



2.6.2. Bari

Bari is divided into six districts, Qardho, Bandarbeyla, Iskushuban, Calula, Qandala, and Bossaso. The capital city of Bossaso (also Boosaaso, Bosaso) is situated on the Gulf of Aden coast.[638](#) As of January 2026, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) estimated Bari's population at 1 281 189.[639](#) For more detailed background information on Bari, see section 2.6.2. of the EUAA COI Report Somalia: Security Situation (May 2025).

○ (a) Actors presence and conflict dynamics

[Map 3](#) Somalia – Approximate Territorial Control as of 31 March 2026 and [Map 2](#) Somalia – Approximate Territorial Control as of 31 March 2025, indicated Al-Shabaab's presence in the Al Madow mountains to the west of Bossaso, and the presence of Al-Shabaab or the Islamic State in Somalia (ISS) in the Al Miskaad mountains to the east of the city. [Map 3](#) of 31 March 2026 indicated approximate ISS 'presence' in central and northeastern Bari in contrast to [Map 2](#) of 31 March 2025 which had only shown possible ISS 'influence'. Both maps indicated the presence of 'autonomous armed forces (unionist)' across Bari region, including Bossaso and other urban centres, except for Habley, which remained under mixed, unclear and/or local control involving autonomous armed forces and ISS. [Map 3](#) of 31 March 2026 also showed Hul Anod, Hiriro, Hamure and Guryasamo towns under mixed, unclear and/or local control.[640](#)

Puntland forces continued security operations against ISS during the reference period, [641](#) supported by US airstrikes,[642](#) the United Arab Emirates and regional countries. [643](#) In the context of the ongoing security operation 'Hilac', Puntland forces declared to have cleared 98 % of the Al Miskaad mountain range from ISS as of June 2025, although authorities confirmed that the group's leader had managed to escape.[644](#)

Following the capture of Togga Miraale, ISS's largest base in the region, in May 2025, [645](#) security operations continued in the Balaade valley.[646](#) Nevertheless, the group maintained a presence in the mountainous region,[647](#) and Puntland forces continued to be targeted by landmine attacks attributed to ISS,[648](#) as one of the group's main tactics, according to a senior commander quoted by Hiiraan Online.[649](#) As of October 2025, the group had reportedly re-emerged in areas previously cleared during security

operations.[650](#) By the end of the reference period, ISS had re-established its presence and intensified its attacks, targeting the local population,[651](#) and security forces.[652](#) Critics reportedly accused authorities of having reduced security operations allowing for the group's resurgence,[653](#) while officials pointed to locals providing support to ISS.[654](#) Media sources also mentioned challenges to security operations including limitations in terms of medicine, fuel, and logistics,[655](#) political disagreements between Puntland's leadership and the FGS,[656](#) delayed payment of (former) soldiers,[657](#) lack of external support, fatigue and declining morale among Puntland's security forces, and a lack of personnel as militia fighters from Mudug and Sanaag returned to their home areas.[658](#)

○ (b) Recent security trends

In the period from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, ACLED recorded 719 security incidents in Bari region, including battles, explosions or other forms of remote violence, and violence against civilians, causing 1 034 fatalities.[659](#)

Figure 33: Evolution of security events and fatalities in Bari per month, based on ACLED data.

Figure 33: Evolution of security events and fatalities in Bari per month, based on ACLED data.[660](#)

Figure 34: Evolution of security events in Bari per type, based on ACLED data.

Figure 34: Evolution of security events in Bari per type, based on ACLED data.[661](#)

In the period from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, the following actors (coded as either 'Actor 1' or 'Actor 2') were, among others, involved in security incidents: the Islamic State in Somalia (ISS) was involved in 556 security incidents against Military and Police forces of Somalia (including Puntland Dervish Force, Puntland Police Force and Puntland Maritime Police Force), and in 88 security incidents against US and UAE military forces, involving air/drone strikes by the latter targeting the ISS. 29 security incidents involved violence against civilians by the ISS, unidentified groups, and others.[662](#)

Illustrative security incidents

- One man was reportedly abducted by ISS in Qandala district in July 2025. According to local sources, there had already been previous incidents of ISS kidnapping and robbing pastoralists and attacking rural residents.[663](#)

- FTL Somalia reported clashes between two clan militias over control of a water well near Bossaso in August 2025, noting that water scarcity had frequently triggered (violent) confrontations between communities.[664](#)
- A senior commander of the Puntland forces and several soldiers travelling with him were killed in a landmine explosion in the Dhasaan area in September 2025.
[665](#)

- **Conflict-related displacement**

According to the UNHC PRMN, 24 660 individuals were newly displaced from Bari region due to conflict or insecurity in the period from April 2025 to February 2026. Almost all of the displaced individuals (24 642) remained within Bari region, with the largest share being displaced from Qandala (17 299), predominantly to Bossaso district (14 524 of 17 299). In the same period, 1 597 individuals arrived from other regions to Bari.[666](#)

Bari was among the regions hosting the highest number of people displaced due to the conflict between Puntland Defence Forces and ISS, according to the ICRC.[667](#)

Other impacts on civilian life and humanitarian situation

A December 2025 map by UNOCHA showed ‘very limited restrictions’ regarding humanitarian access in Qardho, Bandarbeyla, and most of Iskushuban and Calula districts, with the remaining parts showing ‘moderate’ and ‘limited’ restrictions. Restrictions were ‘moderate’ in Qandala and ‘very limited’ or ‘limited’ in Bossaso district, except for the Al Miskaad mountain range stretching across both districts, where the map showed ‘heavy’ and ‘very heavy’ restrictions.[668](#) In total, UNOCHA recorded two humanitarian access incidents in Bari region in 2025.[669](#) Regarding the food insecurity situation as of January 2026, IPC reported that about 75 % of the total analysed population of 1 281 189 were either in Acute Food Insecurity IPC Phase 2 (stressed, 41 %), 3 (crisis, 25 %) or 4 (emergency, 9 %).[670](#) NRC recorded the eviction of 816 individuals in 2025 and early 2026 (all recorded in 2025).[671](#) In Qardho, one of the largest displacement hubs in Puntland, health and education services were available but insufficient, especially following conflict-related displacement, according to a January 2026 report by the Roots Development Initiative (RDI), a Somalia-based consultancy firm.[672](#) In May 2025, Radio Ergo reported of the closure of 36 schools across Bari region due to drought and conflict.[673](#)

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