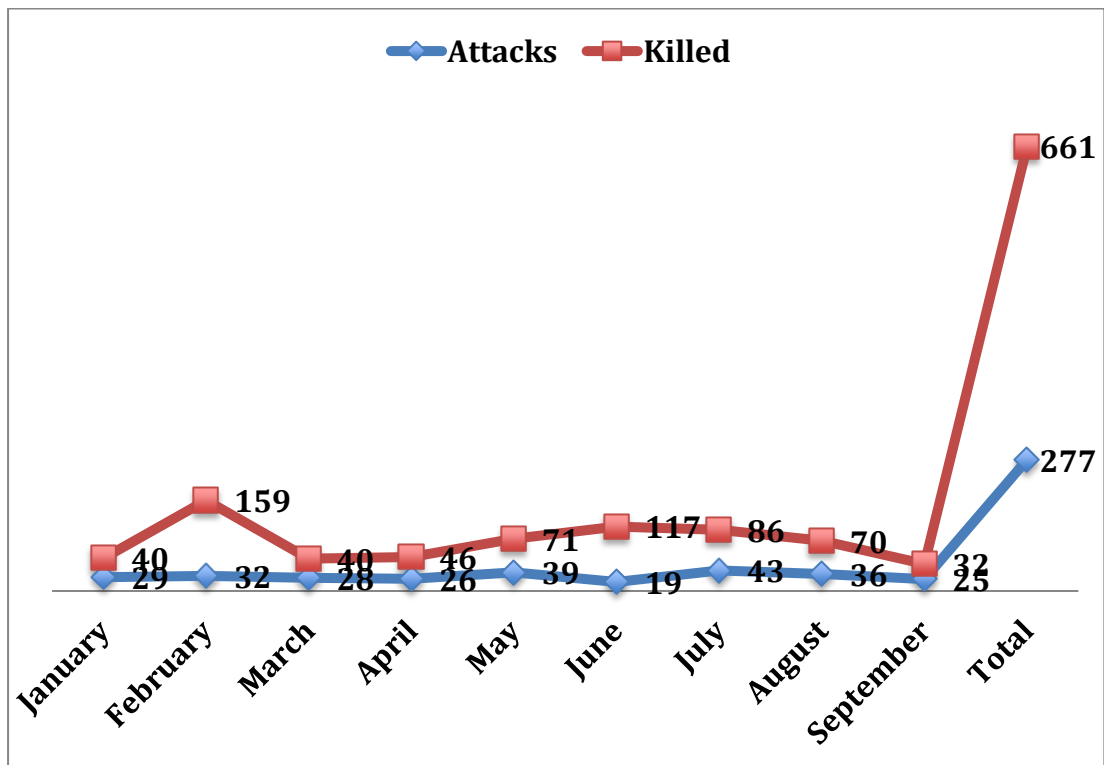




6.1.1 2017 trends (Jan to Sep)

The monthly review for 2017 indicates a level trend, except in February and June. February witnessed a major terrorist attack by the Islamic State in interior Sindh at the shrine of Lal Shahbaz Qalandar, and in June there was a terrorist attack in Lahore. Otherwise, the pattern is uniform.

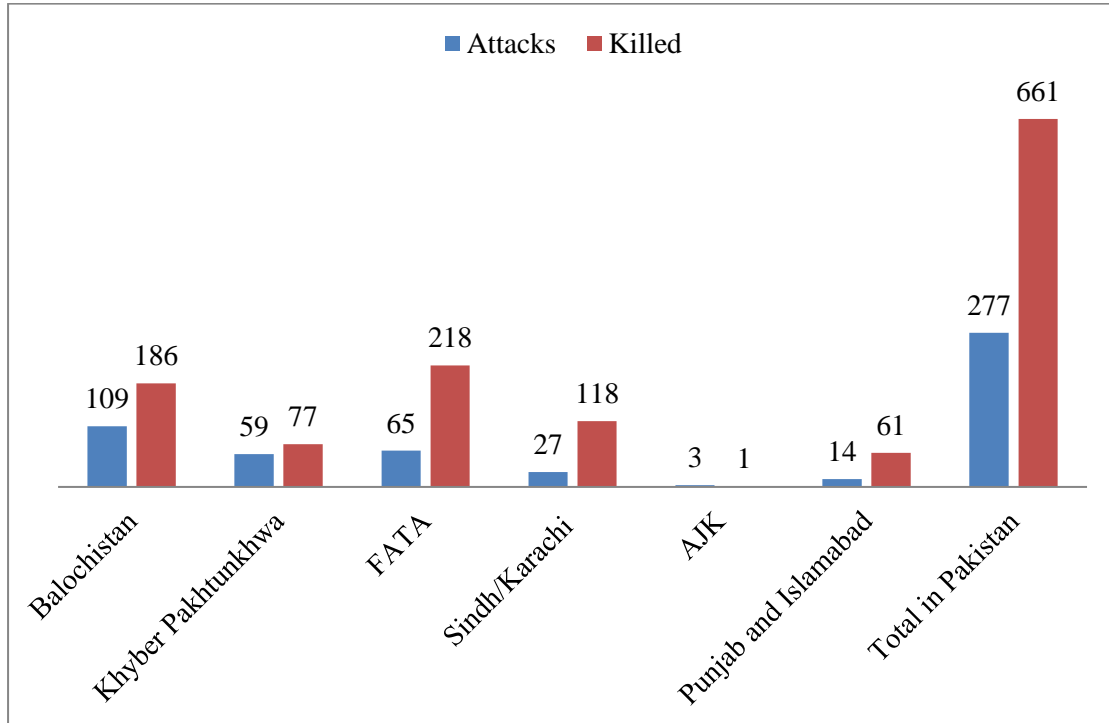
Month-wise Pakistan trends (Jan to Sep 2017):



6.1.2 Geographical distribution

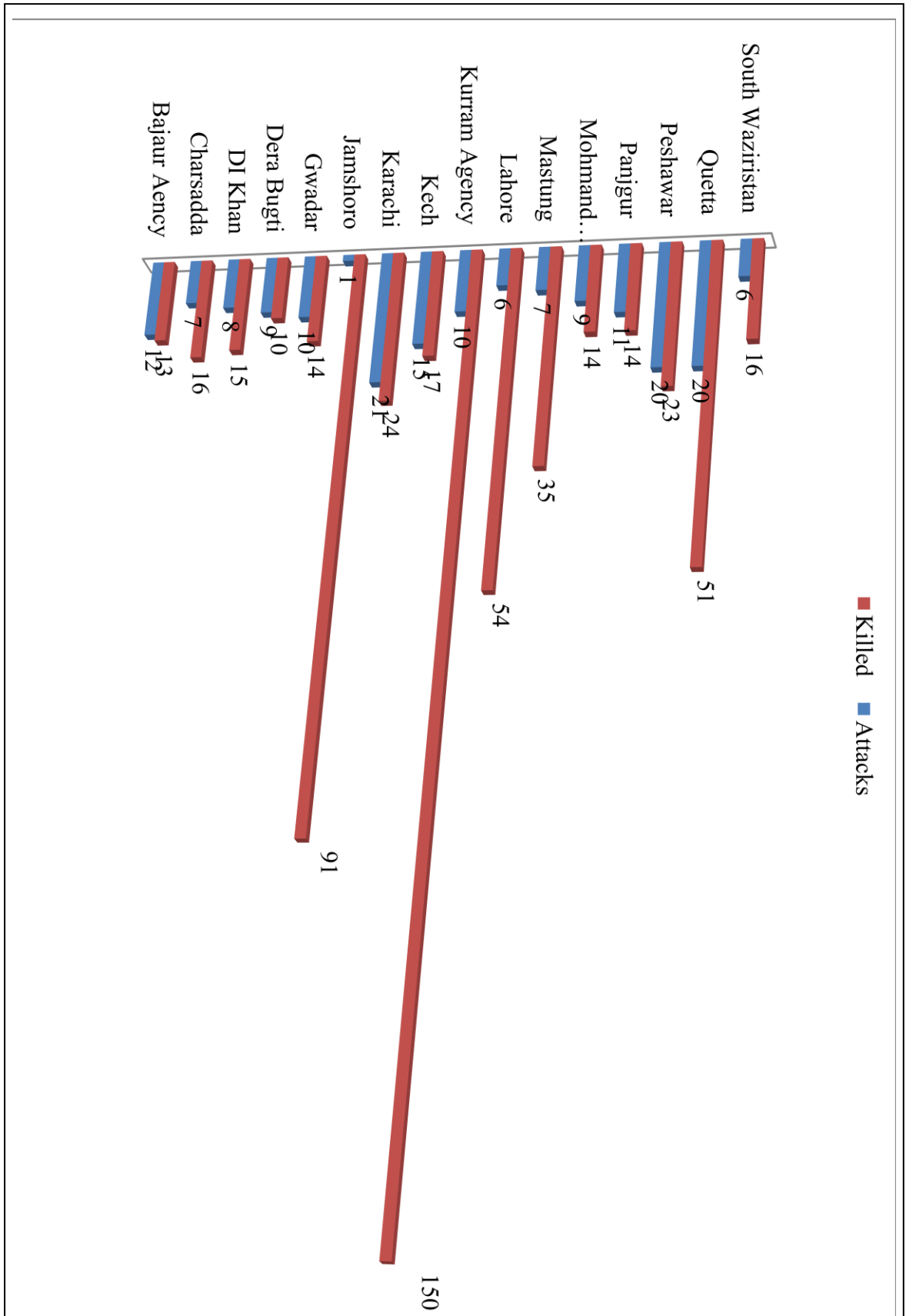
This graph shows the geographical distribution of attacks. You will see that this is another way to look at the emerging security trends.

Geographical distribution of attacks and killings (Jan to Sep):



Most terrorism-affected areas (1 Jan to 30 Sep):

(Districts/regions with more than 10 attacks or fatalities in the year)



In first half of 2017, Peshawar was among the top three vulnerable areas where the Islamic State has also contributed to the unrest while targeting security forces and the religious clerics of their own faith, whom they consider are developing a counter–narrative against Daesh.

The second most affected area was Quetta. In the last six years we have seen that different groups are operating in Quetta and we haven't seen any indications of decrease in the attacks there. There are many reasons why we haven't seen a decline in the attacks.

I think that one area of concern to you is Kurram Agency. Possibly most of you are familiar with the profile of this particular Tribal Agency in the Pakistani tribal areas. This is a Shia majority district, but at the same time the literacy rate is high, and a good proportion of the population are in the government services or even in the paramilitary forces in Pakistan. If you look at the Human Development Index (HDI), this is the Agency within FATA that has a comparatively better indicator than the other FATA agencies.

What does it mean, especially when the Haqqani network, who are considered the “good” Taliban, are also trying to use this territory to hide or to launch operations in Afghanistan? This is the area bordering Tora Bora, which you may already know as the area where the US launched the “mother of all bombs” to destroy the hideouts of the Islamic State. This is the area where the US and Pakistani security forces launched their first joint operation against Daesh. These are the factors. How are they impacting the security situation in this area? The militancy creates a sense of insecurity, but this is not the only factor.

Another faction, LeJ, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi al Almi, launched two attacks in Kurram Agency this year. When people are sensitive and their economic and social profile is comparatively better, it can trigger the most sense of insecurity amongst them, compared with other regions in FATA. So both factors are active in this region: the militancy factor and the social factors which somehow increase the sense of insecurity in this area.

The third city is Karachi, where 21 mainly small-scale terrorist attacks were launched. The city has seen a few new trends and new actors of violence have entered into the theatre of violence in Karachi. One important thing that these statistics indicate: even comparing with last year, the security situation is comparatively better now in Karachi.

Mohmand, I believe, is another important area from where you get many asylum applicants. This is the Agency adjacent to Peshawar, and they are also facing multiple types of problems. If you look at the social profile of the majority of people in this area, they fall in the category of the lower-middle classes, and the response that the sense of the security triggers in this area is that these people mostly migrate to the urban areas of Punjab, or their destination is Karachi. In any district in Punjab, you will find two Pashtun ethnic groups, one is people from Mohmand or Bajaur Agencies, and the second is the Afghan refugees. They somehow live together in the suburbs of urban areas of Punjab and in Karachi. They are also migrating to urban centres in interior Sindh.

6.2 Attack tactics

The number of IED attacks have increased, which indicates two trends: one, that perhaps these attacks are being launched against the security forces or, two, the use of improvised explosive devices to create panic. What we have witnessed in the tribal areas is that sometimes the Taliban or even tribesmen, in the case of some tribal or family feuds, use these devices. This is the biggest challenge for security forces, to document such incidents and identify the responsible. This indicates that even if the attack is not launched by the Taliban, even if it is a family or tribal feud, these weapons or explosive devices are creating a sense of insecurity in the area.

Attack tactics (in attacks between Jan and Sep 2017):

Tactics	Attacks
Hand grenade	20
IEDs	119
Suicide blasts	18
Rockets	6
Mortar	1
Missile	1
Firing	111
Sabotage	1
	277

6.2.1 Target killing

Finally, target killings are taking place mainly in Karachi, in Peshawar valley and in Quetta. This also reflects that this may be used by the new emerging groups that haven't developed their skills at the level that they can plan and execute medium or large-scale attacks. This can also indicate that the response by the security agencies is getting better and that the militants are not finding opportunities to launch bigger attacks.

During the last few years, target killing has become a major tactic for all the militant actors, whether sectarian or Islamic militants or Nationalist insurgents. This is important in your context, that even if it is not suicide bombing or the mass level of terrorist attacks, it increases the vulnerability of the individuals whom the militants consider the enemy. They could belong to the Shia community or Ahmadiyya or any non-Muslim community, or the secular segment of the society. The vulnerability of this kind of individual is increasing, particularly in Peshawar valley, Karachi and Quetta.

Attack targets (in attacks between Jan and Sep 2017):

Targets	No of attacks	Killed
Security forces/law enforcement	119	229
Educational institutions	7	1
Non-Bloch settlers/workers	4	18
Gas pipelines	1	
Govt. officials	9	14
Power pylons	3	
Tribal elders	1	3
Civilians	63	145
CD/other shops/private property	1	
Shia religious scholars/community	12	59
Worship places/shrines/ imambargahs	1	91

Govt. installation/hospitals/banks/property	5	6
Sunni religious leaders/community	4	4
Political leaders/workers	9	35
FC/army/police convoys	4	5
Ahmadi community	4	4
Foreign interests/Diplomats/Foreigners	1	2
Media/journalists	4	3
Health/polio workers	2	2
Pro-govt. tribesmen/peace committee members	10	18
Judges/lawyers/courts	3	13
Afghan Taliban/others	2	2
CPEC projects/workers	3	3
Blasphemy accused	1	1
Former militants	2	3
Railway tracks/trains	2	
Total	277	661

Between January and September 2017, these groups have been the main targets of attacks in Pakistan. Security forces as usual are on top. The number of attacks on educational institutions are decreasing, the reason being that most of the militant groups have already relocated to Afghanistan. For non-Baloch settlers the number of attacks are decreasing. Civilians of course are at the top. It is important to note that shrines, worship places and *imambargahs* have been targeted. On October 5th another shrine was targeted in Balochistan. Both the Shia and Sunni religious scholars are the targets of certain militant and sectarian groups. Last week another violent incident against the Ahmadiyya community was reported, increasing the number of killings to six and the number of attacks to five. Attacks against the Ahmadiyya community is therefore a bit higher than last year.

Media persons. One journalist was killed last week in Swabi District near Peshawar by the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan, the TTP, who claimed the journalist was spying for the security agencies. Something which indicates that the Taliban are still active and able to identify individuals and target them.

Regarding forced recruitment in the military, I don't think that the military recruits people forcefully in Pakistan. Yes, before the military operation in Swat, in Heba and in South Waziristan mainly, and partially in Tank and North Waziristan area, the military had encouraged the local people to form Peace Committees, to fight against the Taliban. During the last three years members of these Peace Committees or the armed militias formed against the Taliban, have been targeted by the Taliban, especially in Swat and Khyber Agency. These are the two areas where those being part of these armed militias are the most vulnerable, and it has triggered a sense of insecurity and migration. Many of them, those who have the resources, have relocated to Islamabad, Karachi or Lahore. Even in Lahore the Taliban chased a few individuals and last year two such killings were reported in Lahore.

Killings of polio workers still occur in parts of Balochistan. These attacks may not be perpetrated by the militant groups, but may be provoked by the local mullahs. This has been observed especially in South Punjab, specifically in the surrounding areas of Multan. Most of such cases usually are reported in the far-flung areas which are distant from major urban centres. Regarding judges and lawyers, especially militant groups, both Shia and Sunni, target lawyers who are pursuing cases against members of their groups. In 2015-2016 there were lawyers pursuing cases of blasphemy in South Punjab Lahore and Rawalpindi who were targeted, killed, and beaten by mobs.

6.2.2 Sectarian attacks

A major fluctuation in sectarian attacks during different times can mislead, and a temporary relief in sectarian attacks increases the sense of security. In the late 1990s sectarian attacks sharply increased, but just after 9/11 the sectarian attacks almost disappeared and for 3 years there were no sectarian attacks reported in Pakistan. But in 2006, 2007, 2009 and 2010 we saw a rising trend. There may be different interpretations as to why. The interpretation that seems most likely is the threat perception of the security agencies against sectarian groups. They considered these sectarian groups as the number one threat for internal security. This is one reason. Even this year we have seen two major operations against sectarian groups. Last year the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi al-Alami - at that time it was associated with the Islamic State - launched the most lethal attacks in Quetta, Balochistan, Karachi and Lahore. But this year an operation was launched against them in Mastung area in Balochistan, and their network has almost been dismantled.

Every year you see operations launched against the sectarian groups and one or two groups being dismantled. Then, a different issue may arise and other sectarian players may emerge with other agencies but may also use the name of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, which has become basically a brand or a tag name. Those who have sectarian ambitions use this typical brand name to develop or to show their sectarian credentials. Even now the security agencies identified more than 7 factions or groups active in Pakistan who use the name Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and in most cases they do not interact with each other. Last year, they launched attacks in D.I. Khan, Islamabad, Karachi and Kurram, and possibly in Sialkot where the sectarian tensions resulted in the killing of one religious scholar.

Sectarian attacks in 2017:

District	Attacks	Killed	Injured	Responsible group
D.I. Khan	3	5	0	LeJ Rival sectarian group
Islamabad	1	0	1	Unknown/unknown militants
Karachi	1	1	0	LeJ
Kurram Agency	2	31	70	Jamatul Ahrar LeJ
Larkana	1	0	1	Sipah-e-Muhammad Pakistan
Mastung	1	4	1	LeJ
Muzaffarabad	1	0	2	LeJ
Quetta	3	6	7	Lashkar-e-Jhangvi Al-Aalmi LeJ

Sialkot	1	1	0	Rival sectarian group
Total	14	48	82	

6.3 Major actors of instability in 2017

These are the major actors of instability in Pakistan:

- **TTP:** 64 attacks- D.I Khan, Peshawar, Kurram, Karachi, South Waziristan
- **Jammatul Ahrar:** 37 attacks- Bajaur and Mhumand agencies, Kurrum, Karachi, Lahore, Quetta
- **LeJ:** 9 attacks- Karachi, Kurram, Mustung, Quetta
- **ISIS:** 7 attacks- Interior Sindh, Peshawar, Mustung
- **LeJ (al-Alami):** 8 attacks- Karachi, Lahore, Quetta, Kurrum
- **BLA:** 34 attacks- Quetta, Qalat, Sibbi, Gawadar
- **BLF:** 35 attacks- Kech, Turbat, Gawadar
- **BRA:** 24 attacks- Nasirabad, Dera Bughti
- New Actors:
 1. **Ansar-ul Shariah:** 6 attacks- Karachi
 2. **AQIS:** 2 attacks- Karachi

As usual TTP is at the top; they were behind 64 attacks and have a nationwide reach. They carried out attacks in DI Khan, Peshawar, Kurram, Karachi and South Waziristan.

Jamaat-ul-Ahrar, another group with a nation-wide reach, conducted 37 attacks mainly in Bajahur, Mohmand, Kurram, Karachi, Lahore and Quetta. This group is important in your context not only for launching terrorist attacks, but this group has also been involved in target killings of peace committees or armed militias formed against the Taliban. In tribal areas they continue to issue threats to journalists whom they disagree with. They also threaten local businessmen and they are involved in abductions of local tribal elders and the traders in their area. This is an important group as it has diverse targets, compared with other groups like TTP or LeJ. The only other group competing with Jamaat-ul-Ahrar was the AQIS, Al Qaida in the Indian Subcontinent, though it was not involved in large scale terrorist attacks but in abductions, issuing threats to traders, academics and intellectuals in Karachi and in Peshawar. The AQIS was also involved in the abduction of businessmen in Peshawar Valley area and in Karachi.

al-Alami carried out eight attacks, but in the last few months it hasn't been active for the reason I mentioned. The new trend is IS that is not only now launching attacks by itself but is also inspiring other groups to adopt their operation strategies and to widen their political and ideological vision. Ansar-ul Shariah is a new actor of violence in Karachi. Initially, it was inspired by IS, but decided the ideology and even their target and indiscriminate targeting of people was too much. So they decided to go have a strategic partnership and tactical cooperation with AQIS. So in both ways IS is inspiring, forcing and transforming the militant landscape in Pakistan. We know groups that are active in mostly the coastal areas of Balochistan, BLA and BLF, and the BRA that is active mainly in the Nasirabad, Dera Bughti areas which are on the border of Punjab and Sindh.

6.4 Closing remarks

I also thought it would be helpful for you to give you an overview of what is happening this year in Pakistan. Now this is the type of threats. The militants are launching coordinating

terrorist attacks. They launched medium scale attacks depending on their own human resources and support they get from partner groups.

Yesterday we discussed the 13 new groups that have emerged in Pakistan, most of whom belong to the Barelvi school of thought. These groups have their influence in the Central and North Punjab areas, from where most asylum applicants originate. To whom do they issue threats? To normal people or influential people? And what is the purpose of creating this panic and fear in these areas? In most cases they threaten the religious leaders of their rival sectarian group. In very few cases they issue statements to those individuals who may not have affiliations with any rival sectarian group but somehow is creating problems for their cause, like local journalists, bloggers and activists on social media. They may not be issuing threats to a common man or to a businessman. The reason why they do not threaten the business community is that they depend on financial assistance from the business community in their area. At the same time, some farmers or those who are linked with the agricultural business, also support certain groups. We see the rise of Barelvi Islam mainly in central Punjab.

The Barelvi awakening has different characteristics altogether in the groups operating in Karachi. In Karachi they may issue threats to the business community for extortion of money, and they may issue threats to academia, intellectuals, and if you look at it most of the target killings of academic professors have been reported in Karachi in the last 5-6 years. Despite all these threats, Karachi is still an attractive destination for the marginalised and vulnerable communities in Pakistan. This city has quite strange credentials and is still attracting people.

I think there are many ways in which you can assess the vulnerability of communities. As for the statistics of the HDI or the focus of most of the development projects in Pakistan, specifically since 2013, and the job opportunities created in this region, Central Punjab and North Punjab and parts of the Peshawar valley are on top. When the State is focusing more on infrastructure building, on the human development building in these areas, what are the factors triggering migration? No organised militant groups exist in these regions, only non-violent radical groups that have sectarian motives but mostly only target opponent sectarian groups or the mosques or the imams. So what triggers migration in these areas? This is the area where you have to rely on your own insights and my presentation may not be helping you in this regard. The abuses by police and by law enforcement agencies are important factors. In Balochistan and in interior Sindh there is a big issue with missing persons. Security agencies are involved in disappearances of Balochi nationalist activists. The disappearances of religious party activists and disappearances of Sindhi nationalist groups are also increasing. This issue isn't a problem only in Central and North Punjab or even in Kashmir. Yes, the police sometimes fabricate the cases on behalf of powerful local political leaders or the class, but does it trigger the sense of insecurity that forces people to migrate? This is a question I can't help you to address.

Kashmir is considered the safest region in Pakistan, and even when Pakistan was facing the worst kind of instability and terrorist attacks between 2008 and 2011, only a few low intensity attacks were reported from this region. The resilience of the people may be considered as one of the factors. The militants have tried to infiltrate Kashmir, but in a few cases local population took the law in their own hands to expel them from their areas. In such an incident people killed three militants near Muzafarabad, the capital of Pakistani Kashmir. This is not a practice that can be encouraged, but such incidents show the level of vigilance of the people. The crime ratio is quite low in most parts of Kashmir as well. The question arises, then what triggers the youth to migrate to Europe? Family disputes or economic factors would be major factors of their migration. As far as the political issues are concerned, the Kashmiri Nationalist organizations have a presence in Muzaffarabad and Mirpur mainly and in Rawalakot districts, but these organizations are not strong, which can trigger anger that could result in a major crisis. The local Kashmiris have less tolerance towards other ethnic groups, as after the

Peshawar Army school attack, it was Kashmir from where Afghan refugees were expelled in 2015.

7. Insurgent politics

Matthew Nelson, Reader in Politics, PhD, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London

In this presentation I will be talking about Kashmir, FATA (Federally Administrated Tribal Areas), KP (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), and I will also say a little bit about Balochistan.

7.1 Kashmir: 1990s

When I think about militancy and militant politics, and the recent historical context for the political violence in Kashmir – I start in 1987. Now, two things: first of all, the Pakistan side of Kashmir, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), is one of the most peaceful parts of Pakistan. I am going to be talking about insurgent politics on the Indian side of the line of control. This is where the level of violence is much, much higher. I should also say that I have learned most of what I know about the Indian side of Kashmir from a colleague, a prominent novelist named Mirza Wahid. So most of what I am about to say I have drawn from some of his observations.

The conflict in Kashmir has sort of three different spaces: the pro-India groups, the pro-Pakistan groups, and then what I am now going to describe as pro-Kashmir groups. By the 1980's, the latter had formed a new group called the Muslim United Front. This group, the Muslim United Front (MUF) was going to contest elections against Delhi/India-friendly parties like Kashmir's National Conference. Kashmir's National Conference was a party founded by Sheikh Abdullah, who was the first leader in Kashmir after 1947, and his party, this National Conference, had developed a relationship with Delhi. And the MUF was formed to contest elections on a pro-Kashmir platform against the India-friendly groups. Unfortunately, in 1987, a key election was massively rigged, and despite a huge wave of support for the MUF, the MUF won just three or four seats. After this, many Kashmiris resorted to a full-fledged rebellion; basically, they were supported by a mass uprising. Some of the young people who had campaigned for the MUF, some of their leaders went across the border to Pakistan for training in this rebellion, training from the Pakistan army, Pakistan intelligence and so on. So by 1989, after this election, India was faced with a massive insurgency that was popular, armed, and supported by Pakistan.

At this point, there are at least three different groups to keep in mind. The first one within the armed insurgence is (at least initially) the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (the JKLF). This is a pro-Independence group, a group that wants Kashmiri independence. It was founded by a fellow named Maqbool Bhat, but he had been hanged already in Delhi in 1984. The second group to mention is a pro-Pakistan group, at that point, called Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, which eventually fought and displaced the JKLF. Hizb-ul-Mujahideen battled the JKLF for prominence in the insurgency, and they did that with support (as a pro-Pakistan group) from the Pakistan military establishment. Hizb-ul-Mujahideen has a religious personality associated ideologically with a religious party in Pakistan, the Jamaat-e-Islami. At the same time, a third group was emerging from mercenaries basically who had been active in Afghanistan, and after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989, many of those actors moved from Afghanistan over to Kashmir, and some of them were affiliated with this Deobandi group Harakat-ul-Mujahideen. Some of their members also went on to Bangladesh and formed militant groups in Bangladesh and so on.

In any case, these three different militant groups represent three different faces of militancy at the same time in Kashmir. We have the secular nationalist, Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front; we have the sort of modernist Islamist, Jamaat-e-Islami-affiliated Hizb-ul-Mujahideen;

and we have the traditional madrassa-based Deobandi Harakat-ul-Mujahideen. Having said all of this, it is very important to remember the popular base of the insurgency at that point. Hundreds of thousands of people were marching in Kashmir for ‘azadi,’ for freedom. At the peak of the insurgency, some would say that there were maybe 20,000 associated with some of these militant groups, and then hundreds of thousand marching in the streets. Inevitably, India launches an aggressive counter-insurgency campaign that kills thousands. In the winter of 1990, you have the famous Gawkadal massacre. This is an event where many unarmed protesters are on a bridge, they are met from both sides by the security forces of India, and they are fired upon, and many killed.

At the same time, India develops unprecedented emergency powers that are associated with its armed forces. We have the notorious Armed Forces Special Powers Act that basically gives soldiers impunity and immunity even when they kill people based on mere suspicion. Non-militants, people suspected of affiliation with militants, if they are killed by a soldier, that soldier will not be charged unless there is explicit permission from Delhi to charge that soldier. Needless to say, that rarely happens. Of course, militant groups also commit atrocities, they torture opponents and they kill those who are suspected of colluding with the Indian intelligence agencies. Crucially, many Hindu Kashmiris, Hindu Pandits, who lived for centuries in a Muslim-majority context, many of those Hindu Kashmiris are harassed, killed or forced out of Kashmir by some of these Muslim militants.

Some statistics. Over about 30 years, it is estimated that about 70,000 people have been killed. There are about 5,000 unmarked graves. According to official estimates, about 8,000 have been disappeared. Rape is a weapon of war and so on. Since 1989, about 500 or more Kashmiri Hindu Pandits have been killed. At this point, we have a traumatized population. According to a survey by Médecins Sans Frontières, 45% of adults in Kashmir face some kind of mental distress, 20% with PTSD, and so on. The insurgency has taken its toll.

7.2 Kashmir: 2000s

After 1999, the nature of the insurgency began to change. This is after the Kargil war, where Pakistani troops occupied positions inside the Indian part of Kashmir, and of course after the events of 9/11. After that period, Pakistan faced quite a lot of pressure to reduce its support for militants. And without that Pakistani support, many of the Kashmiri rebels were forced to retreat. So the militancy was affected by those events in 1999 (the Kargil war), and in 2001, September 11. At the same time, however, the Indian counter-insurgency stepped up. India launched a new group—actually, former militants turned into a new counter-insurgent group known as Ikhwan. This group used killings, torture, extortion, etc. to subdue the militancy. One of the members of this group, Muma Kanna, was actually awarded the Padma Shree, one of the most important civilian honours in India, for his role.

By 2007, 2008 or so, the armed rebellion had basically been transformed into an unarmed civilian protest movement. India’s brutal counter-insurgency tactics had reduced the rebellion. But in 2008, 2009 and 2010, protest marches re-emerged in full form. Again, hundreds of thousands are marching in the streets of Srinagar and so on, for Azadi. But, this time, those unarmed protesters are met with bullets. Since 2008, up to 450 protesters, mostly very young people, have been killed by the Indian armed forces. Thousands, many of them minors, have been arrested under India’s emergency laws. And, of course, under emergency law, fundamental rights can be set aside.

7.3 Kashmir: 2010s

More recently, in 2014, there was a crucial election. A Kashmir-based party, the People’s Democratic Party (PDP), performed quite well in the Muslim-majority area around Srinagar,

the valley of Kashmir. But after the elections, this People's Democratic Party decided to form an alliance with the leading party in India, the Bharatiya Janata Party, a Hindu-nationalist party led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. When this Kashmir-based PDP formed an alliance with the Hindu Nationalist BJP, many of the PDP supporters—the Muslim supporters in the Valley of Kashmir—felt betrayed by their party, the PDP. Again, disappointed with a political process based in an election, many people abandoned the political process and returned to insurgency. So the period of peaceful, unarmed resistance saw another phase of armed insurgency after 2014.

The leader of the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen – this was a man named Burhan Wani, who was a young, educated, extremely charismatic, middle-class, militant – he was killed by the Indian security forces, and after his killing, a huge wave of protest indicated the popularity of his armed resistance. His successor, Sabzar Ahmed, was then killed less than a year later, again fuelling the protests, and as the protests grew, the Indian armed forces and paramilitaries developed new tactics. In 2016, when these killings were happening, we saw what may be the world's first mass blinding when Indian paramilitaries shot crowds of young people with millions and millions of small pellets in their eyes. Over a thousand people were shot, and many permanently blinded. At the same time, the chief of the army staff in India actually defended the use of a Kashmiri man as a human shield. The man was strapped to the front of an army jeep, and driven around to protect that jeep. The Indian chief of the army said, "This is an appropriate tactic in India's internal war." Many of the youngsters who are throwing stones are now labelled terrorists, and so on.

So, many young people believe that their political, unarmed protest movement is of limited effectiveness, and many have returned to armed insurgency. The difference now is that many of these youngsters are not travelling to Pakistan for training. Many of them are simply arming themselves by raiding local police stations, local paramilitaries, seizing their weapons and then training themselves.

So the insurgency in Kashmir has a more indigenous character now.

I want to mention the two or three main militant groups that are still involved. First, just to say, the JKLF (Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front), largely gave up arms in the 1990s, but its leader, a man named Yasin Malik, is still active as a protest leader. The JKLF has not disappeared; it has simply changed its focus. Turning to militancy, however, Hizb-ul-Mujahideen is now the most important militant group in the insurgency, but today it is a more thoroughly indigenous militant group. For instance, in south Kashmir, a recent study found that about 88% of the militants associated with the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen were local. In that study, there were about 112 identifiable militants, and 99 of them were local to that area, not crossing the border. In any case, Hizb-ul-Mujahideen is still led by Syed Salahuddin, who has been declared a terrorist by the US. Interestingly, in 1987, Syed Salahuddin was one of the people who had campaigned for the Muslim United Front. He was one of the people who campaigned for that group in the rigged election; and, after that election, he went to Pakistan, and still remains based in Pakistan. So Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, although being mostly a local insurgent group, still has ties in Pakistan.

The other two groups that are particularly important are Pakistan-based, and they are Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad. Lashkar-e-Taiba, founded by Hafiz Saeed, has been banned in Pakistan, but not very effectively. Despite its ban, it continues to operate somewhat openly. Just this year, an effort was made to launch a mainstream political party that was of the same ilk as Lashkar-e-Taiba, known as the Milli Muslim League, but just in the last few weeks, the election commission of Pakistan has disallowed the registration of this affiliated political party.

The other group, Jaish-e-Mohammad, was actually formed from militants associated with Harakat-ul-Mujahideen. You may remember I mentioned some of these who left Afghanistan and came to Kashmir—these sorts of Deobandi militants like Harakat-ul-Mujahideen. A closely related group is this Jaish-e-Mohammad. Again, banned in Pakistan, but not very effectively. It was founded and led by Mashood Azhar.

Today, the most important point here is that Pakistan-based militants have largely taken a back seat to indigenous insurgents, but the indigenous insurgents are still creating difficulties for India, which Pakistan might think is still helpful.

7.4 The Pakistan Taliban and insurgency in FATA, PATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

The Pakistan government is ferociously opposed to the anti-Pakistan Taliban, regarded as ‘bad Taliban’ because they attack Pakistan’s security forces. I will say a little bit more about this group. Even as Pakistan is opposed to the anti-Pakistan Taliban, however, Pakistan is also accused of sheltering Afghan-focused Taliban: Afghan-focused Taliban, and Afghan-focused Taliban leaders who have a base in Quetta, as well as an affiliated group, the Haqqani Network. The Haqqani Network is now even more closely affiliated with the Afghan Taliban, because as the Afghan Taliban is led by this guy, Mullah Haibatullah Akhunzada, and the deputy leader is now Sirajuddin Haqqani, drawn from the Haqqani network.

At the same time, of course, this Afghan Taliban is opposed by the Afghan government, because of course the Afghan Taliban are fighting the Afghan government. But the Afghan government does not prevent anti-Pakistan Taliban from crossing from Afghanistan into Pakistan. So both the Afghan government and the Pakistan government are not necessarily restricting parts of the Taliban attacking the other side. I am going to focus on the Pakistan Taliban, the anti-Pakistan Taliban.

This formation came together in 2007 from three or four different groups. The anti-Pakistan Taliban is really a mix of different groups. One of the first groups associated included militants who were displaced from Afghanistan after the US invasion of Afghanistan in the wake of September 11. Some of those Taliban militants who were based in Afghanistan left Afghanistan and moved to Pakistan after September 11.

The second group are militants already based in FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Areas), as well as militants based in Swat. The thing to just technically keep in mind about Swat is that Swat is not part of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, it is part of the Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (PATA), which is administered in part from the provincial capital of Peshawar. We hear a lot about FATA, but do not hear very much about PATA. Very briefly, to make a long story short, and this is something of a detail, in Swat during the 1990s there was a rebel movement known as the Movement for the Enforcement of Mohammed’s Shariah, the Tehreek-e-Nafaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi. It was led by a former member of the Jamaat-e-Islami named Sufi Mohammed. Sufi Mohammed was basically leading a miniature rebellion inside Swat saying, “We want Shariah enforced in Swat.” He was fighting the police forces and so on in his movement. But Sufi Mohammed also brought many villagers from Swat into Afghanistan to fight with the Afghan Taliban after September 11, against the international coalition. Some of those militants based in Swat also ended up as part of what we now call the anti-Pakistan Taliban.

The third and fourth groups I have listed here are the sectarian militants, many based in southern Punjab. Often affiliated with the Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP), as well as the Ahl-e-sunnat Wal Jamaat (ASWJ), and finally Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ). All of these groups are very active in anti-Shia politics.

These people displaced from Afghanistan, these militants in FATA, the militants in Swat, the sectarian militants - these are different groups. But in 2007, they decided to form a coalition known as the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). They did that in 2007 after the Pakistan army attacked a mosque and madrassa in the centre of Islamabad, known as the Red Mosque (Lal Masjid). Basically, this was an indication from the Pakistan army that they will not tolerate certain forms of Taliban activism in the centre of Pakistan. That attack led many affiliated groups to then push back against the army itself. Those anti-army, anti-Pakistan Taliban are known as the TTP, the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan.

Initially, this coalition, the TTP, was led by Baitullah Mehsud, from part of the FATA known as the Orakzai Agency, and he was killed by a US drone in 2009. His successor, Hakeemullah Mehsud, from the same tribe in FATA, was also killed by a US drone in 2013. After Baitullah Mehsud and Hakeemullah Mehsud were killed by US drones, today the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan is led by a man named Fazlullah. (Fazlullah is the son-in-law of Sufi Mohammed from Swat.) When he was chosen to lead the Pakistan Taliban, this was very controversial because he is not from FATA, he is from PATA/Swat. He is not from the Mehsud tribe; he is from outside of that group, so in many ways he was an outsider being brought in to lead the Pakistan Taliban. His election was so controversial that many factions within the Pakistan Taliban defected. They left the Pakistan Taliban to form competing groups, some of which declared an association with the Islamic State. So you can again see how fragmented the Pakistan Taliban is.

Others formed a ferocious new group known as the Jamaat-ul-Ahrar, another offshoot of the Pakistan Taliban that emerged after this election of Fazlullah. Again, the fragmentation makes it very difficult to identify one enemy. It is a whole mix. There are many other affiliates – there is Mangal Bakh and his Lashkar-e-Islam in Khyber Agency, and so on and so forth.

Pakistan has a democratic constitution with references to Islamic Law. The goal of the Pakistan Taliban is to replace that constitution and bring, not simply Shariah, but its own *interpretation* of Shariah to the fore. But its more immediate goal is not re-writing Pakistan's constitution. Its more immediate goal is eliminating local elites who rely on various types of tribal custom and state support to maintain their economic and political advantage. So, what you frequently see is a local context for Pakistan Taliban violence, where you have marginalized and subordinate tribal groups, economic groups and young people who feel that they are excluded by an old-school tribal elite. This tribal elite depends on an association with tribal custom to maintain their authority, and these youngsters, these rebels, these Taliban, they use the countervailing language of Shariah. They use the language of "Islam" to oppose those "tribal" elites, those tribal *maliks*. The Pakistan Taliban have consistently and systematically targeted tribal elites, tribal *maliks*. They have targeted many *maliks* for killing, and the elite economic, political and customary support that they receive. They also target state actors who support those elites. They target state actors in the police, in the army, and anyone who support the Pakistani State, including the international community. They target all of those forces who support the power of these local elites. Some of the "religious" conflict associated with the Pakistani Taliban also has a "sociological" dimension: economic grievances, political grievances, grievances related to tribal custom and so on. The Pakistan Taliban is targeting elites and those who protect the elites, i.e. the State.

For years, Pakistan has used haphazard army action and occasional peace deals to placate the Pakistan Taliban but in 2014, this changed. In 2014, shortly after Fazlullah took over as the leader of the TTP – remember, Hakeemullah Mehsud was killed by a US drone in 2013? In 2014, Fazlullah took over, and there were splinters and factions. One of those factions, led by a man named Omar Khalid Khorasani, he tried to take the initiative by killing 23 soldiers who had been held hostage, and he tried to say, "I am an effective militant, I have just killed 23 soldier hostages." Very shortly thereafter, Fazlullah upped the ante. He attacked the Army

Public School in Peshawar and killed 132 children. He basically was using violence to indicate his leadership in a militant movement targeting the Pakistan State. After the killing of these 132 children in the Army Public School, the Army transformed its approach to militancy in Pakistan. Since 2014, all of the data show a decline in the level of violence in Pakistan, largely owing to the Army's response after Fazlullah's attack on the Army Public School in Peshawar. This counter-insurgency campaign is called Zarb-e-Azb.

At exactly the same time, the affiliated sectarian groups in southern Punjab, they faced a wave of so-called police encounters (where the police find an opportunity to take their prisoners and simply kill them extra-judicially). The leader of the anti-Shia sectarian Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, Malik Ishaq, was killed in a police encounter in 2015. Many of these counter-insurgent efforts have pushed these sectarian militants out of Punjab and into Quetta and Karachi. And we have just heard from Amir Rana that although the situation in Punjab sees a decline in violence, Quetta and Karachi still remain key centres for violence. So nowadays, we have the army going after the Pakistan Taliban, the anti-Shia sectarian Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and so on. But this counter-insurgency campaign has not targeted other groups. It has targeted anti-Pakistan groups, but it has not targeted militant groups that focus on India, or that focus on Afghanistan. It has not targeted the Afghan Taliban (with leadership still considered to be based in Quetta), it has not targeted the affiliated Haqqani Network active in Afghanistan. It has not targeted the groups focused on Kashmir – Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammad, and Hizb-ul-Mujahideen. That is the state of insurgency with reference to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA.

7.5 Balochistan

It is interesting to me that the number of cases coming to you related to Balochistan is low because, as Amir has just pointed out, the number of killings in Balochistan is actually at the top. One way to explain this – I have not investigated this in an academic sense – but you might say that Balochistan has very high levels of violence, but also extremely high levels of poverty. Fleeing and crossing huge distances to Europe, for instance, takes money. A lot of the people in Balochistan do not have that money. Central Punjab, the areas around Peshawar, and so on, also have high levels of violence, but also somewhat more resources, allowing some people to generate the resources needed to reach Europe. Balochistan is an interesting place but it is very hard to get access to information about Balochistan. So I feel that my understanding is still somewhat limited.

But it is different from FATA in the following way. In FATA, the resistance against State-supported FATA tribal elites is rooted in the language of religion. The Jihadi language of the Taliban. But in Balochistan, the resistance is actually cast in a secular, ethnic, regional or nationalist language. The resistance is not framed in terms of religion. Initially, the regional, ethnic, nationalist resistance in Balochistan was focused on a leftist ideology and demands for provincial autonomy. Early on, those demands for provincial autonomy in Balochistan were actually tied to demands for provincial autonomy in East Bengal. As you remember, Pakistan once had East Pakistan and West Pakistan. East Pakistan/Bengal left to become Bangladesh. In the early days of ethnic resistance in Bengal, there was some affiliation with ethnic separatist resistance in Balochistan as a leftist, secular politics.

Nowadays, I think it is helpful to think about regional politics in Balochistan on at least four levels, and I will just run through them very quickly. First, tensions *within* the Baloch community between traditional tribal elites and modernizing, middle-class nationalists. This tension between old, traditional elites and younger, educated and urbanized rebels—this is a story we have heard now several times. We heard about it in Chakwal, we just heard about it in FATA, now again in Balochistan we have this sort of youngster versus old-school division. More importantly, however, in Balochistan, you have tensions pitting both of these two

groups against *external* influence from Pakistan's centralizing State. So you have the old school and the youngsters against external resistance from Punjab – either civilian incursions from a Punjabi-dominated majority, or army incursions, basically coming from a Punjabi-dominated army. So local versus external.

The third level, interestingly, pits different tribal leaders against one another. So you will have the Bugti tribe, the Mengal tribe, and so on and so forth, each with their own cleavages and competitions with one another. So some tribal leaders will be accused of collaborating with the State, and others will be accused of resisting the State. So different tribal leaders have different affiliations with the State.

Hopefully, you are getting a sense of a rather complex political atmosphere. The last level involves nationalist/ethnic Baloch against ethnic Pashtun and Punjab. This is the ethnic dimension of resistance in Balochistan. It is not necessarily the Balochis versus the Punjab-dominated State. It is an ethnic conflict involving Balochis versus ethnic Pashtuns and ethnic Punjabis.

I think these four dimensions are quite important. None of them, itself or alone, directly frames the insurgency. They each have a role in framing violence in Balochistan. But, over time, the focus has shifted just a bit as the leadership of the resistance in Balochistan has moved away from tribal elites to more educated, young, middle-class activists based along Balochistan's Southern coast. The Southern coast, which looks extremely remote in Pakistan terms, is actually associated with a more cosmopolitan, trans-nationally connected, educated middle-class. This coast, near Gwadar, basically involves a lot of trans-national migration to the Gulf, a lot of migration over to Karachi, a lot of affiliation not only with a modern global economy, but also with gun-smuggling and drug-smuggling networks. So the proximity of that Southern coast creates access to Karachi, to the Gulf States and so on. I simply wanted to give you a sense that the focus and the leadership within the Baloch insurgency is shifting. So you might increasingly see people claiming refuge in Europe who appear to come from, not remote tribal backgrounds from Balochistan, but actually an insurgency that is increasingly framed around two very different visions of Balochistan - one modern, secular and internationally connected, and the other tribal, parochial and separatist.

The insurgency in Balochistan is believed to at least receive tacit support from Afghanistan, and sometimes accusations of active support from India. Again, the trans-national dimensions of the insurgency I think are worth keeping in mind. Amir mentioned the number of disappearances in Balochistan—a staggering number of disappeared people. The Pakistan Supreme Court has tried to address this problem – people being disappeared by the State Security Forces—but, so far, even the Supreme Court has not been able to address this problem. The State in a sense is divided on these types of abuses.

Nowadays there are concerns that counter-insurgent forces typically associated with the army are being supplemented with new ties to Punjab-based sectarian forces. And there is an influx of anti-Shia Lashkar-e-Jhangvi activists, who have been pushed out of Punjab, as I indicated, and are now launching attacks in Balochistan. I think this is an important element to watch. As I mentioned yesterday, you have already seen attacks on Hazara Shia based in Quetta, persecuted ethnic and religious minority in Quetta. Anti-Shia activists from Lashkar-e-Jhangvi have been associated with killings of Hazara Shia. That is a source of great concern. There is some worry that as this religious and sectarian element begins to take shape in Balochistan, we will see a number of problems, including the possibility of a consolidated presence of those who are sympathetic to the Islamic State. We have seen this already in Mastung: the State has aggressively addressed that risk. Nevertheless, I think it is something to keep watching. We are also seeing ongoing attacks on State institutions as well as shrines in Balochistan.

8. Main patterns and drivers of migration

Anna Giustiniani, IOM

8.1 An historical overview

1) 1947-1951: Partition

Movement is part of Pakistan's history; the 'Partition' of India and formation of the state of Pakistan in August 1947 was accompanied by one of the largest, most violent and rapid mass migration movements in history. An estimated 14.5 million people migrated within the span of four years. Mainly Indian Muslims (termed '*mohajir*' in Pakistan) moved across the border into West Pakistan.

2) 1950s-1970s: Out-Migration to the UK

The majority of British people with Pakistani origin trace their roots back to just two areas in Pakistan: Mirpur in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and Attock in Punjab.

3) 1970s: Influx from East Pakistan (Bangladesh) & Pakistani migration to Australia and Norway (1970s onwards)

Bangladesh won its independence in 1971: a number of Bangladeshis who wished to retain their Pakistani citizenship migrated to Pakistan. This population is generally referred to as *Biharis* although not all of them originate from Bihar.

Australia: Migration flows of Pakistani nationals to Australia have been relatively small in scale. Norway: Pakistani nationals constitute the largest immigrant group in Norway. In 1996, government records indicated 19,400 people of Pakistani origin in Norway, composed of 11,800 first generation and 7,600 second generation immigrants.

4) 1970s-1980s: Out-Migration to the Gulf

Migratory links between Pakistan and the Gulf have a long history. When the oil boom started in the Gulf States, the Pakistanis were some of the first migrant workers.

5) 1980s: Refugee influx from Afghanistan and Burma

The invasion of Soviet troops into Afghanistan caused a massive influx of up to 2.5 million Afghan refugees crossing Pakistan's border.

6) Western Europe and North America as the new preferred destinations of Pakistanis nationals

By the 1990s, major construction projects in the Gulf had been completed, inflation eroded the oil boom and labour competition arose in the form of Bangladeshi, Thai and Indonesian labour migrants. Many Pakistanis' choice of destination countries started to shift towards Western Europe and North America as a result.

8.2.1 Out-migration

The information is based on accounts by 2,581 Pakistani migrants interviewed along the Eastern Mediterranean and Central Mediterranean routes. 1,253 migrants interviewed in 2016 and 1,328 interviewed in 2017.

82% interviewed along the Eastern Mediterranean route (EMR) and the remaining 18% in Italy (data collected in Italy served in order to shed more light on the Central Mediterranean route (CMR) dynamics).

8.2.1.1 Main districts of origin

Most of Pakistanis on the move comes from Punjab, with Gujrat and Guajaranwala, Mandi Bahauddin, Dera Ghazi Khan, Multan, and Sialkot being the main districts of origin.

This is true for both the Central and the Eastern Mediterranean routes: 72% in 2016, and 76% in 2017 - CMR; 54% in 2016, and 63% in 2017 – EMR (percentages refer to the Pakistanis coming from Punjab, interviewed along the CMR and EMR).

It is worth stressing that Eastern provinces (including Punjab) are reportedly more developed than the western ones (i.e. FATA and the provinces of Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa).

8.2.1.2 Drivers of migration as reported by Pakistanis on the move

- Security
- Livelihoods
- Educational opportunities (including a mismatch between relatively high levels of education and lack of relevant jobs)
- Rising crime rates
- Natural disasters

8.2.1.3 Drivers of migration: a comparison between the CMR and EMR

Pakistanis interviewed along the CMR mentioned violence and personal persecution (90%) as the main reason for leaving, whereas for those interviewed along the EMR, economic reasons played a major role (53%).

8.2.1.4 Drivers of migration: additional factors

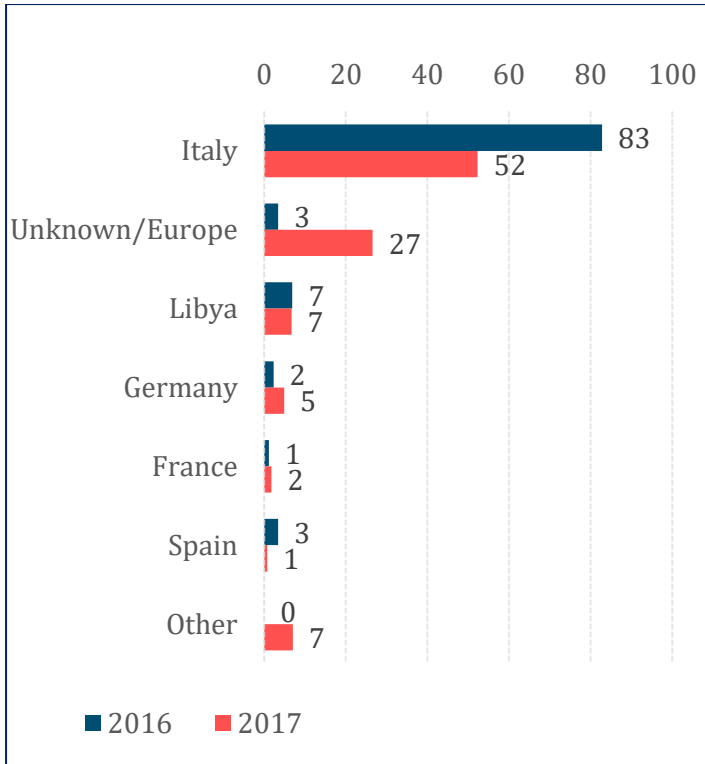
- Culture of migration and the importance of family or kinship linkages
- Remittances as a pull factor (according to IOM Pakistan, the country received 19.9 Billion Remittances in the 2016-2017 fiscal year)
- Established smuggling networks and associated services

8.2.1.5 Socio-economic profile of Pakistanis travelling along both routes

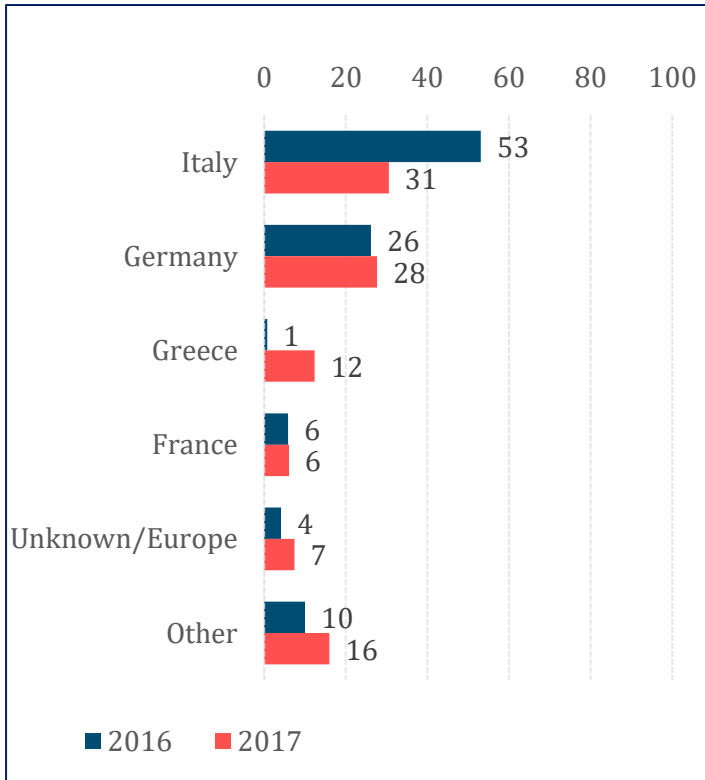
- Age breakdown: 26 years old as the average age
- Sex: male (92.5%)
- Level of education: Secondary education achieved (59%)
- Civil status: single (74%), married (25%)
- Employment status prior to migrating:
 - employed (55%), unemployed (26%), self-employed (7%) / CMR
 - unemployed (48%), employed (34%), self-employed (13%) / EMR

8.2.1.6 Intended destination countries

Central Mediterranean route:



Eastern Mediterranean route:



Source: IOM DTM Flow Monitoring Surveys in Italy ^(?), June-November 2016 & February-August 2017

^(?) IOM DTM, *Analysis Flow Monitoring Surveys: Migrants from Pakistan interviewed along the Mediterranean Routes in 2016 and 2017*, November 2017
http://migration.iom.int/docs/Analysis_Flow_Monitoring_Surveys_Profile_of_Pakistani_Respondents_Novembe

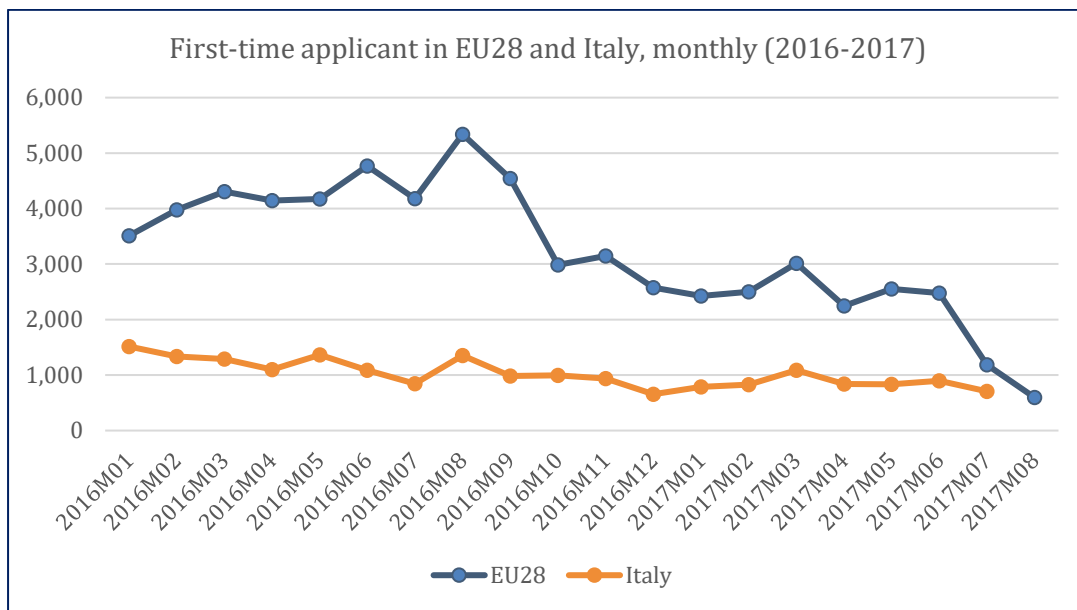
8.2.1.7 Travelling to Europe (main features)

Nationality swapping between Pakistani and Afghan nationals.

Large proportion of irregular Pakistani migrants use migrant smuggling operations to cross borders.

Land and air journeys ('Touchdown Package' which includes flight and fraudulent documents to the intended destination). Cost incurred is up to 12000 EUR.

8.2.1.8 IP requests lodged by Pakistanis in the EU28



Source: Eurostat ⁽⁸⁾

8.2.2 Displacement situations

Pakistan is a disaster prone country, listed amongst the top 10 countries in Asia-Pacific exposed to river flood risks. Most that have been displaced live in camps and can hardly access the services they need. Besides natural disasters, the country is also affected by the complex crisis in the North-West region.

8.2.2.1 Displacement caused by natural disasters

The country has been affected by multiple medium and large scale natural disasters (including earthquakes, flooding, drought conditions in Tharparkar and Umerkot, and cyclones) which caused severe human and socio-economic costs. Earthquakes and floods have also led to the displacement or shifting of mines, making the living conditions in the affected areas (especially in the north-west region) very dangerous.

[r_2017.pdf](#)), accessed 31 January 2018, p. 9. See also DTM, *Displacement Tracking Matrix*, n.d. (<http://www.globaldtm.info/>), accessed 31 January 2018; Galos, E., et al., *Migrant Vulnerability to Human Trafficking and Exploitation: Evidence from the Central and Eastern Mediterranean Migration Routes*, IOM, 2017 (https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/migrant_vulnerability_to_human_trafficking_and_exploitation.pdf), accessed 31 January 2018

⁽⁸⁾ Eurostat, *Database*, n.d. (<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>), accessed 31 January 2018.

8.2.2.2 Displacement caused by conflict and violence

Protracted complex crisis in the North West (FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) has led to large scale population movements since 2008. Conflict and violence have affected both Pakistanis and Afghans, with populations crossing the border when hostilities escalate on either side.

8.2.2.3 Displacement situations: 2016/2017 comparison

January – December 2016	
<i>Population</i>	192,827,000
<i>IDPs (stock)</i>	464,000
<i>New displacements (Conflict and violence)</i>	2,400
<i>New displacements (Natural disasters)</i>	13,000

January – June 2017 (mid-year update)	
<i>Population</i>	192,827,000
<i>IDPs (stock)</i>	Not available
<i>New displacements (Conflict and violence)</i>	17,000
<i>New displacements (Natural disasters)</i>	1,100

Source: IDMC ⁽⁹⁾

New displacements recorded in 2017 were mainly due to conflict situations (displacements caused by natural disasters conversely recorded a decrease).

8.2.3 In-migration: Brief focus on Afghan nationals

The international border between Pakistan and Afghanistan has always been porous, with border crossing occurring on regular basis. A shared historical and cultural heritage, as well as strong tribal links contribute to explain population movements on respective sides of the border.

8.2.3.1 Refugee influx and undocumented Afghans

Starting from the 1980s (invasion of Soviet troops into Afghanistan), Pakistan has hosted more than 3 million Afghan nationals (2 million Afghan refugees and 1 million undocumented Afghans). As of September 2017, 0.7 million undocumented Afghans live in Pakistan.

⁽⁹⁾ IDMC (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre), *Pakistan*, n.d. (<http://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/pakistan/>), accessed 31 January 2018.

Starting from June 2016, the Pakistani government introduced specific border controls at Torkham border, requiring all incoming Afghans to have valid visas/passports or Rahdari.

According to available estimates, prior to the restriction of free movement, over 20,000 Afghans and Pakistanis would cross back and forth between the two countries on a daily basis through Torkham. However, after implementation of border control, this has reduced to 2000—2500 Afghans per day. In contrast, Chaman border crossing remains flexible, and free movement from both countries is ongoing. According to available figures, approximately 25,000-30,000 people utilize the Chaman border from both sides on a daily basis.

8.3 IOM's activities and responses

8.3.1 Migration Management and Counter Trafficking

In close cooperation with the Government of Pakistan, IOM is working to:

- Enhance the reception capacity of the existing facilities, with the aim of fostering humane and orderly treatment of Pakistani returnees;
- Build capacity of local/national officials on a) monitoring post readmission situation of returnees and reintegration of former migrants, b) Counter trafficking and Counter Migrant Smuggling;
- Improve the Readmission process through the development of an electronic readmission case management system.

8.3.2 Resettlement, Movements, and Operations

IOM has been supporting resettlement activities, as well as Assisted Voluntary Returns & Reintegration (AVRR) programmes (in collaboration with Italy, Belgium, Switzerland, France, Ireland, The Netherlands, Greece, Turkey, and Australia). Approximately 1,000 have been resettled and 524 were supported through the AVRR programme. 1,219 received Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR) support (over the period May-August 2017).

8.3.3 Humanitarian Assistance & natural disasters response

IOM is the designated lead agency for Shelter and Non-Food Items Cluster for natural disasters in Pakistan.

IOM Humanitarian Response includes:

- The Multi-year Humanitarian Programme for Natural Disasters preparedness, Response and Recovery, aimed at delivering an integrated, multi-sector and cost-effective preparedness, response and recovery programming for natural disasters (IOM is part of the Natural Disaster Consortium along with UNHCR, FAO, ACTED and HANDS);
- Shelter research project (which includes evidence-based recommendations and technical shelter guidelines).

8.3.4 Humanitarian Communications targeting affected communities

IOM supports displaced and returning populations through the provision of critical life saving information. In doing so, IOM relies on multiple communication channels and community-based awareness sessions.

Humanitarian communications should:

- Take into account the information needs of and feedback from affected communities in developing an appropriate information response

- Provide communications services to humanitarian actors by disseminating assistance-related information to affected communities

8.3.5 Community Stabilization in North-West Pakistan

Within the framework of the Pakistan Transition Initiative, IOM has been providing affected population in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA with critical support. Support to beneficiaries is based on grants covering a number of activities (sanitation, flood protection, agriculture, health, humanitarian relief, school rehabilitation). IOM is also implementing media campaigns so to support safe returns.

8.3.6 Support to undocumented Afghans

IOM is facilitating a large-scale return and documentation assistance programme. IOM is also carrying out Return Intention and thematic surveys, flow monitoring at Pak-Afghan border and scoping reviews for integrated border management. In order to better cope with the influx of Afghan returnees, IOM has recently expanded Torkham transit center.

8.4 Concluding remarks

Interviews with migrants on the move allow for a better understanding of the phenomenon. Listening at migrants' voices is crucial in order to continue adjusting interventions to their real needs and future projects/plans. In order to do so, profiling exercises and activities aimed at collecting first-hand data by means of direct interviews should be further promoted.

No humanitarian responses can be implemented without the active engagement of affected people and communities. Two-way communication is therefore key as it serves to build mutual trust and to identify shared solutions.

9. Political life in Pakistan

Cyril Almeida, Assistant editor and journalist, Dawn newspaper, Pakistan

Political life in Pakistan is a broad topic, so I will structure this presentation in three parts. In the first part I will talk about how politics and the political process itself is used in Pakistan to put pressure on vulnerable groups, to discriminate against groups of people; the politics of hate, oppression and disenfranchisement. So you get a sense of how politics, the political process, is used in some of the cases that come before you. The reverse, the second section, is where regressive elements of society or certain interest groups in society put pressure on the political process itself and will describe the pressure politicians face. And the third section is on this new notion in Pakistan, the so-called mainstreaming of political groups. Mainstreaming is basically the idea that militant groups that have not taken up arms against the Pakistani State can somehow be encouraged to become part of the political process and abandon violent militancy. As a new, poorly defined idea, the potential for mainstreaming to affect the politics of Pakistan and the democratic process and society need to be analysed.

9.1 Politics as a mean of exerting pressure

How politics itself is used to put pressure on citizens of Pakistan, on the people of Pakistan. And there are two aspects of this that I would like to focus on in this part. One at the level of the group. I will give you an example specifically about the Ahmadi community and how the discourse in the political sphere potentially foments violence against them or definitely categorises them as second class citizens in the country. Then at the level of the individual I'll give you an example from Northern Sindh about the Hindu community there, how a particular MNA, a member of Parliament, used his political position and his spiritual links to a shrine in this issue of forced conversions.

Starting with the broader issue about how groups are demonized in Pakistan, last week unprovoked and seemingly out of the blue, a member of a National Assembly stood on the floor of Parliament and delivered what was a quite astonishing 15 minute speech against Ahmadis in Pakistan. Ahmadiyya, the Ahmadi or the Qadiani community are the same. There's no real context to the parliamentarian's speech, it was not in the agenda for the day. It was a very vicious and violent speech. He refers to Ahmadis as "these people". He called for them to be crushed like snakes. This was aired live on TV. The MNA, this parliamentarian went on to make four very specific and seemingly unusual demands.

First of all, last year the Physics centre in Quaid-i-Azam University in Islamabad was renamed in honour of Pakistan's first Nobel Prize winner, Abdus Salam, who was an Ahmadi. The parliamentarian said this is an affront to Muslims in Pakistan to have an Ahmadi's name on this Physics department and the centre should in fact be renamed for some famous or pioneering Muslim figure. This was his first demand.

The second demand of the parliamentarian was that because the Ahmadi is what he called a "fake religion" and Ahmadis are clearly not Muslims, they cannot possibly support the idea of jihad and therefore they should be barred and banned from the Pakistan military, which is an astonishing comment. Here was a parliamentarian publicly calling for Ahmadis in the Pakistan Army to be identified and removed from service.

And the third demand was that every bureaucrat, every parliamentarian, every public official who is a Muslim in Pakistan ought to be asked to sign a new form declaring themselves to be true Muslims and against the founder of the Ahmadi religion, Ghulam Mirza Ahmad.

The fourth demand was that any Ahmadi in the Atomic Commission of Pakistan, which is a civilian Agency and doesn't have anything to do with the military nuclear program, should be identified and removed from the commission.

This manifesto against the Ahmadyya community delivered from the floor of the National Assembly last week was by a parliamentarian of the ruling party, the PML-N Pakistan Muslim League. There was no denunciation of this by the party. Some members of the party tried to distance themselves from the comments over social media. Supporters were praising the parliamentarian's boldness and his defiance. Finally, the former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif put out a statement saying that he reaffirms the PML-N's determination to protect the rights of minorities.

Now, this was not just a dog whistle, this was a call to arms really, against the Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan. And whenever you have this kind of public statement, they're not as frequent as people may think but they do occur every few years or perhaps sometimes every few months, it sends out a signal to society that anti-Ahmadi sentiment is OK and it can be publicly talked about and acted on. Days after the speech, a local TV channel broadcast a report showing the number of non-Muslims who work in the various departments and Ministries of Pakistan State, the Federal Government. Simply stating that 227 non-Muslims work in the Pakistani Government meant that somehow the State of Pakistan is being undermined and weakened by the presence of non-Muslims in the state apparatus. It was clearly a reference to the Ahmadiyya community.

The background is that the parliamentarian who made this speech is the son-in-law of the former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif. He is the husband of the Prime Minister's daughter, Maryam Nawaz, who's thought to be the heir apparent of the PML-N. And he himself is a parliamentarian from Rawalpindi, an urban constituency very close to Islamabad. Why was this man suddenly, so close to the heart of power in the present government and political structure in Pakistan, making a speech from the floor of the Parliament against the Ahmadiyya community? The background is, two things have happened, again in the very recent past. A few weeks ago, the Pakistani Parliament tried to consolidate the electoral laws in our country. The old laws were a mess, a hodgepodge of eight different Acts and Bills of Parliament, and parliament attempted to simplify the law in the form of a single bill that was passed with a parliamentary consensus. And the new law was passed by the Parliament, there was a sudden enormous public outrage generated from the right wing in the country and it was again on the specific issue of the Ahmadiyyas. If you are a Muslim candidate for public office in Pakistan you are required to legally sign a form declaring not only that you are Muslim but that you are against the founder of the Ahmadiyya community, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

In the new set of electoral laws that was passed, the language which used to be "I solemnly swear", was for some reason changed to "I declare". There is no real legal repercussion, no legal difference between the two, but it was used by the right wing in Pakistan to attack the PML-N government for somehow undermining the consensus that the Ahmadiyya community are not Muslims and somehow undermining the definition of who is true Muslim in Pakistan. The government found itself under a great deal of right wing pressure in the run-up to the speech made by the parliamentarian, the son-in-law of Nawaz Sharif. And the other thing that happened just a couple of months ago was the by-election to the seat that had been won in the 2013 general election by Nawaz Sharif, our disqualified Prime Minister. The by-election was contested by Sharif's wife and she won. That was the headline, but the biggest story in

Pakistan was that two new political parties, ultra-right wing, religious parties, captured 11% of the vote. And as a result the PML-N, a centre-right party, was under pressure from the right.

If you look at the background, the parliamentarian, the son-in-law of Sharif, himself caught up in the anti-corruption, accountability trials involving the Sharif family, stands up on the floor of the Parliament to either deflect from his own accountability issues or to try and shore up the right wing support of the PML-N, with the party under attack on the Ahmadiyya issue. So it's just that Ahmadiyya community has been constitutionally declared to be non-Muslim, the community is used as a punching bag, they are used as a political tool. Every once in a while when somebody is under pressure or in trouble for different political reasons, they can denounce the Ahmadi community as a way to shore up support with the rest of the population.

Turning to the by-election and the rise of new ultra right, religious parties. One of the two new parties is a Barelvi group. It grabbed 6% of the vote in the by-election in a constituency in the heart of Lahore. The one-point agenda of this new party called Tehreek Labaik Ya Rasool Allah, known by its initials TLY, is enforcement of the country's blasphemy laws. Headed by Maulvi Khadim Hussain Rizvi, a blog, Bakarabu.wordpress.com, by one of his supporters, helps illustrate the politics of the TLY:

"Allama Khadim Hussain is an Islamic scholar of Sunni Barelvi school of thought. He used to deliver Friday sermons at Pir Makki Masjid near Data Darbar Lahore. [Data Darbar is a big shrine, one of the most famous in Pakistan, in Lahore.] When Ghazi Mumtaz Qadri killed Salmaan Taseer, who termed 295c as black law, with 27 bullets, Allama Sahab showed open support for Muntaz Qadri".

Section 295c is part of the Pakistan Criminal Code that mandates the death penalty for blasphemy.

"It annoyed the government of Nawaz Sharif and resulted in his job being terminated, confiscating all benefits of a long service in the Auqaf Department".

The Auqaf department is a Government department that deals with clerics and pays stipends, etc.

"Allama Sahab happily accepted this, and never requested any benefits; rather his resolve to side with Mumtaz Qadri grew stronger. Allama Sahab is a disabled person on a wheelchair due to an accident some years back, yet he's one of the most travelling evangelists delivering sermons in the width and breadth of Pakistan".

To give a flavour of the kind of issues that concern this party and radical Barelvis, some more quotes from the blog of Khadim Rizvi's supporter:

"The Barelvi thought of Islam was the only group winning public support for army's operations against militancy in North Pakistan. Sadly because Pakistan government and Pakistan army are highly influenced by Saudi Arabian funded Wahabi thoughts they started war against Sunnis of Pakistan. They arrested imams and Muslims for calling to prayer too loudly. Heavy fines were imposed on Imams of Barelvi school. By doing so the Pakistan Army practically tried to axe its own feet as these were the people who were giving them public support when Deobandi and Wahabi gave fatwa against Army personnel dying in the war in terror, that those people are not shahid".

This kind of dangerous politics is being preached right in the heart of Punjab. The supporter of Khadim Rizvi is saying that the Pakistan Army is against Barelvis, that Barelvis used to support the military operation, but these military operations are now turning against the Barelvis. It can be read as an incitement to violence against the State.

The second example of the political process being used to put pressure on social groups is from Northern Sindh. This concerns a specific constituency, a specific individual using his political power against Hindus in his area. In a district called Ghotki there is a National Assembly seat, NA-200. In 2008 a custodian of a shrine won the NA seat from that district on a PPP ticket, the secular liberal Pakistani People Party, and the shrine custodian had gained notoriety because of forced conversions. The shrine custodian had become famous for converting young Hindu girls to Islam and having them marry local Muslim guys. The Hindu community in the region accused the shrine custodian of forcibly converting Hindu girls, but he claimed that the girls were coming to the shrine of their own free will and converting people to Islam is a service to God so he could not turn the girls away.

In February 2012 a girl called Rinkal Kumari, a young Hindu girl from that neighbourhood was allegedly kidnapped from her home according to the local Hindu community, taken to the shrine where the shrine custodian who had become a member of parliament presided over a ceremony to convert Rinkal Kumari to Islam and marry a Muslim man. The case became a huge controversy and went all the way to the Supreme Court of Pakistan where the girl herself was presented in very dramatic circumstances in the Court. The girl told the court that she had voluntarily converted to Islam and had voluntarily married her husband, a Muslim man, but the local Hindu community still claims that the custodian of the shrine is using his political position to intimidate the Hindu community and after he became an MNA accelerated his activities. In 2013, the PPP dropped the custodian as a candidate for parliament, but he will contest the next election from the PTI, Imran Khan's party, platform.

In November 2016, the Sindh Assembly, which is dominated by the PPP, tried to pass a law against forced conversions. The bill was unanimously approved by the Provincial Assembly of Sindh. All that was left to be done was the governor had to sign it into law, but the religious right in Pakistan campaigned against the law. To protect against forced conversions, the law approved by the Sindh Assembly stipulates that no boy or girl under the age of 18 can change their religion. According to right wingers and the mullahs fixing the age of consent at 18 is a western concept and not recognised in Islam. The age of consent can be younger. The Sindh government has recalled the legislative bill and asked the Sindh governor not to sign it into law.

9.2 Pressure on politicians

The second part of the presentation will focus on how pressure is put on politicians who practice secular, liberal, constitutional, rule-of-law based politics. The pressure such politicians and political parties face from militants, from right wing elements, from organised anti-liberal groups in society prevents Pakistan from having new, secular, liberal, progressive voices in politics.

There are three parties in the country that could reasonably be identified as having left of centre, slightly liberal, secular politics: the PPP; the Awami National Party or ANP, which is a Pashtun party largely concentrated in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province; and the MQM in Sindh. Each one of those three parties has faced an enormous amount of violence in recent years. Tomorrow is October 18th, the 10-year anniversary of Benazir Bhutto's return to Pakistan from exile during the Musharraf years. Hours after she had arrived in Karachi, when her convoy was heading towards Jinnah's mausoleum, the convoy was bombed. Until the Peshawar school attack in Dec 2014, the Oct 2012 Karachi bombing was the worst in the country's history. 138 to 142 people were killed in the bombing of Benazir Bhutto's convoy on her return to Pakistan. Two months later, Benazir Bhutto was assassinated. The assassination of Benazir Bhutto had a profound effect on the ability to practice or embrace liberal politics in Pakistan for a number of years.

Days before the last general election in 2013, the son of a former prime minister of the PPP, Yousaf Raza Gillani, was kidnapped prompting the former prime minister to suspend campaigning in the whole of south Punjab. The PPP collapsed in the last elections outside its base in rural Sindh. The PPP's poor governance record had made it unlikely the party would win re-election in 2013, but it's also true that PPP faced very specific violence from militants because of the PPP's identity as a secular liberal party. Much the same thing happened with the ANP. The Awami National Party is a secular party with historic ties to the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The ANP has suffered probably the highest number of casualties of any political party, anywhere in Pakistan including Balochistan, over the last 10 years. Repeatedly, ANP leaders, party members, workers and supporters have been targeted in militant attacks.

The third example is the MQM. The MQM itself has a record of violence and the party's militant wing controlled the city of Karachi with an iron fist for more than two decades. But as an explicitly secular, liberal party and with a number of Shia leaders in the party, the MQM has also faced militant violence. A number of leaders of the party have been killed or injured in violence over the year and it is not always clear if that is a result of factional fighting within the MQM or whether militant groups are targeting the party because of the MQM's secular, liberal politics.

Compare the violence the PPP, ANP and MQM, secular mainstream parties, have faced with the relative lack of violence against the PML-N and the PTI. No PTI rally has been attacked by militants despite Imran Khan holding frequent political rallies in all parts of the country. Militant violence has disproportionately targeted secular, liberal political groups.

9.3 Pressure on civil society

Members of civil society who promote secular, liberal or progressive ideas have also faced repeated attacks. In April 2015, Sabeen Mahmud was killed in Karachi after hosting a seminar on Baloch rights. Sabeen ran a cultural centre in Karachi, where art and cultures classes were held and activities for children were promoted. Sabeen's most famous public campaign was a pro-Valentine day campaign after Valentine's day was banned in Pakistan.

Raza Rumi is a public commentator and journalist. In March 2014, his driver was assassinated but he survived a gun attack. Why? According to a police investigation, Raza was hosting a TV program in which he advocated a progressive interpretation of Islam. According to the police report, Raza's attacker saw him on TV one night and decided he had to kill Raza for what he was saying in his TV programme.

Jibran Nasir, an activist from Karachi, is famous for taking on the Red Mosque cleric. He faces constant threats. While violence is endemic in Pakistan, anyone advocating secular-liberal politics is almost certain to face censorship or violence.

9.4 Mainstreaming of militants

The final section will be brief because it's a new issue, the possibility of mainstreaming of militants and what this could mean for the political process in Pakistan. Mainstreaming is an idea that has been suggested before, but there is now a very real possibility of mainstreaming being attempted by the State. Go back to the recent by-election in Lahore, won by Nawaz Sharif's wife. A second new religious party, besides the TLY discussed earlier, tried to participate in the by-election. The Milli Muslim League is a party founded by the Jamaat-ud-Dawa, the offshoot of Lashkar-e-Taiba. The party was denied official registration by the Election Commission of Pakistan but the MML candidate contested the Lahore by-election as an independent. The candidate was able to campaign freely and secured several thousand votes in the by-election.

Mainstreaming is the idea that militant groups that have not taken up arms against the State of Pakistan should be encouraged to participate in the political process and that by competing for votes and participating in the political process, mainstreamed militant groups will moderate their positions and disavow violence. If mainstreaming is adopted by the State as policy, it could fundamentally transform the politics of Pakistan.

Pakistan has a number of existing religious parties. The Jamaat-e-Islami, the JUI-F, the JUI-S are some of the more prominent examples. Inviting militant groups to enter mainstream politics could fundamentally transform not just the politics of the religious right in the country, but the entire political spectrum. The danger is that elements within the State who support a policy of mainstreaming may not be thinking of the effect on democracy or society.

In the long term, it's not clear whether mainstreaming will be seriously attempted by the State. Part of the problem is that most militant groups oppose democracy. It's not clear how the militant groups will adjust their ideologies to allow them to participate in the democratic process. But if mainstreaming is attempted, with a slow collapse of secular, liberal political parties in Pakistan already underway, the politics of Pakistan could become a contest between centre right and ultra right religious parties.

10. The situation in Karachi

Shehryar Fazli, Senior Analyst and Regional Editor, International Crisis Group

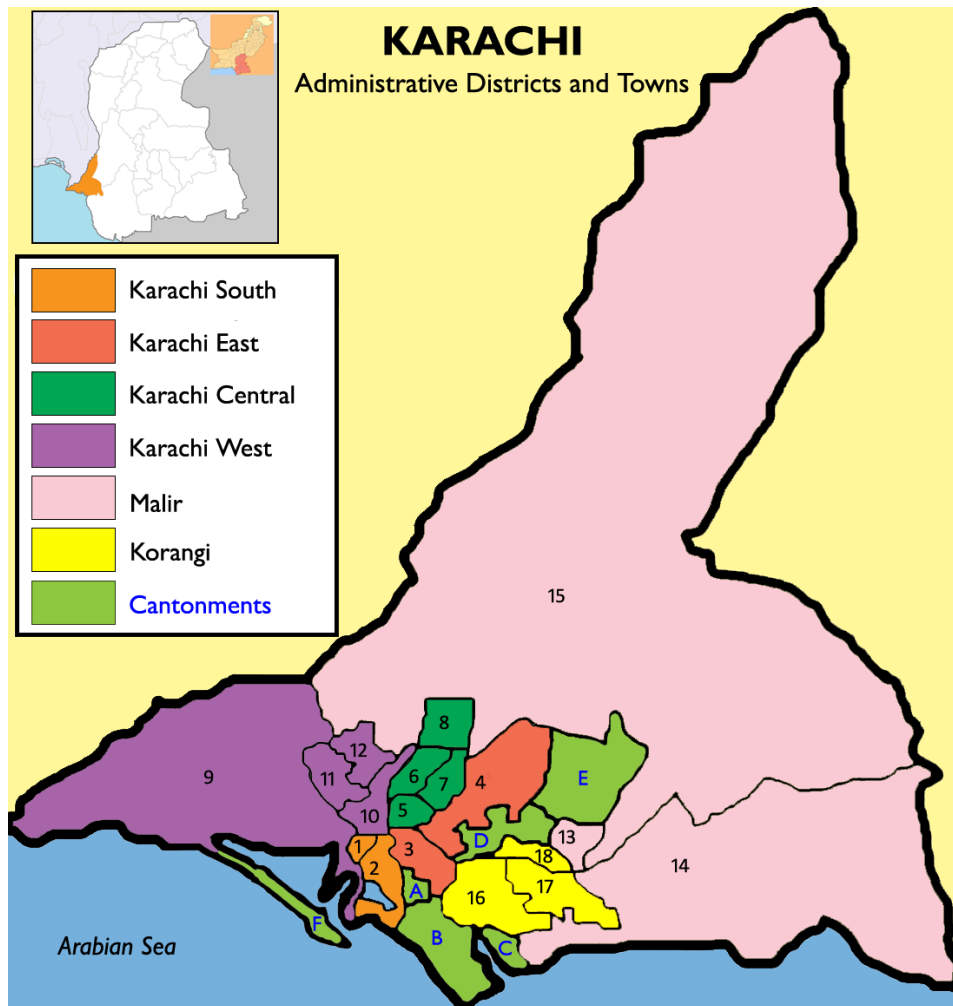
10.1 What is Karachi?

I am going to start with the very basic question - what is Karachi? It is a complete anomaly, and the reason I say that is that Karachi is the non-Sindhi capital of Sindh and maybe less well known is that Karachi does not really have clear boundaries. The last census of 2017 has been controversial for a variety of reasons, but in Karachi the widespread argument against it is that it has under-counted Karachi's population because it has not included a couple of what the census classified as rural areas, but that are actually just extensions of Karachi as Karachi is growing further into the province. Some urban planners and policy makers, when they talk about Karachi, they say, "We cannot talk about really a city, we are talking about an administrative division, because it does not have the fundamental things that a city has, which is defined boundaries."

One of its big problems is that it is Pakistan's economic powerhouse. It provides 20-25 % of national GDP, the central government with 50% of its revenue, and the Sindh government with 90% of its revenue. To put it in layman's terms, Karachi just has too much money. It is too hot, it is too attractive. The result is that a whole range of actors are competing for control over Karachi's resources. It is ethnically diverse - and segregated. It is not a melting pot by any stretch. In fact, it is the very opposite - there is very little melting going on.

10.2 Demography

Quick description of its demography. It consists of six districts: South, East, Central, West, Korangi and Malir, each of them comprising about 3 or 4 towns and they fall under the city administration. In addition, you have six cantonments areas administered by military-dominated governing bodies and boards: Defence Housing Authority, Clifton, in some of the wealthiest areas.



Map of Karachi, administrative districts and towns ⁽¹⁰⁾.

Coming back to how ethnically segregated it is, you can actually point to parts of Karachi and identify it with an ethnic group. So that Karachi Central and East have very large Mohajir (the Urdu speaking migrants from India and their descendants) communities; critical MQM (Muttahida Qaumi Movement) strongholds – that is the party that represents the interests of the Mohajir community. Central and East Karachi includes North Nazimabad and Gulberg Town. A very well-known term that comes up with most Karachi conversations is Nine Zero, which is MQM headquarters.

Karachi South, which includes Lyari town as a PPP stronghold, with a large Baloch community. The Baloch in Karachi identify very closely, historically with the Pakistan People’s Party. Karachi West is largely industrial, including SITE, industrial zones that have sizable pockets of Pashtuns, who have been constituents of the Pashtun nationalist and secular Awami National Party.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Wikimedia Commons/nomi887, *Karachi admin*, 15 January 2009

(https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Karachi_admin.PNG), accessed 19 February 2018. The six districts, 18 towns and six cantonments of Karachi: District South: 1. Lyari Town, 2. Saddar Town; District East: 3. Jamshed Town, 4. Gulshan Town; District Central: 5. Liaquatabad Town, 6. North Nazimabad Town, 7. Gulberg Town, 8. New Karachi Town; District West: 9. Kemari Town, 10. SITE Town, 11. Baldia Town, 12. Orangi Town; District Malir: 13. Malir Town, 14. Bin Qasim Town, 15. Gadap Town; District Korangi: 16. Korangi Town, 17. Landhi Town, 18. Shah Faisal Town; Cantonments: A. Karachi Cantonment, B. Clifton Cantonment, C. Korangi Creek Cantonment, D. Faisal Cantonment, E. Malir Cantonment, F. Manora Cantonment.

The cantonments, meanwhile, are mostly in the south and centre. They are more ethnically mixed, much more elite and include some of the most affluent neighbourhoods, such as Clifton, under the autonomous Defence Housing Authority (DHA), managed by a military-dominated governing body. Many of our friends will typically live in either Clifton or Defence. It is more like a super-imposition on Karachi, rather than integrated into the city.

10.3 Megacity

Karachi's transition from a small, sort of port city to a mega-city is a central part of its story. A little bit of history – in the early 1940s there was 435,000 residents. Today, and this is the contested figure that has just come out in the 2017 census, 14.9 million officially. But more realistic estimates put it between 20 and 25 million.

Migration is part of the Pakistani story, it is very much a part of Karachi's story. Millions crossed the border in 1947, and this had a dramatic effect on Karachi's religious and ethnic configuration. While Sindhi Hindus migrated to India, Muslims became 96% of the city's population by 1951, compared to just 42% a decade earlier. Crucially, the influx of Urdu-speaking migrants, Mohajirs from India, meant that the proportion of Sindhis in their own capital declined from 60 to 14%. I think that 14% is an older figure, I think today it is half of that, around 7%. Meanwhile, the number of new migrants, including Pashtuns who are fleeing operations and conflict in FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, people from interior Sindh - after severe floods in 2010 they ended up coming down to Karachi. Once they come, even if the cause for displacement was a one-off event, they tend to stay in Karachi. A more recent phenomenon is that patterns of land tenancy in Punjab and Southern Punjab are changing. Large land owners are actually laying off a lot of their tenants because their lands have become less productive, less manageable, the price of inputs has gone up and droughts and floods continue to pose challenges. So a lot of Seraikis from Southern Punjab are ending up in Karachi. Its ethnic configuration continues to become more diverse, adding to the city's political complications.

10.4 Early ethno-political divide

Early on, the ethno-political divide became pretty clear. You had the predominantly Mohajir Muslim League, the founding fathers of Pakistan, designate Karachi as the federal capital (until the 1960s, when it moved to Islamabad). They separated it from Sindh in the same way that Islamabad today is a separate territory, and stacked government institutions and other institutions with fellow Mohajirs. This, naturally, provoked a great deal of Sindhi resentment. In an attempt to reverse that, the first democratically elect government in the 1970s, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's PPP government, appealed to Sindhi constituents and established quotas for Sindhis in government offices, education institutions and other institutions. That, in turn, was deeply resented by Mohajirs.

The ethno-political divide widened, and then became violent in the 1980s as you saw the emergence of, at the time, the MQM, supported by the Zia-ul-Haq regime. As arms and ammunitions flooded Pakistan, as a by-product of the anti-Soviet jihad in Afghanistan, these groups contesting Karachi were now armed to the teeth. The bottom line is – and this continues to be the fact about Karachi – its diversity, like diversity anywhere, could have been used constructively. Instead, it has been the opposite. The State as a matter of deliberate policy has pitted different ethnic communities against each other.

10.5 Faultlines

Today, the fault lines are many. I will identify the ones I feel are most prevalent and most interesting. The rivalry between Sindh's two biggest parties, the PPP and the MQM, in Karachi

is not electoral, because the MQM still retains a large electoral base in Karachi, which the PPP cannot possibly contest. Instead, the contest is over how Karachi is governed. For the PPP, which controls the provincial government, you need a highly centralized, at the provincial level, system of government for that party to be able to control Karachi's governance and its resources. For the MQM, one needs a highly decentralized system of government for the MQM to control Karachi's resources and governance.

Second dynamic: A disappearing State – and that is a somewhat misleading description because I do not mean a deteriorating State, I mean a State that has gone from an original role as a service provider and facilitator, to one that is now at best an absentee regulator that can be bought, and it sells its interventions to either the highest bidder or actors with whom it has other commonalities. And then, the demographics, the fact that Karachi is like the bottom of a drain, in that everybody ends up in Karachi. As they end up in Karachi, the State is unable to provide the services to cater to this growing population. I will go on to the ramifications of that in a little bit.

10.6 Who governs Karachi?

Who governs Karachi? That is a central question. We have alternated between devolved and centralized authority, benefiting respectively MQM and PPP. Some of the crucial municipal bodies - the Karachi Port Trust, the Karachi Municipal Corporation and the Karachi Development Authority: when you have had periods of empowered local governments, as you had under the Musharraf regime and as you had under, to some lesser extent, under the Zia-ul-Haq regime, MQM was able through its control of these municipal bodies, to gain significant control over the city's resources and correspondingly, patronage opportunities.

Non-Mohajirs were discriminated against both in terms of appointments to these municipal bodies as well as in the services that were being delivered through these institutions. So non-Mohajir areas of Karachi were often neglected.

By the same token, when you have a weak local government or non-existing local government, the current state of affairs, it is the PPP, through the provincial departments and ministries that is able to control the resources, the funds and the functions of Karachi. One of the things that has happened during the current rangers operation is while the MQM has had its back against the wall facing this paramilitary onslaught, the PPP has seized an opportunity to provincialize a lot of municipal functions like waste management and the building high-density board, which are revenue-generating functions. Some of that has been reversed under court orders, but the point is, you can see how this becomes a zero-sum contest where whenever one side seizes the opportunity to either provincialize or devolve Karachi's governance, they seize it because of the patronage opportunities that this provides.

One of the results of this has been a complete deterioration and politicization of just about every public institution, including the ones that are crucial to the lives of citizens. Most prominently perhaps is the police. Sindh – I think it is not a stretch to say, and this is up against some competition – is the most politicized police force, and it is provincially controlled. MQM has long tried to devolve that authority and it was under the Musharraf devolution plan in the first decade of the 2000s. The police is really functioning at the behest of a partisan, political actor, not as a service provider or protector of the Karachi resident.

Elected local bodies since 2008 have had very little control over municipal affairs. Slowly, the concept of city government in Karachi is being eroded. The idea of city government is disappearing. The marginalisation of municipal bodies, political sidelining of those bodies and the sidelining of government agencies - all of this is seriously undermining the State's ability to provide services.

10.7 The disappearing state

What is happening to the State? Once upon a time, Karachi had public housing, public transport and public health. Over the years, we have seen a gradual privatization of just about everything, including transport and water – de-facto privatization of water provision. Public housing is gone. More recently, the KESC – the institution that provides Karachi its power – was privatized, and the result of all this privatization is that these basic services have started to operate on a free market concept. The privatization of electricity, for example, jacked up the cost of electricity, so that lower income groups now can no longer afford it. They cannot afford water, so they are not provided water. So basic services are subject to a very warped market and warped market forces.

International Crisis Group's last report on Pakistan, was a report on Karachi. I am just going to read one quote from Arif Hassan, who is one of the most prominent architects and urban planners and commentators on all things Karachi. He said, "Given the sums involved, can the State be an effective regulator? It is doubtful. They will continue to give in to the demands of those with the most money."

Even health care has fallen victim to political jockeying. During their intense conflict, which I will come to in a bit, the MQM and the Awami National Party used their respective control over health services and hospitals in the city to distribute health care as a favour to constituents, not as a basic right. This disappearance of the State creates opportunities for a range of actors. The absence of a public ambulance service, for example, has on the one hand led to the prominence of a good charitable organization like the Edhi Foundation, but on the other hand, it has also opened opportunities for some of the less holy groups that we have been talking about, such as the Jamaatud-Dawa, which is the charity front of the anti-India Lashkar-e-Tayyaba (LeT). It is operating under another name as well, which is the FIF, the Falah-i-Insaniyat Foundation (FIF). You see their ambulances all over Karachi.

10.8 Mafias

Privatization and disappearance of the State has also enabled the rise of mafias of all stripes. Land mafias, or qabza groups, land-grabbing groups armed to the teeth, with the collusion of State officials, are able to acquire both private and public land illegally. Public lands are illegally regularized by local government officials and then sold at a very low price to these mafias. Cemeteries are being taken over, slums, and all of this – it is not one mafia, it is not one qabza group. The political parties that are ethnic based have allied groups and there is an ethnic component to all this property grabbing where – let us just say, to simplify things – you take over a building, you then fill that building with members of your ethnic group and create yet another segregated little bastion of patronage.

There is a transport mafia. I referred to public transport earlier. It used to include affordable buses and a circular railway, that they are now trying to revive, that allowed easy travel including to industrial areas for labourers. It is now largely defunct, despite these efforts to revive it. The private transport providers have filled that vacuum, largely dominated by the Pashtun community. They are able to block reforms that attempt to introduce lower-cost transport or revive public transport. Given this virtual monopoly over transport, fares have more than doubled since 2009. Control over the transport sector became all the more lucrative as a result of the new Afghanistan war. After 2001, where NATO trucks going from Karachi port up to and into Afghanistan meant that the trucking businesses had a major opportunity, a lot of money, a lot of profits to be made.

What other city have you heard of that has a water mafia? The water is not coming through the taps, it is coming through tankers. Those tankers are controlled by organized groups, and they manipulate the prices and make water largely unaffordable to lower income groups. All

of this occurs with the collusion of State officials. Corruption has allowed for a flagrant disregard of rules and regulations. I mentioned the formal economy, but what is also rising in parallel to it is a large informal economy that has annexed significant parts of the economy, leading to the growth of these mafias and these rackets. The black economy is estimated at generating \$2.9 billion annually (also including illegal gambling, human trafficking, kidnapping, heroin, arms and munitions).

10.9 Population explosion and urban density

Like I said, Karachi is like the bottom of a drain, it keeps attracting population influxes from all over the country. State institutions are unable to respond. 70% of Karachi's residents are poor. Given the rapid, unplanned growth, half the population lives in squatter settlements. We call them 'katchi abadis'. They were first developed in the 1950s when officials and middlemen seized and sold Board of Revenue land to low income families at affordable prices.

Development plans have been conceived, but they have largely failed to redistribute land to low income groups. Instead, they have been seized by land mafias and armed gangs, developers and speculators. Efforts to produce satellite towns have failed because there are no jobs in those areas.

Low-income groups, although they are offered residence in outlying areas, prefer to live within the city because living out means you have to commute to work and it is a long, very brutal commute. It costs a lot. If you are a woman, you are subject to all kinds of abuse as you travel from your home on the outskirts to your work place. So instead, they opt for irregular settlements in the city centre. These include slums, high-rise buildings with slumlords, which become dens of criminality, gang-recruitment, including recruitment to jihadist groups.

The end result of all of this is that the Karachi resident, the Karachi citizen, is dependent on various kinds of middlemen, police and local politicians in the murky waters between the official and the unofficial economy.

10.10 Ethnic conflict, extortion, and jihadist violence

I want to finally move to material that is probably more relevant to your work and the reasons why people would flee Karachi: ethno-political conflict, extortion and jihadist violence. A new era of violence occurred shortly after the return to democratic rule in 2008. One of the biggest challenges for the MQM is that the demographic ice is melting under their feet. Right now, the Muhajir community is the biggest group, it is a plurality, but it is shrinking. 41% under the last census, which was down from 54% from the census that came before. Their main competition is Pashtuns. Today, Pashtuns – actually, I have not seen the figures from the latest census, but their numbers have been estimated around 7 million, so that is more than a quarter of the population, and rising. Officials, urban planners and close observers of Karachi predict that in 20-25 years, the Pashtuns are going to outnumber the Muhajirs.

How does the MQM hold on to power if the Muhajir community is no longer the largest group? It resorts to force. When the Awami National Party in 2008 won two Provincial Assembly seats, that induced panic in the MQM because they saw the signs of what is to come. A lot of the violence that we saw until the intervention of the Rangers in 2013 was no longer Muhajir on Sindhi, or Muhajir on Baloch violence, it was Muhajir-Pashtun violence.

Meanwhile, the dynamics were further complicated by new entrants. One of them is the Sunni Tehreek, the Barelvi militant group. Originally, in Karachi, because the Barelvis were a majority, they never wore their Barelvi politics on their sleeve – not in large numbers. They happened to be Barelvis who were PPP supporters or MQM supporters. There was a political party that was an outright Barelvi party that was called the Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Pakistan (JUP).

Its constituency was in the Muhajir community, so with the rise of the MQM, the JUP pretty much faded away. But with an onslaught from groups like Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan, Deobandi groups that were seizing mosques and madrassas from Barelvi clerics and Barelvi communities, in response to that you got the Sunni Tehreek. When it first emerged, it was armed to the teeth with a single agenda, that of reclaiming all the real estate, the mosques and madrassas, that they had lost.

TTP, the Pakistani Taliban, also showed up after the operations in FATA, with very serious implications for the ANP that probably suffered the most. For the TTP, banishing or undercutting the ANP in Pashtun neighbourhoods was a starting point to them having influence in the city. And then there is the People's Aman Committee, which was a predominantly Baloch armed group in Lyari, which is a PPP stronghold, allied to the PPP. Although that dynamic had existed for a while, what changed was a similar panic in the PPP in that the demographics in Lyari started to work against it. As loyalties shifted, the PPP felt like if it was to retain control over Lyari, it needed to do so through force. Its relationship with the People's Aman Committee, the PAC, as we call it, was reversed. Where previously the PPP was the senior partner in that relationship, now it was the PAC, the violent, armed group that was telling the PPP in the 2013 election who the PPP candidates were going to be in Lyari.

This added to an already explosive mix, where you had Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, you had Jaish-e-Mohammad, groups that are headquartered in Punjab but that had umbilical links with Karachi's pretty large madrassa sector. Karachi has a large Shia population, so whenever there is a sectarian conflict, an escalation of sectarian conflict and violence, it is going to affect Karachi. Matthew referred to Malik Ishaq, who was the leader of the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi. I want to go a few years before his 2015 killing in a police encounter, to his release in 2011. He was released in the summer of 2011 initiated by the Supreme Court that said, "This guy is not convicted. Unless he is convicted, you have to release him." Before the Punjab government agreed to release him, there were negotiations with the SSP leadership. The State wanted some guarantees, "If we release him, he has to promise to do or not do the following things. First, he cannot mess around in Punjab. Secondly, we do not want to see him showing up in FATA. And thirdly, we do not want to see him stirring up sectarian conflict through hate speech and propaganda."

He observed the first two of those – do not mess around in Punjab and do not go to FATA. But what he ended up doing, because a leopard does not change its spots, he went around the country, including Karachi and Quetta, inciting violence against Shias. It is no coincidence that in the second half of 2011, you saw a dramatic spike in sectarian killings, including in Karachi. I mention this just to tease out the links between what happens elsewhere in the country and what happens in this city that is so different from, and yet reflects so much of, the rest of the country.

The presence of these groups, these sectarian groups, jihadist groups is obviously bad news for minority communities. You see Christian cemeteries being defaced, more and more Christians fleeing. So not very comforting to minorities when groups like this, this explosive mix gets yet more complicated and space gets more contested.

With all these new players, by 2013, extortion rackets and other rackets had proliferated to such an extent that the previously sort of unwritten rules of Karachi – and there is a great book on Karachi by a French academic, Laurent Gayer, called *Karachi: Ordered Disorder and the Struggle for the City* (2014). The idea there is that, yes, it is disorderly, yet there are these unwritten rules that different groups observe, including geographic limits. Fine, you can run your extortion racket, but you run it there, you don't harass businesses and shopkeepers over here. With the proliferation of those rackets, those rules were out the window. And whereas previously you had a relationship if you were a shopkeeper, if you were a small business, if

you were a big business, with one extortion racket, when the person showed up, you paid the money because you wanted to continue your business freely, and there was some predictability of the rate you were going to pay. With the proliferation of these groups, the rates went all over the place; you did not know who was going to show up today. If you paid someone today, there was no guarantee that you would not have to pay a very different actor tomorrow. What was ordered disorder became disordered disorder.

10.11 Re-enter the rangers

In September 2013, re-enter the Rangers. Very briefly, the Rangers have been given very widespread and special powers to tackle the variety of violence, not just ethno-political, but also sectarian, extortion, etc. Wide ranging powers that keep getting renewed. Most recently, last week, these special powers were renewed for another 90 days. In the short term, it is not surprising at all that organized violence and political violence reduced pretty significantly. It happens when you have martial law. People are not crazy, they are not going to take on the paramilitaries, and they are not going to take on a heavily armed State. What they did before these operations began, and these operations had been announced months before they began, is that they put their guns down, and they have been lying low.

So the question is, when we talk about peace and lower levels of violence, how permanent and sustainable is this? Inevitably, at some point, the Rangers operation will have to recede. What happens then? The way they are conducting it include rampant human rights abuses, and collective punishment has become standard practice. Guilt by association – to simplify, if you are a Pashtun, you are TPP. If you are a Mohajir, you are MQM. If you are a Saraiki, you are Lashkar-e-Jhangvi. If you are Baloch, you are People’s Aman Committee. And people who speak out against this, academics and activists, have been picked up, have gone missing. The effect is that those who support the operation – and there are many, and they are influential, including in the business communities, small businesses and shopkeepers who are thankful that they no longer have to face the extortion rackets – will speak up and say, “yes, this is a great thing”. Those who want to express concerns or criticism are increasingly realizing that it is better to keep quiet. That gives a very warped sense of how the population of Karachi perceives the rewards and curses of the operation.

There is more and more evidence of corruption within the Rangers, seizures of valuable real estate, including heritage sites. Their footprint looks permanent. So you have a player – the Rangers are not external to Karachi, they have been around for a while. They are a stakeholder in everything that I have described regarding the contest for Karachi’s resources. That has only increased with this operation.

Selective targeting - the madrassa sector, for example, remains largely untouched. There has been some action against Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, but in a running theme, the Jamaat ud-Dawa, all the iterations of the Lashkar-e-Taiba, the Jaish-e-Mohammad, have been largely untouched. They cannot be your friends in one part of the country and your enemies in another part of the country. So prominent pro-jihadists madrassas continue to operate freely. These include what is popularly called the Binori town madrassa, which is a fountainhead of Deobandi sectarian militancy country-wide that maintains very close ties with the anti-India Jaish-e-Mohammad. There is a range of others. In the interest of time, I will not name them all.

So just to conclude, the problems I have mentioned are all political problems. I know it is a cliché to say that these require political solutions, but they do. A paramilitary operation is not going to solve the problem. What is needed is for the political players, the political parties to agree once again – and they were on the verge of doing so – it was more a matter of being poorly implemented, but the agreements were made to restore the basic rules of the

democratic game, and respect each other's mandates. The Rangers operation, unfortunately, has not encouraged those players to come together.

11. UNHCR Eligibility Guidelines on the International Protection Needs of Members of Religious Minorities from Pakistan

UNHCR

UNHCR delivered a presentation on the Eligibility Guidelines on the international protection needs of members of religious minorities from Pakistan. The Guidelines are publicly available here:

UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), *UNHCR Eligibility Guidelines for Assessing the International Protection Needs of Members of Religious Minorities from Pakistan*, HCR/EG/PAK/17/01, January 2017 (<http://www.refworld.org/docid/5857ed0e4.html>).

