



EASO Country of Origin Information Report

Pakistan Security Situation



August 2017



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| Print: | ISBN 978-92-9494-616-4 | doi: 10.2847/433337 | BZ-04-17-693-EN-C |
| PDF: | ISBN 978-92-9494-615-7 | doi: 10.2847/502130 | BZ-04-17-693-EN-C |

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Karachi, Pakistan - September 01, 2016: Activists of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) are protesting
against Sindh Government and demanding to refer the murder case of Dr. Khalid Soomro to
military court, during demonstration at M.A Jinnah Road in Karachi Rashid Khalid Mahmood
Soomro, the successor of Dr. Khalid Soomro led the demonstration.

Neither EASO nor any person acting on its behalf may be held responsible for the use which
may be made of the information contained herein.

Acknowledgements

EASO would like to acknowledge the following national asylum and migration department as the author of this report:

Belgium, Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons, Cedoca (Centre for Documentation and Research)

The following departments reviewed the contents of this report, together with EASO:

The Norwegian Country of Origin Information Centre, Landinfo;

Asylum Research Consultancy – a consulting group that provides case-specific, country specific and thematic COI research, publishes commentaries on COI reports, and undertakes research consultancy, project management and training for the asylum and human rights sector both in the UK and internationally.

It must be noted that the review carried out by the departments, experts or organisations mentioned does not necessarily lead to an endorsement or approval of the content of the report, which is the full responsibility of EASO. The review is a contribution to the quality of the report.

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Disclaimer

This report was written according to the EASO COI Report Methodology (2012) ⁽¹⁾. The report is based on carefully selected sources of information. All sources used are referenced. As much as possible and unless otherwise stated, all information presented, except for undisputed or obvious facts, has been cross-checked.

The information contained in this report has been researched, evaluated and analysed with utmost care. However, this document does not claim to be exhaustive. If a particular event, person or organisation is not mentioned in the report, this does not mean that the event has not taken place or that such person or organisation does not exist.

Furthermore, this report is not conclusive as to the determination or merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Terminology used should not be regarded as indicative of a particular legal position.

‘Refugee’, ‘risk’ and similar terminology are used as generic terminology and not as legally defined in the EU Asylum Acquis and the 1951 Refugee Convention.

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

The drafting of this report was finalised in June 2017. More information on the reference period of this report can be found in the methodology section of the introduction.

⁽¹⁾ The EASO methodology is largely based on the Common EU Guidelines for processing Country of Origin Information (COI), 2008, and can be downloaded from the EASO website:

https://coi.easo.europa.eu/administration/easo/PLib/EASO_COI_Report_Methodology.pdf.

Glossary and Abbreviations

| | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ACLED | Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project |
| Ah-le Sunnat Wal Jama'at | Political Sunni Deobandi organisation ⁽²⁾ |
| AI | Amnesty International |
| AJK | Azad Jammu and Kashmir |
| ANP | Awami National Party |
| Bazar | Enclosed marketplace or street where goods and services are exchanged or sold |
| BLA | Balochistan Liberation Army |
| BLF | Baloch Liberation Front |
| BRA | Baloch Republican Army |
| CPEC | China-Pakistan Economic Corridor |
| CRSS | Centre for Research and Security Studies |
| CTD | Counterterrorism Department |
| Deobandi | Puritan Islamic school influenced by Wahabism that originated in a madrassa in the town of Deoband ⁽³⁾ |
| FATA | Federally Administered Tribal Areas |
| FC | Frontier Corps |
| FRC | FATA Research Center |
| GB | Gilgit-Baltistan |
| Haqqani network | Armed insurgent movement led by Sirajuddin Haqqani. This movement is affiliated to the Taliban. Their headquarters are in North Waziristan (FATA) and in South East Afghanistan ⁽⁴⁾ |
| Hazara | Ethnic group living in Balochistan province of Pakistan (migrated from Afghanistan) |
| HRCP | Human Rights Commission of Pakistan |
| HRW | Human Rights Watch |
| ICJ | International Commission of Jurists |
| ICT | Islamabad Capital Territory |
| IDMC | Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre |
| IDP | Internally Displaced Person |

⁽²⁾ Fair, C.C., 'Explaining Support for Sectarian Terrorism in Pakistan: Piety, Maslak and Sharia', 2015, p. 1141.

⁽³⁾ Combatting Terrorism Center, The Past and Future of Deobandi Islam, 3 November 2009.

⁽⁴⁾ Express Tribune (The), Jalaluddin Haqqani died last year after 'prolonged illness': Taliban confirm, 31 July 2015; BBC, Afghan militant leader Jalaluddin Haqqani 'has died', 31 July 2015.

| | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| IED | Improvised Explosive Device |
| IJU | Islamic Jihad Union |
| IMU | Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan |
| IS | Islamic State |
| ISI | Inter-Services Intelligence |
| ISPR | Inter-Services Public Relations |
| Jamaat-ul-Ahrar | Splinter faction of the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan |
| JeM | Jaish-e-Muhammad (<i>Muhammad's Army</i>) |
| Jundullah | <i>Soldiers of Allah</i> , a group linked to TTP and IS ⁽⁵⁾ |
| JuA | Jamaat-ul-Ahrar |
| Khasadar | Pashtun tribal militia, institutionalised by the British. In recent times, they are made responsible for security in Pashtun areas, and given an allowance by the Pakistani authorities ⁽⁶⁾ |
| KP | Khyber Pakhtunkhwa |
| Lashkars | Pashtun tribal armies or militias that can be mobilised via traditional tribal decision mechanisms ⁽⁷⁾ |
| LeJ | Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (<i>Jhangvi's Army</i>) |
| LJA | Lashkar-e-Jhangvi Al-Alawi, Faction of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (<i>Jhangvi's Army</i>) |
| LeT | Lashkar-e-Taiba (<i>Army of the Pure</i>) |
| LI | Lashkar-e-Islam (<i>Army of Islam</i>) |
| LoC | Line of Control, disputed border line between India and Pakistan in the regions of Jammu and Kashmir |
| Madrassa | Islamic school |
| MQM | Muttahadi Qaumi Movement |
| NACTA | National Counter Terrorism Authority |
| NADRA | National Database & Registration Authority |
| NAP | National Action Plan to eliminate terrorism |
| NWFP | North West Frontier Province, the former name for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. |
| PICSS | Pakistani Institute for Conflict and Security Studies |

⁽⁵⁾ Daily Mail, Pakistan Taliban splinter group vows allegiance to Islamic State, 18 November 2014.

⁽⁶⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), Khasadar force personnel deprived of salaries, 28 May 2016.

⁽⁷⁾ Dawn, Death by lashkar: The forgotten protectors of Adezai village, 9 May 2016; Chaudhry, S., A., Civil Militia in FATA & Its Impact on Society, 9 October 2015.

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| PILDAT | Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development And Transparency |
| PIPS | Pakistani Institute for Peace Studies |
| PoR | Proof of Registration Card. Administrative document issued to registered Afghan refugees in Pakistan ⁽⁸⁾ |
| PPO | Protection of Pakistan Ordinance |
| PPP | Pakistan People's Party |
| PTI | Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf |
| Radd-ul-Fasaad | Code name for a military operation launched by the Pakistan Army on 22 February 2017 ⁽⁹⁾ |
| Razakar | Pro government tribal militias ⁽¹⁰⁾ |
| SATP | South Asia Terrorism Portal |
| SMP | Sipah-e-Mohammed Pakistan (Shia militant group) |
| SSP | Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (<i>Army of the Prophet Followers, a former Deobandi political party</i>) |
| TBIJ | The Bureau of Investigative Journalism |
| TTP | Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (<i>Pakistan Movement of Taliban</i>) |
| UBA | United Baloch Army |
| USDoS | US Department of State |
| Zarb-e-Azb | Code name for a military operation launched by the Pakistan Army on 15 June 2014 ⁽¹¹⁾ |

⁽⁸⁾ Al Jazeera, Afghan refugees' status extended until end of year, 7 February 2017.

⁽⁹⁾ Dawn, Pakistan Army launches 'Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad' across the country, 22 February 2017.

⁽¹⁰⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 8.

⁽¹¹⁾ Dawn, Zarb-e-Azb operation: 120 suspected militants killed in N Waziristan, 16 June 2014. See also BBC, Pakistan army North Waziristan offensive: thousands flee, 19 June 2014; Reuters, Pakistan army in for long haul in offensive against Taliban, 17 June 2014.

Introduction

This report was drafted by a Country of Origin Information (COI) specialist from Cedoca, the Belgian COI unit, as referred to in the [Acknowledgements](#) section of this report.

The report aims to provide information on the security situation in Pakistan, which is relevant for international protection status determination (PSD; refugee status and subsidiary protection). The terms of reference can be found in [Annex 2](#).

Methodology

This report is an update of the July 2016 EASO COI Report *Pakistan Security Situation* ⁽¹²⁾ and is based on information available from 1 April 2016 to 31 May 2017. The information in this report results from desk research of public specialised paper-based and electronic sources, which were consulted within the timeframe and the scope of the research. As part of a fact-finding mission conducted in April 2017 in Pakistan (Islamabad and Lahore) carried out by the Belgian COI unit and funded by the European Commission's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund ([AMIF](#)), specialised information concerning the security situation was added in this report. The Cedoca researcher, a specialist on Pakistan, conducted extensive interviews with the following experts:

- Abdullah Khan, Managing Director of the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies. Interview Islamabad, 5 April 2017;
- Cyril Almeida, Journalist. Interview Islamabad 11 April 2017;
- Imtiaz Gul, Executive Director of the Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS). Interview Islamabad, 6 April 2017;
- Michael Kugelman, Asia Program Deputy Director and Senior Associate for South Asia at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars (United States). Interview Islamabad, 5 April 2017;
- Mohammed Amir Rana, Security and Political Analyst and Director of the Pakistani Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS). Interview Islamabad, 6 April 2017;
- Saifullah Mehsud, President of the FATA Research Centre (FRC). Interview Islamabad, 5 April 2017.

In order to ensure that the authors respected the EASO COI Report Methodology, a review was carried out by COI specialists from the countries and organisations listed as reviewers in the [Acknowledgements](#) section. All comments made by the reviewers were taken into consideration and most of them were implemented in the final draft of this report.

⁽¹²⁾ EASO, COI Report Pakistan Security Situation, July 2016.

Structure and use of this report

This report provides information on elements and indicators that may help in assessing the need for protection. In the first part a [general description](#) is given on the security situation in Pakistan. This is then explained per province in [more detail](#) in the second part. A general description of the province contains information on the geography and population, on the background of the conflict, including the actors active in the province. This is followed by a description of recent trends in the security situation, including the nature of the violence, frequency, targets, locations and victims. Finally, a separate chapter is dedicated to displacements.

Both the general and regional descriptions provide information from various sources on the relevant elements and indicators. Information on an indicator as such should never be taken as conclusive, but as indicative for the assessment of protection needs, to be read in conjunction with other indicators and information on the region.

1. General description of the security situation in Pakistan

The general security situation will be described in this report using the following administrative divisions:

- The four provinces: Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Balochistan and Sindh;
- The two territories: the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT);
- The two administrative regions: Azad Kashmir (AK) and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) ⁽¹⁴⁾.

Michael Kugelman, Asia Program Deputy Director at the Woodrow Wilson Center (US), who monitors the situation in Pakistan very closely, stated in April 2017 that ⁽¹⁵⁾:

‘In general the security situation has improved significantly over the last three years in Pakistan. Ever since the Pakistani military launched a counterterrorism offensive in North Waziristan in June 2014, terrorist violence has been reduced. Today, the environment continues to be volatile; there are still mass casualty attacks but not as many as before.’

Muhammad Amir Rana, Security and Political Analyst and Director of the Pakistani Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), stated during his interview on 6 April 2017 that currently the objective of militant groups is to carry out attacks in major urban centres which can have a huge impact in the country and with a large number of victims ⁽¹⁶⁾.

1.1. Overview of recent conflicts in Pakistan

The security situation in Pakistan is complex and influenced by internal factors such as political, ethnic conflicts and sectarian violence. Besides this, the security situation is also influenced by international disputes with India and Afghanistan that occasionally result in the eruption of violence ⁽¹⁷⁾.

1.1.1. Political violence

Since the beginning of the 21st century, the politically motivated violence in Pakistan is mainly caused by the instability in the north-west of the country resulting from the 2001 toppling of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. Many Afghan Taliban settled in the FATA and in the North Western Frontier Province (NWFP, currently Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), having fled the international coalition invasion led by the US in Afghanistan. Under their influence, several Pakistani groups with a similar ideology continued working together in what developed into a federation of armed groups. This resulted in the so-called Talibanisation of the region. Their

⁽¹⁴⁾ See [Map 1](#): the two regions are situated in the north of Pakistan. On [Map 1](#), they are indicated in the grey area in the north of Pakistan.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Kugelman, M., Interview Islamabad, 5 April 2017.

⁽¹⁶⁾ Rana, M., A., Interview Islamabad, 6 April 2017.

⁽¹⁷⁾ USIP, The Current Situation in Pakistan, 9 January 2017.

policies included a strict application of conservative Islamic principles and resulted in violence against civilians and eventually the Pakistani authorities ⁽¹⁸⁾. Since 2007, the Pakistani Army has carried out military operations in the FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa aimed at breaking the power of the Pakistani Taliban and affiliated organisations ⁽¹⁹⁾. Especially from 2009, operations against the Taliban have been a source of insecurity, causing a massive displacement from the region ⁽²⁰⁾. In spite of repeated peace agreements and statements by the Pakistani Army, violence has continued in recent years. Since 2004 the US Army has conducted drone attacks against the Taliban and al-Qaeda in the region ⁽²¹⁾ though according to an April 2017 article by Reuters, such drone attacks inside Pakistan have ‘become rare over the past few years’ ⁽²²⁾.

After his election in June 2013, Prime Minister Sharif initially negotiated with the Pakistani Taliban which was, according to the Washington Post, a difficult and complex task ⁽²³⁾. The talks started in the beginning of February 2014 in Islamabad ⁽²⁴⁾, but soon stalled after the Mohmand wing of the Taliban executed 23 soldiers from the Frontier Corps, whom they had held since 2010 ⁽²⁵⁾. In an effort to restart negotiations, the Taliban announced a month-long ceasefire on 1 March 2014 ⁽²⁶⁾, which eventually ended on 17 April 2014 ⁽²⁷⁾. What was left of the peace talks finally collapsed after the terrorist attack on the Mohammad Ali Jinnah Airport in Karachi on 8 June 2014. Although the attack was carried out by some Uzbeks and militants of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) claimed responsibility ⁽²⁸⁾.

On 15 June 2014, the Pakistani Army launched an offensive in order to eradicate ‘foreign and local terrorists’. The main targets were militant strongholds in the North Waziristan tribal region where insurgents enjoyed sanctuary. The operation was codenamed *Zarb-e-Azb* (see Section 1.3.1. [Security operations and armed clashes](#)) ⁽²⁹⁾. The fighting continued in 2014 without, however, giving the Army a decisive victory over the Taliban and its allies in the FATA ⁽³⁰⁾. The militants struck back with terrorist attacks: on 2 November 2014 a suicide

⁽¹⁸⁾ Al, As if hell fell on me, the human rights crisis in northwest Pakistan, 10 June 2010, pp. 10-11; Rashid, A., *Descent into Chaos*, 2008, pp. 265-270.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Critical Threats, Pakistani Military Operation in North Waziristan: Knowing the Battlefield, 16 June 2014; ICG, Pakistan: Countering Militancy in FATA, Asia Report N°178, 21 October 2009; Thomson Reuters Foundation, Pakistan Violence, 11 April 2013; World Politics Review, FATA: The Never-Ending War on Pakistan’s Periphery, 6 January 2015.

⁽²⁰⁾ Al, As if hell fell on me, the human rights crisis in northwest Pakistan, 10 June 2010, p. 7; ICG, Pakistan: The Worsening IDP Crisis, Asia Briefing N°111, 16 September 2010.

⁽²¹⁾ HRW, World Report 2015 – Pakistan, January 2015; ICG, Drones: Myths And Reality In Pakistan, Asia Report N°247, 21 May 2013.

⁽²²⁾ Reuters, Suspected U.S. drone strike targets Pakistani Taliban militants: sources, 28 April 2017.

⁽²³⁾ Washington Post (The), Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif’s effort to seek peace with Pakistani Taliban off to rocky start, 19 September 2013.

⁽²⁴⁾ BBC, Pakistan enters peace talks with Taliban, 6 February 2014.

⁽²⁵⁾ Reuters, Peace Talks between Pakistan and Taliban collapse after killings, 17 February 2014.

⁽²⁶⁾ Dawn, Pakistani Taliban announce a month-long ceasefire, 2 March 2014; Guardian (The), Pakistan Taliban announce one-month ceasefire to aid peace talks, 1 March 2014.

⁽²⁷⁾ Dawn, TTP ends ceasefire, says talks option open, 17 April 2014.

⁽²⁸⁾ AP, Pakistani forces repel attack near Karachi airport, 10 June 2014; Dawn, TTP claims attack on Karachi airport, 9 June 2014.

⁽²⁹⁾ Dawn, Zarb-e-Azb operation: 120 suspected militants killed in N Waziristan, 16 June 2014. See also BBC, Pakistan army North Waziristan offensive: thousands flee, 19 June 2014; Reuters, Pakistan army in for long haul in offensive against Taliban, 17 June 2014.

⁽³⁰⁾ Jane’s 360, Uncertain Victory – Pakistan’s North Waziristan Offensive, 28 December 2014.

bombing claimed 60 lives at the Wagah border crossing near Lahore, a symbolic and sensitive area ⁽³¹⁾. On 16 December 2014, seven to nine gunmen, apparently affiliated with the TTP, entered an Army public school in Peshawar. They opened fire on school staff and children, killing 145 people, including 132 minors, mostly children of Army staff. It was the deadliest terrorist attack ever conducted in Pakistan ⁽³²⁾. The Army Chief of Staff urged the Government to take strong action against the Taliban ⁽³³⁾.

On 25 December 2014, after consultation with different political parties, Prime Minister Sharif announced a 20-point comprehensive plan of action, the National Action Plan (NAP), in order to confront the terrorist threat. Special courts would be established for the speedy trial of terrorist suspects and a moratorium on capital punishment was extended, after being reinstated earlier the same month. Furthermore a 5 000-strong counter terrorism force would be deployed across the country. No armed militias would be allowed to function in the country and their funding would be 'choked'. Hate speech would be 'countered'. The Pakistan Army confirmed that military operations in the tribal areas would continue ⁽³⁴⁾. However, human rights organisations criticised the speedy trial of terrorist suspects and cautioned that hundreds of non-terrorists risked execution without being subjected to proper legal procedures ⁽³⁵⁾ (see also 1.5.1. [State protection, security forces and justice](#)).

In 2015 and 2016, the military Operation *Zarb-e-Azb* continued ⁽³⁶⁾. The Pakistani Army was actively present in the tribal areas, targeting a wide array of militant groups ⁽³⁷⁾. Besides military operations, the Pakistani Army was called upon to provide security backup to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) ⁽³⁸⁾. The Government's NAP, which was established in January 2015 to reduce terrorism, seems to have achieved some reduction in violence but critics have highlighted that the Government had 'failed to take some effective steps to reduce appeal of religious extremism and violence ideologies that feed terrorism' (see Section 1.5.2. [Anti-Terrorism Acts](#)) ⁽³⁹⁾. On 22 February 2017, the Government announced a country wide military operation codenamed *Radd-ul-Fasaad* (see Section 1.3.1. [Security operations and armed clashes](#)), which is regarded as a continuation of the NAP. This announcement came after the country witnessed an increase in major attacks in the first months of 2017 in several provinces, most of them claimed by Jamaat-ul-Ahrar (JuA) ⁽⁴⁰⁾.

⁽³¹⁾ Dawn, TTP splinter groups claim Wagah attack: 60 dead, 3 November 2014; Guardian (The), Dozens killed at suicide attack at Pakistan-India border post, 2 November 2014.

⁽³²⁾ CNN, In Pakistan school attack, Taliban terrorists kill 145, mostly children, 17 December 2014; New York Times (The), Taliban Besiege Pakistan School, Leaving 145 Dead, 16 December 2014.

⁽³³⁾ Economist (The), The man with the plan: Pakistan after the school massacre, 24 January 2015.

⁽³⁴⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), Fight against terrorism: Defining moment, 25 December 2014.

⁽³⁵⁾ BBC, Justice at risk as Pakistan rushes convicts to the gallows, 25 December 2014.

⁽³⁶⁾ Nation (The), Operation Zarb-e-Azb: Two years of success, 6 September 2016.

⁽³⁷⁾ Foreign Policy, Actually, Pakistan Is Winning Its War on Terror, 10 December 2015.

⁽³⁸⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), Pakistan Army leaving no stone unturned to protect Chinese investment, 8 February 2016.

⁽³⁹⁾ PIPS, Executive Summary of comprehensive package of NAP, 14 December 2015.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Dawn, Pakistan Army launches 'Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad' across the country, 22 February 2017.

1.1.2. Ethnic and sectarian violence

Simultaneously, the nationalist insurgency in Balochistan caused bloodshed in recent years, despite the victory of a number of nationalist parties in provincial elections in May 2013. Balochi activists claimed that between 2013 and 2015 the Pakistani Army and intelligence agencies continued to target them, with reports of human rights organisations and news reports documenting disappearances and extrajudicial killings ⁽⁴¹⁾. In 2016, the Pakistan Army claimed that the insurgency in Balochistan has been under control and only ‘isolated activity’ is reported from along the Pak-Afghan border in Balochistan (see Section [2.2.3 Baluchistan](#)) ⁽⁴²⁾.

Sectarian violence across Pakistan continues to be a threat to the security situation in Pakistan and the broader region, according to The Diplomat ⁽⁴³⁾. Shias, but also Sunnis (including Barelvi and Sufis), Ahmadis, Christians and Hindus are victims of religiously motivated violence, especially carried out by radical militant groups ⁽⁴⁴⁾. Most of the victims of sectarian violence are members of the Shia branch of Islam, who comprise approximately 25 % of the population in Pakistan ⁽⁴⁵⁾. Various Deobandi militant groups, such as Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), Jundullah and factions of the TTP, target the Shia community ⁽⁴⁶⁾. According to one source, the violence that was originally limited to Shias now extends to moderate Sunnis as well, if they are seen as not being sufficiently orthodox ⁽⁴⁷⁾. Also the Christian community in Pakistan is a frequent target of sectarian violence ⁽⁴⁸⁾, whilst Ahmadis continue to be targeted by militant extremists ⁽⁴⁹⁾. They are often the victims of legal, institutional and social discrimination, according to USCIRF ⁽⁵⁰⁾.

Interethnic violence has been a problem in the province of Sindh in recent years. Tensions between Mohajir and the Pashtun population in Karachi have increased; especially the power struggle between both groups led to numerous political murders of members of the Muttahadi Qaumi Movement (MQM), Awami National Party (ANP), Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) ⁽⁵¹⁾.

⁽⁴¹⁾ AHCR, Balochistan; 160 persons extra judicially killed, 510 disappeared and 50 decomposed bodies were found during 2013, 8 January 2014; Al Jazeera, From rallies to armed resistance in Balochistan, 6 May 2014; DW, Pakistani army involved in Baloch kidnappings, 6 December 2013; IBT, Balochistan: ‘Hundreds of people abducted and murdered by Pakistan army’ activists say, 11 March 2015.

⁽⁴²⁾ Nation (The), Baloch insurgency brought under control: Army, 7 September 2016.

⁽⁴³⁾ Diplomat (The), US-Pakistan Counterterrorism Needs a New Focus, 4 April 2017.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Netherlands (The), Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, Thematisch ambtsbericht positie van Ahmadi’s en Christenen in Pakistan 2016-2017, 24 April 2017, pp. 19-20.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ USCIRF, USCIRF Annual Report 2017 - Tier 1: USCIRF-recommended Countries of Particular Concern (CPC) - Pakistan, 26 April 2017, p. 61; Clarion Project, 100,000 Christians Flee Persecution in Pakistan, 15 July 2015.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ DW, Examining Pakistan’s growing sectarian violence, 18 February 2015.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Mahadevan, P., ‘Sectarianism in Pakistan’, March 2017, p. 3.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ New York Times (The), AP Explains: Violence Against Christians in Pakistan, 28 March 2016.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Jinnah Institute, State of Religious Freedom in Pakistan, March 2016, p. 24.

⁽⁵⁰⁾ USCIRF, USCIRF Annual Report 2017 - Tier 1: USCIRF-recommended Countries of Particular Concern (CPC) - Pakistan, 26 April 2017, p. 63.

⁽⁵¹⁾ DNA, Pakistan: nearly 3,000 killed in Karachi violence in 2014, 7 January 2015; HRW, World Report 2016 – Pakistan, January 2017; USIP, Conflict dynamics in Karachi, 19 October 2012.

1.1.3. International disputes

Pakistan's relations with neighbouring countries also have an impact on the security situation. The situation at the border with Afghanistan became more volatile with several cross-border attacks in 2017. Both countries accused each other of providing militants with 'safe zones' to carry out attacks across the border ⁽⁵²⁾. Experts quoted by Deutsche Welle stated that the main reason behind an increased hostility between the two countries is that now Afghanistan has better relations with India ⁽⁵³⁾. Relations between Pakistan and India deteriorated in 2016 and at the start of 2017, owing to the situation at the Line of Control (LoC) in Kashmir ⁽⁵⁴⁾. Iranian-Pakistani relations have shown a sharp rise in hostility. Just like Afghanistan and India, Iran disapproves of Pakistan's support to Sunni militant groups and is also concerned about growing Pakistan-Saudi Arabia ties ⁽⁵⁵⁾.

1.2. Actors in the conflict

1.2.1. State armed forces

Pakistan Armed Forces

The Pakistan Armed Forces are the sixth largest army in strength in the world ⁽⁵⁶⁾. The Pakistan Armed Forces have around 620 000 active personnel at their disposal, with an active reserve personnel of 515 000, according to reporting in January 2017 ⁽⁵⁷⁾. Operational control rests with the National Command Authority (NCA). Pakistan's nuclear and conventional forces have traditionally been oriented and structured against a prospective threat from India. Since 2008, however, a priority for the Army has been counter-insurgency operations, mainly against Islamist groups for which forces have been redeployed from the Indian border ⁽⁵⁸⁾.

The military has gradually gained control of a large part of the country's economic resources. It is entrenched in the country's corporate sector and controls some of Pakistan's largest companies and significant tracts of real estate. This has enabled its members to become something of an independent class ⁽⁵⁹⁾. The Pakistan Army has thus developed a very strong 'esprit de corps' ⁽⁶⁰⁾.

As Professor Anatol Lieven observed in his book in 2011: 'The Pakistan military, more even than most militaries, sees itself as a breed apart, and devotes great effort to inculcating in new recruits the feeling that they belong to a military family different from (and vastly superior to) Pakistani civil society' ⁽⁶¹⁾.

⁽⁵²⁾ DW, Worst border clashes in years: Are Afghanistan and Pakistan at war?, 7 May 2017.

⁽⁵³⁾ DW, Worst border clashes in years: Are Afghanistan and Pakistan at war?, 7 May 2017.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ Dawn, India will retaliate to soldiers' mutilation at time and place of choosing: Indian vice-COAS, 3 May 2017.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ DW, Unhappy neighbors - Afghanistan, India, Iran wary of Pakistan's 'jihadist support', 9 May 2017.

⁽⁵⁶⁾ Wire (The), India, Pakistan and a Tale of Two Army Chiefs, 7 January 2017.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ Global Fire Power, Pakistan Military Strength, last updated: 2017.

⁽⁵⁸⁾ IISS, The Military Balance 2015, 2015.

⁽⁵⁹⁾ Globalsecurity, Pakistan Army, n.d.; Lieven, A., Pakistan, a hard country, 2011, pp. 169-170.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ Lieven, A., Pakistan, a hard country, 2011, p. 163.

⁽⁶¹⁾ Lieven, A., Pakistan, a hard country, 2011, p. 163.

The unity of the Army is scrupulously guarded. Islamist conspiracies by junior officers against their superiors have been infiltrated and smashed by military intelligence. The efficient reputation of the Army means that the institution is admired by large parts of the general populace; in the past every military coup in Pakistan so far has been popular with most Pakistanis ⁽⁶²⁾.

At the end of November 2016, General Qamar Javed Bajwa succeeded General Raheel Sharif who stepped down after completing his three-year term, as new Army chief ⁽⁶³⁾. No immediate shift in the military policy under General Bawja is to be expected ⁽⁶⁴⁾.

Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI)

The ISI is Pakistan's intelligence service tasked with coordinating intelligence between the branches of the military, collecting foreign and domestic intelligence and conducting covert offensive operations ⁽⁶⁵⁾. In December 2016, Naveed Mukhtar was chosen as the new head of the ISI, replacing Rizwan Akhtar ⁽⁶⁶⁾. The ISI reportedly has close ties with a number of extremist Islamist groups ⁽⁶⁷⁾. In the 1990s, close relationships were established with outfits such as Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and JeM to put pressure on India, with whom Pakistan has already been for decades embroiled on the issue of Kashmir ⁽⁶⁸⁾. Besides this, the ISI has supported the Afghan Taliban, the Haqqani Network and Pakistani jihadist groups allied with al Qaeda, according to Bill Roggio, Managing Editor of The Long War Journal ⁽⁶⁹⁾.

The Frontier Corps (FC)

The Frontier Corps (FC) is an auxiliary military force, formally under the authority of the Interior Ministry, but commanded by Army officers. There are two major subdivisions, one stationed in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa/FATA and one stationed in Balochistan. The FC helps local law enforcement maintain law and order, border control and fight organised crime. The strength of the FC in KP and Balochistan in April 2016 was 90 138 ⁽⁷⁰⁾. In Balochistan the FC are said to be involved in extrajudicial killings and disappearances ⁽⁷¹⁾.

⁽⁶²⁾ Lieven, A., *Pakistan, a hard country*, 2011, pp. 163-164; Siddiqi, S., *Military Inc.: Inside Pakistan's Military Economy*, May 2007, p. 108.

⁽⁶³⁾ Al Jazeera, *Pakistan's new army chief takes command*, 29 November 2016.

⁽⁶⁴⁾ Reuters, *Pakistan's new army chief brings no change in policy: defense minister*, 27 November 2016.

⁽⁶⁵⁾ EASO, *Pakistan: Country Overview*, August 2015, pp. 28, 49.

⁽⁶⁶⁾ RFE/RL, *Pakistan Names New ISI Head*, 12 December 2016.

⁽⁶⁷⁾ Kiessling, H., *Faith, Unity, Discipline The Inter-Service-Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan*, October 2016, pp. 1-11.

⁽⁶⁸⁾ Kiessling, H., *Faith, Unity, Discipline The Inter-Service-Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan*, October 2016, pp. 1-11.

⁽⁶⁹⁾ Roggio, B., *Pakistan is 'very cooperative and very engaged in the fight against terrorism,' Secretary Kerry tells Congress*, 25 February 2016; Roggio, B., *Pakistan: Friend or Foe in the Fight Against Terrorism?*, 12 July 2016.

⁽⁷⁰⁾ Jaffrelot, C., *Pakistan at the Crossroads Domestic Dynamics and External Pressures*, April 2016, pp. 140-141.

⁽⁷¹⁾ Balochwama News, *Balochistan: Pakistani forces kill five abducted Baloch in fake encounter*, 28 April 2017; UN CAT, *Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan*, 12 May 2017, p. 3.

The Rangers

The Rangers are a paramilitary force under the authority of the Interior Ministry. There are two major subdivisions, the Punjabi Rangers headquartered in Lahore and the Sindh Rangers headquartered in Karachi. The Rangers help local law enforcement, provide border security and fight smuggling. Their total strength is about 19 475 in Punjab and 24 630 in Sindh, according to an April 2016 publication ⁽⁷²⁾. In April 2017, the Government decided to extend 'the special policing powers' of the Rangers in Sindh, extending their deployment and mandate to carry out 'operations against militant wings, extortionists, hitmen and militants' in Karachi by another 90 days ⁽⁷³⁾.

The Pakistani Police

The Pakistani Police (see also [1.5.1. State protection, security forces and justice](#)) has manpower of approximately 391 364 personnel, according to the National Police Bureau, cited by the newspaper Dawn in April 2017. Of those, only 5 731 are women ⁽⁷⁴⁾. The Police are generally understood to be underfunded and are facing a difficult task fighting rising amounts of crime and, in certain regions, activity of militants and insurgents ⁽⁷⁵⁾. The Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) states that 'police services are below Western standards and are non-existent in some areas of the country' ⁽⁷⁶⁾.

According to a report by Human Rights Watch (HRW) in September 2016:

'... the Police are one of the most widely feared, complained against, and least trusted government institutions in Pakistan, lacking a clear system of accountability and plagued by corruption at the highest levels[...] There are numerous reported cases of police extrajudicial killings of criminal suspects, torture of detainees to obtain confessions, and harassment and extortion of individuals who seek to file criminal cases, especially against members of the security forces.' ⁽⁷⁷⁾ (see also [1.5.1. State protection, security forces and justice](#))

Lashkars

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and in the FATA, Pakistani Army and Police sometimes use irregular peace militia (so-called Lashkars) to control territory. They are often called 'Government Taliban', according to the newspaper Dawn. They have reportedly used indiscriminate and punitive force, engaging in the destruction of houses belonging to suspected Taliban and their families, arbitrary arrest and unlawful killings. The provincial government decided to discontinue their financing. Due to the NAP, the Lashkars are being dissolved ⁽⁷⁸⁾.

⁽⁷²⁾ Jaffrelot, C., Pakistan at the Crossroads Domestic Dynamics and External Pressures, April 2016, pp. 140-141.

⁽⁷³⁾ Dawn, Rangers' policing powers in Karachi extended for 90 days, 23 April 2017.

⁽⁷⁴⁾ Dawn, Women make up less than 2pc of country's police force: report, 26 April 2017.

⁽⁷⁵⁾ USIP, A Counterterrorism Role for Pakistan's Police Stations, 18 August 2014, pp. 3-4.

⁽⁷⁶⁾ OSAC, Pakistan 2017 Crime & Safety Report: Islamabad, 31 January 2017.

⁽⁷⁷⁾ HRW, "This Crooked System" - Police Abuse and Reform in Pakistan, 25 September 2016.

⁽⁷⁸⁾ Dawn, Death by lashkar: The forgotten protectors of Adezai village, 9 May 2016; Chaudhry, S., A., Civil Militia in FATA & Its Impact on Society, 9 October 2015.

1.2.2. Armed Groups

Two interviewees interviewed for this report have stated that armed groups in Pakistan can be divided into four major groups:

- The anti-state militant groups such as the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP);
- The India and Afghan-centric groups;
- The sectarian orientated militant groups;
- The secular nationalist groups such as the Baloch militants ⁽⁷⁹⁾.

Some of the main different armed groups in Pakistan are described below.

Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)

The TTP, also known as the Pakistani Taliban, is the largest banned militant group active in Pakistan. It was founded in 2007 as a loose formation of Deobandi groupings chiefly operating in the Pakistani border area with Afghanistan. The initial objectives of the organisation were the implementation of sharia law and the ousting of coalition forces from Afghanistan ⁽⁸⁰⁾. The group is banned by the Pakistan Government ⁽⁸¹⁾. It was published in January 2016 that the TTP consist of 35 000 core volunteer and conscript fighters. These militants are mostly Pashtun originating from the border zone between Pakistan and Afghanistan ⁽⁸²⁾. The TTP mostly operates from provinces of Kunar, Nuristan, Paktika, Gardaiz, Nangarhar and Paktia in Afghanistan to launch cross-border attacks inside Pakistan ⁽⁸³⁾. The TTP finances its activities through extortion and smuggling ⁽⁸⁴⁾. The TTP has strong ties with sectarian Deobandi organisations such as LeJ and Ah-le Sunnat Wal Jama'at ⁽⁸⁵⁾. Arif Jamal, a US-based scholar on Islamic extremist groups states that links between the TTP and the Pakistan Army are confirmed through the TTP's recent decision to focus on Kashmir and Jammu, which 'shows that the Pakistan Army is again activating the TTP and other Deobandi groups in Kashmir and India for jihad' ⁽⁸⁶⁾. On 1 November 2013, the official TTP leader Hakimullah Mehsud was killed by a drone-attack in North Waziristan ⁽⁸⁷⁾. The nomination of hardliner Mullah Fazlullah as his successor was considered a rejection of possible peace talks with the Pakistani authorities ⁽⁸⁸⁾. Under the strain of military operations in North Waziristan in 2014, the rise of the Islamic State (IS) and tensions within the group over the leadership of Fazlullah, the TTP split into different factions ⁽⁸⁹⁾. Bill Roggio, Managing Editor of The Long War Journal, reported that the TTP has attempted to reunite the various factions. In March 2015, JuA rejoined the TTP but operates with a degree of autonomy. In the same month Lashkar-e-Islam (LI) merged

⁽⁷⁹⁾ Almeida, C., Interview Islamabad, 11 April 2017; Khan, A., Interview Islamabad, 5 April 2017.

⁽⁸⁰⁾ Al Jazeera, Breaking down the Tehreek-e-Taliban, 18 September 2015.

⁽⁸¹⁾ Al Jazeera, Breaking down the Tehreek-e-Taliban, 18 September 2015.

⁽⁸²⁾ Mackenzie Institute (The), Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), last updated 22 January 2016.

⁽⁸³⁾ ISSI, Issue Brief Pak-Afghan Relations After the Devastating Terror Attacks in Pakistan, 23 February 2017, p. 4.

⁽⁸⁴⁾ Norway, LandInfo, Pakistan: Sikkerhetsrelaterte forhold i Khyber Pakhtunkwa (KPK) og Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), 8 November 2013.

⁽⁸⁵⁾ Fair, C.C., 'Explaining Support for Sectarian Terrorism in Pakistan: Piety, Maslak and Sharia', 2015, p. 1141.

⁽⁸⁶⁾ DNA, Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan to join jihad in Kashmir; gives fresh call to attack Indian security forces, 29 September 2016.

⁽⁸⁷⁾ Monde (Le), Hakimullah Mehsud enterré, les Talibans choisissent un successeur, 2 November 2013.

⁽⁸⁸⁾ Guardian (The), Pakistani Taliban select hardliner Mullah Fazlullah as new leader, 8 November 2013.

⁽⁸⁹⁾ Jaffrelot, C., The Pakistan Paradox: Instability and Resilience, April 2015, p. 212.

with the TTP. In May 2015, three groups under the leadership of al-Qaeda leader Matiur Rehman merged with the TTP. In February 2017, the Mehsud division rejoined the TTP, after it split from it in 2014 ⁽⁹⁰⁾.

In December 2014, the TTP claimed responsibility for the Peshawar school attack which killed 145 people. A spokesman said it was in retaliation for the ongoing army campaign in North Waziristan ⁽⁹¹⁾.

In 2016, according to the Pakistani Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), the TTP was responsible for 106 terrorist attacks ⁽⁹²⁾, compared to 2012 in 2015 ⁽⁹³⁾. The terrorist attacks remained concentrated in the FATA, KP and Karachi in 2016 ⁽⁹⁴⁾. In comparison, the Pakistani Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS) reported that the group:

‘claimed that during the year it has conducted 117 attacks against Pakistani security forces, which include five suicide bombings, 24 IED attacks 39 targeted attacks and 12 ambushes. However, when PICSS counter checked its claims, many were disputed and claimed by other militant groups as well. (...) If one believes TTP’s own annual ‘progress report’, the group failed to carry out even a single attack in Punjab, Federal Capital, Azad Kashmir or Gilgit-Baltistan. It remained mainly focused on KPK with some attacks in Balochistan and few in Sindh. About half of its ‘claimed’ attacks took place in KPK’ ⁽⁹⁵⁾

The same report concluded that ‘[d]espite its weakness and depleted operational capabilities, the group still poses significant threat to Pakistan’ ⁽⁹⁶⁾.

Jamaat-ul-Ahrar (JuA)

The JuA is a faction of the TTP but operates with a degree of autonomy ⁽⁹⁷⁾. In the summer of 2014, the JuA split from the TTP ⁽⁹⁸⁾. In March 2015, the group rejoined the TTP but releases its own statements on attacks, according to Bill Roggio ⁽⁹⁹⁾. Sources stated that the group is based in the tribal areas but also has a presence in the province of Punjab ⁽¹⁰⁰⁾. The leadership of JuA has close ties to al-Qaeda and its emir, Ayman al Zawahiri ⁽¹⁰¹⁾. Sources mention that

⁽⁹⁰⁾ Roggio, B., Mehsud faction rejoins the Movement of the Taliban in Pakistan, 4 February 2017.

⁽⁹¹⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), TTP claim responsibility for Peshawar school attack, 16 December 2014.

⁽⁹²⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 67.

⁽⁹³⁾ PIPS, 2015, Pakistan Security Report, 2016, pp. 10-12.

⁽⁹⁴⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 67.

⁽⁹⁵⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, p. 26.

⁽⁹⁶⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, p. 26.

⁽⁹⁷⁾ Roggio, B., Mehsud faction rejoins the Movement of the Taliban in Pakistan, 4 February 2017; PGI Intelligence, Pakistan: Recent Attacks Expose Limits of Counter-Terrorism, Threaten CPEC Projects, 28 February 2017.

⁽⁹⁸⁾ Roggio, B., Taliban splinter group Jamaat-ul-Ahrar forms in northwestern Pakistan, 26 August 2014; Nation (The), Ex-TTP spokesman surrender a major breakthrough, 18 April 2017.

⁽⁹⁹⁾ Roggio, B., Weiss, C., Pakistani Taliban faction showcases training camp, suicide attacks, 2 February 2017; Reuters, Pakistani splinter group rejoins Taliban amid fears of isolation, 12 March 2015.

⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ Roggio, B., Weiss, C., Pakistani Taliban faction showcases training camp, suicide attacks, 2 February 2017; PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 68.

⁽¹⁰¹⁾ Roggio B., Weiss C., Pakistani Taliban faction showcases training camp, suicide attacks, 2 February 2017; DNA, Jamaat ul Ahrar: Pakistan’s latest headache, 24 February 2017.

JuA is led by Omar Khalid al Khurasani, a Taliban commander from Mohmand Agency ⁽¹⁰²⁾. In August 2016, the US Department of State (USDoS) added the JuA to its list of global terrorists' organisations ⁽¹⁰³⁾.

PIPS documented that in 2016, the JuA was responsible for 66 terrorist attacks compared to 22 in 2015 ⁽¹⁰⁴⁾. The group was responsible for some major attacks in 2016 such as the attack on Easter in Lahore (more than 70 people killed), the attack on the Charsadda university (nearly 17 killed) and attacks on the courts in Mardan (13 people killed) ⁽¹⁰⁵⁾. PICSS reported that:

'[d]uring 2016, highest number of people killed by any single group can be attributed to JuA. 340 people were killed and 421 were injured in attacks claimed by JuA. More than half of the suicide attacks (9 out of 17) were carried out by the group. The group exhibited unmatched capability of conducting high profile attacks in the country. Except one, all of the suicide attacks carried out by the group were high profile, some of them deadliest ever suicide attacks in Pakistan such as attack on Lawyers in Quetta or Gulshan Park attack in Lahore. It was observed that the group specifically targeted legal fraternity in the country' ⁽¹⁰⁶⁾.

The main targets of the group are minorities, lawyers and education centres ⁽¹⁰⁷⁾. In April 2017, a key figure of the JuA and former spokesperson of the TTP surrendered to the security forces ⁽¹⁰⁸⁾.

The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)

The IMU has been active in the Pakistani tribal region since late 2001, where it regrouped after sustaining heavy losses fighting alongside the Taliban during the US invasion of Afghanistan. Under the leadership of Toher Yuldashev the group targeted the Pakistani security forces from its bases in North and South Waziristan. From 2007, the IMU formed an alliance with the TTP and fought alongside them. In 2009, Yuldashev was killed in a drone attack while Pakistani military operations forced the IMU to North Waziristan where it started to cooperate with the Haqqani Network. Osman Odil became the new leader of the organisation. A radical splinter group of IMU, the Islamic Jihad Union (IJU), is trying to export terrorism from its Pakistan base ⁽¹⁰⁹⁾. On 8 June 2014, IMU militants staged a bloody attack on Karachi Airport ⁽¹¹⁰⁾. The Pakistan Army made it a priority to eradicate the group. Most of the militants of IMU fled to Afghanistan ⁽¹¹¹⁾. At the end of March 2015 the IMU reportedly pledged allegiance to the

⁽¹⁰²⁾ Roggio B., Weiss C., Pakistani Taliban faction showcases training camp, suicide attacks, 2 February 2017; Jamestown Foundation, Pakistan's Jamaat-ul-Ahrar: A Violent Domestic Threat, 16 September 2016.

⁽¹⁰³⁾ USDoS, State Department Terrorist Designations of Jamaat-ul-Ahrar and Mohamed Abrini, 3 August 2016.

⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 68.

⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ Jamestown Foundation (The), 'Pakistan's Jamaat-ul-Ahrar: A Violent Domestic Threat', 16 September 2016.

⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, p. 28.

⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ Jamestown Foundation (The), 'Pakistan's Jamaat-ul-Ahrar: A Violent Domestic Threat', 16 September 2016.

⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ Nation (The), Ex-TTP spokesman surrender a major breakthrough, 18 April 2017.

⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ ISW, Uzbek militancy in Pakistan's tribal region, 27 January 2011.

⁽¹¹⁰⁾ Associated Press, Pakistani forces repel attack near Karachi airport, 10 June 2014; BBC, Karachi airport: Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan claims attack, 11 June 2014.

⁽¹¹¹⁾ RFE/RFL, The Islamic Movement Of Uzbekistan Comes Unraveled, 28 November 2015.

Islamic State (IS) ⁽¹¹²⁾. In August 2016, it was reported that a new faction of the IMU was formed. This faction split after the IMU pledged its alliance with IS and wants to operate independently from IS. This faction has no new name and also calls itself the IMU. They did not officially name a new leader ⁽¹¹³⁾.

Al-Qaeda

Following the US invasion of Afghanistan, many al-Qaeda operatives withdrew to the Pakistani tribal regions. By 2008, they were so deeply entrenched in Waziristan that, according to American intelligence officials, the area had become al-Qaeda's 'international operations hub' ⁽¹¹⁴⁾. Among their ranks were Arabs, Uzbeks, Chechens and Chinese Muslims ⁽¹¹⁵⁾. In the FATA, al-Qaeda has aligned itself with several militant groups, offering support with manpower, training and propaganda. It also attacks the Pakistani Government, which is viewed as apostate for allying itself with the US-led war on terrorism. Al-Qaeda in Waziristan has developed privileged relations with the IJU ⁽¹¹⁶⁾. Operation *Zarb-e-Azb* has pushed many al-Qaeda allied groups into Afghanistan ⁽¹¹⁷⁾. In December 2014, al-Qaeda lost two top commanders: the Pakistani Army killed Adnan el Shukrijuma in South Waziristan ⁽¹¹⁸⁾, while a US drone eliminated Umar Farooq in North Waziristan ⁽¹¹⁹⁾. In July 2015, a leader of al-Qaeda known as Abdali was killed in a raid in Lahore ⁽¹²⁰⁾. In February 2016, the Rangers arrested 97 al-Qaeda militants in Karachi, including Farooq Bhatti, deputy chief of al-Qaeda ⁽¹²¹⁾. In March 2017, the US announced that Qari Yasin, the man behind the Marriott Hotel bombing in 2008, was killed in a drone strike in Afghanistan ⁽¹²²⁾. A drone strike in April 2017 in North Waziristan killed a 'key' (Iraqi) al-Qaeda commander together with seven other jihadists ⁽¹²³⁾. According to PIPS, al-Qaeda was not involved in any major attack in Pakistan in 2016 ⁽¹²⁴⁾.

The Punjabi Taliban

The Punjabi Taliban is a network consisting of a loose conglomeration of members of banned militant outfits of Punjabi origin, mostly sectarian and previously Kashmir insurgency focused, who have developed strong links with the TTP. The major factions of this network include operatives from Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), Sipah Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) and Jayesh-e-Muhammad (JeM) and their splinter groups ⁽¹²⁵⁾. (for details on these groups, see their

⁽¹¹²⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), Too long a wait: Uzbek militants group joins IS, 2 April 2015.

⁽¹¹³⁾ Roggio, B., Weiss C., Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan faction emerges after group's collapse, 14 June 2016.

⁽¹¹⁴⁾ Guardian (The), Waziristan: the hub of al-Qaida operations, 7 January 2008; Rashid, A., Descent into Chaos, 2008, pp. 268-269.

⁽¹¹⁵⁾ Reuters Alertnet, Analysis - The ties that kill: Pakistan militant groups uniting, 30 May 2010.

⁽¹¹⁶⁾ CSIS, Religion and militancy in Pakistan and Afghanistan, June 2012.

⁽¹¹⁷⁾ McNally, L., Weinbaum, M., G., 'A Resilient Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan', 1 August 2016, p. 11.

⁽¹¹⁸⁾ Dawn, Top Al Qaeda leader killed in South Waziristan, 6 December 2014.

⁽¹¹⁹⁾ Dawn, Al Qaeda leader Umar Farooq killed in N Waziristan drone strike, 7 December 2014.

⁽¹²⁰⁾ Dawn, Al Qaeda Pakistan chief killed in Lahore raid: Punjab home minister, 1 July 2015.

⁽¹²¹⁾ Reuters, Pakistan arrests 97 al-Qaeda and other militants; foils jailbreak plan, 12 February 2016.

⁽¹²²⁾ CNN, US drone strike kills man behind Marriott Hotel bombing, Pentagon says, 26 March 2017.

⁽¹²³⁾ Roggio, B., Iraqi al Qaeda leader reportedly killed in drone strike in Pakistan, 3 May 2017.

⁽¹²⁴⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 75.

¹²⁵ Abbas, Hassan, Defining the Punjabi Taliban Network, 15 April 2009; TNS, Who are Punjabi Taliban, 24 April 2016; Express Tribune (The), Watershed event: Punjabi Taliban renounce violence, 14 September 2014.

separate sections in this chapter) The most influential group of the Punjabi Taliban is led by Maulana Asmatullah Muawiya. In 2014, the Punjabi Taliban claimed responsibility for only two terrorist attacks. In September 2014, Muawiya first intended to shift his militant activities from Pakistan to Afghanistan ⁽¹²⁶⁾, then some days later announced he would give up the armed struggle in Pakistan entirely and use peaceful means instead ⁽¹²⁷⁾. By April 2016, it was reported that the Punjabi Taliban was considered weakened and scattered ⁽¹²⁸⁾.

Islamic State (IS)

The first reports about IS (also called ISIS, ISIL or Daesh) appearing in Pakistan date back to the beginning of 2015 ⁽¹²⁹⁾. A report by the Royal United Services Institute stated in February 2016 that IS has an estimated 2 000 to 3 000 members in Pakistan, including fighters and support elements ⁽¹³⁰⁾. Different militant groups such as Tehrik-e-Khilafat Pakistan, the Shahidullah Shahid Group of TTP, Jundullah and IMU have pledged allegiance to the leader of IS, al-Baghdadi ⁽¹³¹⁾. Farhan Zahid, a terrorism expert on Pakistan, stated that IS has managed to increase its influence by forming 'tactical alliances' with similar local militant groups. IS asserts its dominance through local affiliates in urban centres of Pakistan ⁽¹³²⁾. Different sources reported that IS has recruitment networks in several major urban regions such as Peshawar and Karachi ⁽¹³³⁾. The Pakistani authorities deny the presence of IS in the country, but the security forces claim to make successful gains against the group ⁽¹³⁴⁾. In 2016, IS claimed responsibility of three terrorist attacks in Pakistan ⁽¹³⁵⁾. PIPS documented that groups such as JuA, factions of the TTP and LeJ Al-Alami have an operational coordination with IS ⁽¹³⁶⁾. In April 2017, IS claimed an attack on an Afghan Taliban leader in Peshawar ⁽¹³⁷⁾.

Haqqani Network

The Haqqani Network is an insurgent network that operates alongside the TTP, but initially it was not home-grown. It was founded by Afghan warlord Jalaluddin Haqqani. Due to his old age, he handed over leadership to his son Sirajuddin Haqqani in 2007. Media reports in 2015 claimed that Jalaluddin Haqqani had died in 2014 ⁽¹³⁸⁾, but his family and the Afghan Taliban

⁽¹²⁶⁾ PIPS, 2014, Pakistan Security Report, 2015.

⁽¹²⁷⁾ Dawn, Punjabi Taliban call off armed struggle in Pakistan, 13 September 2014.

⁽¹²⁸⁾ TNS, Who are Punjabi Taliban?, 24 April 2016.

⁽¹²⁹⁾ USIP, The Islamic State in Pakistan, September 2016

⁽¹³⁰⁾ Giustozzi A., The Islamic State in 'Khorasan': A Nuanced View, 5 February 2016.

⁽¹³¹⁾ Jamestown Foundation (The), 'Growing Evidence of Islamic State in Pakistan', 4 February 2016; Diplomat (The), The Islamic State Threat Is Real in Pakistan, 18 February 2016.

⁽¹³²⁾ Zahid, F., 'IS Footprint in Pakistan: Nature of Presence, Method of Recruitment, and Future Outlook', 5 May 2017, p. 10.

⁽¹³³⁾ IRIN, Islamic State ramps up recruitment in Pakistan, 11 January 2017; Jamestown Foundation (The), 'Growing Evidence of Islamic State in Pakistan', 4 February 2016; Wall Street Journal (The), Pakistan Frets Over Potential Appeal of Islamic State, 23 February 2016; Voice of America (VOA), Islamic State Takes Root, Grows Along Afghan-Pakistan Border, 1 March 2017.

⁽¹³⁴⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 74.

⁽¹³⁵⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 75.

⁽¹³⁶⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 75.

⁽¹³⁷⁾ Dawn, Afghan Taliban leader shot dead by IS in Peshawar, 30 April 2017.

⁽¹³⁸⁾ Express Tribune (The), Jalaluddin Haqqani died last year after 'prolonged illness': Taliban confirm, 31 July 2015; BBC, Afghan militant leader Jalaluddin Haqqani 'has died', 31 July 2015.

denied these claims ⁽¹³⁹⁾. Sirajuddin Haqqani was appointed as a deputy leader of the Taliban in May 2016 ⁽¹⁴⁰⁾. Originating from Loya Paktya (Khost, Paktia and Paktika provinces in Afghanistan) they now mainly operate in North Waziristan in the FATA. Though their main objective is attacking international forces in Afghanistan, they closely cooperate with the TTP. The Haqqani Network also has a long-standing relationship with the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) which had led to frictions between Pakistan and the US ⁽¹⁴¹⁾. The vast majority of the Haqqani fighters belong to the Zadran tribe but there are also non-Pashtun militants, including Arabs, Chechens and Uzbeks ⁽¹⁴²⁾. The Haqqani network was believed to have ties with al-Qaeda and the ISI ⁽¹⁴³⁾. American sources stated in November 2014 that ongoing Pakistani military operations in North Waziristan have 'disrupted' the military capabilities of the Haqqani ⁽¹⁴⁴⁾. The Haqqani Network relocated in 2016 from North Waziristan to Kurram Agency under the pressure of military operations ⁽¹⁴⁵⁾. In March 2016 the US advised Pakistan to take strong measures against the network ⁽¹⁴⁶⁾.

Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP)

SSP is a former Deobandi political party founded in the early 1980s by Sunni cleric Maulana Haq Nawaz Jhangvi in Jhang, Punjab. Its principal aim is to fight Shia influence in Pakistan. Jhangvi was assassinated in 1990 and was replaced by Maulana Azam Tariq. Tariq was, in turn, killed in 2003 when gunmen fired bullets into the vehicle he was travelling in. Tariq was succeeded by Maulana Ali Sher Hyderi. The organisation is understood to have close ties with the Jihadi organisation Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) and the TTP, and to be a part of the Punjabi Taliban network. Numerous reports have labelled SSP as a violent group. At the beginning of the century it was responsible for the murder of Shia militants, ordinary Shia citizens and attacks on Shia mosques. Although the group denies involvement in violence, former President Musharraf banned it in 2002, and in 2005, the US listed SSP as a terrorist organisation ⁽¹⁴⁷⁾. Part of SSP resurfaced in more recent years under the name Ah-le Sunnat Wal Jama'at, which under the leadership of Maulana Muhammad Ahmed Ludhianvi contested elections in 2014 ⁽¹⁴⁸⁾. Other members left SSP to form an apparently even more radical outfit under the name Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ). Other extremist splinter groups of SSP are the Jhangvi

⁽¹³⁹⁾ AFP, Taliban deny reports of Haqqani network founder's death, 1 August 2015; Reuters, Reports of Haqqani network founder's death, but family denies, 31 July 2015.

⁽¹⁴⁰⁾ Reuters, Afghan Taliban appoint a new leader, Kabul urges peace, 25 May 2016.

⁽¹⁴¹⁾ Asia Times, Haqqani network sours Pakistan-US ties, 20 September 2011; Economist (The), The Haqqani Network. Snake Country. The Pakistan army's complex relationship with jihadists, 1 October 2011; Foreign Policy, Dealing with the Haqqani Network, 23 September 2011; Rashid, A., *Descent into Chaos*, 2008, p. 221; Weinbaum, M.G., Babbar, M., 'The Tenacious, Toxic Haqqani Network', 7 September 2016, pp. 5-6.

⁽¹⁴²⁾ Gopal, A., Mahsud, M., K., and Fishman, B., *The Battle for Pakistan: Militancy and Conflict in North Waziristan*, 2010.

⁽¹⁴³⁾ CSIS, *Religion and militancy in Pakistan and Afghanistan*, June 2012, p. 63.

⁽¹⁴⁴⁾ Dawn, Operation Zarb-e-Azb disrupted Haqqani network; US general, 6 November 2014.

⁽¹⁴⁵⁾ Roggio, B., US drones target jihadist 'hideouts' in Pakistan's tribal areas, 22 February 2016.

⁽¹⁴⁶⁾ Dawn, Restricting military aid to Pakistan will hurt critical US interests, 11 March 2016.

⁽¹⁴⁷⁾ Dawn, 2009: Southern Punjab extremism battle between haves and have-nots, 21 May 2011; NOREF, *Sectarian violence: Pakistan's greatest security threat?*, 9 August 2012; Rashid, A., *Descent into Chaos*, 2008, pp. 227-228; Jamestown Foundation (The), 'Sipah-e-Sahaba: Fomenting Sectarian Violence in Pakistan', 5 May 2005; Abbas, Hassan, *Defining the Punjabi Taliban Network*, 15 April 2009.

⁽¹⁴⁸⁾ New York Times (The), Banned Group's Leader Given Pakistani Parliament Seat After Vote Dispute, 10 April 2010.

Tigers, Al-Haq Tigers, Tanzeem-ul-Haq, Al-Farooq and the Al-Badra Foundation ⁽¹⁴⁹⁾. The core of SSP supporters is made up of Sunni peasantry in the rural Jhang and merchant and trader classes in the urban centres. The *madrassas* are also a major recruiting ground for SSP. SSP cadres have been known to get jihadi training in Afghanistan. To fund its organisation and activities, SSP has relied on contributions from its supporters in the form of *zakat* (religious alms). Sunni business people contribute as well. It is also widely understood that SSP thrives on considerable financial and logistic backing from Saudi donors wanting to curb Iran's influence over the Shia population in Pakistan ⁽¹⁵⁰⁾. SSP is reportedly not only a militant group with about 3 000 to 6 000 members and a party with one million members, but it also has a student wing, an insurance company, many offices and a nation-wide network ⁽¹⁵¹⁾.

Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ)

LeJ is a Deobandi terrorist group founded in 1996, when a number of militants led by Riaz Basra, Akram Lahori and Malik Ishaq broke away from Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan. LeJ is not a political party but a purely paramilitary organisation. Some claim that its creation was prompted by the 1994 establishment of Sipah-e-Mohammed Pakistan (SMP), a Shia militant group that targeted leaders of SSP. Some sources claim that LeJ was formed as the militant wing of SSP to attack the Shia community and that it became independent when it gained more proficiency. In the following years LeJ became a strong terrorist organisation, responsible for 350 violent attacks prior to 2001. In later years there were bombings on Shia mosques. Just like SSP, LeJ has cordial relations with JeM ⁽¹⁵²⁾. LeJ was once openly supported by ISI, who used the group as a proxy in Afghanistan and India as well as to counter Shia militant groups ⁽¹⁵³⁾. LeJ was placed on the US terrorist list in 2003 and was banned by President Musharraf in 2001 ⁽¹⁵⁴⁾. Its underground violent activities continued unabated, especially against members of the Hazara community in Quetta ⁽¹⁵⁵⁾. Although most of the violence of LeJ targets Shias, the organisation also cultivates a radical stance against Christians, Ahmadi and Sufi Muslims ⁽¹⁵⁶⁾. A substantial number of the leadership of LeJ has either been killed in 2015, including Malik Ishaq ⁽¹⁵⁷⁾, or captured in 2016, including Naeem Bukhari ⁽¹⁵⁸⁾. On 19 January 2017, LeJ's commander Asif Chuto was killed in an encounter by

⁽¹⁴⁹⁾ CSIS, Religion and militancy in Pakistan and Afghanistan, June 2012, p. 39.

⁽¹⁵⁰⁾ CSIS, Religion and militancy in Pakistan and Afghanistan, June 2012, p. 39.

⁽¹⁵¹⁾ SATP, Pakistan: Extremist Group: Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan, n.d; Hussain Zahid, Frontline Pakistan, The struggle with militant Islam, 2007, p. 92.

⁽¹⁵²⁾ CSIS, Religion and militancy in Pakistan and Afghanistan, June 2012, pp. 40-42; Dawn, Pakistan bans 25 militant organizations, 6 August 2009; Intellibriefs, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi: Sectarian Violence in Pakistan and Ties to International Terrorism, 3 June 2005.

⁽¹⁵³⁾ Reuters, Special Report: Pakistan's threat within - the Sunni-Shia divide, 24 October 2012; National (The), Pakistan arrests 97 Al Qaeda and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi militants, 12 February 2016; Guardian (The), Pakistan military intelligence under fire for failing to prevent Quetta bombing, 18 February 2013.

⁽¹⁵⁴⁾ BBC, Pakistani group joins US terror list, 30 January 2003.

⁽¹⁵⁵⁾ Dawn, Lashkar-i-Jhangvi claims responsibility: 13 lives lost in brutal attack on shia pilgrims, 28 June 2012; HRW, We Are The Walking Dead. Killings of Shia Hazara in Balochistan, Pakistan, 30 June 2014.

⁽¹⁵⁶⁾ Roggio, B., State designates leader of Lashkar-e-Jhanghi as global terrorist, 6 February 2014.

⁽¹⁵⁷⁾ Roggio, B., Lashkar-e-Jhangvi emir killed in shootout with Pakistani police, 29 July 2015.

⁽¹⁵⁸⁾ Daily Times (The), LeJ leads international terrorist organisations in Pakistan, 10 March 2017.

law enforcement agencies ⁽¹⁵⁹⁾. According to PIPS, LeJ was responsible in 2016 for 17 terrorist attacks in Pakistan, compared to 33 in 2015 ⁽¹⁶⁰⁾.

LeJ Al-Alami (LJA)

LeJ splintered and broke up in different factions as a result of the efforts of the Pakistan State ⁽¹⁶¹⁾. One of those emerging factions is called LeJ Al-Alami (LJA) ⁽¹⁶²⁾, designated by Pakistan as a terrorist organisation in November 2016 ⁽¹⁶³⁾. PIPS mentions that LeJ Al-Alami is 'a rebirth of LeJ with a new global outlook' ⁽¹⁶⁴⁾. Main difference between LeJ and LJA is that the first one was only targeting minority groups whilst LJA also carries out attacks on law-enforcement agencies and government installations ⁽¹⁶⁵⁾. Sources stated that the group is led by Yousaf Mansoor Khurasani and a *shura* (consultation), comprising six members ⁽¹⁶⁶⁾. The leadership is based in Southern Afghanistan, in the province of Zabul ⁽¹⁶⁷⁾. According to PIPS, in 2016 LJA was responsible for six major terrorist attacks, mostly carried out in Balochistan and Karachi ⁽¹⁶⁸⁾. In January 2017, LJA claimed responsibility for the bomb attack on a vegetable market in Parachinar ⁽¹⁶⁹⁾.

Lashkar-e-Islam (LI)

LI is a small outfit active in the Khyber Agency of the FATA. LI was banned in June 2008 by the Pakistan Government ⁽¹⁷⁰⁾. Pakistani military operations in 2014 seem to have crippled the group's operational capabilities in Khyber Agency. As a result, members of LI relocated to Afghanistan ⁽¹⁷¹⁾. Many LI commanders have been killed by US drone strikes in the tribal areas. In 2015, LI announced its merger into the TTP ⁽¹⁷²⁾. It has been reported that the leader of LI, Mangal Bagh, was killed by a drone attack in Afghanistan in the summer of 2016 ⁽¹⁷³⁾. But according to Abdullah Khan, Managing Director of PICSS, it is not clear whether Mangal Bagh was killed in that drone attack. He mentioned that many militants of LI fled to

⁽¹⁵⁹⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), Sheikhpura raid: LeJ chief Asif Chotu, three aides killed in gunfight, 19 January 2017.

⁽¹⁶⁰⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 69.

⁽¹⁶¹⁾ Gandhara/RFE/RL, Pakistani Extremists Carve A Sanctuary In Southern Afghanistan, 23 January 2017.

⁽¹⁶²⁾ Jamestown Foundation (The), 'Lashkar-e-Jhangvi al-Alami: A Pakistani Partner for Islamic State', 27 January 2017.

⁽¹⁶³⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 30.

⁽¹⁶⁴⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 69.

⁽¹⁶⁵⁾ Jamestown Foundation (The), 'Lashkar-e-Jhangvi al-Alami: A Pakistani Partner for Islamic State', 27 January 2017.

⁽¹⁶⁶⁾ Jamestown Foundation (The), 'Lashkar-e-Jhangvi al-Alami: A Pakistani Partner for Islamic State', 27 January 2017; PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 69.

⁽¹⁶⁷⁾ Gandhara/RFE/RL, Pakistani Extremists Carve A Sanctuary In Southern Afghanistan, 23 January 2017.

⁽¹⁶⁸⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 69.

⁽¹⁶⁹⁾ Reuters, Blast kills at least 21 in Pakistan vegetable market, says official, 21 January 2017.

⁽¹⁷⁰⁾ Dawn, Pakistan bans 25 militant organisations, 6 August 2009; Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), List of banned organisations in Pakistan, 24 October 2012.

⁽¹⁷¹⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 68.

⁽¹⁷²⁾ Roggio, B., 3 jihadist groups merge with Movement of the Taliban in Pakistan, 6 May 2015.

⁽¹⁷³⁾ Nation (The), Mangal Bagh 'is dead', 25 July 2016.

Afghanistan⁽¹⁷⁴⁾. In 2016, LI carried out 18 terrorist attacks in Khyber Agency and the areas surrounding Peshawar⁽¹⁷⁵⁾.

Sipah-e-Muhammad Pakistan (SMP)

SMP is a Shia militant group whose aim is to protect the Shia community and target hostile Sunni Deobandi organisations such as SSP and LeJ. SMP is a radical offshoot of a mainstream Shia political party, the Tehrik-e-Jaferia Pakistan⁽¹⁷⁶⁾. The origins are unclear but it was probably founded around 1993 by Maulana Mureed Abbas Yazdani. The organisation claims to have some 30 000 activists [figures from 2015]⁽¹⁷⁷⁾. SMP was outlawed in Pakistan in August 2001⁽¹⁷⁸⁾. In 2016, Karachi and Balochistan were the two major areas where SMP carried out most of its attacks, with eight and two attacks respectively⁽¹⁷⁹⁾.

The Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA)

The BLA is a Baloch nationalist guerrilla organisation. Its objective is an independent Balochistan, free of Pakistani and Iranian rule. Due to violence, including bomb attacks, it was outlawed in Pakistan in April 2006⁽¹⁸⁰⁾. According to PICSS the leader of BLA is Harbyar Murre⁽¹⁸¹⁾. The BLA runs 25 camps in Balochistan and consists of numerous units that carry out guerrilla attacks in the province⁽¹⁸²⁾. In 2016, the BLA claimed to have carried out 55 terrorist attacks⁽¹⁸³⁾, though this could not be verified by independent sources, according to PICSS. BLA have stated it is targeting Chinese working on CPEC: 'It is clear that CPEC related projects, Chinese workers and other related people and entities would be prime targets of BLA in 2017.'⁽¹⁸⁴⁾

The Baloch Liberation Front (BLF)

The BLF is another insurgent group, led by Dr Allah Nazar Baloch. This group operates across Balochistan, but is primarily active in the southern coastal Makran belt⁽¹⁸⁵⁾. BLF was outlawed in September 2010⁽¹⁸⁶⁾. In 2016, this group was responsible for 27 terrorist attacks⁽¹⁸⁷⁾.

⁽¹⁷⁴⁾ Khan, A., Interview Islamabad, 5 April 2017.

⁽¹⁷⁵⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 68.

⁽¹⁷⁶⁾ Dawn, Pakistan bans 25 militant organisations, 6 August 2009; Jamestown Foundation (The), 'Sipah-e-Sahaba: Fomenting Sectarian Violence in Pakistan', 5 May 2005; UK Home Office, Country of Origin Information (COI) Report Pakistan, 9 August 2013.

⁽¹⁷⁷⁾ SATP, Sipah-e-Mohammed Pakistan, Terrorist Group of Pakistan, 2015.

⁽¹⁷⁸⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), List of banned organisations in Pakistan, 24 October 2012.

⁽¹⁷⁹⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 71.

⁽¹⁸⁰⁾ Dawn, Pakistan bans 25 militant organisations, 6 August 2009; Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), List of banned organisations in Pakistan, 24 October 2012; ICG, Policing Urban Violence in Pakistan, Asia Report N°255, 23 January 2014.

⁽¹⁸¹⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2016, p. 32.

⁽¹⁸²⁾ OFPRA, Les acteurs du conflit armé au Baloutchistan, 8 September 2015.

⁽¹⁸³⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 71.

⁽¹⁸⁴⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2016, pp. 30-31.

⁽¹⁸⁵⁾ USIP, Mapping conflict trends in Pakistan, 7 February 2014, p. 16.

⁽¹⁸⁶⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), List of banned organisations in Pakistan, 24 October 2012.

⁽¹⁸⁷⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 72.

According to the PICSS, 'BLF remained more focused on targets related to CPEC and it is also clearly announced by its leader Allah Nazer in his interview to Reuters. The group also targets any kind of foreigners in the province' ⁽¹⁸⁸⁾.

The Baloch Republican Army (BRA)

The banned BRA is the militant wing of the separatist Baloch Republican Party (BRP) ⁽¹⁸⁹⁾ and is headed by Brahmdagh Bugti, the grandson of former Balochistan Chief Minister ⁽¹⁹⁰⁾. The most prominent BRA attack was in January 2015 against the electricity network of Pakistan, which caused a blackout in 80 % of Pakistan ⁽¹⁹¹⁾. BRA carried out 24 attacks in 2016 ⁽¹⁹²⁾. It was involved in attacks against Chinese targets and infrastructure related to CPEC ⁽¹⁹³⁾.

United Baloch Army (UBA)

The UBA is another nationalist insurgent group in Balochistan and also a splinter group of the BLA ⁽¹⁹⁴⁾. The UBA is led by Mehran Marri, the youngest son of Khair Bux Marri ⁽¹⁹⁵⁾. According to PIPS, the UBA carried out three attacks in Balochistan in 2016 ⁽¹⁹⁶⁾.

1.3. Recent security trends and armed confrontations

The overall security situation improved in 2016 compared to previous years, according to sources systematically collecting information on terrorist and anti-state violence in Pakistan. The nature of the violence in 2016 and in the first quarter of 2017 is diverse and is described in detail in the following sections.

The 2016 report of the Pakistani Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS) ⁽¹⁹⁷⁾ recorded 1 624 overall incidents of anti-state violence by militants and counter-insurgency operations by the Pakistani Government, in which 1 858 people were killed including 986 militants, 514 civilians, 336 security forces personnel and 22 pro-government armed militias, while 1 962 were injured including 1 340 civilians, 558 security forces personnel, 57 militants and seven pro-government armed militias ⁽¹⁹⁸⁾. Compared to 2015, there has been a 15 % decrease in the number of incidents, but an almost 11 % increase in the number of those injured, according to PICSS ⁽¹⁹⁹⁾.

⁽¹⁸⁸⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2016, pp. 32-33.

⁽¹⁸⁹⁾ Daily Times, BLA commander among eight killed in Sibi, 10 March 2016; DNA India, Pakistan's FIA urges Interpol to arrest Baloch leaders Brahmdagh Bugti and Sher Muhammad, 28 February 2017.

⁽¹⁹⁰⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2016, p. 32.

⁽¹⁹¹⁾ Diplomat (The), Understanding Pakistan's Baloch Insurgency, 24 June 2015.

⁽¹⁹²⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 72.

⁽¹⁹³⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report 2016, p. 32.

⁽¹⁹⁴⁾ Diplomat (The), Understanding Pakistan's Baloch Insurgency, 24 June 2015.

⁽¹⁹⁵⁾ Dawn, Situationer: Who's who of Baloch insurgency, 1 June 2015.

⁽¹⁹⁶⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 72.

⁽¹⁹⁷⁾ For an explanation of this source, see section 1.4.1. [Figures on civilian fatalities](#).

⁽¹⁹⁸⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 12.

⁽¹⁹⁹⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 12.

The Pakistani Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) ⁽²⁰⁰⁾ reported 749 incidents of violence, resulting in 1 887 deaths and 1 956 injured in 2016 ⁽²⁰¹⁾. Compared to 2015, the number of violent incidents decreased by 32 % ⁽²⁰²⁾. More than half of the number of incidents of violence were terrorist attacks (441 terrorist attacks in 2016), according to PIPS ⁽²⁰³⁾.

Figure 1 presents a breakdown of the nature of violent incidents and the number of fatalities recorded by PIPS in 2016:

| Nature of violence incidents 2016 | No of incidents | No of deaths | No of injured |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|
| Terrorist attacks | 441 | 908 | 1627 |
| Political/ethnic violence | 12 | 14 | 30 |
| Clashes sec. forces & militants | 105 | 348 | 60 |
| Border clashes/attacks | 74 | 81 | 173 |
| Operational attacks sec. forces | 95 | 492 | 49 |
| Drone attacks | 3 | 12 | 6 |
| Inter-militant clashes/attacks | 5 | 5 | 1 |
| Clashes sec. forces & criminal gangs | 13 | 25 | 9 |
| Communal violence | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Total 2016 | 749 | 1887 | 1956 |
| Total 2015 | 1097 | 3503 | 2617 |

Figure 1: Overall incidents of violence (PIPS) ⁽²⁰⁴⁾

1.3.1. Security operations and armed clashes

PIPS states that in 2016, security operations and armed clashes were reported in all four provinces of Pakistan and in the FATA. The security forces carried out 95 operational strikes and raids against militants in 2016, compared to 143 attacks in 2015. Most of these operational strikes were carried out in Balochistan (38), FATA (24), Karachi (15), Punjab (13) and in KP (five). According to PIPS, 492 people were killed, including 481 militants (compared to 1 545 in 2015), seven security forces personnel and four civilians ⁽²⁰⁵⁾. Besides these operational attacks, security forces engaged in 105 armed clashes with militants in 2016, a decrease of 31 % compared to 2015 ⁽²⁰⁶⁾. These clashes claimed 348 lives in 2016, including 328 militants, 19 security forces personnel and one civilian ⁽²⁰⁷⁾.

⁽²⁰⁰⁾ For an explanation of this source, see section 1.4.1. [Figures on civilian fatalities](#).

⁽²⁰¹⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 154.

⁽²⁰²⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 154.

⁽²⁰³⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 15.

⁽²⁰⁴⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 15.

⁽²⁰⁵⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 18.

⁽²⁰⁶⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 18.

⁽²⁰⁷⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, pp. 18-19.

For further information on the varying numbers of civilian fatalities and the various methodologies used by research institutions that monitor these figures, see Section [1.4.1 Figures on civilian fatalities](#).

In the period of review, Operation *Zarb-e-Azb* (Arabic for *Strike of Azb*) entered its final phase. In February 2017, the Pakistan Army launched Operation *Radd-ul-Fasaad* (Arabic for *eradication of mischief*) to try to eliminate terrorism in all areas of the country.

Operation *Zarb-e-Azb*

Operation *Zarb-e-Azb* was launched on 15 June 2014 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and in the FATA. The purpose of the operation was to target the militants in North Waziristan⁽²⁰⁸⁾. The operation continued during 2015⁽²⁰⁹⁾. *Zarb-e-Azb* reduced the level of violence and most of the areas were cleared of militants, except a few pockets and sleeper cells, while the State has to some extent regained public trust⁽²¹⁰⁾. Critics of the operation claim it did not destroy the TTP, who were able to relocate to Afghanistan to carry out attacks from there. Secondly, that intolerance and extremism have increased. Thirdly, the operation did not gain as much regional and international recognition as expected, owing to poor strategic communication and 'dull diplomacy'⁽²¹¹⁾. One source states, in May 2017, that despite *Zarb-e-Azb*, Taliban militants are returning to the FATA⁽²¹²⁾. Reports of 37 civilian casualties as a result of airstrikes during the operation have been denied by the Pakistani military⁽²¹³⁾. As media access to the area was restricted, the extent of the impact on the civilian population is unclear⁽²¹⁴⁾. Displacement figures of 800 000 resulting from the operation were confirmed by the Fata Disaster Management Authority (FDMA), as of 8 July 2014⁽²¹⁵⁾.

Operation *Radd-ul-Fasaad*

Operation *Radd-ul-Fasaad* was launched on 22 February 2017, after a series of attacks conducted by 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⁽²¹⁶⁾. The operation is aimed at eliminating the threat of terrorism and at consolidating the gains of Operation *Zarb-e-Azb*. It is further aimed at ensuring the security of Pakistan's borders. The operation includes the involvement of the Pakistan Air Force, Pakistan Navy, Pakistan Police and other civil armed forces⁽²¹⁷⁾. The Rangers were given special powers to operate in Lahore and different parts

⁽²⁰⁸⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), 2,763 terrorists killed in Operation *Zarb-e-Azb*, 14 June 2015.

⁽²⁰⁹⁾ Jamestown Foundation (The), 'The Successes and Failures of Pakistan's Operation *Zarb-e-Azb*', 10 July 2015.

⁽²¹⁰⁾ Diplomat (The), Pakistan's Counterterrorism Operation: Myth vs. Reality, 27 June 2016.

⁽²¹¹⁾ Diplomat (The), Pakistan's Counterterrorism Operation: Myth vs. Reality, 27 June 2016; See also PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 64.

⁽²¹²⁾ Nation (The), Reversals in FATA, 27 May 2017.

⁽²¹³⁾ Dawn, No civilian deaths in Shawal air strikes: Safron, 22 July 2014; AFP, Civilian Casualties Fuel Outrage Over *Zarb-e-Azb*, 22 July 2014.

⁽²¹⁴⁾ TNS, Reporting from North Waziristan, 22 June 2014; BBC, Journalists gain rare access to North Waziristan ghost town, 10 July 2014.

⁽²¹⁵⁾ Dawn, North Waziristan IDPs figure reaches 800,000, 8 July 2014.

⁽²¹⁶⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), Army launches Operation *Radd-ul-Fasaad* against terrorists across the country, 22 February 2017.

⁽²¹⁷⁾ Dawn, Pakistan Army launches 'Operation *Radd-ul-Fasaad*' across the country, 22 February 2017.

of the province of Punjab ⁽²¹⁸⁾. *Radd-ul-Fasaad* is focusing on ‘coordinated raids’ conducted by the paramilitary Punjab Rangers and civilian law enforcement. At the beginning of April 2017, those raids led to the arrest of 1 300 persons and the seizure of caches of ammunition, weapons, computers and IEDs ⁽²¹⁹⁾. This military operation has led to criticism that some ethnic groups such as Pashtuns and Afghans have been indiscriminately targeted ⁽²²⁰⁾. According to Imtiaz Gul, Director of CRSS, operation *Radd-ul-Fasaad* is the legacy of the new Army chief, just as the previous operation was the legacy of the former General Sharif ⁽²²¹⁾.

1.3.2. Terrorist attacks

PIPS defines terrorist attacks as follows: ‘terrorist attacks include militant, nationalist, insurgent and sectarian attacks’. These terrorist attacks can be carried out through different methods (suicide attacks, beheadings and destruction of educational institutions, CD/video shops, etc.) ⁽²²²⁾. Militant groups continued to conduct terrorist attacks in 2016. Tactics used are targeted killings, IEDs of different types, suicide attacks, grenade blasts, rocket attacks, and sabotage and mortar attacks. One source mentions that different militants groups reached an alliance with other groups. Those alliances meant that such groups were capable of expanding their targets from sectarian to non-sectarian ⁽²²³⁾.

Below is a description of the number of terrorist attacks and the most common methods used by militants in 2016.

Number of terrorist attacks

According to the PIPS 2016 report, 441 terrorist attacks were carried out by militant, nationalist, insurgent and violent sectarian groups in Pakistan in 2016. This is a decrease of 28 % compared to 2015. PIPS mentioned that in 2016 those terrorist attacks killed 908 people and injured 1 672 ⁽²²⁴⁾, and concluded that ‘the fact that a 28 percent decline in attacks resulted in only a 12 percent decrease in fatalities indicates that militants carried out some major attacks during the year’ ⁽²²⁵⁾. Those killed in terrorist attacks in Pakistan in 2016 included 545 civilians, 302 security forces personnel and 61 militants, whilst those injured included 1 157 civilians, 469 security forces and one militant ⁽²²⁶⁾.

⁽²¹⁸⁾ Al, Pakistan: Wave of violence shows a horrific disregard for human life, 23 February 2017.

⁽²¹⁹⁾ Stratfor, Tackling Terrorism in Pakistan’s Heartland, 12 April 2017.

⁽²²⁰⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad: ‘Punjab police focus on Pakhtuns and Afghans’, 4 March 2017.

⁽²²¹⁾ Gul, I., Interview Islamabad, 6 April 2017.

⁽²²²⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 6.

⁽²²³⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 72.

⁽²²⁴⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 13.

⁽²²⁵⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 13.

⁽²²⁶⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 13.

Suicide bombings

PICSS reported that ‘militant [sic] used various types of attacks to achieve their targets but the highest number of victims were from suicide attacks. PICSS Militancy Database shows that in 17 suicide attacks, 326 people were killed and 881 injured’ – Balochistan and KPK witnessed five suicide bombings each, whilst FATA witnessed four suicide attacks, Punjab two and Sindh one ⁽²²⁷⁾.

Bomb explosions and Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs)

PIPS mentioned that militants used IEDs of various types in 172 terrorist attacks ⁽²²⁸⁾. According to PIPS this means that IEDs will remain ‘a big challenge for law enforcement agencies’ ⁽²²⁹⁾. CRSS ⁽²³⁰⁾ stated in its yearly report for 2016 that the number of IED explosions were fewer than in 2015, but caused 25 % more fatalities in 2016 compared to 2015 ⁽²³¹⁾. PICSS reported that

‘Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) remained as usual most frequently used type of militant attacks however, the significant decline has been observed in lethality of IEDs, which suggests that quality of IED making has suffered due to consistent pressure from security forces. In 2016, militants carried out 173 IEDs in which 153 people were killed and 460 were injured’ ⁽²³²⁾.

The highest number of IEDs was recorded in FATA followed by Balochistan ⁽²³³⁾.

Targeted killings

According to PIPS, about 50 % of the terrorist attacks (218) in 2016 were targeted killings or shootings ⁽²³⁴⁾. PICSS reported that most of the targeted killings took place in Balochistan province, followed by the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh. Besides this, PICSS stated that militant groups, especially the TTP and JuA targeted lone security forces personnel. Police personnel were the main victims of targeted killings by militants in 2016, according to PICSS ⁽²³⁵⁾.

Of the total reported terrorist attacks, 211 attacks were against personnel, convoys and check posts of the security forces and law enforcement agencies across Pakistan. Most of these attacks targeted the Police. Civilians were the apparent targets of 89 attacks (20 %). A total of 34 attacks (8 %) had sectarian targets, mainly members of the Shia and Sunni communities and worship places including mosques and shrines. Forty-one attacks were aimed at political leaders and workers while 27 attacks targeted tribal elders. Other targets hit by terrorists

⁽²²⁷⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, pp. 17, 18 and 19.

⁽²²⁸⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 13.

⁽²²⁹⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 73.

⁽²³⁰⁾ For an explanation of this source, see section 1.4.1 [Figures on civilian fatalities](#).

⁽²³¹⁾ CRSS, Pakistan Conflict Tracker Report/Annual Security Report 2016, March 2017, p. 26.

⁽²³²⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, p. 17

⁽²³³⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, pp. 20-21.

⁽²³⁴⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 12.

⁽²³⁵⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, pp. 23-24.

during the previous year included state installations such as gas pipelines, power pylons and railways, government officials (65 attacks), polio health workers (four attacks), educational institutions (six attacks), journalists and media (two attacks), non-Baloch settlers/workers (two attacks) and members of the Christian community (five attacks) ⁽²³⁶⁾.

Kidnappings

PICSS reported that

‘[a] significant decline has been observed in kidnapping during 2016. The number of kidnapping incidents dropped by 47 percent. Overall, 17 such incidents were recorded during last year while in 2015 the number was 32. Kidnapping was one of the major source of income for militants. However, Operation *Zarb-e-Azb* and intelligence based operations in urban areas dismantled kidnapping for ransom networks largely. 34 people were kidnapped in 2016 by militants’ ⁽²³⁷⁾.

1.3.3. Sectarian related violence

PIPS stated that there is a decline in the number of sectarian related violent incidents. The numbers decreased by 41 % in 2016 compared to 2015. The number of people killed also decreased by about 62 % in 2016. Most victims of sectarian related violence were in Khuzdar (Balochistan) and in Karachi (Sindh) ⁽²³⁸⁾. Also, CRSS documented a decline of 19 % in sectarian related violence. According to CRSS, ‘the number of people injured from sectarian violence went higher than those recorded in 2015 because of the forms of violence used in carrying out such attacks’. Over half of the casualties were from five suicide bombings, including the one in Gulshan-i-Iqbal park in Lahore on Easter Sunday, the bombing at the Sufi shrine Shah Noorani in Balochistan, and an attack on a mosque in Mohmand Agency ⁽²³⁹⁾. CRSS states that fatalities from sectarian related violence increased in the provinces of Punjab, Balochistan and in the FATA ⁽²⁴⁰⁾.

1.3.4. Ethnic and political violence

According to PIPS, there was a sharp decline in ethnic and political violence in 2016, during which there were twelve incidents compared to 63 in 2015. These incidents took place in Sindh (particularly in Karachi), in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, in Azad Kashmir and in Punjab ⁽²⁴¹⁾.

⁽²³⁶⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 13.

⁽²³⁷⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, p. 24.

⁽²³⁸⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 16.

⁽²³⁹⁾ CRSS, Pakistan Conflict Tracker Report/Annual Security Report 2016, March 2017, p. 63; Dawn, At least 72 killed in suicide blast as terror revisits Lahore, 29 March 2016; Al Jazeera, Attack on Shah Noorani shrine in Pakistan kills dozens, 12 November 2016; Dawn, Mohmand suicide bombing toll rises to 36, 18 September 2016.

⁽²⁴⁰⁾ CRSS, Pakistan Conflict Tracker Report/Annual Security Report 2016, March 2017, p. 63.

⁽²⁴¹⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 17.

1.3.5. Border attacks

In 2016, PIPS counted 18 cross-border attacks from Afghanistan. Most of these attacks took place in the tribal areas bordering Afghanistan. The main targets were security forces and their check-posts ⁽²⁴²⁾. In the first months of 2017, clashes at the Pakistan-Afghanistan border intensified. In February 2017, all border crossings with Afghanistan were closed for a month due to a 'wave of attacks' in Pakistan ⁽²⁴³⁾. This left hundreds of thousands of people and lorries carrying goods stranded on each side of the border. A temporary opening of the border for two days allowed valid visa holders on both sides to return home ⁽²⁴⁴⁾. At the border with Afghanistan, frequent cross-border attacks were documented ⁽²⁴⁵⁾. In May 2017, the Pakistan Army claimed that it had killed more than 50 Afghan soldiers at the Chaman border crossing ⁽²⁴⁶⁾. According to Pakistani sources, at least nine civilians died and more than 40 were injured during a clash involving a government census team in early May 2017 ⁽²⁴⁷⁾. Another source reports that 'scores of civilians' were killed and hundreds of villagers had fled during the border clashes in May ⁽²⁴⁸⁾.

The situation at the Line of Control (LoC) and the de-facto border between the Indian and Pakistani controlled parts of Kashmir became tense during and after September 2016 due to the Uri incident, in which four militants killed 17 Indian soldiers in the Uri camp. India accused Pakistan that the militants infiltrated from across Pakistan. Pakistan denied ⁽²⁴⁹⁾. Since then, cross-border attacks are regularly reported. In 2016, PIPS counted 51 cross-border attacks from India ⁽²⁵⁰⁾. Cross-border attacks were also reported in the first months of 2017 ⁽²⁵¹⁾. There have been a number of reports of civilian casualties on both sides from October 2016 to May 2017 ⁽²⁵²⁾.

In 2016, Iranian border security forces carried out five cross-border attacks in the Panjgur district of Balochistan, resulting in no injuries or damaged property ⁽²⁵³⁾. In May 2017, tension between the two nations intensified because of mortar shelling of Pakistani territory, killing one civilian ⁽²⁵⁴⁾.

⁽²⁴²⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 57.

⁽²⁴³⁾ Al Jazeera, Pakistan-Afghanistan crossing closed after border clash, 6 May 2017.

⁽²⁴⁴⁾ Al Jazeera, Pakistan PM orders reopening of Afghanistan border, 20 March 2017.

⁽²⁴⁵⁾ Al Jazeera, Pakistan-Afghanistan crossing closed after border clash, 6 May 2017.

⁽²⁴⁶⁾ DW, Worst border clashes in years: Are Afghanistan and Pakistan at war?, 7 May 2017.

⁽²⁴⁷⁾ VoA, Pakistan-Afghanistan Border Clashes Leave Many Dead, 5 May 2017.

⁽²⁴⁸⁾ DW, Worst border clashes in years: Are Afghanistan and Pakistan at war?, 7 May 2017.

⁽²⁴⁹⁾ BBC, Militants attack Indian army base in Kashmir 'killing 17', 18 September 2016.

⁽²⁵⁰⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, pp. 59-62.

⁽²⁵¹⁾ Guardian (The), Kashmir attacks: Indian soldiers mutilated and police shot dead, 2 May 2017; Nation (The), Army rubbishes Indian claim of attacking Pak posts, 24 May 2017.

⁽²⁵²⁾ See for instance: Economic Times (The), BSF jawan, child killed after shelling by Pakistan in J&K, 25 October 2016; CNN, 13 civilians killed by cross-border shelling in Kashmir, say India, Pakistan, 1 November 2016; VoA, Pakistan: Cross-Border Indian Fire Kills 11 Civilians, 3 Troops, 23 November 2016; Al Jazeera, Kashmir: Civilians killed as India, Pakistan trade fire, 11 May 2017.

⁽²⁵³⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 62; Independent (The), Iran causes panic after firing three mortar shells into Pakistan, 30 September 2016.

⁽²⁵⁴⁾ Dawn, Pakistani man killed as Iranian border guards fire mortar shell into Balochistan, 29 May 2017

1.3.6. Drone strikes

The first US drone strike in Pakistan took place in 2004 in the Waziristan region. The number of drone strikes since 2004 and up to 2014, and of those killed or injured by them, varies according to the source consulted ⁽²⁵⁵⁾. Most of the US drone strikes in Pakistan have taken place in the semi-autonomous tribal regions of North West Pakistan, where the US military believed al-Qaeda, Taliban and other terrorist groups sought refuge ⁽²⁵⁶⁾.

The Bureau of Investigative Journalism (TBIJ) compiled its own data on drone strikes. In 2016, TBIJ recorded three strikes. These US drone strikes killed between eleven and twelve people and injured between three and six ⁽²⁵⁷⁾. Whether the fatalities belonged to armed groups or civilians is not specified in the reporting ⁽²⁵⁸⁾.

In the first quarter of 2017, TBIJ counted three US drone strikes, as of 24 May 2017 ⁽²⁵⁹⁾. On 2 March 2017, a US drone strike in Kurram Agency killed two militants ⁽²⁶⁰⁾. This was the first drone strike after a break of nine months in the drone war of the US in Pakistan and was the first under the presidency of Donald Trump ⁽²⁶¹⁾. On 26 April 2017, a US drone strike killed at least seven militants in North Waziristan ⁽²⁶²⁾. It is reported that on 24 May 2017 a third US drone strike killed three militants in North Waziristan ⁽²⁶³⁾.

In September 2015, for the first time, the Pakistani Army launched a Pakistani-made drone, a 'Burraq Drone', to strike at terrorists in Shawal Valley in the FATA ⁽²⁶⁴⁾.

1.4. Impact of the violence on the civilian population

1.4.1. Figures on civilian fatalities

Sources

Varying figures on civilian fatalities are provided by four different research institutes based on different definitions and variables. It is difficult to interpret these figures since not all of these institutes outline clear methodologies.

The four research institutes that present figures about the situation in 2016 are the Pakistani Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), the Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), the

⁽²⁵⁵⁾ Watson Institute for International Studies, *Costs of War: War-related Death, Injury, and Displacement in Afghanistan and Pakistan 2001-2014*, 22 May 2015, p. 11.

⁽²⁵⁶⁾ TBIJ, *CIA drone strikes in Pakistan, 2004 to present*, n.d.

⁽²⁵⁷⁾ TBIJ, *CIA drone strikes in Pakistan, 2004 to present*, n.d.

⁽²⁵⁸⁾ TBIJ, *Pakistan: Reported US strikes 2017*, 15 February 2017.

⁽²⁵⁹⁾ TBIJ, *CIA drone strikes in Pakistan, 2004 to present*, n.d.

⁽²⁶⁰⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), *Drone strike kills two in Kurram Agency*, 2 March 2017.

⁽²⁶¹⁾ VoA, *Will Trump Administration Increase Drone Strikes in Pakistan?*, 27 March 2017.

⁽²⁶²⁾ Reuters, *Suspected U.S. drone strike targets Pakistani Taliban militants: sources*, 28 April 2017; TBIJ, *CIA drone strikes in Pakistan, 2004 to present*, n.d.

⁽²⁶³⁾ Nation (The), *US drone kills 3 militants in NWA*, 25 May 2017.

⁽²⁶⁴⁾ Diplomat (The), *Pakistan Uses Indigenous Drone to Strike Terrorists*, 8 September 2015.

South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) and the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS).

The **Pakistani Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS)**, established in Islamabad, was founded in 2006 by its Director, Muhammad Amir Rana, an expert on Pakistani security issues ⁽²⁶⁵⁾. The basic sources for the year report of PIPS are the PIPS conflict/security database and archives. PIPS uses information from sources such as newspapers, magazines, journals, television news channels ⁽²⁶⁶⁾. PIPS divides ‘attacks’ into five categories:

- ‘(i) terrorist attacks, including militant attacks, nationalist insurgent attacks and sectarian-related attacks;
- (ii) incidents of ethno-political violence;
- (iii) cross-border attacks;
- (iv) drone attacks; and
- (v) operational attacks by security forces against militants’ ⁽²⁶⁷⁾.

PIPS defines ‘casualties’ as follows: ‘casualties include both the number of people killed and injured’ ⁽²⁶⁸⁾.

The **Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS)** is a Pakistani research institute that analyses politics in the country. Established in 2008, it is based in Islamabad and headed by Imtiaz Gul, a journalist and author of several books on Pakistan ⁽²⁶⁹⁾. CRSS published a report on security in Pakistan in March 2017, written by senior research associate Mohammad Nafees. Violence as defined by CRSS includes terrorism, militant attacks, sectarian violence, crime targeted killings, security operations and drone strikes ⁽²⁷⁰⁾. CRSS uses open sources such as national print and electronic media ⁽²⁷¹⁾.

The **South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP)** is a website run by the Institute for Conflict Management, a non-profit organisation set up in 1997 in New Delhi. Headed by its founder K.P.S. Gill, former Director General of Indian Punjab Police, it is committed to the continuous evaluation and resolution of problems of internal security in South Asia. SATP has established ‘a comprehensive, searchable and continuously updated database on all available information relating to terrorism, low intensity warfare and ethnic/communal/sectarian strife in South Asia’ ⁽²⁷²⁾.

The **Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS)** is an independent research think-tank based in Islamabad. This institution collects statistical data regarding Pakistan-specific anti-state violence. PICSS integrated the data of the Conflict Monitoring Center in its institute ⁽²⁷³⁾. PICSS published an annual security report in February 2017. PICSS divided

⁽²⁶⁵⁾ PIPS, PIPS Team, n.d.; Gunaratna, R. and Iqbal, K., Pakistan, terrorism ground zero, 2011; Telegraph (The), Pakistani children are victims of their leaders’ mistakes, 16 December 2014.

⁽²⁶⁶⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 2.

⁽²⁶⁷⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, pp. 3-4.

⁽²⁶⁸⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 3.

⁽²⁶⁹⁾ Imtiaz Gul Official Website, Biography, n.d.

⁽²⁷⁰⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, pp. 3, 26 and 63.

⁽²⁷¹⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 3.

⁽²⁷²⁾ SATP, Institute for Conflict Management, An Introduction, n.d.

⁽²⁷³⁾ PICSS, About PICSS, n.d.

incidents of violence mainly in two categories: ‘violent militant activities and security forces actions’. PICSS is focused on anti-state violence and related responses. Sectarian violence, general crimes, ethnic or language-based violence are not mentioned in the annual report ⁽²⁷⁴⁾. The data collected by PICSS is based on open sources such as newspapers, government sources and own correspondents ⁽²⁷⁵⁾.

Civilian casualties

As the four sources cited above use different definitions of violent attacks and of victims, it is impossible to give one overview of the impact of the violence on the population. Therefore, the following paragraphs present data from the different sources separately to allow comparison and clearer understanding of the situation.

In 2016, **PIPS** recorded 749 attacks, resulting in 1 887 deaths and 1 956 injured (including deaths from terrorism): 619 civilians, 921 militants and 347 security personnel (Police/FC/Army/Levies/Rangers) were killed ⁽²⁷⁶⁾. Compared to 2015, the number of violent incidents decreased by 32 %, from 1 097 in 2015 to 749 in 2016. The number of people killed in overall incidents of violence in Pakistan decreased by 46 %, from 3 503 in 2015 to 1 887 in 2016. This trend included the deaths of 921 militants in 2016, compared to 2 340 in 2015, a decrease of 61 %. In addition, the PIPS data show that terrorist attacks (441) accounted for nearly 59 % of all violent incidents. Both the number of people killed and injured in terrorist attacks in 2016 decreased by 12 % compared to 2015. Operational strikes killed 492 people in 2016 including 481 militants (compared to 1 545 in 2015) ⁽²⁷⁷⁾.

SATP recorded 1 803 fatalities in ‘terrorist violence’ in 2016 (612 civilians, 293 security forces personnel, 898 terrorists/insurgents). Compared to 2015 (3 682 deaths), this number is considerably lower, due to a decrease in the number of killed terrorists/insurgents ⁽²⁷⁸⁾. SATP also provides figures for the first five months of 2017. As of 21 May 2017, SATP recorded in total 608 fatalities. Of these were 259 civilians, 77 security forces personnel and 272 terrorists/insurgents ⁽²⁷⁹⁾. In comparison with the first five months of 2016 (875 fatalities), this is a decline in fatalities of almost 30 % ⁽²⁸⁰⁾.

Data provided by **CRSS** shows 2 613 fatalities and 1 714 injured from violence in 2016: 1 003 civilians, 1 222 militants, and 388 security officials (see Figure 2). Compared to fatalities in 2015, the number of victims of violence decreased by roughly 45 % ⁽²⁸¹⁾. CRSS is the only institute that conducted research on the professions of the victims. It observed that, among the fatalities of civilians, the identifiable people were found to have a link with political/religious parties (primarily in Sindh) or belonging to professions such as shop owners, judicature, education or health ⁽²⁸²⁾. According to CRSS, a slight reduction in violence-related

⁽²⁷⁴⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, pp. 1-2.

⁽²⁷⁵⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 6.

⁽²⁷⁶⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, pp. 14-17.

⁽²⁷⁷⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, pp. 11, 14 and 16.

⁽²⁷⁸⁾ SATP, Fatalities in Terrorist Violence in Pakistan 2003-2017, 21 May 2017.

⁽²⁷⁹⁾ SATP, Fatalities in Terrorist Violence in Pakistan 2003-2017, 21 May 2017.

⁽²⁸⁰⁾ SATP, Fatalities in Terrorist Violence in Pakistan 2003-2017, 21 May 2017.

⁽²⁸¹⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, pp. 6 and 9.

⁽²⁸²⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, pp. 12-19.

fatalities was observed for security personnel ⁽²⁸³⁾. ‘Security personnel’, according to CRSS, includes: the Police, the Army, FC personnel, Pakistan Air Force, Levies, Khasadars and others ⁽²⁸⁴⁾. The category ‘militants’ includes insurgents and criminals.

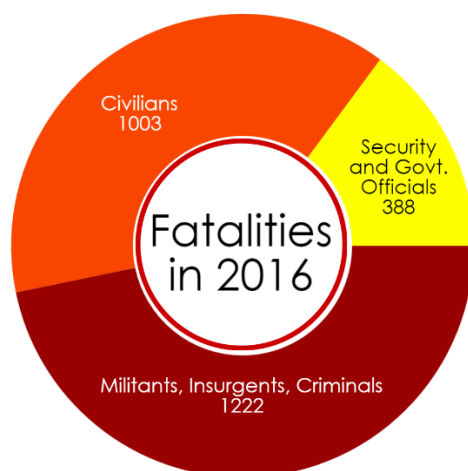


Figure 2: Victims of violence-related fatalities 2016 © CRSS ⁽²⁸⁵⁾

PICSS recorded 1 624 incidents of violence by militants and counter-insurgency operations by the state in 2016. In total 1 858 people were killed: 986 militants, 514 civilians, 336 security forces personnel and 22 pro-government Razakars (a paramilitary force created by the Pakistani Army) ⁽²⁸⁶⁾. PICSS reported 1 962 injured: 1 340 civilians, 558 security forces personnel, 57 militants, and seven pro-government Razakars. Compared to 2015, a 15 % decrease in the overall number of incidents is noted, with a 45 % decline in deaths and an 11 % increase in injured people ⁽²⁸⁷⁾.

Figure 3 gives a comparison of the persons killed in 2015 and in 2016 between the four sources (based on the definitions described above).

⁽²⁸³⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January–December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 18.

⁽²⁸⁴⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January–December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 18.

⁽²⁸⁵⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January–December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 9.

⁽²⁸⁶⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 12.

⁽²⁸⁷⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 12.

| 2015 by source | Total killed | Civilians killed | Militants killed | Security forces killed |
|-------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| PIPS ⁽²⁸⁸⁾ | 3503 | 778 | 2340 | 385 |
| SATP ⁽²⁸⁹⁾ | 3682 | 940 | 2403 | 339 |
| CRSS ⁽²⁹⁰⁾ | 4654 | 1392 (civilians+security) | 2892 (incl. criminals) | 421 (incl. government officials) |
| PICSS ⁽²⁹¹⁾ | 3368 | 641 | 2312 | 415 (incl. pro-government Razakars) |
| 2016 by source | Total killed | Civilians killed | Militants killed | Security forces killed |
| PIPS ⁽²⁹²⁾ | 1887 | 619 | 921 | 347 |
| SATP ⁽²⁹³⁾ | 1803 | 612 | 898 | 293 |
| CRSS ⁽²⁹⁴⁾ | 2613 | 1003 | 1222 | 388 (incl. government officials) |
| PICSS ⁽²⁹⁵⁾ | 1858 | 514 | 986 | 358 (incl. pro-government) |

Figure 3: Comparison of the number of fatalities in 2015 and 2016 (PIPS, SATP, CRSS, PICSS) ⁽²⁹⁶⁾

Patterns in fatalities in 2016 and the first quarter of 2017 per month

In this section the data compiled by CRSS, PICSS and SATP are compared, because they have collected data throughout 2016 and the first quarter of 2017.

Data compiled by CRSS shows a decline in fatalities throughout most of the year 2016 (see Figure 3). Most fatalities occurred in January and March 2016. December 2016, witnessed the least fatalities of the year ⁽²⁹⁷⁾.

⁽²⁸⁸⁾ PIPS, 2015, Pakistan Security Report, 2016, p. 8.

⁽²⁸⁹⁾ SATP, Fatalities in Terrorist Violence in Pakistan 2003-2016, 3 April 2016.

⁽²⁹⁰⁾ CRSS, Pakistan Conflict Tracker Report/Annual Security Report 2015, 2016, pp. 10-11.

⁽²⁹¹⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Report, 2015, 16 February 2016, pp. 7-8.

⁽²⁹²⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 14.

⁽²⁹³⁾ SATP, Fatalities in Terrorist Violence in Pakistan 2003-2017, 21 May 2017.

⁽²⁹⁴⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, pp. 8-9.

⁽²⁹⁵⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 12.

⁽²⁹⁶⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Report, 2015, 16 February 2016, pp. 7-8; PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 12; PIPS, 2015, Pakistan Security Report, 2016, p. 8; PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 14; CRSS, Pakistan Conflict Tracker Report/Annual Security Report 2015, 2016, pp. 10-11; CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 8-9; SATP, Fatalities in Terrorist Violence in Pakistan 2003-2016, 3 April 2016; SATP, Fatalities in Terrorist Violence in Pakistan 2003-2017, 21 April 2017.

⁽²⁹⁷⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 7.

The same trend is visible in monthly data recorded by SATP as well, although the figures differ slightly. In January 2016, SATP counted 213 fatalities and 48 in December 2016. The last quarter of 2016 shows a significant decline in fatalities compared to the first nine months of 2016 ⁽²⁹⁸⁾. SATP also observed a slight increase in fatalities in the period from August to October 2016 ⁽²⁹⁹⁾.

Data compiled by PICSS shows the highest number of fatalities was in January, February, March, August and October 2016. PICSS states that there is a visible decline in the numbers of fatalities in December 2016 ⁽³⁰⁰⁾.

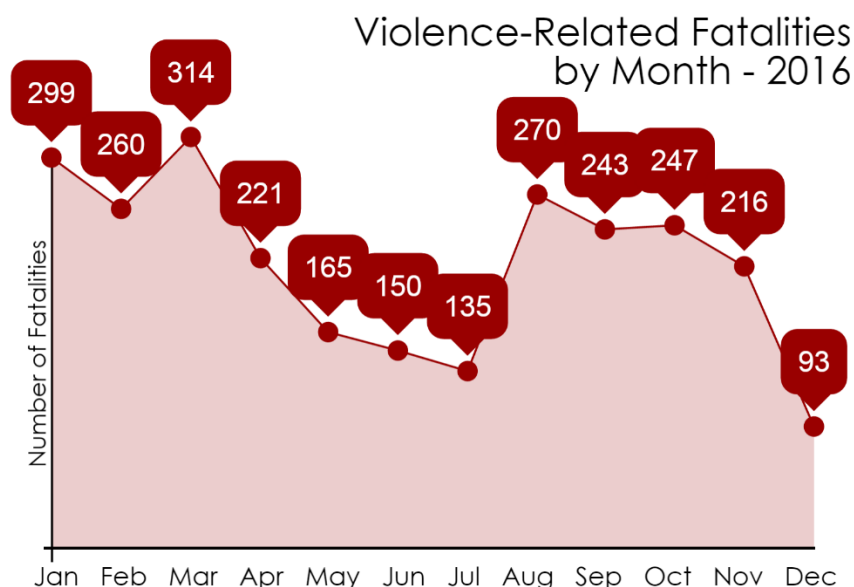


Figure 4: Violence-Related Deaths in 2016 per month © CRSS ⁽³⁰¹⁾

According to data by SATP, the number of fatalities is still decreasing in the first four months of 2017. In January 2017, 61 fatalities were mentioned, which is a decline of more than 70 % compared to January 2016 ⁽³⁰²⁾. In February, March, April and May 2017, SATP counted 262, 107, 107 and 88 fatalities, which is an increase compared to January 2017, especially in the month of February 2017 ⁽³⁰³⁾. For the first five months of 2017 as at 21 May 2017, SATP counted 608 fatalities, a decline of almost 50 % compared to 2016 ⁽³⁰⁴⁾.

According to data in the first quarter analysis report of 2017 conducted by CRSS, 1 129 casualties (594 deaths, 535 injured) were counted, an increase of almost 7 % compared to the last quarter of 2016. Most fatalities in the first quarter occurred in February 2017 ⁽³⁰⁵⁾.

⁽²⁹⁸⁾ SATP, Fatalities in Terrorist Violence in Pakistan 2003-2017, 21 May 2017.

⁽²⁹⁹⁾ SATP, Fatalities in Terrorist Violence in Pakistan 2003-2017, 21 May 2017.

⁽³⁰⁰⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 13.

⁽³⁰¹⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 8.

⁽³⁰²⁾ SATP, Fatalities in Terrorist Violence in Pakistan 2003-2017, 21 May 2017.

⁽³⁰³⁾ SATP, Fatalities in Terrorist Violence in Pakistan 2003-2017, 21 May 2017.

⁽³⁰⁴⁾ SATP, Fatalities in Terrorist Violence in Pakistan 2003-2017, 21 May 2017.

⁽³⁰⁵⁾ CRSS, CRSS Security Report – Q1, 2017, 10 May 2017, pp. 3 and 5.

1.4.2. Socio-economic life

Pakistan's June 2016 Multidimensional Poverty Index documented that the socio-economic landscape in the country is divided and uneven. This report showed that the east of the country is more developed than the west of the country. The provinces of Punjab and Sindh have a higher rate of literacy, education, more access to water, an advanced rate of employment and a modern health system. Contrastingly, the FATA and the provinces of Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have more poverty, a crumbling infrastructure, decaying education and health systems, high levels of unemployment, no industrialisation and high levels of insecurity. In all provinces, poverty in rural areas is higher than in urban areas ⁽³⁰⁶⁾.

UNESCO stated in April 2017 that the conflict and the violence in the north-east of Pakistan have affected local infrastructure such as health centres, roads, schools and water supplies ⁽³⁰⁷⁾.

1.4.3. Children

The annual report issued by HRCP covering 2015/2016 stated that there are over 24 million out of school children in Pakistan ⁽³⁰⁸⁾.

Human Rights Watch stated in a report dated March 2017 that attacks carried out by militant groups have 'a devastating impact on education' in Pakistan ⁽³⁰⁹⁾. According to the briefing report by HRW, from January 2007 to October 2016 attacks by militants have destroyed school buildings, targeted teachers and students and threatened parents into keeping their children out of school. These attacks have often been directed at female students, their teachers and schools, thus blocking girls' access to education ⁽³¹⁰⁾. Especially in the FATA, there is a lack of schools. Recent battles between Pakistan's military and Islamist insurgents have destroyed many more schools and other buildings ⁽³¹¹⁾. During the year 2016, PIPS reported six attacks on educational institutions in the FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, causing 66 civilian casualties (26 deaths and 40 injured) ⁽³¹²⁾. Government forces have also used educational institutions, including both schools and college hostels, as military bases or barracks ⁽³¹³⁾.

According to the Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC), exact figures of child casualties are not available, but children are affected by both sectarian violence and

⁽³⁰⁶⁾ Government of Pakistan, Multidimensional poverty in Pakistan, June 2016, pp. 16-17.

⁽³⁰⁷⁾ UNESCO, Helping promote inclusive education in remote areas of Pakistan, 5 April 2017.

⁽³⁰⁸⁾ HRCP, State of Human Rights in 2016, May 2016, p. 200.

⁽³⁰⁹⁾ HRW, Pakistan: Attacks on Schools Devastate Education, 27 March 2017.

⁽³¹⁰⁾ HRW, Pakistan: Attacks on Schools Devastate Education, 27 March 2017.

⁽³¹¹⁾ IRIN, Can \$10 billion and political reforms bring peace to Pakistan's restive frontier?, 5 April 2017.

⁽³¹²⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, pp. 177-178.

⁽³¹³⁾ HRW, "Dreams Turned into Nightmares" - Attacks on Students, Teachers, and Schools in Pakistan, 27 March 2017, p. 2.

indiscriminate attacks. Suicide bombs and IEDs put children in danger in several areas, especially in the provinces of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa ⁽³¹⁴⁾.

1.4.4. Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees

Internal displacements

Since 2008, approximately 5.3 million people have been displaced by insurgency, counter-insurgency and other related violence in Pakistan ⁽³¹⁵⁾. In 2016, significant progress was made in the return of displaced people. About 700 000 people returned to their homes ⁽³¹⁶⁾. In total 4.8 million people returned since 2008 ⁽³¹⁷⁾. According to UN OCHA, IDPs will continue to need humanitarian support, but the focus of activities will shift to the return areas where the social and physical infrastructure has been heavily damaged due to prolonged displacement and insecurity ⁽³¹⁸⁾. On 5 January 2017, the Government of Pakistan announced that it will deregister IDP families that refuse to return to areas that are no longer considered conflict zones, including North and South Waziristan, Khyber Agency and Kurram Agency ⁽³¹⁹⁾. As of 11 May 2017, 27 421 families returned to the FATA in 2017 and 47 259 families remain displaced according to UN OCHA ⁽³²⁰⁾.

In the second part of this report, internal displacements are explained in greater detail and by geographic division (see [Section 2. Security situation per region](#)).

Afghan refugees

Pakistan is also host to one of the world's largest refugee communities, housing 1.4 million registered Afghan refugees and an estimated one million undocumented Afghan migrants ⁽³²¹⁾. In the second half of 2016, Pakistan pushed back approximately 365 000 registered Afghan refugees, as well as just over 200 000 of the estimated one million undocumented Afghans in Pakistan, according to HRW ⁽³²²⁾. UNHCR reported more than 370 000 registered Afghan refugees returned home from Pakistan in 2016 ⁽³²³⁾. IOM reported the return of around 250 000 undocumented Afghans from Pakistan in 2016 ⁽³²⁴⁾.

The Pakistani Government has extended its Proof of Registration cards (PoR) issued by NADRA (the National Database & Registration Authority), in principle, until the end of 2017 ⁽³²⁵⁾. In April 2017, Pakistan resumed the repatriation of Afghan refugees, following a winter

⁽³¹⁴⁾ SPARC, The State of Pakistan's Children 2016, May 2016, p. 58.

⁽³¹⁵⁾ UN OCHA, Pakistan: IDP/Returnee Survey of Humanitarian Needs in KP/FATA (29 Dec. 2016), 10 January 2017.

⁽³¹⁶⁾ UN OCHA, Pakistan: 2016 FATA Returns Snapshot (January to December 2016), 9 January 2017.

⁽³¹⁷⁾ UN OCHA, Pakistan: IDP/Returnee Survey of Humanitarian Needs in KP/FATA (29 Dec. 2016), 10 January 2017.

⁽³¹⁸⁾ UN OCHA, Pakistan: 2016 FATA Returns Snapshot (January to December 2016), 9 January 2017.

⁽³¹⁹⁾ Dawn, IDPs unwilling to return will be deregistered, 6 January 2017.

⁽³²⁰⁾ UN OCHA, Pakistan: FATA Return Weekly (from 05 May to 11 May 2017) - Humanitarian Snapshot, 17 May 2017.

⁽³²¹⁾ Al Jazeera, Afghan refugees return home amid Pakistan crackdown, 26 February 2017.

⁽³²²⁾ HRW, Pakistan: Mass Forced Returns of Afghan Refugees, 13 February 2017.

⁽³²³⁾ UNHCR, Tough choices for Afghan refugees returning home after years in exile, 3 February 2017.

⁽³²⁴⁾ IOM, Return of undocumented Afghans, weekly situation report, 8-14 January 2017.

⁽³²⁵⁾ Al Jazeera, Afghan refugees' status extended until end of year, 7 February 2017.

break ⁽³²⁶⁾. As of 17 May 2017, UN OCHA reported that from 1 January to 13 May 2017, 20 908 registered Afghans returned to Afghanistan. In the same period 55 421 undocumented Afghans returned ⁽³²⁷⁾.

1.5. State ability to secure law and order

1.5.1. State protection, security forces and justice

For a detailed description of the state's ability to secure law and order and the human rights violations committed by the Pakistani security forces, see the EASO Country Overview report on Pakistan (August 2015) ⁽³²⁸⁾.

Rule of law

Pakistan has an elected civilian government. The constitution provides that the political authority is divided between the legislative, the executive and the judiciary. The military has a substantial influence on national security, foreign policy and economic policy, according to Freedom House ⁽³²⁹⁾. Freedom House further states that corruption, lack of accountability and lack of transparency are pervasive problems at all levels of government, in politics, and in the military ⁽³³⁰⁾.

According to the World Justice Project's 2016 Rule of Law Index, Pakistan ranked 106 in a list of 113 countries in the world on overall rule-of-law scores, which included very low scores, amongst others, in the categories 'right to life and security', 'due process of law', 'sanctions for official misconduct', 'effective investigations', and 'no improper government influence' in the criminal justice system. This index was composed based on a set of questionnaires sent to experts (on average more than 300 per country) and to the general public ⁽³³¹⁾. According to USDoS there is a 'weak criminal justice system' in Pakistan, but the effectiveness of the Police varies by district, ranging from 'good to ineffective' ⁽³³²⁾. The Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development And Transparency (PILDAT) observes that the Pakistani Police lacks operational capacity and professionalism ⁽³³³⁾.

PIPS finds that

'[t]here is no denying the fact that police need to be equipped with new technologies and resources, but utilising the available resources also needs to be assessed. Likewise, the operational build-up of the Police; IT technical support and capacity building are

⁽³²⁶⁾ VOA, Pakistan Resumes Repatriation of Afghan Refugees, 3 April 2017.

⁽³²⁷⁾ UN OCHA, Pakistan: Afghan Refugees and Undocumented Afghans Repatriation (07 to 13 May 2017), 17 May 2017.

⁽³²⁸⁾ EASO, Pakistan Country overview, August 2015.

⁽³²⁹⁾ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2017 - Pakistan, 19 May 2017.

⁽³³⁰⁾ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2017 - Pakistan, 19 May 2017.

⁽³³¹⁾ World Justice Project, Rule of Law Index 2016, 10 January 2017, pp. 16, 122.

⁽³³²⁾ USDoS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2016 - Pakistan, 3 March 2017, p. 11.

⁽³³³⁾ PILDAT, Policy Brief: Policy Recommendations for Reforms in Police, January 2016, p. 7.

also areas needing attention. (...) At the same time, the NAP should prioritize the depoliticization of police, so as to shape it into a professional force' ⁽³³⁴⁾.

Security forces

Amnesty International (AI) states in its 2017 annual report, covering events in 2016, that enforced disappearances by security forces continued ⁽³³⁵⁾. Extrajudicial killings, violence and harassment, arbitrary arrest and detention, torture and abuse of detainees and other human rights abuses by security forces were reported by USDoS in its annual report covering 2016 ⁽³³⁶⁾. Extrajudicial killings were reported in Punjab, Balochistan, FATA, Sindh, and KP, committed during operations against militant groups. Extrajudicial killings during security operations and arbitrary arrests during protests were reported by members of Karachi-based political party MQM. There were also reports of arbitrary detainment of individuals by police in order to extort bribes or to provoke wanted individuals to surrender ⁽³³⁷⁾.

In May 2017, the United Nations Committee against Torture (CAT) expressed its concerns about the 'widespread practice' of torture by the Police, the military and intelligence agencies in Pakistan ⁽³³⁸⁾. The report stated further its concern over: 'reports that members of the State party's military forces; intelligence forces, such as the Inter-Service Intelligence agency; and paramilitary forces, such as the Frontier Corps and the Pakistan Rangers, have been implicated in a significant number of cases of extra-judicial executions involving torture and enforced disappearances.' ⁽³³⁹⁾

Justice

The formal court system, as established by the Constitution, consists of the Supreme Court, a High Court for the four provinces and Islamabad and a Federal Shariat Court ⁽³⁴⁰⁾. However, the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court and the High Courts does not extend to areas such as AJK or GB that operate under separate judicial systems ⁽³⁴¹⁾.

USDoS states in March 2017:

'The law provides for an independent judiciary, but the judiciary often was subjected to external influences, such as fear of reprisal from extremist elements in terrorism or blasphemy cases and public politicization of high-profile cases. The media and the public generally considered the high courts and the Supreme Court credible.

[...]

⁽³³⁴⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 22.

⁽³³⁵⁾ AI, Amnesty International Report 2016/17 - Pakistan, 22 February 2017.

⁽³³⁶⁾ USDoS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2016 - Pakistan, 3 March 2017.

⁽³³⁷⁾ USDoS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2016 - Pakistan, 3 March 2017, pp. 2, 4, 10, 13, 20.

⁽³³⁸⁾ United Nations Committee against Torture, Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan, 12 May 2017, pp. 1-2.

⁽³³⁹⁾ UN CAT, Concluding observations on the initial report of Pakistan, 12 May 2017, p. 3.

⁽³⁴⁰⁾ Hussain F., The Judicial system of Pakistan, May 2015.

⁽³⁴¹⁾ USDoS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2016 - Pakistan, 3 March 2017, p. 15.

Many lower courts remained corrupt, inefficient, and subject to pressure from wealthy persons and influential religious and/or political figures.

[...]

Informal justice systems lacking institutionalized legal protections continued, especially in rural areas, and often resulted in human rights abuses' ⁽³⁴²⁾.

On 6 January 2015, President Nawaz Sharif signed the 21st Constitutional Amendment Bill of 2015 and the Pakistan Army Amendment Act 1952. Those amendments gave military courts the jurisdiction until February 2017 to convict civilians for terrorism-related offences ⁽³⁴³⁾. In August 2015, the Supreme Court upheld the parliamentary amendments ⁽³⁴⁴⁾. The military courts disbanded on 7 January 2017 after the legal provision expired. In March 2017, Parliament, the Senate and the President passed legislation to reinstate the military courts ⁽³⁴⁵⁾. Many criticised the establishment of the military courts and warned that those courts could be used as a mechanism against political dissidents or groups that had disturbed the military in the past ⁽³⁴⁶⁾.

1.5.2. Anti-Terrorism Acts

On 24 February 2014, the Government announced an internal policy for a five-year period, the so-called Security Policy. It mainly focused on securing urban centres and kept largely silent on the situation in the FATA and Balochistan. It referred to dialogue with all stakeholders for *madrassa* reforms, militants' rehabilitation and deradicalisation ⁽³⁴⁷⁾. According to HRW, few steps were taken by the Government to regulate the *madrassas* ⁽³⁴⁸⁾. A prime target of the Security Policy was isolating terrorists. The National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) was supposed to streamline the fight against terrorism and carry out tasks ranging from counterterrorism to political and operational interventions. In February 2014 the Government was still engaged in peace talks with the Taliban, and the Security Policy proved insufficient once the military operation in North Waziristan started, and the country fell victim to retaliatory attacks by the militants ⁽³⁴⁹⁾. The December 2014 terrorist attack on the Peshawar Army Public School served as a catalyst for the political consensus when Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif convened an all parties' conference the day after the attack ⁽³⁵⁰⁾.

⁽³⁴²⁾ USDoS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2016 - Pakistan, 3 March 2017, pp. 15-16.

⁽³⁴³⁾ ICG, Revisiting Counter-terrorism Strategies in Pakistan: Opportunities and Pitfalls n°271, 22 July 2015, pp. 1-3.

⁽³⁴⁴⁾ DW, Pakistan's military courts - a solution or a problem?, 7 August 2015.

⁽³⁴⁵⁾ BBC, Pakistan to reinstate secret military courts despite criticism, 22 March 2017; Dawn, Military courts given legal cover by Senate, 28 March 2017; Military courts resume in Pakistan, 31 March 2017.

⁽³⁴⁶⁾ DW, Pakistan's military courts - a solution or a problem?, 7 August 2015; Al, Pakistan: Don't Reinstate Secret Military Courts, 20 March 2017; ICJ, Pakistan: ICJ denounces the revival of military trials of civilians, 28 March 2017; PILDAT, Policy Brief Revival of Military Courts in Pakistan, March 2017.

⁽³⁴⁷⁾ PIPS, 2014, Pakistan Security Report, 2015, p. 42.

⁽³⁴⁸⁾ HRW, World Report 2016 - Pakistan, 27 January 2016.

⁽³⁴⁹⁾ PIPS, 2014, Pakistan Security Report, 2015, p. 42.

⁽³⁵⁰⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), Fight against terrorism: Defining moment, 25 December 2014.

This led, in the same month, in consultation with all political parties, to the establishment of a National Action Plan (NAP) to eliminate terrorism from Pakistan. Key features were:

- Establishment of speedy military trial courts for two years;
- Commitment to ensure that no armed militias were allowed to function in the country;
- Countering hate speech and extremist material;
- Choking financing for terrorists;
- Establishing and deploying a dedicated counterterrorism force;
- Strengthening and restructuring of NACTA;
- Registration and regulation of *madrassas*;
- Administrative and development reforms in the FATA with immediate focus on return of IDPs;
- Zero tolerance for militancy in Punjab;
- Taking the ongoing operation in Karachi to its logical conclusion;
- Empowering Balochistan government for political reconciliation with complete ownership by all stakeholders;
- Formulation of a comprehensive policy to deal with the issue of Afghan refugees, beginning with registration of all unregistered Afghans staying unlawfully in Pakistan;
- Revamping and reforming the criminal justice system to strengthen counterterrorism departments including authorising the provincial Criminal Investigation Departments to intercept terrorist communications ⁽³⁵¹⁾.

Later in December 2014 Nawaz Sharif announced the formation of a federal counterterrorism force with immediate effect. An operation was to be launched against terrorism in the major cities. The Prime Minister also confirmed that Operation *Zarb-e-Azb* in the tribal areas would continue ⁽³⁵²⁾.

Following the Peshawar school attack in December 2014, the political and security establishment set up temporary military courts to try terrorism-related offences instead of pursuing the cases via an independent judiciary [see information above included under [Justice](#)] ⁽³⁵³⁾. The Government also introduced a series of amendments in counterterrorism laws and introduced the Protection of Pakistan Ordinance (PPO) ⁽³⁵⁴⁾.

Figures of the results of NAP for the past two years are difficult to ascertain. According by data of the National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) cited in a newspaper article in January 2017, 1 808 terrorists have been killed and 5 611 arrested. Around 1 893 cases were filed against clerics and so far 271 have been convicted ⁽³⁵⁵⁾.

After two years of NAP, Muhammad Amir Rana from PIPS finds that '[w]hatever Pakistan has accomplished in its war against terrorism is largely due to extensive operations launched against militants by security and law enforcement agencies across the country ... However, a

⁽³⁵¹⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), Fight against terrorism: Defining moment, 25 December 2014; Washington Post (The), Pakistan announces a national plan to fight terrorism, says terrorists' days are numbered, 24 December 2014.

⁽³⁵²⁾ Dawn, Nawaz constitutes special committee to implement national Action Plan, 26 December 2014.

⁽³⁵³⁾ Dawn, Military Courts part of National Action Plan: PM Nawaz, 30 December 2014; Economist (The), The man with the plan: Pakistan after the school massacre, 24 January 2015.

⁽³⁵⁴⁾ Dawn, Protection of Pakistan Bill 2014 approved in NA, 2 July 2014.

⁽³⁵⁵⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), What has NAP achieved so far?, 30 January 2016

slow implementation of National Action Plan (NAP) measures failed to complement these gains' ⁽³⁵⁶⁾. Sources stated that NAP is not a 'plan' but rather a political tool. The main issues according to the sources are that there is a lack of a central mechanism and the plan does not mention how and in which timeframe its main goals have to be achieved ⁽³⁵⁷⁾.

1.5.3. Detention and death penalty

Detention

USDoS reports that harsh and sometimes life-threatening conditions and abuse in some prisons and detention centres occur. Furthermore, inadequate food and water, and poor sanitation facilities were common. Overcrowding in the prisons is a serious problem due to lack of facilities ⁽³⁵⁸⁾. In December 2016, the newspaper Dawn made similar observations. According to Dawn, prisons are overcrowded and a number of prisoners under trial are housed in prisons, which points to the 'ineffectiveness of the justice system'. According to an editorial piece in Pakistan's leading newspaper Dawn, radicalisation within the prisons in Pakistan is also a concern ⁽³⁵⁹⁾.

Arbitrary arrest and detention were a problem in 2016, according to USDoS. 'The law prohibits arbitrary arrest and detention, but authorities did not always comply' ⁽³⁶⁰⁾.

Human Rights Commission Pakistan (HRCP) reported that Pakistan counts a prison population of 84 315 as per its May 2016 publication, and further noted that '[a]s in yesteryears [sic], overcrowding in prisons, lengthy court trials, corruption and impunity for security officials who transgressed their duties as law enforcers marred the justice system in 2016 as well [...] torture remained the foremost instrument of evidence collection in the criminal justice system of Pakistan' ⁽³⁶¹⁾.

Death penalty

In December 2014, in the aftermath of the attack on a school in Peshawar, the Pakistan authorities partially lifted a moratorium on the death penalty that had been in place since 2008. On 10 March 2015, the Pakistani Government declared that executions would resume for all capital crimes ⁽³⁶²⁾.

According to figures of the HRCP, 471 people were executed since 2014, as at 25 May 2017 ⁽³⁶³⁾. In 2016, Pakistan executed 87 people and as at 14 June 2017, Pakistan had

⁽³⁵⁶⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 9 (foreword).

⁽³⁵⁷⁾ Diplomat (The), Is Pakistan's National Action Plan Actually Working?, 24 December 2016; PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, pp. 85-100.

⁽³⁵⁸⁾ USDoS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2016 - Pakistan, 3 March 2017, p. 7.

⁽³⁵⁹⁾ Dawn, Prison conditions, 24 September 2016.

⁽³⁶⁰⁾ USDoS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2016 - Pakistan, 3 March 2017, p. 10.

⁽³⁶¹⁾ HRCP, State of Human Rights in 2016, May 2016, pp. 57-58, 60, 63.

⁽³⁶²⁾ Diplomat (The), Pakistan and the Death Penalty, 21 April 2016; Economist (The), The man with the plan: Pakistan after the school massacre, 24 January 2015.

⁽³⁶³⁾ HRCP, Death penalty Pakistan, n.d.

executed 44 people since January 2017 ⁽³⁶⁴⁾. According to AI, executions in 2016 in Pakistan fell significantly compared to 2015 ⁽³⁶⁵⁾. AI mentions that in 2015, 326 executions were reported. In 2016, 87 executions were carried out ⁽³⁶⁶⁾.

⁽³⁶⁴⁾ HRCP, Death penalty Pakistan, n.d.

⁽³⁶⁵⁾ AI, Death sentences and executions report 2016, 11 April 2017, p. 18.

⁽³⁶⁶⁾ AI, Death sentences and executions report 2016, 11 April 2017, p. 24.

2. Security situation per region

2.1. Geographical overview of the violence 2016 – May 2017

2.1.1. Trends in regional violence

The Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) ⁽³⁶⁷⁾ reported that the violence in Pakistan in 2016 was concentrated in different geographical areas. ACLED describes the violence in Pakistan by type of event: battles, remote violence, violence against civilians and riots/protests ⁽³⁶⁸⁾.

In Figure 5, an overview of the violence in Pakistan by actor is shown on a map by ACLED ⁽³⁶⁹⁾:

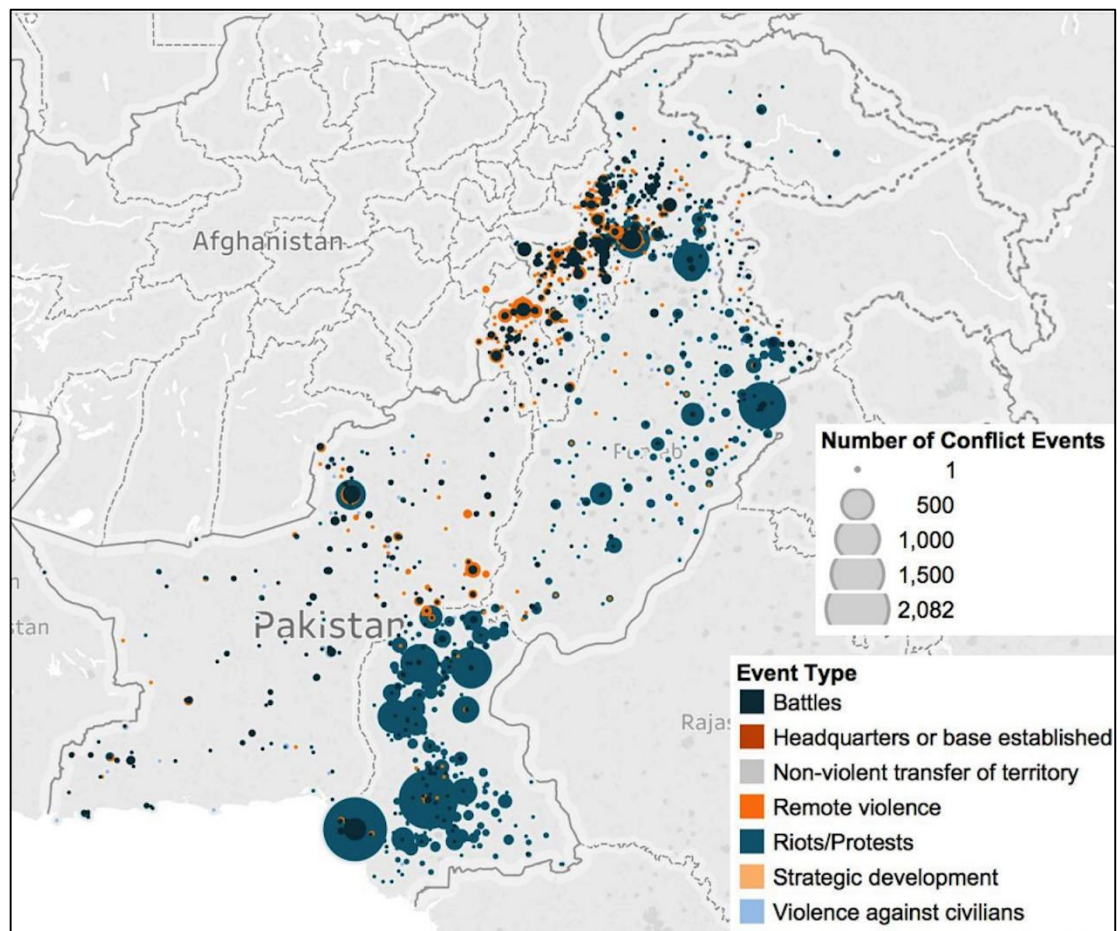


Figure 5: Regional violence in Pakistan Event Type and Location, 2016

© ACLED ⁽³⁷⁰⁾

According to ACLED data, in the provinces of Punjab and Sindh, fewer armed, organised instances of violence occurred in general, but a higher number of riots and protests took place. The big cities, especially Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad and Rawalpindi, are periodically targeted

⁽³⁶⁷⁾ The figures of ACLED were not used in other sections because of the fact that this source used a different methodology to describe 'violence'.

⁽³⁶⁸⁾ ACLED, Regional Violence in Pakistan, 7 February 2017.

⁽³⁶⁹⁾ ACLED, Regional Violence in Pakistan, 7 February 2017.

⁽³⁷⁰⁾ ACLED, Regional Violence in Pakistan, 7 February 2017.

by groups such as the TTP, al-Qaeda, or their affiliates in what ACLED describes as ‘mass-casualty attacks’ (see Figure 5) ⁽³⁷¹⁾. Balochistan sees a relatively large number of battles, incidents of remote violence (bombings) and violence against civilians, but also riots and protests over various issues. The FATA experiences the highest rate of battles, bombings and violence against civilians, with drone strikes predominantly clustered in North and South Waziristan. KP sees considerable violence in Peshawar. This city is the site of many attacks on police and military personnel, as well as bombings of markets and shops. Overall, ACLED documented that

‘[t]ogether Operation Zarb-e-Azb and the National Action Plan are the main drivers of the significant decrease in both fatalities and events in FATA over the course of 2015 and 2016.

[...]

This trend of decreasing violence was also mirrored to some extent in Pakistan’s most populous regions, Punjab and Sindh, although periodic mass-casualty attacks in both provinces over 2015 and 2016, are reminders that soft targets remain vulnerable despite the success of offensives in the Tribal Areas. This to some extent has also been recorded in Balochistan ... although other dynamics are also at play in that region which suggests more is going on under the surface’ ⁽³⁷²⁾.

2.1.2. Regional comparison of violence related fatalities

In this section, figures of fatalities and attacks at regional level are given, according to the four sources as described in [Section 1.4.1 Figures on civilian fatalities](#). It is impossible to present the figures in one comparative table, as the four main sources about the security situation use different parameters and definitions.

PIPS only gives regional details for terrorist attacks, which make up about 58 % of all violent incidents ⁽³⁷³⁾. PIPS focuses on the number of terrorist attacks (and consequent fatalities per province, and indicates percentage changes in 2016 compared to 2015 (see Figure 6). Compared to 2015, PIPS observed a decrease in terrorist incidents (28 % overall). The number of deaths also decreased but the number of injured increased. Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were most affected by terrorist attacks in 2016. FATA occupied the third position (see Figure 6) ⁽³⁷⁴⁾.

⁽³⁷¹⁾ ACLED, Regional Violence in Pakistan, 7 February 2017.

⁽³⁷²⁾ ACLED, Regional Violence in Pakistan, 7 February 2017.

⁽³⁷³⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 15.

⁽³⁷⁴⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 15.

| Region | No of terrorist incidents | % change | No of killed | % change | No of injured | % change |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| Balochistan | 151 | 29 % ↘ | 412 | 63% ↗ | 702 | 116% ↗ |
| FATA | 99 | 32% ↘ | 163 | 38% ↘ | 221 | 40% ↘ |
| Islamabad | 3 | No Change | 1 | 75% ↘ | 4 | 20% ↘ |
| Karachi | 47 | 44% ↘ | 60 | 60% ↘ | 75 | 6% ↘ |
| KP | 127 | 2% ↗ | 189 | 5% ↗ | 355 | 63% ↗ |
| Punjab | 7 | 69% ↘ | 80 | 4% ↘ | 241 | 1% ↗ |
| Sindh (excl. Karachi) | 54 | 59% ↘ | 63 | 97% ↘ | 104 | 78% ↘ |
| Total | 441 | 28% ↘ | 908 | 12% ↘ | 1627 | 18% ↗ |

Figure 6: Terrorist attacks by region - 2016 vs. 2015 (PIPS) ⁽³⁷⁵⁾

SATP gives data for fatalities per province in 2016, subdivided into civilians, security forces and terrorists/militants. The total number of fatalities in 2016, according to SATP, was 1 803. Balochistan was the region most affected, with 633 fatalities respectively. The FATA and Punjab occupied the second and third position with 430 and 271 fatalities ⁽³⁷⁶⁾.

CRSS recorded most of the fatalities in Balochistan, followed by Sindh and the FATA. Overall, the decrease in fatalities can be largely attributed to a sharp decrease in violence-related fatalities in the FATA and Sindh. A very slight increase in terms of fatalities, in comparison with 2015, occurred in the province of Punjab ⁽³⁷⁷⁾.

Generally, the overall trend is similar between the research conducted by SATP and CRSS, with highest fatalities in Balochistan, followed by Sindh and the FATA. The overall number of fatalities for 2016, observed by SATP, is a little less than CRSS. This is mainly due to differing fatalities from Sindh: SATP mentions 271 fatalities ⁽³⁷⁸⁾ in 2016 whereas the figure is 520 according to CRSS ⁽³⁷⁹⁾. These discrepancies may also be due to different definitions and parameters used by the two institutes.

Figure 7 presents a comparative regional analysis by CRSS of violence-related fatalities in Pakistan in 2016 ⁽³⁸⁰⁾.

⁽³⁷⁵⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 15.

⁽³⁷⁶⁾ SATP, Fatalities in Pakistan Region Wise: 2016, 31 December 2016.

⁽³⁷⁷⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 6.

⁽³⁷⁸⁾ SATP, Fatalities in Pakistan Region Wise: 2016, 31 December 2016.

⁽³⁷⁹⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 7.

⁽³⁸⁰⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 7.

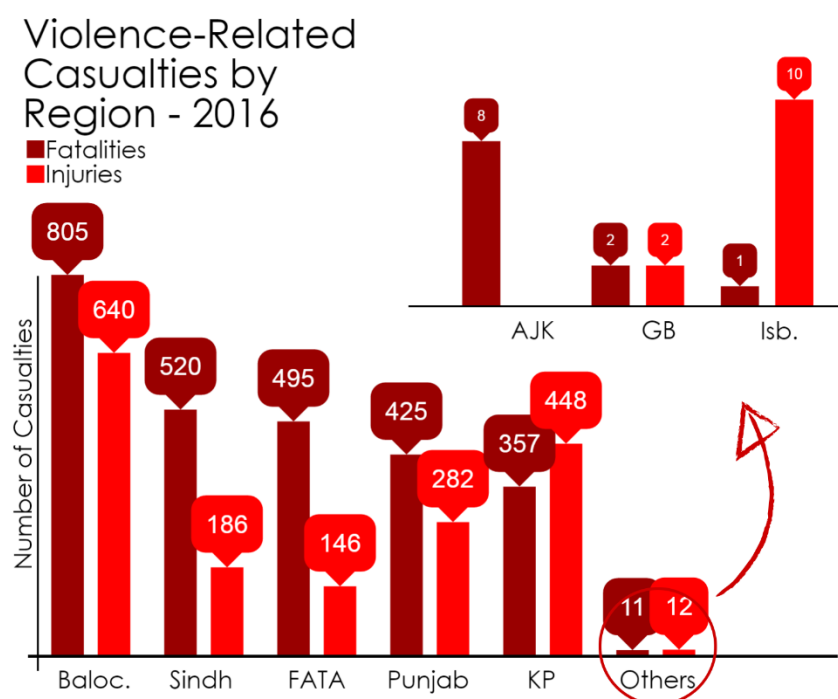


Figure 7: Comparative Regional Analysis 2016 © CRSS ⁽³⁸¹⁾

PICSS only gives regional details for militant attacks. In 2016, 1 624 militant attacks were observed. 1 858 people were killed and 1 962 others injured. According to PICSS, most fatalities of militant attacks were reported in the provinces of Balochistan, Sindh and KP ⁽³⁸²⁾.

2.2. Security trends per geographic subdivision

In the following sections, security trends are explained in greater detail, per geographic subdivision. In each provincial section a general description of the province contains information on the geography and population, on the background of the conflict, including the actors of the conflict in the province. The subsections describe recent trends in the security situation, including the nature of the violence, frequency, targets, locations, and victims within a timeframe from 1 April 2016 until 31 May 2017. Finally, a separate part is dedicated to displacements. Under the subsections several incidents are described. These should be read as illustrations of trends in the security situation and not as an exhaustive list of incidents.

⁽³⁸¹⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 7.

⁽³⁸²⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 12.

2.2.1. Punjab

General description of the province

Punjab province (see Map 1) is situated in the east of Pakistan. It borders the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir in the north-east, the Indian States of Punjab and Rajasthan in the east, the province of Sindh in the south, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces in the west, Islamabad federal capital area and Azad Kashmir in the north⁽³⁸³⁾. The provincial capital of Punjab is Lahore. Lahore is the second biggest city of Pakistan, after Karachi (Sindh province). Lahore is the economic and cultural heart of the province⁽³⁸⁴⁾. The population in the province is estimated at 91 million⁽³⁸⁵⁾. The people of Punjab are descendants of the Iranians, Turks, Afghans and Arabs⁽³⁸⁶⁾. Punjab is one of the most industrialised provinces⁽³⁸⁷⁾. A report by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), published in March 2016 states that the pressure on the economic development and unemployment are seen as major causes of social tension in the poorest southern districts. There is also a growing disconnect and socio-economic inequality between north and south Punjab⁽³⁸⁸⁾.

Background of the violence and actors in the Punjab

According to a report by the ICG in May 2016, militant networks and extremists are present in the south of the province. In this region militants can train, recruit, plan and conduct attacks. ICG states that: 'Their ability to operate freely is largely the result of the state's policy choices, particularly long reliance on jihadist proxies to promote perceived national security interests'⁽³⁸⁹⁾. Many *madrassas* are located in South Punjab. According to the newspaper The Diplomat, due to the hesitance of the Punjab government to close down the *madrassas* in the south, the central and northern areas of Punjab have also become radicalised⁽³⁹⁰⁾. After the attack on 27 March 2016 in Lahore, the Government launched a coordinated security operation in the province in April 2016. The Pakistan Army, the Rangers, the Police, and personnel of the Counterterrorism Department (CTD) of Punjab were deployed⁽³⁹¹⁾. According to PICSS, during the year 2016 as many as 179 security operations were carried out against militants⁽³⁹²⁾.

The TTP, Jamaat-ul-Ahrar and an IS affiliated group⁽³⁹³⁾ are the main actors carrying out terrorist attacks in Punjab in 2016, with motives ranging from sectarian targeted killings to targeting security institutions, according to PIPS⁽³⁹⁴⁾. SATP also mentioned the presence of radical Deobandi-groups such as LeJ and JeM in the province⁽³⁹⁵⁾. In June 2016, The News

⁽³⁸³⁾ Encyclopædia Britannica, Punjab, n.d.

⁽³⁸⁴⁾ Global Security, Lahore Cantonment, n.d.

⁽³⁸⁵⁾ World Population, Punjab Population 2017, 20 November 2017.

⁽³⁸⁶⁾ Government of the Punjab, People, n.d.

⁽³⁸⁷⁾ UNICEF, Context Analysis Summary: Pakistan, UNICEF, 21 March 2016.

⁽³⁸⁸⁾ UNICEF, Context Analysis Summary: Pakistan, UNICEF, 21 March 2016.

⁽³⁸⁹⁾ ICG, Pakistan's Jihadist Heartland: Southern Punjab, 30 May 2016.

⁽³⁹⁰⁾ Diplomat (The), Militancy in Punjab, 12 April 2016.

⁽³⁹¹⁾ Diplomat (The), The Pakistan Army's Curious Punjab Operation, 2 May 2016.

⁽³⁹²⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 58.

⁽³⁹³⁾ This group was unnamed by PIPS.

⁽³⁹⁴⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 42.

⁽³⁹⁵⁾ SATP, Punjab Assessment-2017, n.d.

reported that security forces claimed to have eliminated the entire leadership of LeJ in the province ⁽³⁹⁶⁾.

As part of Operation *Radd-ul-Fasaad*, security operations were launched in the bigger cities and the urban areas of the province ⁽³⁹⁷⁾.

Description of the violence

In 2016, PIPS counted seven terrorist attacks compared to 24 terrorist attacks in 2015, a decrease of 69 % ⁽³⁹⁸⁾. CRSS mentioned that in 2016 in the province the number of security operations were slightly higher than in 2015. Other types of violence mentioned by CRSS were militant attacks, terrorist attacks, targeted killings and robberies, reportedly staying at the same level as the previous years ⁽³⁹⁹⁾. PICSS stated that there was a decline of 44 % in the number of militant attacks in 2016 compared to 2015 ⁽⁴⁰⁰⁾.

In the beginning of 2017, the provincial capital Lahore was again the scene of some major security incidents: On 13 February 2017, a suicide bombing targeted a pharmacists' protest at the provincial assembly in Lahore, killing at least 13 persons and injuring 83 ⁽⁴⁰¹⁾. On 5 April 2017, six people were killed and 18 injuring when a suicide bombing targeted a census team in Lahore ⁽⁴⁰²⁾.

Impact of the violence

CRSS counted 425 fatalities in Punjab in 2016, an increase of 30% compared to 2015 ⁽⁴⁰³⁾. CRSS reports that the highest number of fatalities in Punjab was because of security operations ⁽⁴⁰⁴⁾. According to different sources, most casualties were militants and civilians, followed by security forces and others ⁽⁴⁰⁵⁾. SATP recorded in 2016, 244 fatalities (84 civilians, 21 security force personnel and 139 terrorists) ⁽⁴⁰⁶⁾.

CRSS states that in 2016, violent incidents were recorded in 34 out of 38 districts of the province of Punjab. Lahore was the city most affected by the violence, followed by Rajanpur and Sheikhpura in 2016 (see Figure 8) ⁽⁴⁰⁷⁾. The number of fatalities in Rajanpur is due to security operations in this area ⁽⁴⁰⁸⁾.

⁽³⁹⁶⁾ News (The), LeJ's entire leadership eliminated in Punjab, 20 June 2016.

⁽³⁹⁷⁾ Nation (The), Security forces dig deeper into Punjab, 5 April 2017.

⁽³⁹⁸⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 42.

⁽³⁹⁹⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 49.

⁽⁴⁰⁰⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 58.

⁽⁴⁰¹⁾ Guardian (The), Lahore blast: several killed as 'suicide bomb' hits Pakistan rally, 13 February 2017.

⁽⁴⁰²⁾ Al Jazeera, Deadly bomb blast targets census team in Lahore, 5 April 2017.

⁽⁴⁰³⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 47.

⁽⁴⁰⁴⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 49.

⁽⁴⁰⁵⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 50; PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 43; PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 58.

⁽⁴⁰⁶⁾ SATP, Fatalities in Pakistan Region Wise: 2016, 31 December 2016.

⁽⁴⁰⁷⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 48.

⁽⁴⁰⁸⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 48.

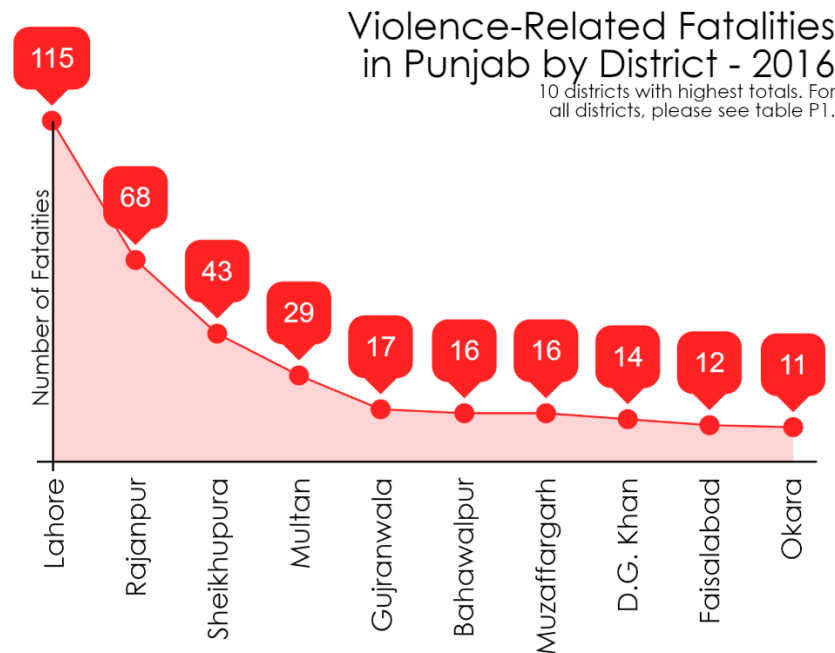


Figure 8: Violence-related Fatalities in Punjab by district 2016 © CRSS ⁽⁴⁰⁹⁾

Michael Kugelman states that militants target Lahore because of the fact that the militant's hideouts are based close to Lahore. He mentions that 'everyone wants to target Lahore because it is a bastion of the Government and the birthplace of high ranked military officials. It is strategically located, and the attacks in Lahore spook the Government' ⁽⁴¹⁰⁾.

According to data in the first quarter analysis report of 2017 conducted by CRSS, 224 casualties (113 dead, 111 injured) were counted, a decline of almost 30 % compared to the first quarter of 2016. Most fatalities in the first quarter occurred in February 2017 ⁽⁴¹¹⁾. The number of civilian victims was reduced while fatalities among security officials and criminals and militants increased in the first quarter of 2017, according to CRSS ⁽⁴¹²⁾.

In the first five months of 2017, SATP counted 102 deaths. Among those deaths, SATP observed 12 civilians, 16 security forces personnel and 74 militants ⁽⁴¹³⁾.

Displacement

UN OCHA did not report any conflict-induced displacement from areas in Punjab in 2016 ⁽⁴¹⁴⁾. Punjab is only identified as a hosting area ⁽⁴¹⁵⁾. The province hosts some IDPs from the FATA and also Afghan refugees ⁽⁴¹⁶⁾. In February 2017, HRCP expressed its concerns about 'racial

⁽⁴⁰⁹⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 49.

⁽⁴¹⁰⁾ Kugelman, M., Interview Islamabad, 5 April 2017.

⁽⁴¹¹⁾ CRSS, CRSS Security Report – Q1, 2017, 10 May 2017, p. 24.

⁽⁴¹²⁾ CRSS, CRSS Security Report – Q1, 2017, 10 May 2017, p. 26.

⁽⁴¹³⁾ SATP, Fatalities in Pakistan Region Wise: 2017, 28 May 2017.

⁽⁴¹⁴⁾ Websites consulted: <http://www.unocha.org/pakistan>; <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/pakistan>; <http://reliefweb.int/country/pak>.

⁽⁴¹⁵⁾ UN OCHA, Pakistan: KP and FATA - Areas of Displacement, Hosting and Returns as of 28 February 2017, 7 March 2017.

⁽⁴¹⁶⁾ Dawn, ANP asks PM to probe racial profiling of Pakhtuns in Punjab, 14 March 2017.

profiling' of Pashtuns from the FATA and Afghanistan in the province after some terrorist attacks occurred in the province in the beginning of 2017 ⁽⁴¹⁷⁾.

2.2.2. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

General description of the province

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (see [Map 1](#)) is situated in the north of Pakistan and borders Afghanistan in the west and FATA in the north, acting as a buffer zone between Afghanistan and KP, Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan in the east and north-east, Punjab province in the southeast, and Balochistan province in the southwest. The provincial capital is Peshawar and is the largest city in the province. The population is estimated at 26.7 million, according to 2015 estimates. The majority of the population speaks Pashtu, followed by the local language Hindko and then the national language Urdu. The province is well known for its natural resources such as oil, marble, gem stones and wood ⁽⁴¹⁸⁾.

Background of the conflict and actors in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

In 2009, the Pakistani Army engaged in a series of military operations against the TTP in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This offensive was marked by human rights violations and arbitrary arrests ⁽⁴¹⁹⁾. These hostilities caused a large wave of displacements ⁽⁴²⁰⁾. The local Taliban in the province went underground and continued its activity in large parts through terrorist attacks and targeted killings ⁽⁴²¹⁾. According to Radio Pakistan in December 2016, operation *Zarb-e-Azb* (see [1.3.1 Security operations and armed clashes](#)) contributed to more security in the province ⁽⁴²²⁾. The Army retains tight control as the threat from militants remains, according to a report by IRIN ⁽⁴²³⁾.

PIPS stated that the TTP carried out most of the terrorist attacks in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, followed by the local Taliban and JuA. The TTP attempts to re-establish its network in the area of Swat ⁽⁴²⁴⁾. PIPS mentions a slight increase in attacks carried out by the local Taliban in the province. According to PIPS this indicates 'a growing level of radicalism and recruitment, as such groups manage these attacks on their own' ⁽⁴²⁵⁾. There are reports that members of IS are hiding among the general population in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Members of

⁽⁴¹⁷⁾ Dawn, HRCP condemns 'racial profiling' of Pashtuns by Punjab govt officials, 27 February 2017.

⁽⁴¹⁸⁾ Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Quick view of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, n.d; Times of Islamabad (The), KP Government launches first population policy, 30 December 2016; Express Tribune (The), Keeping it alive: Conference calls for promotion of Hindko, 21 December 2014.

⁽⁴¹⁹⁾ Dawn, Swat: an unquiet calm, 21 September 2014.

⁽⁴²⁰⁾ ICG, Pakistan: Countering Militancy In FATA, Asia Report N°178, 21 October 2009, p. 8.

⁽⁴²¹⁾ ICG, Pakistan: Countering Militancy in PATA, Asia Report N° 242, 15 January 2013; Norway, LandInfo, Pakistan: Sikkerhetsrelaterte forhold i Khyber Pakhtunkwa (KPK) og Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), 8 November 2013.

⁽⁴²²⁾ Radio Pakistan, Peace restored in KP as result of Operation Zarb-e-Azb: Khattak, 24 December 2016.

⁽⁴²³⁾ IRIN, Fancy a holiday in a former Taliban stronghold?, 1 June 2016.

⁽⁴²⁴⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, pp. 68-69.

⁽⁴²⁵⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 68.

IS operate in Peshawar and are present in the settled areas of the province. They try to recruit people from various TTP factions ⁽⁴²⁶⁾.

Description of the violence

PIPS documented a total of 154 incidents of violence in the province, including 127 terrorist attacks in 2016, an increase of 2 % compared to 2015 ⁽⁴²⁷⁾. In addition three incidents of ethnic and political violence, five operational strikes, 15 armed clashes between law enforcement and militants, one cross-border attack and one clash between militants and tribesmen were observed by PIPS ⁽⁴²⁸⁾. PICSS documented a decrease of 10 % in the number of overall attacks compared to 2015 ⁽⁴²⁹⁾.

PIPS observed that militants in 2016 used suicide bombings, fire arms, IEDs, hand grenades and rockets ⁽⁴³⁰⁾.

In 2016, sources stated that militants attacked educational institutions, government officials and institutions and policemen ⁽⁴³¹⁾. For example, in January 2016, Bacha Khan University in Charsadda was attacked when militants stormed into the university. At least 20 people were killed ⁽⁴³²⁾. On 7 March 2016, a court in Charsadda was attacked ⁽⁴³³⁾. On 16 March 2016, a blast on a bus carrying government officials in Peshawar killed 15 people ⁽⁴³⁴⁾. On 19 April 2016, a blast occurred at a tax office in Mardan ⁽⁴³⁵⁾. On 2 September 2016, a suicide blast was carried out on a court in Mardan ⁽⁴³⁶⁾. At the end of October 2016, a police officer and a polio worker were killed in Peshawar and Jamrud ⁽⁴³⁷⁾. In November 2016, personnel of the Frontier Corps were killed in Peshawar in an IED attack ⁽⁴³⁸⁾.

The same trend persevered at the beginning of 2017. In February 2017, a convoy of the Frontier Corps was targeted in Charsadda ⁽⁴³⁹⁾. On 15 February 2017, a suicide attack targeted judges in Peshawar ⁽⁴⁴⁰⁾. At the end of February 2017, a court was attacked in Charsadda. Five civilians were killed and 15 injured ⁽⁴⁴¹⁾. On 8 May 2017 an explosion damaged a school gate

⁽⁴²⁶⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), Islamic State members hide among public in K-P, 2 March 2017; Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), How strong is Islamic State in Pakistan?, 9 March 2017.

⁽⁴²⁷⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 27.

⁽⁴²⁸⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 28.

⁽⁴²⁹⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 52.

⁽⁴³⁰⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 27.

⁽⁴³¹⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 27; PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 53; CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 43.

⁽⁴³²⁾ Reuters, Militants storm Pakistan university, kill at least 20, 20 January 2016

⁽⁴³³⁾ Reuters, Pakistani militants say blast at court that kills 10 was revenge, 7 March 2016

⁽⁴³⁴⁾ Dawn, 15 killed as bomb rips through bus carrying govt employees in Peshawar, 16 March 2016.

⁽⁴³⁵⁾ News (The), Suicide bomber hits Mardan Excise and Taxation office, 20 April 2016.

⁽⁴³⁶⁾ BBC, Pakistan blast at court leaves several dead in Mardan, 2 September 2016.

⁽⁴³⁷⁾ Dawn, Police officer killed as polio team targeted in Peshawar IED blast, 25 October 2016; Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), Polio vaccinator gunned down in Khyber Agency, 26 October 2016.

⁽⁴³⁸⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), Three FC men killed in TTP-JA blast at funeral in Peshawar, 22 November 2016.

⁽⁴³⁹⁾ Dawn, Three FC men, six civilians injured in blast, 1 February 2017.

⁽⁴⁴⁰⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), One killed in suicide attack on Peshawar judges, 15 February 2017.

⁽⁴⁴¹⁾ Dawn, 3 bombers killed during attack on Charsadda court: officials, 21 February 2017.

in Urmar, and subsequently two policemen got injured by a roadside bomb believed to be connected to the first explosion⁽⁴⁴²⁾. On 21 May 2017, six policemen were killed in two separate attacks near Peshawar⁽⁴⁴³⁾.

Impact of the violence

According to PIPS, the number of deaths from violent incidents show a slight upwards trend in 2016 compared to 2015⁽⁴⁴⁴⁾. According to PIPS and PICSS, the number of injured increased significantly in 2016⁽⁴⁴⁵⁾. On the other hand, CRSS documented a 20 % decline in fatalities from violence, down from 441 in 2015 to 357 in 2016⁽⁴⁴⁶⁾.

CRSS reports a decrease in the number of fatalities among civilians, militants and security forces in 2016 compared to 2015⁽⁴⁴⁷⁾. SATP recorded 213 fatalities in 2016, including 123 civilians, 50 security forces personnel and 40 militants, a slight decrease compared to 2015⁽⁴⁴⁸⁾. According to PICSS, 174 people were killed, including 80 civilians, and at least 386 were injured, of which 291 were civilians⁽⁴⁴⁹⁾. OSAC mentions that ‘targeted attacks against government officials, property, military, law enforcement, judicial, and other soft targets (educational facilities) are common’ and that:

‘[t]he critical terrorist threat [...] touches all aspects of life in northwest Pakistan and dominates the overall security environment. Street robbery, burglary, extortion, revenge/honor killings, political violence, terrorist attacks, kidnapping, sectarian killings, targeted killing of security personnel, military actions, and civil disturbances are common events in Peshawar and northwest Pakistan’⁽⁴⁵⁰⁾.

In 2016, Peshawar was the most affected part of the province, just as in 2015. PIPS recorded 48 terrorist attacks in Peshawar. Swat was the second most targeted area of the province in terms of terrorist attacks, followed by Bannu and Charsadda, according to PIPS⁽⁴⁵¹⁾. CRSS reports that the fatalities from violence in Peshawar slightly declined in 2016 compared to 2015. Charsadda was the second district in terms of fatalities, followed by Mardan and D.I. Khan (see Figure 9)⁽⁴⁵²⁾.

⁽⁴⁴²⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), Two security personnel injured as roadside bomb targets CTD vehicle in Peshawar, 8 May 2017.

⁽⁴⁴³⁾ RFE/RL, Six Pakistani Police Killed In Attacks Claimed By Extremist Groups, 22 May 2017.

⁽⁴⁴⁴⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 27.

⁽⁴⁴⁵⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 27; PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 52.

⁽⁴⁴⁶⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, pp. 41-42.

⁽⁴⁴⁷⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 44.

⁽⁴⁴⁸⁾ SATP, Fatalities in Pakistan Region Wise: 2016, 31 December 2016; SATP, Fatalities in Pakistan Region Wise: 2015, n.d.

⁽⁴⁴⁹⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 52.

⁽⁴⁵⁰⁾ OSAC, Pakistan 2017 Crime & Safety Report: Peshawar, 21 February 2017.

⁽⁴⁵¹⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, pp. 27-28.

⁽⁴⁵²⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 41.

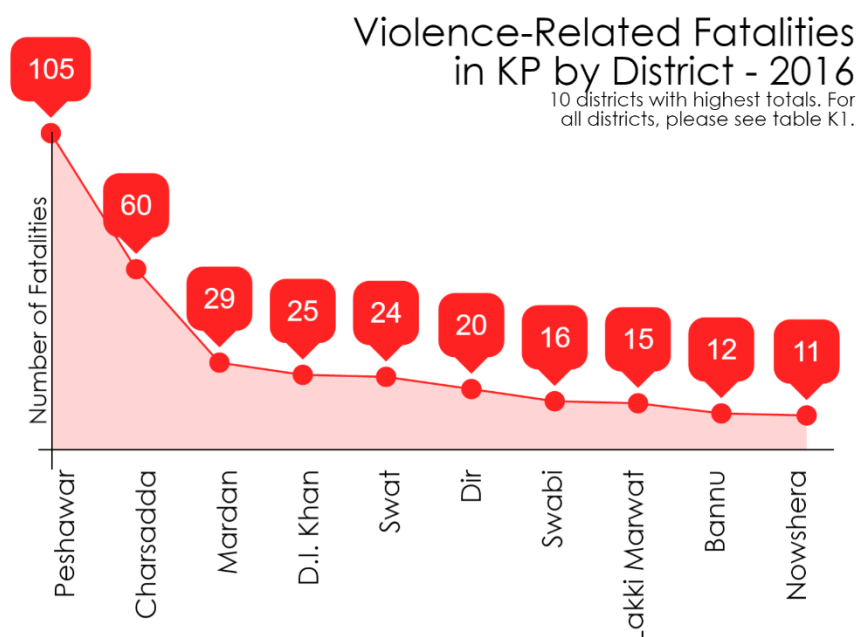


Figure 9: Violence-related fatalities in KP by district in 2016

© CRSS ⁽⁴⁵³⁾

According to data in the first quarter analysis report of 2017 conducted by CRSS, 148 fatalities (81 deaths, 67 injured) were counted, a decline of almost 40 % compared to the first quarter of 2016. Most fatalities in the first quarter occurred in March 2017. Almost half of the fatalities were civilians ⁽⁴⁵⁴⁾.

In the first five months of 2017, 68 fatalities (mostly militants) were counted by SATP ⁽⁴⁵⁵⁾. An almost 50 % decrease in the number of fatalities is observed, compared to the first five months of 2016 (115 fatalities).

Displacement

In February 2017, UN OCHA did not report any conflict-induced displacement from areas in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which is only identified as a hosting area ⁽⁴⁵⁶⁾. The government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa faced a lot of criticism in the past for the lack of facilities for the hosting of IDPs ⁽⁴⁵⁷⁾. For instance, Dawn reported, in March 2017, that in the Jalozai camp in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa a lack of health centres, education, ration, tents and other facilities was observed ⁽⁴⁵⁸⁾.

⁽⁴⁵³⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 42.

⁽⁴⁵⁴⁾ CRSS, CRSS Security Report – Q1, 2017, 10 May 2017, pp. 19-22.

⁽⁴⁵⁵⁾ SATP, Fatalities in Pakistan Region Wise: 2017, 28 May 2017.

⁽⁴⁵⁶⁾ UN OCHA, Pakistan: KP and FATA - Areas of Displacement, Hosting and Returns as of 28 February 2017, 7 March 2017.

⁽⁴⁵⁷⁾ Nation (The), Most of our fellow IDPs from South Waziristan continue to face countless problems and are reluctant to go back, 24 March 2017.

⁽⁴⁵⁸⁾ Dawn, Displaced families of Fata face an uncertain fate in Jalozai camp, 4 March 2017.

2.2.3. Balochistan

General description of the province

Balochistan (see Map 1) is located in the west of Pakistan. It borders Iran in the west, Afghanistan in the north-west, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in the north-east, Punjab province in the east, Sindh province in the south-east, and the Arabian Sea in the south ⁽⁴⁵⁹⁾. Balochistan is the largest province of Pakistan but the smallest in terms of population. The majority of the people are Baloch, but the second largest group is Pashtun (40 %). The provincial capital Quetta is also the home of a large part of the Hazara community in Pakistan ⁽⁴⁶⁰⁾. The province is of strategic importance to the Pakistan Government due to the CPEC project. The CPEC project includes a 3 000 km network of roads, railway and pipelines running from Balochistan's Gwadar Port to the Xinjiang region in China ⁽⁴⁶¹⁾.

Background of the conflict and actors in Balochistan

According to an USIP report dated June 2016, Balochistan struggles with multiple problems such as major 'conflicts between the state and nationalists (the military and armed militant groups); inter- and intra-tribal feuds and clashes; and ethnic and sectarian conflicts'. These conflicts are further complicated by the involvement of several foreign states, such as China, with an economic or political stake in the province ⁽⁴⁶²⁾.

The nationalist conflict in the province started in 2006 with the death of nationalist frontrunner and tribal head Nawab Akbar Bugti. Since then, nationalist groups, such as the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) and the Baloch Liberation Front (BLF), have staged attacks on government targets and on Punjabi settlers ⁽⁴⁶³⁾. In 2016, different Baloch groups carried out 124 terrorist attacks, a decrease of 36 % compared to 2015 ⁽⁴⁶⁴⁾. The fighting in Balochistan is usually referred to as 'a low-level insurgency' ⁽⁴⁶⁵⁾. The authorities have reacted strongly. During recent years, the Frontier Corps have abducted, tortured and killed hundreds of Balochi sympathisers. Human rights violations are frequently cited ⁽⁴⁶⁶⁾. In April 2017, Dawn reported that 434 nationalists from different groups such as BLA, BRA and others surrendered to the authorities as part of a political reconciliation ⁽⁴⁶⁷⁾.

Apart from the nationalist uprising, Balochistan has in recent years also been plagued by sectarian violence. Members of the local Shia community, mostly Hazara, have fallen victim of violent attacks ⁽⁴⁶⁸⁾, resulting in some relocating abroad or to Pakistan's other cities ⁽⁴⁶⁹⁾.

⁽⁴⁵⁹⁾ Encyclopædia Britannica, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, n.d.

⁽⁴⁶⁰⁾ AAN, The Crowded-Out Conflict: Pakistan's Balochistan in its fifth round of insurgency, 16 November 2015.

⁽⁴⁶¹⁾ BBC, China's Xi Jinping agrees \$46bn superhighway to Pakistan, 20 April 2015.

⁽⁴⁶²⁾ USIP, Pakistan: Balochistan: Caught in the Fragility Trap, 27 June 2016, p. 2.

⁽⁴⁶³⁾ ICG, Policing Urban Violence in Pakistan, Asia Report N°255, 23 January 2014; AAN, The Crowded-Out Conflict: Pakistan's Balochistan in its fifth round of insurgency, 16 November 2015.

⁽⁴⁶⁴⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, pp. 33, 36.

⁽⁴⁶⁵⁾ Dawn, 434 militants surrender in Balochistan, 21 April 2017.

⁽⁴⁶⁶⁾ AI, Amnesty International Report 2016/17 - The State of the World's Human Rights - Pakistan, 22 February 2017; HRW, World Report 2016 - Pakistan, 22 January 2017; BBC, Pakistan's battle against Balochistan separatists sparks anger and suspicion, 6 October 2015.

⁽⁴⁶⁷⁾ Dawn, 434 militants surrender in Balochistan, 21 April 2017.

⁽⁴⁶⁸⁾ Siddiqi, F., Sectarian Violence in Balochistan, 18 June 2015; HRW, We Are The Walking Dead. Killings of Shia Hazara in Balochistan, Pakistan, 30 June 2014.

⁽⁴⁶⁹⁾ Gandhara, Pakistan's Invisible Baluch Displacement Crisis, 24 February 2016.

Militant groups present in Balochistan are mainly the TTP, JuA, LeJ and Sipah-e-Mohammad⁽⁴⁷⁰⁾. The PIPS report of 2016 stated that ‘changing dynamics’ are at work in Balochistan. This means that the security forces face a much larger threat from various Islamic militants than from Baluchi nationalist insurgents, according to PIPS. The nationalists have continued ‘low-intensity’ attacks, but groups such as LeJ and Taliban militants have been carrying out major attacks in the region⁽⁴⁷¹⁾. Also The Diplomat reported in January 2017 that religious extremism is on the rise in the province⁽⁴⁷²⁾.

Another factor contributing to the conflict in Balochistan in recent years is the international involvement in Pakistan’s efforts to build the Gwadar Port in collaboration with China. To protect the CPEC project, Pakistan intends to increase its military presence in the region⁽⁴⁷³⁾. Pakistan accused India and other countries of interfering and supporting the Baloch separatists⁽⁴⁷⁴⁾. AHRC stated that security forces intensified their presence in the province since the beginning of 2016. According to sources such as AHRC and The Diplomat, the Government uses the CPEC-project as an excuse to target Baloch insurgents⁽⁴⁷⁵⁾.

Description of the violence

PIPS documented 234 incidents of various types of violence in 2016 in the province: 151 terrorist attacks, 38 operational attacks by security forces, 37 armed clashes and encounters, six cross-border attacks, one drone strike and one inter-militant clash⁽⁴⁷⁶⁾. Compared to 2015 (306 incidents), the overall number of incidents of violence dropped. Terrorist attacks declined by 29 % compared to 2015⁽⁴⁷⁷⁾.

Examples of major security incidents in the province of Balochistan in 2016 include: On 8 August 2016, militants of JuA attacked a hospital in Quetta, killing 56 and injuring 100 lawyers⁽⁴⁷⁸⁾. On 24 October 2016, at least 59 cadets and recruits were killed and over hundred injured after LeJ and IS militants had stormed a police training centre in Quetta⁽⁴⁷⁹⁾. On 12 November 2016, there was an explosion at the shrine of Shah Norani in Khuzdar District and dozens of people were killed or injured⁽⁴⁸⁰⁾.

Examples of major security incidents in the first five months of 2017 in the province include: on 2 January 2017 a blast in Quetta's Western Bypass injured four security personnel and two civilians⁽⁴⁸¹⁾. An IED blast in Quetta on 13 February 2017 killed two security personnel⁽⁴⁸²⁾.

⁽⁴⁷⁰⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, pp. 33, 36.

⁽⁴⁷¹⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 21.

⁽⁴⁷²⁾ Diplomat (The), The Rise of Religious Extremism in Balochistan, 9 January 2017.

⁽⁴⁷³⁾ Diplomat (The), Is the US Trying to Sabotage the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor?, 29 September 2016.

⁽⁴⁷⁴⁾ CACI, The China-Pakistan economic corridor and Baluchistan’s insurgency, 16 January 2016; AHRC, Military intensifies operation in Balochistan, 20 April 2016.

⁽⁴⁷⁵⁾ AHRC, Military intensifies operation in Balochistan, 20 April 2016; Diplomat (The), Balochistan: The Troubled Heart of the CPEC, 23 August 2016.

⁽⁴⁷⁶⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 34.

⁽⁴⁷⁷⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 33; PIPS, 2015, Pakistan Security Report, 2016, p. 19.

⁽⁴⁷⁸⁾ IRIN, Restive Pakistani city in legal limbo since bombing killed, injured 150 lawyers, 24 February 2017.

⁽⁴⁷⁹⁾ BBC, Quetta attack: Militants kill dozens at Balochistan Police College, 25 October 2016.

⁽⁴⁸⁰⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), At least 45 dead, over 100 injured in Khuzdar's Shah Noorani shrine explosion, 12 November 2016.

⁽⁴⁸¹⁾ Dawn, 6 injured in roadside blast near FC vehicle in Quetta, 2 January 2017

⁽⁴⁸²⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), Two killed in Quetta IED blast, 13 February 2017.

On 23 April 2017, four FC personnel were killed by a roadside bomb in the district of Kech ⁽⁴⁸³⁾. On 12 May 2017, a bomb attack targeted a convoy of the deputy leader of the Pakistani Senate, Abdul Ghafoor Haideri. More than 25 persons were killed and at least 30 injured ⁽⁴⁸⁴⁾. In May 2017, two Chinese nationals were kidnapped at Quetta ⁽⁴⁸⁵⁾. In the middle of May 2017, gunmen of the BLA killed ten labourers in Gwadar ⁽⁴⁸⁶⁾. An IED injured four FC personnel on 15 May 2017 in Mastung ⁽⁴⁸⁷⁾.

Impact of the violence

According to the different sources such as PIPS, CRSS and PICSS there was a decline of security incidents in the province but fatalities of those incidents were higher in 2016 than in the year before ⁽⁴⁸⁸⁾. PIPS reported that 681 people were killed and 744 injured in 2016, compared to 550 deaths and 395 injured in 2015 ⁽⁴⁸⁹⁾. CRSS counted 805 fatalities in 2016, compared to 719 in 2015 ⁽⁴⁹⁰⁾. PICSS recorded an increase of 26 % in casualties and a 120 % increase of injured compared to 2015 ⁽⁴⁹¹⁾. According to CRSS more than 45 % of the casualties in Balochistan were civilians and the majority of these were common people, followed by political and religious party activists ⁽⁴⁹²⁾. According to PICSS, out of 449 killed in 2016, 247 were civilians, and out of 734 injured, 451 were civilians ⁽⁴⁹³⁾.

CRSS documented that in 2016 the capital, Quetta, lost the highest number of lives to violence (288 in 2016 versus 106 in 2015), an increase of over 171 %. Other districts that suffered higher fatalities from violence were Khuzdar, Kech, Kalat, Nasirabad, Sibi and Awaran (see Figure 10) ⁽⁴⁹⁴⁾. The high fatalities in Quetta and Khuzdar can be explained with reference to the terrorist attacks there in January, February, August and November 2016 ⁽⁴⁹⁵⁾.

⁽⁴⁸³⁾ Nation (The), Four FC men killed in roadside blast, 23 April 2017.

⁽⁴⁸⁴⁾ Washington Post (The), The Latest: Pakistani PM condemns bombing in Baluchistan, 12 May 2017.

⁽⁴⁸⁵⁾ Dawn, Two Chinese nationals kidnapped from Quetta, 24 May 2017.

⁽⁴⁸⁶⁾ Al Jazeera, Gunmen kill 10 labourers in Balochistan's Gwadar, 13 May 2017.

⁽⁴⁸⁷⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), Four FC personnel injured in Mastung IED blast, 15 May 2017.

⁽⁴⁸⁸⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 15; CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 30; PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 44.

⁽⁴⁸⁹⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 34; PIPS, 2015, Pakistan Security Report, 2016, p. 19.

⁽⁴⁹⁰⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 30.

⁽⁴⁹¹⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 44.

⁽⁴⁹²⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 32.

⁽⁴⁹³⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 44.

⁽⁴⁹⁴⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 30.

⁽⁴⁹⁵⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 34.

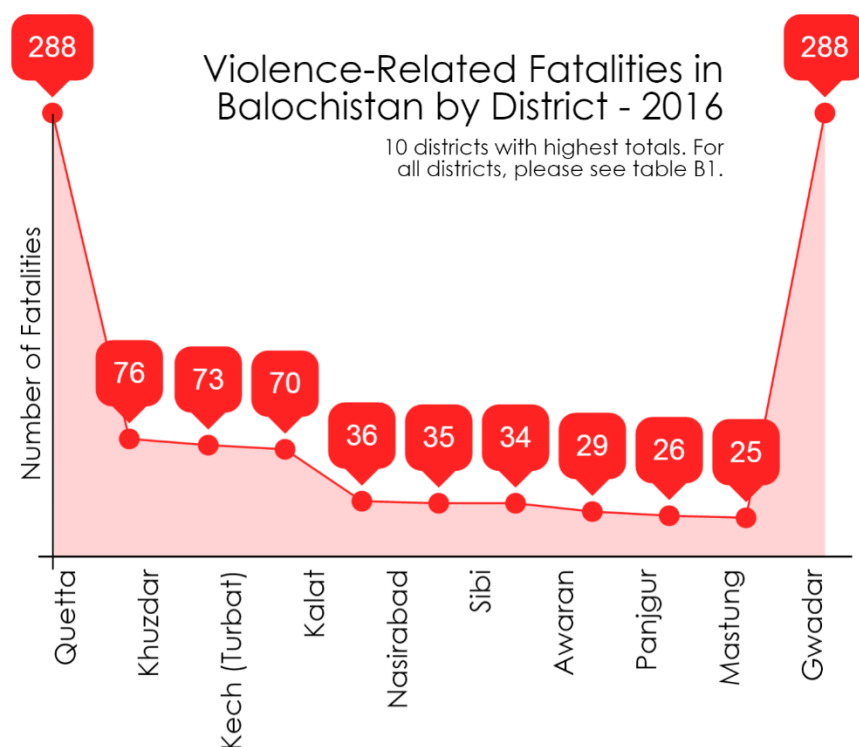


Figure 10: Violence-related fatalities in Balochistan by district in 2016

© CRSS ⁽⁴⁹⁶⁾

The first quarter analysis report of 2017 by CRSS documented 110 casualties (67 fatalities, 43 injured), a decline of almost 60 % in fatalities compared to the first quarter of 2016. While the number of civilian fatalities dropped for the first quarter 2017 compared to the first quarter 2016, from 50 in 2016 to 29 in 2017, the overall percentage of the total number of fatalities went up from 28 % to 42 %. Most fatalities in the first quarter occurred in January 2017 ⁽⁴⁹⁷⁾.

For the first five months of 2017, SATP counted 112 casualties, of which the majority were civilians ⁽⁴⁹⁸⁾.

Displacement

In February 2016, RFE/RL stated that an estimated 250 000 people have been displaced by violence from Balochistan since 2006. A part of this number of Baloch IDPs fled to Afghanistan ⁽⁴⁹⁹⁾. Reportedly, in recent years more than one million Baloch have fled the province due to terrorism. People from Dera Bugti, Kohlu, Makran, Jalawan, Naseerabad, and Bolan have migrated mainly to the border areas of Sindh and Punjab, according to The Diplomat ⁽⁵⁰⁰⁾.

⁽⁴⁹⁶⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 31.

⁽⁴⁹⁷⁾ CRSS, CRSS Security Report – Q1, 2017, 10 May 2017, pp. 9-12.

⁽⁴⁹⁸⁾ SATP, Fatalities in Pakistan Region Wise: 2017, 28 May 2017.

⁽⁴⁹⁹⁾ Gandhara/RFE/RL, Pakistan's Invisible Baluch Displacement Crisis, 24 February 2016.

⁽⁵⁰⁰⁾ Diplomat (The), Pakistan's Census: A Baloch Perspective, 3 February 2017.

2.2.4. Sindh

General description of the province

The province of Sindh (see Map 1) is situated in the south-east of Pakistan. It borders the province of Balochistan in the north and in the west, the province of Punjab in the north-east and the Arabian Sea in the south. The population is estimated at 36 million⁽⁵⁰¹⁾. Sindh population is made up of Muhajir and Pashtun, Punjabi, Sindhi and Baloch speaking people⁽⁵⁰²⁾. The provincial capital, Karachi, is the largest city in Pakistan and is divided in six districts, South, East, Central, West, Korangi and Malir and six cantonments⁽⁵⁰³⁾. Karachi is the part of Sindh where significant sectarian, ethnic and political violence occurs⁽⁵⁰⁴⁾. Karachi attracts migration from every major ethnic and linguistic group in Pakistan owing to its economic potential. Karachi is also inhabited by IDPs from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the FATA, Afghan refugees and illegal migrants⁽⁵⁰⁵⁾.

Background of the conflict and actors in Sindh

Since September 2013, a security operation is ongoing in the province, mainly focusing on the capital Karachi. The purpose of this operation is to tackle four categories of violent groups involved in violence in the city: Taliban, sectarian outfits, armed wings of ethno-political violence, and criminal gangs⁽⁵⁰⁶⁾. Search operations and raids are carried out by the Rangers. Dawn reported that in 2016, 1 992 search operations were conducted in which more than 2 847 suspected criminals were apprehended⁽⁵⁰⁷⁾. HRCP and AHRC expressed their concerns about human rights violations such as extrajudicial killings and torture and the growing role of the Rangers in the political affairs of Karachi⁽⁵⁰⁸⁾.

According to the Jamestown Foundation, Karachi is perceived as a 'safe haven and a source of funding' by Islamist militants⁽⁵⁰⁹⁾. In Sindh province, different militant groups are present such as multiple factions of the TTP and al-Qaeda⁽⁵¹⁰⁾. According to sources, traces of the Islamic State (IS) can be found in the province⁽⁵¹¹⁾. In February 2017, IS claimed responsibility for the attack on the shrine of Lal Shahbaz Qalandar in Sehwan⁽⁵¹²⁾. One source states that as a result of the search operations in 2016 and the beginning of 2017, these groups changed their hideouts from Pashtun-dominated suburban areas to other parts of Karachi, as well as splitting up into smaller cells, some then joining up with other banned groups⁽⁵¹³⁾. According

⁽⁵⁰¹⁾ Encyclopædia Britannica, Sindh, n.d.

⁽⁵⁰²⁾ ICG, Pakistan: Stoking the Fire in Karachi, Asia Report N°284, 15 February 2017, p. 2.

⁽⁵⁰³⁾ ICG, Pakistan: Stoking the Fire in Karachi, Asia Report N°284, 15 February 2017, p. 2.

⁽⁵⁰⁴⁾ Aikins, M., Gangs of Karachi, September 2015.

⁽⁵⁰⁵⁾ ICG, Pakistan: Stoking the Fire in Karachi, Asia Report N°284, 15 February 2017, p. 3.

⁽⁵⁰⁶⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 111.

⁽⁵⁰⁷⁾ Dawn, Rangers apprehended 446 'target killers' in Karachi this year: report, 29 December 2016.

⁽⁵⁰⁸⁾ HRCP, HRCP concerns grow over rights situation in Karachi, 1 October 2016; AHRC, Pakistan: Disappearances and extra judicial killings of Sindhi nationalists continue, 13 December 2016.

⁽⁵⁰⁹⁾ Jamestown Foundation (The), 'Karachi's Security Crackdown a Boost for Pakistan's Islamists', 11 November 2016.

⁽⁵¹⁰⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 111.

⁽⁵¹¹⁾ News (The), Daish network exists in Sindh, 14 October 2015; Jamestown Foundation (The), 'Growing Evidence of Islamic State in Pakistan', 4 February 2016.

⁽⁵¹²⁾ Dawn, CTD report terms Sindh 'fertile growth area' for IS, 21 February 2017.

⁽⁵¹³⁾ News (The), Militant groups finding new ways to evade crackdown, 27 April 2017.

to PIPS, most terrorist attacks (28 out of 54) in the province in 2016 were carried out by factions of the TTP and other militant groups with similar anti-state objectives as the TTP ⁽⁵¹⁴⁾.

Also sectarian violent groups have their roots in Sindh. Groups such as Sipah-e-Sahaba, LeJ, Jundallah and Sipah-e-Muhammed operate in the province ⁽⁵¹⁵⁾. PIPS counted 19 sectarian-related attacks in Sindh, 18 of those were carried out in Karachi and one in Shikarpur ⁽⁵¹⁶⁾. LeJ was responsible for ten attacks in Karachi ⁽⁵¹⁷⁾.

A significant dynamic in the province and especially in Karachi is the power struggle between the political parties of the main demographic groups, the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM, Mohajir), the Awami National Party (ANP, Pashtun) and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP, Sindhi) ⁽⁵¹⁸⁾. Apart from this political violence, Karachi is the base for more than 200 heavily armed criminal gangs. Sometimes these carry out attacks for the armed wings of the political parties ⁽⁵¹⁹⁾. The operations of the Rangers in 2016 weakened MQM's armed wing and were also successful in weakening gang networks ⁽⁵²⁰⁾.

Description of the violence

Sources stated that in 2016 the overall law and order situation in the province improved. Casualties from political violence and gang wars declined. However, sectarian groups are still active in the region ⁽⁵²¹⁾.

In 2016, PIPS recorded 54 terrorist attacks across the province, 47 attacks took place in Karachi. This is a decrease of 47 % compared to 2015 ⁽⁵²²⁾. In interior Sindh, seven terrorist attacks were counted, compared to 17 in the previous year ⁽⁵²³⁾. Among those terrorist attacks, there were both sectarian related and nationalist inspired attacks ⁽⁵²⁴⁾.

In terms of types of attacks, PICSS pointed out a pattern of attacks on security forces personnel (particularly target killings) in Sindh ⁽⁵²⁵⁾. CRSS details different types of security incidents in the province of Sindh. The number of targeted killings, lynching and militant attacks dropped significantly ⁽⁵²⁶⁾. Grenade attacks, IEDs, other types of explosive devices, physical attacks and targeted killings were the methods of violence used in Sindh during the last year ⁽⁵²⁷⁾.

In 2016, the provincial capital Karachi faced the highest number of attacks. Security forces were the victims of targeted killings or victims of IEDs ⁽⁵²⁸⁾. A high profile target killing occurred

⁽⁵¹⁴⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 39.

⁽⁵¹⁵⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, pp. 112-113.

⁽⁵¹⁶⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 39.

⁽⁵¹⁷⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 69.

⁽⁵¹⁸⁾ ICG, Pakistan: Stoking the Fire in Karachi, Asia Report N°284, 15 February 2017, pp. 8-11.

⁽⁵¹⁹⁾ USIP, Conflict dynamics in Karachi, 19 October 2012; Guardian (The), Karachi vice: inside the city torn apart by killings, extortion and terrorism, 21 October 2015.

⁽⁵²⁰⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, pp. 113-114.

⁽⁵²¹⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 111; Jamestown Foundation (The), 'Karachi's Security Crackdown a Boost for Pakistan's Islamists', 11 November 2016.

⁽⁵²²⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 39.

⁽⁵²³⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 41.

⁽⁵²⁴⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 39.

⁽⁵²⁵⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 55.

⁽⁵²⁶⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 55.

⁽⁵²⁷⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 57.

⁽⁵²⁸⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 40.

in June 2016 when famous Sufi-singer Amjad Sabri was killed in Karachi by TTP-militants ⁽⁵²⁹⁾. In September 2016, a suicide bomber targeted an Imambargha in Shikarpur, injuring at least ten people ⁽⁵³⁰⁾. On 29 October 2016, four people were killed when they attended a religious gathering in Karachi ⁽⁵³¹⁾. In February 2017, a worker of Samaa TV was killed in a gun attack by militants of the TTP ⁽⁵³²⁾. IS claimed responsibility for the attack on the shrine of Lal Shahbaz Qalandar in Sehwan on 16 February 2017 ⁽⁵³³⁾.

Impact of the violence

The fatalities from violence-related incidents dropped significantly in the province in 2016, according to the sources. PIPS recorded a 75 % decrease of fatalities in 2016 compared to 2015 ⁽⁵³⁴⁾. Also CRSS marked a decline of 57 % in fatalities ⁽⁵³⁵⁾. The highest number of fatalities reported in Sindh this year were of militants and criminals (275), followed by civilians (206) and security officials (39) ⁽⁵³⁶⁾.

CRSS reported that Karachi was the most affected part of Sindh in terms of fatalities in 2016, just as the previous year. However, there was over a 50 % reduction in the number of fatalities in 2016 (474) compared to 2015 (1 040). In the districts of Sukkur, Hyderabad and Shikarpur respectively, 14, nine and five fatalities were recorded by CRSS (also see Figure 11) ⁽⁵³⁷⁾. According to OSAC, militants targeted police and security forces in Karachi ⁽⁵³⁸⁾.

⁽⁵²⁹⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), Amjad Sabri shot dead in Karachi, 22 June 2016.

⁽⁵³⁰⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), Eid day attack injures 10 in Shikarpur Imambargah, 13 September 2016.

⁽⁵³¹⁾ Dawn, Four killed in firing at religious gathering in Karachi's Nazimabad, 29 October 2016.

⁽⁵³²⁾ Dawn, Samaa TV DSNG van attacked in Karachi, one dead, 13 February 2017.

⁽⁵³³⁾ Dawn, CTD report terms Sindh 'fertile growth area' for IS, 21 February 2017.

⁽⁵³⁴⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 39.

⁽⁵³⁵⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 53; The numbers of fatalities can differ among the main sources used because of their different methodologies.

⁽⁵³⁶⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, pp. 56-57.

⁽⁵³⁷⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, pp. 53-54.

⁽⁵³⁸⁾ OSAC, Pakistan 2017 Crime & Safety Report: Karachi, 1 February 2017.

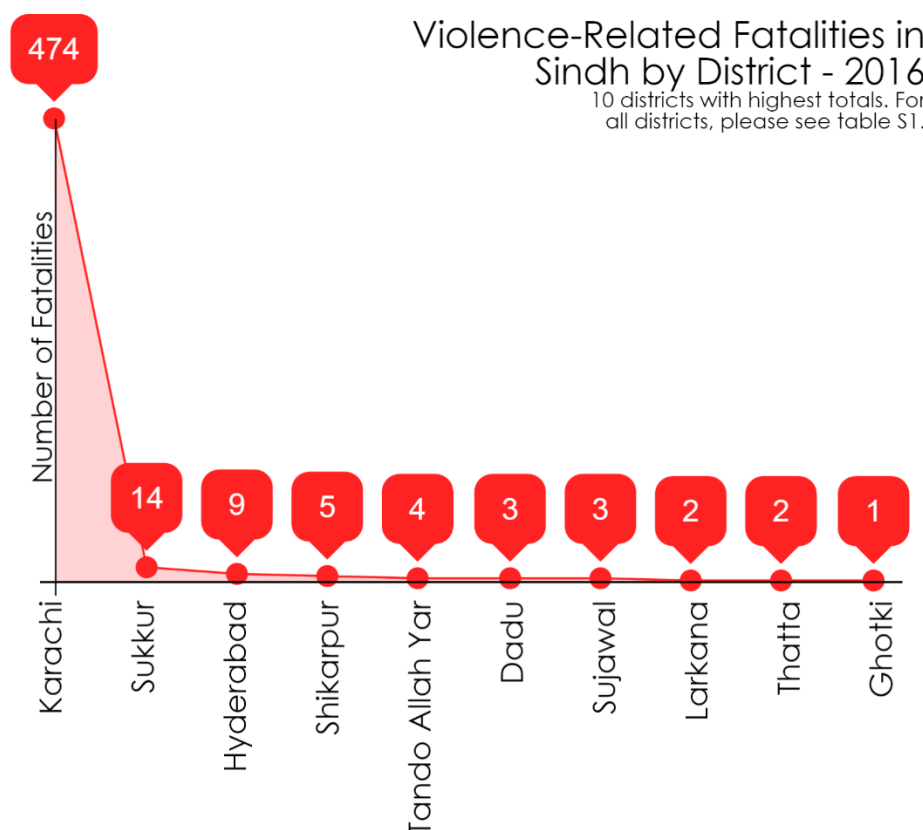


Figure 11: Violence-related fatalities in Sindh by district in 2016 © CRSS ⁽⁵³⁹⁾

In the first five months of 2017, SATP recorded 171 deaths ⁽⁵⁴⁰⁾ in the province compared to 146 in the first five months of 2016 ⁽⁵⁴¹⁾.

CRSS counted in the first quarter of 2017, 409 casualties from violence (184 dead, 224 injured). Just as SATP reported, the highest number of fatalities occurred in the month of February ⁽⁵⁴²⁾. This was due to a suicide attack on 16 February 2017 on a shrine of Lal Shahbaz Qalandar in Sehwan, which killed at least 70 people and injured more than 150 ⁽⁵⁴³⁾.

Displacement

UN OCHA did not report any conflict-induced displacement from areas in Sindh in 2016 ⁽⁵⁴⁴⁾.

⁽⁵³⁹⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 54.

⁽⁵⁴⁰⁾ SATP, Fatalities in Pakistan Region Wise: 2017, 31 May 2017.

⁽⁵⁴¹⁾ SATP, Fatalities in Pakistan Region Wise: 2016, 31 December 2016.

⁽⁵⁴²⁾ CRSS, CRSS Security Report – Q1, 2017, 10 May 2017, p. 29.

⁽⁵⁴³⁾ Dawn, At least 70 dead as bomb rips through Lal Shahbaz shrine in Sehwan, Sindh, 17 February 2017.

⁽⁵⁴⁴⁾ Websites consulted: <http://www.unocha.org/pakistan>; <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/pakistan>; <http://reliefweb.int/country/pak>.

2.2.5. Federally Administered Tribal Areas

General description of the province

The FATA (see Map 1) are situated on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border between the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Afghanistan, and border Balochistan in the south. The FATA comprises seven agencies and six frontier regions. The seven agencies are the following: Bajaur Agency, Mohmand Agency, Khyber Agency, Orakzai Agency, Kurram Agency, North and South Waziristan ⁽⁵⁴⁵⁾. The six frontier regions are: FR Peshawar, FR Bannu, FR Kohat, FR Lakki, FR Tank and FR D.I. Khan ⁽⁵⁴⁶⁾. The FATA have a strong tribal structure and a diverse ethnicity and cultural heritage ⁽⁵⁴⁷⁾. The terrain is mountainous with small valleys, surrounded by settlements and agricultural fields ⁽⁵⁴⁸⁾. The total population in the FATA is estimated to be around 4.45 million ⁽⁵⁴⁹⁾. The Government of Pakistan has plans to reform the FATA and merge the region into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa within five years ⁽⁵⁵⁰⁾.

Background of the conflict and actors in the FATA

Since 2004, the Pakistani Army has conducted military operations in the FATA. As in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa this led to a series of human rights violations and consecutive waves of displacement ⁽⁵⁵¹⁾. These military operations had a major impact on socio-economic life in the region. Educational institutions were destroyed and agricultural output suffered ⁽⁵⁵²⁾.

Due to the military Operation *Zarb-e-Azb* the situation in the FATA improved, according to military sources. In June 2016, the military stated that 'militant strongholds, communications infrastructure and sanctuaries were cleared on a large scale in the FATA, including North Waziristan and Khyber agencies' ⁽⁵⁵³⁾. According to a report by IRIN, militant groups such as al-Qaeda and the Pakistani Taliban have left the area. Many militants were killed, but others have fled to Afghanistan. Despite this, the region is not free of conflict ⁽⁵⁵⁴⁾.

Because many militants fled to Afghanistan, they changed their operational tactics in the area in the past year. They tried to cause as much damage as they could through planting IEDs and carrying out targeted operations, according to FATA Research Centre ⁽⁵⁵⁵⁾. Militant groups carrying out attacks in the region are the TTP and different factions of the TTP, JuA and LI ⁽⁵⁵⁶⁾.

⁽⁵⁴⁵⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 1.

⁽⁵⁴⁶⁾ Government of FATA, FATA, n.d.

⁽⁵⁴⁷⁾ Government of FATA, Tribal and Ethnic Diversity, n.d.

⁽⁵⁴⁸⁾ Government of FATA, Physical Features and Climate, n.d.

⁽⁵⁴⁹⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 1.

⁽⁵⁵⁰⁾ RFE/RL, Reform Of Colonial-Era Laws Aims To Bring Pakistan's 'Black Hole' Into The Light, 2 May 2017

⁽⁵⁵¹⁾ AI, 'As if hell fell on me', the human rights crisis in northwest Pakistan, 10 June 2010; ICG, Pakistan: The Worsening IDP Crisis, Asia Briefing N°111, 16 September 2010.

⁽⁵⁵²⁾ Daily Times, Waking up to FATA, 20 January 2016.

⁽⁵⁵³⁾ Dawn, Nearly 350 military men killed in Zarb-i-Azb: ISPR, 15 June 2016.

⁽⁵⁵⁴⁾ IRIN, Can \$10 billion and political reforms bring peace to Pakistan's restive frontier?, 5 April 2017.

⁽⁵⁵⁵⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 23.

⁽⁵⁵⁶⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 28.

Description of the violence

Firstly, the violence is described in general for the FATA and secondly the violence is described at the agency level. This is done to give an overall picture of the FATA but also an agency specific picture of the violence.

General

According to PICSS, the overall security situation improved in 2016 as a result of military actions in North Waziristan and Khyber Agencies. The number of militant attacks decreased. PICSS counted 119 militant attacks in 2016, compared to 170 in 2015 ⁽⁵⁵⁷⁾. According to PIPS, 99 terrorist attacks were carried out, a decline of 32 % compared to 2015 ⁽⁵⁵⁸⁾. PIPS stated that no sectarian attacks took place in 2016 ⁽⁵⁵⁹⁾.

Fata Research Center (FRC) states in its annual report of 2016 that violent incidents in FATA decreased by 25 % in 2016 compared to 2015, counting 219 incidents of violence in 2016. Of these, 52 were attacks on civilians, and 17 were cross-border attacks by militants on civilians and the military ⁽⁵⁶⁰⁾.

Figure 12 (see below) gives an overview of the nature of the violence for the FATA per agency, in 2016. Table 4 shows that the nature of the attacks is diverse. Methods used by militants included IEDs, terrorist attacks, cross-border attacks, clashes between militants groups and militant ambushes on security personnel. These are observed in all seven agencies. Pakistani security forces reacted in 2016 with air strikes, ground and search operations ⁽⁵⁶¹⁾.

In its quarterly analysis of the first months of 2017, FRC states that there was a significant rise in militant attacks and anti-militant operations in FATA compared to the last quarter of 2016. FRC counted 119 security incidents in the first quarter of 2017, of which 31 were attacks on civilians ⁽⁵⁶²⁾. According to FRC, every agency in the FATA, except North Waziristan Agency, experienced more militant activity ⁽⁵⁶³⁾. Especially in the first quarter of 2017 there is an upscale in attacks noticeable in South Waziristan according to Saifullah Mahsud, president of FATA Research Centre ⁽⁵⁶⁴⁾. FRC stated that this increase of violence is due to the fact that militant groups are regaining their operational strength for carrying out their activities across the FATA and that there are sleeper cells present ⁽⁵⁶⁵⁾.

⁽⁵⁵⁷⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 48.

⁽⁵⁵⁸⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 28.

⁽⁵⁵⁹⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 28.

⁽⁵⁶⁰⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 5.

⁽⁵⁶¹⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 4.

⁽⁵⁶²⁾ FRC, FATA Security Report – First Quarter 2017, 19 April 2017, p. 1.

⁽⁵⁶³⁾ FRC, FATA Security Report – First Quarter 2017, 19 April 2017, p. 22.

⁽⁵⁶⁴⁾ Mahsud, S., Interview Islamabad, 5 April 2017.

⁽⁵⁶⁵⁾ FRC, FATA Security Report – First Quarter 2017, 19 April 2017, pp. 22-23.

| Security Overview 2016 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|-----------|--------|----|---------|----|--------|-----|--------|----|---------|---|-----|----|-----|----|-------|-----|
| Nature of Attacks | | incidents | Bajaur | | Mohmand | | Khyber | | Kurram | | Orakzai | | NWA | | SWA | | Total | |
| | | | K | I | K | I | K | I | K | I | K | I | K | I | K | I | K | I |
| Terrorist Attacks | [On] Civilians | 52 | 4 | 9 | 49 | 56 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 18 | 83 | 106 |
| | [On] Military | 56 | 11 | 10 | 41 | 29 | 28 | 56 | 16 | 61 | 1 | 0 | 6 | 9 | 4 | 14 | 107 | 179 |
| | [On] Peace Lashkar | 5 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 13 | 5 |
| Cross-border attacks | Shelling | 5 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 12 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 16 | 8 |
| | Guerilla activities | 12 | 0 | 2 | 9 | 2 | 1 | 16 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 24 |
| Clashes Between Militant Groups | | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Military operations | Search operations | 64 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 22 | 4 | 7 | 0 | 33 | 7 |
| | Aerial Strikes | 18 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 127 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 133 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 247 | 30 |
| | Artillery Shelling | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Curfews | | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Drones attack | | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 1 |
| Lashkar Operation | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | | 219 | 17 | 22 | 113 | 87 | 153 | 110 | 37 | 78 | 1 | 4 | 175 | 27 | 25 | 32 | 521 | 360 |

Figure 12: Security Overview 2016-Nature of Attacks (FRC) ⁽⁵⁶⁶⁾

Legend: K = Killed, I = Injured

Below is a description of the violence in 2016 and in the first quarter of 2017, given per agency in the FATA.

Bajaur Agency

Bajaur Agency is located in the north of the FATA and is the smallest agency in the FATA. Because it shares most of its border with Afghanistan, this agency is particularly vulnerable to cross-border attacks ⁽⁵⁶⁷⁾.

FRC describes the security situation in Bajaur in 2016 as 'quite disturbed' ⁽⁵⁶⁸⁾. The third quarter of 2016 showed nine incidents. In the last quarter of 2016 incidents of violence declined a little bit ⁽⁵⁶⁹⁾. FRC counted 29 security incidents in 2016, in which 17 people were killed and 22 injured (See Table 4) ⁽⁵⁷⁰⁾.

PIPS states that 15 terrorist attacks took place in Bajaur in the first quarter of 2017, in which nine people were killed and 14 injured ⁽⁵⁷¹⁾. According to one source, IED attacks and

⁽⁵⁶⁷⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 2.

⁽⁵⁶⁸⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 24.

⁽⁵⁶⁹⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, pp. 11-12.

⁽⁵⁷⁰⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 11.

⁽⁵⁷¹⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, pp. 28-29.

ambushes on civilians and security forces were the dominant trends of militancy in Bajaur Agency ⁽⁵⁷²⁾.

In the first three months of 2017, FRC counted 15 terrorist attacks. The security forces also conducted twelve search operations against the militants during the first quarter of 2017. 13 people were killed and 19 injured, of which nine deaths and 13 injured were civilian ⁽⁵⁷³⁾. Compared to the first quarter of 2016, Bajaur Agency saw an increase of 250 % in violent incidents in the first quarter of 2017 ⁽⁵⁷⁴⁾.

Khyber Agency

Khyber Agency borders Afghanistan to the West, Orakzai Agency to the south, Kurram Agency to the south-west and Peshawar in the east. This agency is divided into three administrative units: Bara, Jamrud and LandiKotal ⁽⁵⁷⁵⁾.

In the recent past, Khyber Agency underwent different security operations. In October 2014, the military Operation Khyber 1 started to target militants who fled Operation *Zarb-e-Azb* in North Waziristan and took shelter in Khyber Agency ⁽⁵⁷⁶⁾. In the spring of 2015 Operation Khyber 2 was launched, lasting until June 2015. The military took control over most of the strategic areas in the agency and militant groups fled to Afghanistan ⁽⁵⁷⁷⁾. In August 2016, operation Khyber 3 started. This operation aimed to clear the area beyond Tirah Valley, right on the Pak-Afghan border ⁽⁵⁷⁸⁾.

According to FRC, Khyber Agency was the third most volatile region of the FATA after North Waziristan and Mohmand in 2016 ⁽⁵⁷⁹⁾. 56 incidents of violence occurred, killing 153 people and leaving 110 injured (see Table 4). The third and fourth quarter of 2016 were especially volatile, due to the start of operation Khyber 3 and clashes at the border with Afghanistan ⁽⁵⁸⁰⁾. PIPS recorded 19 terrorist attacks in 2016. In those attacks 37 people were killed and 74 injured ⁽⁵⁸¹⁾.

In the first three months of 2017, FRC documented 42 security incidents. Compared to the same period in 2016 there was a serious increase in 2017 ⁽⁵⁸²⁾.

Kurram Agency

Kurram Agency shares its border largely with Afghanistan. In the east this agency borders Orakzai Agency and Khyber Agency, and North Waziristan Agency in the south. It is divided into three administrative units: Lower Kurram, Upper Kurram and Central Kurram. Parachinar

⁽⁵⁷²⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, pp. 28-29;

⁽⁵⁷³⁾ FRC, FATA Security Report – First Quarter 2017, 19 April 2017, p. 6.

⁽⁵⁷⁴⁾ FRC, FATA Security Report – First Quarter 2017, 19 April 2017, p. 7.

⁽⁵⁷⁵⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 2.

⁽⁵⁷⁶⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), Army chief vows ‘terror-free’ Pakistan, 20 June 2015.

⁽⁵⁷⁷⁾ Dawn, Military operation in Khyber ends successfully, 3 July 2015.

⁽⁵⁷⁸⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), Army mounts Khyber-III to secure Pak-Afghan border, 17 August 2016.

⁽⁵⁷⁹⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, pp. 23-24.

⁽⁵⁸⁰⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, pp. 15-17.

⁽⁵⁸¹⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 29.

⁽⁵⁸²⁾ FRC, FATA Security Report – First Quarter 2017, 19 April 2017, p. 12.

is the main town. Kurram is the only agency in the FATA with a significant Shia population. Kurram Agency has a history of sectarian violence between Sunni and Shia ⁽⁵⁸³⁾.

FRC noticed an increase in casualties but not in the number of incidents during the second quarter of 2016. In the third quarter the violence declined whilst in the fourth quarter the number of incidents increased again. Overall, 19 incidents took place, killing 36 and injuring 79. Of these, two of the fatalities and eight of the injured were civilians ⁽⁵⁸⁴⁾. PIPS counted six terrorist attacks in 2016, killing 15 and injuring six ⁽⁵⁸⁵⁾.

FRC mentions that the situation in Kurram Agency remained 'disturbed' in the first quarter of 2017. In total 16 violent incidents occurred, killing 69 and injuring 143 people. Most casualties were civilians ⁽⁵⁸⁶⁾.

In the beginning of 2017, there were some major incidents in the agency: An IED exploded at a market in Parachinar on 20 January 2017, killing at least 25 persons ⁽⁵⁸⁷⁾. On 31 March 2017, a suicide bomber targeted a Shia mosque near Parachinar, killing 23 persons and injuring more than 100 ⁽⁵⁸⁸⁾. On 25 April 2017, a roadside blast targeted a passengers van killing at least 14 ⁽⁵⁸⁹⁾. This agency also witnessed one drone attack in the first quarter of 2017 ⁽⁵⁹⁰⁾.

Orakzai Agency

Orakzai shares its borders with Khyber Agency in the north, FR Kohat in the east, the districts of Kohat and Hangu in the south, and Kurram Agency in the west. Administratively, it is divided into Upper and Lower Orakzai ⁽⁵⁹¹⁾.

Four incidents of violence were counted by FRC during 2016 and most of the attacks occurred in the last quarter of 2016. In total one person was killed and four injured (see Table 4) ⁽⁵⁹²⁾. According to FRC, Orakzai Agency was 'the most peaceful' agency in the FATA in 2016 ⁽⁵⁹³⁾. PIPS counted three terrorist attacks in 2016 in Orakzai ⁽⁵⁹⁴⁾.

In the first quarter of 2017, FRC documented five violent incidents, resulting in 23 casualties. These incidents were due to terrorist attacks and security operations ⁽⁵⁹⁵⁾.

⁽⁵⁸³⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 2; AA, Specter of sectarianism revisits northwest Pakistan, 21 April 2017; Chandran, D. Suba, Terror revisits Parachinar: Kurram Agency's Ten Year Sectarian Itch, January 2017.

⁽⁵⁸⁴⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 17.

⁽⁵⁸⁵⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 29.

⁽⁵⁸⁶⁾ FRC, FATA Security Report – First Quarter 2017, 19 April 2017, p. 13

⁽⁵⁸⁷⁾ Dawn, 'Terrorists will fail in their attempt to regain lost relevance,' army chief says, 22 January 2017.

⁽⁵⁸⁸⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), 23 killed, over 100 injured as blast rocks Parachinar, 31 March 2017.

⁽⁵⁸⁹⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), 14 killed as passenger van hits landmine in Kurram Agency, 25 April 2017.

⁽⁵⁹⁰⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), Drone strike kills two in Kurram Agency, 2 March 2017.

⁽⁵⁹¹⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 3.

⁽⁵⁹²⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 19.

⁽⁵⁹³⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 24.

⁽⁵⁹⁴⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 29.

⁽⁵⁹⁵⁾ FRC, FATA Security Report – First Quarter 2017, 19 April 2017, pp. 16-17.

Mohmand Agency

Mohmand Agency borders Bajaur Agency in the north and Khyber Agency in the south. In the east it borders Malakand and Charsadda districts and Peshawar District in the southeast ⁽⁵⁹⁶⁾.

PIPS mentioned 36 terrorist attacks in 2016, in which 79 people were killed and 76 injured. PIPS states that JuA was responsible for most of these attacks, and that the main targets were pro-government tribesmen ⁽⁵⁹⁷⁾. On 16 September 2016, they claimed responsibility for an attack on a mosque in Payee Khan ⁽⁵⁹⁸⁾. According to FRC the number of attacks in this agency is higher than in other agencies because it borders the provinces of Kunar and Nangharar in Afghanistan, which are 'safe havens' for groups such as the TTP and JuA. These groups infiltrate from there into Mohmand Agency and carry out attacks in the agency ⁽⁵⁹⁹⁾. FRC counted 59 attacks during 2016, killing 113 people and injuring 87 (see Table 4) ⁽⁶⁰⁰⁾. FRC noted a significant rise in terms of casualties in 2016 compared to 2015 ⁽⁶⁰¹⁾.

In the first quarter of 2017 the security situation remained 'volatile', according to FRC. FRC documented twelve incidents of violence, in which 48 people were killed and 18 were injured ⁽⁶⁰²⁾.

North Waziristan Agency

North Waziristan borders Kurram Agency and Hangu in the north and Karak and Bannu districts in the east, South Waziristan Agency in the south and Afghanistan in the west ⁽⁶⁰³⁾. Since June 2014, North Waziristan has been affected by Operation *Zarb-e-Azb* (see [Section 1.3.1 Security operations and armed clashes](#)).

In 2016, Operation *Zarb-e-Azb* was in its clearing phase in this agency and most of the militants were forced to flee to Afghanistan. Due to this, militants changed tactics and used IEDs and carried out targeted operations ⁽⁶⁰⁴⁾. Sources mention the presence of TTP and a splinter faction of the TTP, Sajna Group, in this agency ⁽⁶⁰⁵⁾. FRC documented 25 incidents, including militant attacks, military operations and airstrikes, in which 175 people were killed and 27 injured ⁽⁶⁰⁶⁾. PIPS counted eight terrorist attacks, in which eleven people were killed and 23 injured ⁽⁶⁰⁷⁾.

In the first months of 2017, FRC states that six violent incidents have taken place. According to FRC this is a decrease of 40 % compared to the same period in 2016 ⁽⁶⁰⁸⁾. At present, North

⁽⁵⁹⁶⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 2.

⁽⁵⁹⁷⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, pp. 29, 36.

⁽⁵⁹⁸⁾ Reuters, Suicide bomber kills at least 25 in Pakistani mosque, 16 September 2016.

⁽⁵⁹⁹⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 23.

⁽⁶⁰⁰⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 13.

⁽⁶⁰¹⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 8.

⁽⁶⁰²⁾ FRC, FATA Security Report – First Quarter 2017, 19 April 2017, p. 8.

⁽⁶⁰³⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 3.

⁽⁶⁰⁴⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 23.

⁽⁶⁰⁵⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 29; FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 23.

⁽⁶⁰⁶⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 20.

⁽⁶⁰⁷⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 29; The numbers of violence differ among the main sources because of the use of a different methodology of the sources.

⁽⁶⁰⁸⁾ FRC, FATA Security Report – First Quarter 2017, 19 April 2017, p. 19.

Waziristan is reportedly cleared of militants. The Pakistan Army states that over two years the Army lost 872 soldiers and killed more than 2 000 militants ⁽⁶⁰⁹⁾.

South Waziristan Agency

South Waziristan shares its border in the north with North Waziristan, and borders Bannu and Lakki Marwat districts in the north-east, the tribal area adjoining Tank district and Dera Ismail Khan district in the east, Zhob District of Balochistan Province and Dera Ismail Khan district in the south, and Afghanistan in the west ⁽⁶¹⁰⁾.

FRC mentions that most militants are cleared from this agency but that they still carry out some 'sporadic attacks' ⁽⁶¹¹⁾. PIPS counted 12 terrorist attacks in this agency, which killed 10 people and injured 24 ⁽⁶¹²⁾. About 50 % of these terrorist attacks were attacks on security or law enforcement personnel ⁽⁶¹³⁾. FRC recorded 28 incidents in 2016, which killed 25 people and injured 32 ⁽⁶¹⁴⁾.

In the first months of 2017, FRC states that 10 violent incidents have taken place. According to FRC this is a decrease of 23 % compared to the same period in 2016 ⁽⁶¹⁵⁾ but FRC still describes the security situation as 'disturbed' ⁽⁶¹⁶⁾.

Impact of the violence

FRC observed 881 casualties (521 deaths and 360 injured) in the FATA in 2016. This is a decline of 60 % in terms of casualties compared to 2015 ⁽⁶¹⁷⁾. A predominant part of these fatalities were militants (462 casualties). According to FRC, this is due to the effectiveness of intensive air strikes, intelligence based operations, drone strikes and ground offences by the Pakistan Army ⁽⁶¹⁸⁾.

CRSS counted 495 fatalities ⁽⁶¹⁹⁾ in 2016, compared to 1 917 fatalities in 2015. The most affected regions of the FATA were North Waziristan, Khyber Agency and Mohmand Agency (see Figure 13) ⁽⁶²⁰⁾.

⁽⁶⁰⁹⁾ BBC, North Waziristan: What happened after militants lost the battle?, 8 March 2017.

⁽⁶¹⁰⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 3.

⁽⁶¹¹⁾ FRC FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 24.

⁽⁶¹²⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 29.

⁽⁶¹³⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 29.

⁽⁶¹⁴⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 21.

⁽⁶¹⁵⁾ FRC, FATA Security Report – First Quarter 2017, 19 April 2017, p. 21.

⁽⁶¹⁶⁾ FRC, FATA Security Report – First Quarter 2017, 19 April 2017, p. 20.

⁽⁶¹⁷⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 5.

⁽⁶¹⁸⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 6.

⁽⁶¹⁹⁾ Fatalities according to CRSS are persons killed, see CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 37.

⁽⁶²⁰⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 37.

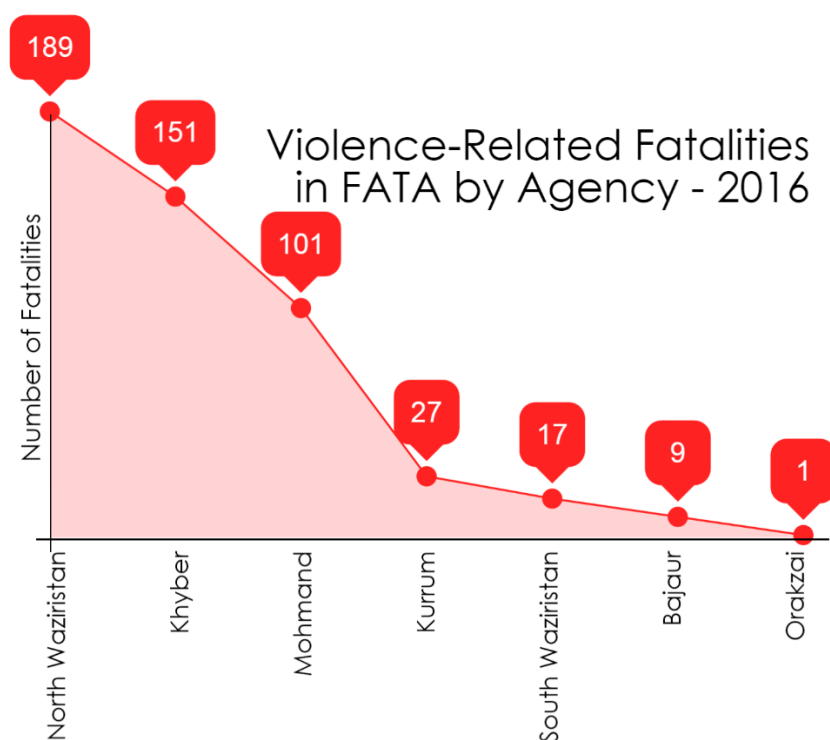


Figure 13: violence-related fatalities in the FATA by agency

© CRSS ⁽⁶²¹⁾

In the first five months of 2017, SATP recorded 191 fatalities in the FATA ⁽⁶²²⁾. A high number of fatalities was observed in the months of February and March ⁽⁶²³⁾.

CRSS counted 231 victims of violence (144 dead, 87 injured) in the first quarter of 2017. Just as SATP mentioned, the highest number of fatalities occurred in the month of February, according to CRSS ⁽⁶²⁴⁾.

For the first quarter of 2017, FRC documented 119 terrorism and counterterrorism incidents, resulting in 281 dead and 210 injured. Of these, 31 attacks targeted civilians, resulting in 72 dead and 164 injured ⁽⁶²⁵⁾.

Displacement

Displacement of persons in the FATA is due to conflict, such as military operations and sectarian violence ⁽⁶²⁶⁾. In the following paragraph, a short overview is given of the numbers of IDPs from 2014 onwards. In 2014 Operation *Zarb-e-Azb* in North Waziristan caused a wave of displacement within the FATA ⁽⁶²⁷⁾. Figures of IDPs in the FATA vary depending on the consulted sources. UNHCR states that approximately half a million IDPs fled the North

⁽⁶²¹⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 38.

⁽⁶²²⁾ SATP, Fatalities in Pakistan Region Wise: 2017, 28 May 2017.

⁽⁶²³⁾ SATP, Fatalities in Pakistan Region Wise: 2017, 28 May 2017.

⁽⁶²⁴⁾ CRSS, CRSS Security Report – Q1, 2017, 10 May 2017, p. 14.

⁽⁶²⁵⁾ FRC, FATA Security Report – First Quarter 2017, 19 April 2017, pp. 1-3.

⁽⁶²⁶⁾ UNHCR, Protection Cluster, *Protection Cluster Report August 2016*, 8 August 2016, p. 5.

⁽⁶²⁷⁾ European Commission, Pakistan, Echo factsheet, March 2016.

Waziristan fighting as of August 2014 ⁽⁶²⁸⁾. However IDMC reports in 2015 that the number of IDPs is often underestimated, and says that more than 900 000 IDPs may have fled owing to the violence in the FATA ⁽⁶²⁹⁾. As of 12 May 2017, UN OCHA counted 47 896 registered families still displaced. The highest numbers of displaced people are from North Waziristan, where 20 585 people remained displaced ⁽⁶³⁰⁾.

The majority of the IDPs from the FATA do not live in IDP camps, but settle in host communities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa or in spontaneous settlements such as in Bannu ⁽⁶³¹⁾. Some of the IDPs have moved to Afghanistan ⁽⁶³²⁾.

In March 2015 the Pakistani Government announced a five-phase plan (March 2015 until December 2016) for IDPs to gradually return to areas declared as safe ⁽⁶³³⁾. Between March and June 2016, thousands of IDPs from Orakzai Agency, Khyber Agency, Kurram Agency, North and South Waziristan were expected to return to their homes ⁽⁶³⁴⁾. Due to the extreme cold weather at the end of 2016, the Government of Pakistan decided to postpone the completion of the repatriation process until June 2017 ⁽⁶³⁵⁾. As of 12 May 2017, UN OCHA reported that 26 784 registered families had returned in 2017 till then ⁽⁶³⁶⁾. From January to May 2017, 14 817 registered families returned to North Waziristan, followed by 9 642 to South Waziristan and 2 099 to Khyber Agency ⁽⁶³⁷⁾. According to the Pakistan Army a total of 94 % of the IDPs in the FATA have returned to their agencies. The return of the displaced to the province of Khost in Afghanistan will start after *Eid* 2017 ⁽⁶³⁸⁾. Additional repatriation is underway, but according to governmental sources it is hindered by 'security and logistical challenges' ⁽⁶³⁹⁾.

At the start of 2016, the Pakistani Government took further initiatives to restore and improve daily live in the FATA. For instance, besides the Government announcing the return of displaced people in the FATA, shopkeepers can resume their work in the *bazaars*, and schools damaged by the Pakistani Taliban are being repaired to reopen soon ⁽⁶⁴⁰⁾. However, in May 2017, returnees feared that the infrastructure was not repaired yet and that the insurgents would return ⁽⁶⁴¹⁾. According to Saifullah Mahsud, President of FATA Research Centre, the rebuilding of homes and repatriation process is a slow and difficult one ⁽⁶⁴²⁾.

⁽⁶²⁸⁾ UNHCR, 2015 UNHCR country operations profile - Pakistan, n.d.

⁽⁶²⁹⁾ IDMC, Pakistan IDP Figures Analysis, 31 July 2015.

⁽⁶³⁰⁾ UN OCHA, Pakistan: FATA Return Weekly (from 27 April to 4 May 2017) - Humanitarian Snapshot, 12 May 2017.

⁽⁶³¹⁾ UNHCR, Protection Cluster, Protection Cluster Report August 2016, 8 August 2016, pp. 5-6.

⁽⁶³²⁾ FRC, FATA Annual Security Report 2016, 24 January 2017, p. 26.

⁽⁶³³⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), IDPs returning as areas get denotified, 8 October 2015.

⁽⁶³⁴⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), Clouded in uncertainty: IDPs to 'stay away from home beyond 2016', 21 February 2016.

⁽⁶³⁵⁾ Tribal News Network, Repatriation of FATA IDPs remains incomplete at 2016 end, 30 December 2016.

⁽⁶³⁶⁾ UN OCHA, Pakistan: FATA Return Weekly (from 27 April to 4 May 2017) - Humanitarian Snapshot, 12 May 2017.

⁽⁶³⁷⁾ UN OCHA, Pakistan: FATA Return Weekly (from 27 April to 4 May 2017) - Humanitarian Snapshot, 12 May 2017.

⁽⁶³⁸⁾ Express Tribune (The)/ International New York Times (The), Pakistan Army 'has satellite proof' of Afghan involvement in cross-border terrorism, 19 May 2017.

⁽⁶³⁹⁾ VoA, Tribesmen Displaced in Pakistan's Anti-militant Operations Demand Repatriation, 13 May 2017.

⁽⁶⁴⁰⁾ IPS, The New Normal in Fata, 11 February 2016.

⁽⁶⁴¹⁾ VoA, Tribesmen Displaced in Pakistan's Anti-militant Operations Demand Repatriation, 13 May 2017.

⁽⁶⁴²⁾ Mahsud, S., Interview Islamabad, 5 April 2017.

2.2.6. Islamabad Capital Territory

General description of the province

Islamabad Capital Territory ([see Map 1](#)) is situated in the north of Pakistan between the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab and includes the capital of Pakistan, Islamabad. The Federal Government of Pakistan controls the area. Islamabad Capital Territory is one of the two federal Territories of Pakistan (the other is FATA). The population is estimated at 600 000 ⁽⁶⁴³⁾.

Background of the conflict and actors in Islamabad Capital Territory

According to a report by OSAC, the level of security in Islamabad is higher than in other regions. Still, the presence of Pakistani Government buildings, government officials and foreigners make the region a 'high profile target for terrorist attacks' ⁽⁶⁴⁴⁾.

In 2016, PIPS mentioned that the terrorist attacks in the region were carried out by IS and unidentified gunmen ⁽⁶⁴⁵⁾.

Description of the violence

The PIPS report of 2016 mentions three terrorist attacks in this region in 2016. This is the same number of terrorist attacks as in 2015 ⁽⁶⁴⁶⁾. One of these attacks was aimed at a news building ⁽⁶⁴⁷⁾.

Impact of the violence

In 2016, the annual security report of CRSS reported one fatality from violence in Islamabad Capital Territory in which two militants were shot by security forces ⁽⁶⁴⁸⁾. In comparison with 2015 this is a significant decline, according to CRSS. In 2015, 10 fatalities from violence were counted by CRSS ⁽⁶⁴⁹⁾.

In the first five months of 2017, SATP did not observe any fatalities from violence in this region ⁽⁶⁵⁰⁾. CRSS, on the other hand, reported three fatalities in the first quarter of 2017 ⁽⁶⁵¹⁾.

⁽⁶⁴³⁾ Encyclopædia Britannica, Islamabad, n.d.

⁽⁶⁴⁴⁾ OSAC, Pakistan 2017 Crime & Safety Report: Islamabad, 31 January 2017.

⁽⁶⁴⁵⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 44.

⁽⁶⁴⁶⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 44.

⁽⁶⁴⁷⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 44.

⁽⁶⁴⁸⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 61.

⁽⁶⁴⁹⁾ CRSS, Annual Security Report January-December 2016, 22 March 2017, p. 61.

⁽⁶⁵⁰⁾ SATP, Fatalities in Pakistan Region Wise: 2017, 28 May 2017.

⁽⁶⁵¹⁾ CRSS, CRSS Security Report – Q1, 2017, 10 May 2017, p. 35.

Displacement

UN OCHA did not report any conflict-induced displacement from Islamabad in 2016 ⁽⁶⁵²⁾.

2.2.7. Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan

General description of the province

The Pakistan-controlled territory of Kashmir consists of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (commonly called Azad Kashmir, AK or AJK) and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) (see Map 1), previously named the Northern Territories. Both regions have a partially autonomous administration ⁽⁶⁵³⁾. However, the influence of the Pakistani Government and Army is far-reaching, especially in AK ⁽⁶⁵⁴⁾. AK has a population of about 4.5 million ⁽⁶⁵⁵⁾. GB has approximately around 1.8 or 2 million inhabitants ⁽⁶⁵⁶⁾.

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

During 2016, the situation at the Line of Control that divides Kashmir intensified. After the attack on the Uri Army base, India conducted more cross-border attacks into AK ⁽⁶⁵⁷⁾. At the end of 2016, exchanges of gunfire along the Line of Control have been ongoing, despite a ceasefire agreement signed in 2003 ⁽⁶⁵⁸⁾.

Gilgit-Baltistan saw mass protests against CPEC in 2016. A 'crackdown' in August 2016 by the Police resulted in the arrest of over 500 locals, including political activist Baba Jan ⁽⁶⁵⁹⁾. A fact finding report by HRCP in March 2017 documented human rights violations by intelligence and law enforcement agencies in Gilgit-Baltistan ⁽⁶⁶⁰⁾.

Description of the violence

In 2016, no terrorist attack was reported in GB or in AK, according to PIPS ⁽⁶⁶¹⁾. PICSS describes the situation in 2016 in GB and AK as 'stable', with only one militant attack reported from AK. Security forces conducted three operations in AK and one operation in GB, according to PICSS ⁽⁶⁶²⁾.

⁽⁶⁵²⁾ Websites consulted: <http://www.unocha.org/pakistan>; <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/pakistan>; <http://reliefweb.int/country/pak>.

⁽⁶⁵³⁾ German Foreign Office (Auswärtiges Amt), Staatsaufbau und Innenpolitik, May 2017.

⁽⁶⁵⁴⁾ ICG, Pakistan's Relations with India: Beyond Kashmir?, Asia Report N°224, 3 May 2012. pp. 19-20.

⁽⁶⁵⁵⁾ BBC, Kashmir territories - full profile, 1 March 2017.

⁽⁶⁵⁶⁾ HRCP, Aspirations for identity, integration and autonomy. Report of an HRCP's fact finding mission to Gilgit Baltistan, 28 February 2017, p. 8.

⁽⁶⁵⁷⁾ Telegraph (The), Pakistan fury after India conducts military strikes on Kashmir border, 29 September 2016.

⁽⁶⁵⁸⁾ New York Times (The), Fighting Intensifies Between India and Pakistan on Kashmir Line of Control, 23 November 2016.

⁽⁶⁵⁹⁾ Ramachandran, S., Unrest in Gilgit-Baltistan and the China-Pakistan economic corridor, 29 September 2016.

⁽⁶⁶⁰⁾ HRCP, Aspirations for identity, integration and autonomy. Report of an HRCP's fact finding mission to Gilgit Baltistan, 28 February 2017.

⁽⁶⁶¹⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 13.

⁽⁶⁶²⁾ PICSS, Annual Security Assessment Report, 2016, February 2017, p. 59.

The situation at the Line of Control remained volatile, especially in the last four months of 2016. PIPS counted 51 cross-border attacks from the border with India ⁽⁶⁶³⁾.

Impact of the violence

In the first quarter of 2017, CRSS reported no fatalities in GB. In AK, CRSS documented two fatalities ⁽⁶⁶⁴⁾. According to SATP, there were no fatalities from terrorist violence documented in AK and GB in the first five months of 2017 ⁽⁶⁶⁵⁾.

Displacement

In November 2016, Dawn reported that as a result of Indian shelling, approximately 11 000 families, most from Kotli and Bhimber, have left their homes to safer areas ⁽⁶⁶⁶⁾.

⁽⁶⁶³⁾ PIPS, 2016, Pakistan Security Report, 2017, p. 17.

⁽⁶⁶⁴⁾ CRSS, CRSS Security Report – Q1, 2017, 10 May 2017, p. 35.

⁽⁶⁶⁵⁾ SATP, Fatalities in Pakistan Region Wise: 2017, 28 May 2017.

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Annex 2: Terms of Reference

The reporting period for incidents and events illustrating the general trends of the conflict, is 1 April 2016 until 31 May 2017. The content of the report should contain information on the following topics:

General description of the security situation

- Background of the conflict

Overview of recent conflicts

- Actors in/Parties to the conflict
- Recent security trends and security trends
- Impact of the violence

Civilian population: casualties, IDP's, refugees

State ability to secure Law and Order: security forces, justice, detention

Geographical overview of the security situation

Regional description of the security situation

- Punjab
- Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
- Islamabad
- Federally Administrated Tribal Areas
- Balochistan
- Sindh
- Azad Kashmir

For each region, a short description of the region (terrain, urban areas, population) should be included, followed by information on:

General description of the region

Background of insecurity in the region: actors, type of violence

Recent security trends (focus on 2016 and first quarter 2017) according to the four main sources (number of incidents, example of the kind of violence, effects of the violence)

Displacement/return

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