

Wolfgang Taucher - Mathias Vogl - Peter Webinger (eds.)

# PAKISTAN

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## Challenges & Perspectives

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# Imprint

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## Foreword

The third volume of our *regiones et res publicae* series focuses on Pakistan and attempts to portray the current and future challenges and perspectives of the country. Understanding the inner workings of Pakistan is of relevance for the Austrian Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum in order to maintain the best possible information on source countries of refugees seeking asylum in the European Union. In addition to the work of our own analysts, this book features contributions by renowned international experts.

Christian Wagner, Head of the Research Division Asia at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs in Berlin, provides an introductory overview over the state of affairs in Pakistan. Gareth Price, Senior Research Fellow of the Asia Programme at Chatham House in London, describes the economic situation. Michael Kugelman, the Senior Program Associate for South Asia at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, DC, and editor of “Reaping the Dividend: Overcoming Pakistan’s Demographic Challenges”, takes a look at the current demographic trends. Samina Ahmed, Project Director for South Asia and Senior Asia Advisor of the International Crisis Group in Islamabad, evaluates the measures to counter violent extremism in Pakistan’s tribal belt. Mona Kanwal Sheikh, Senior Researcher at the Danish Institute for International Studies and visiting research scholar at the Orfalea Center for Global and International Studies at the University of California Santa Barbara and the Center for South Asia Studies at UC Berkeley, provides an in-depth analysis of the Pakistani Taliban. Martina Schrott, Pakistan analyst at the Country of Origin Information Unit of the Austrian Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum, focuses on the situation of minorities. Martin Hofmann, the Policy Advisor to the Director General of the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), traces the migration flows to Europe. Michael Izady kindly granted us permission to use his maps - hosted by the Gulf/2000 Project at Columbia University - on ethnic groups, languages, religious composition and tribes in Pakistan.

We hope that this anthology serves as a solid backgrounder for policy makers and analysts and helps to better anticipate potential developments in the coming months and years.

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# **Pakistan: an introduction**

*Christian Wagner*

Analyzing Pakistan in 2014, there are various challenges with potential implications for international security. First of all, the infrastructure and safe havens of militant groups in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), the small but notorious tribal belt on the Afghan border. With its own legal status, exempting it from most of the state's jurisdiction, it poses a serious security challenge for Western troops in Afghanistan and the Pakistani security forces. Second, the geographical distance between remnants of Al Qaida cadres, somewhere in the FATA or in Karachi, and the stockpiles of a nuclear arsenal is nowhere else as close as in Pakistan. Finally, Pakistan is confronted with various security challenges, ranging from ethnic separatism in Baluchistan, to sectarian violence against religious minorities and religious extremism in form of the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) which is denying the Pakistani state and its constitution.

The different conflict constellations have led to unprecedented levels of internal violence in the last decade. Between 2003 and 2013 around 50,000 people have been killed in one of these different conflicts theatres.<sup>1</sup> In 2012 there were 2,217 incidents and attacks in Pakistan in which 5,047 people were killed. More than 1,500 of these incidents were labeled as terrorist attacks. This development was a significant improvement compared to 2009, when more than 12,000 people were killed. This was due to the military's intervention against the Taliban - who had taken control of parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa - and the response to an unprecedented wave of terrorist attacks. Despite the significant improvements in most regions since then, many of these conflicts converge in Karachi, Pakistan's economic hub and main destination of internal migration. In 2012 violent incidents in Karachi and interior Sindh increased once again by 222 percent. The first half of 2013 then saw 1,726 targeted killings which was a further increase of 42 percent compared to 2012.<sup>2</sup>

The level of violence and the internal challenges are also mirrored in international statistics. Pakistan is only ranked 146 by the Human Development Index (HDI)<sup>3</sup> and has been described as a “hard country” that offers little opportunities for social mobility for the majority of its population.<sup>4</sup> Doing business in Pakistan is difficult not only because of the security situation but also because of administrative hurdles, so that the country was ranked only 110 in 2014.<sup>5</sup>

In the Failed State Index 2013 Pakistan was listed on place 13 out of 178 countries.<sup>6</sup> Similar negative classification can be found on the Corruption Perception Index 2013 with rank 127 out of 177 countries or in the Rule of Law Index 2012/13 where Pakistan was recorded on place 96 out of 99 countries and scored lowest in the sub-category “Order and Security” with rank 99.<sup>7</sup>

But there are also some positive developments in recent years. First, the 18th amendment in 2010 has revived main features of the 1973 constitution and has fundamentally changed the balance between the centre and the provinces in the direction of more autonomy for the latter. This relationship has shaped Pakistan’s history since the 1950s when it was one of the stumbling blocks in the constitutional assembly. It escalated with the civil war in East Pakistan in 1971 and remained a point of contention in the new state of Pakistan after 1972 when the relations between Punjab and the smaller provinces created tensions and local rebellions like in Baluchistan. Second, the elections of May 2013 were a watershed in Pakistan’s democratic development. For the first time in its more than 60 year old history a parliament could finish its tenure by regular elections. The new government of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PMLN) under Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif gained a comfortable majority in the national assembly. It also won the majority in Punjab, Pakistan’s biggest and most important province, and became part of the coalition government in Baluchistan.

Finally, Pakistan’s democracy has undergone at least two fundamental changes with the liberalization of the media under Musharraf in 2002 and the new role of the judiciary. The liberalization has increased media coverage

and enhanced the need for accountability of political decision makers since then. But the media liberalization has also increased the number of religious channels and the liberal part of the media is under constant threat. Thirty-four journalists were killed since 2008 gaining Pakistan a reputation as one of the most dangerous countries for journalists.<sup>8</sup> The new activism of the judiciary has also contributed to the strengthening of democratic institutions in recent years. The protests of the lawyer's movement were important to bring down Musharraf in 2007. Since then, the Supreme Court has challenged both political parties, for instance in the Swiss Bank case against President Zardari, and the military, for instance in the trial against Musharraf as well as the case of missing persons in Baluchistan which is targeting the security forces.

### **Enduring Issues**

Despite the positive trends, Pakistan's democratic system is still far from being consolidated. The different local conflicts and the high levels of violence are the outcome of the different controversies that have shaped Pakistan's development since its independence in 1947: The quest for regional autonomy, the role of religion in society, and the relationship between the democratic parties and the armed forces.

#### **The relations between the Centre and the Provinces**

The quest for more autonomy for the provinces was constitutionally regulated with the 18th amendment. But it is not yet clear how long the process of implementation will take on the administrative levels as because the provinces still lack capacities in many areas. Moreover, it is not clear in how far these new regulations will be a successful political instrument to manage or contain separatist movements like in Baluchistan.

The 18th amendment has also not ended the debate about autonomy which is virulent in different parts of the country. The government of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) supported the creation of a Seraiki province in Southern Punjab which would have weakened at the same time the traditional power base of its rival PMLN. Demands for greater autonomy

are also voiced in Gilgit Baltistan and the FATA. Both are politically and strategically very sensitive regions because they are linked with Pakistan's interests vis-à-vis its neighbors India and Afghanistan. Gilgit Baltistan (GB), previously known as Northern Areas, together with the territory of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) belongs to the former princely state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). The controversy over J&K is at the heart of the conflict between India and Pakistan and was the reason for three of the four wars between the two countries since 1947.<sup>9</sup> Pakistan regards the whole territory of J&K as "disputed territory" according to a resolution of the United Nations (UN). Hence, in order to uphold the claim of a "disputed territory" the government in Islamabad could not integrate GB into the realm of the Pakistani constitution in contrast to India which has always denied this claim. Various governments in New Delhi have integrated the Indian controlled part of J&K with special constitutional arrangements into the framework of the Indian state. The lack of autonomy has also restricted development efforts in GB and increased the frustration and anger among the local population. Musharraf and the following PPP government introduced reforms in 2007 and 2009 in order to address local grievances.<sup>10</sup> Because of these constellations GB only has a legislative assembly with limited powers and not a full-fledged provincial assembly.

A similar debate has developed on the future status of the FATA in order to establish a better political framework to tackle the socio-economic problems of the tribal population which are often regarded as a main reason for violence. The main alternatives are to upgrade the FATA into a separate province, to merge it with neighboring province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) or to remain the status and to revive the traditional tribal structures. New deliberations point to forms of autonomy that could be similar to the institutional setup in GB. Such mechanisms would help the FATA to develop its own institutions in a moderate process of transition into the Pakistani state structure.

### **The Role of Religion**

The second issue is the role of religion. Pakistan was founded on the basis of Islam but the significance of religion in state and society has remained a

contentious issue until today. The debate started already in the 1950s after the Anti-Ahmadiyya riots in Punjab. The following Munir-Report formulated the dilemma of the controversy: “What is then the Islamic State of which everybody talks but nobody thinks?”<sup>11</sup> After the break-up of Pakistan in 1971, Islam gained new importance under Bhutto’s regime with political slogans like “Islamic Socialism” and the prohibition of the Ahmadiyyas in 1974. Zia ul Haq’s politics of Islamization in order to strengthen the legitimacy of his military regime after his coup in 1977 have been widely analyzed and criticized. During his reign the blasphemy laws and Hudood ordinances were introduced which have often been used against religious minorities.

As in most other countries, Islam in Pakistan is not a monolithic religion but consists of different Islamic sects and traditions. 15 to 20 percent of Pakistan’s population belongs to the Shia community, the Sunni majority follows mostly the Deobandi or Barelvi tradition and Sufis still have many followers among the population. A striking feature is the low attractiveness of religious parties in democratic elections which normally only win between three to six percent of the votes. However, this should not be misinterpreted in a way that religion is not important. On the contrary, in recent years surveys have indicated that Pakistani society wants more not less religion.<sup>12</sup>

The controversies over the correct interpretation of religion have triggered violent confrontations. The TTP wants to enforce its interpretation of Sharia and to transform Pakistan into an Islamic state. Their attacks are not only directed against the Pakistani state and its civilian and military infrastructure but also against moderate Islamic groups, other Muslim sects and religious minorities which together with a rise of attacks of sectarian terrorist groups led to an escalation of religious - especially sectarian - violence in recent years.<sup>13</sup> In the last five years more than 2,000 people have been killed only by sectarian violence.<sup>14</sup>

The growth of religious militancy was at times nurtured by the army - particularly under the regime of military ruler Zia-ul-Haq - which has supported Islamic groups for many decades in order to pursue its foreign policy interest vis-à-vis India and Afghanistan. President Musharraf’s decision to join the

American War on Terror after the attacks of 9/11 in 2001 also triggered a controversial debate in how far this war was in Pakistan's interest or not. Pakistan followed a counter-insurgency strategy that only targeted Al Qaida, foreign militants and the Pakistani Taliban but – as most analyst say - not Afghan Taliban groups or militant groups like Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) which aimed against India.

This ambivalent approach has created a public discourse in which right wing and religious parties have often declared their sympathy towards some demands of the Taliban, especially their anti-American agenda, so that, deliberately or not, militancy became partly legitimized. The liberalization of the media has fostered this development because it provided new platforms for such politicians and religious leaders to blame the Pakistani state and its constitution.<sup>15</sup>

### **The Struggle for Democracy**

The third main issue is the relationship between the democratic parties and the armed forces. The political and economic interference of the army into Pakistan's development has often been described, analyzed, and criticized.<sup>16</sup> The army has always been able to exploit and manipulate the differences between the political parties and to co-opt them for their rule. The rise of Nawaz Sharif and his PMLN in the 1990 elections would not have been possible without massive financial support from the military and the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). The return of Benazir Bhutto to Pakistan in 2007 was part of a deal with President Musharraf at that time. After Musharraf demission as COAS in 2007 the army became more professional under the tenure of General Kayani even if political interferences for instance in the Memogate Affair continued.<sup>17</sup>

Since the election of 2008 the parliamentary committees have become more active to scrutinize the activities of the armed forces.<sup>18</sup> The military has also changed its policy and briefed the National Assembly and the Senate on the security situation. The new COAS General Raheel Sharif has underlined in his speeches that the armed forces will continue to support the democratic institutions.<sup>19</sup> But despite these positive developments in

the difficult relationship between the armed forces and the main political parties it should not be overlooked that even after the democratic transition in 2013 there is still no primacy of the legislature or executive over the military. Previous attempts to control the ISI or to curtail the economic privileges of the military have hardly been successful. The new security architecture that was formulated in the National Internal Security Policy (NISP)<sup>20</sup> of the PMLN will not alter the dominant role of the army. The National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) should become the main institution to coordinate the different intelligence agencies and to develop new counter terrorism strategies.<sup>21</sup>

The strength of the army is indirectly fostered by the lack of capacities of the civilian security forces to handle the different forms of militancy and terrorism.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, the army and the paramilitary units will continue to play a decisive role in managing internal conflicts.

The discussion on defense expenditures in the budget 2014 will give another indication on the state of oversight and accountability of the civilian institutions over the military. The projections for the next defense budget include an increase of 20 percent in a time of a difficult socio-economic environment with low growth projections.<sup>23</sup>

### **Short term Challenges**

The most difficult short term challenge emanates from the situation in the FATA. The tribal areas are at the same time a kaleidoscope which mirrors some of the enduring issues mentioned above like the contentious role of religion and the difficult relationship between the democratic government and the security forces.

There seems to be a growing awareness in Pakistan that the situation in Afghanistan will become more difficult after the drawdown of Western troops in 2015. An outbreak of another civil war in Afghanistan would have direct negative repercussions on Pakistan, for instance by a new influx of refugees. The government and the army seem to agree that the border regions should be secured in order to prevent them from becoming part of

a 'Taliban country' after 2015 that would include the Southern and Eastern provinces of Afghanistan and parts of the FATA. This would also benefit the TTP which is already using safe havens in Afghanistan for their attacks in Pakistan. Moreover, the demand of the TTP for a Sharia state in Pakistan has also unveiled the myth of right wing conservative groups that the TTP would cease its attacks once the Western forces have left Afghanistan.

The PMLN has declared to pursue a new policy of "no-interference", "no favorites", and "no-proxies" vis-à-vis Afghanistan.<sup>24</sup> This marks a major renunciation from previous policies which since the 1990s viewed the western neighbor as "strategic depth" for a potential next conflict with India. The army has also shifted its main threat perception away from India and is focusing on the domestic militant groups. In 2012, General Kayani stated that the war against terrorism and extremism "is our own war and a just war too".<sup>25</sup> The new position of the army may be the result of the high casualties that the security forces have suffered in the fight against the domestic militant groups which are higher than in the previous wars with India.

Despite their new consensus, the government and the army have different strategies how to deal with the TTP. The government initiated talks with the TTP in 2014. For the PMLN, the peace talks were necessary in order to get broader support from the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) which form the provincial government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and which have often been arguing in favor of some of the Taliban demands. In contrast, the army is opposing the talks and made it clear that they could only be held under the framework of the Pakistani constitution.

The military operations in North Waziristan would be a litmus test in how far the new rhetorical declarations are followed by new policies. They would indicate a substantive change if the army – as announced - goes after all militant groups, including the Afghan Taliban whose networks are also benefitting the TTP. It would be a mere rhetorical change if the attacks again only target the TTP and the foreign militants as in previous operations. But the army is also confronted with the dilemma that military operations in the tribal areas could provoke revenge attacks of the TTP and its allies in the

urban centers of Pakistan which the security forces would hardly be able to completely contain. In the long term perspective, the war against terror in Pakistan will only be won if the security forces go after all militant Islamic groups and their networks.

### **Whither Pakistan?**

One year after the elections the concrete results of the new PMLN government are mixed even if its public perception is much better compared to the previous PPP government.<sup>26</sup> The macro-economic situation has slightly improved, but the peace talks with the TTP have not ended the violence and therefore had to be called off in the end, the economic growth is below expectations, inflation remains high, employment opportunities limited, and the tax base too narrow. Because of the difficult security situation in different parts of the country and the lingering energy crisis Pakistan is also not an attractive destination for foreign investment that is much-needed in order to stimulate economic development, although there has been an improvement in this regard.

In the mid-term perspective the implementation of the 18th amendment will also fundamentally transform Pakistan into a more decentralized state. This will limit the capacity of the centre for large scale reforms and will shift the focus to the provinces with their different political constellations and capacities. Moreover, there are long term challenges like the youth bulge which will probably not turn into a youth dividend but rather, given the low literacy levels, into another challenge for socio-economic development. Pakistan will not fail in the sense that state institutions will vanish like in the case of Somalia. But given the numerous political, governance, security, economic, social, and ideologically challenges reforms in Pakistan will continue to be slow, painful, and incremental.<sup>27</sup>

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## **Pakistan's economic challenges**

*Gareth Price*

Pakistan's economic challenges are manifold, and recurrent. Its economy has become dependent on outside assistance. When foreign assistance has been curtailed – often for political reasons – the country's foreign exchange reserves have declined. In 1998 Pakistan actually defaulted and failed to meet its external debt repayments. But Pakistan's economic fortunes are linked to its geo-political importance. An important ally of the US in the 1950s and 60s, it became a major recipient of aid. This fell following the 1965 war with India. With the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, the aid returned. In 1989 the Soviet Union withdrew from Afghanistan. Within months Pakistan faced US sanctions triggered by its nuclear program.

Pakistan's nuclear program, along with the size of its armed forces, has an importance in the wider Islamic world. After US support fell, Saudi Arabia stepped in with the Saudi Oil Facility – first oil, then cash for Pakistan.

Large-scale US support for Pakistan returned following the US-led invasion of Afghanistan. In the years after 9/11 Pakistan's economy grew strongly, spurred by large inflows of assistance. But these inflows did little to spur Pakistan's long-term growth rate. As aid slowed, so did Pakistan's growth. For the past five years GDP growth has averaged less than 3%. With population growth of at least 2%, average per capita income has stagnated. But the now overt nuclear state still banks on replacing US support with funds from the Islamic world – Saudi Arabia recently provided Pakistan with USD 1.5bn – and potentially from China.

This reliance on external support reflects the need to increase tax revenue but, in turn, enables Pakistan to defer taking actions which would increase tax revenue. And not all of the external funding is gifted to Pakistan. Annual external debt servicing is equivalent to one third of total tax revenue. As basic services are not provided in sufficiently countrywide a reluctance to

pay taxes is reinforced.

The reluctance to pay for services that are not delivered in sufficient extent extends to power as well. For years, non-payment of energy bills has become endemic, and the sector is afflicted by circular debts. This debt in turn prevents investment in the energy sector. Power generation capacity has just slightly risen in recent years, despite rising demand. Energy shortages have a further impact on the economy, and particularly on the important textile sector, still responsible for more than half of Pakistan's export receipts. During the summer of 2013 some towns experienced blackouts of up to 20 hours per day. While terrorism does affect the economy, power shortages probably have an even more important negative effect.

At times, Pakistan's power generation falls 40% short of demand. The sector faces a number of linked challenges. Private power producers fail to generate maximum capacity because the state-owned purchasers do not pay them. This is because the consumers, frequently other state-owned firms, do not pay the transmission companies. This creates a "circular debt" of billions of dollars. The debt has, on occasion, been paid off, but because the underlying problem is not addressed – that is, that the country does not produce enough electricity – it builds up again.

Hydro-power used to be a major source of electricity in Pakistan. However, siltation and variable precipitation have limited hydro-power generation. Around one-third of generation comes from oil-fired power stations. When the price of oil rises, this leads to a deterioration in the current-account balance. While Pakistan is self-sufficient in gas, it has to import most of its oil requirements. Pakistan is also home to billions of tonnes of coal reserves, but has not invested in coal-fired power stations. It plans to construct more coal-fired power stations, with Chinese support, but has not integrated a plan to utilise its own coal reserves. To address the power crisis, solar energy projects have also been launched or inaugurated mainly with the support of China, including one of the world largest solar parks.

While Pakistan's economy has suffered from man-made problems, it has

also been unlucky in recent years, hit by a series of major natural disasters. In October 2008, an earthquake hit Pakistan, India and Afghanistan, and led to the death of 73,338 people. The worst hit areas were Pakistan-administered Kashmir and the eastern districts of the North-West Frontier Province (since renamed Khyber Pakhtunkhwa). Thousands of people were made homeless following the earthquake which destroyed homes, shops, and infrastructure. The same year, Pakistan witnessed severe floods. Four days of heavy rainfall in the provinces of Baluchistan and Sindh led to 367,394 people being displaced and more than 300 died. This flooding marked the start of a negative development. In 2010, Pakistan was again hit by flooding during the monsoon. These floods led to the deaths of nearly 2,000 people and to the destruction of 2.2 million hectares of crops, 10,000 schools and 450,000 livestock. And flooding returned again in 2013. More than 200 people died and around 600,000 hectares of crops were affected.

While Pakistan's disaster response is improving, these disasters have a significant economic impact, in particular affecting agriculture on which half of the population relies for their livelihoods. Although around 20% of the population lives below the poverty line, disasters push many of those just above the poverty line into poverty.

Pakistan's population has roughly tripled since the 1960s. This places pressure on resources. In the case of energy, electricity production has not kept pace with increased demand. But the situation is increasingly acute for more finite resources, notably water. Pakistan is now a water-stressed country – a development that can be ascribed almost entirely to population growth. Tension over water exists at local levels, and fuels tension between Pakistan's provinces. It is also adding to already high tension with India, source of many of Pakistan's rivers.

Pakistan now has the world's sixth largest population, estimated at around 180m (the last census took place in 1998 – a census held in 2011/2012 was subsequently thrown out as unreliable). What is undeniable is that it is a young population. The median age is thought to be 21, and two-thirds of the population to be under 30 years old.

However, there is little talk of Pakistan enjoying a demographic dividend. Clearly, if these young people were well skilled Pakistan would be well placed to take advantage of opportunities presented by aging populations in other countries. Millions of children do not attend school and conflict has affected the provision of education in some areas. Occasionally the government launches campaigns against “ghost schools”, which exist on paper but not in practice. Increasing numbers of children are educated in Madrassas (Islamic schools). While some of these provide a relatively rounded education, a great many do not, leaving alumni poorly equipped, and often prone to radicalisation. While female literacy for those 15-24 years is stated by UNICEF at 61.5%, in sum around half of women are literate, compared to just over 70% of men.

According to official figures, only in the past decade has spending on primary and secondary education combined overtaken spending on tertiary education (Total spending on education, at just 2% of GDP, is very low by international standards). The infrastructure in the tertiary sector is extensive, yet considering the vast population not sufficient. Many of those who are able to attend university leave the country. In this regard Pakistan could profit of circular migration. As some of the alumni come back after years, e.g. in the United Kingdom or the United States, Pakistan profits already of some knowledge transfer. However, whatever the level of education, job opportunities – particularly in the formal sector – are poor. Even during higher growth years following 9/11, employment in the formal sector grew only slightly. Currently around 10% of young people are unemployed, although under-employment is also widespread, particularly in rural Pakistan. The overall unemployment rate in 2013, according to the International Labour Organisation, was just over 6%.

The low rate of job creation in the formal sector has led to a reliance on the informal sector. Those working in the informal sector do not pay tax and enjoy only few, if any, labour rights. Estimates of the size of the informal sector – which includes mainly small businesses, but also criminal activities such as narco-trafficking - vary. Around two-thirds of the Pakistani workforce is employed in the informal sector which, by some estimates, accounts for

approximately 73% of Pakistan's GDP.

The size of the informal sector only partly explains Pakistan's low rates of tax collection. Less than 1% of the population pays income tax. In 2013 only half of the members of Pakistan's National Assembly paid any income tax. The overall tax to GDP ratio of 10.5% is one of the lowest in the world, and Pakistan remains overly dependent on taxes on imports. Reluctance to pay tax is reinforced, by the fact that services such as health and education cannot be provided sufficiently. The majority of government spending goes on debt servicing and the military (According to the World Bank, in 2012 Pakistan spent 3.5% of its GDP on the military). It also reflects the widespread ability to avoid compliance because of poor fiscal frameworks, tax exemptions and weak bureaucratic capacity to enforce payment.

Furthermore, according to Pakistan's constitution, agriculture is exempt from federal taxes as only provincial administrations are authorized to levy taxes on income from agriculture. Although an extensive revenue system exists on provincial level, due to the tremendous lobbying power that landowners enjoy in the country, they have been able to maintain the status quo and many have been able to avoid paying taxes for the past six decades. Continued pleas by donors for the government to tackle tax evasion and to bring agricultural income under the tax net, have been to little avail.

Pakistan is caught in a vicious circle when it comes to increasing tax revenue. While corruption and tax avoidance are part of the problem, more broadly there is a reluctance to pay taxes when the state services cannot be delivered to a satisfactory extent. As noted, much of government spending – 3,5 % of the GDP - is on the military. However, a growing amount is spent on repaying earlier loans from institutions like the IMF. As Pakistan keeps reverting to borrowing from multilateral institutions, so the amount it subsequently has to repay rises. External debt repayments help contribute to persistent current-account deficits which, coupled with persistent fiscal account deficits, lead to a financing shortfall which has to be filled by external sources.

Pakistan's debt is a major problem for the economy. In 2013, Pakistan's public debt was still just over 63% of GDP, deepening concerns over the country's debt sustainability. Debt repayments are likely to reduce Pakistan's ability to invest in much needed infrastructure. For now, Pakistan's tax revenues are not sufficient to repay its debts, and it relies on each tranche of lending repaying prior borrowing. In the long-run, this is clearly unsustainable.

Unfortunately, one of the first demands of multilateral institutions lending to Pakistan is for Pakistan to cut back on its development expenditure (recognising that the country is unlikely to cut its military expenditure, and that it needs to meet its external debt repayment obligations). But, in turn, this reduces Pakistan's capacity for sustained economic growth.

Corruption extends beyond tax collection. Three of the four short-lived civilian governments of the 1990s were removed because of allegations of corruption. The expectation of dismissal encouraged short-termism, and in turn fuelled corruption. Therefore the ability of the most recent civilian government to serve a full-term is a powerful, and positive, signal.

According to Transparency International (2013), Pakistan was ranked 127 out of 177 countries in perceptions of corruption. Almost half of its population admitted to paying a bribe. The Global Competitiveness Index ranks Pakistan 123rd out of 144 countries for irregular payments and bribes. It also ranks Pakistan 116th for wastefulness of government spending. Corruption is widespread and thought to cost the country more than Rs500 billion annually. According to the World Bank, corruption deters investors and is believed to be a severe limitation for 57% of businesses. It is considered by the World Economic Forum Report 2013-14 as the most problematic factor for doing business in Pakistan (16.7%), followed by policy instability (11.8%), access to financing (11.6%) and access to adequate infrastructure (11.2%).

Pakistan's economy is highly dependent upon its cotton and textile industry, which accounts for around 8% of Pakistan's GDP. Growing and

processing cotton are also significant activities. This sector provides more than 50% of Pakistan's export receipts (worth USD 13bn in 2011). Pakistan is the fourth largest producer of textiles in the world, and the third largest consumer of cotton, although its export receipts are only the 12th largest in the world. This reflects the low-value addition of Pakistan's textile sector. Pakistan's textiles have suffered from being relatively low quality in comparison to other countries, and to focus on lower-end products, although this is starting to change.

However, the sector has suffered disproportionately from the two banes of Pakistan. First, some small textile businesses which are unable to afford generators have been forced to close as a result of Pakistan's power shortages. Some high estimates suggest that the sector has lost around 100,000 jobs over the past three years. Even before power shortages became severe, the sector was struggling to compete with other producers, such as China. The emergence of new sites for textile production, and the re-emergence of producers such as Bangladesh, has also affected Pakistan. Some larger textile producers have shifted production to Bangladesh, where electricity is both cheaper and generally better supplied.

The existence of rival textile producers has also meant that security concerns have impacted Pakistan's textile sector. Buyers from higher-end Western shops have a range of potential suppliers, and in most of which personal security is not a significant concern. Furthermore, Pakistan's investments in research and development are not significant. Compared to many other countries Pakistan's cotton is of low quality. This in turn has led farmers to shift production to other cash crops, such as sugar cane. Around 44% of Pakistan's workforce is engaged in the agriculture sector, which contributes 22% of the country's GDP. The largest food crop in terms of volume is wheat, followed by cotton. Other cash crops include sugarcane, rice and maize, which together account for 75% of total crop output. Successive governments have focused on these "major crops", at the expense of smaller crops and livestock.

However, livestock is responsible for half of the agriculture sector,

contributing 11% to GDP. Pakistan is currently the world's fifth largest milk producer, and the country has animals such as goats (53 million), cows (29 million), buffaloes (27 million) and sheep (26 million). In many areas - such as grain farming and livestock breeding - the Punjab is considered as one of the largest producers worldwide.

Pakistan's agriculture sector has suffered from recent flooding, although more generally water affects the sector through its scarcity rather than its abundance. Pakistan has the world's largest contiguous canal system. However, under-investment has limited its effectiveness. Pakistan recently became a water-stressed country (as a result of population growth limiting per capita water availability) and Pakistan's water storage capacity is low. With on-going population growth, Pakistan's water availability will be vulnerable to changing precipitation patterns as a result of climate change. Access to water correlates with the size of land ownership. This has led to inequitable water distribution stemming from the lack of over-arching framework to ensure access to water. As in the textile sector, investment into agriculture-related research and development is low.

One of the greatest opportunity costs for Pakistan's economy is its largely closed border with India (although smuggling across the border is commonplace, and a significant amount of trade is conducted via third countries, in particular the United Arab Emirates. Estimates of total bilateral trade vary from USD 250m to USD 3bn. Normalising this trade would benefit tax revenue in both India and Pakistan through customs and excise taxes). In the early years after Independence, around 70% of goods produced in what became Pakistan were sold in what became India. Around 63% of goods produced in what became India were sold in what became Pakistan.

However, trade between the two countries declined rapidly through the 1950s. By 2010, India's exports to Pakistan accounted for less than 1% of its total export receipts, while Pakistan's exports to India were less than 5% of its total trade. Trade between the two countries slightly augmented to US Dollar 2.6 billion in 2012-13. There are numerous explanations for the scarce normalization of trade between the two countries, notably excessive

red tape applied to cross-border exports. However, this red tape is more a symptom of the over-arching poor political relationship between India and Pakistan.

Historically, Pakistan argued that the dispute over Kashmir should be resolved first. In such circumstances, other confidence building measures could be easily introduced. India, however, argued that poor political relations meant that the overall political relationship should be improved first before the difficult issue of Kashmir could be dealt with.

This impasse resulted in the adoption of a “composite dialogue”, so that Kashmir would be discussed alongside other difficulties or potential confidence-building measures, such as trade.

At various points in recent years the two countries have appeared close to reaching a deal to increase bilateral trade, but these have stalled because progress over the Kashmir dispute could not be achieved. The normalization of the relations – particularly trade relations - between the two countries has been a main aspect of Nawaz Sharif election campaign. After a significant improvement in the diplomatic relations, foremost the attendance of the inauguration of new Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi by Nawaz Sharif, they witnessed a setback after India called off planned talks in Islamabad citing Pakistan’s plans of consulting Kashmiri leaders in the forefront of the talks as reason.

It would appear that a breakthrough on trade is imminent. Pakistan, facing economic challenges - proposed to offer Most-Favoured Nation trading status to India and a deal, protecting Pakistan’s agriculture sector, seems likely to be offered to India soon. India has already granted Most-Favoured Nation status to Pakistan. While there are genuine concerns among Pakistani farmers and some industrial sectors over the threat of competition from India (not least since Indian firms do not suffer the same power shortages as their Pakistani competitors), the broader benefits to Pakistan of increased economic integration would seem to be recognised.

According to some analysis, trade normalisation could triple Pakistan's exports to India. The most optimistic forecast suggests that a ten-fold increase in trade is feasible. For Pakistan, some sectors – such as cement – would benefit substantially from liberalisation of trade with India. Potentially, Pakistan could export gas to India and, in turn, import electricity from India helping to tackle its power crisis.

Furthermore, if trading concessions were extended to Afghanistan, and potentially into Central Asia, the benefits both in terms of economic benefits and the concomitant political benefits, would be immense.

Two factors in particular have worked to mitigate Pakistan's economic difficulties. The first is investment from Pakistan's long-standing ally, China. China is increasing its footprint in Asia and particularly in Pakistan, at the same time as investment and assistance from most of Pakistan's Western partners is declining. Chinese investment is explicitly in China's own interest, though with clear benefits for Pakistan. Much of its investment has been in Pakistan's infrastructure, building up links connecting Western China with the Indian Ocean. For instance, China financed 75% of the construction costs of a port in Gwadar, Baluchistan, and is reported to be considering reviving an oil refinery nearby. China has also invested in Pakistan's road infrastructure, and is helping Pakistan construct a nuclear power plant near Karachi. Other Chinese projects include the construction of various coal-fired power plants. Trade between China and Pakistan is also growing strongly. A bilateral free trade agreement came into force in 2007. Total bilateral trade has now reached around USD 12bn.

Remittances from Pakistanis working overseas have soared in recent years. In part, rising remittances reflect Pakistan's economic difficulties. The economic slowdown, coupled with increasing insecurity, has encouraged more Pakistanis to seek work overseas. Many travel to the Gulf, although the US and the UK are also the source of substantial remittances. However, the growth in remittances also reflects a long-standing government policy to encourage funds to be remitted through official channels rather than through the underground hawala system of money transfer.

In the first ten months of 2013/14, remittances from overseas Pakistanis had risen by 11.5% year on year to stand at USD 12.9bn, according to the State Bank of Pakistan. Remittances for the year are likely to stand at around USD 14.5bn for the year as a whole. Remittances in the previous year fell just short of USD 14bn.

## **Conclusion**

At the time of its 2013 elections, Pakistan faced a severe economic crisis, with its foreign exchange reserves equivalent to the value of just two months of imports. During his election campaign, Nawaz Sharif promised that fostering the recovery of the economy would be his foremost priority, rendering him the preferred candidate amongst Pakistan's business leaders. Following his election, PM Sharif promised to tackle both - immediate problems as well as the structural issues, confronting Pakistan, such as the endemic corruption and mismanagement afflicting the country's public sector, its insufficient energy supply and rate of tax collection.

In part as a response to the administration's signals that it was willing to seriously look into the much-needed reforms, and in part under pressure to avoid default, in September 2013 the IMF approved a USD 6.7bn loan to Pakistan, paid out in instalments of USD 540m over three years.

Since then, although the fundamental challenges it faces are still not solved, the country has made progress on several issues. Over the first half of the financial year 2013/14, Pakistan's economy expanded by 4.1%. The State Bank of Pakistan has sent out cautious signs of recovery, as its reserves reached USD 8bn in early May, and machinery imports for the country's crucial textile industry rose by 52% (in dollar terms) between July and March, having fallen by 12% during the previous financial year. Contrary to the downtrend of the past years, foreign direct investments increased in the fiscal year 2013 to 1.456 billion US Dollars. In comparison, in 2012 it fell to only 820.6 million US Dollars. The Karachi Stock Exchange prospered in 2013 and despite backdrops caused for example by floods, which drove many into poverty, the middle class is growing to an estimated 30 million

people.

During a recent meeting in London, Mr Sharif said that the situation of loan availability to the private sector of Pakistan had also improved. Consequentially, in May 2014 IMF officials concluded that the government was on track to achieve several other targets as well, in particular revenue growth and subsidy reductions. The Pakistani government has other achievements to show as well, such as a large-scale drive for vaccinations against polio earlier this year. With regard to India, PM Sharif's acceptance of the invitation to attend the swearing-in of India's designated Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, could signify an important signal for Indo-Pakistani relations and steps seem likely to be taken to facilitate greater direct trade between India and Pakistan.

However, despite these steps, the Pakistani government continues to face a number of severe challenges:

On the economic front, inflation remains high - although it improved since 2012 it seldom decelerated under 9 %, (however, in July it decelerated for the third straight month to 7.9 percent) The country's energy crisis is still not solved. Power outages of 10-12 hours continue to be the norm, contributing to the public-private cycle of debt and depriving the economy of much-needed investment. While immediate resolution of the power crisis was always impossible, the pace of progress has been slow. Moreover, meaningful tax reforms are still lacking and tax revenue remains low.

However, PM Sharif also faces a number of challenges which are primarily political, but nonetheless have a significant impact on Pakistan's economic prospects. The need of improvement of civil-military relations could not be met. After reporting the alleged involvement of the ISI in the shooting of a prominent Pakistani journalist, the military has called for Geo News, among Pakistan's most popular TV channels, to be shut down. All of this is taking place against the background of Pakistan's volatile security situation, with terrorist attacks constituting a menace to both citizens and the economy.

As a consequence of unfulfilled promises on the one hand, and the many unresolved challenges facing the country, protests erupted in mid-May. The scale of the protests was relatively small, so most Pakistanis seemed willing to give Sharif more time. The consequences of the protests in August, invoked by opposition politician Imran Khan and cleric Tahir ul-Qadri, will have an impact on the economy and will have to be reviewed.

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# **Pakistan's demographic realities: large, young, and still growing**

*Michael Kugelman*

In recent years, there has been a tendency in many Western capitals to view Pakistan solely through the lens of the war in neighboring Afghanistan. However, with international forces on their way out of Afghanistan and their direct role in the conflict soon to end, it is important to remember that Pakistan is a highly strategic country in its own right—and for reasons that have nothing to do with the war in Afghanistan.

Pakistan sits in the middle of the Indian Ocean region, a part of the world that noted foreign affairs thinker Robert D. Kaplan has said “may comprise a map as iconic to the new century as Europe was to the last one.”<sup>1</sup> Pakistan is closely allied with critical global players such as China and Saudi Arabia. It is blessed with high-performing—though also underappreciated—industries that range from information technology to electronics. And it is also cursed with withering levels of violence and militancy. Finally, it is a nuclear weapons state that is rapidly increasing its stockpile. Presently, it boasts not only one of the world's fastest-growing nuclear arsenals, but also one of the globe's most rapidly growing tactical nuclear weapons programs.<sup>2</sup>

However, arguably the biggest reason for Pakistan's immense strategic importance is quite simple: its people. Pakistan has one of the largest, youngest, and most rapidly growing populations in the world.

## **Pakistan's population profile**

Obtaining current population data for Pakistan is a struggle for researchers, given that the country has not held a census since 1998 (it is supposed to conduct one every 10 years). Various factors—from natural disasters and a lack of funding to political obstacles and a bad security situation—are to blame. As a result, the most up-to-date demographic estimates for Pakistan

come not from the Pakistani government, but from the United Nations Population Division. Unless otherwise stated, the population figures cited in this chapter come from the UN.<sup>3</sup>

Pakistan's current population is about 182 million (some estimates provide a significantly higher figure; the CIA World Factbook projects that Pakistan's current population is 196 million). It has about 93 million men, and 88 million women. Pakistan is currently the sixth most populous country in the world, and the second-most populous Muslim-majority country, after Indonesia.

Punjab—home to the federal capital of Islamabad, the cultural capital of Lahore, and the military garrison city of Rawalpindi—is the country's most populous (and affluent) province. Arid, insurgency-riven Baluchistan is Pakistan's largest province in terms of size, but its smallest in terms of population (and also its most impoverished). Punjabis constitute Pakistan's most populous ethnic group. The country's various other ethnic groups—which include (among others) Sindhis, Pashtuns, and Baluch—are represented significantly less within the general population, and tend to be concentrated in the provinces bearing their names (Sindhis in Sindh, Pashtuns in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, and Baluch in Baluchistan). Ethnic Muhajirs—Muslims who originally migrated to Pakistan from India after Partition—are highly represented in the megacity of Karachi, in Sindh province.

### **Urbanization**

One of the most striking aspects of Pakistan's population profile is its rapid urbanization. Consider that between 2000 and 2010, the population of Karachi—Pakistan's financial capital and largest city—increased by 80 percent, the largest such increase in the world.<sup>4</sup> In fact, over the last decade, the number of people added to Karachi's population has exceeded the entire population of New York City. Not surprisingly, Pakistan is urbanizing at a faster annual rate (3 percent) than any other country in South Asia. Today, a third of Pakistan's population is urban. Yet this figure is expected to be nearly 50 percent by 2025. Karachi's population, 13 million in the present day, will have ballooned to 19 million by that year. Lahore's will have risen

from 7 to 10 million. And the number of Pakistani cities with populations between half a million and a million will have increased from 2 (in 2000) to 11.

This rapid urbanization is attributable to two major factors. One is a natural increase in the general population; Pakistan's total population is rising by nearly 2 percent every year. The other is rural-to-urban migration. Pakistanis are moving to cities for many reasons. Some, particularly farmers, fishermen, and others whose professional lives are directly (and deleteriously) affected by rural water shortages, seek better livelihoods. Others are escaping natural disasters like flooding and earthquakes. Still others desire access to better-quality healthcare and education. And many others are migrating because of war and conflict. This has been an observable trend since Partition, when 6 to 8 million Indian Muslims entered Pakistan and many settled in urban areas of Sindh and Punjab provinces. Such conflict-fueled urban migration also occurred in the 1980s, when Afghans fleeing the anti-Soviet insurgency in their country ended up in the Pakistani cities of Peshawar and Quetta. And such movement continues to take place today, with military offensives in Pakistan's tribal areas causing masses of Pakistanis (including militants from groups such as the Pakistani Taliban) to relocate to cities such as Peshawar, Quetta, and Karachi.<sup>5</sup>

There is a caveat here, however. The urbanization estimates cited above are based on administrative definitions of urban space—essentially, cities demarcated as such by boundaries or other formal markers. However, if one uses a density-based definition of urban space—the UN, in fact, classifies urban space as any area with 1,000 people per square mile (or 400 people per square kilometer)—then the figures are very different. Under this criterion, as much as 60 to 65 percent of Pakistan may be urban today. This would mean that large areas of rural Pakistan—including the entire eastern half of Punjab and a large region outside of Peshawar in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province—are in fact urban.<sup>6</sup>

## **Youth**

Another striking feature of Pakistan's population profile is its very large

youth cohort. Nearly 60 percent of the country's population is 24 years old or younger (as a percentage of the total population, only Yemen has more people under 24), and more than a third are under the age of 15. The median age is about 22. By contrast, barely 4 percent of the country is over the age of 65—a particularly notable figure given that life expectancy has risen dramatically since 1950 (from about 38 years then to about 66 years now).

It is important to keep these statistics in perspective. While Pakistan is certainly one of the world's most youthful nations, a number of countries are even younger. Niger has the world's youngest median age, at 15 years. Nine other countries—seven in Africa, and two (Afghanistan and Timor-Leste) in Asia—have median ages of 17 or younger.

Pakistan's large youth bulge has important economic implications. If successfully educated, trained, and incorporated into the job market, the country's young masses have the potential to revitalize Pakistan's lagging economy. Those offering particular promise are the young people graduating from prestigious universities—such as Lahore University of Management Sciences and the Institute of Business Administration—and joining high-growth sectors such as IT and electronics. Additionally, a new generation of young, skilled workers could help unlock Pakistan's vast mineral wealth. Like its neighbor Afghanistan, Pakistan is blessed with bountiful yet largely unexploited natural resources—including gold, copper, and coal. Furthermore, with fertility levels decreasing in many areas of the world, and with global manpower rising at slower rates than in earlier decades, masses of young, skilled Pakistani laborers could be highly sought after for global outsourcing projects—thereby generating a boom for the world economy.

Admittedly, however, such optimism may be misplaced. Roughly 40 million of Pakistan's 70 million 5-to-19 year-olds are not attending school.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, in recent years economists have estimated that the country will require 9 percent GDP growth to successfully employ the country's under-20 population<sup>8</sup>—and yet growth today barely surpasses 4 percent. Finally, Pakistan's job market is creating less than a million new jobs every year—a

seemingly insufficient number in a nation with millions of job-seekers. Only about 15 percent of 15-to-29-year-old Pakistanis have completed secondary school, while less than 6 percent have received technical and vocational education or training. Thirty percent of them are illiterate, and more than 50 percent are not in the labor force.<sup>9</sup>

Making matters worse is the fact that Pakistan's chief arm of youth policy, the Ministry of Youth, was abolished several years ago. The country's 18th constitutional amendment, which was passed in 2010 in an effort to spark devolution and the decentralization of power, shifts many central government resources and responsibilities to the provinces. As a result, the functions of many federal ministries—including youth—have been handed over to overburdened, underfunded, and capacity-constrained provincial authorities. This does not bode well for youth policy in Pakistan.

Pakistan's youthful population also has clear implications for politics. About a fifth of Pakistan's 85 million registered voters are between 18 and 25 years old, with another 15 percent between the ages of 26 and 30.<sup>10</sup> Little wonder the youth vote was such a highly coveted constituency during the 2013 national election campaign. Top candidates such as Imran Khan and eventual winner Nawaz Sharif aggressively courted young people—from Khan's social media-driven calls for change to Sharif's provision of free laptop computers.

Some commentators—pointing to a young, technologically savvy, rapidly urbanizing Pakistani population aggrieved by economic stress, injustice, and corruption—have suggested that the country could experience an Arab Spring-type movement.<sup>11</sup> It is a tempting theory, given that the same type of population—and one nursing the same grievances—has been present in the Arab Spring countries of the Middle East and North Africa. However, such a scenario appears remote. Pakistan is a highly fractured country—it is divided along provincial, ethnic, and sectarian lines—and therefore an unlikely candidate for a mass change movement. Additionally, Pakistan has already experienced a limited, urban-based movement for change. Back in 2007 and 2008, lawyers and journalists led a pro-democracy campaign that

helped end the military rule of President Pervez Musharraf.<sup>12</sup>

### **Pakistan's population projections**

Back in 2009, the UN estimated that Pakistan's population could rise to 335 million by 2050. However, that estimate was based on the assumption that the country's total fertility rate would fall from a rate of nearly four children per woman (Pakistan's rate in 2009) to two. Assuming the total fertility rate remains unchanged, the UN projected back in 2009, then the Pakistani population could exceed 450 million by 2050—with a total population of nearly 300 million as early as 2030.

The UN has since lowered these estimates. It now projects 275 million people instead of 335 million by 2050, assuming a fall in the fertility rate. And it estimates 380 million people, not more than 450 million, if fertility rates remain unchanged. Based on conversations the author has had with UN Population Division staff and other demographics experts, it appears that the UN's decision to lower its earlier projections was guided by a belief that Pakistan's fertility rates will eventually fall—simply because its South Asian neighbors have followed such a path.

This may be an overly optimistic assumption. Family planning services in Pakistan are of poor quality or absent altogether—particularly in rural areas, where many women must travel 50 to 100 kilometers on average to obtain these services. Pakistan's contraception prevalence rate is quite low (30 percent), and its rate of unmet need for family planning is high (25 percent).<sup>13</sup> Not surprisingly, while Pakistan's total fertility rate (currently about 3.3 children per woman) is indeed declining, it is declining at a significantly slower pace than that of its South Asian neighbors, and the rate of this decrease has slowed over the last decade or so.

### **Still Growing, Still Young**

Nonetheless, even these more conservative projections portend a rapidly rising population in the years ahead. Pakistan's population density (people per square kilometer) is expected to rise from 218 in 2010 to 341

in 2050. The annual population growth rate, currently around 1.8 percent, is projected to remain over 1 percent until at least 2030. Pakistan's total population is expected to continue to rise until at least 2075. There is good reason to believe that Pakistan, currently the sixth-most populous nation in the world, will soon vault ahead of Brazil, currently the world's fifth-most populous nation. However, because of the surging population of Nigeria, Pakistan is expected to remain the world's sixth-most populous nation in 2050 (Nigeria, which currently has the world's seventh-largest population, is expected to be the third-most populous country by that year, with Brazil falling to number seven on the list).

Additionally, Pakistan's population will remain young for several decades to come. The 15-to-24 age bracket is expected to increase significantly in the 2020s, and the under-24 population will still be in the majority by 2030. The median age is expected to be just 34 as late as 2050—and only 43 by 2100. However, just as today there are nations with lower median ages, this will also be the case several decades down the road. By 2050, for example, 10 African countries are projected to have a median age of 22 or less.

Nonetheless, Pakistan's demographic trajectory—marked by a young and rising population—is very different from that of most other nations. Sub-replacement level fertility rates (equivalent to about two births per women) are now found across the developed world, but also in some countries in developing world regions such as Southeast Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East.

South Asia is one of the last regions of the world (along with Africa) where populations are still very young and growing quickly. In fact, however, Pakistan stands out even in its own region. Excluding Afghanistan, of all the members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation—Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka—Pakistan boasts the highest population growth, birth, and fertility rates; the youngest median age (though it is tied with Nepal in this category); and the highest percentage of people who are 14 years old or younger.<sup>14</sup>

Nonetheless, Pakistan does not compare with numerous countries in Africa, where fertility rates of five and even six children per woman are found today. Additionally, by 2050, more than a dozen African countries are expected to have fertility rates in excess of three children per woman, with several—Mali, Niger, and Zambia—projected to have rates of four or five children per woman. By contrast, by that year Pakistan's fertility rate is projected to be about two children per woman. However, as stated earlier, given Pakistan's poor state of family planning services and its low contraception prevalence rate, such an estimate—which would represent a significant decrease from today's fertility rate of 3.3—appears questionable.

### **Implications**

For a country as impoverished and volatile as Pakistan, the ramifications of having a young and rising population for the foreseeable future are quite stark.

A chief implication is the strain on natural resources and basic services—particularly in Pakistan's overcrowded cities. Even today, Pakistan struggles to provide water, energy, education, housing, and healthcare to its masses. Up to a third of the country's population lacks access to safe water; power outages sometimes last up to 20 hours per day; millions of children are not in school; there is a national housing shortage of 7 million units; and public health crises—from waterborne disease and tuberculosis to polio—are acute, and yet Pakistan has only one doctor for every 18,000 people.<sup>15</sup> These collective problems are attributable to external factors such as climate change, but also to human-made factors such as large defense budgets, which have historically allocated relatively little funding to human development and the social sector.

Given the seriousness of these problems in the present day, imagine what could happen by 2050, when Pakistan is scheduled to have anywhere from 100 to 200 million more people than it does today. The case of water is illustrative. Consider that as early as 2025, Pakistan's total water demand is expected to exceed availability by 100 billion cubic meters. This deficit equates to five times the amount of water that can currently be stored in

the reservoirs of the Indus River system, Pakistan's chief water source.<sup>16</sup> By 2050, this unmet demand for water will likely be much higher.

Another major implication of a long-term population rise, one that is tied to the resource and services crunch highlighted above, relates to security. While there is no clear causal link between privation and radicalization in Pakistan, there is ample reason to fear that a large, young population that struggles to obtain basic services (and employment) could become a source of extremism—and particularly in cities, where the crunch on basic services is particularly acute and where militants are steadily intensifying their presence and activities. Research in early 2014 concluded that most ethnic Pashtuns in Karachi—who comprise several million of the city's 13 million people—are “under partial or complete influence” of the Pakistan Taliban,” and that on the whole the organization “controls or dominates” nearly a third of the city.<sup>17</sup>

To be sure, young militants comprise a small percentage of Pakistan's total population, and public opinion polling finds Pakistani youth largely opposed to extremism. Still, it is worth emphasizing that almost every terror strike in Pakistan since the September 11, 2011 attacks has been initiated by someone under the age of 30 (a demographic cohort that equates to about two-thirds of Pakistan's total population).<sup>18</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Demographically speaking, Pakistan is big, young, and growing—at a time when many regions and countries, particularly in the developed world, are experiencing aging populations and slower overall population growth. This is not to say that Pakistan is unique. Five countries have a larger population than Pakistan does today, and five countries will likely continue to outsize Pakistan in the decades ahead. Numerous countries in Africa (and several in Asia) are much younger than Pakistan today, and will continue to be so in the coming years. And in many nations across Africa, women are having, and will likely continue to have, more children than are their counterparts in Pakistan.

Still, Pakistan's demographics warrant attention, especially because of the nation's volatile economic and security situation. Some may argue that given all of Pakistan's pressing challenges—which range from insurgency and terrorism to an acute energy crisis—it will be hard for Islamabad to put demographics on its front burner. And indeed demography is not a popular field of study in Pakistan. There are few demographers, demographic data is scarce (particularly given the lack of a recent census), and demographic matters have rarely—if ever—been a policy priority.

And yet in Pakistan, demographic issues have tremendous salience. In fact, just as it is important for the world to recognize the strategic value of Pakistan even as international forces wind down their military involvement in the Afghanistan war, it is also critical that Pakistan recognize that its demographic situation is nothing short of a core strategic challenge. Population issues impact, and in some cases intensify, many of Pakistan's other challenges—from natural resource shortages and public health epidemics to educational dysfunction and increasing radicalization.

In essence, it will be difficult for Pakistan to successfully tackle its many challenges unless it simultaneously focuses more deeply on its demographic situation.

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## **Countering violent extremism in Pakistan's tribal belt**

*Samina Ahmed*

On 5 June 2013, Mian Mohammad Nawaz Sharif was sworn in as Prime Minister for the third time. The May 2013 elections marked a transformational change in Pakistan's political development. The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) government, led by party chair President Asif Ali Zardari had managed, against all odds to complete a full five-year term of office, only the second to do so.<sup>1</sup>

Power was then transferred from one elected government to another through democratic, constitutional means for the very first time in the country's history.

The May 2013 election was also the bloodiest in Pakistan's history as Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP-Taliban Movement of Pakistan) leader Hakimullah Mehsud called on his commanders to attack the "agents" of "an infidel system".<sup>2</sup> Around 170 people were killed and 700 wounded in more than 150 terror attacks of the Taliban and other groups in the run up to the elections and on election day. This violence was mainly aimed at the ruling PPP and the Awami National Party (ANP), a secular Pashtun party, that had headed the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KKP) government in coalition with the PPP. Both parties were denounced by the Pakistani Taliban and their Punjabi jihadi allies for their stance against terrorism and extremism. Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), which now heads the KPK government in alliance with the Islamist Jamaat-i-Islami (JI), were mainly spared by the extremists since they were seen as soft on militancy.<sup>3</sup>

That selective targeting might have made it easier for the PTI to win in KPK. It still keeps a far more soft stance on the militants than any other mainstream political party. Sharif's PML-N government, has, however, had

to rethink an approach that was based on negotiating with the militants in the tribal borderlands. It is, however, too early to assess its success in countering violent extremism in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and KPK and to protect citizens from terror attacks that have claimed thousands of victims countrywide.<sup>4</sup>

By winning an absolute majority in the National Assembly, the PML-N government's hands are not tied, as in the PPP's case, by coalition partners, providing it ample opportunities to adopt and implement appropriate policies to protect the security of citizens and enforce the writ of the state. Much will, however, depend on the government's ability and willingness to seize full control over national security and the directions of foreign policy from an intrusive and ambitious military.

This article focuses on Pakistan's mountainous and highly porous tribal belt, mainly the Federal Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), which officially have its own legal regulations, codified in the "Frontier Crimes Regulations". Therefore it is not subject to the jurisdiction of the courts and police. The Durand line, its border to Afghanistan, is not recognized by Afghanistan which still makes territorial claims.

### **Proxy wars and military operations**

The restoration of democracy in 2008, after nine years of Musharraf's rule, has yet to result in civilian governments wresting control over internal security or foreign policy from the powerful military establishment. National security remains the military's domain, which also influences, to a considerable extent, the directions of Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan and India.

Musharraf's counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism policies were rooted in the military's perceptions of national security and foreign policy preferences. The military's view on Afghanistan as a sphere of influence and the resultant attempts to also assert this influence, direct or indirect, over its western neighbor, have had dire implications for internal stability.

Military and military-dominated regimes have long supported Afghan Pashtun Islamic proxies to promote perceived national security interests in Afghanistan: Pashtuns since they have traditionally dominated the Afghan state; and Islamists since they are seen as unlikely to join hands with disgruntled Pakistani Pashtun nationalists.<sup>5</sup> During the 1980s and 1990s, Afghan mujahidin factions were first supported against the Soviet-backed government in Kabul, with American encouragement, and then during the decades of civil war. One such Afghan faction, the Taliban, emerged victorious; Pakistan was one of only three countries to recognize Mullah Omar as the legitimate ruler and his Islamic Emirate as the legitimate government of Afghanistan.<sup>6</sup>

The growth of militancy and extremism in the FATA and KPK can be seen as being largely the blowback of these proxy wars and interventionist policies in Afghanistan. Yet, apologists and sympathizers of Pakistani tribal militants, including the JI and the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI)<sup>7</sup> hold General Musharraf's decision to join hands with the US in combatting al-Qaeda and the Afghan Taliban responsible for the growth of militancy in FATA and KPK. Apologists and sympathizers of the tribal militants also insist that the hundreds of attacks by Pakistani Pashtun extremists, which have claimed thousands of civilian lives, are primarily or – depending on the view – at least partly a reaction to the targeting of the predominately Pashtun Afghan Taliban by the US-led international forces in Afghanistan. According to PTI leader Imran Khan: “They (the Taliban) think we are the slaves of America, that the Pakistan government is taking money from the US and fighting its (America's) war and killing its own people. Therefore they have declared jihad against the Pakistan army and Pakistani security forces”.<sup>8</sup>

When Musharraf pledged to support U.S efforts in the “war on terror”<sup>9</sup> the regime took action against al-Qaeda, with some 700 al-Qaeda leaders and footsoldiers, including Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, one of the masterminds of the 11 September terror attacks, eliminated, arrested or deported. However, the Afghan Taliban, including Mullah Omar's Shura, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's Hizb-e Islami and the al-Qaeda linked Haqqani network were not targeted. Finding sanctuary in Pakistan's tribal borderlands and in

KPK and Balochistan provinces, the Afghan insurgents were to regroup and revive. This contributed to the spike of the insurgency in Afghanistan, but it also came at a high domestic cost. The tribal borderlands and parts of KPK have become the home base of a network of local, regional and transnational jihadi groups.

Once some military factions began to challenge the military's writ, including through targeted attacks on security personnel, the high command had to attempt to forcefully reassert control. Successive military operations have been conducted in several of the FATA agencies since 2004, the latest in North Waziristan Agency, which was formally launched on 15 June 2014. However, almost all of the military's actions have been reactive in nature, launched after attacks on security personnel or high profile attacks such as on Karachi's international airport on 9 June 2014. Looking at the sustainability of earlier operations, often, once an operation ended, the militants soon revived their attacks against the state, although some partly successes could be recorded as a drive back of militants in Swat and South Waziristan, a significant decline of terror attacks in the country between 2010 and 2012 (though not in KPK) and a weakening of internal structures of militant groups. Moreover, although it is in general the military's policy to warn the population of the affected area in advance, this was not always practiced and the military's reliance on indiscriminate force often resulted in massive displacements of locals, and the destruction of civilian homes and livelihoods, fuelling local alienation that served as grist for the militants' propaganda mill and added recruits to their cause.

In the ongoing effort in North Waziristan the military claimed to have killed 500 militants in the operation by end-July.<sup>10</sup> Yet, reportedly the vast majority of hardcore militants had fled the agency well before it started, some across the border into Afghanistan, many into other FATA agencies and KPK or dispersing countrywide.<sup>11</sup> More than 800,000 of North Waziristan residents have also fled the agency, joining the ranks of around one million IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons) from other FATA agencies, who too had fled their homes during military operations or fearing the return of the militants.<sup>12</sup>

The return of the NWA IDPs remains uncertain after the operation ends, given the massive destruction of infrastructure and livelihoods in an already under-developed region. As in other FATA agencies, such as Bajaur, Khyber and Kurram, there are also understandable concerns about the return and / or further attacks of the militants.<sup>13</sup> Following threats by the Taliban, the vast majority of NWA's IDPs have even refused to move into military-run IDP camps in Frontier Region (FR) Bannu.<sup>14</sup> They have opted for shelter with families and host communities in KPK's Bannu district. Displaced families have also moved to KPK's Dera Ismail, Lakki Marwat and Tank districts.<sup>15</sup> Although the military high command has vowed to prevent the militants from regaining lost ground, their fears of the militants' return are not unfounded, if the operation is followed, as in several cases in the past, by peace deals with militants.

### **Appeasing the militants**

Between 2004 and 2009, almost all military operations have been followed by military-devised peace deals with violent extremists.<sup>16</sup> Involving the release of prisoners and allowing a sanctuary for the groups, these peace deals gave the militants the time and space they needed to regroup, reorganize, and expand their territorial control. As the peace deals unraveled and the militants resumed attacks, the military resorted to reactive military operations in the FATA agencies. This process of deal-making continued even after the formation of the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP-Taliban Movement of Pakistan) in 2007, an umbrella group of dozens of militant groups, committed to violently rejecting state authority.<sup>17</sup> This selective approach towards combatting violent extremism has resulted in the spread of militancy within all seven FATA agencies and in the KPK heartland, including the capital, Peshawar.

While most peace deals soon ended, some have survived. These include peace accords between the military and the Hafiz Gul Bahadur faction in NWA and the Maulvi Nazir group in South Waziristan.<sup>18</sup> Such deals have resulted in allegations of distinctions made between 'good' and 'bad' Taliban. The military's announcement to hunt all extremists down without

distinction has yet to be followed up.<sup>19</sup>

There could be lessons learned from the failed peace deals, including in KPK's Malakand region, to control militancy by appeasing violent extremists. Following a violent insurrection in Malakand, including in Swat district in 2007, KPK's ANP government had signed a military-devised peace deal with the militants in February 2009, which met one of their main demands, the imposition of Sharia in the region. The peace deal was endorsed by the national legislature, bringing the Nizam-e-Adal Regulation 2009 into effect on 16 April. Instead of laying down arms and respecting the writ of the state, the insurgents quickly consolidated their control, imposing Taliban-style governance, including public beheadings and floggings. Outraged public opinion and the militants taking over Buner district in late April, a few hours' drive from the federal capital, Islamabad, led the military to launch an operation in May 2009.<sup>20</sup> By July, the military declared the area cleared, and the millions of Malakand residents, who had fled the region, gradually returned. Yet, many of the militant leadership and foot soldiers managed to escape and disperse, particularly in the port city of Karachi. Their leader, Mullah Fazlullah, who now heads the TTP, still controls the group, and oversees attacks on security forces in KPK and FATA from safe havens in Afghan territory.

Despite the damage that followed successive peace deals, there is reluctance in military as well as many civilian circles to abandon the hope that politically expedient peace deals with violent extremists could contain the spread of terrorism, and curb attacks on security personnel and state institutions.

Economic reform, including tackling the energy crisis and the widespread poverty, which is seen as one reason of youth being prone to recruitment for militancy, was initially and still remains, Prime Minister Sharif's main priority. Yet, facing a sharp spike in terror attacks countrywide and concerned that the economy was unlikely to stabilize if security remained elusive, Sharif looked for ways to counter extremist violence and militancy.<sup>21</sup> The Prime Minister and many key ministers believed that violence could be contained

through negotiated deals with FATA-based militant factions. There was also reluctance to crack down on jihadi networks because of concerns that the blowback could destabilize the PML-N's home province, Punjab, where it had once again formed government after the 2013 election and which is in comparison sparsely affected by terror attacks.<sup>22</sup> As the major opposition party in the former legislative period, the PML-N had done little to support the PPP government's efforts to change the national narrative on violent extremism, identifying it as the most serious threat to the state. Instead, the PML-N had implied that cooperation with the US in the war on terror, and the resultant use of military force against homegrown jihadis was primarily responsible for the growth of militancy and violent extremism.<sup>23</sup>

Soon after taking over power in May 2013, following the promises of his election campaign, Sharif called for a dialogue with the tribal militants, saying: "The bullet is not the solution". However, he also emphasized: "I want an end to terrorism whether it is through dialogue and reconciliation or through full use of force".<sup>24</sup> Yet, even as militant attacks on security forces and civilians continued to take a rising toll in FATA and KPK, the government opted for unconditional negotiations with the TTP. Preliminary talks began after an All Parties Conference (APC) endorsed the policy in February 2014.<sup>25</sup> In the first detailed statement on the PML-N's counter-terrorism and extremism policy, Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan said that the government would not shy away from "all out war" but emphasized that it would prefer to negotiate with the militants.<sup>26</sup>

The government's policy was based on the premise that some militant factions could be persuaded to end their attacks on security personnel through peace deals, which would make the task of confronting those disinclined to negotiate far easier. One of the most radical Taliban factions, the Waliur Rehman group, headed by Khalid Saeed (also known as Khan Said Sajna) was seen as a potential partner as it battled for control with the Fazlullah-backed TTP faction. Scores of their members were killed in infightings of the militant groups, which spread to other FATA agencies, including North Waziristan and Khyber. The government and military's hopes that this divide would pay dividends were reinforced by the Saeed

faction's decision to break away from the Fazlullah-led TTP in May 2013.<sup>27</sup>

However, extremist violence was not curbed, with more than 100 terror attacks taking place in both KPK and FATA as the peace talks continued. Yet, the PML-N government kept the promised course, with Interior Minister Khan, for instance, blaming the US for attempting to derail the talks by killing Hakimullah Mehsud in November 2013.<sup>28</sup> The military, too appeared willing to go on with the talks, taking action only, including through aerial strikes, after militant attacks such as the 18 February execution of 23 Frontier Corps soldiers, who had been kidnapped by TTP's Mohmand faction in 2010.<sup>29</sup> The high command issued repeated warnings of a military operation unless the militants ceased attacks. Following the high profile attack by the Taliban and their al-Qaeda-linked allies on Karachi's international airport on 9 June, and the assassination of two senior officers from a military intelligence agency in Punjab army chief Raheel Sharif finally decided to act on a broad base.<sup>31</sup>

On 15 June, the military stated to have launched a full-fledged operation, named "Zarb-e-Azb", in North Waziristan. According to the prime minister's special adviser, the decision was taken because "one group was involved in talks and the other indulged in terrorism. There was no command [structure] and we were forced to launch the operation".<sup>32</sup> While aimed at eliminating all forms of militancy and terrorism not just in FATA but the rest of the country, it is presently restricted to NWA. The military has, for instance, backed down on pledges, following militant attacks, to extend the operation to Bajaur agency.<sup>33</sup>

However, the repeated announcements and warnings of an operation, including media reports, provided ample advance notice to militant leaders and foot soldiers, many of whom moved out of the agency even before it began.<sup>34</sup> By 15 June, when the operation commenced, many of the Pakistani Taliban and their Haqqani network allies moved across the border into Afghanistan or to other FATA agencies and KPK districts, as did the affected population. Some militants have reportedly taken shelter, as in the Swat case, in Karachi, where TTP elements are already present in the city's

many Pashtun-majority slum settlements.<sup>35</sup> If the militant networks are not eradicated and their fleeing leaders and followers are not apprehended and tried for their crimes, they will resume their violent activities with the support of their jihadi allies. Attacks by the militants have already resumed in Bajaur (although in a significant lower numbers) and Khyber agencies as well as in KPK's capital Peshawar.<sup>36</sup>

It would be particularly problematic if the military operation is followed, as in the past, by peace deals with selected Taliban factions. The short term benefits of peace deals with militants, such as with the Nazir and Gul Bahadur groups, should also be weighed against the urgent need to restore the state's writ over the no-man's land FATA.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, FATA will remain a safe haven for criminals of every hue so long as it remains out of the reach of courts and civilian law enforcement agencies, and outside the constitutional and legal mainstream.<sup>38</sup>

### **The jihadi nexus**

Pakistan has already paid a high price for not tackling the nexus of terror in the country as a whole, which could extract, if left untouched, an even higher price in the future. In the recent military operation, charitable wings of formally banned but renamed Jihadi organizations such as the Laskhar-e-Tayyaba (LeT) and the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) which target the main regional adversary, India, are freely providing assistance to North Warizistan's IDPs. While representatives of local and international humanitarian organizations have criticized military-imposed curbs on their activities and access to the IDPs, the charity wings of hardline Islamist groups and parties, such as the Jamaat-i-Islami's Al-Khidmat foundation or LeT's Falah-e-Insaniyat foundation, have been able to gain access to the IDPs.<sup>39</sup> Displaced by the military operation, deprived of livelihoods, and alienated by the state, some IDPs could be tempted to join the ranks of the jihadis.

There are relationships between the LeT, now renamed Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JD), the JeM and scores of other jihadi groups that operate within and from

Pakistani territory. Local Sunni radical organizations such as the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), that once restricted their violent attacks to their sectarian adversaries, now, according to reports, provide recruits and funds to anti-India oriented jihadis, including the LeT/JD and JeM. These anti-India jihadis, as reports say, work alongside the Afghan Taliban, including al-Qaeda linked groups such as the Haqqani network. While the LeT/JD and JeM aim at Pakistan' rival India and therefore find sympathizer, their fellow travelers, particularly many of the groups that constitute the TTP, have turned their guns inwards Pakistan.<sup>40</sup>

Pakistani tribal militants, sectarian and regional jihadis also provided safe havens and recruits to the Afghan insurgents and have empowered the Afghan insurgents, particularly the Haqqani network. Pakistan's security is also challenged since the Afghan insurgents, returning the favor, have provided shelter and support to some of the most dangerous of Pakistani extremist groups, including militant factions headed by TTP leader Mullah Fazlullah. These attacks have seriously strained Pakistan's relations with Kabul, with tensions running high after every episode. In June 2014, for instance, Pakistan reportedly launched airstrikes into Afghan territory following cross-border attacks, according to Pakistani military sources, by over 200 extremists on Bajaur Agency.<sup>41</sup> On their part, Afghan security officials attribute the spike in insurgent attacks on the massive influx of Pakistani militants who have left North Waziristan since the launch of the operation to their Afghan allies.<sup>42</sup>

Since the restoration of democracy, successive elected governments have attempted to normalize and broaden relations with India mainly without major successes. After the PPP took over power in 2008, peace with India was a top priority of the government. Although Islamabad and New Delhi resumed their dialogue and began to expand economic ties, the rapprochement process came to a halt when the LeT attacked Mumbai in November 2008, killing 163 and wounding scores. The PPP government, in an unprecedented move, besides arresting scores of members, blocking accounts and raiding and closing down dozens offices and hospitals of the JD, did charge seven LeT operatives of planning and coordinating the attack,

the first time that Pakistani nationals were indicted for crimes committed in India. Yet, New Delhi believed that the cases, which continue to drag on in courts, were not pursued in earnest demonstrating limitations of the civilian leadership in wresting control over policy from the military.<sup>43</sup> Although the dialogue process was resumed, it stalled again as the result of several cross-Lines of Control (LoC) skirmishes in January 2013, for which each side blamed the other.

Nawaz Sharif's business friendly government has attempted to resume the dialogue process, with the expansion of trade and economic ties with India being a top foreign policy priority. The government has persevered, reaching out to the hardline nationalist Bharitiya Janata Party (BJP) government, including Sharif's participation in Prime Minister Modi's inauguration and the subsequent exchange of correspondence between the two prime ministers. Yet, resumed cross-border and cross-LoC attacks in July 2014 bode ill for the process.

Pakistan's failure to crackdown on the anti-India jihadis could bear more serious implications for relations with India. Unlike Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who was bent on exercising restraint even after attacks such as Mumbai, Modi's hardline government might react far more robustly if another major terror attack on Indian territory is traced back to groups domiciled in Pakistan. Even absent such an attack, Sharif's bid to improve and broaden ties with India will be jeopardized by attacks against Indian targets in Afghanistan, such as the May 2014 attack on the Indian consulate in Herat, attributed by Hamid Karzai's government to the LeT.<sup>44</sup>

## **Conclusion**

With the December 2014 deadline for the exit of foreign forces around the corner in Afghanistan, which could further open up space on both sides of the border for Pakistani militants, there should be no exceptions in dismantling the nexus of terror in Pakistan if is to make sustainable progress against terrorism and extremism. To do so will require to pursue a civilian-led, civilian-implemented counter-insurgency, counter-militancy strategy

that focuses on law enforcement. Public opinion would strongly favor such an approach, given the high human cost of indiscriminate terrorist violence. The government's legitimacy will rest in its ability to protect the lives of citizens and to reassert the writ of the state in all parts of the country, as could the survival of a fragile democratic transition.

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- 1 Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) government was the first but was ousted in a military coup soon after the 1977 elections.
- 2 "Mehsud sanctions polling day attacks", *The Express Tribune*, 10 May 2013. Hakimullah Mehsud had succeeded TTP founder Baitullah Mehsud, who was killed in a drone strike in August 2009. The TTP, an umbrella organization of militant groups in FATA, was formed in 2007.
- 3 ANP leader Asfandiyar Wali Khan, condemning the caretaker government's failure to curb such attacks said: "It appears that Hakimullah Mehsud is deciding who should and shouldn't contest the elections", adding, "How can we campaign when our politicians and supporters are dying in targeted attacks". Qaiser Butt, "It seems Hakimullah is heading ECP (Election Commission of Pakistan): Asfandiyar", *The Express Tribune*, 6 May 2013.
- 4 According to the Ministry of Interior's National Internal Security Policy 2013-2018, there were 13,721 terror incidents in Pakistan from 2001 to 2013. Suicide bombings increased from 15 between 2001 to 2007 to 358 between 2007 and November 2013; 48,994 people, including 5,272 security personnel were killed between 2001 and November 2013. Ismail Khan, "Pakistan most terror-hit nation", *Dawn*, 23 February 2014. According to data provided by intelligence agencies to the Supreme Court in 2013, more than 24,000 civilians and security personnel had been killed in terror attacks since 11 September 2001; another 25,000 had been killed during military operations against tribal militants in the borderlands. Mudassir Raja, "Pakistan victims: War on terror toll put at 49,000", *The Express Tribune*, 27 May 2013.
- 5 There are more Pashtuns in Pakistan than Afghanistan, many from Afghan territory incorporated into Imperial India by the Durand Line (1893). While Pashtun nationalism has receded over time in Pakistan, the military has a long history of backing Pakistani Pashtun Islamists against secular Pashtun parties.
- 6 Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates also recognized the Taliban regime.
- 7 JUI-Fazlur Rehman (JUI-F) and JUI-Samiul Haq (JUI-S) are predominately Pashtun Deobandi parties.
- 8 Khan's response to TTP leader Hakimullah Mehsud's killing in a drone strike in November 2013. "Imran Khan accuses US of derailing peace talks with Pakistani Taliban", *Reuters*, 9 November 2013.
- 9 Khan's response to TTP leader Hakimullah Mehsud's killing in a drone strike in November 2013. "Imran Khan accuses US of derailing peace talks with Pakistani Taliban", *Reuters*, 9 November 2013.
- 10 There is no independent verification of the military's claims, which does not allow the local and international media, NGOs and humanitarian agencies access to the conflict-zone. A leading newspaper said: "Everything about this war is shrouded in such secrecy that one does not know what to make of it". "War in the fog", Editorial, *The New*, 23 July 2014. "Air raids on militant hideouts kill 28", *The Express Tribune*, 21 July 2012.
- 11 The commander of the NWA operation, Major General Zafarullah Khan, admitting that hardcore militants had escaped said: "They had smelled the operation was about to be launched". Yet attempting to justify the failure to apprehend them, he added: "It is not possible to create a watertight compartment where individuals cannot escape". Ismail Khan, "Pakistan claims win, but enemy escapes", *The New York Times International*, 12-13 July 2014.
- 12 Zahir Shah Sherazi, "Infections haunt IDP children as displaced number crosses 0.9m", *Dawn*, 14 July 2014. There were 1.02 million IDPs from FATA and KPK in 2013. United Nations High Commission for Refugees, September 2013.
- 13 See "Pakistan: Countering Militancy in FATA", *Asia Report*, Number 178, International Crisis Group, 21 October 2009.
- 14 There are six tribal areas in FATA, known as Frontier Regions (FRs) that border on KPK districts.
- 15 Barkatullah Marwat, "IDPs from NWA refuse to stay in FR Bannu camp", *The News*, 15 June 2014.
- 16 Peace deals with FATA-based militants included the 24 April Shakai agreement, which followed military operations in South Waziristan; the Shakai agreement with militant commander Nek Mohammad in South Waziristan in April 2004 and after Nek Mohammad was killed in a drone attack with other commanders in the agency in November 2004; the Sra Rogah agreement with Baitullah Mehsud in 2005; the 2006 and 2007 peace deals with the Gul Bahadur faction in North Waziristan and the Maulvi Nazir group in South Waziristan; and peace deals in hardcore militant factions in Bajaur and Mohmand agencies in 2009. In KPK's Malakand region, a military-devised-peace deal was signed with Mullah Fazlullah in 2009, who now heads the TTP.
- 17 The TTP was founded by Baitullah Mehsud in 2007. Hamikullah Mehsud replaced Baitullah after he was killed in a drone strike in August 2009. After Hakimullah Mehsud was killed in drone strike in November 2013, Mullah Fazlullah, the leader of the Swat faction of the TTP, was appointed leader.
- 18 Maulvi Nazir was killed in a drone strike in January 2013. His faction is now headed by Bahawal Khan,

also known as Salahuddin Ayubi.

- <sup>19</sup> "11 Punjabi Taliban dead in NWA drone strikes", Dawn, 20 July 2014; "6 top al-Qaeda leaders droned in Waziristan", The News, 22 July 2014;
- <sup>20</sup> "Countering Militancy in PATA", Asia Report, No 242, International Crisis Group, 15 January 2013.
- <sup>21</sup> According to Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, more than 400 people lost their lives and another 1,225 were injured, in terror attacks which included 358 bomb blasts, in less than three months (1 June and 12 August 2013). "Terror incidents in 74 days claim 449 lives", The Express Tribune, 18 August 2013.
- <sup>22</sup> The PML-N had reportedly forged some local electoral alliances in Punjab with sectarian extremists. Amir Mir, "Punjab govt may not act against LeJ. PML has seat adjustments with defunct SSP", The News, 22 February 2013.
- <sup>23</sup> During the 2013 election campaign, Sharif emphasized that such cooperation was problematic, adding, "guns and bullets are not always the answer to such problems. I think other options need to be explored at the same time and see what is workable. And I think we're going to pursue all these other options". Pakistan should reconsider support for US war on terror: Nawaz", Reuters, 5 May 2013.
- <sup>24</sup> "Nawaz promises light at the end of the tunnel", Daily Times, 20 August 2013; Abdul Manan, "Talks with Taliban only option: Nawaz", The Express Tribune, 21 May 2013
- <sup>25</sup> Syed Irfan Hussain, "Govt in secret contact with Taliban: minister", Dawn, 31 August 2013; "Pakistan-Taliban talks process kicks off", The News, 31 August 2012.
- <sup>26</sup> Iftikhar Ali Khan, "Govt ready for both talks and 'all out' war", Dawn, 14 August 2013.
- <sup>27</sup> "TTP splits, Khalid Sajna group announces separation", The News, 29 May 2013.
- <sup>28</sup> Khan said that talks with the Taliban and a government delegation had been scheduled the day after Mehsud was killed. Zahir Shah Sherazi, "Pakistani Taliban chief Hakimullah Mehsud killed in drone attack", Dawn, 2 November 2013.
- <sup>29</sup> "Taliban peace talks break down", Agence France Presse, 18 February 2014.
- <sup>30</sup> On 30 April, several weeks before the NWA operation began, General Sharif warned "You must accept the writ of the state, failing which the army is more than capable of dealing with threats from insurgents". Khaled Ahmed, "Fighting Pakistan's war", Newsweek, 15 June 2014.
- <sup>31</sup> In the attack claimed by the TTP and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), 38 people, mostly security and airport staff, were killed as were all 10 IMU attackers.
- <sup>32</sup> Asim Yasin, "Massive political support for military operation", The News, 16 June 2014.
- <sup>33</sup> "Tribesman start returning home in Bajaur", Dawn, 19 July 2014.
- <sup>34</sup> Admitting that many militants had left North Waziristan after government warnings of a military operation, the agency's political agent, the senior bureaucrat, said, "The people who have left the NWA and went across the border (to Afghanistan) moved out of their free will. But their return to Pakistan would not be without proper check and scrutiny". Sardar Sikander Shaheen, "Govt warns of military operation in North Waziristan", Daily Times, 8 June 2014.
- <sup>35</sup> "Urban Violence in Pakistan", Asia Report, No. 255, International Crisis Group, 23 January 2014.
- <sup>36</sup> "Two security guards gunned down in Hayatabad", The News, 21 July 2014; "Militants kill eight Pakistani paramilitary members", Reuters, 18 July 2014
- <sup>37</sup> Adnan Rasheed, a former air force officer, responsible for assassination attempts on Musharraf and attacks on military bases, also a key planner of the June 2014 attack on Karachi's international airport, is one of the very few senior leaders arrested thus far in the operation. His arrest from Wana in South Waziristan was reportedly the result of intelligence provided to the military by the Maulvi Nazir group. Amir Mir, "Adnan Rasheed's capture a major success", The News, 17 July 2014.
- <sup>38</sup> For detailed analysis on FATA's ambiguous political, legal and constitutional status, see "Pakistan: Countering Militancy in FATA", op. cit.
- <sup>39</sup> "NGOs complain being discouraged by govt for working for IDPs", The News, 17 July 2014; Azam Khan, "Dignity left by the roadside for a line to an IDP camp", The Express Tribune, 17 July 2014.
- <sup>40</sup> For detailed analysis of jihadi organizations in Pakistan, see International Crisis Group Asia Reports, "The State of Sectarianism in Pakistan", No. 95, April 2005; and, "Pakistan: The Militant Jihadi Challenge", No. 164, 13 March 2009.
- <sup>41</sup> Munir Ahmed and Rahim Faiez, "Pakistan launches airstrikes after attack", Associated Press, 1 June 2014.
- <sup>42</sup> "Massive Taliban attack pushed back in Helmand: MOI", Afghanistan Times, 20 July 2014. "Kabul airport comes under attack as Pakistan fighters join Afghan Taliban", The Daily Beast, 17 July 2014.
- <sup>43</sup> Although the PPP government acknowledged that the attacks had been planned in Pakistan, as the

trail of the seven accused began in November 2009, it insisted that it lacked evidence to try LeT leader Hafiz Saeed. Sahar Habib Ghazi and Sabrina Tavernise, "Pakistan charges 7 terrorism suspects a year after attacks that shocked Mumbai," *The New York Times*, 25 November 2009.

<sup>44</sup> "According to the information we have –given to us by a Western intelligence agency—the perpetrators of the LeT", "Karzai blames LeT for Indian consulate attack," *Agence France Presse*, 27 May 2014.



## **Has the Pakistani Taliban come to stay?**

*Mona Kanwal Sheikh*

Pakistan has been severely affected by the decade-long conflict in neighboring Afghanistan. The high number of civilian and military casualties and the escalation of violence throughout the country speak for itself.<sup>1</sup> The rise of the Pakistani Taliban movement during the first decade of the new millennium has particularly been a game changer since it has challenged the internal stability of the country to a degree that arguably transformed the security political priorities of Pakistan.

The last decade has been full of traumatic events for a country for which the prime security concerns used to be linked to either separatist demands or the arch rivalry with India: Events such as the Pakistani army's intrusion into the semi-autonomous Tribal Areas of Pakistan in 2003-4, the 2004-initialization of the US drone program in the Northwestern Pakistan, the Pakistan army's operation aimed at the Red Mosque activists in the very capital of Pakistan in 2007, the Pakistani Taliban's take-over of the Swat-valley and its adjacent areas in 2008-9, the subsequent army operations to get the area back under control, domestic refugee crisis that followed, the Taliban attack on the school girl Malala Yusufzai, and not least the expansion of the Taliban movement from the Tribal Areas into the urban centers of Punjab and Sindh in the realm of shades of the.

The unfolding of these traumatic events raises the question of what Pakistan and the western world should expect in the future, and what measures might be helpful in transforming the conflict dynamics in Pakistan. This chapter zooms in on the development of the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which is the largest Taliban umbrella organization in Pakistan, and seeks to evaluate the future prospects of the movement. It also argues that the militaristic approaches that have hitherto been applied to deal with the Pakistani Taliban have failed when it comes to deescalating the spiral of violence in Pakistan and limiting the spread of Taliban ideology.

## **The past and present of the TTP**

In the immediate years after the US-led intervention in Afghanistan in 2001 there was no formal Pakistani Taliban organization, but only loyalists and supporters of the Afghan Taliban concentrated in the Tribal Areas of Pakistan. Some of the loyalists, who were led and organized by the first Pakistani Taliban commander Nek Mohammad, fought in solidarity with the Afghan Taliban. They saw their resistance as a repetition of history: as a battle against foreign invasion and foreign control like the battle that was once fought against the Soviet forces.

With the Pakistani army's deployment of troops in the Tribal Areas during 2003 and 2004, the Taliban loyalists gradually consolidated an independent Pakistani identity. Their resistance was now two-fold: they were both helping their Afghan brothers but also fighting the Pakistan Army that was portrayed as traitors due to their alliance with the US in the communication materials issued by the Taliban loyalists. They declared the Pakistani army to be an infidel force and thus legitimized the targeting of who they also regarded to be 'apostate Muslims.' As the years passed, the movement became increasingly focused on the battle against the Pakistan Army and the rulers of the country. However, it was not before 2007 that the TTP was established with the dual aims of fighting the invasion forces in the neighboring country *and* the Pakistan Army and government.

During the past years where I have studied the Pakistani Taliban's communication- and recruitment materials I have noticed a transformation in their narratives on the *raison d'être* of their own movement. If one looks at some of the latest communications issued by the TTP, they are now increasingly engaging in the discourse on why Pakistan was established in the first place. This discourse is generally not new in a Pakistani context but goes back to the very moment when Pakistan gained independence from India in 1947. Put simply, the discourse on Pakistan's identity has been shaped by a battle between parties that advocated that Pakistan is or ought to be a state for Muslims on one side and parties that advocated that Pakistan should be defined by (a particular interpretation of) Islam, and

hence be an Islamic state. Old political parties like the *Jamaate Ulamae Islam* and *Jamaate Islami* have opted for the last viewpoint, which is also the reason why we can presently see an approximation between the TTP and some representatives of these parties. In the ongoing talks between the Pakistani government and the TTP, the TTP appointed both a front figure of the *Jamaate Islami* and the *Jamaate Ulamae Islam* as their representatives in the talks with the governments' negotiation team.

The Pakistani Taliban's more recent engagement in the debate on Pakistan's identity indicates that the movement is reinventing itself and is trying to create a more long-term space for itself. Rather than developing into a regional and global phenomena its ambitions appear to remain local. Pakistan has most probably inherited a long-term challenge from the conflict in Afghanistan – one that will not just disappear when the international troops will pull-out from Afghanistan. Rather the TTP will continue to opt for the implementation of a particular version of *sharia* in Pakistan.<sup>2</sup>

When I interviewed Taliban activists and spokesmen during one of my travels to Pakistan in 2008, they were very clear about their ambitions: as one of their spokesmen said, when the US pulls out, these *jihadis* will lay down their arms “and go to sleep, peacefully.” Today, nearly 6 years after, there are no prospects that the Pakistani Taliban will “go to sleep”. Yet, time will show to what degree the movement will be able to reinvent itself, and if they will become part of the normal – unarmed – political conversation in Pakistan. Though it might seem to be an illusion in light of the escalation of violence – not only in the northwestern areas of Pakistan, but also in cities like Karachi and Quetta - a transformation of the movement is not a completely unlikely scenario, and it can be pushed forward by initiatives such as the talks between the government of Pakistan and the TTP.

### **Negotiating with terrorists?**

A new momentum for transforming the Pakistani Taliban movement was created when the Nawaz Sharif-led government in the beginning of 2014 appointed a negotiation team to talk with the TTP. As mentioned above the

TTP in turn appointed clerics from both the *Jamaate Islami* and *Jamaate Ulamae Islam* (along with the current Imam of the Red Mosque) to represent them in the negotiations. It was the first time that the TTP as such entered into a dialogue with the central government, though they were mediated by clerics who are not directly part of the TTP. The talks have been criticized for being indirect talks and thus useless; however these clerics who sympathize with the sharia-aspirations of the Taliban are well-known on the political stage in Pakistan, and are in a unique position to convince parts of the TTP and their followers that their sharia-aspirations can be channeled through the parliamentary system.

It is important to note that resistance towards democracy was never the Pakistani Taliban's primary agenda – it was not their ideological opposition to democracy that made approximately 40 tribal leaders meet and decide on the establishment of TTP in 2007. It was as already indicated their resistance against the foreign forces and the Pakistani governments alliance with the US in the War on Terror that were given as the primary reasons.

There is however no doubt that parts of the TTP appear to be strongly opposed to democracy, which is also prevalent in their communications – but it still was not their anti-democracy stance that made them take up arms. The groups or individuals that are against democracy, were so before the TTP was established, and their viewpoints were probably conditioned by the norms and traditions that were and are predominant in the Tribal Areas.

It is important to note that today, the Pakistani Taliban is not restricted to the Tribal Areas, nor do they represent Pashtun interests only. Part of the movement is known as the 'Punjabi Taliban' and consist of (former or present) members of *Sipah-e Sahaba Pakistan* (a movement that has also been active within the parliamentary system in Pakistan), or they are supporters of Fazlur Rehman from *Jamaate Ulamae Islam* (one of the largest and oldest Islamist political parties in the country). Some of them used to support, and vote for, the alliance of religious parties, *Muttahida Majlise Amal*, which was voted into power in the province that was earlier known as the North West Frontier Province in 2002. Altogether, this means

that the TTP also covers elements that are pragmatic when it comes to the question of whether democratic participation is legitimate in order to further their ideological agenda.

The Pakistani governments' push for negotiations with the TTP was also helpful in delegitimizing the 'last resort' argument that is often used by Taliban spokesmen to justify violence, i.e. that violence is the only option because nobody will listen to their grievances. The leadership of the TTP has often represented the most hardened attitude within the movement, and with the new TTP leader Mullah Fazlullah in charge (since 2013), the chances for transformation might not be great in the short term. However internal fragmentation within the movement allows the pursuit of a policy that divides the movements into the good, bad and ugly Taliban, i.e. entering peace deals with the negotiation-friendly groups and hitting hard on the spoilers of the peace process.<sup>3</sup> Since Mullah Fazlullah is the first TTP leader chosen that does not hail from the Tribal Areas, internal rifts have been prevalent since the previous leader Hakimullah Mehsud was killed in a drone attack. Also the issue of talks with the governments divides the movement, along with the old rift about whether or not it is religiously legitimate at all to target the Pakistan army and declaring them infidel or apostate Muslims.

Since 2012 the Afghan Taliban has had an office in Qatar, where they have entertained preliminary talks with the Americans. In one of the statements made by the Afghan Taliban's representatives in Doha the idea of power sharing was embraced. And there are other examples of violent and extremist groups, who have changed their ideological viewpoint when it comes to their participation in political processes. Even though the Taliban-regime in Afghanistan was hardly democratic, they did invite members of the political opposition to become part of their governing regime, and during a very short period of time they went from being an insurgent movement to becoming a political actor who even sat in meetings with US government officials. In countries like Egypt, Algeria and Lebanon we have seen examples of parties and movements who have radically changed their viewpoint when it comes to the legitimacy of participating in political processes. The Pakistani Taliban is a very fragmented movement and will hardly transform into a uniform

political party. However elements of the movement might change direction and support political candidates promoting the slogan of “more *sharia* in Pakistan.”

### **The Afghan Taliban**

Pakistan was one of the few countries that supported the Taliban regime in Afghanistan as long as it lasted. A main reason was that a Pashtun-dominated government in Kabul would be helpful in keeping down separatist demands for a separate Pashtunistan and Pakistan could avoid giving up the frontier areas bordering Afghanistan, where the Pashtuns are a majority.

But today the dynamics in Pakistan have changed, or rather, they have become more complicated. As the Afghan Taliban fled into Pakistan in 2001, it put Pakistan in a paradoxical situation, as Pakistan had officially sided with the Americans in the confrontation between two of the country’s oldest allies. The situation became even more complicated for Pakistan as the TTP, who in their official letterhead respectfully salute the Afghan Taliban Mullah Omar, who had in fact declared war on the Pakistani government and army.

Although the Afghan Taliban leadership is probably still in Pakistan, Pakistan’s incentive to invest in a Taliban-led Afghanistan, has significantly decreased. For Pakistan, it is important to be able to control the TTP and prevent it from growing, but if the Afghan Taliban ever returns to power in the neighboring country it would only increase uncertainty in Pakistan. Such a situation would likely inspire the Pakistani Taliban to seek a take-over of power in Pakistan.

Over the past 6 years, the threat posed by TTP has been high on Pakistan’s list of security challenges and frequent attacks on police schools, prisons, military academies and civilian targets, have shaken the old friend-enemy antagonisms within the country. When the Taliban regime was overthrown in Afghanistan, the Pakistani military went after al-Qaeda, foreign fighters from neighboring countries and the Pakistani groups that defended them in the Tribal Areas. Ensuring stability and avoiding the creation of new internal

threats have been Pakistan's top priorities in light of the creation of the TTP.

The logic behind policy towards the Afghan Taliban in Pakistan was not that Pakistan wanted them back in power, but that the Afghan Taliban could be a useful tool in terms of reorienting the TTP's attention away from Pakistan. Mullah Omar has at several occasions urged the Pakistani Taliban to focus their fighting on Afghanistan, where "the real enemy is," and not on Pakistan.

Pakistan does not consider the Afghan Taliban to be their only option in Afghanistan. Pakistan has in recent years pointed out that the ethnic composition of the Afghan National Army and the central government must be representative of the ethnic composition of the country where the Pashtuns are in majority. Pakistan obviously has a vested interest in promoting the agenda of a representative government and army since the separatist threat is still lurking in the background (not only from Pashtuns, but also from separatist groups in the provinces of Balochistan and Sindh). At the same time, supporting the Pashtuns is Pakistan's way to counter India's support to other ethnic groups in Afghanistan, and thereby the Indian influence in Afghanistan. Pakistan can therefore be expected to continue working towards a future government in Kabul dominated by Pashtuns, who would be willing to adopt a formal ratification of Durand line as the official border between the two countries. And Pakistan will keep looking for other groups than the Taliban, who may represent the Pashtun element in the government of Afghanistan.

### **New counterterrorism policy**

While the Pakistani Taliban is reinventing itself, and Pakistan is looking for new Pashtun partners in Afghanistan, the situation also calls for new counter terrorism measures. From being a movement that was established with the presence of approximately 40 members in 2007, the TTP has grown to become a phenomena comprising up to two hundred organizations according to a Pakistani think tank monitoring the development of the movement.<sup>4</sup>

The military did manage to cleanse the Tribal Areas from al-Qaeda fighters and the U.S. drone attacks have also – probably with some degree of acceptance - been to the favor of Pakistan’s government and military in the fight against the TTP in the Tribal Areas. But the TTP was in turn created as a reaction against the military operations in the Tribal Areas, its mobilization capacity has increased in tact with the drone attacks, and the military elimination of the religious seminary for girls adjacent to the Red Mosque, was an event that really gave the TTP momentum.

At the same time, the perception of Pakistani soldiers of the Taliban and the groups that work with them have changed. At first we often heard about soldiers, who refused to carry out orders in the Tribal Areas because they did not want to fight against their old allies. But the situation has changed, and the increasing brutality and conflict escalation has challenged the bonds between the Army and the Taliban – instead these bonds have been replaced by cold-blooded hostility. This development should also be expected when one looks at the way in which the Pakistani army is portrayed in the communication materials that the TTP emits.<sup>5</sup>

In the strategy papers of the Pakistani administration, one can read that the previous government's three D's (development, dialogue, and deterrence) has been expanded to five elements: removal, containment, prevention, education and reintegration. Although much of the content is the same, there is a greater focus on civil follow-up on military operations. While reconciliation attempts will continue, they will, according to the official policy be paired with re-integration initiatives, which are inspired by Hamid Karzai made in 2004 in relation to the Afghan Taliban: he tried to engage former fighters and prisoners, and made them renounce violence publicly, in return for financial incentives. However his project was not particularly successful, due to various practical implementation errors, and not least corruption in the management of the initiative.<sup>7</sup>

Considering the potential instability in the wake of 2014, the balance could quickly tip to the advantage of the military instruments. Whether we will see a new generation of militant Taliban becoming hatched in the

Tribal Areas, or whether we will see a fragmented movement trying to find a new identity in a context where the external occupying power is gone, and the incentives for armed struggle are limited, would depend on what instruments the present Pakistani government chooses to implement in the years to come.

There is no doubt that Western governments, especially those that have pursued a so-called activist foreign policy in Afghanistan will follow the developments in Pakistan very closely. Although the Pakistani Taliban mainly focused on the local battle, over the last 10 years there have been few incidents where individuals facilitated by the Taliban-affiliated organizations, have been oriented towards targets in the West.<sup>8</sup> But also in the future, the Pakistani Taliban should only weakly be expected to get involved in attacks in the West. The degree to which there will be any threat stemming from the Pakistani Taliban movement will depend on the extent to which the Pakistan Taliban through peace agreements and similar initiatives aimed at political normalization can be disarmed after 2014.

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- <sup>1</sup> Even though there is disagreement over the exact figures the numbers of both civilian and military casualties since 2001 remain very high <http://tribune.com.pk/story/527016/pakistani-victims-war-on-terror-toll-put-at-49000/>. For 2003-14 figures see <http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/pakistan/database/casualties.htm>. The total number killed in Pakistan may be as high as or higher than the toll in Afghanistan, with NGO estimates ranging widely between 18,000 and 49,000 recorded deaths.
- <sup>2</sup> The Taliban interpretation of sharia particularly revolves around the implementation of a punishment system that they regard to be more just, swift and unbureaucratic than the prevalent Pakistani justice system.
- <sup>3</sup> This option has also been discussed in relation to earlier rifts within the TTP movements. See my paper "Disaggregating the Pakistani Taliban - Does the good, the bad and the ugly Taliban distinction represent a failed policy?" [http://en.diiis.dk/files/publications/Briefs2009/Disaggregating\\_Pakistani\\_Taliban.pdf](http://en.diiis.dk/files/publications/Briefs2009/Disaggregating_Pakistani_Taliban.pdf) (Danish institute for International Studies, 2009).
- <sup>4</sup> This is based on my own interview with the director of the FATA Research Center, Ashraf Ali, in 2012.
- <sup>5</sup> Mona Kanwal Sheikh, *Sacred Pillars of Violence: Findings from a Study of the Pakistani Taliban* (Politics, Religion & Ideology, 2012).
- <sup>6</sup> An outline of the main content of the policy papers can be found here: <http://tribune.com.pk/story/589497/fighting-terror-draft-policy-aims-to-dismantle-terror-networks/>.
- <sup>7</sup> See the report "Taliban Talks: Past, Present and Prospects for the US, Afghanistan and Pakistan" (eds. Mona Kanwal Sheikh and Maja Greenwood) [http://subweb.diiis.dk/graphics/Publications/Reports2013/RP2013-06-Taliban-Talks\\_web.jpg.pdf](http://subweb.diiis.dk/graphics/Publications/Reports2013/RP2013-06-Taliban-Talks_web.jpg.pdf) (Danish Institute for International Studies, 2013).
- <sup>8</sup> E.g. the case of Faisal Shehzad, who pleaded guilty to the attempted car bombing in New York's Times Square in May 2010. The bombing attempt was linked to TTP. The TTP also claimed responsibility for a failed bomb plan in Barcelona in 2008, where 12 men with Pakistani origins were involved. In 2009, in the Chicago-case, two men were charged for plotting an attack on the Danish newspaper Jyllandsposten that published the Muhammad Cartoons: this case was linked to Punjab based Lashkare Taiba.

# Religious minorities

Martina Schrott

This article covers Non-Muslim religious minorities and aims at giving a brief overview on their population, infrastructure, religious background and relevant historical developments before examining the actual situation in detail – first for minorities in general and based on this specifically for the main minority communities. In the case of the Ahmadiyya community the historical development that led to their definition as “Non-Muslims” is dealt with in detail as it illustrates the challenges the state faces in protecting the rights of religious minorities. Although focussing on challenges for minorities, efforts and activities for tolerance and the rights of minorities on part of minority organisations, the civil society, Muslim clerics and the state are also considered.<sup>1</sup>

## Population

According to the official statistics 96.4 percent of the - as the CIA World Fact Book estimates - roughly 193 Million Pakistani citizens are Muslims. Of these, according to different estimations, 75<sup>2</sup> -90<sup>3</sup> percent adhere to the Sunni and 10<sup>4</sup> -25<sup>5</sup> percent to the Shia denomination of Islam.<sup>6</sup> The U.S. Department of State names Hindus, Christians, Parsis/Zoroastrians, Bahais, Sikhs, Buddhists, Ahmadi Muslims, Kalasha, Kihals and Jains as further religions constituting about 5 percent of the population.<sup>7</sup> Going further into detail UK Home Office cites official estimations of about 1.5 percent Christians - stating that they likely constitute approximately 3 percent of the population, 1.5 percent Hindus and 0.6 percent other.<sup>8</sup> In an interview in Islamabad the then Secretary of the former Ministry for National Interfaith Harmony (dissolved and integrated in the Ministry of Religious Affairs in June 2013) assumed that Non-Muslim minorities together account for about 10 million people – including about 4 million Christians, 3 million Hindus and 20,000 Sikhs. Certain concentrations in the settlement of the different religious minorities can be ascertained; this will be further examined.<sup>9</sup>

In total, the number of Non-Muslims in Pakistan has decreased considerably: When the state was founded they constituted 29 percent of the population, in 1970 10 percent and in the last census in 1998 only about 3 percent of the population were Non-Muslims. In interviews with minority organizations they critically emphasized that it is not clear if this can be traced back mainly to conversions, emigration or distinct population growth. Suspicions were raised that the proportion of minorities was adjusted downwards at the census, in order to concede less political representation to them.<sup>10</sup>

### **Legal, political and administrative provisions for religious minorities**

The founders of Pakistan, although constituting it as a homeland for Indian Muslims aimed at building a secular state and with the experience of having been a minority in Hindu dominated India - a country that safeguards the rights of its religious minorities.

Muhammed Ali Jinnah, Pakistan's founding father dedicated his famous address to the Constitutional Assembly also to the question of religious minorities:

*If you change your past and work together in a spirit that every one of you, no matter to what community he belongs, no matter what relations he had with you in the past, no matter what is his colour, caste, or creed, is first, second, and last a citizen of this State with equal rights, privileges, and obligations, there will be no end to the progress you will make. I cannot emphasize it too much. We should begin to work in that spirit, and in course of time all these angularities of the majority and minority communities (...) will vanish.*

*(...) Therefore, we must learn a lesson from this. You are free; you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other place or worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed – that has nothing to do with the business of the State. (...) We are starting with this fundamental principle: that*

*we are all citizens, and equal citizens, of one State. (...) Now I think we should keep that in front of us as our ideal, and you will find that in course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus, and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the State.*<sup>11</sup>

Already in the “Objectives Resolution” the Constitutional Assembly obliged the newly founded Islamic State of Pakistan to establish adequate legal safeguards for the protection of minorities, their non-discrimination, religious freedom and development.<sup>12</sup>

As a consequence, in its preamble the constitution provides for the freedom of religions and faith.<sup>13</sup> Article 20 specifies:

“Subject to law, public order and morality-  
(a) every citizen shall have the right to profess, practise and propagate his religion; and  
(b) every religious denomination and every sect thereof shall have the right to establish, maintain and manage its religious institutions.”<sup>14</sup>

Although Article 2 of the constitution establishes Islam as the state religion,<sup>15</sup> and Article 227 requires that all laws be consistent with the “injunctions of Islam as laid down in the Quran and Sunnah”, this Article also states that the personal laws of Non-Muslim citizens or their status as citizens shall not be affected.<sup>16</sup>

Safeguards for religious freedom in educational institutions, providing the right for minorities to instruct pupils of their community and forbidding to force persons to undergo religious instructions which are not their own or discriminate in access to public funded educational institutions are installed in Article 22.<sup>17</sup> Article 27 requires safeguards against discrimination in state services, except for positive discrimination of underrepresented groups,<sup>18</sup> and Article 26 forbids discrimination in access to public spaces.<sup>19</sup> Article 36 obliges the state to safeguard the rights and interests of minorities including, representation in the Federal and Provincial services.<sup>20</sup>

Thus, in the national as well as in the provincial assemblies certain seats are reserved for religious minority members. Ten seats in the 342-seat national assembly are reserved for minorities. As part of the 18th Amendment, four reserved seats for religious minorities have been established in the 104-seat senate, one from each province. Three reserved seats exist in the provincial assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, eight in Punjab, nine in Sindh and three in Baluchistan for religious minorities.<sup>21</sup>

Minorities are also represented in the local government system with a minimum of one seat per zila (~district), tehsil (subunits within a zila), or union council, as stipulated under the provincial Local Government Ordinances. In Baluchistan, religious minority representation is based on population, with a minimum of two seats per zila.<sup>22</sup>

By monitoring Pakistani media, it can be observed that a few minority members of the different political parties bring issues of minorities forward in these legislative bodies.<sup>23</sup>

In May 2012 the National Commission for Human Rights Bill was signed, which authorized the establishment of an independent human rights commission. According to the bill, out of the 10 members of the commission there has to be one belonging to a religious minority.<sup>24</sup> To date, the commission is in process of instalment.<sup>25</sup>

Especially for the affairs of religious minorities, the former National Ministry for Interfaith Harmony and also its predecessor, the Ministry for Minorities, had been established. In the course of the devolution of the 18th amendment of the constitution which aimed at a decentralization and strengthening of the provinces, the duties of the earlier Ministry for National Minorities were transferred to provincial level with the provinces setting up their own Departments of Interfaith Harmony.<sup>26</sup> The National Ministry of Interfaith Harmony was installed for the coordination between these departments.<sup>27</sup> However, shortly after the inauguration of the newly elected conservative PMLN government the National Ministry of Interfaith Harmony was merged into the Ministry for Religious Affairs, which is now responsible

for the matters of all religions in Pakistan.<sup>28</sup> Renamed to Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony it, nevertheless, does not mention in its own responsibilities religious minorities or interfaith harmony.<sup>29</sup> The merger has been criticized by some representatives of minorities and civil society.<sup>30</sup> However, it had already been responsible for minority issues before the establishment of the Ministry for Minorities in 2008.<sup>31</sup> On the provincial level, ministries or departments of interfaith or for minorities are installed, although in all provinces they are part of ministries of different affairs.<sup>32</sup>

Nevertheless, despite constitutional provisions and legal safeguards for minorities to profess and practice their religious beliefs freely, other provisions of the constitution and laws impose limits on this right.<sup>33</sup> The most important of these are the so-called “Blasphemy laws” and the “Anti-Ahmadiyya” provisions which both will be examined in detail.

The possibilities of these laws legally restrict freedom of expression and religion for minorities. Nevertheless, by means of the “Blasphemy laws” freedom of expression in religious matters is also restricted for the majority Muslim population as accusations of blasphemy also affect Muslims.<sup>34</sup>

In addition to legal constraints some practices by state actors limit the religious freedom of minorities. As such, although the constitution provides for the right to establish places of worship, in practice district-level authorities - pointing to the need to maintain public order - consistently refused permissions for the construction of such, especially for the Ahmadiyya communities.<sup>35</sup>

### **Blasphemy laws**

Pakistani criminal law provides for penalties for blasphemy. § 295 C, insulting the Prophet, provides for the death sentence, which has never been carried out for blasphemy. However, if the penalty is imposed a lengthy incarceration can follow.<sup>36</sup> A sentence of up to life imprisonment can be handed down for § 295 B, desecration of the Koran, and a sentence of up to 10 years for § 295 A, injuring religious feelings.<sup>37</sup>

In the cases under § 295 B and § 295 A bail is normally granted. In case of charges under § 295 C - insulting the Prophet - it is regularly not granted.<sup>38</sup> In the trial a conviction in such cases frequently follows, which is usually overturned by the appellate court,<sup>39</sup> or is altered so that the obligatory death penalty for § 295 C, insulting the Prophet, can be commuted into life sentence (which is limited to 25 years).<sup>40</sup> In total, more cases result in an acquittal or are withdrawn than result in a conviction. Comparatively few people are in prison due to the blasphemy laws. One reason is that these accusations mostly are not based on facts, but result from disputes,<sup>41</sup> as it is assumed most blasphemy complaints are issued in personal grievances or to intimidate vulnerable people.<sup>42</sup>

Under the blasphemy law it is very easy to accuse somebody.<sup>43</sup> They are vaguely formulated and, therefore, easy to abuse. While the law requires as a legal safeguard the investigation to be executed by a senior police officer before a charge is filed, this was not uniformly enforced. According to reports the government did not prevent abuses under the blasphemy law.<sup>44</sup> Nevertheless, comparatively few cases are reported each year. The accusations of blasphemy had been decreasing in the last years,<sup>45</sup> but are now disproportionately rising.<sup>46</sup>

In their annual report for 2012, Pakistan's well-recognized nongovernmental human rights organisation "Human Rights Commission of Pakistan" (HRCP) counted 27 accusations of blasphemy against Muslims, eight against Christians and one against an Ahmadi.<sup>47</sup> In 2013 HRCP cited sources of 41 persons been charged under the Pakistan Penal Code's chapter on "Offences Relating to Religion" - sections 295 to 298-C of the PPC Blasphemy and "Anti-Ahmadiyya" laws. These included 13 Christians, 17 Ahmadis and nine Muslims, while the religion of two accused was not known. Eight of these - three Muslim, four Christians and one Ahmadi - were charged under Section 295-C for which the threat of capital punishment exists. For one accused under Section 298-C - "Anti-Ahmadiyya law" - the charge was during the trial extended to blasphemy.<sup>48</sup> For this year, Reuters even spoke of 100 people having been accused of blasphemy, until July.<sup>49</sup>

While evaluating the number of people in prison for blasphemy, in sum USCIRF counted at least 17 Pakistanis on death row for blasphemy and 19 serving life sentences in 2013.<sup>50</sup>

Various minority and human rights organizations collect information on and investigate the blasphemy charges, additionally strong networking between the organizations makes it possible that the figures and names gathered are reliable.<sup>51</sup> However, numbers can differ as there are also other “Offences Relating to Religion”, which sometimes might be registered as blasphemy.<sup>52</sup>

For the accused the consequences can be severe. NCJP often prefers that the accused remain in custody during trial, since the danger of lynch law by incited mobs exists.<sup>53</sup> Additionally - as even a senator assumed during a meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on National Harmony - it can take those accused of blasphemy eight to 10 years to prove their innocence in courts. Even in case of acquittal upon release the security implications are considerable, so that relocation is often the only real option.<sup>54</sup>

There are no systematic state measures for protection and no protection legislation or policies for such cases. In some cases compensation for false accusations was paid while in most not. The Bar Association of lawyers has a Solicitors Committee, which offers legal aid, but this tradition is becoming weaker.<sup>55</sup>

However, aid organizations for people accused of blasphemy do exist.<sup>56</sup> An example is the Christian legal aid organization National Commission on Justice and Peace (NCJP) that offers assistance in regional offices and also organizes and assists with the re-settlement. With unknown cases re-settlement within Pakistan is possible, with prominent cases it is not. For these cases contacts with foreign countries have been established to organize relocations. This is a dichotomy in the work with the media – on the one hand, the media attention is good for the case during the trial, on the other side, this might also catch the attention of fanatics. The legal aid of NCJP, as such, is not bound to the Christian faith – the assistance from

the NCJP is open for all, but most clients of the NCJP are Christians. Muslim victims being represented by Christian groups can raise the suspicion of conversion. Thus if a Muslim victim approaches the NCJP, it would rather broker the assistance of a Muslim lawyer.<sup>57</sup>

According to various media sources, there are threats from non-state actors. For example, a Christian lawyer - Pervez Aslam Chaudhry – known for defending and mostly winning blasphemy cases – was repeatedly threatened and seriously attacked, until he finally fled Pakistan in 2011.<sup>58</sup>

Accusations of blasphemy also affect Muslims, as already mentioned. However, compared to their share of population religious minorities are disproportionately represented in such incidents of accusations.<sup>59</sup> A societal problem of blasphemy accusations is that mobs of people in some instances take the law into their own hands and attack the accused, the possibility of such accusations is, therefore, especially intimidating for religious minority groups.<sup>60</sup> In case of the accused being a member of a minority, incidents occurred where violence affected the whole community in the area.<sup>61</sup> This, although rarely, mainly affected Christians and it is assumed that such an accusation is occasionally brought forward against Christians to incite a mob in order to try to expel the community and take over the properties and land.<sup>62</sup>

### **Public discourse on blasphemy laws**

In 2011, two high ranking politicians - the influential governor of Punjab, Salman Taseer, and the Minister for Religious Minorities, Shahbaz Bhatti - were killed because they criticized the blasphemy law in support of a Christian woman who had been sentenced to death. Since then no serious efforts for a reform of the blasphemy legislation have been made.<sup>63</sup> It appears politically impossible to scrap the blasphemy laws or lessen its allowance of capital punishment.<sup>64</sup>

However, following the allegations against a minor Christian girl that proved wrong and mob violence against a Christian community in course of a blasphemy accusation, a discourse about the blasphemy law and possible

amendments such as safeguards against wrong accusation proceeded.

In September 2013, the Council of Islamic Ideology (CII), a constitutional body responsible for giving advice to parliament on whether a certain law is repugnant to Islam and ensuring compliance of state laws with the principles of Islam,<sup>65</sup> discussed measures to prevent abuse of the blasphemy law. Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi – an influential cleric on the council who often publicly speaks up for minorities – proposed that the capital punishment should also be installed for those making a false accusation, explaining that in wrong accusations the accuser himself uses the blasphemous words.<sup>66</sup> The amendment would ensure that nobody uses religion to settle personal scores.<sup>67</sup> Publicly announced by Ashrafi and widely published by media as opinion of the CII, it, however, was not taken into the official recommendations of the Council.<sup>68</sup> The members opposing amendments to the blasphemy law had a clear majority. Arguing that the Criminal Code includes in general punishment for lodging a false case, people should not be discouraged. Some members even demanded the resignation of Ashrafi. However, some parliamentarians also demanded a review of the law.<sup>69</sup>

Meanwhile, in the streets, even the solely public debate about potential amendments to the blasphemy laws caused protest demonstrations of some religious groups.<sup>70</sup>

### **Socio-economic sphere**

In daily life there is no active conflict between majority and minorities, however, minorities encounter discrimination and inequality in the economic and social area,<sup>71</sup> in education, health and government.<sup>72</sup> This creates a basis for disharmony. The discrimination does not, however, reach the level of actual dissociation. The representative of the NCJP explains that there is discrimination in the labour market<sup>73</sup> and according to the US Department of State, most religious minority groups, with the exception of Shia, reported discrimination in hiring.<sup>74</sup> However, it is possible to work. In general, employment depends more on family affiliation and personal connections than on religious affiliation.<sup>75</sup>

The then-Secretary of the former Ministry for National Interfaith Harmony stated in an interview that salaries are the same for the same work. Trade and business activities are open for all – everybody is allowed to run a business. Nevertheless, he admits, there are people who discriminate. He traced this back to the out-dated caste-based way of thinking and some fundamentalist.<sup>76</sup> At the work place Christians and Non-Muslims are often treated badly, according to a minority organisation, as they are often employed in minor works.<sup>77</sup>

On behalf of the state employment sector, the government introduced a five-percent minimum quota for members of religious minorities in 2009. The quota is not completely fulfilled, and is unevenly applied across the country.<sup>78</sup> Officially there is also an open admission in the employment in state and political system. In the army several officers are Christians or Sikhs, the then-Secretary of the former Ministry for National Interfaith Harmony stated.<sup>79</sup> Representatives of minorities also refer positively to the quota, however, Non-Muslim people find it more difficult to be promoted to higher positions within the state services.<sup>80</sup>

Access to schools is not discriminatory. Poverty is, however, a problem – many minorities cannot afford it.<sup>81</sup> Additionally, there are disadvantages in the education sector. The schoolbooks contain derogatory statements.<sup>82</sup> In the past, intolerance and the idea that Muslims are superior were promoted in the books. Private and state initiatives were launched against this, but such contents still exist. The majority of schools is reluctant and is still influenced by religious conservatives, a Pakistani social scientist explained in an interview.<sup>83</sup>

Reward-incentives for religious conduct are cited as a further discriminating point. Thus in Punjab, for example, extra points are given in the admission to colleges if the candidate knows the Qur'an by heart.<sup>84</sup>

On the other hand, an interview partner of the former Ministry for National Harmony stated, that in many cases minorities have better access to health and education, as they have their own infrastructure. For example, access

for Muslim women to infrastructure of such kind in many areas is often worse than for Christian women.<sup>85</sup>

### **Societal violence**

In daily life, communication between the different faiths is relatively unproblematic, interview partners confirmed. Inter-marriages between the different religious groups are common and<sup>86</sup> the different religions get along with each other, and mainly live peacefully.<sup>87</sup> This societal peace is, however, unstable. If an “incident”, like a blasphemy accusation, occurs and somebody incites the people, riots can arise abruptly.<sup>88</sup> Since the adding of § 295 C against blasphemy into the Penal Code in 1986 three incidents of rioting have arisen against Christian settlements in the aftermaths of blasphemy accusations.<sup>89</sup> Against Ahmadi time and again certain extremist groups direct demonstrations with hate campaigns. HRCP states that such incidents of violence and tensions are increasing.<sup>90</sup> Additionally, mistrust is growing between the religions and faiths, due to the terrorist attacks.<sup>91</sup>

Alongside the mentioned rare cases of large riots, weaker, but more common acts of violence against minorities’ facilities and places of worship by societal actors occur. The NCJP has collected nine such incidents in 2012 against Non-Muslim minorities’ infrastructure, in which graves were desecrated, and churches, temples and Ahmadiyya mosques vandalized.<sup>92</sup> HRCP speaks of more such acts in 2012 reporting of “many churches”, including one in Faisalabad, one in Mardan and six in Sindh as well as three Hindu temples and one Ahmadi worship place damaged or vandalised.<sup>93</sup>

If threats occur, the police often does not follow up and in case of such incidents a poor performance on part of the police is visible – they more often rather stand on the side-lines than intervene.<sup>94</sup> For the NCJP the situation appears as if these acts of violence of an enraged crowd of people can break out, since usually in such cases the offenders are not penalized and consequently the deterrent effect is missing.<sup>95</sup> The system of law is the same for all, says Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, HRCP, but there are serious problems, e.g. investigations of the police are often not

properly.<sup>96</sup>

Additionally, there were reports of forced conversions of religious minorities to Islam at the hands of societal actors as well as of groups seizing minority places of worship by forcing the religious communities to leave, by the use of threats and other means.<sup>97</sup>

Some newspapers and media, particularly the vernacular press, frequently published articles containing derogatory references to religious minorities, especially Ahmadis and Hindus. Some fundamentalist Sunni groups even published literature calling for violence against Ahmadis, Shias, other Sunnis, and Hindus.<sup>98</sup> However, major Pakistani media take up issues of religious minorities and criticize problems independently.<sup>99</sup> For example, in the case of a mob attack against a Christian community interview partners of minority apprehended the reporting of the Pakistani media as positive, accurate, highly critical of the violence and giving members of the Christian community their say.<sup>100</sup>

While only a small number of persons are involved in violent attacks, the mentioned laws, teachings of religious intolerance, limited police protection of minorities and falling short of prosecuting and arresting the perpetrators create a permissive environment for such attacks that leads to accelerating vigilantism and mob violence.<sup>101</sup>

However, police protection is provided for special occasions, such as worship assemblies and the processions of minorities like the Shiite Muharram or the Christian Palm Sunday Procession,<sup>102</sup> and reports show that police guards are installed at some minority worship places.<sup>103</sup>

There are regional differences in the situation of religious minorities. Due to better economic and educational situation, the Punjab province is more “open-minded”, yet on the other hand, riots<sup>104</sup> and most violence against the Christian community occurred there. However, it is also home to the largest Christian community.<sup>105</sup> Sindh is relatively liberal – Hindus and Muslims have lived together here for centuries and<sup>106</sup> without major boundaries

between the groups.<sup>107</sup> In Islamabad problems are also comparatively few.<sup>108</sup> In general in the cities discrimination is less than in rural areas.<sup>109</sup> The forms of violence the religious minorities experience differ also in some regards, depending on the community.

### **Extremist violence**

Extremist groups constitute the gravest threat in the area of Freedom of belief in Pakistan. Minorities are a target of extremists. The Taliban follow an extremist and repressive interpretation of Islam - therefore human rights organisation HRCP rates the situation for Non-Muslims as critical. It is a serious human rights problem, HRCP states, that people are killed by extremists due to their belief, like it is with the attacks on the Hazara people.<sup>110</sup> The UNHCR designates in an interview the situation of the religious minorities as one of the severest human rights problems in Pakistan, in particular the situation of the Hazara people, amongst other things because of their religious affiliation to the Shiite faith.<sup>111</sup> Several attacks targeted Sufi, Hindu, Ahmadiyya Muslim, Shia, and Christian gatherings and religious sites on the basis of their religious beliefs, resulting in numerous deaths, especially in 2013.<sup>112</sup> Of these religious targets the main target of terrorist attacks are Shiites, particularly Hazara.<sup>113</sup> Targeting religious minorities is the easiest way for terrorists to garner attention (also international) and to incite unrest.<sup>114</sup>

It is not possible to clearly divide into more or less spontaneous violence of common citizens and violence of extremist and terrorists. For example, NCPJ assumes that extremists incited the mob violence against Christians.<sup>115</sup>

One form of attacks are target killings of members of religious minorities, for example, in 2012 this amounted to 20 incidents against Ahmadis<sup>116</sup> and eleven against Christians.<sup>117</sup> In general target killings strike mainly on locally-known members of the community, who have influential positions in their community or elevated professions, such as doctors and lawyers.<sup>118</sup> Few of these killings led to arrest or convictions of the perpetrators.<sup>119</sup>

As mentioned before, authorities fall short of intervening effectively against violence targeting minority communities and prosecution of the perpetrators of violence - societal as well as terroristic, is not consistently exerted. Pakistani Chief Justice Tassaduq Hussain Jiliani has on several occasions criticized the poor security situation for religious minorities and instructed the government to take remedial steps.<sup>120</sup>

Additionally, in some areas of Pakistan violent extremists prevail and demand of the inhabitants to follow their extremist interpretation of Islam, threatening brutal consequences if they don't.<sup>121</sup>

### **The rising of intolerance and extremism**

Non-Muslim interview partners stated that they see Islam as a religion of peace, like the Muslims do. Yet, much is falsely understood and taught. Many religious leaders are said to have only little in-depth knowledge, but the opening of a madrassah is often a business. Some local leaders do not aim at educating "true" Muslims, but followers of their own. They incite a crowd, which is not religiously led. "Checks and balances", a supervision of the mosques, is necessary, but for that the political will is lacking.<sup>122</sup>

An extensive "infrastructure of intolerance, hatred, and violence exists", the interview partner of NCJP asserts: organizations, which spread hatred, institutions which protect them and interest groups who expect economic advantage from the discrimination of minorities and support hate campaigns - and act as centres of intolerance. Mobs are incited through speeches in certain mosques.<sup>213</sup>

In some rural areas madrassahs – schools led by Islamic clerics – are the only form of education available to poor students. Madrassahs vary greatly in their curriculum and teaching. Although they are legally prohibited from teaching or encouraging sectarian or religious hatred and violence, in practice, clerics who preach intolerance are common. A small yet influential number of madrassahs have taught violent extremist doctrines, even in support of terrorism.<sup>124</sup>

Religious intolerance has increased, stemming from frustration, not religiosity, but the majority, endorses tolerance and is against extremists, a social scientist remarked in an interview. Intolerant groups do not find support in the majority and people elect secular parties. Until the 1970s, religious pluralism determined policies, even though Pakistan was founded as an Islamic state. The leadership of the state, the structure, was open-minded and religious minorities were represented. The story of what a “correct” Muslim is, has, however, changed since the time of the founder of Pakistan, Mohammed Ali Jinnah. The changes happened gradually and increased drastically in the late 70s into the 1980s. Particularly during the reign of General Zia-ul-Haq, Islamisation was enforced in schools and the military. Beginning with 9/11, Musharraf started to “de-Islamize”, indeed without major success; however, the process was further accelerated by the PPP. Until a few years ago, one could hardly speak about inter-religious tolerance. This has changed. Nowadays it is possible to discuss such topics that were previously a taboo.<sup>125</sup> Also the NCJP remarks that the country has experienced positive changes in this regard.<sup>126</sup>

### **Efforts and initiatives against intolerance, violence and discrimination**

During interviews the importance of education for the promotion of tolerance and the avoidance of violence was stressed by all interviewed.<sup>127</sup> The campaign for education is a focus of the NCJP. It developed changes for schoolbooks and works for their implementation together with the education and minorities departments of the provincial governments.<sup>128</sup> For the former Ministry of Interfaith Harmony the education sector was also a focal point. In order to eliminate discrimination and promote tolerance, the former government introduced alterations for teacher training, curricula<sup>129</sup> and schoolbooks. Yet, while in many schools the curricula are already changing successively, derogatory or even intolerant points of view are still taught in many schools.<sup>130</sup>

The Madrassah Registration Ordinance was introduced to diminish the spread of extremism by madrassahs. All madrassahs have to register with one of the five independent boards (wafaqs) or directly with the government

and cease accepting foreign financing. All wafaqs have to mandate the elimination of teachings promoting religious or sectarian intolerance and of terrorist or extremist recruitment at madrassahs. Inspectors from the education boards mandate affiliated madrassahs with full-time students to supplement religious studies with secular subjects. However, there are many unregistered madrassahs operating and as mentioned many preach intolerance and some even violence.<sup>131</sup>

In the former legislative period inter-religious dialogue was promoted by the government. “The Islamabad Interfaith Declaration of the President” was adopted at the National Conference on Inter-religious Solidarity with religious leaders, scholars and parliamentarians organized by former Ministry for National Harmony in 2013. The National Council of Interfaith Harmony was established as a forum between the religious communities<sup>132</sup> and Minister Bhatti established District Interfaith Harmony Committees in more than hundred districts.<sup>133</sup> The new PML-N government has in this regard attracted attention, yet, with the merger of the National Ministry for Interfaith Harmony into the Ministry of Religious Affairs and a performance in protecting minorities, which has been criticized by media after the mob violence in Lahore.<sup>134</sup>

However, Minority Members of Parliament of the ruling PML-N take up minority issues and utter critic<sup>135</sup> and the annual federal “Minorities’ Day” on August 11th that was introduced by the former government has been kept by the new government.<sup>136</sup>

There are various organizations in Pakistan that work for tolerance and cooperation between the religions.<sup>137</sup> The Pakistani Jinnah Institute, a Pakistani policy analysis organization, is also very active in advocating religious minority issues.<sup>138</sup> The All Pakistan Minorities Alliance represents smaller religious groups and marginalized communities and is headed by the former Christian advisor to the Prime Minister on Minorities, Paul Bhatti.<sup>139</sup>

The Pakistan Interfaith League runs a Peace Museum with programs and

weekly workshops where the beliefs of other religions are explained and understanding for other religions is promoted. It holds training sessions for the traffic police in order to sensitise them and instructs members of minorities to go together to the police “9-member units” in order to give them empowerment in front of the authorities, as PIL states that the police has a negative “mind-set” in relation to the minorities and often minorities are not taken seriously, while many are fearful of going to the police. Some programs of the PIL aim to inform (minority) citizens about their rights.<sup>140</sup> NCJP volunteers hold seminars on human and minorities rights across the country throughout the year.<sup>141</sup>

The Pakistan Interfaith League highlights the great value of cooperating with other religious leaders, in particular Muslim leaders. They cooperate with the “All Pakistan Ulema Council”, one of the most important Muslim associations. They campaigned together intensively and publicly for the release of Rimsha Mashi, a girl who was accused of blasphemy in 2012, against the misuse of the blasphemy law<sup>142</sup> and after the mob attack against Christians in March 2013.<sup>143</sup> If an important Muslim religious leader speaks up for inter-religious harmony, it will be heard by the students and the madrassas of his association. The Council is the umbrella organisation of 20,000 Islam-scholars and clerics, as well as more than 5000 madrassas.<sup>144</sup>

The Pakistan Ulema Council worked especially in the last month intensively in the promotion of interfaith dialogue and held meetings with different minority leaders and the Prime Minister as well as a national conference with minorities, administration and Muslim clerics to address the issues of minorities.<sup>145</sup>

## **Ahmadiyya**

### **Population and belief**

The Ahmadiyya community can be roughly divided into two groups. The main group, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat, has an estimated 600.000 adherents in Pakistan. Their own estimates put the number at about 2 – 5 millions. The huge gap is attributed to the fact that most Ahmadis do not

register as such, as this means to be registered as Non-Muslims, while they see themselves as Muslims.<sup>146</sup> The centre of the community is in Rabwah (officially renamed in Chenab Nagar) with more than 95 per cent of its population being Ahmadis.<sup>147</sup>

The by far smaller Lahore branch - "Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at-i-Islam Lahore" - is estimated to count about 30,000 adherents worldwide, of those 5,000 till 10,000 are living in Pakistan. Apart from Rabwah, the population areas of both groups correspond, and can be found mainly in Lahore, Karachi, Rawalpindi, Pechawar and other towns in the Provinces Punjab and Sindh. Further examples for cities, respectively areas with bigger populations are Khewra, Sargodha, Bhalwal, Shahpur and Gujranwala.<sup>148</sup>

The beliefs of the Ahmadiyya sect, which defines itself as Muslim, differ in some core elements from the broad Muslim consent. Additionally, within the community itself important variations between the two main groups of the Ahmadiyya can be found. Both groups have the following in common:

- The central role of their founder Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, which is seen in both groups as the spiritual second coming of Jesus, the promised Messiah, as well as the Islamic Mahdi - the redeemer;
- Islam as foundation - the religious contents are completely cohering to the Quran, the Hadith, the five pillars and six articles of faith of Islam, while
- prophets or core figures of other religions, like Buddha, Zarathustra or Krishna are integrated in their belief. Highlighted is the rejection of violence by emphasising a jihad with words
- and related to this a high emphasis on education - for women the same as for men.

The main differences between the two groups of Ahmadiyya can be seen in the belief of the main group, Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat of their founder being an Islamic prophet and in the establishment of a khalifat, while the smaller Lahore branch sees the founder only as a reformer and is led by a council.

The belief in their founder as a prophet of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat is the bone of contention for strong hostilities against Ahmadis by orthodox and fundamentalist Muslims, for whom this belief is blasphemous. They see it as insult of the Islamic core doctrine of Mohammed as “Khatam-un-Nabiyyin”, seal of prophets. Ahmadiyya are, therefore, seen as outside the circle of the Muslim ummah and consequently as Non-Muslims. The agitation and pressure of these groups led to the forcibly designation of both Ahmadiyya groups as a Non-Muslim minority in the constitution of Pakistan in 1974 and thereupon to legal restrictions on their practices of belief, as well as discriminations.<sup>149</sup>

### **Definition as Non-Muslims**

The development of the definition of the Ahmadis as Non-Muslims is a very specific example of the struggle of the Pakistani state between protection of religious freedom and the religious right wing and is, therefore, examined in more detail.

The question of the relationship between Islam and the state, in particular how the Pakistani state should implement its Islamic identity and the clash between different concepts of Islam is paramount in Pakistan. Pakistan's existence is based on the two-nation theory, which purported that Muslims of India should be organised in a separate state to safeguard their interests as they feared a Hindu dominance after independence.<sup>150</sup> Ahmadis actively supported this objective. Despite the concept of Pakistan as a homeland for Muslims, the political leaders who founded the state, first of all the father of the nation Muhamamd Ali Jinnah, adopted a conception of a secular, multi-religious Pakistan.<sup>151</sup>

Ahmadis played an important role in the first years of the nation building of the new state. The first finance minister and the first foreign minister of Pakistan have been Ahmadis, but Ahmadis also held other important positions in the administration of the new state. The first and until now only Nobel Prize winner of Pakistan (and first Muslim Nobel Prize winner in general) was also an Ahmadi.<sup>152</sup> Resulting from the high estimation of education in the religious ethics of Ahmadiyya, they became a significant

and visible group in early Pakistani politics.<sup>153</sup> However, precisely this prominent presence as well as the wealth of their elites perpetrated the view that they would profit disproportional from the resources of the country.<sup>154</sup> Their influence worried leaders of other religious groups.<sup>155</sup>

The Majlis-i-Ahrar-i-Islam, a militant Muslim organization, first propagated demands to declare Ahmadis as Non-Muslim publicly in 1949 and held congregations and campaigns thereto. However, the state remained committed to its principle of protecting the fundamental rights of all religious minorities and deemed the anti-Ahmadi campaign unlawful.<sup>156</sup> However, in 1953 the activity of the group led to the first violent outbreak of sectarianism in Pakistani history:<sup>157</sup> Violent campaigns by the Ahrar, this time with the support of Islamist parties, broke out against the Ahmadis in the province of Punjab.<sup>158</sup> The violence was not directed only against the Ahmadis, but against the state itself. The period was characterized by public debates on the constitution of Pakistan and for Islamist parties the role of Islam in the state was not strongly enough embedded in the constitution and the state. At the same time the state was weakened by the assassination of the prime minister and an economic crisis.<sup>159</sup> The prevailing poverty was also blamed on the Ahmadis by the Ahrar.<sup>160</sup>

Instead of reaching their political aim, the violence led to the imposition of Pakistan's first Martial Law in parts of the country in March 1953. The military used the government's alleged inability to deal with the religious violence as pretext for dismissing the government in April 1953 and, furthermore, the Constituent Assembly. The Ahmadiyya question, therefore, led to the first military coup in Pakistani history and paved the way for the Army in Pakistani politics. However, religious freedom was confirmed, an Inquiry Commission criticised the inability of the government to halt the violence and adjudicated the full right of religious freedom to the Ahmadis.<sup>161</sup>

The following authoritarian military regimes, pursued a secular state and religious freedom, but at the same time suppressed the opposition, including the religious right wing. As a consequence the democratization movement had Islamic backing, and within this democratic process the

religious right wing succeeded with their demands directed against Ahmadis. In 1974, renewed violence against Ahmadis broadly broke out. The religious right wing succeeded in launching a broad, nation-wide movement with campaigns that called for social boycotting of Ahmadis and demanded that the state declare Ahmadis Non-Muslim. This time the religious right wing had been consolidating itself before, and had managed to disseminate their “truth” about the Ahmadis widely via religious media. As a consequence the Anti-Ahmadi movement was entrenched in a broader extent and covered by a democratic rhetoric that successfully denounced the state’s reaction to the violence of 1954 as an act of repression. The pressure on the new, first democratically elected president Pakistan’s, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto was high. Bhutto, although not supporting the demand, placed the issue before the National Assembly, where both sides were heard. Islamist parties only had a narrow base in the Assembly and only a small part of the members supported the religious motivation, but the pressure was enormous. Additionally, the Ahmadis brought disfavour upon themselves by confirming in the parliamentary hearing that in their view followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad are the only true Muslims. Finally, in September 1974 a constitutional amendment declaring Ahmadis as Non-Muslim minority passed through the National Assembly.<sup>162</sup>

Islamic military ruler General Zia-ul Haq who came to power in a 1977 coup expanded this exclusion to restrictions on Ahmadis that prohibited them from identifying themselves as Muslims and introducing criminal penalties for violating this law.<sup>163</sup>

### **“Anti-Ahmadiyya laws”**

Although since the time of Zia-ul Haq legal improvements and positive steps have been taken,<sup>164</sup> § 298 B and C of the penal code still prohibit Ahmadis from calling themselves Muslims, their religious beliefs as Islam, preaching or propagating their religious beliefs or to “pose” as Muslims.<sup>165</sup> As a consequence, it is also forbidden to call their mosques as such, their call to prayer “Azhan” as in Islam, as well as to recite from the Quran or conduct Islamic practices in public.<sup>166</sup> These three legal mechanisms that derived from the mentioned agitations of Islamist activism – the Constitutional

(Second Amendment) Act of 1974 and § 298 B and C of the penal code - are frequently labelled summarizing as “Anti-Ahmadiyya-Law”.<sup>167</sup>

The punishment for violation of these provisions is imprisonment for up to three years and a fine.<sup>168</sup> However, a charge of violations of the Anti-Ahmadiyya laws might be extended to a charge of blasphemy, carrying a risk of a death sentence. As mentioned already, the death penalty has not been executed for blasphemy yet, however, a lengthy incarceration can follow.<sup>169</sup> The prospect of a due process and a fair trial is marginal for Ahmadis in the first instance. Frequently, high pressure is exerted on judges in the lower instances by extremist religious groups.<sup>170</sup> A conviction in such cases in the first trial is frequent, however it is usually overturned by the appellate court. In total, more cases result in acquittal or are withdrawn than result in conviction. Bail has been frequently granted in cases under the “Anti-Ahmadiyya law” §298. Comparatively few are in prison, however, for those affected it has far-fetching consequences.<sup>171</sup> It is likely that it takes years in the backlogged court system until the cases are tried and eventually appealed.<sup>172</sup>

The numbers reported by organizations illustrate the extent.

In 2012, according to Ahmadiyya leaders, 56 Ahmadis were charged in 20 different kinds of cases, most of these in relation to the “Anti-Ahmadiyya laws.” 26 Ahmadis were arrested during 2012, according to Ahmadiyya leaders, for their faith, before being released on bail. At the end of 2012 no Ahmadi was in prison.<sup>173</sup>

According to a USCIRF report for 2012 ten Ahmadis were reported as being charged under Article 298, many of the arrested were released on bail.<sup>174</sup> HRCP reported five cases on religious grounds against Ahmadis, while one case was filed on blasphemy charge; four were based on the Anti-Ahmadiyya laws, including one case against a whole family.<sup>175</sup>

In 2013 Ahmadiyya leaders reported charges against 26 Ahmadis in seven separate cases between January and September. Again, most

were charged with violations of the “anti-Ahmadi laws”, ten Ahmadis with blasphemy, two others under a terrorism clause. Eighteen Ahmadis were arrested in matters relating to their faith during the 2012 before being released on bail, although one Ahmadi remained in custody awaiting trial at year’s end.<sup>176</sup> HRCP recorded nine cases against 30 Ahmadis with offences relating to religion, 23 leading to arrests.<sup>177</sup> In many cases, the police was pressured to file a charge by local religious leaders.<sup>178</sup>

Furthermore, the legislation is used by non-state actors to threaten and harass Ahmadis.<sup>179</sup> Militant groups accuse them of illegally “posing as Muslims,”<sup>180</sup> and societal elements use the “Anti Ahmadiyya laws” to justify abuse and discrimination. As with the blasphemy law no measures are taken by the government to prevent abuses under “Anti Ahmadiyya laws.”<sup>181</sup>

#### **Further implications on worship**

As a further consequence the “Anti-Ahmadiyya law” affects the mosques of Ahmadis. The law includes that Ahmadis are not allowed to recite the kalima, the Islamic testimony of faith. This results in some instances of authorities forcibly removing the kalima from Ahmadiyya mosques, after complaints by local Islamic leaders,<sup>182</sup> or instructed Ahmadis to remove the scripture from mosques and minarets themselves. In 2012, for example, USCIRF reported nine such incidents. As passages from the Qu’ran are often inscribed on Ahmadi graves, reports tell of Islamic inscriptions being removed from Ahmadi gravestones by local police.<sup>183</sup>

In some cases the damage goes further as police even removed the minarets after complaints by clerics. Additionally to demanding those kinds of legally sanctioned destructions of police, there are cases where societal actors damaged mosques or graves of Ahmadis themselves,<sup>184</sup> particularly militant groups vandalized graves in Punjab.<sup>185</sup>

In sum, the Ahmadiyya community reports, between 1984, the year of the promulgation of the “Anti-Ahmadiyya laws”, and 2013 30 Ahmadi mosques were sealed and the construction of 46 mosques barred by authorities, while in sum 28 Ahmadi mosques were demolished or damaged and societal

actors set 13 mosques on fire and forcibly occupied 16.<sup>186</sup>

As further consequences of the vaguely formulations of the law, members of the Ahmadi community were deterred from slaughtering animals on Eidul Azha (fast-breaking after Ramadan) by police or were not allowed to assemble for Eid prayers, as these are Islamic injunction they are not to behave like Muslims.<sup>187</sup> In Lahore and Rawalpindi extremist groups in some instances also hinder them in using their mosques.<sup>188</sup>

### **Further consequences in the political and legal area**

Related to these laws several administrative obstacles are in force for Ahmadis who will not deny their self-definition as Muslim.<sup>189</sup>

In the application form for the national identity card, issued by National Database & Registration Authority, the religious affiliation has to be stated. All those who want to state "Muslim" in the form have to sign an affirmation, swearing they believe the Prophet Muhammad is the final prophet and concretely denouncing the founder of the Ahmadiyya religion as a false prophet. The ID card and, therefore, the same procedure are necessary for obtaining a passport. While on the ID itself the religious affiliation is not indicated, it is designated on the passport.<sup>190</sup> However, in the last years there have been cases of individuals who despite refusing to sign the mentioned clause received a passport.<sup>191</sup>

This regulation forms a barrier for Ahmadis in obtaining legal documents but also in voting for which an identity card is required. As a consequence pressure rests on members of the community to deny their basic tenets or accept being designated as Non-Muslim, which is also against their belief. Many Ahmadis are thus effectively excluded from taking part in elections.<sup>192</sup>

Additionally in the area of voting, Ahmadis are the only community on a separate voters' list, while all other persons, minority or not, are registered in a joint list.<sup>193</sup> As a form of protest against this exclusion into a separate list, the Ahmadi community announced to disassociate themselves from the general election of 2013.<sup>194</sup>

Since Ahmadis refuse to be specified as Non-Muslims, they cannot take advantage of the affirmative regulations for religious minorities (in which Non-Muslim religions are defined) and as a consequence they have no political representation as a community.<sup>195</sup> They also did not work together with the former Ministry for Interfaith National Harmony.<sup>196</sup>

Some other administrative restrictions for Ahmadis are in place, additionally to those deriving directly from the “Anti-Ahmadiyya laws”. While the publishing of religious material of the different other faiths in general is not restricted, the public sale of Ahmadiyya religious literature is banned. Thus, the umbrella Ahmadiyya organization publishes religious literature only for circulation within the communities. At the same time, while in general missionary activity is legally permitted also for Non-Muslim as long as there is no preaching against Islam, it is forbidden for Ahmadis.<sup>197</sup> In practice, the vague formulation can also limit other contents of expressing their belief like open discourse about religion with non-Ahmadis.<sup>198</sup>

Additionally to legally sanctioned official restriction, reportedly there are obstacles in administrative area, which affect the practice of their faith. Although the constitution provides for the right to establish places of worship and there is no official restriction on the construction of Ahmadiyya places of worship, in practice district-level authorities granted no permission for or tried to block the construction or renovation of their worship places. District governments also often denied Ahmadis permission to hold public events.<sup>199</sup>

Summarizing the situation, an UNHCR officer evaluated that Ahmadis are subject to the tightest restrictions of all the religious minorities in Pakistan and officially sanctioned discrimination.<sup>200</sup> In the eyes of the NCJP, the HRCP and the German Embassy the situation of the Ahmadis is more difficult and they experience stronger disadvantages than other minority groups.<sup>201</sup>

In general, it is possible for Ahmadis to practise their faith on a restricted basis within Pakistani law either in private or in community with other Ahmadis. Since legal punishments are applicable for some of Ahmadis religious practices, which could be interpreted as “posing as Muslim”,

they find themselves officially and legally restricted to fully exercise of their religion.<sup>202</sup>

### **Socio-economic sphere**

Pakistan's Ahmadi community tends to be comparatively well educated and relatively prosperous<sup>203</sup> and has higher financial means available, for example, for legal protection.<sup>204</sup> The overwhelming majority of the Ahmadis peacefully lives together with their Muslim neighbours.<sup>205</sup> However, even within the Pakistani middle and educated class which is *grosso modo* more "open minded" it is apparent that only little acceptance of their self-designation as Muslims exists.<sup>206</sup> Also, social discrimination in the labour market is particularly acute for Ahmadi Muslims.<sup>207</sup> In 2012 and 2013 social discrimination against Ahmadis increased.<sup>208</sup> Harassments of the Ahmadi community are reported in form of cases of expulsions of Ahmadi students from schools and universities as well as false-reporting Ahmadi communities en masse to local police for crimes.<sup>209</sup>

### **Societal and extremist violence**

The violence against Ahmadis takes specific forms, most of it has already been dealt with in previous chapters, since private actors use the mentioned legislation to harass, threaten or justify violence against Ahmadis.<sup>210</sup> If Ahmadis call themselves Muslim, for example, it can result not only in charges but also in violent attacks.<sup>211</sup>

Reports tell of incidents of oppression by private actors.<sup>212</sup> As such, Ahmadis and their infrastructure are targeted by religiously motivated violence, much of it organized by violent extremists.<sup>213</sup> Extremist religious groups, foremost Khatm-e-Nabuwat – a Sunni Deobandi group - engage in actions reaching from regular harassments right up to attacks on physical integrity. Actions of these groups usually are condoned by authorities, according to reports.<sup>214</sup>

Militant groups freely engage in hate speech that aims at inciting violence against Ahmadis.<sup>215</sup> As such, heavy hate campaigns including public rallies are organized and even saw an upsurge in 2013. Muslim

clerics also assembled in Rabwah, the centre of Ahmadi population, to hold hate speech against the local Ahmadi community.<sup>216</sup> A number of Sunni groups publish literature with derogatory material on Ahmadis, some calling for violence against Ahmadis.<sup>217</sup> In 2011, for example, militant groups even issued a pamphlet that urged Muslims to kill Ahmadis, providing a list of around 50 locally prominent Ahmadis with their addresses and businesses. No action was taken against the publishers. One of the listed persons was killed indeed.<sup>218</sup>

However, on occasions the government of Pakistan banned leaders of the notorious Anti-Ahmadi groups Tehreek-e-Khatme Nabuwwat and Majlis-e-Ahrar-e-Islam from delivering speeches.<sup>219</sup>

Ahmadis were victims of targeted killings. In such targeted attacks, 20 Ahmadis have been killed in 2012, 10 of these in Karachi, two in Sindh, three in Baluchistan, four in Punjab and one in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Eleven were injured.<sup>220</sup> This was a significant upsurge;<sup>221</sup> in 2011 at least six Ahmadis had been killed.<sup>222</sup> In 2013 seven Ahmadis - six in Karachi and one in Lahore - were murdered in targeted attacks, according to data collected by HRCP.<sup>223</sup>

The poor legal standing of Ahmadis fosters a climate, where private actors feel enabled to attack them without a serious fear of arrest or prosecution.<sup>224</sup>

Considering the different forms of violence that specifically target Ahmadis, bomb attacks have in general not been a strategy of extremist against Ahmadis.

However, in 2010 Ahmadis suffered two simultaneous high-level terror attacks on Ahmadiyya mosques that killed 86 Ahmadis.<sup>225</sup>

Most recently at the end of July 2014, an Ahmadi community suffered a kind of violence that to this extent previously targeted Christians.

Due to accusation of blasphemy against one Ahmadi heavy mob violence

broke out in Gujranwala, targeting the whole community. The mob attacked, plundered and burnt houses of local Ahmadis. Three females, including a girl and an infant, died in the flames. Ahmadis claimed police stayed on the side-lines, while police said they had tried to stop the mob. It was the worst attack on the community since the terror attack in 2010. Cadres of policemen were deployed in the area and<sup>226</sup> criminal cases were registered against 420 people.<sup>227</sup>

## **Christians**

### **Population and Infrastructure**

According to the UK Home Office, based on official estimations, 2.8 million Christians live in Pakistan, constituting 1,5 % of the population, while some estimations of Christian sources assume that there are higher numbers of Christians in Pakistan, speaking of around 5-10% of the population.<sup>228</sup> The then Secretary of the former Ministry of National Interfaith Harmony assumed that about 4 million Christians live in Pakistan.<sup>229</sup>

The vast majority of Christians lives in the Punjab where Christians constitute the largest religious minority.<sup>230</sup> An interview partner of NCJP estimates that around 90 percent of the Christians in Pakistan live in Punjab, mainly in central Punjab. While he further assumes that almost half of the Christians in Punjab live in the divisions Lahore (65 churches) and Gujranwala,<sup>231</sup> the UK Home Offices estimates that 2 Million Christians live in Lahore and half a million in other parts of Punjab.<sup>232</sup> NCJP estimates - based on the census of 1998 - that 8 – 10 percent of the population in Lahore is Christian, making it the largest concentration in Pakistan.<sup>233</sup> Another significant centre in Punjab is Faisalabad and another main centre of Christians in Pakistan is Karachi.<sup>234</sup> Islamabad is also home to a high number of Christian communities.<sup>235</sup> Nevertheless, as the Secretary of the National Ministry for Interfaith Harmony states, Christians also live spread throughout the country.<sup>236</sup> This is underscored by the fact that, as NCPJ states, there are 116 Catholic parishes in 116 districts of Pakistan.<sup>237</sup>

However, NCJP explains, Christians prefer to move into the cities – because

of better economic possibilities, but also because discrimination is more common in rural areas and because of the feeling of insecurity in those areas where Taliban are active.<sup>238</sup> A growing trend of Pakistani Christians leaving the country is visible, in particular, to live in countries such as Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.<sup>239</sup>



[Church in Islamabad]

Among the Christians in Pakistan the majority adheres either to the Roman Catholic Church, which constitutes approximately half of the Christians in Pakistan, or to the Protestant “Church of Pakistan”, which constitutes slightly fewer than the other half of the Christian population.<sup>240</sup> The “Church of Pakistan” unites four Protestant churches: the Anglican Church, the Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church and the Lutheran Church. Another major protestant sub-denomination in Pakistan is the Salvation Army. In addition, further Evangelical churches are domiciled in Pakistan, such as the Baptists, the Seven Day Adventists, the Full Gospel Assemblies Church and the Pentecostal Church as well as a number of smaller churches and offshoots. Particularly in the slums many small and independent church communities prosper,<sup>241</sup> and the numbers belonging to these sometimes called ‘charismatic’ churches are increasing.<sup>242</sup>

A certain Freedom of Religious Expression is present. Symbols, such as the cross, can be displayed, although this could also provoke discriminatory behaviour upon a person. Palm Sunday processions take place. For special

occasions, such as religious assemblies and processions, like Palm Sunday, preventative police protection measures are taken. However, in Lahore Palm Sunday processions have not been held since 2004, due to security considerations the Church decided it would be better not to attract the attention of terrorists. In general, the Church respectively the Christians keep a “low profile” and try not to draw attention to them.<sup>243</sup>

Regarding the infrastructure, the then Secretary of the former National Ministry of Interfaith Harmony estimated in 2013 the number of churches in Pakistan of around 500 of which 100 are dating back to the time of the British Empire.<sup>244</sup> NCJP estimates that around 350 Catholic priests and 2000 nuns are active in Pakistan. According to further estimations, 50 schools of the Catholic Church along with schools of other Christian confessions are situated in Lahore. 54 villages in Punjab and four in Sindh are directly owned by Christian communities.<sup>245</sup> There are different Christian media in Pakistan, such as the Pakistan Christian Post and Christians in Pakistan.<sup>246</sup> According to the representative of the Pakistan Interfaith League, church leaders have infrastructure at their disposal for the Christian minority – such as schools, missions and hospitals. However, social differences and diverging social classes also exist within the Christian minority. Poor Christians often have limited access to Christian schools, because of the often high costs for these high quality private schools, while - due to the quality - non-minority citizens who can afford the fees take advantage of Christian schools.<sup>247</sup>

### **Socio-economic sphere**

This leads to the most common problem of Pakistani Christians - severe poverty.

Social discrimination against Christians is often traced back to the remains of the caste system. Most Christians are descendants of Hindus from “untouchable castes”, who converted in the course of Christianization. Until today there are people who still sense Christians to be untouchable and “impure”.<sup>248</sup> Deriving from the social implications of former caste system, poverty is still very high among Christians.<sup>249</sup>

The US Department of States concludes that social discrimination against Christians in employment is widespread and Christians have difficulty finding jobs other than those involving menial labour.<sup>250</sup> As the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade points out that, although Pakistan's Christian community is not subject to official discrimination, it is affected by the common "tendency towards nepotism in employment", which is present in the government and private sector.<sup>251</sup> As an interview partner of the NCJP explained, employment depends more on familial and personal relations than on religious affiliation. Although there is discrimination in the labour market and belonging to the Christian minority can be a disadvantage in the competition for a job, it is possible to work.<sup>252</sup> Also, Christian activists stated in the private sector the situation has improved in recent years.<sup>253</sup>

Although many Christians are among the poorest in Pakistani society, there are also many economically and socially well-off and active in politics, education and the health sector.<sup>254</sup>

In state service, as mentioned, a quota for minorities was introduced and Christians are working in state authorities, according to NCJP, but in the past they were more and in higher positions, for example, from 1960-1968 the Chief Justice was a Christian. Today, only a few can be found in higher positions. Concerning the judicial system, NCJP further examines that there are currently no Christians in the higher courts and in the Supreme Court and in the lower courts there are only one or two.<sup>255</sup> Under the former PPP led government the Minister for Minorities and, following his assassination, the adviser to the Prime Minister on Minority Issues, heading also the re-named Ministry for Interfaith Harmony, have been Christians. Christians are also nominated to the newly elected provincial or federal assemblies, addressing issues of the Christian minorities in the legislative bodies.<sup>256</sup>

### **Mob violence due to blasphemy rumours**

A specific form of violence against Christians is stemming from raging mobs.

Most recently, in March 2013, local riots of a mob of approximately 3,000 Muslims<sup>257</sup> erupted in Lahore aiming at a mainly Christian inhabited suburb, the Joseph Colony in Badami Bagh.<sup>258</sup> In the end, an estimated 147 Christian homes were burned down,<sup>259</sup> and according to a report 250 Christian families were affected.<sup>260</sup> Nobody was killed.<sup>261</sup>

The initial trigger of the violence was an accusation of blasphemy against an individual Christian, following a dispute with a Muslim friend four days before the riots.<sup>262</sup> The police said that since the evidence was weak they only filed a charge under pressure from Muslim religious groups<sup>263</sup> to placate the congregating mob.<sup>264</sup>

The Christians were told by police to evacuate during the night,<sup>265</sup> yet there was no support in the evacuation, according to affected Christians.<sup>266</sup> Only the next day, when the Christians returned under police protection<sup>267</sup> – the police offered sufficient security measures.<sup>268</sup> The houses, however, had been looted and burned down by the mob.<sup>269</sup> According to most news and interview partners, the police took no action against the attackers.<sup>270</sup> Nevertheless, some news agencies reported that police officers suffered serious injuries in attempts to negotiate with the rioters.<sup>271</sup>

The Christians were accommodated in a camp.<sup>272</sup> Church organizations<sup>273</sup> and the Pakistani civil society provided aid and assistance.<sup>274</sup> A large contingent of police officers was redeployed into the district after the riots.<sup>275</sup> Representatives of the Government such as the Prime Minister visited the community in the Joseph Colony in order to express solidarity and condemnation of violence.<sup>276</sup> Compensation was paid to the affected and the homes renovated by the Government.<sup>277</sup>

Serious criticism was levied by the local Pakistani media, in particular, against the PML-N Provincial Government under Shabaz Sharif, brother of Nawaz Sharif, since no preventative measures for the protection of the district were taken,<sup>278</sup> despite past experiences of similar outbreaks of violence after accusations of blasphemy.<sup>279</sup> Following the mob violence, Christians mounted demonstrations against the government for failing to

ensure law and order in the Joseph Colony.<sup>280</sup>

The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudry, instigated suo moto proceedings,<sup>281</sup> and strongly criticised the police for the failure to protect the rights and homes of the Christians. He condemned the fact that only lower-ranking superintendents were suspended, but no superiors.<sup>282</sup> According to differing reports between 150<sup>283</sup> and two dozen people<sup>284</sup> were identified or arrested as suspects by the police and around 50 charged under the Anti-Terrorism Law.<sup>285</sup> However, little hope for a comprehensive prosecution of the offenders was expressed by NCJP.<sup>286</sup>

Indeed, in its report of July 2014 UK Home Office states that although dozens of suspected perpetrators have been charged, nobody has been convicted for the riots until then, while in March 2014, the accused Christian was sentenced to death for blasphemy and he appealed against this.<sup>287</sup>

Minority organisations and Pakistani media expressed suspicion that the riots were neither a random outbreak of violence nor a pure expression of spontaneous anger, but rather planned and incited and the mob assembled of students from madrassas elsewhere, not of local Muslims, as the local religious groups get along well with each other.<sup>288</sup> From PIL's and NCJP's point of view extremists are behind such mob violence aiming at causing insecurity, destabilizing the situation and spreading the feeling of insecurity.<sup>289</sup> Another suspicion is that economically influential people or groups are behind the accusations of blasphemy against Christians in an attempt to acquire their land.<sup>290</sup> As such, media expressed the assumption that the riots in Lahore might have been instigated by the owner of a nearby factory owner.<sup>291</sup>

This was the third serious rioting of this type against the Christian community since the application of § 295 C against blasphemy in 1986 – all occurred in Punjab and under a PML-N Provincial Government:

In the first instance 17 years ago, in 1997, riots arose in Shantinagar in Punjab after accusations of blasphemy against a Christian. A Christian

village and 14 churches were burned down. In 2009, 6 people died in Gojra in a fire in the course of such riots against a Christian district, which also arose after accusations of blasphemy.<sup>292</sup> Local Pakistani media concluded that the PML-N has a poor performance in the protection of minorities.<sup>293</sup> According to media, nobody was sentenced for the incidents in 2009 in Gojra.<sup>294</sup>

The incidents in Gojra were legally investigated by the then Justice of High Court in Lahore, Iqbal Hameeduddin. The conclusion was that the blasphemy law must be amended in order to prevent abuse. These recommendations have not yet been taken up.<sup>295</sup>

In 2012 a similar incident took place in the urban slums of Islamabad. A fanatical crowd of people gathered after a minor Christian girl - Rimsah Mashi - was accused of blasphemy. Many of the Christian inhabitants fled or were evacuated.<sup>296</sup> However, it was managed to avoid riots, according to the Islamabad City Administration, since everybody worked together - the local community, the administration and Muslim clerics. Muslim clerics spoke up, for the girl and the state provided protection for the girl.<sup>297</sup>

### **Further Societal and Extremist Violence**

Illiteracy, poverty<sup>298</sup> and inter-depend marginalization make the Christian community in Pakistan vulnerable – also to societal violence.<sup>299</sup> Often, Christian girls work as domestic servants. In this sector the danger of becoming the victim of violence and forced conversion is present.<sup>300</sup> Sexual assaults against underage Christian girls,<sup>301</sup> as well as kidnappings and forced conversions of Christian girls and women are reported.<sup>302</sup> Estimates range between 100 and 700 kidnappings each year.<sup>303</sup>

Christians are also affected by target killings. The most prominent Christian victim of target killing was the Minister for Minorities, Shabaz Bhatti, assassinated in 2011 due to his criticism of the blasphemy law.<sup>304</sup> In 2012 the NCJP recorded eleven incidents of target killings of Christians.<sup>305</sup> Between August and October 2013 three Christian social activists were shot and killed by armed gangsters in a Karachi slum where hundreds of Hindu

and Christian families reside confronted with a struggle for territory between criminal gangs and a lack of help from authorities and police. Following the killings the majority of the residents, around 600 families moved into other areas.<sup>306</sup>

Grievances against the West are also inflicting the situation of Christian community in Pakistan. When in September 2012 wide street demonstrations against an anti-Islam film by an American amateur took place in Pakistan, a protesting mob also torched a Lutheran Church, high school, library and houses of clergymen in Mardan district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Another church was attacked in Hyderabad, Sindh, with one person injured.<sup>307</sup>

Shortly after the start of the US led intervention in Afghanistan, the Christian community was targeted in a series of small-scale terrorist attacks on Christian hospitals, churches and other establishments between 2001 and 2002.<sup>308</sup> While the Christian community had been spared of high level attacks, this changed in 2013,<sup>309</sup> a year that saw an unprecedented level of violence against Christians in Pakistan.<sup>310</sup>

In the deadliest attack against Christians in Pakistan's history, on 22nd September 2013, more than 80 people have been killed when two suicide attackers targeted the All Saints Church in Peshawar, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.<sup>311</sup> The number of fatalities in the attack is reported with wide differences; the government and the media spoke of around 85 people killed and over 100 injured, while Christian sources claimed twice as many people were killed. HRCP speaks of over 100 people killed. It was the highest death toll ever in an attack on Christian citizens of Pakistan. The attackers struck just after the Sunday mass when hundreds of adherents were present. Two policemen standing guard outside the church were shot in advance. The militant group that claimed responsibility stated it was the revenge for US drone attacks. The federal and provincial governments announced three days of mourning as well as 500,000 rupees compensation for the family of each deceased. Policemen were stationed at major churches. However, according to HRCP, investigations against the perpetrators are not conducted in a substantial manner.<sup>312</sup> Protests erupted in Pakistan's towns

among others in Peshawar, Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi.<sup>313</sup>

Some clashes followed these acts of large-scale violence. During the demonstrations of Christians in the aftermath of the Lahore mob violence, incidents of clashes were reported between the protesters and police and few weeks after the mob attack, Christians and Muslims clashed in Gujranwala. In the protests following the church bombing, a number of Christians and Muslims clashed in Karachi. A Muslim man was killed and three houses were set on fire in mainly Christian areas of the city. Charges of blasphemy were registered against three Christian protesters after complaints that they hit a mosque with sticks and stones.<sup>314</sup>

Beside the mentioned attacks, also violent acts against churches occur. During 2012 at least six churches were vandalized in Karachi; in one rare case police filed a charge of blasphemy against the attackers. In Islamabad security measures for churches were increased for Christmas after threats.<sup>315</sup> In 2013, five other attacks on churches or policemen assigned for protecting the buildings were reported: In April 2013, unidentified people tried to burn a church in Punjab, damaging the building and in August the interior of a church in Lahore was burnt. In August, July and November respectively one policeman was killed while guarding assigned churches in Peshawar.<sup>316</sup>

On the other side of the societal spectrum, as a sign of solidarity of Pakistan's Muslim community with the Christian minority civil society activists formed human chains around churches and Muslim leaders spoke up against the violence.<sup>317</sup> Pakistan Ulema Council, Pakistan's biggest clerical Muslim organization strongly condemned the attack.<sup>318</sup>

### **Social and political activism**

Various Christian organisations work in the social, legal and political field in order to empower Christians and improve their situation. Parts of their work have already been mentioned. The NCJP and PIL are described further, as examples.

NCJP is an organization for legal assistance, which was established

by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Pakistan. Another important task is lobbying and campaigning for the concerns of the Christian minority, nationally to the competent authorities as well as internationally. Due to the social situation of the Christian community the NCJP is active in the areas of minorities, education, women and labour rights. The NCJP deals with approximately 100 cases per year – blasphemy, discrimination in the workplace or in the education system, as well as violence against women. It brings about dialogue with politicians, police and administration and enjoys a credibility of neutrality.<sup>319</sup>

The Pakistan Interfaith League (PIL) is a social movement for inter-religious tolerance in Pakistan. It cooperates amongst others with the United Council of Churches of Islamabad and the National Supreme Council of Bishops. The PIL also collects reports on violence against minorities and on accusations of blasphemy and stands behind the victims. The affiliated PILAP is an aid organisation for the reduction of poverty and works amongst other things in disaster relief.<sup>320</sup>

According to NCJP the Christian community attempts to achieve a balance and to remain neutral. They cooperate with the important stakeholders. They try not to anger, but rather to achieve a change through negotiations and improvements through consensus. The problems that need to be tackled are huge. Successes are apparent in the area of regional autonomy, while it has not worked with extremism. Efforts to amend the blasphemy law were also unsuccessful; however, in the case of the Hudood laws there was some success as the entire civil society worked together for amendments. Trust was built; there is a will to work together. The former Prime Minister had a Christian adviser for national minorities who was also able to criticise the government. Dialogue with the government authorities is basically possible.<sup>321</sup> NCJP and PIL confirm that, nowadays, they find recognition and are also listened to in government circles.<sup>322</sup> The last years offered better conditions for the Christian community, but shortly before the election in 2013 it worsened.<sup>323</sup>

In particular, as already mentioned before, the PIL stresses the great

value of cooperation with Muslim scholars and cooperated with the Pakistan Ulema Council, in particular the Chairman, Mohammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi, to campaign intensively for the Rimsah Masih release and against the misuse of the blasphemy law.<sup>324</sup> The case was the first in which not only Christians raised their voices for the victim, but also Muslim organisations.<sup>325</sup> Following the attack against Christians in Lahore in March 2013 the PIL and Ulema Council demanded united amongst other things a public investigation and the criminal prosecution of the offenders and the police officers who took no action.<sup>326</sup>

The PIL explains that the Christians raise their voices more strongly - nationwide protests followed the violence, they loudly communicated their message.<sup>327</sup> The Christian community in Pakistan is one that fights strongly for their rights, the NCJP concludes. They do not remain silent, they are a “vocal community” and politically active, they have to, the NCJP concludes.<sup>328</sup>

## **Hindus**

### **Population**

According to estimation by Pakistan Hindu Council (PHC) more than 7 Million Hindus live in the different provinces of Pakistan, constituting about 5.5% of the total population.<sup>329</sup> Most sources speak, like HRCP, of a Hindu population in Pakistan in excess of two<sup>330</sup> or three million.<sup>331</sup> Officially, they constitute 1,5 percent of the population.<sup>332</sup>

The majority of Pakistani Hindus - approximately 94 percent - is settled in Sindh, where they, according to estimations of the Pakistani Hindu Council, account for 17 percent of the population of the province. More than half of the Hindu population is concentrated in the south-eastern district Tharparkar which borders India. More than four percent are living in Punjab, where PHC states they account for less than one percent of the population, while a small part of Hindu population is settled in Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, constituting an estimated one percent in Baluchistan and less in the latter.<sup>333</sup>

When Pakistan and India became separate countries in 1947, widespread inter-religious violence between Hindus and Muslims plagued the two emerging countries. In Pakistan Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab were mainly affected, but Sindhi Hindus feared that violence might spread to their province after partition as well. Thus, the great majority of Hindus living at the time of partition in what is today Pakistan had already migrated to India by late 1948.<sup>334</sup> However, hundreds of thousands of Hindus decided to stay in Pakistan and most remained even during the 1965 and 1971 wars between the two countries.<sup>335</sup>

With a rise in intolerance and extremism, also in the traditionally tolerant Sindh, it becomes more and more difficult for religious minorities in Pakistan.<sup>336</sup> Upper Sindh has a long history of inclusion in the social, political, economic and even religious life but that seems to be changing. In recent years, more and more reports tell of Hindus emigrating because of social discrimination, violence or threats of violence. Most of the reports of Hindus leaving Pakistan stem from Sindh, but also from Baluchistan where the Hindus had lived in peace for centuries but who now feel insecure in different districts.<sup>337</sup>

A Hindu Member of Pakistan' National Assembly from the ruling PML-N estimated that around 5,000 Hindus are leaving Pakistan every year.<sup>338</sup> The main destination of migration of Hindu Pakistani citizens is India.<sup>339</sup>

### **Socio-economic area**

Hindus face social discrimination.<sup>340</sup> Economically they constitute a very underprivileged group<sup>341</sup> as many of them belong to the former "scheduled castes" and are landless agricultural labourers in the rural areas of Sindh and Punjab, many even in debt bondage. However, there is an ample social divide between the Hindu community, so that Hindus of the "scheduled" castes even have to face discriminatory behaviour of "upper caste" Hindus.<sup>342</sup>

On the other side of the Hindu population strata, a big part of Pakistani Hindus is active in commerce, trade and the civil service and well educated.<sup>343</sup>

According to estimates of a Hindu Panchayat leader, 70 percent of local businesses in Jacobabad, where around 40,000 Hindus live, are run by Hindus, to name an example.<sup>344</sup>

### **Societal violence**

Since many of the Hindus run businesses, they are especially prone to abduction with the aim of extortion.<sup>345</sup> Particularly in Baluchistan, but also in parts of Sindh, reports of abduction of Hindus for money concern the community.<sup>346</sup> Robberies and abduction for money of Hindus have increased in parts of Sindh.<sup>347</sup>

Of most concern for the Hindu community are rising reports of kidnapping of Hindu girls and women for forceful conversion to Islam and marriage to Muslim men or boys,<sup>348</sup> especially in Sindh. While precise numbers are difficult to ascertain,<sup>349</sup> some Hindu activists estimate there are 20 such cases every month in Karachi,<sup>350</sup> and some estimation speak of 1000 cases of abduction every year in Sindh.<sup>351</sup>

Pakistani media and human rights groups take up the issue of forced conversion of Hindu girls.<sup>352</sup> In February 2013, political parties and civil society activists demonstrated in Karachi to protest against the kidnapping and forced conversion of Hindu girls.<sup>353</sup> The Sindh Government set up a three-member committee to examine a law to stop forced marriages of Hindu girls.<sup>354</sup> In June this year, the National Assembly's Standing Committee on Law, Justice and Human Rights approved a draft law of the Hindu Marriage Bill 2014 which aims at combatting forced conversions and marriage.<sup>355</sup>

Hindus have also been confronted with reprisal abuse from extremists when it was believed that Muslims in India had been targeted because of their faith.<sup>356</sup>

### **Temples**

Pakistan's Hindu community is legally free to worship. However, there have been incidents of damage to Hindu temples.<sup>357</sup> The demonstrations against an US-American amateur Anti-Islam film in 2012 also saw a Hindu

temple vandalized by protesters– the police filed blasphemy charges against the attackers. In sum, at least three Hindu temples have been vandalized in 2012.<sup>358</sup>

Recently, allegations of a Hindu man committing blasphemy by desecrating the Quran led to a mob burning down a Hindu temple in Larkana in March 2014. In March 2014 a 150-year-old Temple in Karachi was threatened to be damaged due to nearby construction works. Several activists demonstrated in support of the Hindu community.<sup>359</sup>

### **Legal Sphere**

Difficulties in the legal sphere arise for Hindus due to the fact that there is currently no law or mechanism in Pakistan that governs the registration of Hindu marriages. This affects the Hindu couples' rights as it creates complications in matters of divorce, maintenance and inheritance, applications for passports and accessing health care. According to HRCPT this lack contributed to married couples being harassed by police and asked for money. Couples often had to prove their marriage by bringing invitation cards or wedding photographs.

The committee of experts that was established to prepare a draft law against forced conversions was also ordered to include the issue of registration of Hindu marriage in consultation with lawmakers from the Hindu community.<sup>360</sup>

### **Political sphere and activities**

Hindu members of the National and the Sindh Provincial Assembly are reflected in the reports of the media as lodging issues of the Hindu community.<sup>361</sup>

Different Hindu socio-political and/or welfare Organisations in Pakistan, such as the Pakistan Hindu Council, the Pakistan Hindu Panchayat, the Shri Maharashtra Panchayat, the Pakistan Hindu Seva and the Pakistan Hindu Seva Welfare Trust agitate and speak up for better condition.<sup>362</sup>

The Pakistan Hindu Panchayat, for example, organizes support for the Hindu candidates in Hindu elections, and lobbies on issues important to Hindus, such as the security of temples, abduction of Hindus for ransoms and forcible conversions. It has branches in all Pakistani provinces. It aims at uniting the Hindu community to protect their basic rights, freedoms and interests, advance education and opportunity.<sup>363</sup>

In the general elections of May 2013 numerous political parties in Sindh named candidates from religious minorities to contest in the elections. However, only few were nominated in constituencies where they had a realistic chance to win. Also, “scheduled caste” Hindus in Sindh voiced their complaint in a demonstration that only upper-caste Hindus had been nominated by the political parties for the elections, while demanding that more representatives of the scheduled castes should be named by the parties as minority candidates.<sup>364</sup>

In one political act against the Hindu community in the elections, a madrassah in Sindh distributed a pamphlet calling up Muslims not to vote for Hindus, describing Hindus as infidels and voting for a Hindu candidate as betraying Islam. Prior to the poll, the Election Commission of Pakistan issued a code of conduct for political parties and candidates, firmly prohibiting seeking votes in the name of religion or campaigning against any person on the basis of religion, ethnicity, caste or gender. However, the authorities and the Election Commission did not take any action after the pamphlet was distributed.<sup>365</sup>

The general elections in May 2013 also saw a “lower-caste” Hindu woman from Sindh as the first former bonded labourer contesting for general election. Although she only got 503 votes, her candidacy itself was hailed as a milestone for women from marginalised communities and for bonded labourers.<sup>366</sup>

## **Sikhs**

### **Population and infrastructure**

Pakistan is considered as origin of the Sikh religion, since the founder of the religion, Guru Nanak, was born in what is today Pakistan<sup>367</sup> in Nankana Sahib.<sup>368</sup> As some of the holiest sites of Sikhism are located in Pakistan, quite a number of pilgrims are visiting Pakistan every year.<sup>369</sup>

The local Sikh community in Pakistan nowadays is estimated at around 15,000<sup>370</sup> to 20,000<sup>371</sup>. Sikhs reside mainly in parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, with around 500 Sikh families residing in its provincial capital Peshawar, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Punjab<sup>372</sup> with the highest concentration in Lahore.<sup>373</sup> “All about Sikhs” lists 150 gurdwaras in Pakistan, while it is not commented how many of these are still used.<sup>374</sup> According to Pakistan Sikh Council 17 gurdwaras are situated in Sindh.<sup>375</sup> In general, many Sikh shrines have fallen into disrepair since 1947, as the remaining Sikh population and its economic power and political influence is minuscule compared to that of pre-1947.<sup>376</sup>

Concerning the holy sites, pilgrims thanked the government for preserving the sites.<sup>377</sup> However, reports tell of a poor upkeep of the shrines by the state Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, with several Sikh shrines in need of urgent repair. As per the Nehru-Liaquat Pact, India and Pakistan have permitted Sikh devotees to visit their religious places situated in Pakistan on certain religious occasions.<sup>378</sup>



[Gurdwara Dera Sahib in Lahore]

### **Societal and extremist violence**

The security situation in the main areas of settlements of Sikhs is heavily influencing the security of this minority as FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa bear the brunt of militancy and attacks in Pakistan, domiciling the main hideouts of Taliban groups.

Sikh residents of areas of FATA - mainly those who run businesses - have faced abductions for ransom, methods of extortion, intimidation and attacks by extremist militants. There are also reports in areas in FATA where militants prevail, that they demand “jizya”, a kind of Islamic protection tax for Non-Muslims, from Sikhs. The Taliban in Khyber Agency of FATA give the “tax” even a kind of official aura by handing out written receipts for the paid jizya. Many Sikhs of the Taliban affected Tirah valley in Khyber Agency, the Orakzai and Kurram agency of FATA moved to Peshawar, the close provincial capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to escape militancy and lawlessness in those affected areas.<sup>379</sup> However, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, neighbouring the tribal belt of FATA, is the province mostly affected by attacks of Taliban and other (affiliated) militants or extremists, in particular Peshawar.

In the settled areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa killings of Sikhs, mainly in their businesses, are on the rise, with at least three members killed in the last year,<sup>380</sup> while another three were killed within only a month in August/September 2014, two of them in Peshawar.<sup>381</sup>

Most Sikhs relocate from KP and FATA to Hasanabdal, Punjab<sup>382</sup> where a bigger Sikh community lives and to Rawalpindi, Punjab.<sup>383</sup> However, the Express Tribune estimates that since 2005, a total of 40 to 50 Sikh families have also migrated to India.<sup>384</sup>

With regard to faith based violent acts, since mid-2013 a row of incidents of desecration by burning and tearing of the Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh holy book, at several Hindu temples in cities in Sindh<sup>385</sup> still continued in May 2014 and enraged the Sikh community.<sup>386</sup> As parts of the Hindu community regard it also as holy, the Guru Granth Sahib can also be found in some Hindu temples<sup>387</sup> and corresponding practices and believes lead

Hindu and Sikh believers to using the same temples in some cases.<sup>388</sup>

The Hindu community vehemently condemned the acts and those Hindu perpetrators who want to create hatred between Sikhs and Hindus in Pakistan, as Hindu leaders<sup>389</sup> in unity with the Pakistan Sikh Council interpret the incidents.<sup>390</sup> According to Pakistan Sikh Council in none of the 17 gurdwaras in Sindh have ever any problems been reported.<sup>391</sup>

The community turned to the Chief Justice who directed the Advocate General that FIRs of the incidents shall be submitted in court under Section 295 of the Pakistan Penal Code - the blasphemy section.<sup>392</sup> On 24 May 2014 about 300 Sikhs assembled in Islamabad to protest in Parliament against the desecration of their holy book.<sup>393</sup>

### **Political and legal sphere**

The Sikh community faces the same difficulties over the lack of a registration of marriages like the Hindu community.<sup>394</sup>

In the May general elections, Ramesh Singh Arora, became the first Sikh member of Punjab Assembly ever. He was nominated by Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) on a seat reserved for religious minorities. In the provincial assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa a member of Sikh community is represented on a seat reserved for minorities, nominated by the Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf.<sup>395</sup>

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- 1 With regards to methodology, based on basic standards of the EASO Country of Origin Information Report Methodology, every piece of information used is sourced and processed according to the principles of neutrality, objectivity and transparency. Information obtained in interviews during a Fact Finding Mission in March 2013 are worked in. Special attention was directed to balanced information, using various kinds of sources. For crosschecks, for most information additional sources are cited.
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# Muslim sects and sectarian violence in Pakistan

*Martina Schrott*

Not only are different religions prevalent in Pakistan, but also various dimensions of Muslim identity and religious intensity.<sup>1</sup> Pakistan is a country with a highly diverse composition of Muslim sects, sub-sects and political parties, and sectarianism is a part of the political discourse. In the face of regional, ethnic and linguistic differences, Islam is used as the unifying element.<sup>2</sup> However, as there are many interpretations of Islam in Pakistan and the state was founded as a home for Indian Muslims, a clash between different concepts of Islam is paramount in Pakistan,<sup>3</sup> and the state undermined its own approach towards national unity by imposing a particular concept on society at times.<sup>4</sup>

According to official statistics 96.4 percent of the - as the CIA World Fact Book estimates - roughly 193 Million Pakistani citizens are Muslims. Of these, according to the Fact Books' further estimations, 85-90 percent adhere to the Sunni and 10-15 percent to the Shia denomination of Islam.<sup>5</sup> The U.S. Department of State roughly breaks the Muslim population down into 75 percent Sunni and 25 percent Shia,<sup>6</sup> as does the German Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge.<sup>7</sup> Most scholars believe that about 20% of Pakistanis are Shia which means that there are some 30 million Shias in Pakistan. The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade refers to estimations of up to 40 million Shias.<sup>8</sup> The estimates indicate that Pakistan might have the world's second largest Shia population after Iran. However, the percentage of the Pakistani population in Muslim sectarian terms is difficult to establish as the only governmental statistics available regarding the religious affiliation distinguish only between Muslims and Non-Muslims.<sup>9</sup>

However, Sunnis in Pakistan are a highly diverse group. Sunni Islam in Pakistan may broadly be categorized into three sub-sects: the Deobandis,

the Barelvis and Ahl-e-Hadith.<sup>10</sup> Barelvi form the majority with about 60 percent of Pakistan's Sunni population as per estimation of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Deobandi followers are estimated to be about 35 percent of Sunnis, and therefore constitute the second largest Sunni sub-sect in Pakistan.<sup>11</sup> A small number of Sunnis in Pakistan - about five percent follow the Ahl-e Hadith (Salafi) school.<sup>12</sup>

Madrassahs are grouped on the basis of the school of thought (maslak) they adhere to and are affiliated with their respective umbrella organizations called wafaq or tanzim:

- Wafaq ul Madaris Al-Arabia Pakistan (Deobandi)
- Tanzim ul Madaris Ahl-e-Sunnaht Pakistan (Barelvi)
- Wafaqul Madaris Al Salafia (Ahl-e-Hadith)
- Rabita-tul-Madaris Islamia (Jamat-i-Islami)
- Wafaq ul Madaris Al Shia<sup>13</sup>

Since the introduction of the Madrassah Registration Ordinance all madrassahs have to register with one of the five independent boards (wafaqs) or directly with the government. However, there are many unregistered madrassahs operating.<sup>14</sup>

## **Deobandi**

The Sunni Deobandi school of thought derives its name from the town of Deoband, in India,<sup>15</sup> where the first madrassah/university of this sub-sect, the Dar-al-Uloom, was established in 1867 (in some sources 1866).<sup>16</sup> The foundation fell into the early period of India's struggle for independence from British colonial rule.<sup>17</sup> Thus, the university was formed as a reaction to Western civilization and culture with the purpose of saving Islam and Islamic teachings.<sup>18</sup> The school's founders, Mohammad Qasim Nanautawi and Rashid Ahmed Gangohi,<sup>19</sup> set up the centre to establish a place where Muslims could escape what they believed was the corrupting encroachment of Western civilization. The school should offer a place where Muslims could return to what they believed was the "pure" Islam.<sup>20</sup> The madrassah at Deoband was based on the British formalized way of education instead

of the traditional informal familial style, nevertheless, it did not include Western Sciences and rather focused on the study of the Quran, the Hadith and Islamic Law and Science.<sup>21</sup> They aimed to train a new generation of learned Muslims who would revive Islamic values based on intellectual learning, spiritual experience, Sharia law and Tariaqath or the “path”.<sup>22</sup>

The Deobandi School is among the most literal and puritanical sects of Sunni Islam.<sup>23</sup> They oppose folk Islam, which focuses on mysticism of shrines, intercession by saints and related customary celebrations. The Deobandis, in contrast to the common practice of the “pirs” (sufi saints, spiritual guides) of the shrines, emphasized as far more effective the central individual responsibility of the disciple to adhere to the law.<sup>24</sup> As such Deobandi Islam is centred on mosques and madrassahs.<sup>25</sup>

Their belief is against any folk custom practices like those to which the Shia and Barelvi adhere and comes close to the rigid Wahabi ideology, which has its roots in Saudi Arabia.<sup>26</sup> The Deobandis discourage many of the popular festivals and rituals that the Barelvis associate with Sufi shrines but unlike the more extreme Wahhabis, Deobandis do not promote the destruction of shrines.<sup>27</sup>

In the process of Britain’s ceding its control of the Indian Subcontinent, the Deobandis aligned themselves with Mahatma Gandhi against the leading Indian Muslim politician at that time, Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Like Gandhi, the Deobandis opposed the idea of partitioning India into two states, one especially for Muslims, to be called Pakistan, and instead aimed at uniting all Indians to create a democratic state for Indians of all faiths. And so in 1947 when the subcontinent was divided the Deobandis decided not to move to the new state of Pakistan. As the two new states soon were on hostile terms over the control the Himalayan state of Kashmir, followers of the movement in Pakistan had to create their own centres of learning as they no longer had access to the centre in Deoband. Instead of weakening the movement, this condition led to a prospering of Deobandi madrassahs as in the new environment new leaders could develop without having to focus on the centre’s authority.<sup>28</sup>

In 1971 the number of Deobandi madrassahs in Pakistan had already augmented to 900.<sup>29</sup> In the 70ies the regime of military ruler Zia ul-Haq clearly favoured the Deobandi School in administration and funding amongst other areas, thus disadvantaging Shias and Barelvis. Reports indicate that numerous mosques of the Barelvi were declared Deobandi by administration.<sup>30</sup>

With Zia ul-Haq's regime funding the sect and donations from more than 45 Muslim countries, the number of Deobandi madrassahs in Pakistan had jumped up to 8.000 official and an estimated 25.000 unregistered madrassahs instructing half a million students by 1988.<sup>31</sup> Their umbrella organisation Wafaq ul Madaris Al-Arabia, Pakistan, which was founded in 1957 in Pakistan, today counts more than 8,000 Iqra Schools and 10,000 seminaries as affiliates in Pakistan and denotes itself as the largest federation of Islamic seminaries around the world.<sup>32</sup> Deobandi madrassahs, often foreign funded, greatly outnumber Barelvi madrassahs in Pakistan and also constitute the majority of the Sunni ulema (Islamic scholars) in Pakistan, despite their smaller share of the population. The strength of the movement can also be seen in the spread of Deobandi madrassahs to Europe and North America.<sup>34</sup>

### **Extremism**

Without a centralist hierarchy and without recognized religious leaders the Deobandi school of thought in Pakistan dispersed in many factions and some of them developed into extremist groups.<sup>35</sup> Thus, today, the Deobandis in Pakistan are often associated with hard-line interpretations<sup>36</sup> and many of the Deobandi centres are labelled as "hard-line," since a number of the Deobandi madrassahs have been linked to extremism.<sup>37</sup>

In fact, the Deobandis are the sub-sect in Pakistan of which most of Pakistan's and Afghanistan's Taliban and sectarian militia derived – with many of the militant leaders being religiously and ideologically educated at Pakistani Deobandi madrassahs.<sup>38</sup> According to most sources, the overwhelming majority of militant groups, particularly anti-Shia groups, operating in Pakistan follow, or claim to follow, a form of Deobandi or Salafi

Islam.<sup>39</sup> Some Deobandi madrassahs sent fighters not only to Afghanistan but also to Kashmir, Chechnya and Bosnia. Deobandism is also one of the main religious influences on the ideology of the Taliban, the other one being Wahabism - a strict and austere tradition within the Sunni Hanafism originating in Saudi Arabia. One of the most notorious factions of Deobandi teaching was led by Sami ul-Haq. In his madrassah, the Darul Uloom Haqqania, he educated many of the later Afghan Taliban ministers, governors, judges and administrators.<sup>40</sup> Thus Sami ul-Haq has been named by some as the “father of the Taliban”. The Haqqani-network even derives its name from the Haqqania madrassah. Seminary officials and teachers vehemently deny that they are preaching violence. But Darul Uloom Haqqania’s embrace of fundamentalist Islam and anti-western polemic encourages students to oppose the west and fight the enemies of Islam.<sup>41</sup>

However, the development of numerous extremist interpretations of Deobandi teachings does not implicate that this school of thought, or Deobandis per se, are in general more radical or more militant than others as is often simplified assumed.<sup>42</sup> The Deobandi School has never been as extreme as, for example, in the Taliban’s practice whose radicalism the traditional Deobandi would never approve. This new kind of extremism “clearly debased the Deobandi tradition of learning and reform.”<sup>43</sup>

## **Barelvis**

The Barelvi line of Sunni Islam or “Ahl-e Sunnat wa Jama’at” is the sub-denomination which the great majority of Sunni Muslims in Pakistan follow and it is especially strong in the countryside where the majority of the population resides.<sup>44</sup> Particularly among the Non-Pashtun population it is the main religious sect.<sup>45</sup> The umbrella organisation of the Barelvis, the “Tanzim ul Madaris Ahl-e-Sunnaht”, has more than 6,000 registered madrassahs and there are thousands of Barelvi organisations across the country, with many restricted to just one neighbourhood. Even though the numerous Barelvi groups are highly diverse, the national-level body, the Sunni Ittehad Council, takes a leading role.<sup>46</sup>

The Barelvi faith emerged as a reaction to the Deobandi school of thought. It is founded on the teachings of Ahmed Riza Khan (1856-1921), in whose hometown, Bareilly (India), the first Barelvi madrassah was established in 1904.<sup>47</sup> Inclined towards the mystical dimension in Islam or Sufism – a mystical interpretation of Islam that involves a devotion to saints and shrines<sup>48</sup> - other than Deobandis, they practice custom-laden Islam.<sup>49</sup> Beside the general Islamic rituals such as praying and fasting their practice is also based on pilgrimages to Sufi shrines, sometimes made in the hope of experiencing miracles. Some Barelvis become the disciples (murids) of holy men (murshids) and pay respect to saints – dead and living – known locally as pir sahibs or Sufi sheikhs.<sup>50</sup> As Sufism is widespread in Pakistan, Barelvi Sunnis and Shias both venerate Sufi saints and shrines.<sup>51</sup> The birthday of the Holy Prophet is celebrated passionately.<sup>52</sup> Theologically, the divide between Deobandi and Barelvi derives mainly from the Barelvi's attribution of special abilities that could be seen as supernatural to the person of Mohammed, while Deobandi refuse and denote that as sirk (polytheism).<sup>53</sup>

Deobandis and Barelvis both believe in taqlid (imitation) which refers to the “unquestioning acceptance of established schools and authorities”. Given this background of taqlid, Deobandis and Barelvis are considered as muqallids (the followers). As followers of the Sunni Hanafi school of thought they believe that an unlearned or a less knowledgeable Muslim should not attempt to find out the meanings of the Divine Text himself, but follow the religious scholars. Nevertheless, their ideological differences in regard to Prophet Mohammad and folk Islam are intense, so both have separate seminaries for the promotion of their maslak (school of thought).<sup>54</sup>

Ensuing from the characteristics of Barelvi practice and belief there is, on the other hand, some convergence between Barelvis and Shias. On the countryside some Barelvi will even take part in Shia festivals. Thus, Sunni ulema fear that such a porous identity boundary will help to convert Sunnis to Shi'ism, especially in areas where the landlords are Shias.<sup>55</sup>

### **Extremism**

Because of their custom-laden practices, Deobandi and Ahle Hadith

reject the Barelvi line, and the extremists of these two groups even combat them. In several cases Barelvi Muslims fell victim to attacks of Deobandi extremists.<sup>56</sup> As they consider their practices as falling off Islam (heresy), extremist Deobandi groups carry out attacks against religious conventions and festivities of adherents of Sufism, including Barelvi, amongst others in Darra Adam Khel, Lahore, Pakpattan (Punjab), Peshawar und Nowshera (KPK) and Karachi (Sindh).<sup>57</sup>

Nevertheless, although the Barelvi movement - in the Sufi tradition - is *grosso modo* seen as moderate, more open-minded and shunning violence, some kind of extremism and extremist groups also developed within this sub-sect of Sunnism, according to sources, as reaction to Deobandi hostilities and violence.

This gained public attention with the assassination of the influential and powerful Punjab governor Salman Taseer.

The most unusual aspect was that the assassin whose motive was that he felt Taseer had insulted the Prophet by describing Pakistan's blasphemy law as "black law" belonged to the Dawat-e-Islami. This Barelvi Sufi movement rejects violence and has been in the forefront of the struggle against jihadi groups of the Deobandi and Ahle Hadith. The founder, Pir Ilyas Qadri, propagated resistance and defence against Deobandi extremism, but only to be exercised in a peaceful manner. His reluctance to adopt violence as a form of protection against Deobandi violence led to a breakaway of a small fraction led by Saleem Qadri. He founded the Sunni Tehrik in 1990 and preached to meet Deobandi violence with more violence. However, Saleem Qadri did not break his religious allegiance to Pir Ilyas Qadri, nor did he want his followers to break their links to the Dawat-e-Islami, so the lines between the groups of followers are fluent.<sup>58</sup>

Violence between Deobandi and Barelvi groups had already developed in the course of the 1970ies due to Zia-ul-Haq's sectarian politics of favouring Deobandi groups in form of street struggles about mosques that allegedly had been taken from the Barelvis. Nevertheless, until the foundation of

Sunni Tehrik the different Barelvi organisations were seen as relatively nonviolent.<sup>59</sup>

The Sunni Tehrik was the first Barelvi group to articulate the demands of the majority Barelvi sect and to use violence to achieve them. Their basic demands were the protection of Ahle Sunnath beliefs, rights, mosques and awqaf (religious endowments), such as shrines. Soon after its founding, the Sunni Tehrik started using force to take back mosques the Deobandis allegedly had taken from the Barelvi ulema. The rise of the Sunni Tehrik posed a direct challenge to the Deobandi jihadi groups.<sup>60</sup> In the 1990ies Sunni Tehrik engaged in several targeted killings of important Deobandi leadership figures. However, since a bomb attack in 2006 killed most of the leading circle of Sunni Tehrik the group is merely a marginal force,<sup>61</sup> but is still involved in target killings of activists of rival Deobandi extremist groups.<sup>62</sup>

Most of all, Sunni Tehrik played an important role in radicalizing parts of the Barelvi youths, and together with the Dawat-e-Islami in reviving the dormant Barelvi religious party Jamaat Ahle Sunnat, („The Community of People of the Traditions of Muhammad“). The Jamaat Ahle Sunnat adopted the Sunni Tehrik propagation of a forceful defence of Barelvi interests and began to play a major part in the country’s Islamist politics.<sup>63</sup>

During the Afghan jihad against the communists Barelvis were never encouraged to take part as the Saudis, one of the main donors, preferred that only their favourite sects, such as the Ahle Hadith and the Deobandis are engaged. Thus, Barelvis in general are not trained in guerrilla warfare like Deobandi and Ahle Hadith groups who have been actively waging jihad for more than a quarter century. However, the Barelvis can demonstrate their strength and influence by their sheer numbers and their. Jamaat Ahle Sunnat can mobilize masses to take their demands to the street. However, it not only engages in sectarian politics as reaction to the Deobandi. Every time the government discussed amending the blasphemy laws, the Jamaat Ahle Sunnat and other Barelvi groups were in the forefront of the protests. In the case of the assassination of Taseer Barelvi ulema and more than 500

leading members of the Jamaat Ahle Sunnat issued a fatwa against leading the deceased governor's funeral prayers or even attending his funeral. Hundreds of lawyers showered the assassin with rose petals on his way to court. In widespread demonstrations support for the assassin has been publicly shown.<sup>64</sup>

As this case is often cited as example for Islamist radicalisation and intolerance in Pakistan, it has to be added that thousands of supporters of the PPP governor, a combative politician, who often expressed his uncompromising views against extremist forces, also took to the streets across Pakistan and his death provoked a flood of collective sorrow in social media.<sup>65</sup>

### **Ahl-e-Hadith**

Only a small number of Sunnis in Pakistan, about five per cent of the Sunni, follow the Ahl-e-Hadith (people of the prophetic narrations) respectively Salafi called school of Sunni Islam.<sup>66</sup> They decline any intermediation between man and God like the canonical law or saints. Members of Ahl-e-Hadith are strident critics of taqlid and they lay the foundations of religious norms and practices not on schools of law but directly on the Qur'an, the sunnah and hadith. Since they do not follow any of the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence, they are called non-followers.<sup>67</sup>

### **Shia**

Sunnis and Shias mainly differ regarding the rightful succession of the Prophet. For the Sunnis the father of the Prophet's wife Aisha, Abu Bakr, was the righteous successor.<sup>68</sup> Shias consider Ali Ibn Talib as the rightful successor of the Prophet,<sup>69</sup> a prophet's cousin and son-in-law.<sup>70</sup> Shias also refute the chain of succession of the four caliphs. On the 10th of Moharram (the first month of Islamic calendar) they mourn the battle of Karbala, where Hussain, the grandson of prophet Mohammad fell on 10th October 680. It is commemorated by Sunnis as well as by Shias, however, the latter hold specific mourning ceremonies.<sup>71</sup> The distinctions formed different traditions

and customs which the two branches practice and which correlate with the jurisprudence they follow.<sup>72</sup>

The Shia in Pakistan also divide themselves in different sub-sects. The majority of Pakistani Shia adheres to the Twelver (athna ashariya) school of thought, but there are significant other sub-sects such as Nizari Ismailis, the second largest branch of Shia Islam in Pakistan, the Daudi Bohras and Sulemani Bohras.<sup>73</sup>

The Shia population is spread across Pakistan, but in no province Shias constitute a majority. However, they form the majority of the population in the semi-autonomous region of Gilgit–Baltistan. Significant numbers of Shias can be found in Peshawar, Kohat, Hangu and Dera Ismail Khan in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; Kurram and Orakzai Agencies in FATA; in and around Quetta and the Makran coastline in Balochistan; areas of southern and central Punjab and throughout Sindh. Many cities in Pakistan like Karachi, Lahore, Rawalpindi, Islamabad, Multan, Jhang and Sargodha, are home to large Shia communities. The Shia faith in Pakistan is not confined to specific ethnic, linguistic and tribal groups, but is prevalent amongst most of them. However, there are some ethnic or tribal communities, which are predominantly Shia, first and foremost, the ethnic group of the Hazara, but also tribes, like the Turis, Bohris, Baltis and some clans within the Bangash Pashtun tribes. Thus, Pakistani Shias, with the exception of Hazaras, are not physically or linguistically distinguishable from Sunni Pakistanis. However, Shias can sometimes be identified through common Shia names. Across the country, Sunni and Shia communities are generally well-integrated, live<sup>74</sup> in mixed villages and also intermarry.<sup>75</sup>

Despite Pakistan having a majority Sunni population, Shias have always held prominent and powerful positions and influenced the structure and development of the Pakistani state. Sir Aga Khan III (the spiritual leader of the Ismailis) was the first President of the All India Muslim League, which led the movement for the creation of Pakistan. Pakistan's founder, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, belonged also to the Shia community,<sup>76</sup> like the politically well-known Bhutto clan.<sup>77</sup> The Shia Bhutto clan has always been dominating

the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), which led the previous government coalition, and so Shias have tended to be supporters of the PPP.<sup>78</sup> Shias find employment in government and hold high offices, including former President Asif Ali Zardari. They are represented on Pakistan's Council of Islamic Ideology, the Constitutional body, which provides advice to the Government of Pakistan on issues of Islamic jurisprudence and practice.

According to the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the UK Home Office there are no discriminatory laws or government policies that discriminate against Shias in Pakistan. Neither are there any legal restrictions on freedom of religion for Shias. There is little societal discrimination that would restrict Shias in their daily life.<sup>79</sup>

Nevertheless, occasionally violent clashes between members of Sunni and Shia community arise, but most of all, the Shia community in Pakistan is the target of sectarian Sunni extremist groups, some with a clear anti-Shia stance, which carried out several attacks causing numerous casualties.<sup>80</sup> Additionally Anti-Shia groups also sustain hate campaigns against Shias branding them infidels and even calling for their murder.<sup>81</sup>

## **Hazara**

The Hazara are an overwhelmingly Shia ethnic group of Eurasian origin, which makes them visibly distinct from many other Pakistanis. Historically Hazara migrated to Pakistan from central Afghanistan. Some Hazara families' origins in Quetta can be traced back to the late 19th century, however, the majority of the community immigrated in two waves – the first during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan from 1979 on, and the second in 1996, when the Taliban regime in Afghanistan began to target the Hazara. Existing local networks enabled the Afghan Hazara to avoid refugee camps and to integrate better into Pakistani society.

Those living in rural areas speak Hazaragi, an eastern dialect of the Persian (Farsi) language, while many Hazara in urban areas of Pakistan also speak other languages including standard Persian, Urdu and English. The

Hazara population of Pakistan is estimated at up to 750,000. The majority, up to 500,000, live in and around Quetta, the capital of Baluchistan.

Within Quetta, Hazara live predominantly within their own two communities—Hazara Town (also known as Brewery Road) and along Alamdar Road towards Mehrabad. These tend to be lower and middle-income areas on the outskirts of Quetta. Within these areas, Hazara have access to medical and educational facilities, generally provided from within their own communities. Hazara in Pakistan are relatively well-educated. The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade considers Pakistan's Hazara community not to be subject to official discrimination and there is little discrimination at the community or societal level. Hazara in Quetta are integrated in the local community and work alongside members of other ethnic groups. Many are employed in the civil service of Baluchistan, in Baluchistan's police force or are employed at private businesses.<sup>82</sup>

However, since they are the only community that is visibly distinguishable and almost exclusively Shia, they had to bear the brunt of sectarian terrorist attacks in Pakistan in the last years with a tremendous spike in 2013.

### **The Shia-Sunni violence - background**

Despite the generally peaceful coexistence, violence between these two Muslim sects is a challenge for Pakistan. Moreover, the main form of violence between these two groups - sectarian terror attacks by extremist factions- is also one of the main forms of terrorism prevalent in Pakistan.

As their ideology opposes contents of the Shia denomination, extremist Deobandi organisations are leading the anti-Shia sectarianism so far that, for example, political scientist like Miriam Zahab concludes that the so called Shia-Sunni conflict in Pakistan should be referred more precisely as the Shia-Deobandi conflict.<sup>83</sup> Violence between Barelvi Sunnis and Shias is rare.<sup>84</sup> Barelvis are usually more tolerant towards Shias,<sup>85</sup> the two sects stand closer since their rites are similar. Ahle Hadith groups occasionally support Deobandi groups in their Anti-Shia violence.<sup>86</sup>

The rise in violence between Sunni and Shia Muslims in Pakistan began in the early 1980s. Prior to this, violence between Shias and Sunnis was rare<sup>87</sup> and limited to some clashes during Muharram processions.<sup>88</sup>

A combination of domestic and international political factors contributed to the rise, including the Iranian Revolution of 1979, military ruler Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq's policy of Islamization of the Pakistani state, the US-backed Afghan resistance to the 1979 Soviet Invasion,<sup>89</sup> violent challenges to the state by ethno-separatist movements and uneven economic development. Thus, in the 1970s Pakistan saw a major shift of the state away from pluralism towards Islamization. Starting with the distinct definition of Muslims, which excluded Ahmadis, the state gave up its religious neutrality.<sup>90</sup>

Since in 1974 the Ahmadi community was excluded from the state's definition of Muslims, Sunni fundamentalists aimed at extending their success to preclude the much larger Shia community from the definition of Muslims as well. The state sheered farther from the path of religious neutrality, when in 1979 the military regime of Zia-ul-Haq imposed Islamic legislation based on the Hanafi Sunni interpretation regarding taxation and charity endowments uniformly on the entire Muslim population. This state legislation enraged the Shia minority.<sup>91</sup> It was not only Sunni Islam Zia-ul-Haq wanted to enforce, but especially the Deobandi School.<sup>92</sup> The Shia community viewed Zia-ul-Haq's Islamization as a bid to create a Sunni state.<sup>93</sup>

At the same time, the success of the Iranian Revolution strengthened the confidence of the Shia minority.<sup>94</sup> In 1979 Pakistani Shia founded the Tehrik-e-Nifaz-e-Fiqh-e-Jafaria (TNFJ) with the declared objective of defending the community.<sup>95</sup> Shia successfully organized themselves and confronted the military government. In front of massive Shia demonstrations the regime granted Shias exemption from the Sunni laws.<sup>96</sup>

But their success and the military government's bowing to Shia demands caused Sunni fundamentalists to worry about the strength of Shia, as it indicated that the state awarded them a status quite equal to that of the

Hanafi law of the Sunni majority. For extremist Deobandis this nourished the fear that the Pakistani nation-state's Islamic identity was not synonymous with Sunni Islam and also damaged the aim of having Shias declared non-Muslims.<sup>97</sup>

Zia-ul-Haq's Islamization program and the active resistance by the Shia community, therefore, played a significant role in radicalizing Sunnis and Shias. The revolutionary government in Iran supported the Pakistani Shia in their effort to counter Zia-ul-Haq's Deobandi-Sunni-Islamization which itself was directly backed by Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia. To contain the perceived challenges to a Sunni dominance in Pakistan, Sunni Deobandi organizations such as the Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) supported the establishment of the militant Sipah-i-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) in 1985.<sup>98</sup> At the same time due to General Ziaul Haq's regime's support the Deobandi groups received an upswing, especially because most of the extremist groups supported the jihad against Soviet forces in Afghanistan and provided the foot soldiers.<sup>99</sup> On the opposite side, by 1985 Tehrik Nifazi-Fiqhi Jafaria had become a militant Shia organization.<sup>100</sup>

In 1988, after Zia-ul-Haq's death, civilian rule and democratic governance returned to Pakistan. Nevertheless, Shia-Sunni militancy augmented significantly with targeted killings of government and military officials by Shia and Sunni militants, as well as citizens on the basis of sectarian identity. The return to democratic rule led the SSP and TNFJ to enter mainstream politics by forging alliances with the Nawaz Sharif-led Pakistan Muslim League (PML) and Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and taking part in elections. This process led to the breaking off of splinter groups, who wanted to keep the focus on violence.<sup>101</sup>

Sectarian organizations formed alliances and rivalries with more mainstream religious and secular oriented political parties in Pakistan. Such alliances tend to be more situational than based on an ideology. An example is that despite the Shia affiliation and Shia vote-bank of the Bhutto clan, the SSP supported the PPP minority administration in the Punjab during the second reign of Benazir Bhutto in 1993-1996. As a result, many

in the Shia community shifted their political allegiance to the PML (Pakistan Muslim League) of Nawaz Sharif, once protégé of the Deobandi General Zia ul Haq.<sup>102</sup>

As Saleem Khan put it:

*“As Pakistan is still evolving from feudalism to capitalism, it is experiencing problems of an identity crisis as its traditional power structures are coming under considerable strain. The landlords are losing some of their political clout but the industrialists and bureaucrats have not entirely replaced them and these categories are being increasingly blurred. All these alliances and realignments leave the religious elites as brokers in a complicated patron-client set-up.”*<sup>103</sup>

Nawaz Sharif, in his second reign as Prime Minister, passed the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1997 to curb sectarianism.<sup>104</sup> Shortly after his taking office, the first serious clampdown against militant Islamist groups, inter alia the SSP, was executed, including a wave of arrests of leading figures.<sup>105</sup> Iran ceded its support of militant Shia groups in the middle of the 1990ies, since it assessed it as counter productive.<sup>106</sup> The post 9/11 period saw General Musharraf taking a change in Pakistan’s policy towards militants and with it a clampdown on some sectarian groups like the SSP and a promotion of ‘moderate’ groups began.<sup>107</sup> Numerous sectarian groups like Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and Sipah-e-Muhammed were forbidden in 2001 and 2002.<sup>108</sup> However, the seriousness of the clampdowns was widely questioned. For example, the then-leader of the SSP Azam Tariq was allowed to contest the October 2002 parliamentary elections, although he was in jail and his organization forbidden. Following his victory Tariq was freed from jail and allowed to take his seat in the parliament, allegedly on the condition that he supports the pro-Musharraf alliance.<sup>109</sup>

### **The main Sectarian Terror groups**

**Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (Army of the Companions of the Prophet-Pakistan, SSP)**

The Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) is a militant sectarian Sunni Deobandi group formed in 1980 - during the Zia era - with the declared aim of containing Shia influence in Pakistan. Concerning the background of the SSP it originated of the district of Jhang in Punjab, which is one of the regions of Pakistan, where Shia feudal landlords dominate a Sunni majority populace. The SSP draws much of its strength from the urban areas of Jhang. Most of the SSP's violence is directed against the Shia militant organization Sipah-e-Muhammed Pakistan, which recruits from the same socio-economic strata. Many SSP activists like their rivals SMP have been fighting the Soviet-backed communists in Afghanistan.<sup>111</sup> The group renamed itself every time it was banned, most recent into Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat.<sup>112</sup>

#### **Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (Army of Jhang, LeJ)**

The LeJ is a militant extremist sectarian Sunni Deobandi group formed in 1996 as an offshoot faction of the Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan. The LeJ views Shia Muslims as heretics and their killing as religiously justified. Reports indicate that it is funded by private Arab donors for the purpose of serving as an anti-Shia and anti-Iran militant group.<sup>113</sup> It has been banned in 2001.<sup>114</sup> In the last years the group has become a significant threat to the country. It is assumed to have been involved in 116 terror attacks in 2013, but also in incidents of inciting of unrest, being responsible for the killing of 441 people. Different factions of the group operate mainly in Karachi and Quetta.<sup>115</sup>

LeJ has gained a reputation as the most violent Sunni extremist organisation in Pakistan. It operates as a collection of loosely coordinated sub-units headed by semi-autonomous chiefs. Members have operated in small cells - usually ranging from five to eight persons - that disperse after completing their missions in an attempt to avoid detection from Pakistani authorities.<sup>116</sup>

#### **Sipah-e-Muhammed (Army of Muhammad in Pakistan, SMP)**

The militant sectarian Shia group Sipah-e-Muhammed was formed as a splinter group of the TNFJ<sup>117</sup> as reaction to Anti-Shia attacks of Sipah-e-Sahaba with the declared aim of protecting Shia interest.<sup>118</sup> It is involved in target killings of rival Sunni religious leaders and activists of the banned

Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP). Different factions of the groups are operating in Karachi and Quetta. A faction in Punjab is dysfunctional since a crackdown in the late 1990s.

In 2013, for example, Sipah-e-Muhammed is suspected to have been involved in 63 sectarian attacks and killing 79 people, mainly in target killings of Sunni religious scholars and activists of the banned Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan in Karachi and Quetta.<sup>119</sup>

## **Sectarian Violence**

### **Extent and specific forms of sectarian terrorist attacks**

While 2011 marked a decrease in sectarian attacks, 2012 saw a surge in Pakistan, especially in Quetta and Karachi,<sup>120</sup> and mainly affecting Shiites.<sup>121</sup> The Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) counted 111 terrorist attacks against other Muslim denominations in the year 2011, taking the lives of 314 persons.<sup>122</sup> For 2012, PIPS registered 202 sectarian terrorist killing of 537 people<sup>123</sup> – to take a comparison – the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) researched at least 531 fatal victims in sectarian terrorist attacks for 2012.<sup>124</sup>

2013 saw an even higher increase of victims in sectarian terrorist attacks. 208 sectarian terrorist attacks (6 more than 2012) claimed the lives of 658 people in 2013, an increase of 22 percent in fatalities, according to PIPS.<sup>125</sup>

Likely in correlation to the pre-election period, the first two months of 2013 have been especially plagued by an intense surge of sectarian violence, mainly in Karachi and Quetta. In January and February alone 238 had to die in sectarian motivated terrorist attacks, the overwhelming majority in two large-scale attacks against Hazara in Quetta. Following this peak, sectarian terror declined in the following two months, however, still one of the large-scale attacks of the pre-election period also targeted the Shia community – killing 48 people in a predominantly Shia district of Karachi on 3rd March.<sup>126</sup>

The overwhelming majority of victims of sectarian attacks are Shia.<sup>127</sup> For

example, in 2012 out of all the sectarian terrorist attacks counted by PIPS, 60 percent targeted the Shia community, 30 percent Sunni. In these attacks 395 Shia have been killed, constituting 73 percent of all fatal victims of sectarian attacks. Human Rights Watch (HRW) estimated the death toll among the Shia population in sectarian attacks for 2012 at least at 325 victims, to cite further sources.<sup>129</sup>

In 2013, although only more than half of the sectarian terrorist attacks were targeted against the Shia community, the number of victims even diverged disproportionately wider. In attacks targeting the Shia community 471 people have been killed, while in sectarian attacks on Sunni community 99 fatalities had to be recorded. This can be traced back to the fact that most of the attacks of Shia terrorist groups against Sunni are target killings.<sup>130</sup> Again, to compare further sources, HRW numbered the fatal victims of the Shia Muslim population in attacks targeting against Shia at 400 for 2013. Of these at least 200 had been killed in and around Quetta (Baluchistan), most of them from the Hazara community.<sup>131</sup>

Among the Shia population, Hazara in Balochistan are the main target group and victims of sectarian attacks. HRW estimated more than one hundred of the 325 Shia victims were killed in Baluchistan and most of these were Hazara.<sup>132</sup> HRCP counted 119 Shia Hazara been killed in 2012 in Quetta.<sup>133</sup> 2013 began even worse for the Hazara community in Quetta. In the first two months of 2013, as already mentioned, two series of large scale attacks targeting the Hazara community in Quetta claimed the lives of, depending on the source, over 170<sup>134</sup> to over 200 people.<sup>135</sup>

In 2013 some of the Shia sub-sects that previously had been spared by faith-based violence were also targeted. In August, hand grenade attacks on two community centres and worship places of Ismaili Muslim community killed two people in Karachi. The police suspected Taliban involvement. Prior to these attacks, the peaceful and progressive Ismaili community had only faced communal conflict in Gilgit Baltistan and Chitral. Four members from the Shiite Bohra Muslim community were killed in targeted attacks in Karachi in 2013. Sectarian motives were suspected.<sup>136</sup>

However, as examined before, while most attacks on Sunni adherents, mainly on activist of extremist or rival groups, may be executed by Shia extremist groups attacks on Sunni communities or adherents are also executed by Sunni extremist groups.

For example, on 25 February 2013, a bomb blast killed two people at a Shrine located near Shirkarpur in Sindh<sup>137</sup> and in January 2014, the Pakistan Taliban allegedly slit six people's throats while they were visiting a Sufi shrine in Karachi.<sup>138</sup>

The main form of attacks between adherents of different Muslim denominations is targeted killings. As such, about 85 percent of all sectarian attacks 2012 and more than 80 percent in 2013 have been targeted killings of individuals, most of them in Karachi, while most of the victims have been lost to suicide attacks.<sup>140</sup>

A form of attack which caught wide attention were instances of buses of Shia pilgrims en route to or returning from Iran were hijacked by extremists and Shia travellers were selected and executed. In 2012, for example, in Chilas, Diامر district nine Shia travellers were dragged out from a bus and killed. In two further incidents 2012 Shia pilgrims travelling to or from Gilgit have been killed in terrorist attacks in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa districts bordering Gilgit Baltistan, where militants dressed up as security forces picked out Shias on basis of the Shia sound of their names on their identity cards.<sup>141</sup> The authorities arrested five suspects in March 2012 for a bus attack in February.<sup>142</sup>

Due to the attacks the buses only travelled in convoys with security escorts, but still in October 2013, in an attack on a convoy two security forces personnel died.<sup>143</sup>

### **Sectarian clashes**

Sectarian violence not only expresses itself in attacks of terrorist groups, clashes also occur on societal level between rival sects. Since 2011 a decline in sectarian clashes could be witnessed, while the sectarian

terrorist attacks and their intensity increased considerably.<sup>144</sup> In 2011, 83 people were killed in 28 sectarian clashes<sup>145</sup> and in 2012 26 died in 11 sectarian clashes, while in 12 sectarian clashes between adherents of Muslim sects, which were reported from Pakistan in 2013, 29 people died. All of the sectarian clashes in 2013 occurred between Shia and Sunni, most of them in November, during the Islamic month of Muharram. Three of these occurred in Rawalpindi (Punjab), two in Karachi (Sindh) and one in Quetta (Baluchistan), one in Lahore and one in each further four districts of Punjab and one in the Kohat district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.<sup>146</sup>

### **Regional spread and concentration**

Sectarian violence differs in intensity, frequency, spread and forms. Concentrations can be found in certain districts/areas. Incidents of sectarian violence - clashes and terrorist attacks - in 2013 were witnessed in 29 of 116 districts of Pakistan and particularly sectarian terrorist attacks affected 26 districts of Pakistan in 2013.<sup>147</sup>

According to a breakdown of PIPS, 85 % of all sectarian incidents – considering clashes and terrorist attacks together – in 2012 occurred in Karachi, Quetta, Gilgit and Kurram Agency. These are according to PIPS also hotspots of sectarian violence in annual comparison of 2010-2012.<sup>148</sup> Karachi, Quetta and Peshawar were also the sectarian hotspots in 2013 while Gilgit was spared in 2013.<sup>149</sup>

Sporadic incidents also occur in other parts of the country, some areas developing into regular hotspots of sectarian violence. In this regard PIPS especially names Central and South Punjab, Hangu and Dera Ismail Khan in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Khyber and Orakzai in FATA and Mastung in Baluchistan.<sup>150</sup> Besides corresponding hotspots for 2012 and 2013, HRCF also speaks of Diامر in Gilgit Baltistan and the districts Kohistan and Mansehra in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as sectarian flashpoints in 2012<sup>151</sup> and USDOS of Kohat, Tank (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) and Dera Ghazi Khan (South Punjab) in 2012 and 2013.<sup>152</sup> Additionally, in 2012 one large-scale attack with around 20 fatal victims each also hit Rawalpindi and the southern district Rahimyar Khan in 2012.<sup>153</sup> In 2011, besides the already mentioned

foci, also Lahore (Punjab) and Nowshera (KP) have been flashpoints of sectarian violence.<sup>154</sup>

For 2013, considerable incidents besides from some of the already mentioned flashpoints were also reported from the twin cities of Rawalpindi-Islamabad. Islamabad, which has been mainly spared by sectarian attacks and also saw just a few low-scale general attacks in recent years, had to see two sectarian attacks that took four lives. Further concentrations in 2013 were witnessed in Bolan in Baluchistan as well as Bhakkar, Lahore and Gujrat in Punjab. In sum, more than 84 percent of the incidents of sectarian violence and 91 percent of the total number of people killed in such violence in 2013 concentrated in Quetta, Karachi, Peshawar, Hangu, Parachinar and the twin cities of Islamabad-Rawalpindi.<sup>155</sup>

### **Federal Administered Tribal Agencies (FATA)**

In the Federal Administered Tribal Agencies sectarian violence time and again erupt into clashes between Shia and Sunni tribes.<sup>156</sup> In an example for a sectarian tribal conflict in the FATA, the Shia Turi tribe has a long history of conflict with Sunni members of the Bangash tribe in the Kurram agency. The presence of the TTP, who established itself in Kurram Agency after fleeing the offensives by the Pakistan Army in 2009-10 added to the complexity of the tribal conflict in the agency.<sup>157</sup>

Sectarian terrorist attacks also occur. However, in 2013 that kind of attacks and the number of victims decreased. Three such attacks, in comparison to ten in the previous year, killed 57 people. All the fatal victims in 2013 were lost in a twin suicide blast in July by a faction of TTP in Parachinar (Kurram Agency, FATA) in an area predominately populated by Shia.<sup>158</sup>

### **Sindh - Karachi**

Pakistan's economic and Sindh's provincial capital - Karachi - plagued by all kind of violence - is scene of sectarian terrorist attacks, mainly target killings of members of rival sects, as well as of shootouts between Sunni and Shia street gangs in the suburbs. In Karachi, Shiites engage in terrorist activities on their own as defence against Sunni terrorism. As such, the

terrorist outfit Sipah-e-Muhammad Pakistan is a Shia group involved in target killings of religious leaders and activists of the Sunni terrorist outfit Sipah-e-Sahaba. Not counting Karachi, in the rest of Sindh incidents of sectarian violence are rare.<sup>159</sup>

While 130 sectarian motivated attacks killed 210 people in Karachi in 2013, the rest of Sindh was affected by two attacks. For the second year in a row, sectarian terrorist attacks and clashes, as well as the number of victims significantly increased in Karachi. Thus, in number of sectarian attacks, Karachi has been the worst affected area of Pakistan in 2013. The Sunni sectarian militant group Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and the Shia group Sipah-e-Muhammand were the main perpetrators.

Most of the sectarian attacks in Karachi, 118 of 130, were target killings.<sup>160</sup> At least 45 people were killed and over 130 injured in a massive bombing in Karachi's Shia-dominated neighbourhood of Abbas Town in March 2013.<sup>161</sup>

In 2013, the shi'ite Ismaili in Karachi community that before was spared of being a target of terrorist attacks, was also hit in two attacks with claiming two people's lives.<sup>162</sup>

### **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA are the areas of Pakistan, which are hit hardest by suicide attacks. After security forces and political leaders sectarian minorities are one of the main targets.<sup>163</sup> Especially sectarian attacks on mosques are prevalent in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.<sup>164</sup>

In 2013, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa saw an increase in sectarian attacks, from 14 in 2012 to 23 in 2013, claiming 76 fatalities that mark an increase of 28 percent in fatalities. Most affected were Peshawar and Hangu, witnessing together 20 sectarian attacks with 71 fatalities. Most sectarian attacks in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were carried out by Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and TTP.<sup>165</sup>

### **Punjab**

Although the overall number of terror attacks and their victims are comparatively few in Punjab, still occasional attacks on Shiites occur and<sup>166</sup> sectarian attacks constitute a major portion of the attacks in Punjab. Also most of the clashes between members of Sunni and Shia in 2013 occurred there.<sup>167</sup> The south Punjab, particularly Jhang is the origin of the Anti-Shia militant groups Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and Sipah-e-Sahaba where they still have support bases, although their attacks are mainly perpetrated in Karachi and Quetta.<sup>169</sup>

In 2013 Punjab, including Islamabad, suffered 17 sectarian attacks, taking 32 lives. The number of such attacks increased compared to 2012, while the number of victims decreased. However, while in 2012 only four districts were affected, in 2013 there were eight. Most of these attacks were directed against the Shia community. Except for one suicide blast in Rawalpindi, all attacks in Punjab, including Islamabad were target killings or direct shoot outs. Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and Sipah-e-Muhammand were the main perpetrators.<sup>170</sup>

Societal outbreaks of violence between Shia and Sunni decreased in Punjab from nine in 2011 to three in 2012 with no fatality reported.<sup>171</sup> However, in 2013, the overwhelming majority of sectarian clashes in Pakistan, eight out of twelve, took place in Punjab, taking 22 lives, with Rawalpindi constituting a major flashpoint of sectarian clashes in Pakistan.<sup>172</sup>

In the gravest incident, in November 2013 clashes blazed up in Rawalpindi (Punjab) during a Shia Ashura procession in the course of the 10th Muharram, claiming at least 10 lives.<sup>173</sup> The Muharram procession coincided with a sermon in a Sunni mosque.<sup>174</sup> The violence is said to be provoked as reaction to insulting speeches by the Sunni clerics of the seminary the procession passed by.<sup>175</sup> 5,000 policemen were deployed to control the situation.<sup>176</sup> Although the imposed curfew was lifted after three days, the situation remained tense for a longer period.<sup>177</sup> Due to protest violence also erupted in the districts Multan and Bhawalnagar of Punjab province<sup>178</sup> as well as in Kohat and Hangu in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. At least three people were killed in Kohat.<sup>179</sup>

Ahead of the ceremonies the authorities had already stepped up security and deployed tens of thousands of police and soldiers across the country to prevent possible attacks against the Shia minority taking part in the commemorations.<sup>180</sup>

### **Baluchistan**

Baluchistan witnessed an enormous increase of 62 percent in fatal victims of sectarian attacks, although the number of such attacks declined considerably. This increase is mainly due to the unprecedented large-scale terrorist attacks against the Hazara community in Quetta, taking the lives of at least 170 members of the Hazara community only in the first two months of 2013. Previously, most of the sectarian terrorist tactic concentrated on targeted killings, attacks on passenger busses and low intensity blasts. Quetta is the main town in Baluchistan affected by sectarian attacks and also for whole Pakistan the highest number of lives lost in sectarian attacks was reported from Quetta. In 22 sectarian attacks 260 people were killed in Quetta, most of them Hazara Shia. Besides Quetta, six other districts in Baluchistan have been affected by sectarian violence. In sum, 276 people have been killed in all affected districts in Baluchistan. Of the 33 sectarian attacks in 2013, 21 were targeted against the Shia, mainly Hazara, and 21 against Sunni community. Most of the attacks have been perpetrated by the Sunni militant groups Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and Jaishul Islam, as well as the Shia militant group Sipah-e-Muhammand.<sup>181</sup>

The Hazara accuse the authorities of not being willing to protect them. Due to security concerns they retreated to the two mainly by Hazara populated enclaves in Quetta.<sup>182</sup> The massive bombings appear to force the Hazara community to migrate from Quetta. After the massive twin attack on the Hazara community in January, hundreds of Hazara staged a sit-in protest with the bodies of the deceased, refusing to bury them. Shia parties staged protests in different Pakistani towns. The Hazara community stopped their sit-in and buried their dead after the government met their demand and imposed governor's rule in Baluchistan.<sup>183</sup>

### **Gilgit Baltistan**

In Gilgit Baltistan tensions between Shia and Sunni occasionally flare up in violent riots.<sup>184</sup> In rural areas of Gilgit Baltistan such incidents are rare, the living together is rather harmonic, also with the Ismaeli community.<sup>185</sup>

Between 2009 and 2012 Gilgit-Baltistan experienced an upsurge in sectarian violence between Shi'ite Muslims, who form the majority in Gilgit-Baltistan, and Sunni Muslims who have migrated to the region with the tacit support of federal authorities.<sup>186</sup>

In 2012 PIPS counted 20 sectarian terrorist attacks in Gilgit Baltistan, 12 against Sunni, 8 against Shia, causing 18 deaths, mainly in target killings. 19 of these occurred in the capital Gilgit and one in Chilas, Diamer district on Shia pilgrims. According to PIPS 12 people have been killed in three clashes (two of them in April only) between Shia and Sunni in the capital Gilgit in Gilgit Baltistan in 2012.<sup>187</sup> The German Foreign Office speaks of 14 deaths,<sup>188</sup> Freedom House of at least 16 in the incidents of April.<sup>189</sup> It was possible to calm down the situation. The different sects worked together for inter-sectarian dialogue.<sup>190</sup> In May 2012, the Gilgit Baltistan Legislative Assembly passed a law aimed at curbing Sunni-Shiite violence, forbidding clerics of one sect from issuing edicts or statements against the other.<sup>191</sup> In 2013, Gilgit Baltistan was spared from sectarian attacks;<sup>192</sup> however, sectarian tensions are easy to ignite.<sup>193</sup> Since attacks on Shiites in other parts of Pakistan in 2013 killed some residents of Gilgit Baltistan protests arose also in the region. In sectarian clashes in December three people were killed.<sup>194</sup>

### **Attempts of prevention and containment**

Human Rights organizations like Human Rights Watch have heavily criticised Pakistan as failing to crack down on sectarian violence<sup>195</sup> and state that Sunni militant groups such as the banned Lashkar-e Jhangvi operate with virtual impunity across Pakistan. Human Rights Watch assumes that law enforcement officials either turn a blind eye or are helpless to prevent attacks.<sup>196</sup> The reaction of the state has been described as grossly inadequate. Authorities have not consistently brought the perpetrators of such violence to justice. Pakistan's judiciary also critically remarks the

state's performance in such violence. In September 2012, a panel of Supreme Court judges, led by Pakistan's Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry, issued a highly critical statement of government efforts to bring security for Hazara in Quetta.<sup>197</sup> Also, Pakistani Chief Justice Tassaduq Hussain Jiliani has on several occasions criticized the security situation for religious minorities and tasked the government to take remedial steps.<sup>198</sup>

However, in fact there are at least crackdowns and arrests against members of groups like Lashkar-e-Janghvi.

Over 50 suspected members of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and Sipah-e-Sahaba have been arrested in a crackdown in southern parts of Punjab, where Lashkar-e-Jhangvi has strongholds and support bases. Among the arrested were leading figures like LeJ co-founder and chief Malik Ishaq,<sup>199</sup> who was arrested for one month under a pre-emptive law. He had already been incarcerated for 14 years until July 2011, for charges of murder of Shias, without proof.<sup>200</sup> The other co-founder and leader of LeJ is imprisoned since for years.<sup>201</sup> In March 2013 a top commander of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi in Sindh was arrested in Karachi<sup>202</sup> and in July 2013 the head of the "death squad" of LeJ.<sup>203</sup> Several other arrests of LeJ member were reported, for example, during March 2014 in Karachi<sup>204</sup> and April 2014 in Lahore.<sup>205</sup>

Special provisions are taken for the safety of Shia mourners during Muharram, including restricting the movement of certain clerics in some cities. Entry of certain religious clerics is banned in major cities during the month of Muharram to prevent incitement of violence and hate speech. For example, in 2013 27 clerics were banned from making public speeches in Lahore and 31 were banned from entering the city. Similar bans were imposed on clerics throughout Punjab: for example, 60 clerics were banned in Taxila, 50 in Chakwal, 25 in Sargodha and nine in Narowal. The government also banned selling or playing of audiotapes and public speeches that incite hatred of any sect, group or community.<sup>206</sup>

Since the attacks on pilgrim buses en route to Iran, they only travel in convoys, escorted by security forces.<sup>207</sup> In general, police protection is

provided during Shiite processions. Nevertheless, attacks do occur in course of such events.<sup>208</sup>

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# **Migration from Pakistan to Europe – a statistical overview**

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The present chapter analyses migration flows and stocks from Pakistan to Europe for the period 2002 to 2013 from a purely quantitative perspective. The analysis uses available migration statistics provided by Eurostat, UNHCR, OECD, the Budapest Process and national statistical authorities and draws conclusions on basis of the data they provide. It does not aim at providing underlying and more in-depth explanations for the observed quantitative trends but tries to describe the main migration patterns, to examine if and how migration from Pakistan to the EU has changed over time, and to carefully assess whether major changes can be expected in the future.

International migration and asylum statistics are not yet fully harmonised, neither at the European nor at the global level. Statistics on migration from Pakistan are not fully comprehensive or comparable, however, the available data allow for identifying and describing the main quantitative developments and trends. The analysis is restricted to countries and time periods for which comparable data are available. Since data collection practices have changed over time and – more importantly – vary from country to country, there is no guarantee of full comparability of data. However, many efforts have been made at the level of the European Union in the past years and the data situation has improved significantly regarding comprehensiveness and comparability. The available data allow for providing a basic picture of migration from Pakistan to Europe. Taking into account the still existing limitations in available migration statistics, it has to be emphasised that the provided figures should be perceived as indicators for certain trends and developments rather than giving a fully accurate analysis of the situation in quantitative terms.

Taking into account its significance, the first section presents main trends

regarding general and labour migration to Europe, describes the main types of residence permits issued to Pakistani nationals, and discusses the issue of acquisition of citizenship. The second section presents main trends flight migration and asylum seekers from Pakistan, the related quantitative developments, and the most important European destination countries. The final section briefly outlines main trends concerning irregular migration and return.

### **Main characteristics of the migration situation**

Pakistan is not only an important but also a traditional emigration country. This development started immediately after its independence when an estimated six million people moved from Pakistan to India on a permanent basis for religious and political reasons. The 1950s and 1970s saw significant flows of economically motivated emigrants towards Europe and Middle-Eastern countries.<sup>1</sup> Today, Pakistan is one of the most important emigration countries on a global scale. For the year 2010 it was estimated that a total of 6.3 million Pakistanis were living outside their home country. The main countries of residence of Pakistani emigrants were Saudi Arabia (app. 22%), the United Kingdom (app. 22%), the USA (app. 16%), the United Arab Emirates (app. 13%) and Canada (app. 5%). From a regional perspective, app. 44% of Pakistani emigrants resided in the Gulf region, 32% in Europe and 21% in Northern America.<sup>2</sup>

Pakistan's population is estimated to have grown by up to 49% between 1998 (132.4 million) and 2011 (197.4 million). With annual population growth rates of 2% Pakistan is faced with the challenging task to create 1.25 million jobs on an annual basis for its growing population and labour force. Labour emigration is vital for the country, both in terms of reducing the pressure on the domestic labour market and in generating income by way of migrant remittances. After a period of accelerated economic growth between 2000 and 2005, Pakistan faced a drop in growth with a low point in 2008. After that growth rates have increased again but the economic recovery is still fragile. The reasons for the economic challenges are manifold: inflation, energy crisis, the volatile political and security situation

and the global economic crisis.<sup>3</sup>

The year 2007, with the assassination of Benazir Bhutto, the imposing of the emergency rule and the economic downturn was also a turning year regarding emigration from Pakistan to Europe. As the next sections will show, immigration from Pakistan to the European Union increased significantly in 2007 and remained at high levels afterwards.

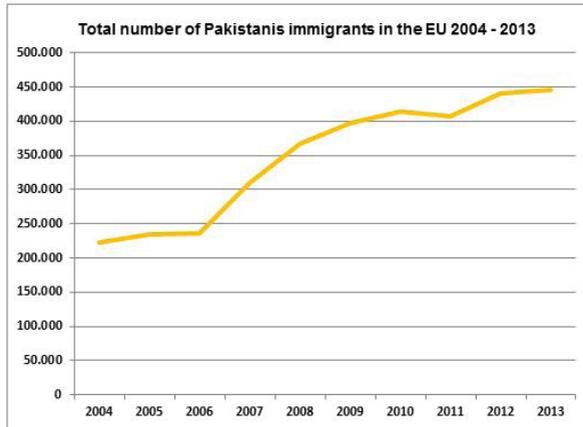
But Pakistan is also an important immigration country and country of destination for refugees in the region. The most recent statistics estimate the total number of immigrants at 4.2 million. Immigrants from Afghanistan represent the largest group among them, comprising both labour migrants (due to the close historical and economic ties) and refugees. In 2012, Pakistan hosted nearly 1.7 million refugees; almost all of them originated from Afghanistan. Thus, Pakistan continued to be the largest refugee receiving country in the world. In addition, the country has to deal with large numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs). Estimates speak of about five million people that have been displaced by conflict and violence in the North-Western regions and another 15 million people that have been displaced due to natural disasters.<sup>4</sup>

### **Immigration stocks and populations**

Not all of the main countries of destination of Pakistani immigrants in the EU have reported their national figures on stocks of Pakistani populations to Eurostat for all respective years of the last decade. Thus, the presented data are not fully comparable. However, when combining available data from Eurostat, OECD and the UK Home Office a quite accurate picture of the volume and distribution of Pakistani immigrants in the EU can be given.

Between 2004 and 2013 the number of Pakistani immigrants residing in the European Union doubled from a total of 223,024 to a total of 446,713. The most significant increases in Pakistani immigrant stocks were observed in the years 2007 and 2008 with annual increases of 31.1% and 18.7% respectively. All other years showed comparatively modest but mainly

positive trends.



### Main European countries of destination

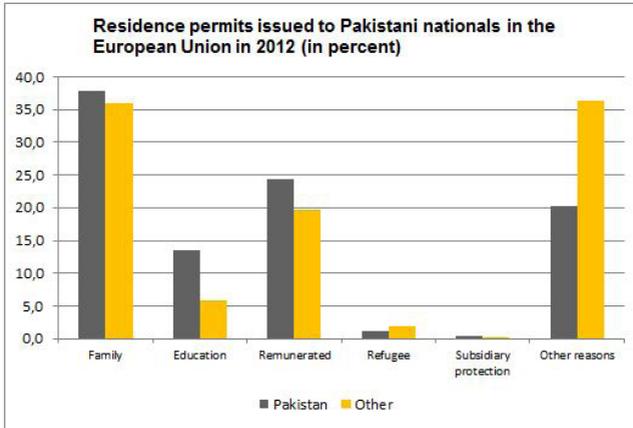
Legal immigration from Pakistan to the EU confirms a general trend in migration, i.e. the “clustering” or concentration of immigration from a third country in a smaller number of European destination countries. In 2013, 87.3% of all Pakistani immigrants in the EU were recorded in five main countries of destination: the United Kingdom (a total of 184,791 or 41.4%), Italy (a total of 77,485 or 17.3%), Spain (a total of 65,529 or 14.7%), Germany (a total of 38,028 or 8.5%) and Greece (a total of 24,094 or 5.4%). The degree of concentration has not changed significantly since 2004 but there was a noticeable shift regarding some of the main destinations. The United Kingdom remained the single most important country of destination; but Italy and Spain overtook Germany and Greece and emerged as new important destinations. Between 2004 and 2013 the total number of Pakistani immigrants in Greece increased almost six-fold from 4,174 to 24,094. Immigration from Pakistan to the European Union is predominantly male. In 2013 the share of males among all immigrants from Pakistan was at 60.4% and thus above overall average. It can be expected that many of these male migrants will sooner or later reunite with their spouses or start a family. In combination with the long immigration history and the stable positive immigration trends over the last decade, the likely high levels of family migration suggest that immigration from Pakistan will continue to

move at considerable scales in the future.

### **Residence permits**

The figures on annually issued residence permits and respective types provide for a more detailed picture on types and characteristics of Pakistani migration to the European Union. According to the data reported to Eurostat more than 380,000 residence permits issued to Pakistani citizens were valid at the end of 2012 in 27 EU Member States. For 2013, not all EU Member States have reported their figures on residence permits yet; the total number for the 22 which have is at 358,445 and in line with previous trends. Related figures follow general immigration trends, the EU Member States with the highest shares of Pakistani immigration are also the ones which issued the highest numbers of residence permits. Most permits were issued in the United Kingdom (app. 125,000 or 32.9% of all permits), followed by Italy (app. 97,000 or 25.5%), Spain (app. 70,000 or 18.3%), Germany (app. 24,000 or 6.2%) and Greece (app. 24,000 or 3.6%).<sup>5</sup>

An analysis of the reasons for issuing residence permits confirms that compared to other countries of origin the main immigration patterns from Pakistan are linked to labour and education. Statistics on the permits show shares for “remunerated activities” and – even more significant – for “education”, which are above the overall averages for third country nationals. The slightly above average value for “family reasons” can be explained by the longer immigration history – more stable immigration trends result in higher degrees of family formation and reunification – and the higher share of employed immigrants, who are in a legal position to bring their family members. Only 1% of Pakistani citizens hold a residence permit as recognised refugees implying that flight migration is of minor significance in the context of immigration from Pakistan to the European Union.



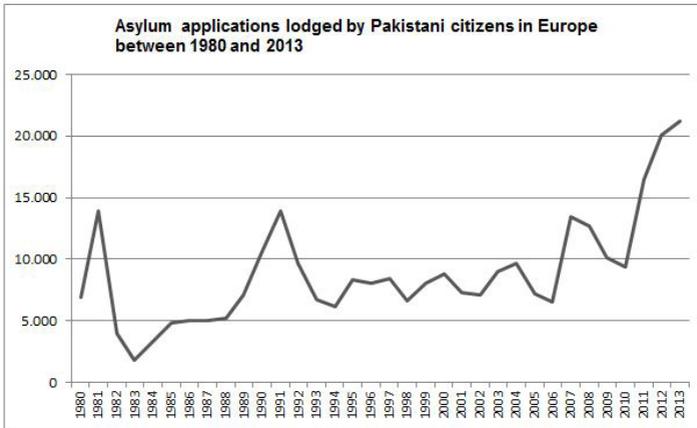
## Flight migration from Pakistan

### Asylum trends in the EU

Pakistan is also an important country of origin of asylum seekers. With a total of 26,300 applications lodged in 44 industrialized countries Pakistan ranked sixth in 2013 according to UNHCR data, following Syria, the Russian Federation, Afghanistan, Iraq and Serbia (and Kosovo: S/RES/1244 (1999)). For the year 2013 the UNHCR registered a total of 484,560 asylum applications lodged in Europe, a total of 398,250 were lodged in countries of the European Union (EU 28). When looking at UNHCR figures on applications in the EU - in line with the trend at the global scale - Syria was the most important country of origin (48,926 applications or 12.2%), followed by the Russian Federation (37,987 applications or 9.5%), Serbia (and Kosovo: S/RES/1244 (1999) - 33,192 applications or 8.3%) and Afghanistan (23,965 applications or 6.0%). Pakistan ranked fifth with a total of 20,326 applications (or 5.1%) followed by Somalia (18,200 applications or 4.6%).<sup>6</sup>

The comparison of the total number of asylum applications lodged by Pakistani nationals in the European Union in the years 2002 and 2013 suggests clearly an increasing trend. For those EU Member States where annual data are available for both years,<sup>7</sup> the total number of applications

almost tripled, from a total of 7,094 applications to a total of 20,326 applications. This was also the highest value recorded for Pakistani applicants since 1980. The analysis of the annual developments within this period, however, shows a high degree of fluctuation between the years. The years 2006/2007 and 2010/2011 saw significant jumps in overall applications with annual increases of 107.0% and 75.2%.



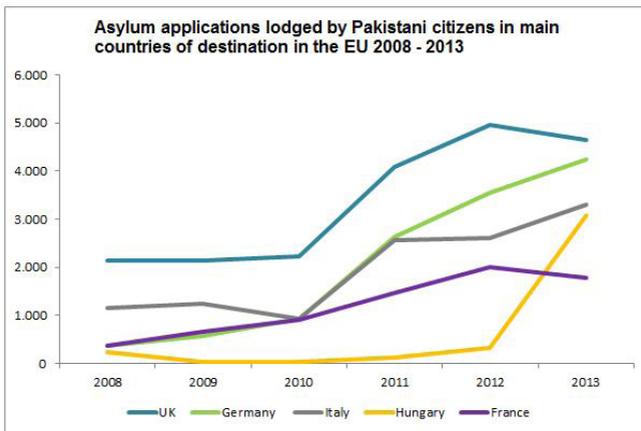
In recent years, the EU has witnessed a constant increase of overall asylum applications. According to Eurostat, the annual application figures have increased by 68.2% from a total of app. 226,000 to a total of app. 434,000 between 2008 and 2013. Annual applications lodged by Pakistani citizens are in line with this trend; they have increased by 64.1% (from a total of app. 12,500 to app. 20,300). Against the background of the overall increase in asylum applications, this trend also implies that the share of asylum applications lodged by Pakistani nationals among the total applications remained stable with 4.9% in 2008 and 4.8% in 2013.

### Main countries of destination in the EU

In 2013, the United Kingdom recorded the most asylum applications lodged by Pakistani citizens in the European Union. With a total of 4,645 applications, the country received app. 22% of all Afghan asylum applications in the EU for that year. Germany was the second most important country of destination (a total of 4,245 applications or 20%), followed by Italy (a total of

3,310 applications or 16%), Hungary (a total of 3,080 applications or 15%), and France (a total of 1,780 applications or 9%).

It is an often observed trend that asylum applications lodged by citizens from a specific country of origin in the EU focus on a small number of main destination countries and that the share of these destination countries among the overall applications increases over time. Such a trend, however, cannot be fully confirmed for Pakistani citizens. In 2013 there was still a high degree of concentration on five main countries of destination of asylum seekers in the European Union, which decreased from 87% in 2008 to 82% in 2013. During this period changes regarding the EU Member States with the highest application rates could be observed as well. In 2013 Greece recorded only one fifth of the applications that had been submitted in the country in 2008. Contrary to that, Hungary received almost 12 times more asylum applications from Pakistani citizens than in 2008, Germany 10 times more. All other main destination countries showed increasing but comparatively stable developments.



Such shifts can be explained by a number of reasons ranging from statistical inaccuracies to legal developments to the existence or lack of well-established migrant communities which could assist newcomers. A mere look at the quantitative developments, however, suggests a change in migration patterns. Asylum applicants from Pakistan increasingly avoid

submitting their applications in Greece and try to do so in EU Member States further up the so called South-Eastern migration route to the EU. One explanation for this development might lie in the fact that Greece has significantly increased its returns of Pakistani citizens under a leave order over this period. The actual return rate for Pakistani citizens in Greece, i.e. the number of officially recorded returns of Pakistani citizens under a leave order in a given year, rose from 1.4% in 2008 to 28.0% in 2012.

### **General characteristics of Pakistani asylum seekers in the EU**

With 1.6% the share of individuals considered to be “unaccompanied minors” among asylum seekers from Pakistan in 2013 was below the average 3.1% of unaccompanied minors among all asylum seekers in Europe for this year. Asylum seekers from Pakistan are predominantly male; in 2013 their share among the overall applications was at 89.2%. This is clearly above the general trend of 65.7% of all asylum applicants in the EU being men.<sup>8</sup>

### **Decisions on asylum applications lodged by Pakistani asylum seekers**

It is not possible to compare decisions on asylum cases or recognition rates for certain nationalities between countries. First of all, statistics on decisions do not refer to the years when the respective application was lodged but to the year when a decision was taken. Secondly, countries report statistics depending on the standards of their own national systems. Some countries report decisions on “new applications”, others on “first instance decisions”, “first instance and appeal decisions” or “reopened applications”. Consequently, available figures serve only as a rough indicator and allow only for some very careful conclusions. Regarding decisions on asylum applications from Pakistani citizens in 2012 in the main receiving countries in the EU, the values for granting “convention status” or “complementary protection status” ranged between 0.0% and 47.5%.<sup>9</sup> For the main countries of destination recognition rates range between app. 10% and app. 20%.

### **Irregular migration**

It is by definition not possible to precisely measure the size of irregular

migration to Europe or the total number of irregular migrants residing on the territory of European States. Related estimates are based on extrapolations of other data sets like apprehensions at external borders or within the territory of States, asylum statistics, regularisations or expulsions/leave orders. These statistics refer to foreign nationals who do not - or no longer - fulfil the legal conditions for entry to, presence in or residence on the territory of a state. However, they do not provide information on the concrete migration history or motivations of the individuals affected. Thus, they have to be perceived as rather weak indicators for the real extent of irregular migration from a specific country of origin.

The first statistical indicator on the extent of irregular migration from Pakistan to Europe is the number of Pakistani nationals found to be illegally present on the territory of an EU Member State. In 2013 this number was at 31,160, implying a significant increase of more than 130% since 2008 (13,307). More than 35% of illegally present Pakistani nationals were reported by Greece, 26.4% by the United Kingdom, 9.9% by Germany, 7.4% by Austria and 6.7% by Spain.<sup>10</sup> All those EU Member States had observed increases in the numbers of illegally present Pakistani citizens ranging from plus 75% up to plus 540% in the period between 2008 and 2013. The quoted developments in those five EU Member States suggest intensified irregular migration to three of the main destinations for overall migration from Pakistan to Europe, namely the United Kingdom, Germany and Spain, via two important transit countries, namely Greece and Austria.

Closely linked to the numbers on illegally present third country nationals is the second statistical indicator on orders to leave the country issued by EU Member States on an annual basis (leave orders). In 2013, a total of 26,680 leave orders were issued to Pakistani citizens in the EU. This represented a share of 7.6% among all leave orders that were issued to foreign citizens in that year. Between 2008 and 2013 there has been a significant increase of annual leave orders by plus 109% (from a total of 16,891 leave orders in 2008). 19 out of those 26 EU Member States who have provided data on annual leave orders to Eurostat for this period,<sup>1</sup> observed increases in related statistics over that period. Those increases were most significant in

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<sup>1</sup> Croatia joined the EU only in 2013, Luxembourg did not report any data on leave orders

the above-mentioned destination and transit countries of irregular migration from Pakistan. In addition, Hungary showed a stark increase in leave orders (plus 638%), suggesting that the country also developed into an important transit country for irregular migration from Pakistan to Europe.<sup>11</sup>

The numbers of rejections at the EU external borders concerning citizens from Pakistan move at rather modest levels. In the years 2008 to 2013 a total of 7,490 Pakistani citizens were refused entry at an external border of the European Union, the annual refusals were between 515 and 855. Approximately 95.7% of the rejected did not hold valid travel documents, visa or residence permits, the remaining 4.3% were refused entry upon grounds of false travel documents, visa or residence permits. Most refusals were made at the external borders of the UK (61.5% in 2013).<sup>12</sup>

Taking into account the overall size of immigration from Pakistan to the European Union, the presented indicators suggest rather moderate levels of irregular migration. Rejections at the borders are comparatively low and the – in comparison – high numbers of leave orders indicate that they mainly refer to rejected asylum seekers or individuals with unauthorised residence. The geographical distribution of illegally present persons from Pakistan and persons under a leave order indicate a certain shift from Greece to Hungary with the latter becoming an important transit country for asylum seekers from Pakistan.

### **Acquisitions of citizenship**

Since 2003, a total of 185,593 naturalisations of Pakistani citizens have been reported in 27 EU Member States. The United Kingdom was by far the most important EU Member State in terms of acquisition of citizenship, reflecting the country's status as the most important destination of immigration from Pakistan to Europe over the last decade. With a total of 146,422 almost 80% of all naturalisations of Pakistani citizens in the EU over the period between 2003 and 2013 were reported by the United Kingdom. The numbers reported by the next EU Member States in the ranking were significantly lower: Germany (a total of 12,559 naturalisations

or 6.8%), Belgium (a total of 4,569 or 2.5%), France (a total of 4,335 or 2.3%) and Italy (a total of 3,274 or 1.8%). The overall annual trends in acquisitions of citizenship made a big jump between 2008 and 2009 where figures almost doubled from 13,360 to 25,309 and have remained at this level ever since. The significant increase has to be largely attributed to the developments in the United Kingdom where the total number of immigrants from Pakistan almost doubled between 2004 and 2009. A certain share of these immigrants obviously wanted to obtain British citizenship and after the required duration of legal residence in the country qualified for the acquisition of citizenship, explaining both the increasing trends in naturalisation and the timely delay in comparison to the immigration peak observed in the years 2008 and 2009.

## **Conclusions**

Migration from Pakistan to Europe is mainly to be characterised as legal (or labour) migration at increasing levels with significantly lower flight migration at comparatively stable levels. The share of Pakistani immigrants in the EU holding permits for “remunerated activities”, i.e. for the purpose of work, and “education” are clearly above the average for third country nationals.

Immigration from Pakistan concentrates on a limited number of main countries of destination. In terms of legal or labour migration, the United Kingdom is by far the most important one, hosting almost half of all Pakistani immigrants in the EU. Regarding the less significant number of asylum seekers, there is a more even distribution among the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Hungary and France as main countries of destination.

The years after 2007 saw a significant increase in immigration from Pakistan, a fact owed to the volatile political situation in the country, domestic economic and labour market challenges, and the impacts of the global economic crisis. Taking into account the expected population growth and the challenges linked to creating a sufficient number of jobs for the growing labour force in Pakistan, the large number of internally displaced

persons in the country, and the considerable size of well-established Pakistani communities in several European countries; it can be expected that emigration pressures will persist and emigrants from Pakistan will continue to try to move to Europe.

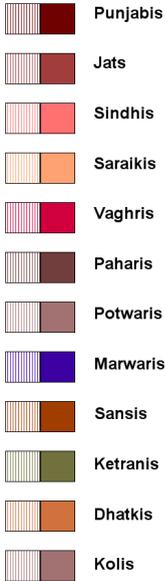
*Martin Hofmann is the Policy Advisor to the Director General of the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD).*

- <sup>1</sup> Maqsood Ahmad Jan, Pakistan's National Emigration Policy - A Review, December 2010 p. 2 [http://www.nccr-pakistan.org/publications\\_pdf/Migration/Jan\\_EmigrationPolicyReview.pdf](http://www.nccr-pakistan.org/publications_pdf/Migration/Jan_EmigrationPolicyReview.pdf) (May 2014).
- <sup>2</sup> Budapest Process, A Silk Routes Partnership For Migration, Pakistan Migration Country Report, 2013, p. 31 <https://www.budapestprocess.org/projects/silk-routes-project> (May 2014).
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 6.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 16.
- <sup>5</sup> Own calculations based on data from Eurostat database, table "All valid permits by reason, length of validity and citizenship on 31 December of each year [migr\_resvalid]" (data extracted in May 2014).
- <sup>6</sup> UNHCR, Asylum trends 2013, p. 27.
- <sup>7</sup> AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU (no data available for 2002), LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK.
- <sup>8</sup> Own calculations based on data from Eurostat database, table "Asylum and new asylum applicants by citizenship, age and sex Annual aggregated data (rounded) [migr\_asyappctza]" (data extracted in July 2014)
- <sup>9</sup> UNHCR Statistical Yearbook 2012, p. 116.
- <sup>10</sup> Own calculations based on data from Eurostat database, table "Third country nationals found to be illegally present - annual data (rounded) [migr\_eipre]" (data extracted in May 2014).
- <sup>11</sup> Own calculations based on data from Eurostat database, table "Third country nationals ordered to leave - annual data (rounded) [migr\_eiord]" (data extracted in May 2014).
- <sup>12</sup> Own calculations based on data from Eurostat database, table "Third country nationals refused entry at the external borders - annual data (rounded) [migr\_eirfs]" (data extracted in May 2014).

# **Maps of Pakistan**

*Michael Izady*

**Indic Group**



**Iranic Group**



**Dravidian Group**



**Tibetan Group**



**Dardic Group**



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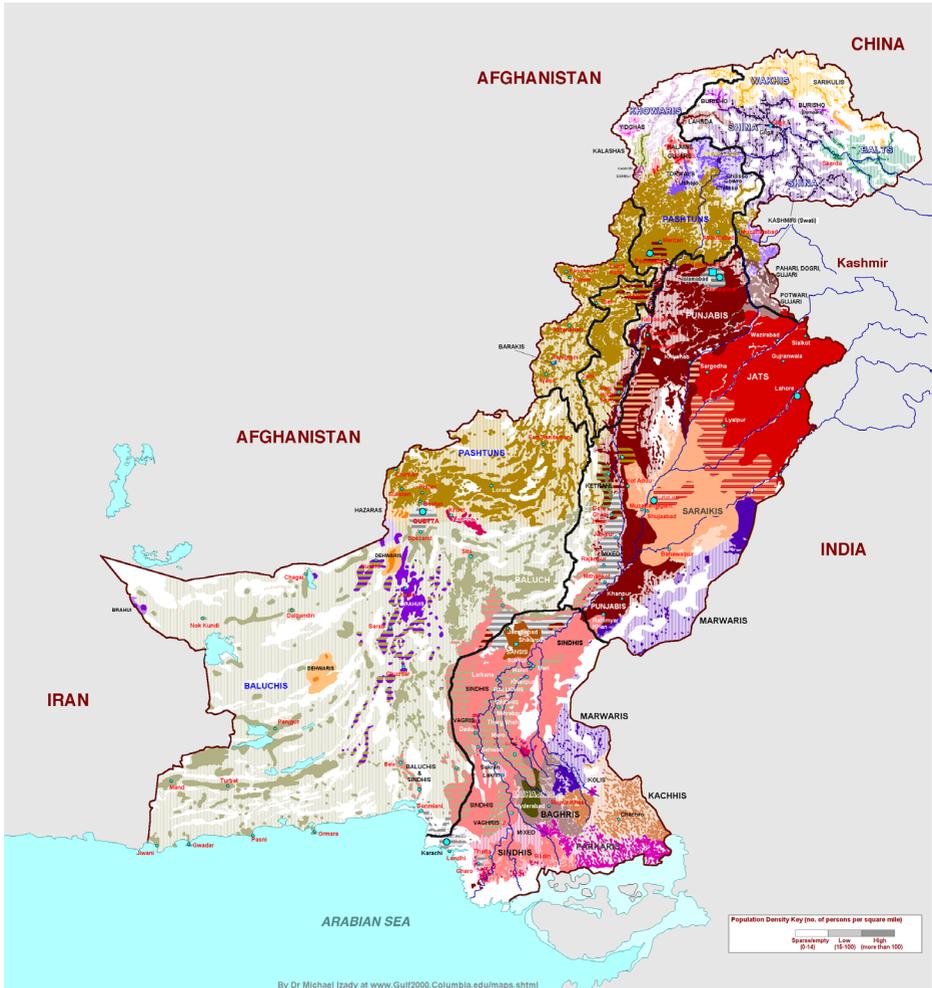
**Ethnic Statistics  
(Percentage of the national total)**

<b>Punjabis</b>	<b>24.62</b>
<b>Jats</b>	<b>22.76</b>
<b>Pashtuns (Pathans)</b>	<b>17.89*</b>
<b>Sindhis</b>	<b>11.16</b>
<b>Saraikis</b>	<b>10.23</b>
<b>Muhajirs (Indians)</b>	<b>7.17</b>
<b>Baluch</b>	<b>3.57</b>
<b>Brahuis</b>	<b>0.59</b>
<b>Others</b>	<b>2.1</b>

**\* This total includes both the Pashto-speaking (15.52% of Pakistan's total population) and Hindko speaking (2.37% of the total).**

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# Ethnic Groups in Pakistan



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## Languages of Pakistan

### Indo-European Family of Languages:

#### Indic Branch:

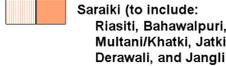
##### Punjabi group



##### Sindhi group



##### Saraiki group



#### Other Indic languages



#### Iranic Branch:



#### Dardic Branch:



#### Dravidian Family



#### Tibetan Family



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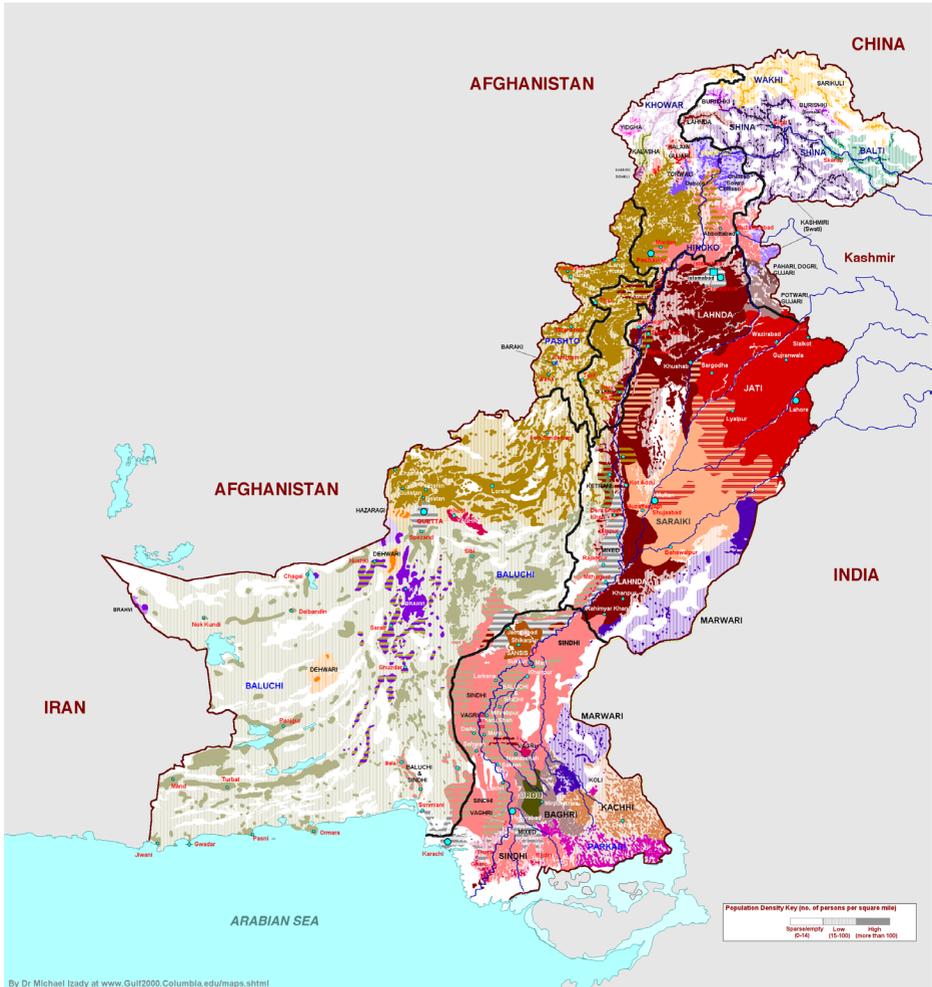
## POPULATION BY MOTHER TONGUE (percentages)

	Urdu	Punjabi	Pashto	Sindhi	Saraiki	Baluchi	Hindko	Others
<b>Pakistan</b>	7.57	44.15	15.42	14.1	10.53	3.57	2.37	2.36
<b>N W F P</b>	0.78	0.97	73.9	0.04	3.86	0.01	17.1	3.33
<b>F A T A</b>	0.8	0.23	99.1	0.01	0.45	0.04	neg	neg
<b>Punjab</b>	4.51	75.23	1.16	0.13	17.36	0.66	neg	0.95
<b>Sindh</b>	21.05	6.99	4.19	59.73	1.00	2.11	neg	4.93
<b>Balochistan</b>	0.97	2.52	29.64	5.58	2.42	54.76	neg	4.11
<b>Islamabad</b>	10.11	71.66	9.52	0.56	1.11	0.06	neg	6.98

Source: Government of Pakistan, Statistical Bureau.

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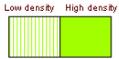
# Languages of Pakistan



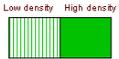
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# Religion in Pakistan

## ISLAM, 95.38%



**Sunnism: 76.3%** (Mainly Hanafi rites of the Barelvi school, with a large Deobandi minority)



**Shi'ism: 19.1%** (Imamis, Ismailis, and the Gnostic Zikris)

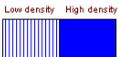


**Mixed Sunni-Shia (high population density)**

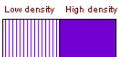


**Mixed Sunni-Shia (low population density)**

## OTHER, 4.62%



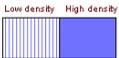
**Christianity (Catholicism and Anglicanism/ Church of Pakistan): 1.5%**



**Hinduism: 1.4%**

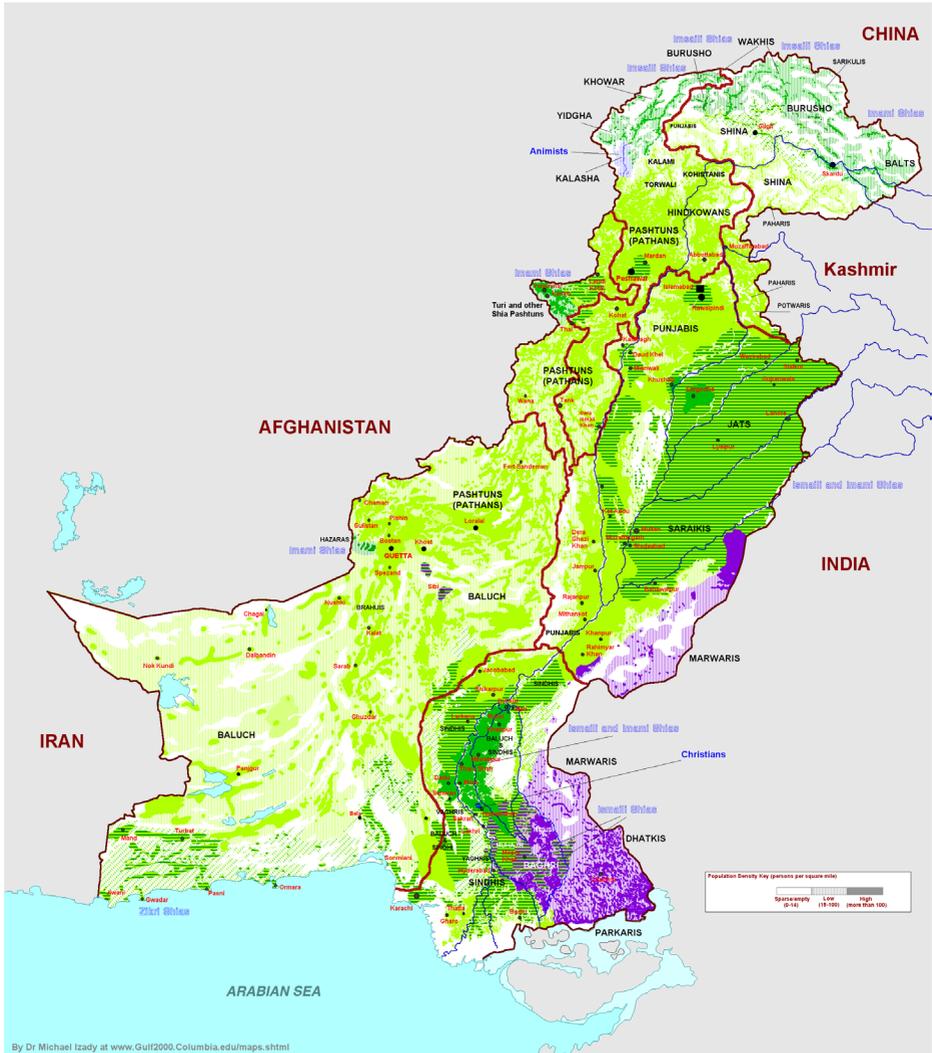


**Ahmadism, Wahhabism/Salafism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, and Baha'ism: 1.7**



**Animism, 0.02**

# Religion in Pakistan



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## Pashtun Tribal Confederacies in Afghanistan and Pakistan

-  Sarban/Abdali/Durrani
-  Karlan
-  Batan/Ghilzai/Ghalji/Ghiljie
-  Gharghasht/Gharghakht
-  Lodi/Lodin
-  Large Pashtun minorities (hachured pattern)
-  Mixed tribes



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