



## **Pakistan - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 25 April 2012**

### **Treatment of Hazara's in Pakistan**

An article in *Dawn* from April 2012 points out that:

“Eight more people belonging to the Hazara Shia community were killed in Quetta on April 14 as the targeted killing of the ethnic community has unfortunately become a routine in the provincial capital. These targeted killings indicate a great failure of law-enforcement agencies in Balochistan. Every time after completing their nefarious design the militants have been able to walk away freely and the perpetrators of such organised crime remain untouched. Human rights groups have urged Pakistani security forces to take action against extremist sectarian outfits which have once again targeted Hazara Shia Muslims killing eight more people. Human Rights Watch says that from 2008 to 2011 at least 275 Shias, mostly from the Hazara community, have been killed in Balochistan province, while these killings are still continued.”  
(*Dawn* (18 April 2012) *Protecting Hazaras in Balochistan*)

In April 2012 a report published by *Radio Free/Radio Europe* notes:

“Dozens of Hazaras have been killed in attacks attributed to extremist groups, including Lashkar-e Jangi and local Taliban militants. In late March, five Hazaras were killed in the outskirts of Quetta.” (Radio Free Europe/Radio Europe (3 April 2012) *Pakistan's Hazara Women Fight Killings With Bangles*)

The *Human Rights Commission of Pakistan* note in March 2012 that:

“A large number of Hazaras were reported to be fleeing Balochistan because of the constant threats and target killings.” (Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (20 March 2012) *State of Human Rights in 2011 - Chapter III: Fundamental freedoms*)

An article issued in April 2012 by *Dawn* states:

“And still the killings continue. In the months between last September and now, there have been repeated attacks on the Hazara, who can be physically distinguished from the other people of Balochistan because of their resemblance to their Central Asian and Mongol ancestors.” (*Dawn* (11 April 2012) *Saving the Hazara*)

In February 2012 *IRIN News* states:

“Widespread fear of harassment, discrimination and killings has prompted some Hazara community members living in Quetta, the capital of Balochistan Province in southwestern Pakistan, to consider leaving the country, even by illegal means.” (*IRIN News* (7 February 2012) *Pakistan: Quetta's Hazara community living in fear*)

This document also states:

"The Hazaras constitute a distinct ethnic group, with some accounts tracing their history to central Asia. Almost all belong to the Shia Muslim sect, speak a dialect of Farsi, and are concentrated in central Afghanistan and some parts of Pakistan. There are some 6,000 to 7,000 Hazaras in the country, according to a Hazara chief, Sardar Saadat Ali." (ibid)

An article published in *National Geographic* in January 2012 notes:

"The Hazara, both in Afghanistan and Pakistan, have been persecuted because of their religious and/or ethnic heritage..." (National Geographic (16 January 2012) *Helping the Hazara of Afghanistan and Pakistan*)

The *Human Rights Commission of Pakistan* in December 2011 states commenting on Balochistan that:

"The situation is particularly grave for non-Muslims and minority Muslim sects. As many as 80 members of the Shia Hazara community have been killed in the province this year alone, for no reason other than their religious belief." (Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (9 December 2011) *Masses must push government to stem the rot in Balochistan: HRCP*)

In October 2011 *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* states:

"Thousands have died in the ongoing conflict between rival hard-line Shi'a and Sunni sects in Pakistan, but the Hazaras have particularly suffered. The minority has been left reeling from a sharp increase in attacks in recent years..." (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (4 October 2011) *Pakistan's Tiny Hazara Minority Struggles To Survive*)

A report published in October 2011 by *Amnesty International* states:

"In reaction to the news that Gunmen have attacked a bus carrying Shia Muslims in south-western Pakistan, killing 13 people and injuring six others, Amnesty International said: "Sadly this is only the latest in a long line of brazen attacks against Quetta's Shi'a population. Sectarian violence has been a feature of the general breakdown in law and order in Pakistan, but these recent attacks seem to indicate a new targeting of the ethnic Hazara community," said Amnesty International's Pakistan Researcher Mustafa Qadri. "Routine targeted killings against the Hazara and other groups because of their ethnicity, religion or political affiliations raises serious questions about the will or ability of Pakistan security force to protect the people of Balochistan," said Mustafa Qadri." (Amnesty International (3 October 2011) *Pakistan: Authorities must tackle brazen attacks on Hazara Shi'a*)

The *International Federation for Human Rights* in October 2011 note in a report that:

"A statement issued at the conclusion of the HRCP Council meeting said: The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan takes serious note of the litany of threats to the right to life in Pakistan. It expresses serious concern that all manner of killings remain pervasive in Balochistan, including horrific bloodshed as a result of targeting of the Hazaras, and victims of enforced disappearance continue to be recovered as dead bodies." (International Federation for Human Rights (10 October 2011) *Pakistan: HRCP demands end to growing killings, impunity*)

*Dawn* in October 2011 notes:

“The massacre of 40 ethnic Hazara community members in less than 10 days is a clear message for the Hazara community that terrorists are focused and determined in their operations. More than 1,500 members of the Hazara community have lost their lives in less than a decade, and the provincial government...” (Dawn (14 October 2011) *Ethnic cleansing of Hazara community*)

The *Jamestown Foundation* in October 2011 notes:

“Though anti-Hazara violence predates the 2001 American invasion and occupation of Afghanistan by several years, incidents of violence continue as Taliban factions and their Sunni chauvinist allies in Pakistan accuse the Hazara of collaborating with Western militaries since the Mullah Mohammed Omar-led emirate was deposed ten years ago.” (Jamestown Foundation (21 October 2011) *Sectarian Violence Escalates in Balochistan as Shi’a Holy Month Approaches*)

Research carried out by the *Refugee Review Tribunal of Australia* in May 2011 notes:

“The vast majority of ethnic Hazaras in Pakistan are Shi’ite Muslims, primarily of the Twelver sect. Of the estimated 600,000 Hazaras living throughout Pakistan<sup>1</sup>, at least half live in the province of Baluchistan.” (Refugee Review Tribunal of Australia (3 May 2011) *Pakistan: 1. Are Shiite Hazaras targeted by extremist groups in Quetta? 2. Are there any areas in Pakistan where Hazaras form the majority or live in relative peace? 3. Is state protection available for Hazaras in Quetta? 4. Is state protection available for Hazaras elsewhere in Pakistan? 5. Are there any reports of extremists demanding ransoms from well-known wealthy businessmen in Pakistan?*, p.1.

This document also states:

“While the city of Quetta is home to the largest ethnic Hazara community in Pakistan, there are approximately 300,000 Hazaras living outside of Baluchistan...Despite this fact, almost no information specifically on the security circumstance of Hazari communities elsewhere in Pakistan has been located.” (ibid, p.3)

It is also pointed out in this report that:

“Quetta is described by a recent source as a “garrison city” due to its large army presence. Despite this fact, and despite significant representation in Quetta’s police force by Hazaras, state protection of Hazaras in the city appears highly inadequate given the ongoing campaign of attacks on the community and the failure of state authorities to prosecute the vast majority of perpetrators.” (ibid, p.4)

A report published in July 2011 by the *Refugee Review Tribunal of Australia* notes:

“Sources indicate that despite a heavy military presence in Quetta, militant groups operate openly and the state is unable to prevent violent attacks.” (Refugee Review Tribunal of Australia (15 July 2011) *Hazaras – Quetta – State Protection*)

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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