



Organized Crime Watch-36

Pakistan's Organized Crime Weekly Review

Compiled by National Initiative against Organised Crime (NIOC)

7 December to 13 December 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic is not only affecting the economies and societies across the world but also changing the trends of the organized crime and illicit markets. Pakistan is already facing critical economic challenges as well as issues related to governance and internal security. While the coronavirus pandemic has complicated these challenges, it can also bring to fore new challenges related to organized crime and non-state actors in the country. There is a need for institutional vigilance to monitor the changing trends for better understanding and preparedness to cope with future challenges. The National Initiative against Organized Crime (NIOC) is initiating a weekly monitor on Organized Crime as a civil society initiative to support the institutional and community responses. The weekly brief is a result of information collected from open sources, mainly the mainstream media reports, both Urdu and English as well as information collected from various experts associated with the Project.

As of December 13th, the nationwide confirmed cases of Covid-19 infections stood at 440,787, while 384,719 of them have recovered so far in the country. The death toll has reached 8,832. The detail on regional distribution of the total detected cases across Pakistan as well as consequent deaths is given in the table below.¹

Area	Number of Confirmed Cases	Number of Deaths	Deaths as % of Cases
AJK	7,719	191	2.47
Balochistan	17,745	175	0.98

¹ Statistics are drawn from the government's official website on Covid-19: <http://covid.gov.pk/stats/pakistan>

Gilgit Baltistan	4,791	99	2.06
Islamabad	34,840	371	1.06
KP	52,449	1,473	2.80
Punjab	127,541	3,365	2.63
Sindh	195,702	3,158	1.61

1. Terrorism Watch

In a terrorist attack reported from Rawalpindi, over two dozen people including women and children were injured when a blast took place in the busy Ganj Mandi area. Eyewitnesses said two motorcyclists hurled a hand grenade at passers-by and those gathered around a shoe vendor before speeding away. It was a locally made grenade having ‘high intensity explosive’.²

Separately, security forces conducted a search operation in Nawagai tehsil of Bajaur tribal district. A terrorist reportedly wearing a suicide vest set it off when the security forces closed in on him in Saidashah area near the Thangi Bazaar.³

2. Terrorism Financing

During the week under review, a media report revealed that before his death in a US drone attack in 2016, Afghan Taliban leader Mullah Akhtar Mansour had purchased a ‘life insurance’ policy from a private company in Pakistan using a fake identity, it emerged at the hearing of a terror funding case against him. The insurance company confirmed it to an anti-terrorism court in Karachi at the hearing of the case registered against him and his accomplices by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) last year.⁴

3. Drug Trafficking

Revealing that there are over 7 million drug addicts in the country, Prime Minister Imran Khan announced that government would devise a strategy to check drug abuse among the youth and save the future generations.⁵

² Dawn, December 14, 2020, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1595652/25-injured-in-rawalpindi-grenade-explosion>

³ Dawn, December 9, 2020, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1594770/terrorist-blows-himself-up-in-bajaur-raid>

⁴ Dawn, December 13, 2020 <https://www.dawn.com/news/1595456/slain-taliban-chief-had-life-insurance-policy-court-told>

⁵ Dawn, December 8, 2020, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1594537>

Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Mahmood Khan has directed taxation and narcotics control department to take serious steps to protect the youth from menace of drug abuse.⁶

The Director General Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while expressing satisfaction on the overall organizational performance of the ANF, directed it to take proactive and innovative measures to curb drug trafficking.⁷

The ANF conducted 21 counter-narcotics operations throughout the country and seized 1296.9 kilograms of narcotics worth USD 89.039 million in international market, arrested 16 culprits and detained 14 vehicles.⁸

The ANF Balochistan thwarted different attempts of drug trafficking and confiscated over 950 kilograms of opium including morphine, ice, and heroin.⁹

In a joint operation, the Pakistan Navy (PN) along with the ANF seized narcotics worth PKR 1.8 billion in Arabian Sea, off Jiwani, Balochistan.¹⁰

The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has instructed officials to stimulate their anti-smuggling operations against illicit and smuggled cigarettes.¹¹

The district and sessions judge, Saryab division Quetta fined and awarded prison term to a drug pusher.¹² Meanwhile, the anti-narcotics court Rawalpindi fined and awarded prison to two drug peddlers.¹³

The police in the four provinces also conducted multiple anti-drug operations as mentioned below:

- The Airport Security Forces (ASF) at the Islamabad airport arrested a suspected drug pusher and seized over 21 kilograms of heroin from his possession. Separately, the Peshawar police recovered 30 kilograms of heroin from a vehicle.¹⁴

⁶ *Dawn*, December 11, 2020, https://epaper.dawn.com/DetailNews.php?StoryText=11_12_2020_008_002

⁷ *The Nation*, December 9, 2020, <https://nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2020-12-09/page-14/detail-3>

⁸ *Daily Dunya*, December 12, 2020, https://e.dunya.com.pk/detail.php?date=2020-12-12&edition=ISL&id=5433965_47394486

⁹ *Daily Jang*, December 12, 2020, <https://e.jang.com.pk/12-12-2020/Quetta/page2.asp>

¹⁰ *The Express Tribune*, December 12, 2020, <https://tribune.com.pk/epaper/news/Karachi/2020-12-12/ZDFiYzEyM2Y4YjlmNjJmOGZmN2IwMmExMGYyNGQ3NTIuanBlZw%3D%3D>

¹¹ *Dawn*, December 12, 2020, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1595273>

¹² *Daily Jang*, December 8, 2020, <https://e.jang.com.pk/12-08-2020/Quetta/page2.asp>

¹³ *Daily Dunya*, December 12, 2020, https://e.dunya.com.pk/detail.php?date=2020-12-12&edition=ISL&id=5433978_11619972

¹⁴ *Daily Dunya*, December 11, 2020, https://e.dunya.com.pk/detail.php?date=2020-12-11&edition=ISL&id=5433046_28603899

- The Islamabad police arrested three drug peddlers and seized 24 kilograms of hashish, and 1060 grams of ice from their possession.¹⁵
- The Rawalpindi police arrested two drug peddlers from different areas of the city and recovered over 2 kilograms of drugs from their possession.¹⁶
- The Karachi police in Gaddap Town arrested two suspected drug peddlers and recovered 23 kilograms of hashish from their possession.¹⁷ Separately, the rangers in Karachi arrested ten drug peddlers and recovered drugs from their possession.¹⁸
- The officials of Special Investigation Unit in Karachi arrested seven bank robbers and recovered 10 kilograms of hashish and other weaponry from their possession.¹⁹
- The Swat police during a raid against recovered over 2 kilograms of narcotics and filed an FIR against the accused drug pushers.²⁰
- The Sundar police arrested a suspected drug dealer and recovered hashish from his possession.²¹
- The Lahore police arrested a drug pusher and seized over 3 kilograms of hashish from his possession.²²

4. Cyber Crime

During the week under review, Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) issued a rebuttal over a report by the Asia Internet Coalition (AIC), which showed concerns over the recently enacted rules for social media. The PTA statement said that “prejudiced and wrong impression is being created regarding the rules”. The rules — titled “Removal and Blocking of Unlawful Online Content (Procedure, Oversight and Safeguards) 2020” — were notified by the government on Nov 27, but these have not been received well by digital rights activists and social media platforms, mainly the members of AIC. The AIC has also written to the prime minister, expressing concerns

¹⁵ Daily *Dunya*, December 9, 2020, https://e.dunya.com.pk/detail.php?date=2020-12-09&edition=ISL&id=5430375_32415797

¹⁶ *The Nation*, December 7, 2020, <https://nation.com.pk/E-Paper/islamabad/2020-12-07/page-14/detail-4>

¹⁷ Daily *Jang*, December 10, 2020, https://jang.com.pk/news/856138?_ga=2.181669735.1947997901.1607593134-2039814662.1604552106

¹⁸ Daily *Jang*, December 7, 2020, https://jang.com.pk/news/854752?_ga=2.7378746.965831836.1607493589-2039814662.1604552106

¹⁹ Daily *Jang*, December 13, 2020, https://jang.com.pk/news/857450?_ga=2.172869994.898766768.1607780900-2039814662.1604552106

²⁰ *Daily92*, December 11, 2020, https://www.roznama92news.com/efrontend/web/index.php/?station_id=4&page_id=1&is_common=&xdate=2020-12-11&n=n14

²¹ *The Express Tribune*, December 8, 2020, <https://tribune.com.pk/epaper/news/Karachi/2020-12-08/MjA1YzU3YTdlMzhhZWE0MDc2YjM1OTgxM2NhNDE3NTAuanBIZw%3D%3D>

²² Daily *Dunya*, December 13, 2020, https://e.dunya.com.pk/detail.php?date=2020-12-13&edition=LHR&id=5435862_81345049

over the rules. In a statement, the PTA contradicted the AIC's stance that meaningful consultation was not carried out and termed it "misleading and against the facts".²³

Meanwhile, cybercrime is expected to cost the global economy more than \$1 trillion this year, up more than 50% since 2018, a recently released research report claimed. The report by McAfee Corp with the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) concluded that the cost of online criminal activity is more than 1% of global economic output, and also had significant non-monetary impacts. The researchers noted a surge in a range of attacks including ransomware, phishing, business email takeovers, spyware and cryptocurrency theft. Some of the increase can be attributed to weaker security with more people working remotely outside their workplace.²⁴

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About NIOC:

National Initiative against Organized Crime (NIOC), in collaboration with the Global Initiative Resilience Fund, is the first-ever initiative in Pakistan launched in November 2019 by a group of committed professionals and experts with law enforcement, media and other public service backgrounds. NIOC aims to build community resilience and influence public policy to combat organized crime.

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²³ *Dawn*, December 12, 2020, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1595261/wrong-impression-created-about-social-media-rules-pta>

²⁴ *The Express Tribune*, December 8, 2020, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2275060/cybercrime-costs-to-top-1tr-this-year-researchers>