

PAKISTAN:

Displacement ongoing in a number of regions

A profile of the internal displacement situation

15 May, 2008

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Through its work, the Centre contributes to improving national and international capacities to protect and assist the millions of people around the globe who have been displaced within their own country as a result of conflicts or human rights violations.

At the request of the United Nations, the Geneva-based Centre runs an online database providing comprehensive information and analysis on internal displacement in some 50 countries.

Based on its monitoring and data collection activities, the Centre advocates for durable solutions to the plight of the internally displaced in line with international standards.

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre also carries out training activities to enhance the capacity of local actors to respond to the needs of internally displaced people. In its work, the Centre cooperates with and provides support to local and national civil society initiatives.

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OVERVIEW

Displacement ongoing in a number of regions (May 2008)

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Military operations against armed opposition groups in Pakistan have displaced hundreds of thousands of people in recent months, according to the limited information available. While many of the internally displaced people (IDPs) have apparently been able to return to their areas of origin after an end to the fighting, others remain displaced with little access to humanitarian assistance.

In the North West Frontier Province's Swat Valley, conflict between an armed opposition group and the army led to Asia's biggest new displacement in 2007, with between 400,000 and 900,000 people forced to flee their homes towards the end of the year. Many people returned as soon as possible, but some of them found their homes and property damaged.

In North Waziristan, conflict between armed opposition groups and the army resumed in October 2007 after the collapse of a ceasefire agreement. At least 80,000 people are believed to have fled their homes to avoid being caught in the bombing and crossfire. There was intense fighting between government forces and the armed opposition groups, where helicopter gunships, fighter planes and heavy artillery were reportedly used. There were also clashes between the army and opposition forces in South Waziristan in early 2008, with both sides using heavy weapons, and the conflict forced thousands of civilians to flee the area.

In Balochistan, tens of thousands of people remained displaced as government forces fought some Baloch tribes. The government continued to deny humanitarian agencies access to the displaced in the name of security and safety.

The Pakistani army is accused of preventing people displaced from near the Line of Control dividing Pakistan and India from returning to their homes. The IDPs had first been displaced due to shelling at the border in 1999 and a second time as a result of the 2005 earthquake. In many cases IDPs' land has been occupied by the army.

There is no information available on the exact numbers of people displaced in Pakistan today, due to administrative restrictions on access to affected areas. However, conflicts have clearly displaced, and will continue to displace, civilians in urgent need of protection and humanitarian assistance. Therefore it is critical that donors and humanitarian agencies continue to press the government for access to displaced populations in the country.

Conflict and displacement in the Swat Valley

The largest displacement in Pakistan in 2007 occurred in Swat Valley in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP). The valley, with a population of 1.5 million people, was seized by pro-Taliban fighters in July 2007.

In 1992, fundamentalist cleric Maulana Sufi Muhammad launched the Movement for the Enforcement of Islamic Law (*Tehrik-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Muhammadi* or TNSM) in the Malakand

region of NWFP. When US forces attacked the Taliban government in Afghanistan in 2001, the TNSM began recruiting people in Pakistan to fight in the neighbouring country. Most of the TNSM fighters were killed or arrested by Northern Alliance forces in Afghanistan, and Maulana Sufi Muhammad and several TSNM leaders were arrested by Pakistani security forces in January 2002. The TNSM regrouped as a pro-Taliban armed movement under Maulana Fazlullah, the son-in-law of Maulana Sufi Muhammad (The Media Line News Agency, 6 February 2008).

Maulana Fazlullah rose to power as a preacher, broadcasting fundamentalist sermons over pirate radio stations. By May 2007, he had attracted a core group of 5,000 militants (CSM, 26 February 2008). The central government did not initially take action so as not to alienate the country's religious political parties (Time Magazine, 22 November 2007). Following the army's storming of the Red Mosque in Islamabad in July, Maulana Fazlullah ordered his supporters to take up arms against the government. In Swat Valley, the militants attacked security forces and police stations. The TNSM also began to send threatening messages and bombs to pro-government tribal leaders, government officials, music and video shops, internet cafes, aid agency offices and girls' schools in the Valley (PIPS, 24 November 2007).

By September, Fazlullah's forces had seized control of almost 60 towns throughout the Valley in an attempt to create an Islamic state (CSM, 26 February 2008). On 25 October, the army launched an attack on the militants and four days of intense fighting ensued, centred on Fazlullah's headquarters in Imam Dheri village. A ceasefire was agreed on 28 October and thousands of villagers took advantage to escape. Around 10,000 villagers left Salanda village alone (AFP, 28 October 2007). Fighting resumed between the army and Fazlullah's forces on 31 October, and a number of civilians were killed in bombardments.

Media sources reported that hundreds of thousands of people fled the fighting over the next few weeks. According to one report, some 400,000 people from the Valley's total population of 1.5 million were displaced (The Media Line News Agency, 6 February 2008). Another cited unnamed officials estimating that 500,000 people had left the area, a majority of them to Malakand, Mardan, Charsadda, Nowshera, Peshawar and Islamabad (Kashmir Herald, 3 December 2007). A third report suggested that 900,000 people or 60 per cent of the valley's entire population had fled (PIPS, 24 November 2007), with the displaced seeking refuge with relatives or in rented houses in Mardan, Buner, Peshawar, Rawalpindi and Karachi. Thousands of people also reportedly fled the Shangla district, which has a population of 600,000, when the fighting spread there (Newsvine, 17 November 2007).

By early December fighting died down with many of the militants' strongholds taken over by the army. According to the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), more than 1,000 houses had been destroyed and there had been at least 400 civilian casualties. Much of the destruction is alleged to have been caused by the use of attack helicopters against villages believed by the army to be harbouring militants (IRIN, 17 December 2007). Three months after the army was sent to the Swat Valley, the militants remained in hiding in the mountains. While life in towns in the valley was returning to normal, bombings continued and Maulana Fazlullah remained at large (AP, 26 February 2008).

There is not much information available on the immediate and longer-term humanitarian and protection concerns of IDPs displaced from the Swat Valley. The Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) established a camp in the town of Barikot which could accommodate 5,000 displaced families (IRIN, 1 November 2007). PRCS set up 100 tents, as well as a dispensary and reception area at the Barikot camp, but militants' threats to set fire to the camp kept IDPs away (IRIN, 6 November 2007). It was reported that 6,000 families had taken shelter in government schools in the city of Mingora (Swat Youth Front, December 2007). It is believed that many IDPs who returned soon after the fighting had died down faced curfews that had a severe impact on daily

life, especially education, with over 2,000 schools reportedly closed down for varying periods (IRIN, 17 December 2007).

Internal displacement in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas

The Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) lie on the border with Afghanistan outside the four provinces of Pakistan. They include seven “agencies” or districts of which two are North Waziristan and South Waziristan. The majority of the people in FATA are from the Pashtun ethnic group who live on both sides of the border. FATA is governed by the Frontier Crimes Regulation Ordinance, which the British implemented in 1901 based on tribal customs and a Pashtun code of ethics. Administration rests in the hands of a “political agent” of the central government, along with tribal elders.

After the US-led coalition ousted the Taleban government from Kabul in November 2001, armed opposition groups are believed to have regrouped in the historic Taleban powerbase: Afghanistan’s predominantly ethnic Pashtun southern provinces and in Waziristan and Balochistan in Pakistan (HRW, April 2007, p.14). In Waziristan, the armed groups are believed to have received support, willing or otherwise, from local tribesmen who have long resisted central government authority. The area is also believed to act as a base for armed opposition groups fighting NATO forces in Afghanistan (Guardian, 10 October 2007).

The army has traditionally stayed out (USIP, 2006) and the government bars the access of foreign observers, journalists and aid organisations (McClatchy Newspapers, 20 March 2008). However, in 2001 and 2002, the US enlisted the help of the Pakistani government to stop the Taleban and Al-Qaeda members fleeing across the Afghanistan-Pakistan border and regrouping in Pakistan. In July 2002, the central government dispatched 80,000 troops to areas along the Afghan border in FATA (the first army operation in FATA since 1947) in search of Taleban and Al-Qaeda members. Almost immediately a violent resistance grew against the perceived incursion (Middle East Review, p. 24).

By 2006, fighting had led to civilian casualties and the displacement of tens of thousands of people in Waziristan. Army operations in March 2004 around the South Waziristan capital of Wana and in June 2004 in the Shakai area north-west of Wana led to civilian deaths and the demolition of hundreds of houses, and forced thousands from their homes. Thousands others fled fighting around the town of Miranshah in North Waziristan during March 2006 as a result of military operations. Many more people were allegedly displaced due to army operations by 2006, but there is little information available on them (IDMC, 10 October 2006). The conflict also displaced Afghan refugees living in camps. When the camps were closed in 2005 due to the fighting, many had no choice but to repatriate prematurely to Afghanistan, creating a humanitarian crisis there.

In the attempt to contain the conflict in North Waziristan, on 4 September 2006, the government and the tribes and militants agreed to the terms of the Waziristan Accord (Guardian, 10 October 2007). However, this was the third agreement between the parties since 2004, and both previous deals had failed to stem the violence and cross-border movement (Middle East Review, p. 25). The Accord led to a fall in attacks against Pakistani troops, but in following months attacks on US-led troops in eastern Afghanistan tripled. The Accord unravelled in July 2007 amid the surge in violence in north-west Pakistan which followed the Red Mosque operation. Militants in North Waziristan argued that the government had violated the ten-month peace deal by launching attacks and deploying more troops in the area. As the ceasefire collapsed, violence in North Waziristan intensified sharply (Reuters, 28 February 2008).

Fighting around the town of Mirali in North Waziristan in October 2007 led 80,000 people to flee their homes. The fighting started on 7 October after militants ambushed a military convoy near Mirali, and continued for ten days before a ceasefire took hold as a result of efforts by a tribal council from the Orakzai district in FATA (The News, 21 October 2007).

During the fighting the Pakistani army closed off roads leading into North Waziristan, effectively cutting off the area from the rest of the country. Villages believed by the army to be sheltering militants were reportedly bombed by fighter planes and helicopters, leading to civilian casualties and the destruction of homes and shops (IRIN, 21 October 2007). HRCP called upon the government and militants to put an immediate end to hostilities, the bombing of villages and the use of heavy weapons which endangered the lives of civilians (Dawn, 13 October 2007).

Large numbers of families left the villages of Ipi, Haiderkhel, Mosaki, Hurmaz, Hasukhel, Barokhel, Milagan, Zairaki and Esori on 10 October (Dawn, 11 October 2007). Most of the displaced went to the neighbouring Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan districts, while others headed to Peshawar, some 190 kilometres to the north. The people displaced fled in lorries, vans or on foot. The Jamaat-i-Islami, a religious political party, set up three camps in Bannu where about 200 displaced people were provided temporary shelter (Dawn, 11 October 2007). After a week of fighting the town of Mirali, with a normal population of 50,000, had become virtually empty, although many families left behind a single male member to watch over their homes and possessions. By 18 October some IDPs had started to return to recover belongings or to resume their lives. Trucks carrying goods, especially food items, had also begun reaching North Waziristan (IRIN, 21 October 2007).

In January 2008, heavy fighting between the army and militants broke out in South Waziristan. The army was targeting Baitulla Mehsud, a leader of Pakistani Taleban groups, who had been accused of involvement in the assassination of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto (VOA, 23 January 2008). Both sides used heavy weapons against each other in the areas of Jandola, Chaghmalai, and Spinkai-Raghzai (The Nation, 24 January 2008).

As a result of the conflict, large number of families from South Waziristan were displaced. According to one report the number of displaced people exceeded 60,000 (PIPS, 11 March 2008). Hundreds of displaced families, mostly women, children and the elderly, fled to the neighbouring Tank district and North Waziristan. Some had to walk for two days to reach Tank over rough terrain, with little food and water along the way. There were unconfirmed reports of children dying due to the cold weather. After reaching Tank, many IDPs were reportedly living in parks and other open areas. The army set up a relief camp at Kari Wam in Tank for the displaced families. According to a government official, around 200 people who had reached Tank by 20 January had been given food and medicines. Over 100 displaced families from South Waziristan reached North Waziristan, where locals had set up relief centres in Miramshah, Mirali and Esha (Dawn, 29 January 2008). Some displaced families sought shelter with relatives outside Waziristan after areas of the region were sealed off by the army in January.

State authorities also set up a relief camp near Kot Azam in Bannu but failed to provide any visible relief to the IDPs. Officials in the Ministry of Defense announced an aid package of around \$300,000, but the camp lacked adequate facilities. Camp administrators asked for 5,000 tents but only received 250, and food, medicines and blankets were unavailable (PIPS, 11 March 2008).

In January 2008, the Pakistani government restarted peace negotiations with the armed opposition in North Waziristan. Even before the deal had been finalised, the army was withdrawing from some checkpoints in the region (Long War Journal, 29 January 2008). The following month the government announced a ceasefire in South Waziristan, that had been brokered by two Afghan commanders who persuaded Baitulla Mehsud to stay in Afghanistan (Asia Times, 9 February 2008).

In April 2008, the army reopened some roads in South Waziristan to allow thousands of displaced persons to return home. A ration card scheme for over 10,000 displaced families was also started by the South Waziristan administration, to allow families to receive relief goods. Nevertheless, a number of displaced families from Waziristan and other conflict-affected areas chose not to return. (IRIN, 16 April 2008).

Internal displacement in Balochistan

Balochistan is the largest of Pakistan's provinces and also the most sparsely populated. 55 per cent of the population are from Baloch tribes and 29 per cent from Pashtun tribes (IPCS, October 2006). The Baloch have longstanding grievances with the Punjabi-dominated central government, and faced with a slowing population growth, they fear losing their land and resources and their distinct identity. Major development projects in Balochistan have had limited benefit to the local population. Most of the gas from the Sui gas field is used in other provinces of Pakistan and only four of 26 districts in Balochistan are supplied with gas. The Baloch have only been able to play a small role in the construction of Gwadar naval base, which is under the control of the central government.

Since independence from Britain in 1947, the central government has come into conflict with the Baloch in 1948, 1958, 1962 and 1973. The conflict restarted in 2004 as three tribes, the Marri, Bugti and Mengal, rose up against the government and demanded political and economic autonomy (Carnegie, January 2006, p. 7-8).

The government's building of army barracks in three of Balochistan's most sensitive areas of Sui, Gwadar and Kohlu added to this perceived alienation of the Baloch (Carnegie, January 2006, p. 6). The army has stationed 35,000 paramilitary troops in Balochistan. In January 2005, they fought to suppress armed protests by tribal militias, and in December 2005 launched full-scale operations following a failed attempt on the life of President Musharraf, allegedly by Baloch rebels (ACHR, August 2007, p. 35).

Since then, tens of thousands of people have been displaced. From December 2005 onwards, at least 84,000 people, mostly from the Marri and Bugti tribes, were displaced in the districts of Dera Bugti and Kohlu alone. According to a humanitarian assessment in July and August 2006, the displaced people, including 26,000 women and 33,000 children, were living in makeshift camps without adequate shelter in Jafarabad, Naseerabad, Quetta, Sibi and Bolan districts. 28 per cent of children under five were acutely malnourished, and six per cent faced severe acute malnourishment and their survival depended on immediate medical attention. Over 80 per cent of the deaths among those surveyed were of children under five (ICG, 22 October 2007, p. 6).

Aid agencies were repeatedly denied access to the displaced, although supplies of food and medicines lay in warehouses in the provincial capital Quetta. Local officials helped the agencies monitor conditions, but more senior provincial and federal officials refused humanitarian requests or blocked them with bureaucratic hurdles (CSM, 21 December 2006).

In December 2006, under pressure from foreign governments and humanitarian agencies, the government finally allowed the UN to deliver a \$1 million aid package to IDPs in Balochistan. The UN was allowed to set up 57 feeding centres there on various conditions, for example that no UN official would communicate with the press. A few days later, however, the UN's permission to assist the IDPs was revoked. The head of the local NGO Edhi Foundation was also told not to deliver any aid to the Baloch IDPs. Meanwhile, fear of army reprisals prevented locals from aiding the displaced (Newsline, June 2007).

Thousands of Baloch reportedly remained displaced and were living in miserable conditions in June 2007. Many had travelled to neighbouring towns and those with more resources to urban centres. Displaced families were living without clean drinking water or medicines. Women had died in childbirth and dozens of children had died due to malnutrition and diseases such as typhoid and hepatitis (Newsline, June 2007).

In May 2007, at a public meeting in Dera Bugti, President Musharraf said that 65,000 people out of 90,000 displaced from Dera Bugti had returned home. A regional human rights organisation believed that 200,000 people were still displaced (AHRC, 21 December 2006) while the head of the NGO Baloch Rights Council insisted that the IDP figures were much higher than reported, with 200,000 people displaced from Kohlu district alone (ICG, 22 October 2007, p. 6). Other estimates put the number of Baloch IDPs at between 50,000 and 60,000 (Economist, 17 April 2008).

The central government has reportedly continued to impose control through force. The army's killing of the Baloch leader Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti in August 2006 was followed by the imprisonment of another leader, Sardar Akhtar Jan Mengal, who was held on terrorism-related charges without due process from December 2006 to May 2008. Law enforcement agencies have detained thousands of Baloch nationalists and many are believed to have disappeared. Many young activists are losing faith in the political process and see armed resistance as a viable way to secure their rights (ICG, 22 October 2007, p. 1).

The momentum of the Baloch insurgency declined in 2007, as some leaders fled Pakistan or were captured or killed by the state. The operational capacity of the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA), the most prominent armed opposition group in the province, was considerably reduced in 2007 and the BLA's purported chief Nawabzada Balach Marri was killed in November 2007.

The conflict, however, continues to simmer, and there has been a steady stream of bomb and rocket attacks on gas pipelines, railway tracks, power transmission lines, bridges, and communications infrastructure, as well as on military establishments and government facilities. The tribal militias are still capable of carrying out acts of sabotage on a daily basis across the province, and a political solution to the conflict is nowhere in sight. Acts of violence are occurring in practically all districts, including Quetta (South Asian Terrorism Portal, 2008).

Displacement has occurred in Balochistan not only as a result of conflict but also due to floods in June and July 2007 that affected 2.5 million people and displaced 300,000.

Displacement from the Line of Control in Kashmir

During the Kargil conflict in Kashmir between India and Pakistan in 1999, hundreds of families were forced to leave their homes along the Line of Control (LoC) to escape cross-border shelling. These families sought shelter in IDP camps or with relatives, and many were also affected by the October 2005 earthquake that killed 75,000 people and made 3.5 million homeless.

Although many earthquake-affected families have returned to their area of origin, helped by a government scheme to offer homeowners more than \$3,000 in building assistance, those displaced by the conflict have not received the same assistance. Consequently, almost a decade on, hundreds of families still live in IDP camps in Pakistan-administered Kashmir. In some cases the land has been occupied by the army and mined, and some IDPs have been refused permission to return to their land due to its proximity to the LoC (IRIN, 27 November 2007).

An estimated 17,000 displaced Kashmiris remain in refugee-like conditions on the Pakistani side of the LoC (USCRI, World Survey 2007). In August it was reported that the government was considering issuing identity cards similar to those issued to Afghan refugees to individuals who had fled Indian-controlled Kashmir after 1990 (HRCP, 1 April 2008).

Humanitarian access and national and international response to IDPs

The Pakistani government has no national policy on addressing conflict-induced displacement and there have been no reports of any systematic government assistance to these types of IDPs in the country, the majority of whom are displaced as a result of combat between the army and insurgent forces. Initiatives by provincial governments to aid the displaced have had varying degrees of success.

The HRCP has acted as a watchdog and undertaken fact-finding missions to areas where violence and displacement have occurred. The agency has publicised the actions of armed forces, such as indiscriminate bombing, that have led to death and displacement among the civilian population (IRIN, 2 February 2006).

In its 2007 yearbook the HRCP noted that there were 1.5 million people displaced in Pakistan during the year a result of natural disasters, development projects and military operations. The figure did not include those displaced by the 2005 earthquake. The HRCP stressed that government agencies had not only failed to prevent displacement caused by armed opposition groups, but that their operations against them had themselves displaced hundreds of thousands of people (HRCP, April 2008).

In March 2008, the HRCP underlined the dire situation of the 1.5 million displaced people in Pakistan and stated that the government must extend humanitarian aid to all IDPs and seek for this the cooperation and assistance of UNHCR (HRCP, 31 March 2008).

The Government of Pakistan has denied humanitarian agencies access to areas with large internally displaced populations. In some conflict areas where aid agencies have been allowed in by the government, IDPs have been afraid to take advantage of assistance after receiving threats from armed opposition groups.

In Balochistan, efforts by international and national aid agencies to assist the IDPs have been rejected by authorities. Due to the unstable security situation in Waziristan, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has not been able to travel to areas most directly affected by the armed conflict, but ICRC has helped some wounded who have been able to reach more accessible areas.

During the conflict and displacement in the Swat Valley, ICRC and the Pakistan Red Crescent Society assisted the IDPs by providing blankets and soap to hundreds of families, and distributing medical kits and x-ray material to area hospitals (ICRC, January 2008). NGOs such as the International Relief and Development Foundation collaborated with local agencies to provide food packages to the Swat IDPs and other vulnerable groups.

After two recent natural disasters, the October 2005 earthquake in NWFP and Pakistan-administered Kashmir, and the June-July 2007 floods in Balochistan and Sindh provinces, the UN Cluster Approach was activated in Islamabad and in the affected areas. Clusters and working groups remain active as of May 2008 to respond to natural disaster in Pakistan (FMR 29, p. 40). There is no such humanitarian response system in place for the estimated hundreds of thousands of people believed to be displaced by the country's conflicts.

It is unlikely that adequate humanitarian support will reach populations displaced by the conflicts in Pakistan unless international agencies continue to urge the government to increase access. At the same time, the country's principal donors and the main supporters of its "war on terror" campaign will also have to promote initiatives to get aid to displaced people and call upon the government to do more to protect civilians during military operations if the impacts of current and future conflicts are to be mitigated.

CAUSES AND BACKGROUND

Displacement in North West Frontier Province

Extremists seize control in Swat Valley in the North West Frontier Province (November 2007)

- A pro-Taliban cleric rose to power in the Swat Valley of the North West Frontier Province
- By 2007, the cleric had mobilized thousands of volunteers in an armed wing largely through sermons on radio stations
- The movement banned music, internet cafes, CD shops and closed schools, especially those for girls
- Initially the central government ignored the problem, by the time it tried to intervene an insurgency had spread in the Valley

The New York Times, October 2007:

"The sharp rise in violence in the area, Swat Valley, which is relatively isolated from the lawless tribal areas on the Afghan border, demonstrates the growing strength of Islamists. Leading the wave of militancy is the cleric, Maulana Fazlullah, who is also known as Maulana Radio for his illegal broadcasts calling for Taliban-like Islamic law, and who is thought to have some 4,500 followers. He is the son-in-law of Sufi Muhammad, the founder of Tehrik-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi, the Movement for the Implementation of Muhammad's Law, who has been in prison since 2001 after sending Pakistanis into Afghanistan to support the Taliban in fighting American forces."

Inter Press Service News, November 2007:

"Maulana Fazlullah, who preaches over his own FM radio station, has mobilised some 4,000 volunteers in an armed wing called Shaheen Force, and established courts. Three persons were lashed in public on Oct. 12 for their role in the abduction of a woman.

[...]

There is a complete ban on music, Internet cafes and CD shops in Swat. Maulana Fazlullah set 15 CD shops on fire before Ramazan after paying the owners, 2,000 dollars each. The radical cleric has even changed names of places that he has deemed un-Islamic. Schools in Swat, especially for girls, have been closed. In August, the principal of a paramedical institute was killed in a bomb attack on his vehicle for failing to stop teaching female students."

Time, November 2007:

"For too long, the central government ignored the problems festering in Swat, concerned that a crackdown on demands for Shari'a would alienate the country's Islam-based political parties. By the time the military tried to intervene, a homegrown insurgency was in full swing."

Armed conflict between extremists and the army displaces hundreds of thousands (December 2007)

- The army went into the Swat Valley in late October and carried out aerial attacks; a ground offensive was launched in November
- The offensive drove hundreds of thousands of people from their homes
- Many civilians fled in response to security forces ordering them to leave, others fled to escape artillery shelling

Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, December 2007:

“Since the end of October an open war has ensued between the militants, led by a radical cleric Maulana Fazlullah, fighting for the enforcement of the Sharia law in the region and the security forces. The militants on a rampage since the beginning of this year unleashed havoc following the Lal Masjid operation with at least four suicide attacks against the security forces in July itself. The Pakistani army, at first, launched aerial attacks through helicopter gunships in late October to target militant hideouts and training camps; but, due to continuing unrest in the region and large-scale surrender of the paramilitary forces, the army stepped up its operations and launched an all-out ground offensive in end-November.”

Integrated Regional Information Networks, November 2007:

“Thousands of people have begun fleeing Pakistan’s troubled Swat Valley in North West Frontier Province (NWFP) following an announcement by security forces calling on residents to leave their homes.

[...]

Meanwhile, the past few days have seen increased artillery shelling in the area - further driving people’s desire to leave the area. Over the weekend, helicopter gun-ships and artillery reportedly continued targeting Koza Banda and Bara Banda; areas known to be extending support to Fazlullah, while helicopters hovered over other areas of Swat and Shangla districts.

[...]

And while the army says this is targeted shelling, there are reports that a number of shells have gone astray.”

Displacement in Waziristan

Renewed conflict in North Waziristan displaces tens of thousands (October 2008)

- A peace accord between the Taleban leaders in North Waziristan and the central government unraveled in July 2007
- Heavy fighting broke out in North Waziristan in October 2007 during which a number of civilians were caught in the crossfire
- The fighting also displaced 80,000 people from Mirali in North Waziristan where military operations were taking place

New York Times, July 2007:

“Taliban leaders in North Waziristan called off the peace deal over the weekend, after Pakistan’s president, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, deployed troops to several checkpoints in the region. Under the truce, signed last September, the military had agreed to pull back to its barracks and take

down checkpoints in exchange for a suspension of hostilities from the militants, who agreed to halt cross-border attacks on American and NATO troops in Afghanistan.

Government officials said they would allow tribal elders to enforce the peace deal in return for millions of dollars in financial aid. Critics said all the deal did was let the Taliban and Al Qaeda to regroup and plan attacks inside the country and across the border.

The September agreement was the latest in a series of sometimes contradictory steps taken by the Pakistani government to restore law and order in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, where civilian administration has steadily eroded in recent years.

The Musharraf government has alternately tried to bludgeon, buy off and appease militants operating in the tribal areas, sometimes sacrificing Pakistani troops, and other times negotiating deals with some of the most feared militant commanders, who now appear to have rejected the agreement altogether.

A letter circulated Monday by the Taliban in North Waziristan said the peace pact had been scrapped "in the larger public interest." It warned the tribal police not to aid military and paramilitary troops, and urged tribal elders not to cooperate with the government.

[...]

Even before its failure, the peace accord had not brought the security the government intended. American and NATO commanders in Afghanistan say the Taliban continue to use Pakistan's tribal areas as a rear base. In early June, the United States National Security Council warned that the Taliban had regrouped and reorganized inside Pakistan. That same month, the Interior Ministry warned General Musharraf that the Taliban's influence was increasingly spreading outside the tribal areas to other parts of the country."

The Nation, October 2007:

"The battle to evict Taliban militants from North Waziristan has entered a decisive phase. It started on Saturday October 6, 2007, after months of inaction, during which war lord Baitullah Mahsud consolidated his hold over most of North Waziristan, while the Taliban kept harassing Pakistani citizens in many border towns and villages, including Bannu, Karak, Tank, Laki Marwat and Dera Ismail Khan.

After four days of fierce fighting which started on October 06, some 250 people including 205 militants and 45 Pakistan security personnel were killed. These were the deadliest clashes since Pakistan's involvement in the US led war on terror. Pakistan Army's artillery, gunship helicopters and Pakistan Air Force fighters bombed militant hideouts, including Ipi village bazar in North Waziristan on Tuesday last.

[...]

Fierce fighting in the areas of Baro Khail, Maski, Esau Khel, Khushhali and Hyder Khail continued on Sunday night, while militants attacked check posts of security forces and the city of Miranshah. After mortar shells started hitting village mud huts, hundreds of villagers fled to the surrounding hills. Electricity and telecommunication systems in the Mir Ali area have been badly damaged. Miran Shah-Mir Ali-Bannu highway has been closed. In Khawaja Khel village, 18 militants and civilians died from the bombardment by gun ship helicopters and PAF fighters. Twelve people of Wazir tribe died and 18 were injured when stray mortar shells struck their houses. Another fourteen people were killed when a shell hit a house in Kazi village. Three people in Essu Khal, two in Khazmak and two in Mir Ali were killed by mortar shelling."

Dawn, October 2007:

"Eyewitness reports said the fighting had displaced thousands of people, forcing many to seek refuge in the nearby Bannu and D.I. Khan districts. Some 80,000 people left Mirali, the second

largest town in North Waziristan, where the military operation against militants was taking place. The dead and the wounded were being brought to hospitals in Bannu and Peshawar.”

Clashes between army and militants in South Waziristan displace thousands (March 2008)

- Heavy clashes began in South Waziristan in January 2008 when army tried to target a leader of Pakistani Taleban groups
- Both sides used heavy weaponry
- The fighting displaced hundreds of families who fled to the adjacent district and North Waziristan
- According to some estimates, tens of thousands of people were displaced from South Waziristan due to the military operations

Voice of America News, January 2008:

“The Pakistani military says it is sending reinforcements to the South Waziristan region on the Afghan border to target a Islamic rebel commander accused of involvement in the assassination of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. Military spokesman General Athar Abbas says a recent escalation in militant attacks made it necessary to reinforce military posts in the tribal area. He said additional troops have been sent to the area, but did not specify how many. South Waziristan is a stronghold of Baitullah Mehsud, a leader of Pakistani Taliban groups who is also believed to have ties to al-Qaida. Mehsud has claimed credit for organizing a series of suicide attacks against Pakistani military targets in the last year, but he has denied government allegations that he masterminded the assassination of Ms. Bhutto.”

Dawn, January 2008:

“A large number of people moved out of the conflict-hit areas of South Waziristan as fierce clashes between security forces and militants continued ...information gathered from different sources indicated that hundreds of displaced families, mostly women, children and elders, were migrating to the adjacent Tank district and North Waziristan.

The army has set up a relief camp at Kari Wam in the Frontier Region of Tank for the displaced families. An official said that around 200 people had arrived in the centre and they were being provided food and medicines.

Over 100 displaced families have reached Miramshah in North Waziristan. Local elder Fazl Subhan, who is contesting the elections, has set up relief centres in Miramshah, Mirali and Esha.”

Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, March 2008:

“A large number of families in Pakistani tribal areas have been displaced from their native lands to settled areas of Dera Ismail Khan, Tank, and Bannu while some have migrated to far-flung Karachi. During the process of this enforced displacement, stirred by the security operations in Waziristan, four infants and two pregnant women have lost their lives. Records of the Relief Camps suggest that the number of displaced people from South Waziristan has exceeded 60,000.

According to the district administration, about 1,500 to 2,000 families have arrived in the city of Dera Ismail Khan. Their total number is more than thirty thousand. But, nobody has their particulars. Initially, centers were established in Dera city's Town Hall and Besakhi Ground for rehabilitation of the displaced people, but, when the locals protested, they were shifted near Gomal University."

Hunt for pro-Taliban militants has displaced thousands (May 2006)

- The Pakistani army has based 80,000 troops in Waziristan to flush out foreign pro-Taliban militants hiding there
- Displacement has been reported since March 2004, when the army stepped up its operations in South Waziristan
- In 2005, the government launched operations also in North Waziristan
- Despite a peace agreement between the Pakistani Government and pro-Taliban tribal leaders in September 2006, fighting has continued

Reuters, May 2006

"Since the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, the Pakistani army has launched a series of attacks in the semi-autonomous region of Waziristan, aimed at flushing out foreign pro-Taliban militants hiding there. This has led to displacement and alienation of the local population, provoking a rise in Islamic fundamentalism.

[...]

Pakistan's semi-autonomous tribal belt has become a hideout for sympathisers of the militant al Qaeda network and members of the Taliban who fled Afghanistan after U.S.-led forces toppled the regime in 2001.

Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, who is blamed for the Sept. 11 attacks on U.S. cities in 2001, is believed to have passed through North Waziristan during his escape from Afghanistan that year. He and his number two, Ayman al-Zawahri, may still be hiding in the region.

In 2005, the government switched its campaign to rid the tribal areas of foreign fighters from South Waziristan to North Waziristan. Pakistani intelligence officials estimate there are up to 1,000 militants in the area, who enjoy the support of its deeply religious and conservative tribes.

The government bombing of an alleged militant hideout in early March 2006 sparked violent clashes. Several hundred militants seized government buildings in the town of Miranshah, leading to confrontations in which more than 120 militants died, according to the military. Thousands of people fled as helicopter gunships pounded militant positions around the town.

These clashes coincided with a visit to Pakistan by U.S. President George Bush. The U.S. regards Pakistan as a key ally in its "war on terror", but Bush said more needed to be done to defeat al Qaeda and pro-Taliban militants on the Pakistan-Afghan border.

Relations over border issues are thorny. Afghan officials have complained that, since 2001, insurgents have used Pakistani soil to launch attacks inside Afghanistan. A major row blew up around the time of Bush's visit when Musharraf said intelligence on Taliban leaders handed over by Afghanistan was out of date.

Several weeks later, however, Pakistan beefed up troops deployed in the area, posting more forces opposite the eastern Afghan province of Kunar to stop militants fleeing a U.S.-led offensive. There are now around 80,000 Pakistani soldiers patrolling the border area.

The death toll from the violence has reached around 375 since the middle of last year, including 325 militants (75 foreign) and around 50 members of the security forces, according to government estimates. At least half the deaths have occurred since early March 2006."

RFE/RL, 24, March 2006

"The issue of a Pashtun national homeland along the Afghan-Pakistan border has been largely dormant for the last 40 years. Dormant -- but unresolved. And now, arguments from the century-old debate are surfacing again in a way that affects the international war against terrorism.

For many ethnic Pashtuns, "Pashtunistan" is an historic homeland that was divided in 1893 by the Durand Line -- a 2,450 kilometer demarcation line drawn by the British through Pashtun tribal lands to suit the defensive needs of British colonial India.

For Islamabad, the issue represents a territorial claim against Pakistan -- particularly parts of Pakistan's Baluchistan Province and the tribal regions where Pakistani security forces are battling pro-Taliban militants. The reason is that Pakistan inherited the Durand Line from British colonial India as its northwestern border with Afghanistan."

COE-DMHA, 5 September 2006

"The Pakistan government has reportedly signed a peace agreement with pro-Taliban militants in the country's semi-autonomous western Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), which border Afghanistan.

[...]

Pro-Taliban militants in the area were reportedly consolidating their political power in the region, which led to a renewed military crackdown in March. According to officials in July, over 400 people have been killed in clashes this year, mostly in North Waziristan tribal agency. However since June, the government has been working with a council of tribal elders (jirga) to talk with militants to control the violence. The formation of the jirga is the first of its kind since Pakistan deployed about 80,000 troops to the region in 2003 to flush out al Qaeda and Taliban elements in the region. Under the agreement, the Pakistan military has pledged to end major operations in the area and withdraw most soldiers to military camps. According to reports today, hundreds of soldiers were withdrawn from several checkpoints in North Waziristan over the weekend. However, the military will continue to operate border checkpoints. Earlier, the military had released a number of tribesmen in what was seen as a goodwill gesture. In return, pro-Taliban militants have pledged not to shelter foreign militants, launch raids across the Afghan border or attack Pakistan government troops or infrastructure. All foreign militants would also have to respect the peace deal, otherwise they would have to leave, and movement across the border will only continue for family or business matters. Observers say that these conditions would be difficult to enforce as the Taliban has support from the Pashtun ethnic group, which live on both sides of the porous border. Across the border in Afghanistan, a recent major offensive by NATO-led forces in the southern Afghan province of Kandahar has pushed Taliban fighters to the border. Afghanistan has complained that Pakistan is not doing enough to crack down on militants on its side of the border."

Displacement in Balochistan

Conflict ongoing in Balochistan though momentum declines (January 2008)

- Political unrest and armed conflict continued in Balochistan in 2007
- Security forces have detained thousands of Baloch nationalists
- Many young activists see armed resistance as only viable way to secure their rights
- The momentum of the armed conflict declined as some leaders fled or were neutralized by the state
- Acts of violence are occurring in all parts of the province, including the capital Quetta

Human Rights Watch, January 2008:

“Political unrest in the southwestern province of Balochistan continued in 2007. Though the dispute in Balochistan is essentially political, centered on issues of provincial autonomy and exploitation of mineral resources, the Pakistani military and Baloch tribal militants have increasingly sought a military solution to their disagreements. The Pakistani military has arbitrarily detained, tortured, and “disappeared” militants and political opponents; Baloch militants have continued to target civilians and use landmines in sporadic retaliatory attacks.”

International Crisis Group, October 2007:

“Violence continues unabated in Pakistan’s strategically important and resource-rich province of Balochistan, where the military government is fighting Baloch militants demanding political and economic autonomy. President Pervez Musharraf’s government insists the insurgency is an attempt to seize power by a handful of tribal chiefs bent on resisting economic development. Baloch nationalists maintain it is fuelled by the military’s attempts to subdue dissent by force and the alienation caused by the absence of real democracy. Whether or not free and fair national and provincial elections are held later this year or in early 2008 will determine whether the conflict worsens. Instead of redressing Baloch political and economic grievances, the military is determined to impose state control through force. The killing of the Baloch leader Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti by the army in August 2006 was followed by the incarceration of another, Sardar Akhtar Jan Mengal, who has been held on terrorism related charges without due process since December. Law enforcement agencies have detained thousands of Baloch nationalists or those believed to be sympathetic to the cause; many have simply disappeared. With the nationalist parties under siege, many young activists are losing faith in the political process and now see armed resistance as the only viable way to secure their rights.”

South Asian Terrorism Portal, 2008:

“The Balochistan province – accounting for approximately 44 per cent of Pakistan’s landmass – is now afflicted by an encompassing insurgency. Currently, all 30 Districts of Balochistan are affected either by a sub-nationalist tribal insurgency or, separately, by Islamist extremism. Most of the violence in Balochistan is, however, 'nationalist' and there is no co-operation between predominantly Pashtun Islamist militants in the North and the Baloch nationalist insurgents. Structural and constitutional biases prevailing against the provinces feed popular anger and the insurgencies, and militate against any possible solution to the Baloch problem, particularly given Islamabad’s track record of intransigence.

On the face of it, it seems that the province has relatively calmed down after the assassination of Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti on August 26, 2006, by the military. The momentum of the Baloch insurgency declined relatively in 2007, as some leaders either fled Pakistan or were neutralized by the state. The operational capacity of the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA), the most prominent insurgent group in Balochistan, was considerably reduced in 2007 and is expected to

remain diminished in the immediate future. At least 450 persons, including 226 civilians, 82 soldiers and 142 insurgents, were killed in 772 incidents in 2006. Violence in 2007 was at relatively lower levels, with at least 245 persons, including 124 civilians, killed in the year. But, the insurgency continues to simmer, and there has been a steady stream of bomb and rocket attacks on gas pipelines, railway tracks, power transmission lines, bridges, and communications infrastructure, as well as on military establishments and Government facilities. The rebels are still capable of carrying out acts of sabotage on a daily basis across the province and a political solution to the insurgency is nowhere in sight. Acts of violence are, importantly, not restricted to a few Districts, but are occurring in practically all of them, including the provincial capital Quetta.

Still reeling under the loss caused by the assassination of Nawab Akbar Bugti in August 2006, the Baloch insurgents were dealt another significant blow when Nawabzada Balach Marri, purported chief of the Balochistan Liberation Army, was killed on November 21, 2007. Marri was reportedly killed along with his bodyguards in a clash somewhere inside Afghanistan, triggering widespread violence in Quetta and other parts of the province. Mystery shrouds Marri's killing, as some reports suggested he was killed in Afghanistan while others stated it was in Pakistan."

Background: the conflict between Baloch tribes and the government is deepening (September 2006)

- Balochistan has seen decades of struggle between separatists and the government
- In December 2005, the conflict flared up, and the army stepped up operations against separatist groups
- Thousands of civilians have been affected by the conflict
- The situation deteriorated further after one of the most influential local leaders was killed in August 2006

Reuters, May 2006

"In Baluchistan, the largest and poorest of Pakistan's four provinces, the conflict is an ethno-nationalist struggle between separatists and the government. Tribal militants have staged several insurgencies since the mid-20th century to fight for greater political autonomy and control over local mineral resources.

[...]

The decades-old conflict in Pakistan's southwestern Baluchistan province flared up again in December 2005, following a rocket attack during a visit by Musharraf to the town of Kohlu. This spurred the Pakistani military to launch a major crackdown against nationalist groups in the region.

Since then, militants have regularly blown up gas pipelines, railway lines and electricity transmission lines, and launched rocket attacks on government buildings and army bases. It is unclear how many people have been killed in the renewed violence, but according to the Daily Times newspaper, in April 2006, the interior minister put the death toll since the start of the year at around 160, including some 50 civilians and 75 tribesmen. Landmines planted by both militants and the security forces are responsible for a growing proportion of deaths.

Much of the violence is thought to be carried out by a group known as the Baluch Liberation Army (BLA), which has been listed as a terrorist organisation by the government. Set up in the 1970s, the BLA is the first nationalist group to be banned by Pakistan in recent years.

In May 2006, the government banned Baluch nationalist leaders from travelling outside Pakistan, including three members of parliament. The state telecommunications agency also ordered the

country's internet service providers to block access to four websites containing Baluch nationalist material.

According to analyst Bansal, the Baluch nationalists know they cannot win a direct battle with the Pakistani army.

Their tactics are therefore focused on attacking the military's lines of communication and trying to widen the scope of the conflict by drawing in other groups to support them against the Punjabi elite. The Pakistani authorities have made allegations that the militants are receiving external support.

Baluchistan was not incorporated into Pakistan until 1948, when Pakistani troops moved in, forcing the Khan of Kalat, the monarch who had ruled the area under the umbrella of the British Empire, to give up hopes of independence.

In the mid-1950s, the People's Party, a new nationalist party, was launched by the Prince of Kalat, and in 1972, it joined with the National Awami Party, based in North West Frontier Province, and the Islamist Jamait-ul-Ullema-i-Islam in opposition to the centralising government of President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.

Major conflict broke out in 1973 after the intelligence services intercepted a consignment of weapons headed for Baluchistan and Bhutto dismissed the regional government. Thousands of militants fought the national army, which targeted the Baluch tribes' livestock, their key economic asset. The insurgency dragged on until 1977, when Bhutto was overthrown and the military regime of General Zia ul-Haq arrived at a political settlement with some Baluch leaders. Some 9,000 people died in the violence.

[...]

Since then, resentment against the central government has continued to grow as infrastructure has been built to exploit the province's rich natural resources, especially gas. Development has fuelled local frustration for two key reasons.

Firstly, Baluchs feel their province is being increasingly monopolised by non-indigenous migrants attracted by its economic opportunities. Secondly, there is a widespread perception that the province does not receive a fair share of benefits from the exploitation of its natural resources.

One major infrastructure project regularly targeted by Baluch militants is the construction of a strategically important port at Gwadar. Work began on the deep-sea port and naval base in 2002, with the majority of funding coming from China.

Gwadar is on Pakistan's Arabian Sea coast near the mouth of the Persian Gulf, 400 km (250 miles) from the Strait of Hormuz and just 72 km from Iran. It is expected to become a key shipping hub at the mouth of a strategic waterway, and China's involvement in the project would help it protect its energy and security interests. This is a source of concern for the United States, India and Iran.

Although Baluchistan's citizens are not opposed to the project outright, as with other development initiatives, many believe its benefits will go largely to outsiders, and will not improve local living standards.

The port facilities and workers have been targeted in sporadic attacks since 2004 when bomb blasts and rocket attacks killed several Chinese engineers.

As well as calling for a larger dividend from local development projects and the exploitation of natural resources, Baluch militants are struggling for greater political control over their administrative affairs. In March 2006, the provincial assembly voted to form a bipartisan panel to try to make peace between the authorities and warring tribal leaders, but this has yet to yield significant results."

ICG, September 2006, pp.1-2

"Three decades after the 1973-1977 insurrection in Balochistan, a low-level insurgency again challenges central control over the province. After almost seven years of military rule, deprived of representative participatory institutions and with their natural resources exploited by Islamabad,

Baloch alienation is at an all-time high. Although regional parties and leaders are still struggling to obtain political, economic and social rights within a democratic, federal, parliamentary framework, militants have picked up the gun.

Baloch political parties and militants have a common goal – to assert provincial control over Balochistan's natural resources and gain a voice in shaping its political, economic and social development. "We want to live as an equal partner in the federation, with our democratic rights respected, including the ownership of our resources, these resources belong to the people of Pakistan".

[...]

By refusing to negotiate Baloch demands for provincial autonomy and control over their resources and opting instead to forcibly subdue dissent – political or militant – the Musharraf government has upped the stakes. Islamabad might be able to retain central control through brute force but its policy directions will likely

undermine the remaining vestiges of state legitimacy in the troubled province.

That tensions between the centre and the Baloch have reached new heights under centralised authoritarian rule is not surprising. The military government's disregard for provincial autonomy has sparked the unrest.[...]

Baloch alienation is also rooted in Islamabad's longstanding neglect of the resource-rich province, which remains the poorest of Pakistan's four federal units.[...] Popular support for Baloch nationalist parties and sardars (tribal chiefs) who articulate Baloch political aspirations and social and economic demands is widespread. Musharraf's decision to sideline this regional leadership and attempt instead to consolidate central control through military force has left little space for a negotiated settlement.

[...]

In 2006, this gap has increased dangerously, particularly after the military killed Nawab Akbar Khan

Bugti, one of the most influential Baloch political leaders, on 26 August 2006. Bugti had taken to the mountains in early 2006 after his hometown of Dera Bugti was attacked and besieged by the military. He was killed in his remote mountain base in a military operation that involved the use of helicopter gunships and ground troops.[...] Yet, Islamabad denies it is conducting a military operation, insisting instead that a few tribal chiefs, threatened by its development schemes which would undermine their hold over local power, are responsible for an insurgency limited to their tribal fiefdoms.[...] But the military government is neither the harbinger of modernisation and development, nor is Baloch resistance limited to a handful of tribal chiefs.

On the contrary, Baloch dissent has become a broad movement for political, economic and social empowerment.

[...]

Balochistan is the largest of Pakistan's four provinces. Some 347,190 square kilometres in size, it covers 43 per cent of its land area but has only around 6 per cent of its population.[...]

The ethnic make-up, according to last official estimates, is 54.7 per cent Baloch, 29.0 per cent Pashtun.⁹

It is the least developed province but rich in energy and mineral resources,[...] meeting more than 40 per cent of Pakistan's energy needs through its gas and coal reserves and accounting for 36 per cent of its total gas production. Large energy reserves remain untapped.[...] However, 46.6 per cent of households have no electricity.[...] Consistent degradation of the water supply and absence of storage systems, such as small dams, have turned much of Balochistan, with its predominantly rural population, into an arid wasteland.[...] According to the Karachi-based Social Policy and Development Centre, poverty levels are twice that of Punjab, Pakistan's largest and most prosperous province; urban unemployment is 12.5 per cent, compared to the countrywide average of 9.7 per cent; and half the population lives below the poverty line.[...]

Balochistan is strategically located. Bordering on Afghanistan and Iran,[...] it lies astride the communication

routes of South, South West and Central Asia.[...] With a 760-km coastline, Balochistan links Pakistan with the oil-rich Gulf States and the sea lanes of the Arabian Sea, close to the Strait of Hormuz through which oil tankers bound for the West and Japan must pass. This coast is particularly important to the Pakistan military. Three of its four naval bases are located there."

Fighting between separatist groups and the army has displaced tens of thousands (July 2006)

- Fighting was reported to displace tens of thousands from December onwards
- Displacement started in the town of Dera Bugti, but as fighting spread to a wider area, whole districts have been affected

IRIN, 2 February 2006

"Fact-finding missions, sent by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) to the Kohlu area and to Sui and Dera Bugti in December 2005 and January 2006, under the leadership of HRCP's chairperson Asma Jahangir, have found a troubling picture. The fighting has caused widespread damage to buildings, and 85 percent of the 25,000 or so people of Dera Bugti have been forced to flee the town, the commission maintains.

In the Dera Bugti area, schools have been closed for the last month. HRCP says children have not been attending them since March 2005, due to armed skirmishes between tribal militias and paramilitary troops in the area.

[...]

The HRCP team, on its visit, found what looked like a ghost town at Dera Bugti. Almost the entire population, their belongings tied atop trucks, vans, lorries or donkey carts, had left the town and shops had been closed for over a month. On the roads leading out of Dera Bugti, caravans of people could be spotted leaving, watched by security forces manning road blocks.

[...]

Meanwhile, the town of Kohlu remains under a state of siege. Entry to the area is barred, and the 12,000 or so people of the town have remained virtually cut off from the outside world since the middle of December. There have been complaints of food shortages, acute problems in taking the sick or injured to hospitals and normal life has come to a standstill. From towns near Kohlu, such as Kahan, hundreds have fled. The fact that much of the population of the area is nomadic makes it difficult to ascertain the precise number of displaced people."

Raman, 21 January 2006

"[...]. Addressing a press conference at Quetta on January 14, 2006, Malik Zahoor Shahwani, the Vice-Chairman of the Balochistan Chapter of the Pakistan Human Rights Commission, said:

[...]

• Information collected by the team revealed that 53 civilians have been killed and 132 injured during an outbreak of hostilities in the remote area from the last week of December till January 8.

• "No law permits custodial killing and no law-enforcement agency is above the law and entitled to award death sentence to citizens who are in their custody. The Government should act according to constitutional requirements and uphold rule of law to ensure protection of fundamental rights of the people. If those arrested in Dera Bugti were involved in illegal activities, they should be presented before courts for trial."

. A war like situation existed in Dera Bugti "where Government offices are empty, the district coordination officer has shifted his office to Sui, schools are not functioning and vehicles not plying and the bazaar has been closed."

. "A majority of the residents of Dera Bugti town have migrated. Only two persons out of the 250 members of the local Hindu community are still living in the town."

Eighty to eighty-five per cent of the dead and injured victims of the military operation were women and children, and a majority of them non-combatants."

AHRC, 21 July 2006

"Due to the military operations and aerial bombardments the local population have been forced to migrate to safer parts of Balochistan as well as to the nearby borders of Sindh and Punjab provinces. The military have cordoned off Hernai area for the past several days making it impossible for people to come and go. As a result the people are without food, medicines and drinking water. The area where people have taken leave from are predominantly Mach, Kohlo, Usta Mohamad, Sibi, Dera Bugti and some parts of Hanai. The two district provinces of Sibi and Bolan are the worst affected areas of military operations as well as the aerial bombardment. These two districts cover more than 500 kilometres. The displaced are now settled in other areas such as Dera Murad, Jamali, Quetta, Khuzdar, Hub in Balochistan and Kashmore, Jakob Abad and the border areas of Larkana district in Sindh Province. In Punjab Province they have taken shelter in Dera Ghazi Khan district near Usta Mohammad village of Balochistan. According to newspaper reports the displaced are living in terrible conditions with no safe drinking water. According to a report published in the daily Dawn "It is unclear how many Bugti displaced people (DPs) actually poured into neighbouring cities and towns following the outbreak of hostilities between the warring tribesmen and the law-enforcement agencies in the early summer of last year. The Dera Bugti Nazim, Kazim Bugti, puts the number of DPs at over a hundred thousand. His assertions about the involvement of army helicopters in Dera Bugti military operations lend credence to the claims of the DPs. The accusation is stoutly denied by the government, however". "

Inter-tribal feuding fuels more conflict in the region (June 2006)

- The government has encouraged the return of the Kalpars which is in conflict with the Bugti tribes
- This has been seen as a deliberate effort on the part of the government to destabilise the Bugti domination in the conflict affected area
- Fighting between the two tribes has been reported on several occasions

IPCS, 28 June 2006

"The Bugti-Kalpar feud has intensified since 1992. While such intra-tribal clashes are part of Baloch tribal history, the two tribes had co-existed in the past; two killings in 1992 changed that situation forever. Amir Hamza, son of Kalpar leader Khan Mohammad Kalpar, was allegedly killed by Akbar Bugti in May 1992 in Dera Bugti during a local bodies' election. Accepted as their leader by all Bugti tribes, Akbar Bugti does not brook any opposition and runs the political and tribal affairs of the region like a monarch complete with imprisonments and punishments. Even today there are some Kalpars 'imprisoned' by Bugti. Prior his killing Amir Hamza was attempting to forge an alliance between the Kalpars and Masuris (another Bugti sub tribe), of which Akbar Bugti did not approve. The Kalpars retaliated in June 1992 by killing Salal Bugti, Akbar Bugti's son.

Ever since, Akbar Bugti's primary goal has been to remove the Kalpars and Masuris from the region or physically eliminate them. Besides these personal and political factors, the Kalpars claim that the Sui gas fields are located in their area, hence they should be the primary beneficiaries of its royalties, which has further infuriated Akbar Bugti.

The federal government has exploited these divisions, depending on the equations between Akbar Bugti and Islamabad. Since January 2006, the federal government has rehabilitated the Kalpars in the Dera Bugti and Sui areas to minimize Akbar Bugti's influence. Besides, there is an effort to project that the situation in Dera Bugti is returning to normalcy with the displaced willing to return. The resettled Kalpars had recently led a procession in Sui supporting Musharraf's policies.

The Bugtis are against the Kalpars' return and have been attacking them ever since the first convoy brought them back. The Bugtis are also instigating those Kalpars who support Akbar Bugti against the returnees.

[...]

Besides the intra-tribal feud, the returnees face problems over issues of settlement and security. Most of Kalpar land has been occupied by the Bugtis and reclaiming it will not be easy."

Nagesh, 8 March 2006

"As part of its strategy to establish its writ and wrest control of areas from tribal chiefs, the government last month relocated members of the Kalpari Badlani sub tribe in Sui. According to reports from Sui, residents started leaving the town soon after the government resettled the Kalpar Badlani sub tribe. Locals said that the resettled tribals were forcing them to leave. Many have left for Dera Murad Jamali, Kandhkot and Shikarpur.

On Feb 14, Another Massuri tribesmen also returned to their homes in the Bekar region of Dera Bugti district, according to APP. A total of 67 families, comprised of 334 people made their way back to their hometown. On their arrival in Bekar, the displaced tribesmen thanked the present government as well as President Pervez Musharraf for their help and support.

Kalpar Bugtis staged a demonstration in favour of development projects in Balochistan, including the building of military cantonments, Kalpar elder Sardar Ahmadan Bugti said to media.

[...]

The protestors denounced Bugti tribe chief Nawab Akbar Bugti and accused him of detaining and torturing Kalpars in private prisons. They also accused the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) and the Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy (ARD) of being partial to the Bugtis and for ignoring the Kalpars' rights. They demanded the HRCP and ARD to visit the area and observe the Kalpars' situation, who they said were subjected to atrocities. The speakers termed the Sui cantonment a "great gift" for the people of the area. They expressed full support for the policies of President Pervez Musharraf.

[...]

Another batch of some 300 Kalpars recently left for Sui under the supervision of the Frontier Corps. "We now feel safe (in Sui) and normalcy is returning to the area after a long time," said Sardar Ahmadan Bugti. He said that over 4,000 Kalpars had now resettled in Sui and 3,000 still remained in Punjab and Sindh, adding that two to five Kalpar families were returning to the town every day.

The mainstream Bugti tribe, whose tribal elders are already facing a government crackdown, accused the government of sponsoring the return of Kalpar and Masuri clans, warning that it could create a serious law and order problem in their area where Pakistan's biggest Sui Gas Field is located.

[...]

But the move is seen as fuelling more tensions and a law and order problem in the area where tribesmen are already mounting hit-and-run attacks on the security forces and government installations."

Displacement of Hindus

Hindus in Balochistan targeted and displaced (January 2006)

- Anti-Hindu violence in Balochistan has displaced thousands in previous years
- Most of the Hindus left for the province of Sindh to join the Hindu community there
- The military operations in Balochistan during 2005 displaced the remaining Hindus living in Dera Bugti

Khaled Ahmed, 20 May 2004

"Anti-Hindu violence in Balochistan: The Friday Times reported in its issue of March 23-29, 2001, as follows: 'Hundreds of Hindus have been forced to flee their homes and cross over into Sindh. Three Hindus were reported to have been killed in the town of Chaman after clashes between Hindus attempting to protect their homes and Muslim mobs in October. Temples and homes were set ablaze and property, including Hindu shops, destroyed as the growing social intolerance assumed alarming new proportions in Balochistan. In all cases, local extremist groups played a role in triggering the attacks.

'Though the precise number of families which fled was unknown, reports suggested almost half the community of 10,000 Hindus in Lasbela had been forced to leave their homes over the year. In almost all cases, the increased activism by militant religious groups imposed new strains on relations between the majority Muslim and the Hindu communities, who had lived peacefully alongside each other for many decades. The efforts to forcibly convert the Hindus, especially female school students, had a direct role to play in violence against Hindu settlements.

[...]

Plight of Hindus of Sindh: Newline(Dec 2000), pages 77-79, stated that 'the status of the 2.7 million Hindus in Pakistan, who are largely concentrated in Sindh, does not make for a very encouraging picture. Despite the fact that the Hindus in Pakistan have generally maintained a low profile, the general attitude towards them is one of suspicion.

[...]

'Hindus in Pakistan have faced the greatest trials when there has been tension between India and Pakistan. Says an analyst, "From the first Indo-Pak war to the demolition of the Babri mosque in Ayodhya, Hindus in Pakistan have been perceived as enemies and persecuted." Kidnapping, extortion, and even killing are, meanwhile, common crimes perpetrated against Hindus in Sindh today.

'In Pakistan, the Dalits face different issues. Since they are part of a tiny minority that is 5 per cent of country's total population, and due to also lack of education and literacy, they continue to stick to different forms of Hinduism whatever their half-literate Gurus impart them. Caste Hindus continue their domination only in southern part of Pakistan, especially former Mirpurkhas division, where more than one million Dalits dwell as landless peasants and labourers. The Caste Hindus, though small in numbers, dominate the minority politics through support of their convert relatives and government functionaries. The incidents of atrocities and caste-based discriminations on Dalits are increasing day by day in Tharparkar - a district where 35 per cent people belong to

different Dalit communities among a million people - because of growing awareness and assertiveness of the Dalits. Several hundred Dalit employees of Dalit communities were transferred to far-flung areas under different obnoxious pretexts. Cases were initiated against the Dalit political activists. Their rural folks were threatened and even disallowed to graze their livestock on government lands called Gauchar.

'Dalits also suffer in many instances from de facto disenfranchisement. During elections 2002, those unpersuaded by typical electioneering were routinely threatened and beaten by a pro-government political party strongmen in order to compel them to vote for certain candidates. Already under the thumb of local landlords and police officials, Dalit villagers who do not comply had been victimized, beaten, and harassed. In Tharparkar, violence against Dalits is normally treated as a very minor and marginal issue, even by the law-enforcement machinery, whether be it police, the prosecution, or the medico-legal fraternity or often even the judiciary. Non-registration of crimes against Dalits is one of the main problem in Tharparkar. Political influence over the police, and caste, class, religion and gender biases are rampant. It is extremely difficult for helpless Dalits to file complaints, particularly against the powerful individuals and or perpetrators. The theft of livestock of Dalits in Tharparkar is rampant as police never registers any such case. These are very few examples as to how Dalits are dealt with if they display an act to show equality. Hundreds of the incidents of caste discrimination go unreported.'

The military operations in Balochistan during 2005 displaced the remaining Hindus living there:

Raman, 21 January 2006

"Musharraf has extended his military operation to intimidate the Hindu Balochs also. The Pakistan Army, which looks upon Balochistan as a sensitive area of strategic importance because of its location, natural resources and the location of its nuclear-testing and missile-targeting grounds in the province, has been over the years forcing the Hindus either to leave for India or to shift to Sindh. After the post-Partition anti-Hindu massacres which resulted in the large-scale exodus of Hindus from the then Western Pakistan to India, Balochistan and Sindh were the only provinces still having a Hindu population of a little over a million. The Sindhi and Baloch nationalists looked upon them as their ethnic brothers and sisters and protected them.

[...]

[...] In the early 1970s, the late Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who looked upon these Hindus as security threats, started forcing them to leave Balochistan. This policy continued under the Governments that followed. After inviting the Chinese to construct the Gwadar port and the Mekran Coastal Highway, Musharraf started forcing the remaining Hindus, whose numbers had considerably dwindled, to shift to Sindh.

[...] The Baloch Sardars took under their protection those Hindus, who resisted Musharraf's attempts to re-settle them outside Balochistan. Nearly 250 Balochs were thus enjoying the protection of the Bugtis in their area. Similarly, there were small clusters of Hindus, who were living under the protection of the Marris and the Mengals. All these Hindu Balochs are now being forced to leave Balochistan since Musharraf launched the present phase of the military operation on December 18, 2005. According to the Balochistan Chapter of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, the number of Hindu Balochs living in the Bugti area has come down from 250 to two."

Sectarian violence

Sectarian violence is on the increase, minorities are vulnerable (April 2006)

- Hundreds of people have died in attacks carried out by different Muslim sects or groups on each other
- Religious minorities in Pakistan, including Ahmadis, Christians and Hindus continue to be victims of religiously motivated violence
- The perpetrators of violence against minorities act largely with impunity
- Sectarian violence is on the increase

AI, 13 April 2006

"Over recent years, hundreds of people have died in attacks carried out by different Muslim sects or groups on each other, and by the Muslim majority against members of religious minorities. The organization notes that the Government of Pakistan has consistently failed to prevent sectarian violence, despite repeated verbal undertakings to the international community and minority groups in the country that it would ensure that measures would be taken to end religious discrimination and religiously motivated violence. The government has also failed to ensure that perpetrators of such crimes are brought to justice.

The Government of Pakistan has in the past on several occasions announced steps towards ending religious discrimination and sectarian violence, but has on most occasions gone back on these after protests by religious groups. For example, the use of loudspeakers at mosques to incite violence against other religious groups or individuals of other faiths has been banned but the ban has not been enforced, thereby permitting violence to continue. In addition, several religious groups which are known to have participated in violence against those belonging to other groups, and to have incited others to commit such violent acts were banned by the government in 2002, but this ban has not been enforced.

[...]

Religious minorities in Pakistan, including Ahmadis, Christians and Hindus, also continue to be victims of religiously motivated violence. The discriminatory blasphemy laws, which criminalize the preaching and religious practice by Ahmadis, have further contributed to the atmosphere of intolerance. When the government revoked an earlier undertaking to amend these laws, many people believed that this was an indication that the government did not take the protection of religious minorities seriously. A government undertaking to remove details of religious affiliation in passports and other official documents was annulled in March 2005."

Mir, Amir, 6 June 2005

"The sectarian war between Pakistan's Shias and Sunnis is bloody and deadly. Available figures indicate that, between January 1989 and May 31, 2005 a total of 1,784 Pakistanis were killed, and another 4,279 injured in 1,866 incidents of sectarian violence and terror across the country. This averages out to over 100 persons per year over the past 17 years, with no end in sight. And there are some indications that the trends may worsen. Thus, 187 persons were killed and another 619 were injured in 19 incidents of sectarian violence in 2004. Within the first five months of 2005, 120 Pakistanis have already lost their lives, and 286 have been injured in 30 incidents of sectarian violence.

[...]

Sectarian conflict and violence are an unpleasant reality in Pakistan today, and are becoming more and more intense. Administrative measures taken by the Musharraf-led Government have failed to produce results so far. Analysts believe that the sectarian problem cannot be overcome

by such administrative measures alone, while the state itself remains in alliance with extremist elements. The problem for General Musharraf is that it is difficult to promote the so-called *jihad* in J&K without inadvertently promoting many of the Pakistani sectarian outfits. In the process, state authority stands eroded in one way or the other. The increasing militarisation and brutalisation of the conflict shows that there are virtually no sanctuaries left - neither home, nor mosque nor hospital. Not even a jail is safe. And being innocent is not the issue. Just 'being' is enough - being Shia or Sunni, *Barelvi* or *Deobandi*. In a situation where different sectarian groups are vying to prove themselves the standard bearers of Islam, one strategy to secure prominence as a representative of 'true Islam' is obviously by displaying extreme hostility and intolerance to those designated as being 'un-Islamic' by virtue of belonging to religious minorities and minority sects."

POPULATION FIGURES AND PROFILE

Global Figures

Tens of thousands have fled conflict, but no estimate available on total number of IDPs in the country (April 2008)

- According to the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, a total of 1.5 million people were displaced in the country in 2007 due to natural disasters, development projects and military operations in Balochistan, North West Frontier Province and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas.
- It is unknown how many from this 1.5 million are conflict-induced IDPs due to restricted access to conflict areas
- Also unknown is the total number of people in the country displaced prior to 2007 who have not found durable solutions to end their displacement

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, April 2008:

“Natural disasters including a cyclone, floods induced by torrential rains and sea intrusion, as well as development projects and military operations in Balochistan, NWFP and Pakistan’s tribal areas bordering Afghanistan caused displacement of over 1.5 million people during 2007. This figure does not include those displaced by the October 2005 earthquake, who were yet to return home. Official statistics for internal displacement were largely unavailable. Army operations targeting alleged insurgent groups in parts of Balochistan, Waziristan in the tribal areas and the Swat Valley in the NWFP were the main causes of conflict-induced displacement in 2007.

Statistics regarding such displacement were either unavailable or highly inconsistent. Despite evidence to the contrary, the official remarks on internally displaced persons (IDPs) numbers largely consisted of denial of the displacement figures reported by the media. The government agencies not only failed to prevent displacement caused by non-state actors but their own operations against alleged insurgents in areas populated by civilians displaced hundreds of thousands.”

Information on approximate conflict-induced displacement figures in Balochistan, North West Frontier Province and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas is in the geographical distribution envelopes.

Geographical distribution

Hundreds of thousands estimated to be short-term IDPs in North West Frontier Province (February 2008)

- Hundreds of thousands of people were displaced in the Swat Valley due to fighting between army and extremist forces in October and November 2007

- Some estimates place the number of IDPs in the Valley at 400,000, others at 500,000 and still others at 900,000 or 60 per cent of the Valley's 1.5 million population
- Once the army had seized control of most of the Valley in early December large numbers of displaced returned

Media News Line Agency, February 2008:

"In the clash that followed the security forces suffered massive casualties and more than 13 Pakistani security personnel were beheaded by armed men in the Matta and Charbagh areas of the district. Of the valley's 1.5 million population some 400,000 were displaced by the fighting."

Kashmir Herald, December 2007:

"With little evidence of state capacities to control or protect, the common people of Swat have been extraordinarily vulnerable. Indeed, thousands fled their villages in the Kabal sub-division and other areas of Swat after announcements were made by SFs asking them to leave the area, as the Army was set to launch a massive operation against what it called terrorists hiding there. Safdar Sial and Aqeel Yusafzai reported that about 60 per cent of the 1.5 million inhabitants have left the area. Unnamed officials confirmed, on November 19, that at least 500,000 people had fled the region.

[...]

On their part, the militants are said to have made announcements asking people not to leave their homes as they had arranged for suicide bombers to attack the SFs, if the latter came out of their bases to attack the militants."

Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, November 2007:

"The idyllic valley of Swat, one of Pakistan's main tourist attractions, has over the last six months turned into a theatre of insurgency by religious extremists. Led by Maulana Fazlullah, a village cleric and a leader of the 'banned' Tehreek-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Muhammadi (TNSM), armed militants demanding enforcement of Sharia laws are taking on Pakistan's paramilitary and regular army troops. There have been at least 63 terrorist attacks in Swat region since July this year, including six suicide bombings and numerous public beheadings. Most of these attacks—39 till November 15, to be precise—were targeted at the security forces, killing 97 security personnel and injuring another 127. The number of militants and other civilians killed in the fighting runs into hundreds as the Pakistan Army has moved in to quell the pro-Taliban movement, which has taken control of six sub-divisions in the district of Swat.

In addition, the violence has forced thousands of people to flee their homes. PIPS sources say that about 60 per cent of the 1.5 million Swat valley inhabitants have left the area. Hounded, on the one hand, by the Taliban and vulnerable to military strikes on the other, they have either taken refuge with their relatives or moved to other cities like Mardan, Buner, Peshawar, Rawalpindi and Karachi."

Dawn, December 2007:

"Swat valley is slowly returning to normality with large numbers of displaced people coming back to areas now under the control of security forces.

[...]

Scores of families have returned to secured areas, including Shakardara, Koza Banda, Bara Banda, Ningolai, Khwazakhela and Kot.

Public transport carrying people and their luggage could be seen throughout the day on roads. The displaced people had been taking shelter mostly with their relatives in Mingora and other towns. Some had shifted to other cities such as Mardan, Nowshera and Peshawar.”

Tens of thousands displaced in North and South Waziristan from October 2007 to January 2008 (February 2008)

- Civilians in North Waziristan were caught in the crossfire between the army and militants in October 2007
- 80,000 fled from Mirali in North Waziristan to nearby districts
- In January 2008, conflict in South Waziristan forced thousands of tribal families to flee
- Roughly 150,000 people left their homes in the Mehsud areas and moved to other areas
- Despite a temporary truce between the army and militants, people continued to flee to adjoining districts of South Waziristan

Dawn, October 2007:

“The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) on Friday called upon the government and militants to immediately end hostilities in North Waziristan and halt attacks on innocent civilians. “Civilians in North Waziristan are getting caught in the crossfire between the military and the militants,” Kamran Arif, HRCP NWFP chapter vice-chairperson, said in a press release issued here on Friday. “We seek an immediate end to hostilities, bombing of villages and use of heavy weapons that endanger the lives of civilian population,” he said. Over 250 people were killed when heavy fighting broke out in the area between the military and militants on October 7. While the army claimed that the casualties included only soldiers and militants, local people reported civilian deaths and massive displacement of population. Mr Arif said that on October 10, tribesmen in Ipi Faqir, a village close to Mirali, buried 50 people killed in air strikes, which also destroyed houses and shops. “When the militants seek refuge in villages, the military follows them with gunship helicopters and fighter jets, bombing houses and markets,” a resident of Ipi Faqir told HRCP at a hospital in Peshawar where his brother was receiving treatment for multiple injuries suffered in a rocket attack. “We are here in this hospital in Peshawar. I invite the authorities to come and prove if we are militants or their supporters.” Eyewitness reports said the fighting had displaced thousands of people, forcing many to seek refuge in the nearby Bannu and D.I. Khan districts. Some 80,000 people left Mirali, the second largest town in North Waziristan, where the military operation against militants was taking place. The dead and the wounded were being brought to hospitals in Bannu and Peshawar.”

Dawn, February 2008:

“Despite reports of a temporary truce between militants and security forces, exodus continued from South Waziristan to adjoining districts of Dera Ismail Khan, Tank and Bannu. To cope with the situation, local administrations of Dera Ismail Khan and other districts are considering establishing relief camps for the displaced families. Sources told Dawn that setting up of two refugee camps in Dera Ismail Khan was on the cards, where they would also be provided with food, medical facilities and other essentials of daily life. The migrated tribesmen said the military operation and influence of militant groups in the troubled region had virtually paralysed life in the Mehsud tribe areas, including Spinkai Raghznai and Kotkai, and surrounding areas of the Frontier Region of Jandola. They said the affected areas were presenting a deserted look after evacuation of local people.

[...]

Over 1,000 displaced families (about 10 thousand people) have come to Dera Ismail Khan alone.

[...]

A meeting of local officials was held here to decide a site for establishing a relief camp. Speaking at a press conference in Dera Ismail Khan, a 15-member committee of tribal elders said war was not a solution and the matter could only be resolved through dialogue (tribal jirga). The elders included Mir Zaman Mehsud, Wasim Khan Mehsud, Junabat Khan Mehsud, Khan Wali Khan Mehsud and Salauddin Mehsud. The tribal leaders demanded immediate end to the military operation and called for political solution to the dispute. They said the fighting between security forces and militants had turned the whole region into a battlefield where the life of an ordinary man was unsafe. They said thousands of tribesmen had vacated their homes and were forced to live like nomads. They said the affected people had no links with militants, rather they were the sufferers of a war imposed on their soil by some people for their vested interests."

Dawn, February 2008:

"An unofficial ceasefire agreed between security forces and militants has been holding ground in the troubled South Waziristan tribal region since Saturday, according to a tribal parliamentarian.

[...]

He said that back-door talks were under way to bring the two sides to the negotiation table. Locals said that the guns had been silent over the past two days. Troops, backed by tanks and helicopters, had launched an operation against the militants in several areas of the Mehsud tribe last month, killing scores of militants. Many soldiers also lost their lives. Hundreds of local people were displaced by the conflict.

[...]

Roughly 150,000 people had left their homes in the Mehsud areas and moved to other areas. He said that people in Tiarza tehsil, Berwand, Sararogha, and Kaniguram had left their homes for safer places because of relentless shelling. A large number of people have migrated to Karachi and Hyderabad."

Thousands reported displaced due to fighting in North Waziristan (March 2006)

- Thousands reported displaced, but displacement and return movements have not been monitored

COE-DMHA, 9 March 2006:

"Although thousands of civilians have been reportedly displaced, exact numbers are difficult to procure because both foreign and local journalists are barred from the region, however, local reports say that at least 1,000 families have fled fighting in Miran Shah."

HRW, 8 March 2006:

"Thousands of civilians have fled their homes since the Pakistani army, backed by helicopter gunships, began operations to put down a rebellion in the town of Miran Shah, the capital of North Waziristan Agency, on March 3.

[...]

On March 16, 2004, army and paramilitary troops reportedly evicted between 25,000 and 35,000 civilians from the area in and around the village of Kalusha in just a few hours. They remained without shelter for the two-week-long operation and returned to find that the army had destroyed scores of homes, cattle, and crops."

BBC, 7 March 2006:

"Several hundred militants seized government buildings in Miran Shah on Saturday. It followed the bombing of an alleged militant hideout by security forces last week that killed dozens of people.

The main bazaar in the town is without electricity, and the only telephones that are working are those used by the local administration, our correspondent says.

[...]

Thousands of people have already fled Miran Shah, while many more continue to leave to escape the clashes, witnesses said.

"We were waiting for the day. It was fighting all night and we feared that we might be hit by fire from a helicopter," Mohammad Anwar, a resident who was fleeing with his family, told the Associated Press."

Differing estimates of displacement due to conflict in Balochistan (April 2008)

- By early 2008, estimates of the displaced in Balochistan ranged from 25,000 IDPs from Dera Bugti to more than 200,000 in Kohlu district alone
- The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan noted that IDPs in Balochistan remain invisible because of ongoing military operations and a media ban
- It is unknown how many of the displaced have returned home

International Crisis Group, October 2007:

"In May 2007, addressing a public meeting in Sui subdistrict of Dera Bugti, President Musharraf claimed that 65,000 of a total of 90,000 IDPs from Dera Bugti had returned home. A regional human rights organisation, however, believes some 200,000 persons are still displaced. Local estimates are even higher. Abdul Wahab Baloch, head of the Baloch Rights Council, an NGO, insists that more than 200,000 have been displaced from Kohlu district alone, and government neglect has resulted in many deaths. The media is denied access to the IDPs and their homes in the conflict zones, so it is impossible to verify the conflicting claims."

Pakistan Human Rights Commission, April 2008:

"IDPs in Balochistan largely remained invisible because of the continuing military operation and restrictions on media access to them. A report said in December 2006 that 84,000 people displaced by the conflict in Balochistan were in need of immediate food aid. The government continued to dispute the figures in 2007 and claimed that thousands of displaced families had returned home. The opposition parties insisted that over 100,000 were still homeless."

Asian Human Rights Commission, July 2006:

"Due to the military operations and aerial bombardments the local population have been forced to migrate to safer parts of Balochistan as well as to the nearby borders of Sindh and Punjab provinces. The military have cordoned off Hernai area for the past several days making it impossible for people to come and go. As a result the people are without food, medicines and drinking water. The area where people have taken leave from are predominantly Mach, Kohlo, Usta Mohamad, Sibi, Dera Bugti and some parts of Hanai. The two district provinces of Sibi and Bolan are the worst affected areas of military operations as well as the aerial bombardment. These two districts cover more than 500 kilometres. The displaced are now settled in other areas such as Dera Murad, Jamali, Quetta, Khuzdar, Hub in Balochistan and Kashmore, Jakob Abad and the border areas of Larkana district in Sindh Province. In Punjab Province they have taken shelter in Dera Ghazi Khan district near Usta Mohammad village of Balochistan. According to newspaper reports the displaced are living in terrible conditions with no safe drinking water. According to a report published in the daily Dawn "It is unclear how many Bugti displaced people (DPs) actually poured into neighbouring cities and towns following the outbreak of hostilities between the warring tribesmen and the law-enforcement agencies in the early summer of last

year. The Dera Bugti Nazim, Kazim Bugti, puts the number of DPs at over a hundred thousand. His assertions about the involvement of army helicopters in Dera Bugti military operations lend credence to the claims of the DPs. The accusation is stoutly denied by the government, however". "

Integrated Regional Information Networks, August 2006:

"HRCP estimates that in all, 100,000 people were displaced in the Dera Bugti and Kohlu districts alone. Abdul Samad Lasi, Dera Bugti's district coordination officer, says law and order have since been restored, with thousands of people returning.

However, several thousand people, like Zubaida, continue to live in temporary settlements with no provisions for water, sanitation, food, schooling or health care."

Dawn, July 2006:

"It is unclear how many Bugti displaced people (DPs) actually poured into neighbouring cities and towns following the outbreak of hostilities between the warring tribesmen and the law-enforcement agencies in the early summer of last year [spring 2005].

The Dera Bugti Nazim, Kazim Bugti, puts the number of DPs at over a hundred thousand. His assertions about the involvement of army helicopters in Dera Bugti military operations lend credence to the claims of the DPs. The accusation is stoutly denied by the government, however."

Dawn, July 2006:

"According to the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, in the current situation in Dera Bugti almost 50,000 people have fled their villages and settlements. Opposition leaders say they are living in deplorable conditions and have no access to potable water, food and other basic necessities. However, official sources assert that the government has set up camps for these DPs (displaced persons). They also state that financial help is not needed since the people who have fled Dera Bugti are very well off. While the government and some of tribal leaders remain firmly cemented in their positions, what is clear is that there is no sign of any imminent relief to a people who can at best be described as dispossessed."

After fighting starting late December 2005 reportedly displaced 90 per cent of the population in the Dera Bugti and Kohlu districts

Displacement of Hindus in Pakistan (May 2004)

Khaled Ahmed, 21 May 2004:

"Anti-Hindu violence in Balochistan: The Friday Times reported in its issue of March 23-29, 2001, as follows: 'Hundreds of Hindus have been forced to flee their homes and cross over into Sindh. Three Hindus were reported to have been killed in the town of Chaman after clashes between Hindus attempting to protect their homes and Muslim mobs in October. Temples and homes were set ablaze and property, including Hindu shops, destroyed as the growing social intolerance assumed alarming new proportions in Balochistan. In all cases, local extremist groups played a role in triggering the attacks.

'Though the precise number of families which fled was unknown, reports suggested almost half the community of 10,000 Hindus in Lasbela had been forced to leave their homes over the year.'

PATTERNS OF DISPLACEMENT

General

North West Frontier Province/Swat Valley: Civilians flee to other parts of Swat and NWFP (April 2008)

- Thousands fled their villages in Mingora and Matta after army warnings that it was about to launch a massive operation against militants
- Many IDPs moved to calmer areas of Swat and nearby towns like Mardan
- Some IDPs rented houses in safer towns, but many more had to find shelter in government schools in the towns or go to remote villages in the mountains
- Others took refuge in Peshawar or other parts of North West Frontier Province
- Some IDPs went further to Rawalpindi and Karachi

Kashmir Herald, December 2007:

“With little evidence of state capacities to control or protect, the common people of Swat have been extraordinarily vulnerable. Indeed, thousands fled their villages in the Kabal sub-division and other areas of Swat after announcements were made by SFs asking them to leave the area, as the Army was set to launch a massive operation against what it called terrorists hiding there. Safdar Sial and Aqeel Yusafzai reported that about 60 per cent of the 1.5 million inhabitants have left the area. Unnamed officials confirmed, on November 19, that at least 500,000 people had fled the region. A majority of them had reportedly shifted to the Malakand Agency, Mardan, Charsadda, Nowshera, Peshawar and Islamabad. A majority of villagers in areas like Sangota, Faza Gat, Hayatabad, Koza and Bara Bandai, Nangolai, Kanju, Shakar Dara, Sher Palam, Behrain, Mianadam, Oshu, Gabral, Shawar and Chakrial have also reportedly abandoned their homes.”

Buneri, November 2007:

“Locals say that about 60% of the 1.5 million population in Swat valley have left their houses and take refuge either with their relatives or rented houses in Mardan, Buner, Peshawar, Rawalpindi and Karachi.”

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, April 2008:

“The valley is home to around 1.5 million people. Estimates varied as to the extent of displacement, but at the height of the conflict, some reports suggested that up to 60% of people in the valley had fled, mainly to the homes of friends and relatives. Others rented houses in safer nearby towns, but many more had no option but to find shelter in government schools in towns nearby or head to remote villages in the mountains. In Mingora, Swat’s second-largest town, rents rose sharply due to the large number of families seeking sanctuary there, with many residents complaining of a housing shortage.”

Reuters, October 2007:

“Clashes have also taken place in and around the congested city of Mingora, adjacent to Swat's administrative headquarters at Saidu Sharif, and in villages of the Matta administrative unit.

At least 60 militants have been killed in three days of clashes, while dozens more have been injured, including civilians, and hundreds, if not thousands, have reportedly fled, Pakistani media said on 30 October. Some are taking refuge with relatives in Peshawar or other parts of NWFP, while others have simply moved to calmer areas of Swat itself. "Most people are moving to nearby towns in the area like Mardan," said Imran Khan, coordinator in Peshawar for the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan.”

Waziristan: IDPs flee air strikes and artillery shelling (February 2008)

- In October 2007 villagers in North Waziristan fled their homes after air strikes and artillery shelling
- Many moved to Bannu and Peshawar, leaving behind a family member to watch over possessions
- After clashes in South Waziristan in January 2008, hundreds of displaced families- made up mostly of women, children and elderly- migrated to Tank district and North Waziristan
- Roughly 150,000 people had to leave their homes in the Mehsud tribal area of South Waziristan because of shelling and have migrated as far away as Karachi and Hyderabad.

Dawn, October 2007:

“Eyewitnesses said that people of several villages had left their homes after the air strikes and artillery shelling. They said that a large number of families were heading towards Bannu district.

[...]

Residents said that 50 bodies had been laid to rest in Ipi, 20 in Haiderkhel and three in Zairaki villages which were bombed on Tuesday. They said the intense air strikes and artillery fire had turned most of the Ipi village into rubble. Fighter jets had bombed Ipi and adjoining areas, with 12 bombs dropped on a village market. Locals claimed that innocent people had been killed in the attack.

[...]

The witnesses said that a large number of families were streaming out of Ipi, Haiderkhel, Mosaki, Hurmaz, Hasukhel, Barokhel, Milagan, Zairaki and Esori villages of Mirali and moving to Bannu and other settled districts.

[...]

Unconfirmed reports said that thousands of people had left their homes in Mirali. They are facing shortage of food.”

Integrated Regional Information Networks, October 2007:

“HRCP said in a 12 October statement that most of the 80,000 people displaced by the fighting had gone to neighbouring Bannu. Others had headed for Peshawar, some 190km to the north, and a number headed straight for hospitals seeking treatment for wounded family members. "In most cases, as the fighting intensified, families fled, just heading out along the road to Bannu or elsewhere in lorries, trucks, vans or on foot – even though many had nowhere to go," Aurangzeb Ali told IRIN. He said almost all women and children left, with Mirali, having a previous population of 50,000, becoming a "virtual ghost town". Many families left just a single male member behind to watch over houses and possessions abandoned as they fled.”

The News, October 2007:

“Such was the severity of the fighting that whole villages were emptied of their population and no Eidul Fitr prayers could be offered. Village and tribal elders claimed that more than 80,000 people were displaced and 90 per cent population of Mir Ali town, populated by 50,000, abandoned their homes due to fear of bombing by the Pakistan Air Force. Most walked to safer destinations, spending cold nights in the open and cursing all those who made them suffer in the holy month of Ramazan. Civilian casualties were high, up to 60 according to some estimates, and the injured included men, women and children aged two years to 70.

Some of the wounded were brought with great difficulty and at a huge cost to Bannu and Peshawar, and that is how the media and the world got to hear heart-rending stories of human suffering resulting from military operations and militants' attacks. The military's reluctance to admit civilian deaths as a result of the bombing by its warplanes and its insistence that those killed were all militants and terrorists inflamed passions and deprived it of whatever little support it still had in North Waziristan. This was skillfully exploited by the militants, who accused the government of resorting to indiscriminate aerial bombing and artillery shelling densely populated villages.”

Dawn, January 2008:

“A large number of people moved out of the conflict-hit areas of South Waziristan as fierce clashes between security forces and militants continued on Sunday night and Monday, officials and local people said.

[...]

Information gathered from different sources indicated that hundreds of displaced families, mostly women, children and elders, were migrating to the adjacent Tank district and North Waziristan.

“We fear a major humanitarian crisis if the conflict continues on the same scale in the region,” said Gul Rehman, a Tank-based social activist who visited the troubled areas. He said that a large number of families belonging to the Mahsud tribe had been living in open areas and parks in Tank.

“The displaced people had to walk for almost two days to reach Jandola and Tank,” Mr Rehman said.

He said that the terrain was very rough and people had faced numerous problems on their way, including non-availability of food and water.

[...]

There are unconfirmed reports about some children dying due to severe cold. “I have seen a man carrying body of his seven-year-old son who died due to freezing weather,” a resident of Tank City said. He said that witnesses had told him that about 30 children had died over the past week. Over 100 displaced families have reached Miramshah in North Waziristan. Local elder Fazl Subhan, who is contesting the elections, has set up relief centres in Miramshah, Mirali and Esha. Witnesses said that transporters were charging high fares from the displaced people. “From Omer Adda to Tank City, hardly a distance of 5km, the transporters are charging Rs1,000,” said a resident.

The displaced families are also looking for houses on rent and a committee of Mahsud tribesmen is helping them.

The sources said that heavy clashes which had started on Sunday night in Nawaz Kot, Kotkai and Berwand areas of South Waziristan continued on Monday. Security forces and helicopter gunships bombed suspected militant locations. Troops fired heavy artillery from their bases in Jandola, Manzai and Tank.”

Dawn, February 2008:

"An unofficial ceasefire agreed between security forces and militants has been holding ground in the troubled South Waziristan tribal region since Saturday, according to a tribal parliamentarian.

[...]

He said that back-door talks were under way to bring the two sides to the negotiation table. Locals said that the guns had been silent over the past two days. Troops, backed by tanks and helicopters, had launched an operation against the militants in several areas of the Mehsud tribe last month, killing scores of militants. Many soldiers also lost their lives. Hundreds of local people were displaced by the conflict.

[...]

Roughly 150,000 people had left their homes in the Mehsud areas and moved to other areas. He said that people in Tiarza tehsil, Berwand, Sararogha, and Kaniguram had left their homes for safer places because of relentless shelling. A large number of people have migrated to Karachi and Hyderabad."

Balochistan: Tens of thousands remain displaced (June 2007)

- IDPs in Balochistan are continuing to stay in towns and urban centers
- Small groups of IDPs are encamped over vast and isolated area
- More than two years since the insurgency, most of the IDPs from Dera Bugti and Sui have not returned

Newsline, June 2007:

"The situation in Balochistan is, indeed, bleak. Thousands remain displaced and are living in miserable conditions. Many have poured into neighbouring towns and those with better resources have made it to the urban centres. The low income peasants have fared the worst. Small groups of displaced peasant families remain encamped over a vast and isolated area that is becoming increasingly insecure as the fighting spreads. [...]

On the outskirts of towns like Dera Murad Jamali and Jhapat, some native landowners have allowed several families to stay on as labourers. But the locals are often hostile. Old tribal enmities and newer political alliances further complicate the situation. Fear of reprisal by security agencies also prevents locals from aiding refugees.

[...]

Almost two years on since the insurgency began, and several months after the government announced that peace had returned to the area, most of the population of Dera Bugti and Sui has not returned. "

Balochistan: civilians fled to secure areas of balochistan as well as to the Sindh and Punjab provinces**AHRC, 21 July 2006:**

"Due to the military operations and aerial bombardments the local population have been forced to migrate to safer parts of Balochistan as well as to the nearby borders of Sindh and Punjab provinces. The military have cordoned off Hernai area for the past several days making it impossible for people to come and go. As a result the people are without food, medicines and drinking water. The area where people have taken leave from are predominantly Mach, Kohlo, Usta Mohamad, Sibi, Dera Bugti and some parts of Hanai. The two district provinces of Sibi and Bolan are the worst affected areas of military operations as well as the aerial bombardment. These two districts cover more than 500 kilometres. The displaced are now settled in other areas

such as Dera Murad, Jamali, Quetta, Khuzdar, Hub in Balochistan and Kashmore, Jackob Abad and the border areas of Larkana district in Sindh Province. In Pubjab Province they have taken shelter in Dera Ghazi Khan district near Usta Mohammad village of Balochistan. According to newspaper reports the displaced are living in terrible conditions with no safe drinking water. According to a report published in the daily Dawn "It is unclear how many Bugti displaced people (DPs) actually poured into neighbouring cities and towns following the outbreak of hostilities between the warring tribesmen and the law-enforcement agencies in the early summer of last year. The Dera Bugti Nazim, Kazim Bugti, puts the number of DPs at over a hundred thousand. His assertions about the involvement of army helicopters in Dera Bugti military operations lend credence to the claims of the DPs. The accusation is stoutly denied by the government, however". The displaced have to carry water from at least one to three kilometers away. No medical help is being provided to them. They are mostly children and women suffering from diarrhea, dehydration, malaria and high fevers. Some cases of deaths have been reported but not confirmed by any hospitals."

PHYSICAL SECURITY & FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

General

Balochistan: landmine accidents on the increase in violence affected areas

- A growing number of landmine accidents have been reported from Balochistan, especially from the Dera Bugti and Kohlu areas

IRIN, 14 September 2006

"[there is] a growing number of victims of landmine blasts in the troubled province of Balochistan. The mines have been indiscriminately planted by rebel groups in many areas of the Dera Bugti and Kohlu districts, to the southeast of Quetta. The area is at the epicentre of a conflict between government forces and militias led by tribal chieftans, mainly over the province's lucrative natural resources.

[...]

According to a January 2006 statement by Pakistani Senator Sanaullah Baloch, at least 180 people have died in bombings, 122 children have been killed by paramilitary troops and hundreds of people have been arrested since the beginning of the campaign in early 2005. On 8 December 2005, the federal interior minister stated that some 4,000 people had been arrested in Balochistan since the beginning of 2005.

According to figures compiled by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), which has been monitoring human rights violations in Balochistan, there have been 121 landmine blast incidents in 2006 alone. At least 78 civilians and 28 security personnel have been killed, with well over 150 people injured.

"All these incidents have taken place in the Kohlu and Dera Bugti areas," explained Farid Ahmed, provincial coordinator for HRCP in Balochistan.

[...]

There is official concern at the growing casualties from landmines in the province. Razik Bugti, a spokesman for the Balochistan provincial government, has said that: "The landmines placed by 'miscreants' endangered the lives of ordinary people who did not support militancy."

Currently, security forces deployed in the Dera Bugti area are engaged in demining major roads. However, as the conflict continues, with troop movements reported by the national press in the Kohlu district, more mines continue to be laid by rebel groups opposing the military - each one of them presenting an additional threat to the people who live in these areas of Balochistan.

The toll of dead and injured from landmine explosions is just one example of the way in which the Balochistan conflict has affected hundreds of ordinary people. In 2006 alone, according to records maintained by HRCP, there have been 190 bomb blasts in the unstable province, killing more than 60 people.

An estimated 2,114 rockets were fired in the province between January and June 2006, killing 44 security personnel and 32 civilians."

SUBSISTENCE NEEDS

General

North West Frontier Province/Swat Valley: IDPs unable to access relief camp (April 2008)

- IDPs in the Swat Valley needed shelter, food and medicine
- A camp with food and tents was inaccessible for the IDPs due to threats from the militants

International Development and Relief Foundation, 2008:

“Shelter, food and medicine have been identified as important activities that need to be addressed in the area. SRSP is focussing on food supplies while other organizations are dealing with shelter and medicine.”

Integrated Regional Information Networks, November 2007:

“Efforts to establish a displaced persons camp in Pakistan’s Swat Valley are under threat from militants fighting the government, according to aid officials.

“At present, there is no shortage of food or tents, but without any security, people don’t want to come,” Mohammad Munir, district manager of Pakistan’s Red Crescent Society in Swat, told IRIN on 6 November from the town of Kanju, near the district capital Saidu Sharif.

On the evening of 2 November, one family arrived at the camp recently set up in the town of Barikot, 20km outside the capital, only to leave the following morning out of fear.

“The local Taliban do not want to see this camp running,” Munir said. But “there are people who are suffering and they [the Taliban] should understand our need to help them”, he added.

[...]

According to Munir, despite ongoing threats, district authorities and Red Crescent workers managed to erect 100 tents, as well as a dispensary and reception area at the camp, which could be expanded to accommodate 5,000 families if necessary.

“There is no shortage of tents – we have another 1,000 from the provincial relief authorities,” Munir said, adding that ample stocks of food and medicines were also available.

But without sufficient security arrangements, it looks unlikely that any of the displaced will come, he said, particularly as the militants had already threatened to burn the camp if work continued.”

Waziristan: need for shelter, food, medicine (March 2008)

- The displaced from South Waziristan were in need of food, medicine, shelter and quilts
- Relief camps were set up for them, but according to some reports the camps lacked adequate number of tents and had no food, medicines and quilts

Dawn, February 2008:

“Sources told Dawn that setting up of two refugee camps in Dera Ismail Khan was on the cards, where they would also be provided with food, medical facilities and other essentials of daily life.

The migrated tribesmen said the military operation and influence of militant groups in the troubled region had virtually paralysed life in the Mehsud tribe areas, including Spinkai Raghznai and Kotkai, and surrounding areas of the Frontier Region of Jandola.

They said the affected areas were presenting a deserted look after evacuation of local people.
[...]

Over 1,000 displaced families (about 10 thousand people) have come to Dera Ismail Khan alone.

Waseem Khan Mehsud, a political activist, said food, quilts, blankets and other utensils had been distributed among 2,000 registered tribal people at the temporary Mehsuds’ relief camp. DCO Khudadad Khan said the Crisis Management Cell had started supply of relief goods and about six trucks loaded with 10,000 tents and 20,000 plastic sheets had arrived in the district. Another consignment of food items for 30,000 people would arrive soon, he said.”

Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, March 2008:

“State authorities established a relief camp near Kot Azam but it failed to provide any visible relief to the displaced people. Meanwhile ministry of defense announced an aid package of Rs 20 million for rehabilitation of the affected people. But the camps, so erected, lack relief facilities.

The camp administrators had demanded 5,000 tents but they got only 250. Food, medicines and quilts were not available in the camps at all. It means no appropriate measures were taken for provision of the basic needs and protection from the cold winter. In addition, gangs of militants had an open access to the camps, which prevented the people from receiving aid. No photographers were allowed to go inside and take the photographs of the inmates. State authorities and Taliban militants equally wanted that the miseries and sufferings of the people remain covered.”

Balochistan: displaced reported to be living under extremely difficult conditions (June 2007)

- According to UN estimates, at the end of 2006 there were 84,000 IDPs in Balochistan
- Many have poured into neighboring towns and some have moved to urban centres to earn a living
- The IDPs are often living in deplorable conditions in makeshift camps with no access to water, food and medical facilities
- There had been reports of severe malnutrition crisis among the IDPs with children particularly affected
- No assistance is being permitted to reach the displaced in Balochistan

Newsline, June 2007:

“The situation in Balochistan is, indeed, bleak. Thousands remain displaced and are living in miserable conditions. Many have poured into neighbouring towns and those with better resources have made it to the urban centres. The low income peasants have fared the worst. Small groups

of displaced peasant families remain encamped over a vast and isolated area that is becoming increasingly insecure as the fighting spreads.

[...]

On the outskirts of towns like Dera Murad Jamali and Jhapat, some native landowners have allowed several families to stay on as labourers. But the locals are often hostile. Old tribal enmities and newer political alliances further complicate the situation. Fear of reprisal by security agencies also prevents locals from aiding refugees.”

Asian Indigenous and Tribal People Network, January 2007:

“According to United Nations estimates, there were 84,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Balochistan of which 26,000 were women and 33,000 were children as of December 2006. As per the statistics of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, about 50,000 people have fled their villages and settlements from Dera Bugti as of July 2006. The officials have not provided relief as it claimed that the people who have fled Dera Bugti were very well off. Due to total blockade of Marri and Bugti areas by the Pakistani army, about 8000 to 10,000 allegedly died due to exodus, malnourishment, lack of shelter and disease. They had been reportedly living in deplorable conditions in the makeshift camps with no access to potable water, food, and other basic necessities. No products, medicine and medical facility, doctor and electricity or even fuel to run water pumps were not provided to these areas. The government was reportedly offering 10 goats to those who have returned to their homes in order to make their ends meet.

Unfortunately the plight of the displaced has been overshadowed by the conflict in the region, which has been aggravated by the killing of Baloch chief Akbar Bugti. The government of Pakistan had failed to hear the cries for help of the displaced due to its occupation with the operation against the tribal militias. The government has deliberately created the humanitarian crisis by not even recognizing the presence of IDPs in the province. Although the government had sought the intervention of the United Nations to avert the humanitarian crisis on 21 December 2006, it was too late. Besides, the situation further aggravated as the government prevented journalists and aid groups to reach the affected areas. Even the assistance sought from the UN was alleged to be conditional as only three districts of Naseerabad, Jaffarabad and Quetta, which housed majority of the IDPs were given permission. The other districts Sibi and Bolan were not considered. Besides, the UN was asked to carry out its relief operation through health facilities in the districts and under the supervision of local authorities. The aid workers who had earlier visited the area alleged that military trucks rounded up displaced people and hid them ahead of their visits.

There had been reports of severe malnutritional crisis among the IDPs. The UN in its internal assessment report on nutritional status of women and children among the IDPs revealed that 28 per cent children under the age of five were ‘acutely undernourished’, out of them, six per cent were in the state of ‘severely acute malnutrition’ and 80 per cent of the deaths among the IDPs were children under the age of five. Six percent of the children were so underfed that they would die without immediate medical attention.”

Asian Human Rights Commission, July 2006:

"The displaced have to carry water from at least one to three kilometers away. No medical help is being provided to them. They are mostly children and women suffering from diarrhea, dehydration, malaria and high fevers. Some cases of deaths have been reported but not confirmed by any hospitals.

The local people in these areas where displaced persons are settled, are not allowed by the intelligence agencies of Pakistan Army to help refugees. Edhi center, a local charitable organisation, has been stopped by the Pakistan Military from providing medical assistance to the

affected people and from making medical camps in refugee settled areas. The main persons from Edhi center were summoned to Pakistan's capital, Islam Abad by the Military intelligence and were ordered to stop medical assistance to the victims. According to the daily Dawn the displaced are lying in the open skies in summer where temperature remains at 38 to 44 degrees centigrade. The conditions of the displaced are deteriorating day by day and urgent help is needed through from international organisations working for the rehabilitation of refugees and displaced persons."

The displaced were also reported to be living under extremely difficult conditions after the violence in April 2006:

Integrated Regional Information Networks, April 2006:

"With violence in parts of Pakistan's southern province of Balochistan showing no signs of abating, provincial opposition leaders have appealed to humanitarian organisations to help those displaced by the conflict.

"Since the violence has escalated, thousands of poor people have migrated from the scene of clashes between [Baloch] tribesmen and security forces in the district of Dera Bugti to neighbouring areas of Jafarabad and Naseerabad. They are living in the open in baking hot weather without food and other facilities," Kachkol Ali, leader of the opposition in the provincial assembly, said in the southern port city of Karachi.

Ali, who is also head of a regional fact-finding committee on the Baloch conflict, has asked leading national charity the Karachi-based Edhi Foundation for help to assist displaced people including children, women and the elderly.

In response the foundation has sent an assessment team into the areas of Jafarabad and Naseerabad.

"We've sent our survey team to assess the number of people affected by the conflict in terms of food, shelter, drinking water and health assistance," Faisal Edhi, a spokesman for the charity, told IRIN from Karachi. "Once the survey teams get back in a day or so, we'll be able to say something about the situation on the ground," Edhi added.

Balochistan is home to 8 million people and is the largest but least developed of Pakistan's four provinces. Endemic violence in the province has increased over the past year as tribal groups have protested against a government they say ignores their needs while extracting energy and minerals from the resource-rich province."

PATTERNS OF RETURN AND RESETTLEMENT

General

North West Frontier Province/Swat Valley: many displaced return soon after end to armed conflict (December 2007)

- By early December 2007 the Swat Valley was slowly returning to normalcy and large numbers of IDPs were coming back
- The returnees arrived to find hundreds of homes damaged or destroyed largely by the use of helicopter gunships during the conflict

Dawn, December 2007:

“Swat valley is slowly returning to normality with large numbers of displaced people coming back to areas now under the control of security forces. With the forces preparing for a major assault on the last strongholds of the militants in Matta tehsil, Maulana Fazlullah managed to air his address on the radio after a gap of six days on Saturday and announced: “My Shaheen commando force is fully prepared to face the forces.”

Scores of families have returned to secured areas, including Shakardara, Koza Banda, Bara Banda, Ningolai, Khwazakhela and Kot.

Public transport carrying people and their luggage could be seen throughout the day on roads. The displaced people had been taking shelter mostly with their relatives in Mingora and other towns. Some had shifted to other cities such as Mardan, Nowshera and Peshawar.”

Integrated Regional Information Networks, December 2007:

“Over the past two weeks fighting has died down, with many of the militants’ strongholds taken over, but residents of Swat Valley, home to around 1.5 million people, have paid a heavy price, residents and non-governmental organisations say. “According to what preliminary data we have, over 1,000 houses have been damaged or destroyed and there have been at least 400 civilian casualties,” Shaukat Saleem, core group coordinator of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), told IRIN from Swat. This belies an official death toll of 230 civilians and 90 military personnel killed.

Much of the destruction was caused by heavy use of helicopter gunships against villages believed by the Pakistan military to harbour militants. However, Sher Muhammad Khan, a Swat-based activist, described the bombing as “indiscriminate”, particularly in hilly areas where villages were bombed and houses destroyed. He said a curfew in the area made it difficult to assess the full scale of the damage.

[...]

Meanwhile, fighting and curfews have badly disrupted life, particularly education, with over 2,000 schools reportedly closing down for varying periods.

"The school term has been shattered for children here," said Amjad Abbas, a high-school teacher speaking from the city of Mingora. He said that "most likely" future holidays for affected schools would be cut short to make up for lost time.

Curfews continue and there are still outbursts of fighting between troops and fighters in a few villages. But overall, a process of recovery is now under way. There is also a lingering sense of trauma. "The children in particular have been deeply affected. They feel unsafe," said Abbas."

Waziristan: roads being opened clear way for return of displaced (April 2008)

- Roads were opened in Waziristan in April 2008, allowing thousands of IDPs to return
- Many returnees had set up a second home in a safer location
- The South Waziristan government initiated a ration card scheme to enable over 10,000 families to receive relief goods

Integrated Regional Information Networks, April 2008:

"With the opening of some roads into conflict-ravaged South Waziristan this month, thousands of people displaced by fighting in Pakistan's tribal areas, which lie along the country's western border with Afghanistan, have begun returning to their homes. Displacements from the North and South Waziristan agencies, over 150km south of Peshawar, began in 2004, as government forces began battling pro-Taliban militants in the area. Hundreds of homes have been destroyed, with scores of civilians among those reportedly killed. The Pakistan military has said several hundred personnel and many more militants have died, but the number of civilian casualties remains unknown.

"People in the area are very badly affected. Waziristan has always produced fruit and now that source of income has been wiped out for people. Education is also very badly affected," Kamran Arif, a Peshawar-based human rights activist, told IRIN. The precise number of people displaced from the North and South Waziristan agencies has not been determined. However, in October 2007, according to the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), some 80,000 fled the town of Mirali, the headquarters of North Waziristan. Many have since returned, while other families have opted to stay away. "Quite a few people, even if they have gone back to Waziristan have also set up a second home elsewhere - in Peshawar or towns near the tribal areas like Dera Ismail Khan, simply to make sure they have a safe place to live in," said Arif, who said a movement back into Waziristan had begun.

[...]

The opening up of a key road that leads into Wana, the principal town in South Waziristan Agency, from the small town of Jandola on the agency's western border, is intended as a goodwill gesture. A ration card scheme for over 10,000 internally displaced families has also been initiated as part of the same policy by the South Waziristan political administration. The cards will enable families, many of them members of the Mehsud tribe, to receive relief goods, including food items.

Many families have been living with relatives outside Waziristan after Mehsud-tribe dominated areas of the region were sealed by the military in January. People who fled fighting were denied permission to re-enter to retrieve household items.

[...]

The re-opening of closed roads, early in April, signals a relaxation in these measures. Other roads, however, remain closed. Some families from Waziristan and other conflict-areas have chosen to leave permanently. Even as people return, the fear of further fighting still looms, and new government policies on the issue of militancy are yet to be elaborated.”

Balochistan: conflicting information on number of returns (October 2007)

- There are conflicting reports on the number of IDPs who have been able to return
- According to government estimates 65,000 IDPs from a total of 90,000 have returned from Dera Bugti
- According to other sources, most of the population of Dera Bugti and Sui has not returned

International Crisis Group, October 2007:

“Since December 2005 when military operations began, at least 84,000 people have been displaced by the conflict in Dera Bugti and Kohlu districts alone. According to a UN internal assessment in July-August 2006 that was leaked to the press, the displaced persons, mostly women (26,000) and children (33,000), were living in makeshift camps without adequate shelter in Jafarabad, Naseerabad, Quetta, Sibi and Bolan districts. 28 per cent of five-year-old children were acutely malnourished, and more than 6 per cent were in a state of “severe acute malnourishment”, with their survival dependent on receiving immediate medical attention. Over 80 per cent of deaths among those surveyed were among children under five.

The government initially dismissed the UN assessment as exaggerated, claiming that almost all the internally displaced (IDPs) had gone home. However, it denied aid agencies and media access to the areas to which they had supposedly returned. In December 2006, in the first official acknowledgement of the gravity of the humanitarian crisis, the government gave UN agencies permission to conduct relief efforts, albeit with preconditions, including that aid would have to be disbursed under the supervision of local authorities. UN officials were also reportedly told not to speak to the media. Soon after, the government reportedly backtracked and blocked access to the UN and other aid agencies. Local non-governmental organisations’ (NGOs) efforts, including that of the Edhi Foundation, were also halted.

In May 2007, addressing a public meeting in Sui subdistrict of Dera Bugti, President Musharraf claimed that 65,000 of a total of 90,000 IDPs from Dera Bugti had returned home. A regional human rights organisation, however, believes some 200,000 persons are still displaced. Local estimates are even higher. Abdul Wahab Baloch, head of the Baloch Rights Council, an NGO, insists that more than 200,000 have been displaced from Kohlu district alone, and government neglect has resulted in many deaths.”

Newsline, June 2007:

“Almost two years on since the insurgency began, and several months after the government announced that peace had returned to the area, most of the population of Dera Bugti and Sui has not returned. “Why should I go back and live under the rule of those traitors who bombed our women and children,” says Murad Baksh Bugti. “I know I have nothing and can’t fight for my rights, but I would rather my children die of starvation here than go back there in shame.” This

sentiment echoes throughout the community of IDPs, who mostly comprise members of the Marri and Bugti tribes. Here, the government and its security agencies are viewed as the enemy who drove them from their homes and killed the man they called their leader, Nawab Akbar Bugti. "We will only go back when someone from our leader's family is reinstated as the rightful sardar," is the almost unanimous consensus here."

HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

Humanitarian access to conflict affected areas

Humanitarian access limited by government and due to insecurity (April 2008)

- Threats from the Taleban prevented displaced from accessing aid in the Swat Valley
- Owing to the unstable security situation in Waziristan, international agencies such as the ICRC could not access areas affected by armed conflict
- The government has prevented local and international efforts to assist displaced persons in Balochistan

Buneri, November 2007:

"Some times back the provincial government established a tented village in Barikot for the displaced people but due to the security reasons no one opted for it. " First the camp established for displaced people is far away from the affected area—about 40 kilometer, second we fear lest Taliban attack it as the government has not provided any security it", Sher Ali, head of displaced family explained why the people were not going to live in the camp."

International Committee of the Red Cross, April 2008:

"The agreement signed in late 2006 between the Pakistani government and militants in North Waziristan kept large-scale armed violence at bay for the first half of 2007. However, in July 2007 the truce broke down and there were suicide bombings targeting military convoys and checkpoints. The violence spilled over to other parts of the Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) and several districts of the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP). Peshawar and the surrounding area were struck by a sequence of bomb attacks.

Owing to the unstable security situation, ICRC staff are not able to travel to areas most directly affected by the armed violence. The ICRC does help some weapon-wounded able to reach more accessible areas. It continues to carry out assessments wherever possible and will pursue its support for medical facilities serving those affected by the fighting."

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, April 2008:

"IDPs in Balochistan largely remained invisible because of the continuing military operation and restrictions on media access to them. There were reports in June of the displaced inhabitants of Balochistan's Kohlu and Dera Bugti districts still waiting to return home. These IDPs were largely dependant upon locals' generosity and were often harassed by security agencies on suspicion of siding with insurgents. Fear of reprisal by security agencies also prevented locals from helping the displaced. There were reports of enforced disappearances at the hands of government agencies in these areas including instances of government agencies taking away family members of suspected militants to compel them to surrender.

Other reports revealed an apparently systematic blocking of aid agencies' access to the displaced. A media report recounted how permission given to the UN on December 21, 2006 following foreign pressure to provide aid to IDPs in Balochistan, was abruptly withdrawn a few days later after an aid agency official said that an earlier permission could have saved hundreds of children's lives. According to the same report, the same week Edhi Foundation was explicitly asked not to deliver any more aid to affected Balochis as the situation was highly "sensitive".

Balochistan: humanitarian access to conflict affected populations denied (July 2006)

- There are several reports of authorities hindering access to the conflict affected populations
- Journalists have also been barred from entering to report from the camps

AHRC, 21 December 2006, p.21:

Since the latest killings, Balochistan has been cut off from the world. In response to the violent reaction of thousands of alienated and frustrated youths, more than 1000 people were reported to have been arrested in the last few days of August 2006, with about a dozen persons having been killed. Four cities - including Quetta, the provincial capital - have been placed under indefinite curfew after the killing of the Baloch leader. The provincial government has all but ceased operations. Law enforcement is in the hands of the military. Soldiers are also reported to have been stationed at hospitals. The federal government has suspended train services to the province. The highways were initially closed by the government, and have now been blockaded by angered local people. Balochistan is in serious danger. Curfews, check points and blockades are all obstacles to the movement of much-needed foods and medicines. The consequent suffering to the entire population is only further exacerbating anti-government sentiments. And under the cover of darkness and with transport links cut, the security forces are free to do as they please without fear of immediate consequences.

AHRC, 21 July 2006:

"The local people in these areas where displaced persons are settled, are not allowed by the intelligence agencies of Pakistan Army to help refugees. Edhi center, a local charitable organisation, has been stopped by the Pakistan Military from providing medical assistance to the affected people and from making medical camps in refugee settled areas. The main persons from Edhi center were summoned to Pakistan's capital, Islam Abad by the Military intelligence and were ordered to stop medical assistance to the victims. According to the daily Dawn the displaced are lying in the open skies in summer where temperature remains at 38 to 44 degrees centigrade. The conditions of the displaced are deteriorating day by day and urgent help is needed through from international organisations working for the rehabilitation of refugees and displaced persons."

Dawn, 13 July 2006:

"The vice-president of the Jamhuri Watan Party, Rafiq Ahmed Khoso, says that not only were sophisticated weapons used against largely unprotected civilian settlements but relief workers were also turned away. "I visited many camps of DPs in Nasirabad, Jafarabad, Kashmore and other neighbouring towns. And I was told that Edhi relief volunteers were asked either to leave or operate among DPs without government security."

However, a spokesman for the Edhi Foundation says that a four-member team visited camps of DPs in Jafarabad, Nasirabad and Dera Murad Jamali about two months back and returned only when Dera Bugti's top bureaucracy chief, Abdul Samad Lasi, told them that they would be called when needed. "Mr Lasi assured us that the government would do all it could to help the DPs," says the spokesman."

Waziristan: no humanitarian access to the civilian population after army operations (September 2004)

IRIN, 8 September 2004:

"Residents of Pakistan's northwestern conflict-hit tribal belt of Wana have complained that no relief or human rights agency have acted to stem the deteriorating humanitarian situation following a military operation in the area designed to root out militants and those supporting them.

"Humanitarian organisations should have dispatched their teams and representatives to assess the loss of civilian lives, the demolition of houses, the disruption of livelihoods and the destruction of agriculture in the area," Wali Muhammad, a resident of the conflict-hit area of Shakai, told IRIN in the second largest city of North Western Frontier Province (NWFP), Dera Ismail Khan (DIK).

"We regret that no organisation has visited the area so far. They [military] bombarded our houses. Innocent children and women lost their lives but no one bothers," Muhammad said, adding, "We will show them the orchards and fields destroyed by the bombardment by the military. Only then can one have a balanced view. Otherwise there is no option except to believe the official statements."

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES

National

Ad-hoc provincial response in North West Frontier Province and Waziristan (March 2008)

- Provincial governments have carried out efforts to assist IDPs in Swat Valley and Waziristan which have had varying levels of success
- The protection of IDPs has sometimes not been possible, with camps set up by provincial governments under militant threats, or militants having open access to the camps

The government of Pakistan does not seem to have any systematic response to conflict-related IDPs; whatever response there has been so far seems to be from initiatives by provincial governments.

Integrated Regional Information Networks, November 2007:

“Efforts to establish a displaced persons camp in Pakistan’s Swat Valley are under threat from militants fighting the government, according to aid officials.

“At present, there is no shortage of food or tents, but without any security, people don’t want to come,” Mohammad Munir, district manager of Pakistan’s Red Crescent Society in Swat, told IRIN on 6 November from the town of Kanju, near the district capital Saidu Sharif.

On the evening of 2 November, one family arrived at the camp recently set up in the town of Barikot, 20km outside the capital, only to leave the following morning out of fear.”

Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, March 2008:

“State authorities established a relief camp near Kot Azam but it failed to provide any visible relief to the displaced people. Meanwhile ministry of defense announced an aid package of Rs 20 million for rehabilitation of the affected people. But the camps, so erected, lack relief facilities.

The camp administrators had demanded 5,000 tents but they got only 250. Food, medicines and quilts were not available in the camps at all. It means no appropriate measures were taken for provision of the basic needs and protection from the cold winter. In addition, gangs of militants had an open access to the camps, which prevented the people from receiving aid. No photographers were allowed to go inside and take the photographs of the inmates. State authorities and Taliban militants equally wanted that the miseries and sufferings of the people remain covered.”

International

International and national agencies denied access to displaced in Balochistan and Waziristan (March 2008)

- International humanitarian organizations such as the ICRC assisted IDPs in the North West Frontier Province's Swat Valley, often in partnership with local groups
- The conflict areas of Waziristan are off limits to international aid agencies
- The government has prevented international agencies from assisting the IDPs in Balochistan despite the agencies having plans in place to assist the displaced

International Committee of the Red Cross, January 2008:

"In the NWFP, while running the already ongoing medical projects in Miranshah, Bannu, Tank and Peshawar for those injured by weapons, ICRC has advanced its endeavours. The Internally Displaced Persons in Swat were assisted by distributing blankets and soap to three hundreds families who had left their homes due to the crisis and shifted to safer places in Udigran, Tandodag and Qambar villages. The x-ray material and medical kits meant to treat and support hundred weapon-wounded patients injured during the clashes were also distributed in Sadda, Parachinar and Saidu Sharif hospitals, and requests for further assistance are followed."

International Development and Relief Foundation, November 2007:

"This project is providing food for 500 families displaced in Swat and Shangla districts. Supplies in packages are provided to the poorest and most vulnerable families living in temporary shelters. The assistance will be provided through the Relief and Reconstruction Teams of Sarhad Rural Support Programme (SRSP), who have been coordinating its efforts with government in Swat and Shangla. Shelter, food and medicine have been identified as important activities that need to be addressed in the area. SRSP is focusing on food supplies while other organizations are dealing with shelter and medicine. These supplies in packages will be provided to the poorest and most vulnerable families living in these temporary shelters. An effort would be made to ensure that poor, women headed families and children are given particular attention."

McClatchy Newspapers, March 2008:

"The region [Waziristan] is closed to foreign journalists and international aid organizations, and local journalists operate under self-imposed restrictions to protect themselves."

International Crisis Group, October 2007:

"Since December 2005 when military operations began, at least 84,000 people have been displaced by the conflict in Dera Bugti and Kohlu districts alone. According to a UN internal assessment in July-August 2006 that was leaked to the press, the displaced persons, mostly women (26,000) and children (33,000), were living in makeshift camps without adequate shelter in Jafarabad, Naseerabad, Quetta, Sibi and Bolan districts. 28 per cent of five-year-old children were acutely malnourished, and more than 6 per cent were in a state of "severe acute malnourishment", with their survival dependent on receiving immediate medical attention. Over 80 per cent of deaths among those surveyed were among children under five. The government initially dismissed the UN assessment as exaggerated, claiming that almost all the internally displaced (IDPs) had gone home. However, it denied aid agencies and media access to the areas to which they had supposedly returned. In December 2006, in the first official acknowledgement of the gravity of the humanitarian crisis, the government gave UN agencies permission to conduct relief efforts, albeit with preconditions, including that aid would have to be disbursed under the supervision of local authorities. UN officials were also reportedly told not to speak to the media. Soon after, the government reportedly backtracked and blocked access to the UN and other aid

agencies. Local non-governmental organisations' (NGOs) efforts, including that of the Edhi Foundation, were also halted."

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