

3.2. Main non-state armed groups

3.2.1. Tehreek-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP)

Tehreek-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has been described as a ‘coalition’,295 ‘network’296 or ‘umbrella’ organisation of various armed militant groups297 operating in areas of KP near the border with Afghanistan.298 It was formed in December 2007 by a *shura* (council) of 40 high-ranking Taliban commanders as a reaction to Pakistani military operations that targeted al-Qaeda-affiliated insurgents in the former FATA. Drawing heavily from the tenets of the Deobandi school of Islamic thought,299 TTP seeks to overthrow the Pakistani government300 and to create a state based on Islamic rule.301 Since 2018, the group has been headed by Noor Wali Mehsud.302 Under his leadership, and especially since the August 2021 Taliban takeover in Afghanistan, the group has undergone a resurgence303 and is currently deemed the most lethal insurgent group in Pakistan. Since 2018, the group has reportedly incorporated over 70 militant factions into its coalition,304 including Taliban factions that had temporarily withdrawn from the TTP umbrella (e.g., Jamat-ul Ahrar (JuA), Pakistani al-Qaeda affiliates (e.g., the Aslam Farooqi group),305 and even militant factions from both Pashtun- and Baloch-majority areas of Balochistan.306 According to a mid-2025 UN estimate, TTP had around 6 000 fighters.307 The group’s recruitment efforts mainly focus on North Waziristan, Dera Ismail Khan, and Peshawar districts.308

TTP maintains its centralised command structure309 but was also reported to provide room for decentralised operations led by smaller, flexible units.310 The group has sought to establish structured quasi-governance systems.311 It has declared to have set up shadow administrations in the former tribal districts and southern KP,312 as well as in North and South Punjab313 and Balochistan.314 In late 2025, TTP presented an organisational blueprint for 2026 that divides the country into northern, southern central, and western zones, each further subdivided into multiple so-called ‘waliyats’ (administrative units). As of late 2025, the group’s military commands and intelligence/counterintelligence cells existed to varying degrees across the northwest and certain areas of Balochistan.315 At the same time, 2025 saw recurring signs of internal disagreement within the TTP ranks, especially between its leadership and JuA loyalists.316 The TTP has gained greater operational manoeuvrability in Pakistan317 and continued to attack security forces318 and infrastructure to undermine the state’s authority.319 As the group reinforced its organisational structure, it shifted towards more strategic and coordinated high-profile operations320 and away from indiscriminate attacks on civilians.321 However, the group continued to strike civilians with perceived links to the state in targeted attacks.322 A new ‘general code of conduct’ introduced in 2025 broadened TTP’s declared set of legitimate targets from a narrower focus on security forces to include other state-related targets323 such as

‘military-owned businesses’324 and individuals working in the legal and judicial domains.325 The group sustained a high pace of operations throughout 2025, 326 with some attacks resulting in large numbers of casualties. The lethality of attacks was enhanced by TTP’s continued access to sophisticated weaponry327 such as sniper rifles, night-vision goggles, and drones.328

In 2025, KP’s former tribal districts and their adjoining border districts remained the TTP’s core operational theatre.329 In these areas, the group has set up roadblocks and checkpoints, and its fighters were reported to roam freely and live among the population while not maintaining sizeable bases.330 Beyond these core areas, the group has also expanded its activities to the province’s northwest and south, particularly Bannu, Lakki Marwat and Dera Ismail Khan,331 and has maintained persistent operational intensity in these areas.332 Some of TTP’s operations in 2025 also extended to areas like South Punjab and Pishin333 in Balochistan.334 Although TTP has yet to establish a strong operational presence in regions outside KP,335 it has reinforced its footprint in these areas through alliances with influential local militant factions (notably in northern and southern Punjab336 and Karachi).337

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Map 2: TTP activities in Pakistan between 1 November 2024 and 21 April 2026338

Please note: The depictions on Map 2 do not imply any opinion whatsoever on the part of EUAA concerning legal status or effective control over any country, territory, city, or area. Every effort is made to ensure this map is free of errors, but there is no guarantee that the map or its features are either spatially or temporally accurate or fit for a particular use. This map is provided without any warranty of any kind whatsoever, either expressed or implied.

Beyond developments on the ground, TTP now employs propaganda as a principal tool for extending its influence,339 showing enhanced capabilities in using social media as a means of recruiting new members.340 Its recent messaging, amplified by its multilingual AI-supported Umar Media channel, blends traditional Islamist ideology with Pashtun nationalist rhetoric.341

The group continued to benefit from significant operational and logistical support from Afghanistan’s Taliban *de facto* authorities. Some member states of the UN Security Council reported of sustained tactical-level relations between TTP and Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP). According to one member state, TTP operatives also provided training to insurgents in Balochistan,342 although there was disagreement between members states as to the degree of cooperation between TTP and the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA).343 For further information see section 3.2.1. Haqqani Network of the EUAA COI report Pakistan - Country Focus (December 2024).

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