

3.1.1. Pakistan Army

The Pakistan Army has been described as being arguably the country's most powerful institution.176 Sources from 2025 and early 2026 estimated that the Pakistan Armed Forces in their entirety had between 650 000177 and 660 000 active-duty personnel, with an overall personnel strength of around 1 710 000.178 Within the armed forces, active duty members of the Pakistan Army accounted for 550 000 as of December 2025. Pakistan's military forces are tasked with external defence but also have a role in internal security.179 Troops serve on a voluntary basis. Each of the main services of Pakistan's armed forces (army, navy, air force) is commanded by a chief of staff.180

The 27th amendment to the Constitution, signed into law in November 2025,181 rewrote Article 243 of the Constitution to create the new supreme military position of Chief of Defence Forces (CDF), a post designed to be held automatically by the sitting chief of the Pakistani Army, currently Asim Munir.182 This grants the army chief (Munir) primacy183/direct operational command184 over the chiefs of the air force and navy,185 thus effectively placing these two services under the CDF's authority.186 At the same time, the new amendment abolished the position of Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC), which, albeit ceremonial, had embodied a degree of equilibrium between the three armed services.187 The amendment further provides for professional safeguards for Munir, requiring a two-thirds majority in parliament to remove a CDF. Moreover, it grants lifelong immunity from prosecution to five-star military officers, a rank presently only held by Munir.188 The amendment also created the new military position of Commander of the National Strategic Command (CNSC), whose holder is responsible for overseeing the country's nuclear command189 and reports through the army's chain of command.190

The Army General Headquarters (GHQ) is located in Chaklala in the city of Rawalpindi.191 As reported in mid-2025, the army's command system encompassed nine corps-level commands, each covering a specific geographic zone and operational domain.192 Paramilitary groups affiliated with the Pakistan Army include the Khyber Rifles193 and the National Guard. Pakistan's military arsenal consists of foreign and some domestically produced equipment.194 During the reference period, the military forces significantly stepped up their use of targeted drone strikes against militants.195 In Balochistan, there were a number of reported instances of the army subjecting civilians to extrajudicial killing,196 arbitrarily detention/enforced disappearance,197 and torture.198

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