



Organized Crime Watch-38

Pakistan's Organized Crime Weekly Review

Compiled by National Initiative against Organised Crime (NIOC)

21 December to 31 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.

COVID-19 in Pakistan

As of December 31st 2020, there were 484,362 confirmed cases of COVID-19 nationwide. 438,974 people have thus far recovered from the illness, leaving 35,130 active cases at present. The death toll is currently sitting at 10,258. The breakdown of COVID statistics by province is in the table below.

Province	Confirmed Cases (total)	Active Cases	Deaths	Recoveries
Azad Kashmir	8,303	388	224	7,691
Balochistan	18,181	245	184	17,752

Gilgit-Baltistan	4,862	48	101	4,713
Islamabad	38,020	2,982	421	34,617
KP	59,023	3,420	1,661	53,942
Punjab	139,341	11,131	4,085	124,125
Sindh	216,632	16,916	3,582	196,134

1. Terrorism Watch

At least five terrorist attacks happened in Pakistan during the period under review, including four in Balochistan and one in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which claimed in all 12 lives and wounded 53 others.

Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) and other Baloch insurgents perpetrated four attacks including three against security forces in Panjgur, Harnai and Kalat districts of Balochistan. In Panjgur, on December 26, at least two people were killed and eight injured in a bomb blast near a football club in Panjgur's Essai area. Two vehicles were also fully damaged in the blast. Apparently the deceased Rahim Jan and Hasan Jan who were sitting in the car were the target.¹ One day after, at least seven security personnel were martyred and six others injured in an attack by terrorists on a Frontier Corps check post in the areas of Sharag coal mines in Balochistan's Harnai district. According to ISPR, heavy exchange of fire took place between FC personnel and terrorists and the latter were repulsed. According to BBC Urdu BLA claimed the attack.² Two other attacks by BLA, in Harnai and Kalat, did not cause any death but injured 22 people including seven army soldiers and two FC men.

In North Waziristan tribal district of KP, according to ISPR, the terrorists opened fire at a convoy of security forces in Mirali on December 24, which resulted in an armed clash. One Pakistan Army soldier, Naik Yaseen, was martyred and 7 other soldiers were injured in the exchange of fire, while two militants were also killed and another 10 injured.³

Separately, in Awaran district of Balochistan, at least 10 suspected terrorists have been killed in an intelligence based operation against a terrorist hideout in Gwargo area in the Awaran district. According to the ISPR, these terrorists were involved in firing on security forces, which had resulted in martyrdom of Lance Naik Mohammad Iqbal on December 20.⁴

¹ Daily Jang (Urdu), December 27, 2020, <https://e.jang.com.pk/12-27-2020/pindi/pic.asp?picname=644.png>

² BBC Urdu, December 27, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/urdu/pakistan-55460692>; Dawn, December 28, 2020, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1598254/seven-fc-men-martyred-in-harnai-terrorist-attack>

³ Daily Dunya (Urdu), December 25, 2020, https://e.dunya.com.pk/detail.php?date=2020-12-25&edition=ISL&id=5450484_24763907

⁴ Dawn, December 23, 2020, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1597317/10-terrorists-killed-in-awaran>

2. Terrorism Financing

An anti-terrorism court sentenced Jamaatud Dawa (JuD) chief Hafiz Saeed to 15-and-a half-years in one more terror financing case. The Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) of Lahore also imposed a 200,000 Pakistani rupees fine on Saeed.⁵ The other four JuD leaders convicted by the court were Hafiz Abdus Salam, Zafar Iqbal, JuD spokesperson Yahya Mujahid and Muhammad Ashraf. A total of 41 cases have been registered by the CTD against the JuD leaders, out of which 28 have been decided while the rest are pending in the ATC courts. Five cases have been decided against Saeed so far.

3. Drug Trafficking

Minister for Narcotics Control, Brigadier (retired) Ijaz Shah, released a statement on December 24th vowing to make Pakistan a “drug-free society”. In a meeting with a representative from the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Minister Shah stated that he intended to reach this goal through crackdowns on drug dealers and smugglers, as well as liaison with UNODC.

Special Adviser to the Chief Minister of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, Ghazan Jamal, praised the provincial Excise Department for their activities to curb narcotics smuggling on December 22nd. He praised the department’s operations over the previous three days, where multiple operations led to the seizure of a total 132 kilograms of different drugs across the province.

- SHO Excise in Peshawar led an operation against drug dealer Naimatullah, where 38.40 kg of hashish and 6kg of heroin were seized from hidden compartments in his car.
- An operation carried out on GT road near Tarnab led to the seizure of 24kg of heroin from a passenger on public transport.
- DI Khan Excise police seized 51kg of hashish from a car, however the smuggler managed to escape custody.
- A routine vehicle stopped at Therabad check post led to the seizure of 3kg of hashish and the smuggler’s arrest.

Model Courts have been set up to expedite judgments and clear a backlog of 512 cases, including 39 murder cases and 119 narcotics cases. As of December 21st, two prisoners have been given the death penalty for murder and narcotics, while 3 others have been sentenced to rigorous imprisonment.

On December 31st, 26 smugglers were arrested and 1179kg of multiple types of narcotics seized in Rawalpindi.

- ANF conducted 16 separate operations

⁵ “Pakistani court sentences JuD chief Hafiz Saeed to over 15 years in jail,” Khaleej Times, December 24, 2020, <https://www.khaleejtimes.com/world/rest-of-asia/pakistan-court-sentences-jud-chief-hafiz-saeed-to-over-15-years-in-jail>

- The value of the seized narcotics was \$207mn, ranging from a tone of heroin, 16kg of hashish and varying amounts of methamphetamine, crystal meth and 4kg of opium

On December 26th, ANF conducted four separate operations in Karachi. The narcotics seized were valued in the millions of Pakistani rupees

- In Korangi, ANF arrested a drug smuggler by the name of Saleem Khan, seizing 7kg of hashish
- A courier company was attempting to smuggle heroin from Pakistan to the UK in boxes of bangles; this operation was foiled by ANF
- ANF and PMSA conducted another joint operation, seizing 25kg of heroin and 1kg of hashish
- An ANF raid in Sohrab Goth led to the arrest of three smuggles and the seizure of 4.5kg of crystal meth

Other successful anti-narcotics operations were carried out across the country as listed below:

- A narcotics network in Karachi was dismantled on December 20th. This network used educated youths to transport narcotics from Balochistan to Karachi, run by an individual known as Khilji. According to one of the smugglers, Khilji supplied these narcotics to private parties attended by influential figures in society.
- Two female drug smugglers were detained in Muzaffargarh on December 21st. Heroin, hashish and weaponry were recovered.
- On December 23rd, the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA) and Anti-Narcotics Force conducted a joint operation in Sindh's Creeks area against drug smugglers. 25kg of heroin and 1kg of hashish were seized during the operation, with the haul valuing in at 400 million Pakistani Rupees.
- Following a tip-off, Customs Intelligence in Karachi conducted an operation on December 23rd. 32kg of heroin were recovered from the unregistered Toyota Hiace van that, according to the tip, was headed from Tando Adam to Hyderabad and Karachi. The haul seized valued in at 3.2 million Pakistani Rupees.
- On December 25th, 5kg of hashish was seized in Balochistan during a snap check.
- On the same day in Quetta, 2 men were sentenced to six years in prison for narcotics smuggling.
- In Rawalpindi, two men were acquitted on December 25th for narcotics smuggling due to lack of evidence.
- On December 26th, ANF recovered 6kg of crystal-meth from a Manama-bound passenger in Islamabad Airport.
- On December 28th, 36 drug cases were registered in Dera Ghazi Khan. In these cases, 141kg of hashish had been seized by authorities.
- On December 28th, 17 people were arrested by Islamabad police for possession of drugs, arms and alcohol
 - 155g of hashish was seized from one arrest
 - 2 of the 17 arrested has 1.14kg of heroin on their person

- 2 others had 130g of heroin
- On December 29th, 134kg of hashish was seized from an ambulance after it crashed near Mastung. The ambulance was transporting a COVID patient from Quetta to Karachi when it collided with another vehicle, killing three people including the patient. The narcotics were seized from a hidden compartment in the roof of the ambulance.
- On December 29th, Sindh Police conducted multiple operations against criminals in Karachi. Five people were arrested altogether.
 - 180g of hashish was recovered from one arrest
 - 300g of hashish was seized from another arrest

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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.

Website: <https://nioc.pk>

Email: info@nioc.pk