

Organized Crime Watch-4/2021

Pakistan's Organized Crime Monthly Review

Compiled by National Initiative against Organised Crime (NIOC)

April 2021

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 monthly monitor on Organized Crime as a civil society initiative to support the institutional and community responses. This monthly 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.

1. Terrorism Watch

As in the month before, as many as 11 terrorist attacks took place in Pakistan during April 2021. These attacks claimed 14 lives, compared to 16 in the previous month, and injured 39 others. Among those 14 killed in terrorist attacks seven were civilians, five security

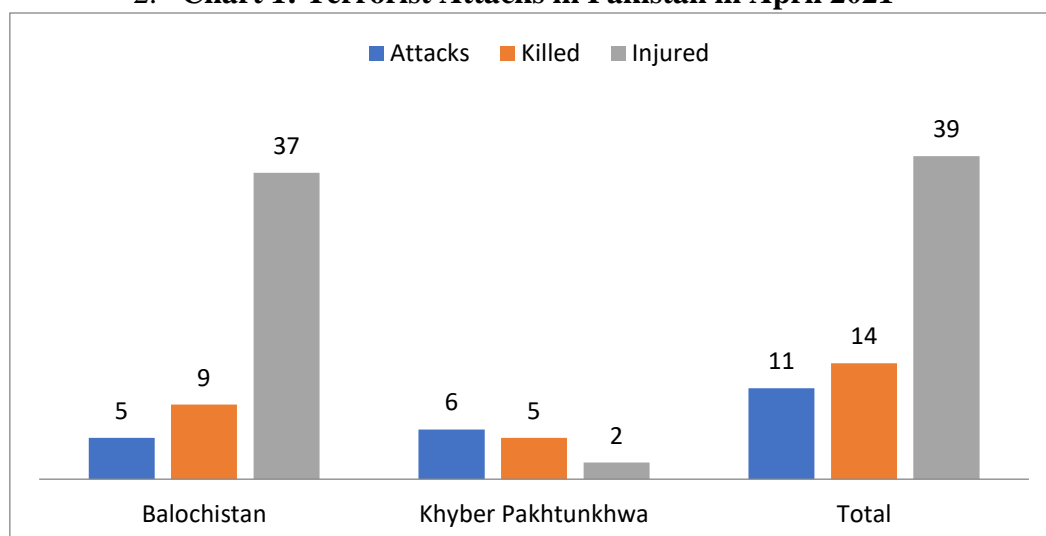
personnel (4 policemen, one army soldier), as well as two militants; those injured included 35 civilians and four security personnel.

All reported attacks in April concentrated in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan provinces and no attack was recorded in any of the other regions.

Compared to two in the previous month, as many as six terrorist attacks took place in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in April 2021. These attacks claimed five lives and injured another two people. Among those five killed were three security personnel, one civilian and one militant.

Five terrorist attacks took place in Balochistan during the month under review, compared to three in the month before. These attacks caused nine deaths – compared to 10 in the previous month – and inflicted injuries on another 37 people. Among those nine killed six were civilians, two policemen and one militant.

2. Chart 1: Terrorist Attacks in Pakistan in April 2021



The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and other militants with similar objectives such as Islamic State group perpetrated eight attacks in April 2021, killing 12 people and injuring 22 others. Baloch nationalist insurgent groups were believed to be involved in three attacks that killed two people and inflicted injuries on 17 others.

2. Terror Financing

With regards to terror financing, the biggest development was the UK placing Pakistan on its list of high-risk countries for Money Laundering and Terror Financing,¹ likely as a result of Pakistan struggling to control money laundering and corruption. This will certainly have had some impact on Pakistan's position at the next FATF plenary meeting, which should be taking place in June. Pakistan's response to the UK's move was one of outrage, as Pakistan has fulfilled 24 out of the 27 goals on the FATF's action plan.² In

¹ <https://www.voanews.com/extremism-watch/british-high-risk-designation-pakistan-seen-bad-sign-anti-corruption-efforts>

² <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/819461-fatf-action-plan-nears-completion>

spite of the UK designating Pakistan on its own list, the British High Commissioner has pledged to support Pakistan's efforts at the FATF.³

Other developments include the freezing of TLP assets following their proscription by the Pakistani Interior Ministry following their nationwide riots.⁴ While on the surface it appears to be a move against funding a banned group, the fact that the state negotiated with the TLP, and released their leader after the ban was implemented,⁵ will reflect poorly on Pakistan at the upcoming FATF meeting. The lenient stance taken on the TLP, even after the destructive riots and the deaths of police officers, shows a lack of commitment to meaningfully dealing with extremists. Furthermore, the state's decision to debate expelling the French Ambassador (a core TLP demand) will cause further blowback, as Pakistan will lose the support of France and her allies at the meeting. Additionally, the FATF itself is a Paris-based organization.

3. Drug trafficking

Trends:

- Hashish remains the most popular drug to smuggle within Pakistan.
- The largest busts occurred within Sindh and Balochistan, with the high quantity of narcotics due to proximity to international borders and international black markets.
- Punjab saw the most drugs pass through its territory during the month of April. This is likely due to smugglers using it as a transit hub and transporting narcotics from KP and Afghanistan to other parts of the country.
- Fewer busts, arrests and drugs seized in April compared to March. Overall decrease in seized drugs observed. This is likely due to police having to respond to the nationwide TLP riots, thus having fewer officers to perform anti-narcotic operations.
- Major Busts:

| Major Operations/Busts | | | |
|------------------------|----------|---------|---------------------------------------|
| Date | Location | Arrests | Seizures |
| 5/4/2021 | Jeoni | 0 | 1250kg hashish, 17kg ice, 14kg heroin |
| 12/4/2021 | Kohat | 1 | 132kg hashish, 30kg opium |
| 13/4/2021 | Quetta | 2 | 120kg hashish |
| 13/4/2021 | Gwadar | 2 | 170kg hashish |
| 20/4/2021 | Sindh | 1 | 666kg hashish, 51.3kg ice, 2kg heroin |
| 23/4/2021 | Sindh | 14 | 94kg hashish |
| 24/4/2021 | Multan | 3 | 82kg narcotics |
| 30/4/2021 | Punjab | 26 | 6748.34kg various narcotics |
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³ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/824068-uk-to-fully-support-pakistan-on-fatf-issue-british-hc>

⁴ <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/822534-govt-freezes-banned-tlp-s-assets>

⁵ <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2295790/tlp-chief-saad-rizvi-reportedly-released-from-custody>

| Apr 2021 - NIOC | Response | | Types of drugs seized (in kg) | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|------------|-------------------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| Province | Ops | Arrests | Hashish | Heroin | Ice/Meth | Others | Total (by province in kg) |
| Punjab | 34 | 149 | 6751.45 | 92.01 | 4.16 | 106.68 | 6954.3 |
| Balochistan | 7 | 18 | 1543 | 14 | 17.26 | 0 | 1574.26 |
| Sindh | 15 | 42 | 868.2 | 18 | 51.3 | 7 | 944.5 |
| KP | 6 | 37 | 158.57 | 0 | 0.2 | 30 | 188.77 |
| AJK/GB | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 62 | 246 | 9321.22 | 124.01 | 72.92 | 143.68 | |
| | | | | | | | Ecstasy Pills |
| | | | | | | | 335 |

4. Cybercrime

Cybercrime has not undergone a great deal of change in Pakistan. It mostly consists of people filming acts of torture, rape and other violent crime before disseminating it across social media. In addition, the production and dissemination of child pornography, and electronic and financial fraud, remain prevalent in the country. No instances of cyber-attacks on state institutions or infrastructure were reported.

5. Human Trafficking

Incidents of human trafficking have been more frequent than previous months, and largely involve individuals leaving the country using false travel documentation, in pursuit of better economic opportunity. Below are summaries of the major incidents.

- Hundreds of illegal migrants were deported from Iran to Pakistan this month. A total of 511 illegal migrants were returned to Pakistan for lacking valid travel documentation in three separate incidents. These migrants sought to travel through Iran to Continental Europe in search of work.
- On April 9th, Pakistani national, Abid Ali Khan was sanctioned by the US Treasury for operating a human trafficking network. Khan would smuggler people into the US through countries like Latin America, whilst operating out of Nowshera. Khan's organization has been designated a Transnational Criminal Organization (TCO).
- On April 9th, a human trafficking bid was foiled at Sialkot Airport. 7 migrants and the trafficker were arrested for travelling on false visas. The 8 were travelling to Turkey.
- A transnational drug cartel run by Nasrullah Bizenjo engaged in human trafficking as well as drug smuggling to the Middle East and North Africa. Bizenjo kidnapped 3 Nigerian nationals as collateral until he received payment for the narcotics. Will continue monitoring if new instances of this occur.