



Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)
LEGAL AID BOARD

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Information on Taliban activity and control in Mohmand agency

In September 2015 the *Austrian Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum* notes that:

“The situation in Mohmand Agency is very similar to that in Bajaur Agency. Thus, the military clearing operations that took place in 2011 and 2012 in Mohmand Agency also pushed militants into Afghanistan” (Austrian Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum (September 2015) *Fact Finding Mission Report Pakistan*, p.28).

This document also states that:

“...there remain militant hideouts in this agency despite many militants having been captured...A splinter group of the main TTP, namely Jamat-ul-Ahrar...has been conducting anti-State activities in the agency” (ibid, p.28).

In February 2016 *Voice of America* notes:

“Mohmand Agency is one of Pakistan’s seven semi-autonomous tribal districts lining the border with Afghanistan. They have long been considered strongholds of local, as well as al-Qaida militants linked to Afghanistan’s Taliban insurgency” (Voice of America (18 February 2016) *Taliban Militants Kill 9 Pakistani Security Personnel*).

Reuters in February 2016 states that:

“Since 2007, the Pakistani Taliban have been waging an insurgency in the area around Mohmand, about 177 km (110 miles) from Islamabad, the capital, to demand imposition of a strict interpretation of sharia, or Muslim religious law” (Reuters (18 February 2016) *Pakistani Taliban kill nine paramilitary personnel in attacks in northwest*).

In February 2016 *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* points out that:

“Mohmand is one of several districts that make up Pakistan's tribal belt near the Afghan border where the military has been battling Al-Qaeda and Taliban-linked militants for more than a decade” (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (20 February 2016) *Pakistani troops kill five militants*).

In February 2016 the *Express Tribune* states that:

“The political administration has clamped a curfew in Mohmand Agency, one of the seven quasi districts that make up the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Fata), citing potential security threats” (Express Tribune (22 February 2016) *Pakistan: Indefinite curfew imposed in Mohmand agency after terror threat*).

This document also notes that:

“In 2009, operation Brekhna was launched in the Agency and by 2011 the tribes people were asked to repatriate. While Mohmand remains a denotified area and official stats do not show any IDP's from the area, there are hundreds of families that have not gone back to the area and remain outside the Agency owing to the precarious law and order situation prevailing in the area” (ibid).

A report released in March 2016 by *Reuters* notes that:

“Pakistan's volatile tribal areas have been home to an insurgency by Islamist militants under the banner of the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) since 2007. The tribal areas, including Mohmand, have seen multiple rounds of military operations reduce the TTP's capacity, but targeted attacks against state and civilian targets are common. Mohmand has seen increasing violence in recent weeks. On Feb. 18, Jamaat-ur-Ahrar gunmen killed nine Pakistani paramilitary soldiers in two separate attacks” (Reuters (2 March 2016) *Taliban claim blast that killed two Pakistani staff of U.S. consulate*).

The *Daily Times* in March 2016 points out that:

“An indefinite dusk-to-dawn curfew was imposed across Mohmand Agency last month as security forces stepped up operations in the restive region. Residents were asked to stay home indefinitely via loudspeakers before the launching of an operation against the militants. According to the political administration, the measure was taken after two separate attacks in the agency which left nine security officials dead” (Daily Times (2 March 2016) *Two US mission officials killed in Mohmand blast*).

In March 2016 *Dawn* notes the:

“Mohmand tribal region, which is one of seven semi-autonomous tribal regions in the northwest, where Pakistani Taliban and Al Qaeda-linked militants were said to have carved out strongholds” (Dawn (7 March 2016) *Pakistan Taleban splinter group claims responsibility for court suicide attack*).

A document produced in March 2016 by the *Agence France-Presse* notes the

“...Mohmand tribal district, one of seven semi-autonomous regions bordering Afghanistan where militants from Al-Qaeda and the Taliban had established bases in the past” (Agence France-Presse (7 March 2016) *Blast kills 13 as Pakistani Taliban avenge executed Islamist*).

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty points out in a document published in March 2016 the

“...the Mohmand tribal area, which has seen several attacks in recent days” (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (7 March 2016) *Blast rocks district court in Pakistan*).

A report published in March 2016 by *BBC News* notes:

“Mohmand, which remains volatile years after the military said it had been cleared of militants” (BBC News (7 March 2016) *Pakistan bomb: Fourteen killed in Qadri 'revenge' attack*).

A report released in March 2016 by *Reuters* notes that:

“...Taliban's Jamaat-ur-Ahrar faction...[who] mostly focuses attacks in its base of the northwestern Mohmand tribal area...” (Reuters (28 March 2016) *Pakistan plans new paramilitary crackdown; Easter bombing kills 70*).

In March 2016 the *Deutsche Presse-Agentur* states in a report that:

“Once a formidable umbrella group, the Pakistani Taliban have splintered into several small but deadly cells after the killing of former leader Hakimullah Mehsud in a US drone strike in 2013. The deadliest is the Jamaat-ul-Ahrar or Army of Liberators, now based in the mountainous Afghan provinces of Kunar and Nuristan. The group has been behind several attacks in Pakistan including the suicide bomb that targeted members of the Christian community celebrating Easter in Lahore on Sunday” (Deutsche Presse-Agentur (28 March 2016) *Background*).

This document also states that:

“The group, whose former base in Pakistan's Mohmand tribal district remains a stronghold, also orchestrated a suicide bombing at a border crossing between Pakistan and India in November 2014 that killed more than 50 people” (ibid).

A report issued by *The News* in April 2016 notes:

“Two persons, including a tribal elder, were killed in a roadside blast in Pandjali tehsil in Mohmand Agency, official sources said on Wednesday. The sources said soldiers and political administration's official were returning to the offices after a search operation in Pandjali when their vehicle was targeted with a roadside bomb in Dawezai area. A tribal elder Malik Gul Rahim and a soldier were killed in the blast. The security forces cordoned off the area and launched a search operation. Meanwhile, Jamaatul Ahrar, splinter group of outlawed Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan claimed the responsibility for the terror act. The spokesman of the group, Ihsanullah Ihsan, called the media from an undisclosed location and claimed the attack” (The News (21 April 2016) *Tribal elder among two killed in Mohmand blast*).

A table issued in April 2016 by the *South Asia Terrorism Portal* includes incidents involving Mohmand Agency for 18 February 2016 (page 4); 1 March 2016 (page 4); and 24 April 2016 (page 6) (South Asia Terrorism Portal (April 2016) *Incidents and Statements involving TTP: 2016*).

In April 2016 the *Express Tribune* states:

“A security official was killed and at least three others injured in multiple attacks, including a roadside blast, in an area of Mohmand Agency bordering Afghanistan between late Saturday night and Sunday morning, senior security officials said” (Express Tribune (25 April 2016) *Mohmand violence: Security forces repulse cross-border attacks*).

The *Nation* in April 2016 notes that:

“Due to the law and order situation in the area, the political administration of Mohmand Agency and security forces have imposed curfew in Dawezai and Sagai area...” (The Nation (25 April 2016) *Forces kill five militants in Mohmand post attack*).

In April 2016 the *Express Tribune* points out in a report that:

“Militancy and violence increased by 34% in Federally Administered Tribal Areas is on the rise since the start of 2016 as compared to the last quarter of 2015” (*Express Tribune* (26 April 2016) *FRC first quarter report 2016: Violence by banned outfits increases 34% this year*).

This document also notes that:

“The report stated Mohmand Agency recorded the highest number of terrorist attacks while North Waziristan Agency witnessed the highest number of counter-terrorist operations from January to March 31” (*ibid*).

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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