4.1.2. Border security

In 2024, PIPS reported an increase in violent incidents along the Pakistani border, with 28 recorded incidents (including attacks and clashes) compared to 12 in 2023. The incidents occurred along the Durand Line572 with Afghanistan (25), India (1) and Iran (2).573 In 2025, PIPS documented 49 incidents, including clashes and armed attacks, along borders with Afghanistan (31) and India (18), resulting in 63 Pakistani civilian and 47 Pakistani security personnel deaths, as well as 282 injuries.574

Incidents along the Durand Line (Afghanistan)

ACLED reported a rise in border clashes between Pakistan and Afghanistan in 2024 and again in 2025, from 39 to 81 clashes.575 2024 saw cross-border clashes involving militants and Pakistani forces. No meaningful advancements toward improving bilateral ties were reported that year. 576 Early 2025 saw intensified tensions and clashes, particularly in the Kurram district, prompting Pakistan to strengthen its border (Durand Line) fortifications.577 The border situation remained volatile throughout 2025.578. A total of 31 violent border incidents resulted in one civilian and 33 security forces deaths, alongside 64 injuries, with 21 incidents reported in KP and 10 in Balochistan province.579

In December 2024, hostilities escalated between Pakistan and Afghanistan as Pakistan conducted airstrikes on alleged TTP hideouts in Afghanistan,580 which continued into 2025.581 Subsequently, in February 2025, Pakistan closed the Torkham border crossing due to a dispute over an Afghan border post, disrupting trade and travel,582 and leading to the displacement of thousands. The crossing was reopened following a ceasefire mediated by a tribal *jirga* (Pashtun local assembly).583 Though there were hints of modest rapprochement in mid-2025, October saw the crisis peak, marked by severe military escalation, including Pakistani airstrikes and cross-border clashes.584 Defence Security Asia reports that a notable escalation occurred on 9 October 2025, when Pakistan conducted airstrikes in Kabul.585 Cross-border firing was reported in various frontier sectors586 and clashes persisted until mid-October,587 mainly in KP districts with a Pashtun majority (including former FATA), and Balochistan.588 As of early January 2026, border crossings were closed to civilians and commercial traffic,589 allowing only for return movements of Afghan nationals and UN humanitarian assistance.590

In late February 2026, tensions between the two countries escalated again.591 Pakistan carried out large-scale air and ground strikes across several Afghan locations,592 including the above-mentioned airstrike in March on a drug rehabilitation facility in Kabul.593 In response, Taliban *de facto* authorities launched an operation against the Pakistani army along the Durand Line,594 resulting in civilian casualties and displacement, as well as school closures on both sides,

including at least 289 civilian casualties and the displacement of more than 115 000 individuals in Afghanistan.595 After a conditional pause around mid-March, Pakistan resumed military operations.596 ACLED categorised this conflict escalation round as the ‘most intense’ since August 2021, surpassing October 2025 levels.597 As of late-March 2026, exchange of fire continued on both sides.598 Sources reported the reopening of KP’s Torkham border crossing in late March after it had been closed in February.599 Some noted that this step was initially taken to facilitate the forced return of Afghan nationals.600

Incidents along the Line of Control (India)

February 2025 saw ongoing tensions along the Line of Control (LoC).601 The Pahalgam terrorist attack in April 2025602 in Indian-administered Kashmir, which India partially blamed on Pakistan,603 escalated tensions in May 2025,604 resulting in exchanges of fire across the LoC. 605 The International Crisis Group described the conflict as ‘the most serious confrontation’ between the two countries in decades, noting the deployment of weaponised drones for the first time ever across the LoC.606 Out of 18 incidents recorded by PIPS in 2025 along the LoC, 11 occurred in May, resulting in 218 injuries and 76 fatalities,607 including civilians. A ceasefire agreed upon mid-May608 was holding as of early 2026.609 For more information on the violent events that followed the terrorist attack in Pahalgam, see section 4.2.6. Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Gilgit-Baltistan.

Pakistan–Iran border

In 2024, militant attacks were concentrated near Pakistan's western border, including with Iran, amidst a complex bilateral relationship (see section 2.2.3. Relations with Iran for information on Pakistan’s role and position considering the US-Israeli attack on Iran in 2026) shaped by mutual concerns over cross-border militant activities and border security.610 In January 2024, tensions increased with Iranian missile strikes on Pakistani territory targeting the Baloch militant group Jaish Al-Adl (Army of Justice) claiming to fight for more rights for the ethnic Baloch minority living in Iran and responsible for a series of attacks in the Iranian Sistan and Balochistan province. In retaliatory strikes, Pakistan’s two days later targeted the BLA and the BLF.611 A few days after the strikes, which had initially led to a mutual withdrawal of ambassadors, both countries declared that they would restore diplomatic ties.612 Late in 2024, coordinated border operations in Iran's Sistan-Balochistan province suggested a collaborative approach to security, 613 which intensified in 2025 with strategic alignments, including joint border patrols and intelligence sharing.614 Following the outbreak of the Israel-Iran war in June 2025, Pakistan closed its border with Iran until further notice.615 Amid large-scale protests in Iran in December 2025, security measures along border districts increased, reflecting fears of a potential spillover. 616 The outbreak of the Iran-US-Israel war in late February 2026 reportedly prompted thousands of Pakistani nationals and foreigners to cross into Pakistan from Iran via Balochistan border crossings.617

No further information could be found on border security and violent incidents along the Pakistan-Iran border during the reference period. For details on the security situation in Balochistan province, see section 4.2.1. Balochistan and for the relationship between Pakistan and Iran, see section 2.2.3. Relations with Iran.

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