



Home Office

Country Policy and Information Note

Pakistan: Hazaras

Version 2.0

November 2019

Preface

Purpose

This note provides country of origin information (COI) and analysis of COI for use by Home Office decision makers handling particular types of protection and human rights claims (as set out in [the basis of claim](#) section). It is not intended to be an exhaustive survey of a particular subject or theme.

It is split into two main sections: (1) analysis and assessment of COI and other evidence; and (2) COI. These are explained in more detail below.

Assessment

This section analyses the evidence relevant to this note – i.e. the COI section; refugee/human rights laws and policies; and applicable caselaw – by describing this and its inter-relationships, and provides an assessment on whether, **in general**:

- A person is reasonably likely to face a real risk of persecution or serious harm
- A person is able to obtain protection from the state (or quasi state bodies)
- A person is reasonably able to relocate within a country or territory
- Claims are likely to justify granting asylum, humanitarian protection or other form of leave, and
- If a claim is refused, it is likely or unlikely to be certifiable as ‘clearly unfounded’ under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.

Decision makers **must**, however, still consider all claims on an individual basis, taking into account each case’s specific facts.

Country of origin information

The country information in this note has been carefully selected in accordance with the general principles of COI research as set out in the [Common EU \[European Union\] Guidelines for Processing Country of Origin Information \(COI\)](#), dated April 2008, and the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation’s (ACCORD), [Researching Country Origin Information – Training Manual, 2013](#). Namely, taking into account the COI’s relevance, reliability, accuracy, balance, currency, transparency and traceability.

The structure and content of the country information section follows a [terms of reference](#) which sets out the general and specific topics relevant to this note.

All information included in the note was published or made publicly available on or before the ‘cut-off’ date(s) in the country information section. Any event taking place or report/article published after these date(s) is not included.

All information is publicly accessible or can be made publicly available and is from generally reliable sources. Sources and the information they provide are carefully considered before inclusion.

Factors relevant to the assessment of the reliability of sources and information include:

- the motivation, purpose, knowledge and experience of the source
- how the information was obtained, including specific methodologies used
- the currency and detail of information, and
- whether the COI is consistent with and/or corroborated by other sources.

Multiple sourcing is used to ensure that the information is accurate, balanced and corroborated, so that a comprehensive and up-to-date picture at the time of publication is provided of the issues relevant to this note.

Information is compared and contrasted, whenever possible, to provide a range of views and opinions. The inclusion of a source, however, is not an endorsement of it or any view(s) expressed.

Each piece of information is referenced in a brief footnote; full details of all sources cited and consulted in compiling the note are listed alphabetically in the [bibliography](#).

Feedback

Our goal is to continuously improve our material. Therefore, if you would like to comment on this note, please email the [Country Policy and Information Team](#).

Independent Advisory Group on Country Information

The [Independent Advisory Group on Country Information](#) (IAGCI) was set up in March 2009 by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration to support him in reviewing the efficiency, effectiveness and consistency of approach of COI produced by the Home Office.

The IAGCI welcomes feedback on the Home Office's COI material. It is not the function of the IAGCI to endorse any Home Office material, procedures or policy. The IAGCI may be contacted at:

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Information about the IAGCI's work and a list of the documents which have been reviewed by the IAGCI can be found on the Independent Chief Inspector's pages of the [gov.uk website](#).

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Assessment

Updated: 17 October 2019

1. Introduction

1.1 Basis of claim

1.1.1 Fear of persecution and/or serious harm by state or non-state actors because the person is Hazara.

1.2 Points to note

1.2.1 Hazaras are an ethnic group, the majority of whom are Shia Muslim. They have a distinct appearance, with oriental features and lighter skin, different from much of Pakistan's population.

1.2.2 For information on Shia Muslims see the [Country Policy and Information Note Pakistan: Shia Muslims](#).

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2. Consideration of issues

2.1 Credibility

2.1.1 For information on assessing credibility, see the instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

2.1.2 Decision makers must also check if there has been a previous application for a UK visa or another form of leave. Asylum applications matched to visas should be investigated prior to the asylum interview (see the [Asylum Instruction on Visa Matches, Asylum Claims from UK Visa Applicants](#)).

2.1.3 Decision makers should also consider the need to conduct language analysis testing (see the [Asylum Instruction on Language Analysis](#)).

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2.2 Exclusion

2.2.1 Decision makers must consider each case on its individual facts and merits to determine whether to apply one (or more) of the exclusion clauses.

2.2.2 If the person is excluded from the Refugee Convention, they will also be excluded from a grant of humanitarian protection.

2.2.3 For further guidance on the exclusion clauses and restricted leave, see the [Asylum Instruction on Exclusion: Article 1F of the Refugee Convention](#) and the [Asylum Instruction on Restricted Leave](#).

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2.3 Refugee convention reason

2.3.1 The person's actual or imputed race or religion.

2.3.2 Establishing a convention reason alone is not sufficient to be recognised as a refugee. The question to be addressed in each case is whether the particular person has a well-founded fear of persecution on account of their actual or imputed convention reason.

2.3.3 For further guidance on Convention reasons, see the instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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2.4 Risk

2.4.1 The population of Hazaras living in Pakistan is estimated to be between 600,000 and 1 million, the majority of whom are Shia Muslim. Approximately half a million Hazaras live in Quetta, Balochistan, the majority of whom are concentrated in Hazara Town and Mariabad (Mari Abad), enclaves which are protected by high walls and security checkpoints guarded by federal paramilitary troops. There are also communities living elsewhere, including Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore and Rawalpindi. Hazaras are easily identifiable by their 'Mongolian' features (see [Demography](#)).

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a) State treatment

2.4.2 The Constitution guarantees freedom of religion and protection of minorities and there are no direct discriminatory laws, official policies or actions against Hazaras. However, in the Pakistani context, the term minority does not cover sectarian, ethnic, linguistic and national minorities such as Hazaras. Hazaras report delays and refusals in issuing Computerised National Identity Cards (CNICs) by National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) officials, which can limit access to education. Community members report unnecessary security checks are made on Hazaras at check points. There are also reports that the government fails to maintain basic facilities in the enclaves in Quetta (see [Legal rights](#), [Citizenship and documentation](#), [Hazaras living in Quetta](#) and [Provision of security and redress](#)).

2.4.3 In general, Hazaras are not at risk of persecution or serious harm from the state. If discrimination does occur, it is unlikely to be sufficiently serious by its nature and repetition to amount to a real risk of persecution or serious harm.

2.4.4 Decision makers must consider whether there are particular factors specific to the person which would place them at real risk. Each case must be considered on its facts with the onus on the person to demonstrate that they would be at real risk from the state.

2.4.5 For further guidance on assessing risk, see the instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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b) Treatment by non-state actors

2.4.6 Hazaras distinct appearance and own neighbourhoods and enclaves around the country make Hazaras targets for sectarian extremist groups targeting Shia Muslims. Around 540 Hazaras have been killed in apparent sectarian attacks since 2012 in Balochistan (affecting approximately 0.05% of the total Hazara population in Pakistan or 0.1% of the Hazara population in Balochistan – see [Demography](#)).

- 2.4.7 Perpetrators claiming responsibility for such attacks include the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), Islamic State and the Taliban (for more information on these groups see the Country Policy and Information Note on [Pakistan: Security and humanitarian situation, including fear of militant groups](#)).
- 2.4.8 The majority of attacks occur in Balochistan. Hazaras are more vulnerable to attacks when they leave the areas of their enclaves in Hazara Town and Mariabad in Quetta. There are no reports of recent large-scale targeted attacks against Hazaras outside of Balochistan (see [Attacks and casualties](#), [Motivation for attacks](#) and [Road safety](#)).
- 2.4.9 Sources indicate a slight decrease in attacks and casualties in Balochistan during 2018 compared to 2017. During the first half of 2019, 20 Hazaras were killed in targeted attacks, including a bomb which killed at least 8 Hazaras in a Quetta market in the Hazar Ganji area outside the protected Hazara enclaves in April 2019. Security personnel are also victims of attacks when trying to protect Hazaras (see [Attacks and casualties](#) and [Hazaras living in Quetta](#)).
- 2.4.10 Hazaras face a risk of sectarian attacks due to their religion and their distinct identity increases that risk. Security measures taken in and around the Hazara enclaves in Quetta lessen the risk of attack, though movement outside these areas, even under guard, increases that risk. However, overall the number of security incidents and casualties is low compared to the population of Hazaras living in Pakistan. Hazaras living outside of Quetta and Balochistan tend to live among the general population to reduce the risk of ethnic profiling and attack (see [Security situation](#)).
- 2.4.11 Decision makers must consider whether there are particular factors specific to the person which would place them at real risk of attack from non-state armed groups, for example, where they reside in Pakistan. Each case must be considered on its facts with the onus on the person to demonstrate that they would be at real risk from non-state actors.
- 2.4.12 For further guidance on assessing risk, see the instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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c) Societal treatment

- 2.4.13 There is little societal discrimination that restrict Hazaras in their daily life, although, due to security concerns, there are restrictions in freedom of movement outside of the 2 Hazara enclaves in Quetta, and thus access to employment, education and healthcare is limited. There are reports of Hazaras being denied access to education and health facilities or to transportation in Quetta, in order to reduce the risk for non-Hazara clients and students. Hazaras often try to conceal their identity by covering their heads when travelling outside the enclaves. According to the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), incidents of discrimination are likely be cases of individual prejudices rather than evidence of a broader trend of societal attitudes (see [Societal treatment and attitudes](#), [Socio-economic situation](#), [Health and welfare](#) and [Road safety](#)).

- 2.4.14 Groups, such as the LeJ, continue to organise public and free-spoken anti-Shia rallies, particularly against the Hazara community. A media source reported ‘plentiful’ anti-Hazara graffiti on Quetta’s walls and distribution of anti-Hazara leaflets across Balochistan (see [Anti-Hazara Shia sentiment](#)).
- 2.4.15 In general, the level and nature of societal discrimination faced by Hazaras does not amount to a real risk of persecution or serious harm. Each case must be considered on its facts with the onus on the person to demonstrate that they would be at real risk from societal actors.
- 2.4.16 For further guidance on assessing risk, see the instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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2.5 Protection

- 2.5.1 Where the person has a well-founded fear of persecution from the state, they are unlikely to be able to avail themselves of the protection of the authorities.
- 2.5.2 Where the person has a well-founded fear of persecution from non-state actors, including ‘rogue’ state actors, decision makers must assess whether the state can provide effective protection.
- 2.5.3 The government has taken steps to limit the capability of terrorist groups that target the general public as well as Shia Muslims specifically (see the [Country Policy and Information Note on Pakistan: Shia Muslims](#)).
- 2.5.4 The Pakistan security forces provide a degree of protection to Hazaras, particularly those living in Quetta, including check points around the Hazara enclaves; patrol routes between Hazara Town and Mariabad; and some security escorts outside of the enclaves. Security measures increased in May 2018 and extra measures were promised following the April 2019 market attack, including installation of closed circuit television, increased action to root out the perpetrators of attacks and financial compensation to victims and families (see [Provision of security and redress](#) and [Hazaras living in Quetta](#)).
- 2.5.5 For further information on security operations undertaken by the Pakistan government aimed at curbing militant violence, see the Country Policy and Information Note on [Pakistan: Security and humanitarian situation, including fear of militant groups](#)).
- 2.5.6 The reported case of [AW \(sufficiency of protection\) Pakistan \[2011\] UKUT 31 \(IAC\) \(26 January 2011\)](#), heard on 11 November 2010, found that ‘Notwithstanding systemic sufficiency of state protection, a claimant may still have a well founded fear of persecution if authorities know or ought to know of circumstances particular to his/her case giving rise to the fear, but are unlikely to provide the additional protection the particular circumstances reasonably require (per Auld LJ at paragraph 55(vi))’ (headnote 2).
- 2.5.7 Decision makers must also take particular account of past persecution (if any) and consider whether there are good reasons to consider that such persecution (and past lack of sufficient protection) is likely to be repeated (see headnote 3 of [AW](#)).

- 2.5.8 Some Hazara claim that security convoys to market are not regular and that the general improvement in security is down to measures taken by the Hazara community. According to some sources, security personnel have failed to apprehend perpetrators of attacks and / or have been complicit in, or at least ignored, anti-Hazara sentiment by proscribed terrorist groups (see [Provision of security and redress](#) and [Anti-Hazara Shia sentiment](#)).
- 2.5.9 In general, the state appears willing and able to provide effective protection to Hazaras. A person's reluctance to seek protection does not necessarily mean that effective protection is not available. Decision makers must consider each case on its facts. The onus is on the person to demonstrate why they would not be able to seek and obtain state protection. The standard to be applied when determining whether it is sufficient is not that which would eliminate the risk of discrimination and violence.
- 2.5.10 For further guidance on assessing the availability of state protection, see the instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#). See also the Country Policy and Information Note on [Pakistan: Background information, including actors of protection and internal relocation](#).

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2.6 Internal relocation

- 2.6.1 Where the person has a well-founded fear of persecution from the state, it is unlikely to be reasonable to expect them to relocate to escape that risk.
- 2.6.2 Where the person's fear is of persecution or serious harm by non-state actors, in general they will be able to relocate to escape that risk.
- 2.6.3 Freedom of movement, particularly in and around Quetta, is limited due to security concerns (see [Hazaras living in Quetta](#) and [Road safety](#)). There are a number of Hazara communities across Pakistan (see [Hazaras living outside of Quetta](#)) and Pakistan is a large, diverse country with no general barriers to freedom of movement (see also the Country Policy and Information Note on [Pakistan: Background information, including actors of protection and internal relocation](#)).
- 2.6.4 However, in all cases, Decision makers must give careful consideration to the relevance and reasonableness of internal relocation taking full account of the individual circumstances of the particular person.
- 2.6.5 For further guidance on internal relocation see the instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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2.7 Certification

- 2.7.1 Where a claim is refused, it is unlikely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded' under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.
- 2.7.2 For further guidance on certification, see [Certification of Protection and Human Rights claims under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 \(clearly unfounded claims\)](#).

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Country information

Section 3 updated: 23 September 2019

3. Legal rights

3.1 Constitution

3.1.1 Article 36 of the Constitution of Pakistan provides for the protection of minorities¹. Article 28 provides that ‘any section of citizens having a distinct language, script or culture shall have the right to preserve and promote the same and, subject to law, establish institutions for that purpose.’² In its report on Freedom in the World 2016, Freedom House noted, for Pakistan, that ‘Constitutional guarantees of freedom of religion and protection of minorities have not provided effective checks to discriminatory legislation, social prejudice, and sectarian violence.’³

3.1.2 According to an undated article on freedom of religion or belief, by Minority Rights Group International (MRGI):

‘While in the Pakistani Constitution several references are made to “minorities”, no clear definition for this term is set out, resulting in ambiguity regarding what constitutes a “minority”. However, “minority” in the Pakistani context is commonly understood to refer to religious minorities specifically, thereby limiting the constitutionally recognized minority groups to those such as Hindus, Christians and Sikhs. This has implications for “internal minorities” such as Shi’a who, while Muslim, are a sectarian minority, as well as for ethnic, linguistic and national minorities who are not clearly constitutionally recognized as such. Particularly vulnerable are those groups, such as Hazara Shi’a, who face intersectional discrimination on account of their ethnicity and religious identity, but also those who face caste discrimination, all of which fall outside of the commonly accepted definition of “minority” in Pakistan.’⁴

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3.2 Citizenship and documentation

3.2.1 The Australian Government’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade noted in its February 2019 Country Information Report Pakistan (DFAT report), which draws on DFAT’s on-the-ground knowledge, discussions with a range of sources in Pakistan as well as open source information, noted that ‘Hazara children born in Pakistan are entitled to Pakistani citizenship. Hazara arrivals from Afghanistan typically do not have citizenship, but have access to immigration cards, which provide some rights such as access to drivers’ licences.’⁵

3.2.2 The same source noted

¹ Constitution, [url](#).

² Constitution, [url](#).

³ Freedom House, ‘Freedom in the World 2016 – Pakistan’, 25 July 2016, [url](#).

⁴ MRGI, ‘Freedom of religion or belief in Pakistan’, n.d., [url](#).

⁵ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 3.42), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

'Hazaras claim access to services, including mobile SIM cards and internet connections, within the enclaves does not require formal documentation, such as a passport or CNIC [Computerised National Identity Card]. However, travel in and out of, or between, the enclaves, involves document checks that can serve to block access to services. While most Hazaras in Pakistan can obtain formal identification such as CNICs, Hazaras claim the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) officials have at times caused delays for Hazaras applying for official documentation. Hazaras have suffered lethal attacks outside the NADRA office in Quetta, located outside the enclaves, while trying to obtain passports and CNICs. As a result, many Hazaras do not feel safe leaving the enclave to apply for documentation.'⁶

- 3.2.3 Further, DFAT noted that it was '... aware of reports that NADRA officials have refused to amend CNICs of Hazaras attempting to relocate within Pakistan, thus preventing them from applying for a passport, which must be obtained at the place of residence. Hazaras who have a high-level advocate can overcome such official barriers. NADRA refusal to change a CNIC address can also limit access to education, as school enrolment also requires local residence.' (see also [Access to education](#)).

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Section 4 updated: 23 September 2019

4. Demography

4.1 The Pakistan-Hazara community

- 4.1.1 Pakistan's population was estimated at nearly 208 million in July 2018⁷, of whom approximately 96% are Muslim. Sunnis represent about 70-85% of the Muslim population and Shia 15-20%⁸. In January 2014, Syed Mehdi Hassan Moosa, chief of the Hazara tribe in Pakistan, was reported as saying there were one million Hazaras, the majority of whom were settled in Karachi and Quetta⁹. According to a Human Rights Watch (HRW) report of 30 June 2014, 'The small Hazara Shia community is concentrated in the south-western province of Balochistan, largely in the capital city of Quetta; it is estimated to be around 500,000.'¹⁰ Pakistan's National Commission for Human Rights Commission (NCHR) undertook a small study on Hazaras in the location of Alamdar Road and Hazara town districts of Balochistan (predominantly Hazara-populated areas) and reported in 2018 that the population of Hazaras in Balochistan was approximately 400,000 to 500,000¹¹. In February 2019, DFAT noted that the Hazara population in the whole of Pakistan was estimated to be between 600,000 to under 1 million¹². (See [Hazara living outside of Quetta](#) and [Hazara living in Quetta](#)).

⁶ DFAT, 'Country Information Report Pakistan', (para 3.41), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

⁷ CIA, 'World Factbook: Pakistan', (People and society), updated 21 August 2019, [url](#).

⁸ USSD, 'International Religious Freedom Report for 2018', (page 4), 21 June 2019, [url](#).

⁹ Express Tribune, 'Alleged discrimination: ...', 18 January 2014, [url](#).

¹⁰ HRW, "'We are the Walking Dead'", (page 9), 30 June 2014, [url](#).

¹¹ NCHR, 'Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras', (pages 3 and 4), February 2018, [url](#).

¹² DFAT, 'Country Information Report Pakistan', (para 3.27), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

- 4.1.2 The overwhelming majority of ethnic Hazaras are Shia Muslim¹³, mostly of the Twelver Sect although a small number are Sunni¹⁴.
- 4.1.3 The US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) 2019 Annual Report, covering 2018, stated:
- ‘While other ethnic groups in Pakistan are also Shi’a Muslims, the Hazaras have a distinct appearance and have established their own neighborhoods and enclaves around the country. These two factors make Hazaras prime targets for sectarian extremist groups targeting Shi’a Muslims. Violent sectarian groups have perpetrated massive attacks on Hazara neighborhoods in places like Quetta despite the additional security provided by the government for those neighborhoods since 2013.’¹⁵ (see [Hazaras living in Quetta](#)).
- 4.1.4 As cited in the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) report on Pakistan, dated August 2015, ‘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.’¹⁶
- 4.1.5 A BBC News report of May 2013 noted that the Hazaras ‘are ethnically Mongolian, with oriental features and light skin, different from much of Pakistan’s population.’¹⁷ World Atlas noted in its description of Hazaras, ‘Researchers cannot fully reconstruct the origin of the Hazaras, but due to their physical appearance, it is believed that they might have a close relationship with the Turkic and Mongols. Their facial bone, culture, language similarities, and general appearance closely resemble those exhibited by Central Asian Turks and Mongolians.’¹⁸
- 4.1.6 EASO reported:
- ‘Historically, Hazara migrated to Pakistan from central Afghanistan. Some Hazara families’ origins in Quetta can be traced back to the late 19th century, though the majority of the community immigrated in two waves – the first during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan from 1979 onwards, 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 staying in refugee camps and to integrate better into Pakistani society.’¹⁹
- 4.1.7 The Hazara community in Balochistan is represented by the Hazara Democratic Party–HDP, who have 2 provincial assembly representatives²⁰. The Tehreek-e-Suba Hazara is a registered political party with the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP)²¹ but holds no seats in the Balochistan

¹³ EASO, ‘Pakistan Country Overview’, (page 101), August 2015, [url](#).

¹⁴ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 3.27), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

¹⁵ USCIRF, ‘Annual Report 2019: Pakistan’, (page 6), April 2019, [url](#).

¹⁶ EASO, ‘Pakistan Country Overview’, (page 101), August 2015, [url](#).

¹⁷ BBC News, ‘“Hell on Earth”’: Inside Quetta’s Hazara community’, 1 May 2013, [url](#).

¹⁸ World Atlas, ‘Who are the Hazara people’, 8 February 2018, [url](#).

¹⁹ BBC News, ‘“Hell on Earth”’: Inside Quetta’s Hazara community’, 1 May 2013, [url](#).

²⁰ Balochistan Provincial Assembly, ‘Members’, n.d., [url](#).

²¹ ECP, ‘List of Enlisted Political Parties’, 2018, [url](#).

assembly²². The Majlis Wahdat-e-Muslimeen (MWM) represents the Shia community²³ and holds a number of seats in the Balochistan assembly²⁴.

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Section 5 updated: 23 September 2019

5. Security situation

5.1 Hazaras living outside of Quetta

- 5.1.1 Estimates of the number of Hazaras living outside of Quetta and/or Balochistan vary widely.
- 5.1.2 The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), an NGO, stated in its 2015 Annual Report, 'Media reports indicated that some families belonging to sectarian minorities, especially the Hazara community in Balochistan, continued to shift to Pakistan's major cities, which they considered more secure.'²⁵ A Hazara man who had left Quetta for Islamabad told Dawn, in 2014, "'Islamabad is very costly as compared to Quetta",' and that "'It is not possible for the poor people to get a house on rent in big cities like Rawalpindi or Islamabad"'. He said 'thousands' more Hazaras in Quetta wanted to move but poverty prevented them from doing so²⁶.
- 5.1.3 An article published in March 2014 in the English-language newspaper, Dawn, stated, 'Of the 600,000 Hazara community members, 100,000 have left their hometown [Quetta] ... Around 80,000 people migrated from Quetta to Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Lahore and Karachi.'²⁷ The Vice-Chairperson of the HRCP told the Express Tribune in April 2014 that, given a surge of violence, 30,000 Hazaras had left Balochistan, for other parts of the country, in the past five years²⁸. In its report covering 2017, the HRCP reported that '... according to community elders, 70,000 Hazaras have moved out of Quetta.'²⁹
- 5.1.4 According to the undated internet blog 'Hazaras in Karachi', 'Over 13,000 members of the Hazara community lives in Karachi. [...] Hazaras living in Karachi comprise small amount [sic] in numbers out of Karachi's whole population but they have managed to keep their own identity, language, beliefs and culture discrete and distinct amongst tens of other ethnicit[ies] dwelling in Karachi Metropolitan city.'³⁰
- 5.1.5 Reporting in May 2015 on Hazaras in Karachi, The News International, an English-language Pakistani newspaper, noted 'Hussain Hazara Goth and Mughal Hazara Goth are the couple of areas where there are large pockets of Hazara population while some clusters of the community also reside in

²² Balochistan Provincial Assembly, 'Members', n.d., [url](#).

²³ News International, 'Survival is a luxury Hazaras in Karachi can afford', 20 May 2015, [url](#).

²⁴ Balochistan Provincial Assembly, 'Members', n.d., [url](#).

²⁵ HRCP, 'State of Human Rights in 2015', (pages 12-13), 1 April 2016, [url](#).

²⁶ Dawn: 'A tough life for the displaced Hazaras in twin cities' 9 March 2014, [url](#).

²⁷ Dawn: 'A tough life for the displaced Hazaras in twin cities' 9 March 2014, [url](#).

²⁸ Express Tribune, 'Losing Ground: 30,000 Hazaras fled Balochistan in five years', 12 April 2014, [url](#).

²⁹ HRCP, 'State of Human Rights in 2017', (page 83), March 2018, [url](#).

³⁰ Hazaras in Karachi, 'About Us', n.d., [url](#).

areas of DHA Gizri, Pak Colony and Manghopir.³¹ The same source added 'The city of Karachi with its vastness and alien culture gives the Hazara community a degree of security.'³²

- 5.1.6 In correspondence with the UK Home Office Country Policy and Information Team (CPIT) on 5 May 2016, an official at the Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) stated:

'It is [...] difficult to trace the distribution of Hazara population in Pakistan as after sectarian killings in Quetta, many families migrated to different parts of the country, especially Karachi, which already has a sizeable Hazara population, estimated 25,000 families live there. They are concentrated in areas of Hussain Hazara Goth and Mughal Hazara Goth of the city. Those who afford the expensive living of Islamabad also relocated in the capital but their numbers are small. Reportedly, [a] few families have also migrated to Lahore and [are] living among [the] Shia population.'³³

- 5.1.7 The NCHR report of 2018 noted 'Hazara people are residing in different parts of the country including, Parachinar, Karachi, Sanghar, Nawabshah, Hyderabad, different parts of Punjab and Gilgit Baltistan.'³⁴ The report also noted that, due to the violence faced in Quetta, some Hazaras, particularly youths, felt inclined to relocate to Punjab or Islamabad³⁵. The same source said that, aside from Quetta, other areas of Balochistan in which Hazaras lived included Sanjawi, Much, Zhob, Harnai, Loralai, and Dukki³⁶. (See also [Hazaras living in Quetta](#)).

- 5.1.8 The DFAT report of February 2019 stated 'Outside of Balochistan, smaller but significant [Hazara] populations reside in major urban centres such as Karachi. Hazaras in urban centres other than Quetta tend not to live in enclaves, to reduce the risk of ethnic profiling, discrimination and attack.'³⁷

- 5.1.9 The same source reported:

'Hazaras that can afford to leave Quetta do so. Outside Balochistan, Hazaras report finding it safer to live separately amongst the general community than to relocate to live near other Hazaras, where they can be easily profiled and targeted. Hazaras' preferred options for internal relocation are, in order, Lahore, Karachi and Islamabad. Hazaras report that the few Hazara enclaves in Karachi, such as Mungo Pir, are unsafe and have only arisen out of necessity where poorer Hazaras have had to pool resources.

'While living in ethnically diverse locations such as Karachi affords increased security, Hazaras still experience societal discrimination and security threats. Some Hazara members of the military employ measures to reduce their profile, such as varying daily travel routes and times, changing vehicles and avoiding the use of military vehicles.'³⁸

³¹ News International, 'Survival is a luxury Hazaras in Karachi can afford', 20 May 2015, [url](#).

³² News International, 'Survival is a luxury Hazaras in Karachi can afford', 20 May 2015, [url](#).

³³ PIPS, 'Correspondence with CPIT', 5 May 2016, [Annex A](#).

³⁴ NCHR, 'Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras', (page 4), February 2018, [url](#).

³⁵ NCHR, 'Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras', (page 10), February 2018, [url](#).

³⁶ NCHR, 'Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras', (page 4), February 2018, [url](#).

³⁷ DFAT, 'Country Information Report Pakistan', (para 3.28), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

³⁸ DFAT, 'Country Information Report Pakistan', (paras 3.43-3.44), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

See also [Societal attitudes and treatment](#) and [Road safety](#).

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5.2 Hazaras living in Quetta

5.2.1 The EASO report of August 2015 noted:

‘Within Quetta, Hazara live predominantly within their own two communities – Hazara Town (also known as Brewery Road) and along Alamdar Road towards Mehrabad [also referred to as Mariabad or Mari Abad]. 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 Quetta are integrated in the local community and work alongside members of other ethnic groups. Many are employed in the civil service of Balochistan, in the Balochistan police force, or with private businesses.’³⁹

5.2.2 The DFAT report of February 2019 noted that Hazara Town was located to the west of the city of Quetta, near the cantonment and Benazir hospital; Mariabad was to the east, near the Pakistan air force base⁴⁰. DFAT added ‘Most Hazaras live in enclaves in Quetta due to the security situation in Balochistan. While DFAT is not able to provide detailed reporting on Balochistan based Hazaras who reside outside of Quetta, the overall security situation outside of Quetta is more severe than within Quetta.’⁴¹ The Diplomat, a current affairs magazine for the Asia-Pacific region, reported on 16 April 2019, noted that the 2 districts of Hazara Town and Mariabad were connected via Spini Road – a distance of 11.2 kilometres⁴².

5.2.3 Hazara Town and Mariabad are both protected by high walls and security checkpoints guarded by federal paramilitary troops^{43 44 45}. Human Rights Watch (HRW) referred to this as “ghettoization” in its June 2014 report, adding that ‘There is no travel route, no shopping trip, no school run, no work commute that is safe.’⁴⁶ The HRCP reported in its 2015 annual report that ‘In search of safety, large numbers of Hazara citizens in Quetta have relocated to enclaves exclusive to their community over the years.’⁴⁷

5.2.4 An article in Pakistan Today in June 2015 referred to 300 shops run by Hazaras being located outside of the two main enclaves, in the ‘main city areas’.⁴⁸ Hazaras, however, were reportedly wary of travelling around Quetta because they were easily identifiable⁴⁹. During its study on Hazaras, a Hazara student told the NCHR, ‘A Hazara cannot visit the whole city of

³⁹ EASO, ‘Pakistan Country Overview’, (page 101), August 2015, [url](#).

⁴⁰ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 3.28), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

⁴¹ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 3.28), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

⁴² The Diplomat, ‘Hazaras Gripped by Religious Extremism in Balochistan’, 16 April 2019, [url](#).

⁴³ Express Tribune, ‘Losing Ground: 30,000 Hazaras fled Balochistan in five years’, 12 April 2014, [url](#).

⁴⁴ Dawn, ‘Hazaras: Fault in their Faces’, 24 October 2014, [url](#).

⁴⁵ Independent, ‘Fear and persecution in Pakistan’s Hazara community’, 2 August 2019, [url](#).

⁴⁶ Human Rights Watch, “‘We are the Walking Dead’”, (page 5), 30 June 2014, [url](#).

⁴⁷ HRCP, ‘State of Human Rights in 2015’, (pages 13-14), 1 April 2016, [url](#).

⁴⁸ Pakistan Today, ‘Three ‘most wanted terrorists’ arrested in Quetta’, 8 June 2015, [url](#).

⁴⁹ Express Tribune, ‘Parkour – The other side of Hazara Town’, 16 June 2014, [url](#).

Quetta without inviting danger to his life.⁵⁰ The Independent reported in August 2019 that many Hazara businesses that ran in Quetta's wholesale markets had closed down and moved into the enclaves. However, the report added 'Some still venture out into Quetta in search of work, while others keep businesses running.'⁵¹

5.2.5 The US State Department Human Rights report for 2018 (USSD HR Report 2018) noted 'According to press reports and other sources, Hazara were unable to move freely outside of Quetta's two Hazara-populated enclaves. Community members complained that increased security measures had turned their neighborhoods into ghettos, resulting in economic exploitation. Consumer goods in those enclaves were available only at inflated prices, and Hazaras reported an inability to find employment or pursue higher education.'⁵² (see also [Socio-economic situation](#)).

5.2.6 The DFAT report noted:

'Hazaras report the security situation in Quetta has become so restrictive and the likelihood of attack so high, that they are reluctant to travel outside of or between the two enclaved areas, including for basic services, such as food, education, health care and employment. Consequently, Hazaras have access only to services within enclave walls. Community representatives claim the government does not maintain the basic facilities that exist and that their operations depend on staffing by Hazaras living within the enclaves. The Hazara community also relies heavily on a small number of Hazara vendors who risk their own security to move limited food supplies into Hazara enclaves.'⁵³

5.2.7 In its 2018 annual report, the HRCP noted 'Driven into virtual ghettoisation, the community's freedom of movement remains severely limited, with many migrating abroad, often illegally.'⁵⁴ The report added:

'A Hazara woman who has opened a restaurant in the centre of Hazara Town explained their plight, "We are in a very sad predicament today. Many homes have no male breadwinners left – they have either been killed or have left Quetta. In a community where children's education was of paramount importance and child labour looked down upon, many children have had to leave school and work as waiters in restaurants, or errand boys in medical stores or in shoe shops etc. to support their families".'⁵⁵

5.2.8 According to the NCHR report:

'In the wake of security situation in Quetta, threat perception has reached to such a level amongst the Hazara community that according to some community members, Hazaras always try to hide their identity while travelling and dealing outside their communities. The Hazara respondents explained that while going outside their areas they have to conceal their identity by covering their heads. The bike riders usually wear helmet in order

⁵⁰ NCHR, 'Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras', (page 5), February 2018, [url](#).

⁵¹ Independent, 'Fear and persecution in Pakistan's Hazara community', 2 August 2019, [url](#).

⁵² USSD, 'Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 2018', (section 6), 13 March 2019, [url](#).

⁵³ DFAT, 'Country Information Report Pakistan', (para 3.36), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

⁵⁴ HRCP, 'State of Human Rights in 2018', (page 109), March 2019, [url](#).

⁵⁵ HRCP, 'State of Human Rights in 2018', (page 113), March 2019, [url](#).

to conceal their identity instead of wearing helmet for safety. The unique facial features i.e. cheek bones, Sian eyes; nose and language make the Hazaras easily identifiable. They said that they cannot offer prayers in open areas, as their prayers differ from other sects which expose their identity. The respondents said sometimes they represent themselves as Uzbeks when asked, and omit words from their names to conceal their Shia Hazara identity. The respondents further added that Hazaras are known for cleanliness but the situation has forced them to such an extent that in order to conceal their identity and avoid attacks they intentionally keep their vehicles unclean while traveling in the city.⁵⁶

See also State response and treatment – [Provision of security and redress](#)

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5.3 Attacks and casualties

5.3.1 According to the Home Department of Balochistan, cited by the NCHR in its February 2018 report:

“Since January 2012 to date, 509 individuals, from Hazara community, have been killed and 627 injured in different incidents of sectarian violence, which mostly took place in District Quetta. With regard to the present wave of terrorism in the country, especially in Balochistan province, the federal and provincial governments have taken measures to counter the situation in order to ensure security and safety of the masses, public property and sensitive installations. The security threats, particularly the terrorist activities, are mostly linked with the situation in Afghanistan leading to influx of the Afghan nationals, including the terrorists, into Balochistan through long and porous border, extending to 1200 kms along with eight districts of the province”.⁵⁷

5.3.2 The NCHR also stated ‘Hazaras have consistently been targeted by terrorists and religious fanatics since 1999 through suicide bombings and targeted killings, with more than 2,000 having reportedly been killed in the last 14 years.’⁵⁸

5.3.3 According to the think tank, the Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), between 2013 and 2018, 289 Shia Hazaras were killed in sectarian violence⁵⁹.

5.3.4 According to the South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP), attacks against Hazaras decreased in 2018 compared to 2017, citing 3 attacks causing at least 11 fatalities in 2017⁶⁰, and 2 attacks causing 4 deaths, including that of 2 police officers assigned to protect Hazaras, in 2018⁶¹. Whilst also reporting a decrease in attacks in 2018 compared to 2017⁶², the Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), in its security report covering 2017 events, reported 7

⁵⁶ NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras’, (page 10), February 2018, [url](#).

⁵⁷ NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras’, (page 5), February 2018, [url](#).

⁵⁸ NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras’, (page 5), February 2018, [url](#).

⁵⁹ CRSS, ‘Annual Security Report 2018’, 8 February 2019, [url](#).

⁶⁰ SATP, ‘Pakistan Attacks on Hazaras: 2017’, 2017, [url](#).

⁶¹ SATP, ‘Pakistan Attacks on Hazaras: 2018’, 2018, [url](#).

⁶² PIPS, ‘Pakistan Security Report 2018’, (page 46), 2019, [url](#).

attacks against Hazaras causing 17 deaths⁶³. In its 2018 report, the PIPS cited 6 sectarian attacks, in March and April of that year, causing the deaths of 8 people, including 7 Hazaras and a police officer⁶⁴.

- 5.3.5 The HRCP report for 2018 noted that, according to the regional head of the Hazara Democratic Party, the actual number of casualties was much higher than quoted by the Home Department⁶⁵. The HRCP report added that in 2018:

‘Six Hazara men were shot dead and one injured in four separate attacks in the short span of one month. Two were killed in the Western Bypass area of Quetta. A shopkeeper was gunned down on 18 April while another Hazara man was killed at the beginning of the month. Two Hazara men were killed in the fourth targeted attack on 28 April. On 4 March, a member of the Hazara community was shot dead in a targeted killing in Quetta, while on 8 March in Quetta a policeman was shot dead and another sustained injuries while guarding the Hazaras.’⁶⁶

- 5.3.6 According to the PIPS, the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) reportedly perpetrated the above attacks⁶⁷. As noted by the SATP, the LeJ is a proscribed group in Pakistan, whose aim is to ‘transform Pakistan into a Sunni state, primarily through violent means.’⁶⁸ According to the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) 2019 Annual Report, covering 2018, the Islamic State, LeJ, and the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) targeted Hazaras⁶⁹. (see also [Anti-Hazara Shia sentiment](#)).

- 5.3.7 The CRSS noted in its 2nd quarterly report for 2019 that 20 Hazaras were killed in sectarian violence between the beginning of January 2018 and end of June 2019; 12 of those were killed in Q2 of 2019⁷⁰. SATP reported that in the first eight months of 2019 there were 11 Hazara fatalities in three attacks on 12 April, 7 June and 6 August⁷¹.

- 5.3.8 The SATP, citing media sources, noted on 12 April 2019, that a vegetable market in Hazarganji, Quetta [outside of the Hazara enclaves], was targeted by an improvised explosive device (IED), killing at least 16, including 8 Hazaras⁷². According to Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Abdul Razzaq Cheema, the blast targeted the Hazara community and killed at least 9 Hazaras. However, Home Minister Ziaullah Langove believed no specific community was targeted⁷³. Islamic State claimed responsibility for the attack, although, according to Dawn news, ‘a little known faction of the Taliban had

⁶³ PIPS, ‘Pakistan Security Report 2017’, (page 52), 2018, [url](#).

⁶⁴ PIPS, ‘Pakistan Security Report 2018’, (page 46), 2019, [url](#).

⁶⁵ HRCP, ‘State of Human Rights in 2018’, (page 113), March 2019, [url](#).

⁶⁶ HRCP, ‘State of Human Rights in 2018’, (page 112), March 2019, [url](#).

⁶⁷ PIPS, ‘Pakistan Security Report 2018’, (page 45), 2019, [url](#).

⁶⁸ SATP, ‘Lashkar-e- Jhangvi (LeJ)’, n.d., [url](#).

⁶⁹ USCIRF, ‘Annual Report 2019: Pakistan’, (page 6), April 2019, [url](#).

⁷⁰ CRSS, ‘Quarterly Security Report 2019’, 17 July 2019, [url](#).

⁷¹ SATP ‘Pakistan Attacks on Hazaras: 2019’, 2019, [url](#).

⁷² SATP, ‘Pakistan Attacks on Hazaras: 2019’, 2019, [url](#).

⁷³ Dawn, ‘20 killed, 48 injured in attack targeting Hazara community in Quetta’, 12 April 2019, [url](#).

claimed responsibility for the blast, saying it collaborated with Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ).⁷⁴

5.3.9 The SATP also reported a blast on 7 June 2019 targeting a car, which killed 2 Hazaras from Quetta, who were visiting Ziarat District; on 6 August 2019 an IED placed outside a shoe shop on Mission Road, Quetta, killed 1 Hazara and injured 13 others, most of whom were also Hazara⁷⁵. Most shops on Mission Road were run by Hazaras, according to Dawn news⁷⁶.

5.3.10 The DFAT report noted that:

‘Although improved security measures by the community and general improvements in the security situation in Pakistan have led to a steady decrease in successful attacks, a large number of official and non-government interlocutors report that Hazaras in Quetta continue to face significant risk of violence. Local media claim that security threats and government restrictions mean they are unable to report accurately on Hazara security in Balochistan.’⁷⁷

5.3.11 A [Google map](#), maintained by the Hazara Organization for Peace and Equality (HOPE), documented attacks on Hazaras across the country⁷⁸.

See also [Provision of security and redress](#).

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5.4 Motivation for attacks

5.4.1 The HRCP annual report for 2018 noted ‘Sectarian terrorism in Balochistan has disproportionately targeted the Hazara community.’⁷⁹ However, according to respondents to the NCHR study, ‘Most members of Hazara community were of the view that their persecution is not just sectarian. They explained that other Shia groups are living peacefully in Dera Murad Jamali and Jafarabad in Balochistan, which gives weight to the view that these killings are not religiously-motivated against Shias as only Hazaras are being targeted.’⁸⁰

5.4.2 The NCHR report further noted:

‘According to Hazara community members one of the reasons for their persecution could be associated with the socio-economic prosperity which they enjoy. They explained that Hazaras have built shops, markets, buildings and shopping malls in the hub of city and also progressed rapidly in Balochistan, in all spheres of life, economy, trade; education, sports etc as compared to other native communities. That is why land mafia could be involved in their killing, forcing them to abandon their running business and prime properties, leaving Quetta for other parts of the country. However,

⁷⁴ Dawn, ‘Islamic State says it was behind Quetta’s Hazarganji market bombing’, 13 April 2019, [url](#).

⁷⁵ SATP, ‘Pakistan Attacks on Hazaras: 2019’, 2019, [url](#).

⁷⁶ Dawn, ‘One killed, 10 injured in blast on Quetta’s Mission Road’, 6 August 2019, [url](#).

⁷⁷ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 3.32), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

⁷⁸ HOPE, ‘Hazara genocide in Pakistan’, n.d., [url](#).

⁷⁹ HRCP, ‘State of Human Rights in 2018’, (page 112), March 2019, [url](#).

⁸⁰ NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras’, (page 6), February 2018, [url](#).

among non-Hazara respondents, no one identified the involvement of land Mafia in the killings of Hazaras in Quetta.

‘Some respondents from Hazara community have indicated the possibility that some persons of Hazara community could also be involved in the killings of their own community. Moreover, some non-Hazara respondents also endorsed this view. However, no credible information or evidence has been provided to substantiate the claim.’⁸¹

- 5.4.3 The NCHR report added ‘However, there were some respondents from Hazara community who declared their persecution as a sectarian issue. They were of the view that Hazara are affiliated to Shia sect and consequently to present day Iran, a declared Shia State.’⁸²
- 5.4.4 The Home and Tribal affairs department of Balochistan, told the NCHR that: ‘... terrorists infiltrating from Afghanistan are involved in Hazara killings. There have been fewer incidents of target killings of Hazaras since 2014 as compared to previous years as federal and provincial governments have taken measures to control the sectarian issue. The District Superintendent Police (DSP) legal Quetta, Najam-Us-Saqib also told NCHR that terrorists involved in Hazara killings come from Afghanistan. He further said that these terrorists hire native people for this purpose. According to him the violence against Hazaras has been minimized to a good extent.’⁸³
- 5.4.5 The NCHR report noted that, according to Senator Usman Kakar, ‘[in] Quetta Hazaras are not the only target, but Balochs, Pashtuns, and other communities are unsafe too. This view was supported by some of the Hazara representatives, who were of the view that they should focus on collective struggle for their emancipation from violence, rather than migrating place to place which adversely affects their identity.’⁸⁴

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5.5 Road safety

5.5.1 The DFAT report noted:

‘Local sources consider the road from Quetta airport to the city and Double Road to be dangerous for all travellers, regardless of ethnicity. Local sources, including from the Hazara community, consider Giant Road to be dangerous for both Hazaras and Frontier Corps. Militants have targeted Shi’a pilgrims on the road through Balochistan during pilgrimage to Iran and Iraq and Hazara Shi’a are easier targets because of their distinctive appearance. Local sources claim that government security for Shi’a undertaking religious pilgrimage [...] is more readily available for non-Hazara Shi’a, and the government provides escorts for Hazaras only every couple of months.’⁸⁵

⁸¹ NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras’, (page 7), February 2018, [url](#).

⁸² NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras’, (page 7), February 2018, [url](#).

⁸³ NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras’, (pages 7-8), February 2018, [url](#).

⁸⁴ NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras’, (page 11), February 2018, [url](#).

⁸⁵ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 3.35), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

5.5.2 The Hazara community told the NCHR that travelling to Karachi for medical treatment was not an option as the journey was too unsafe. The NCHR cited an attack in July 2017 of a Hazara family who were killed whilst travelling to Karachi from Quetta⁸⁶.

5.5.3 The DFAT report noted, regarding access to transportation:

‘The high frequency of attacks against Hazaras, such as on 4 October 2016 when a gunmen attacked a bus in Quetta, killing at least four Hazara women, have led many education and health facilities in Quetta to deny Hazaras access to transportation or attendance, in order to protect non-Hazaras clients and students. Many Hazaras now refuse to take the bus to attend university outside of Hazara enclaves due to increased fear in the wake of attacks on transportation.’⁸⁷

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Section 6 updated: 23 September 2019

6. State response and treatment

6.1 Provision of security and redress

6.1.1 The NCHR report of 2018 noted:

‘According to Home Department of Balochistan, special measures for the security of Hazara community have been ensured including:

(1) 19 platoons of FC [Frontier Corps] personnels deployed for the security of Hazara community living in Marri Abad and Hazara town.

(2) Permanent check posts established at the entry/ exit points of the areas where Hazara community lives.

(3) Permanent FC/Police patrolling frequent routes where Hazara community moves from Hazara town to Marri Abad and back via Spini road.

(4) 410 FC personnel, 310 Police personnel, 393 Levies personnel, 126 Vehicles, 16 Jamming vehicles, and 7 Levies APCs, provided on permanent basis for the safe movement of Shia Zaireen enroute from Quetta to Taftan and back.

(5) Permanent FC/ Police escorting Hazara shopkeepers proceeding to markets for purchase of goods/service.’⁸⁸

6.1.2 The HRCP report for 2017 noted an attack on a van bound for a vegetable market in October 2017. According to the report, ‘The police claimed to have created a special convoy to guard the Hazara community to and from the vegetable market, and the five people murdered were not travelling in the convoy. The Hazara community leaders disagreed, claiming that the protection of the convoy was not regular, even though vegetables had to be purchased on a daily basis.’⁸⁹

6.1.3 The Hazara community told the NCHR that:

⁸⁶ NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras’, (pages 9-10), February 2018, [url](#).

⁸⁷ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 3.38), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

⁸⁸ NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras’, (pages 5-6), February 2018, [url](#).

⁸⁹ HRCP, ‘State of Human Rights in 2017’, (page 84), March 2018, [url](#).

‘... the state seems to be oblivious of its responsibility to ensure the protection of their rights. The Hazara community has been demanding from the state to take considerable measures to address their concerns i.e. to guard them against persecution. They complained that the state is inadequately responding to their situation and is unable to provide them protection, despite the initiation of National Action Plan. Hazaras are of the view that the role of the state is discriminatory, as the perpetrators have never been brought to justice and that the First Information Reports (FIRs) are always lodged against unknown persons. The community also questioned the measures taken by the Provincial Government for their protection; instead of giving them protection, L.E.As [law enforcement agencies] are often engaged in unnecessary searching and checking of Hazaras themselves at various check posts.’⁹⁰

- 6.1.4 The HRCP noted in its 2018 report that, following attacks on Hazaras in 2018, ‘The authorities’ failure to protect Hazaras sparked protests in Quetta, including a five-day sit-in led by Jalila Haider, which ended after the Army Chief met protestors. In May the CJP [Chief Justice of Pakistan] took suo moto notice of these attacks, directing provincial and national authorities to file reports within 10 days.’⁹¹ As noted in the USCIRF 2019 Annual Report, ‘During a special case hearing in May 2018, the chief justice of Pakistan stated that attacks on the Hazara Shi’a Muslims in Balochistan Province were tantamount to wiping out an entire generation and that the state must “protect lives and property of the Hazara community”.’⁹²
- 6.1.5 According to the USSD International Religious Freedom (IRF) Report for 2018, ‘Chief of Army Staff Bajwa met with protest leaders in May [2018], and police subsequently provided additional security in Quetta to protect religious minorities from attack. Although the violence subsided, some Quetta Hazara community members complained that increased security measures had turned their neighborhoods into isolated ghettos.’⁹³
- 6.1.6 The NCHR were told in a brief statement by Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed Chairman Parliamentary Committee on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), relating to the killings of Hazara, that ‘it is ethnic cleansing of Hazara community and we have failed to protect them.’⁹⁴
- 6.1.7 The NCHR report noted that respondents from the Hazara community criticised the Government for not giving compensation for the deaths of family members, some of whom were the sole providers. The NCHR stated ‘They are facing emotional, psychological and financial problems. Hazaras said that government has only paid lip service to their problems with no substantive measures taken for their consoling and rehabilitation.’⁹⁵
- 6.1.8 On 31 May 2018, Public Radio International (PRI), an independent, non-profit multi-media organisation, noted:

⁹⁰ NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras’, (page 6), February 2018, [url](#).

⁹¹ HRCP, ‘State of Human Rights in 2018’, (page 109), March 2019, [url](#).

⁹² USCIRF, ‘Annual Report 2019: Pakistan’, (page 6), April 2019, [url](#).

⁹³ USSD, ‘International Religious Freedom Report for 2018’, (page 25), 21 June 2019, [url](#).

⁹⁴ NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras’, (page 8), February 2018, [url](#).

⁹⁵ NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras’, (page 8), February 2018, [url](#).

‘Although the lockdown of Hazara neighborhoods has been carried out in the name of security, it hasn’t stopped attacks. Crimes against Hazaras have increased in recent years, with most cases going uninvestigated. Targeted killings of Hazara are rarely pursued by courts or the police; fear of retribution means that victims and local authorities alike often do not name perpetrators when first incident reports are filed. In recent years, the police and Frontier Corps paramilitary personnel assigned to protect Hazaras have also been killed by militant groups.’⁹⁶

- 6.1.9 DFAT noted in its February 2019 report ‘The paramilitary Frontier Corps [...] maintains checkpoints on roads leading to Hazara town in Quetta, and search people on entry and exit. Sources report Frontier Corps are known to routinely discriminate against and harass Hazaras at checkpoints.’⁹⁷
- 6.1.10 DFAT noted ‘Local sources attribute much of the improvement in the security situation for Hazaras, including in Hazara Town and Mariabad in Quetta, to measures taken by the community to protect itself, rather than an increase in support from security forces or a change in intent from militant groups.’⁹⁸
- 6.1.11 Following a bombing at a vegetable market in Quetta on 12 April 2019 (see [Casualties](#)), members of the Hazara community held a sit-in protest in Quetta, demanding a halt to the killings, the arrest of the perpetrators and heightened security. Community members also gathered in Karachi to protest the violence⁹⁹.
- 6.1.12 According to Dawn news, a high level meeting, under the Chief Minister of Balochistan, took place after the attack on the vegetable market when it was decided that financial assistance would be provided to the affected families as well as the cost of treatment for the injured. It was also agreed that closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras would be immediately installed at the Hazarganji market and other public places. Action on terrorists’ hideouts and against their leaders would be increased. Deputy Inspector General Abdul Razzaq Cheema told Dawn news TV that members of the Hazara community were escorted by security forces to and from Hazarganji market on a daily basis¹⁰⁰.
- 6.1.13 The Diplomat reported on 25 April 2019:
‘After the most recent attack [on Hazaras], Balochistan’s Chief Minister Jam Kamal Khan Alyani and former Minister of State for Interior Shehryar Afridi visited the camp of Hazaras on Western Bypass Road to give assurances of state protection. And on April 21, Prime Minister Imran Khan went to Quetta to meet members of the Hazara community. Before the grieving families of attack victims, he too repeated promises to ensure the NAP [National Action Plan – an anti-terrorism strategy] was fully implemented and pledged that the day was coming soon when Pakistan would enjoy peace.’¹⁰¹

⁹⁶ PRI, ‘Pakistani Hazaras face a constant threat of targeted violence’, 31 May 2018, [url](#).

⁹⁷ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 3.30), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

⁹⁸ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 3.31), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

⁹⁹ RFE/RL, “Down With Terrorism”, 14 April 2019, [url](#).

¹⁰⁰ Dawn, ‘20 killed, 48 injured in attack targeting Hazara community in Quetta’, 12 April 2019, [url](#).

¹⁰¹ The Diplomat, ‘Fear and Loathing in Balochistan’, 25 April 2019, [url](#).

6.1.14 The same source noted ‘... security officials insist that they have been carrying out actions against the perpetrators of such violence. This is why, officials add, unlike in the past, there are only sporadic attacks on the Hazaras. Security forces claim to have carried out intelligence-based operations inside and outside of Quetta against Lash[k]ar-e-Jhangvi elements, who are involved in the Hazara killings.’¹⁰²

6.1.15 During his visit to Quetta in April 2019, the Prime Minister also announced a 5% quota in the Naya Pakistan Housing Scheme for those families of Hazaras who had lost loved ones in terrorist attacks in Balochistan¹⁰³.

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Section 7 updated: 23 September 2019

7. Societal attitudes and treatment

7.1 Community relations

7.1.1 The NCHR noted in its February 2018 report

‘Senator Kabeer Muhammad Shahi, a Baloch nationalist leader from National Party (NP), told NCHR that there is no issue between Hazara and Sunni community in Balochistan. We have lived peacefully and had marriage relations with each other. It is an international agenda to foment sectarian violence in Balochistan, he added. Similarly some members of civil society also said that, “the persecution of Hazara community is not a religious/sectarian issue, there is something else behind the killing of this community”.’¹⁰⁴

7.1.2 According to DFAT’s assessment:

‘Hazaras in Pakistan who remain inside Hazara enclaves in Quetta do not face societal discrimination. Outside the Hazara enclaves in Quetta, Hazaras face a moderate risk of societal discrimination, including by government officials and security forces, in the form of obstruction at checkpoints, denial of or delay in access to identity documentation, employment and services. However, DFAT assesses such discrimination reflects individual prejudice rather than systematic and/or formal official discrimination.’¹⁰⁵ (see also [Provision of security and redress](#)).

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7.2 Anti-Hazara Shia sentiment

7.2.1 Following the attack at the vegetable market on 12 April 2019, The Diplomat, reported:

‘Although LeJ [Lashkar-e-Jhangvi] has been labelled by Pakistan’s Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) as one of the country’s “most virulent terrorist organizations,” and proscribed by the United States, doubts remain about the severity of the crackdown on such groups. In one interview, SSP [Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan, an offshoot of the LeJ] leaders proclaimed that Pakistani

¹⁰² The Diplomat, ‘Fear and Loathing in Balochistan’, 25 April 2019, [url](#).

¹⁰³ The Diplomat, ‘Fear and Loathing in Balochistan’, 25 April 2019, [url](#).

¹⁰⁴ NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras’, (page 7), February 2018, [url](#).

¹⁰⁵ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 3.46), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

military and intelligence had advised them in 2016 “to tone down their inflammatory, anti-Shia language but maintain their basic policy.” In another example, LeJ leader Ramazan Mengal was freed by the authorities two days before the Friday attack despite Mengal’s admission of killing tens of Hazaras, and serious allegations of human rights violations.

‘Likewise, groups like LeJ, which has its roots in Punjab, have continued to organize public and free-spoken anti-Shiite rallies, particularly against the Hazara community in Pakistan. A video from one such rally on Mezan Chowk in Quetta shows LeJ leaders freely chanting “Shiite Kafir” slogans, threatening to “wipe out the entire [Shiite] Hazara community,” while FC personnel and police are seen roaming around the rally.’¹⁰⁶

- 7.2.2 The Diplomat also noted ‘Beyond the physical attacks, there are plentiful threats and hate slogans directed at the Hazara community; hateful slogans chalked on walls, death threats delivered on social media, and distribution of anti-Hazara printed leaflets across the province.’¹⁰⁷
- 7.2.3 The NCHR report stated, ‘Hate speech against the Hazara community by religious leaders and groups has been instrumental in further marginalizing the community, and this overt discrimination deprives them of their fundamental rights to public life, mobility, and economic activities, among others.’¹⁰⁸

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Section 8 updated: 23 September 2019

8. Socio-economic situation

8.1 Access to education

- 8.1.1 The News International reported, on 20 May 2015, that ‘According to Muhammad Ali, a resident of Hussain Hazara Goth, there are Hazara students in public and private universities but their numbers don’t reflect the true proportion of young Hazaras living in the city. “Usually they can’t even afford public universities. If they can it is difficult for the families to survive if the earned money is put into education,” said Ali.’¹⁰⁹ The same source quoted an activist as saying “In Karachi, the standard of schools and colleges near Hazara-dominated localities is highly deplorable”.¹¹⁰
- 8.1.2 The HRCP report for 2018 noted ‘As Hazaras are driven into enforced seclusion for the sake of safety, their children’s education is disrupted and thriving businesses abandoned.’¹¹¹ The NCHR reported ‘A representative of Hazara Democratic Party (HDP) informed NCHR that prior to existing situation, Hazara children used to go to schools outside the Hazara town, but due to the current security issues the law enforcement agencies have

¹⁰⁶ The Diplomat, ‘Hazaras Gripped by Religious Extremism in Balochistan’, 16 April 2019, [url](#).

¹⁰⁷ The Diplomat, ‘Hazaras Gripped by Religious Extremism in Balochistan’, 16 April 2019, [url](#).

¹⁰⁸ NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras’, (page 5), February 2018, [url](#).

¹⁰⁹ News International, ‘Survival is a luxury Hazaras in Karachi can afford’, 20 May 2015, [url](#).

¹¹⁰ News International, ‘Survival is a luxury Hazaras in Karachi can afford’, 20 May 2015, [url](#).

¹¹¹ HRCP, ‘State of Human Rights in 2018’, (page 113), March 2019, [url](#).

established check posts and blockades which make it difficult rather than facilitating the students to reach schools.’¹¹²

- 8.1.3 The NCHR report stated ‘The interviewees from Hazara community revealed that under the existing situation, it is difficult for them to pursue higher education in Balochistan. Students from Hazara community explained that due to the fear of violence they are reluctant to go to higher educational institutions.’¹¹³
- 8.1.4 The same source added ‘The respondents from Hazara community claimed that buses carrying Hazara students are being veiled with black cloth to conceal their presence. A community activist contended that due to worsening security situation the enrolment of Hazara students in Balochistan University has dwindled to a very low number as they are now compelled to prefer joining universities outside the province.’¹¹⁴
- 8.1.5 The DFAT report noted ‘Hazaras claim that there are two government colleges within the enclaves, open to all children, offering the equivalent of Australian year six to 12, and that no universities are located in the enclaves. DFAT is unable to verify these claims. Hazaras seeking education outside the enclaves face a high risk of discrimination and violence.’¹¹⁵
- 8.1.6 The Diplomat reported in April 2019 ‘Due to sectarian violence, there are only a handful of Hazara students – mostly women — in the local universities of Quetta. They do not leave the university grounds until or unless they leave for their homes on the buses. Most Hazara students are studying in universities outside of Balochistan, in Punjab and Sindh provinces. Even while leaving for Karachi for their studies, Hazara students have also been targeted and killed.’¹¹⁶
- 8.1.7 A November 2018 report by Human Rights Watch (HRW) examined issues of girls’ access to education in Pakistan and stated ‘Naira worries about her teenage daughter, a college student in Quetta. Naira described their lives in Quetta as being like a prison, saying targeted attacks against members of the Hazara community are so pervasive that girls from other ethnic groups sometimes beg Hazara girls not travel with them or stand close to them on public transportation. An activist in Balochistan said he believed driving Hazara students out of education was an objective for sectarian groups. “They targeted us because we were progressing—in the military, in sports, education,” he said. “We always achieved the highest marks at Balochistan’s various universities. Now there are only a handful of [Hazara] children who go to Balochistan University. This was a concentrated campaign to keep us down.”¹¹⁷

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¹¹² NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras’, (page 9), February 2018, [url](#).

¹¹³ NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras’, (page 9), February 2018, [url](#).

¹¹⁴ NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras’, (page 9), February 2018, [url](#).

¹¹⁵ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 3.38), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

¹¹⁶ The Diplomat, ‘Fear and Loathing in Balochistan’, 25 April 2019, [url](#).

¹¹⁷ HRW, ‘Shall I feed my daughter or educate her?’, November 2018, [url](#)

8.2 Access to employment

8.2.1 The NCHR stated:

‘In Quetta, most of the Hazaras are dependent on business, trade and Government jobs for their livelihood. The respondents told NCHR that prior to their persecution they were leading a prosperous life. Soneri Market, Spinzar Market, Liaquat Market, Junction Market, Baldia Plaza, Abdul Sattar Road and Liaquat Road were the major centers of business for Hazaras. However, the situation has changed after constant attacks against them. The respondents were of the view that because of being Hazaras, the shop owners are demanding higher rents, making it unaffordable for them to continue with their businesses. Their entire economic activity is now confined to Hazara populated areas, leaving them with very little choices. It has caused economic loss as they cannot go outside their areas for buying and selling of goods. The middle men now provide them goods and mint hefty commissions which causes extra financial burden on Hazara businessmen and consumers.’¹¹⁸

8.2.2 The NCHR added:

‘According to Hazara community, prior to the existing situation, recruitments of the Hazaras in civil services and other Government jobs were high and they were serving on different levels and positions in Balochistan. Due to the deteriorating situation, their representation in civil services and power structures has diminished. Owing to this situation, the community as a whole has shifted its focus towards other fields such as business and banking, which does not make up for their loss vis-à-vis their representation in provincial administration. They further said that Hazaras are not in a position to obtain jobs in Balochistan because of the fear of being killed. A Hazara named Muzafar informed NCHR that he has been offered a government job in Quetta but due to the insecure situation he refused to join. He further claimed that because of this insecurity and persecution, “We are confused about our lives and future as many of Hazara youth are jobless”.’¹¹⁹

8.2.3 According to the DFAT report:

‘Historically, the government of Balochistan was the main employer of Hazaras in Quetta. Hazaras now decline jobs for fear of movement. Hazaras claim they are denied private employment opportunities on the basis that they cannot travel safely to work in the city. Hazara youth, like other young people in Pakistan, need to move for employment. Many Hazaras in Quetta provide services to their own community within their enclaves; others attempt to move to other cities across Pakistan to work.’¹²⁰

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¹¹⁸ NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras’, (pages 11-12), February 2018, [url](#).

¹¹⁹ NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras’, (pages 12-13), February 2018, [url](#).

¹²⁰ DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 3.37), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

9. Health and welfare

9.1.1 The NCHR noted that, according to Hazara community members, the 2 main government hospitals – Bolan Medical Complex and Civil Hospital – were located in unsafe areas and people feared travelling there for treatment. The private hospitals in Hazara areas were often unaffordable. The report stated that Hazaras ‘have limited access to healthcare facilities, as government hospitals are situated outside the areas in which they reside.’¹²¹

9.1.2 The DFAT report noted:

‘Hazaras claim that Hazara town has one hospital and one government hospital clinic, both staffed by Hazara doctors. Members of the community who can afford it travel to Karachi for treatment; those who cannot risk the journey for treatment in Quetta outside Hazara enclaves. Hazaras claim a private charity ambulance provides emergency transport in and out of Hazara town, but abductions of ambulance workers have led Hazaras to fear travel in the ambulance. DFAT is unable to verify these claims.’¹²²

See also [Road safety](#).

9.1.3 As regards mental wellbeing, the NCHR were told by community members that the ongoing threat of violence, restricted mobility and socio-economic situation had a negative psychological effect on Hazaras. ‘This feeling of insecurity has created anxiety amongst the community, compelling them to the use of narcotics for relief. Community members are also showing signs of paranoia and delusional behavior,’ the NCHR was told¹²³.

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¹²¹ NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras’, (pages 9-10), February 2018, [url](#).

¹²² DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (para 3.39), 20 February 2019, [url](#).

¹²³ NCHR, ‘Understanding the Agonies of Ethnic Hazaras’, (page 13), February 2018, [url](#).

Annex A

Correspondence with Pak Institute for Peace Studies

On Wed, May 4, 2016 at 8:13 PM, <redacted> <redacted>@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk> wrote:

Dear <redacted>,

I am conducting some research into Hazaras living in Pakistan, specifically looking for information on Hazaras living outside of Quetta – including the estimated numbers of Hazaras in each province/district; how well integrated into the community they are; and how they are treated there by society in general/the authorities?

I'm not sure if this is a subject area you cover, but I would be grateful for any help you can offer.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

<redacted>

From: <redacted>@gmail.com

Sent: 05 May 2016 08:58

To: <redacted>

Subject: Re: FW: Request for information - Hazaras living outside Quetta

Dear <redacted>,

It is bit difficult to trace the distribution of Hazara population in Pakistan as after sectarian killings in Quetta, many families migrated to different parts of the country, especially Karachi, which already has a sizeable Hazara population, estimated 25000 families live there. They are concentrated in areas of Hussain Hazara Goth and Mughal Hazara Goth of the city. Those who afford the expensive living of Islamabad also relocated in the capital but their numbers are small. Reportedly, few families have also migrated to Lahore and living among Shia population.

My best regards

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Terms of Reference

A 'Terms of Reference' (ToR) is a broad outline of what the CPIN seeks to cover. They form the basis for the [country information section](#). The Home Office's Country Policy and Information Team uses some standardised ToRs, depending on the subject, and these are then adapted depending on the country concerned.

For this particular CPIN, the following topics were identified prior to drafting as relevant and on which research was undertaken:

- Legal rights
- Demography
 - The Hazara community in Pakistan
- Security situation
 - Hazaras living outside of Quetta
 - Hazaras living in Quetta
 - Attacks and casualties
 - Motivation
 - Road safety
- State response, treatment
 - Provision of security and redress
- Societal treatment and attitudes
 - Community relations
 - Anti-Hazara sentiment
- Employment and education
- Health

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Version control

Clearance

Below is information on when this note was cleared:

- version **2.0**
- valid from **25 November 2019**

Changes from last version of this note

Updated country information and assessment.

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