

## **DAILY TRACKER**

### **Taliban's extremist implementation of sharia law**

1. "After a long period of uncertainty about their whereabouts and safety, the four 'disappeared' Afghan women activists, as well as their relatives who also went missing, have all been released by the de facto authorities," the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) said on Twitter.

Source: <https://opoyi.com/english/four-missing-afghan-women-activists-released-by-de-facto-authorities-un>

2. A 10-year-old girl tries to sell plastic bags to shoppers squeezing past her in one of Kabul's biggest markets, amid roadside restaurants and hectic crowds. "We'll go hungry if I don't work," Shaista says. Food is abundant in the Afghan capital's shops, but her family cannot afford any of it. Shaista goes to the market every morning to buy a few shopping bags for 5 afghani (4p) each, then sells them for twice as much. According to humanitarian workers, the number of child labourers and beggars in Kabul has tripled as the UN projects that 97 percent of Afghans would be poor by June. Many people are struggling for their lives.

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2022/feb/07/scared-hungry-and-cold-child-workers-in-kabul-picture-essay>

3. A top US official claimed on Saturday that the Taliban had abducted 29 women and their families in Kabul, adding to fears over the escalating number of civilians seized and kept indefinitely in Afghanistan. Women were among the 40 people detained on Friday, according to Rina Amiri, the US special envoy for Afghan Women, Girls, and Human Rights. In a tweet, she stated, "These unfair detentions must end." Although it has since been removed, other sources have corroborated that several women were detained in Kabul. Requests for comment from the state department on why it was taken down went unanswered.

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/feb/12/taliban-have-detained-29-women-and-their-families-in-kabul-says-us-envoy>

4. Two journalists working for the UN, including former BBC reporter Andrew North, were detained in Afghanistan's capital Kabul, by the Taliban and charged with working for western intelligence agencies.

Source: <https://twitter.com/BlueprintGreece/status/1492916752543592449>

### **Promotion of radicalism in Pakistan: HR violations of minorities in Pakistan: Steps taken in the world against Pakistan's radicalism**

1. Community leaders said during a protest meeting that the assassination of a Protestant pastor in Pakistan, as well as ongoing attacks on religious minorities, has raised

Christian insecurity in the Muslim-majority country. They were speaking at a peaceful protest at the Karachi Press Club on Feb. 6 against the Jan. 30 assassination of Christian Pastor Rev. William Siraj in Peshawar, which was organised by a Christian-led rights organisation in collaboration with various human rights and minority rights organisations.

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/christians-protest-killing-of-pastor-in-peshawar/96006>

2. In Khanewal, another guy was slain for blasphemy. If the Sialkot tragedy had been properly probed, none of this would have happened. The cops are there as silent observers. People may do it for their own gain.

Source: <https://twitter.com/Jihad313SR/status/1492749868049354752>

3. A violent mob has tortured and killed a man accused of burning pages of Quran in Punjab's Tulamba area near Mian Chunnu. Videos of men hitting him with bricks and dragging him on the streets are circulating in WhatsApp groups and on Twitter and Facebook.

Source: [https://twitter.com/Roohan\\_Ahmed/status/1492554503282855937](https://twitter.com/Roohan_Ahmed/status/1492554503282855937)

4. On Saturday, a mob stoned a middle-aged man to death in a remote village of Khanewal district for allegedly desecrating the Holy Quran. The assassination follows a similar event in Sialkot last December, when a Sri Lankan engineer was lynched by manufacturing workers on blasphemy charges.

Source: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1674819>

5. A large number of people gathered outside the National Press Club on the call of Alliance Map to condemn the terrorist attack on Christian pastors in Peshawar, Pakistan.

Source: [https://twitter.com/ac1d\\_apu/status/1493087608041205768](https://twitter.com/ac1d_apu/status/1493087608041205768)

6. An international religious freedom organisation has called for the immediate release of a Hindu school principal in Pakistan who was sentenced to 25 years in prison for blasphemy. After a court in Sukkur, Sindh province declared Notan Lal guilty of blasphemy on Feb. 7, Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) joined Hindu groups in seeking justice for him.

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/christian-group-demands-release-of-jailed-pakistani-hindu/96077>

7. Prof Naela Quadri Baloch, Chairperson of the Baloch People's Congress and a leader of the Balochistan resistance movement, has stated that Pakistan is in the midst of its deadliest civil war, with the Pakistani Army losing more than 190 soldiers in an ambush by Balochistan resistance forces. On Sunday, Naela Quadri, the president of the World Baloch Women's Forum (WBWF), spoke at a Webinar titled "Recent Developments in

Balochistan" hosted by the Centre for Policy and Development Studies, a think tank with offices in Chennai and Thiruvananthapuram.

Source: <https://www.wefornews.com/it-is-civil-war-in-pakistan-baloch-leader-naela-quadri/>

### **Positive stories on steps taken against radical Islam**

1. In three weeks, forces' offensive operation in the country's north has resulted in the killing of over 120 terrorists and the arrest of 50 others, according to the Defense Headquarters. It also stated that 965 terrorists from Boko Haram/Islamic State's West Africa Province surrendered over the time period.

Source: <https://www.gfatf.org/archives/at-least-120-terrorists-killed-and-965-surrendered-in-three-weeks/>

2. Home Secretary Priti Patel stated on Wednesday that the UK's terrorism danger level has been dropped from "severe" to "substantial." Patel said security specialists at the independent Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC) reached the decision based on the most recent intelligence available in a statement to the House of Commons. The "substantial" grade denotes the likelihood of a terrorist strike in the United Kingdom. It ranks third in the UK's terrorism threat assessment system, behind "critical" and "severe" but above "low" and "moderate."

Source: <https://www.gfatf.org/archives/uk-terror-threat-level-reduced-from-severe-to-substantial/>

3. According to an in-depth analysis of 33 of the most popular websites run by actors such as the Islamic State, al-Qaeda, the Atomwaffen Division, and the Taliban, these sites receive over 1.5 million monthly visitors, with the majority of visitors hailing from Algeria, Pakistan, the United States, and the United Kingdom. All of the websites promote a variety of radical beliefs that encourage violence and terrorism. Given the conventional caricature of terrorists, one startling conclusion is that more than half of the sites identified by the Tech Against Terrorism report support far-right ideologies. In recent years, the focus on terrorism has shifted away from Islamic extremism and toward more domestic, far-right concerns.

Source: <https://www.gfatf.org/archives/at-least-200-terrorist-websites-operate-with-impunity-on-the-open-web/>

4. The Islamic State's (IS) territorial domination in Iraq after 2014 was preceded by the group's "Breaking the Walls" prison-break effort in 2012-2013. It's not unexpected, however, that IS' January 20 attack on al-Sina'a prison in al-Hasakah, Syria, aimed at liberating thousands of people related to the group, sparked fears of the group's revival spilling over into Iraq.

Source: <https://www.gfatf.org/archives/al-hasakah-prison-break-sparks-fear-of-islamic-state-resurgence-in-iraq/>

5. The National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) has released a new mobile application designed to provide first responders and security professionals with up-to-date

information on active crises, such as terrorist assaults. The programme will provide unclassified terrorism reports and alerts to responders' phones, as well as reference training aids, mobilisation indicators, and validated data. The new app, dubbed aCTknowledge, would also feature counterterrorism expertise from throughout the federal government.

Source: <https://www.fedscoop.com/odni-launches-counterterrorism-app-for-first-responders/>

6. According to security officials, Turkey has arrested 22 Daesh terror suspects in an anti-terror operation based in Istanbul. As part of an investigation into the Daesh terror organisation, Istanbul prosecutors issued arrest warrants for 23 terror suspects. The suspects were accused of collecting money as sacrificial offerings to help the terror organisation financially.

Source: <https://www.gfatf.org/archives/at-least-22-islamic-state-terror-suspects-arrested-in-turkey/>

7. The United Nations counterterrorism chief said Wednesday that it's critical to build on the momentum created by the killing of the Islamic State's leader last week and address the grievances that terrorist groups exploit to recruit new members. The murder of Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi in a US strike in northwest Syria, according to Undersecretary-General Vladimir Voronkov, was "probably the most significant in a sequence of blows" against the Islamic State's leadership in recent months.

Source: <https://www.gfatf.org/archives/un-build-on-islamic-state-chief-death-to-thwart-new-recruits/>

8. Mali's army has confirmed that it took part in a coordinated strike with French and European forces last week that resulted in the deaths of at least 20 Islamist extremists. Despite escalating tensions between Mali's administration and the country's former colonial ruler, the attack in southern Mali went ahead. According to a statement released by the French Army Ministry on Tuesday, "almost 30 Islamists" were killed in the Liptako region of Mali, near the borders with Niger and Burkina Faso, by French and Estonian Takuba Task Force personnel, as well as Malian armed forces soldiers.

Source: <https://www.gfatf.org/archives/mali-and-france-forces-eliminated-at-least-20-terrorists/>

9. The Interior Ministry stated on Monday that Turkish security forces have initiated a new counterterrorism operation against the PKK terrorist group in the southeastern region of Hakkari. According to the ministry, Operation Eren Winter-25 (Hakkari-Oul Village) Martyr Gendarmerie Sgt. Maj. Timuçin Alada will involve 555 security personnel and 37 operating teams.

Source: <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/war-on-terror/turkish-forces-launch-new-counterterrorism-operation-against-pkk>

10. The Iraqi air force struck an alleged Islamic State (ISIS) hideout in Kirkuk province on Sunday, the latest in a string of recent airstrikes by Iraqi security forces as the country ramps up attempts to eliminate terrorist cells and hideouts. Iraq's Security Media Cell

reported that F-16 jets carried out an airstrike in the Zghitun valley in western Kirkuk, obliterating a "important nest of ISIS terrorist gangs."

Source: <https://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/iraq/130220221>

11. After meeting with her counterparts from India, Japan, and the United States, Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne stated that the Quad countries will expand their collaboration on cyber- and counter-terrorism, including ransomware assaults. On Friday, the four countries agreed to further up collaboration to ensure that the Indo-Pacific region is free of "coercion," a barely veiled jab at China's expanding economic and military might.

Source: <https://thethreadtimes.com/quad-to-strengthen-cyber-counter-terrorism-cooperation-australian-fm>