1.2.8. Capital and corporal punishments

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After their takeover, the Taliban reopened courts across Afghanistan but replaced former staff with male Taliban judges educated in *madrassas*.405 The interpretation of *sharia* has largely been left to individual judges,406 who enjoy almost complete authority in court proceedings.407 This has caused great variations in verdicts.408 Amnesty International described how court proceedings and sentences, including corporal punishments, are impacted by widespread impunity, unaccountability and personal biases.409

On 14 November 2022, the Taliban Supreme Leader ordered all de facto judges to fully implement *sharia*,410 and issue so-called *hudud* and *qisas*411 punishments where applicable. 412 Such punishments include execution, stoning, flogging and amputation.413 Since then, de facto courts have been handing down capital punishment414 and floggings.415 In some cases large groups have been lashed all at once,416 and floggings417 and executions have been carried out in public – including at sport stadiums.418

At the time of writing, the UN had recorded ten public executions in total since the Taliban takeover in 2021. All the executed were individuals convicted of murder,419 and enforcement had been recorded in the provinces of Badghis, Farah, Ghazni, Jawzjan, Laghman, Nimroz, and Paktya.420 On 11 April 2025, four men convicted of murder were publicly executed in front of hundreds of spectators,421 at sport stadiums of Badghis, Nimroz and Farah.422 They were shot to death by family members of the murder victims.423

In the first six months of 2025, both UNAMA and Rawadari recorded hundreds of cases of judicially sanctioned floggings.424 According to UNAMA corporal punishments were carried out in public on a weekly basis,425 while Rawadari, on the contrary, reported that most floggings were not publicly displayed, as they were often used as supplementary punishments to imprisonment. However, Rawadari noted that ‘moral crimes’ were punished in public, with de facto MPVPV officials and *imams* advertising these events to attract crowds.426

Data collected by Rawadari suggested a significant increase in floggings, with 326 people flogged in the first six months of 2025, including 64 women. This represented more than a two-fold increase compared to the same period in 2024, and more than a four-fold increase since 2023.427 UNAMA recorded corporal punishment against 656 individuals in the period 1 January–30 September 2025 (518 men, 131 women, 5 girls and 2 boys).428

Floggings have been used as punishment for moral crimes such as ‘running away from home’ for women, same-sex sexual relations between men, and extramarital relations,429 and reportedly

also for theft, drinking alcohol and drug trafficking.430 People have been lashed up to 39 times, 431 but on 27 November 2024 a man was reportedly flogged 80 times for falsely accusing another man of adultery.432 In March 2024, the Taliban Supreme Leader announced that the stoning sentence would be enforced for adultery.433 Rawadari has recorded cases of women being sentenced to stoning,434 including a woman in Daykundi accused of having an 'illegitimate' child. As of August 2025, the sentence had not been enforced awaiting approval from higher de facto courts.435 Rahimi noted that almost no *hudud* sentences were being enforced, including stoning and hand amputation, as they were pending approval from the Taliban Supreme Leader.436

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