

Afghanistan: Behandlung von Personen durch die Taliban, die verdächtigt werden, mit dem bewaffneten Widerstand in Verbindung zu stehen

Auskunft der SFH-Länderanalyse

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Dieser Bericht basiert auf Auskünften von Expertinnen und Experten und auf eigenen Recherchen. Entsprechend den COI-Standards verwendet die SFH öffentlich zugängliche Quellen. Lassen sich im zeitlich begrenzten Rahmen der Recherche keine Informationen finden, werden Expertinnen und Experten beigezogen. Die SFH dokumentiert ihre Quellen transparent und nachvollziehbar. Aus Gründen des Quellenschutzes können Kontaktpersonen anonymisiert werden.

1 Einleitung

Die nachstehenden Fragen sind einer Anfrage an die SFH-Länderanalyse entnommen:

1. Welchem Risiko sind Personen ausgesetzt, die nach Ansicht der Taliban am bewaffneten Widerstand teilnehmen, ihn unterstützen oder sich ihm möglicherweise anschliessen könnten? Werden auch ihre Familienangehörigen von den Taliban beschuldigt?
2. Besteht für die Kommandeure der *Nationalen Widerstandsfront* (NRF) seit der Machtübernahme der Taliban im August 2021 ein erhöhtes Risiko, von den Taliban verfolgt zu werden oder Repressalien ausgesetzt zu sein? Wie steht es um die Familienangehörigen dieser Kommandanten?
3. Werden Zivilist*innen, die in den Widerstands- und Kampfgebieten leben, insbesondere im Pandschirtal und in der Provinz Baghlan, als Ziel der Taliban gesehen und sind sie Repressalien aufgrund einer Verbindung zum bewaffneten Widerstand ausgesetzt?

Die Schweizerische Flüchtlingshilfe (SFH) beobachtet die Entwicklungen in Afghanistan seit mehreren Jahren.¹ Aufgrund von Auskünften von Expertinnen und Experten und eigenen Recherchen nimmt die SFH zu den Fragen wie folgt Stellung:

2 Vorgehen der Taliban gegen Angehörige der früheren Sicherheitskräfte

Die Taliban nehmen systematisch alle Personen ins Visier, von denen sie glauben, dass sie sich ihnen militärisch widersetzen. Die mit der Vorgängerregierung in Verbindung stehenden Sicherheitskräfte werden als potenzielle Bedrohung gesehen. Seit August 2021 wurden mindestens 130 ehemalige Angehörige der Sicherheitskräfte und der Regierung, einschliesslich ihrer Familienmitglieder, von den Taliban getötet. Laut der *Asylagentur der Europäischen Union* (EUAA), die sich auf einen Professor für afghanisches Recht beruft, wird jede Person, die als dem militärischen Widerstand gegen die Taliban angehörend angesehen wird, von den Taliban systematisch verfolgt. Die Taliban betrachten zudem folgende Personen als potenzielle Bedrohungen: Geheimdienstoffiziere, Eliteeinheiten der ehemaligen Verwaltung, die sich Anti-Taliban-Bewegungen anschliessen könnten, und einflussreiche Persönlichkeiten, die den Taliban die Stirn bieten könnten (EUAA, Januar 2022). In seinem letzten Bericht vor dem *Menschenrechtsrat* über die Lage in Afghanistan gab der UN-Hochkommissar für Menschenrechte an, glaubwürdige Schilderungen über die Tötung von mehr als 130 Mitgliedern der afghanischen Sicherheitskräfte (ANSDF) und der Regierung oder ihren Familienangehörigen erhalten zu haben. Etwa Hundert davon seien willkürliche Hinrichtungen gewesen, die den De-facto-Behörden oder ihren Verbündeten zuzuschreiben seien. Zahlreiche getötete Personen seien zudem Opfer von Verschleppung, Folter und Misshandlung durch die De-facto-Behörden gewesen. Personen, die in Verdacht stehen, der ehemaligen Regierung oder der ANSDF anzugehören, wären Opfer von Inhaftierung, heimlicher Verhaftung und Misshandlung einschliesslich Folter (HRC, 4. März 2022). Gemäss

¹ www.fluechtlingshilfe.ch/publikationen/herkunftslanderberichte.

US Department of State (USDOS) verweisen zahlreiche Berichte auf Tötungen, die seit August 2021 als Vergeltungsaktionen von den Taliban begangen wurden. Mehr als 100 Personen, die mit der ehemaligen Regierung und ihren Sicherheitskräften in Verbindung gebracht werden, wären getötet oder gefoltert worden oder verschwunden – trotz Ankündigung einer Amnestie seitens der Taliban im August 2021. Am 6. September 2021 hätten die Taliban Durchsuchungen in Häusern des Pandschirtals durchgeführt, um Personen zu finden, die in Verdacht stehen, für die ehemalige Regierung zu arbeiten. Mindestens sechs Zivilisten, die meisten ehemalige Mitglieder der ANSDF, seien hingerichtet worden (USDOS, 12. April 2022). Eine sieben Monate dauernde Untersuchung der *New York Times* (NYT) zeigt, dass die Taliban eine Rachekampagne gegen ehemalige Mitarbeitende der Regierung und Mitglieder der Sicherheitskräfte geführt haben. Fast 500 ehemalige Regierungsangestellte und Mitglieder der afghanischen Sicherheitskräfte wurden im Laufe der ersten sechs Monate des Taliban-Regimes getötet oder sind in dieser Zeit verschwunden. Laut NYT sind Tötungen aus Rache weit verbreitet und betreffen alle Regionen des Landes (NYT, 12. April 2022).

3 **Behandlung durch die Taliban von Personen, die als mit der Nationalen Widerstandsfront (NRF) in Verbindung stehend angesehen werden**

3.1 **Die Nationale Widerstandsfront (NRF)**

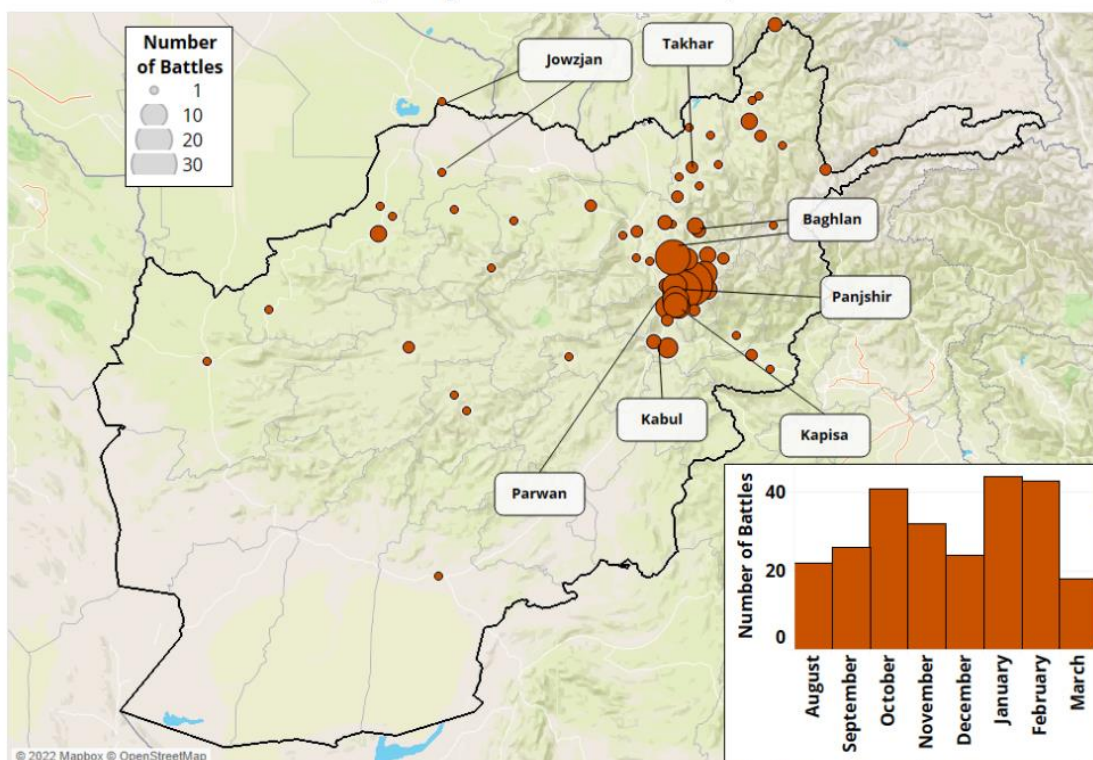
Die Nationale Widerstandsfront (NRF) mit Sitz in der Provinz Pandschir ist die grösste bewaffnete Oppositionsgruppe. Nach wochenlangem Widerstand verliessen die Anführer der NRF im September 2021 Afghanistan. Die Anhänger der NRF setzten seitdem ihre Angriffe gegen die Taliban fort. Gemäss BBC ist die Nationale Widerstandsfront (NRF) eine bewaffnete Widerstandstruppe mit Sitz im Pandschirtal, das bereits in den 1990er Jahren eine Hochburg der Opposition gegen die Taliban war. Die Gruppe wird von Ahmad Massoud, dem Sohn des legendären Kämpfers Ahmad Schah Massoud, angeführt und enthält Angehörige der ehemaligen afghanischen Armee (BBC, 16. Mai 2022). *Radio Azadi von RFE/RL* zufolge ist die Provinz Pandschir, eine Bastion des Widerstands der ethnischen Tadschiken gegen die Taliban unter paschtunischer Vorherrschaft, die letzte Provinz, die 2021 in die Hände der Taliban gefallen ist. Die NRF wurde nach der Machtübernahme der Taliban im August 2021 gegründet und hat den Taliban über mehrere Wochen standgehalten. Sie besteht aus Zivilisten und ehemaligen Mitgliedern der afghanischen Sicherheitskräfte (*Radio Azadi von RFE/RL*, 13. Mai 2022). Ahmad Massoud und der ehemalige Vizepräsident Amrullah Saleh, der ebenfalls aus der Provinz Pandschir stammt und mit Massoud verbündet ist, haben Afghanistan im September verlassen und ihre Kämpfer sporadische Angriffe gegen die Taliban führen lassen. Im Bezirk Andarab in der Provinz Baghlan führen Kämpfer des ehemaligen Innenministers Masud Andrai regelmässig Angriffe gegen die Taliban durch. Weitere wichtige Mitglieder des Widerstands gegen die Taliban sind der ehemalige Verteidigungsminister Bismillah Khan, der ehemalige Stabschef Yasin Zia und der Anführer der Hazara-Miliz Abdul Ghani Alipur (*Radio Azadi von RFE/RL*, 27. April 2022). Laut *Washington Post* leiten Ahmad

Massoud und Amrullah Saleh, die beiden im Exil lebenden Anführer der NRF, weiterhin Operationen ihrer Kämpfer, von denen es mehrere Tausend geben soll (*Washington Post*, 8. Juni 2022).

3.2 Kämpfe zwischen den Taliban und der Nationalen Widerstandsfront (NRF)

Die Auseinandersetzungen zwischen der NRF und den Taliban haben im Januar und Februar 2022 zugenommen und konzentrieren sich auf die Provinzen im Norden. In einem gemeinsamen Bericht vom April 2022 weisen das *Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project* (ACLED) und *Afghan Peace Watch* (APW) darauf hin, dass sich die Auseinandersetzungen zwischen der NRF und den Taliban im Januar und Februar 2022 verschärft haben und sich auf die Provinzen im Norden des Landes, namentlich Pandschir, Kapisa, Baghlan und Parwan, konzentrieren (ACLED und APW).

**Battles between the Taliban and the National Resistance Front and Other Anti-Taliban Forces
(15 August 2021 - 15 March 2022)**



Note: Data shown for August 2021 span from August 15-31. Data shown for March 2022 span from March 1-15.

Quelle: ACLED und APW, April 2022

Intensivierung der Kämpfe im Mai in den Provinzen Pandschir und Baghlan. Laut BBC haben die Kämpfer der NRF im Mai 2022 einen Angriff gegen die Taliban in der Provinz Pandschir gestartet. Im Gegenzug haben diese eine grosse Anzahl Kämpfer in das Gebiet geschickt, um ihre Präsenz zu stärken. Die Kämpfe haben sich zudem auf den Bezirk Andarab in der Provinz Baghlan und auf den Bezirk Warsaj in der Provinz Takhir ausgeweitet (BBC, 16. Mai 2022). Der *Washington Post* zufolge bestreiten die Vertreter der Taliban, dass es im

Pandschirtal zu Gewalttätigkeiten kommt, wenngleich Tausende Soldaten der Taliban im gesamten Tal zu sehen sind. Bewohner*innen berichtet, Angriffe gegen Stellungen der Taliban seien an der Tagesordnung, Dutzende von Personen seien getötet und Zivilpersonen seien bei gross angelegten Verhaftungen inhaftiert worden (*Washington Post*, 8. Juni 2022).

3.3 Menschenrechtsverletzungen im Pandschirtal und in der Provinz Baghlan

Beschränkter Zugang zu den Kampfzonen im Pandschirtal. Schwierigkeit, die Informationen und Berichte vor Ort zu überprüfen. Laut *Washington Post* haben die Taliban den Zugang zum Pandschirtal beschränkt. Auf diese Weise versuchen sie, Nachrichten über die Auseinandersetzungen mit den Kämpfern der NRF zu unterdrücken. Offiziell bestreiten die Taliban die Existenz eines bewaffneten Widerstands und dementieren, dass Taliban-Kämpfer bei den Kämpfen ums Leben gekommen sind. Die *Washington Post* geht davon aus, dass Informationen, die die offizielle Linie der Taliban infrage stellen, immer schwieriger zu überprüfen sind. Dies sei insbesondere der Tatsache geschuldet, dass zahlreiche Medien geschlossen, die Zivilgesellschaft permanent eingeschüchtert und Menschenrechtsgruppen aufgelöst oder strengsten Restriktionen unterworfen würden (*Washington Post*, 8. Juni 2022). Laut der bei der SFH am 3. Juni 2022 eingegangenen E-Mail einer *Kontaktperson*, bei der es sich um einen anerkannten Afghanistan-Spezialisten handelt, ist es seit August 2021 immer schwieriger geworden, Berichte über Vorwürfe von Menschenrechtsverletzungen durch die Taliban zu überprüfen. Personen, die versuchen, sich offen über diese Themen zu informieren, könnten auf Schwierigkeiten stossen und sich selbst in Gefahr bringen.

Systematische Verfolgung durch die Taliban von Personen, die als der NRF angehörig angesehen werden. Suchlisten. Hinrichtungen von NRF-Kämpfern und Folter von Zivilisten, die in Verdacht stehen, der NRF anzugehören. Laut der bei der SFH am 3. Juni 2022 eingegangenen E-Mail einer *Kontaktperson*, bei der es sich um einen anerkannten Afghanistan-Experten handelt, weisen ungeprüfte Berichte auf Razzien und Ermordungen von Personen hin, die von den Taliban verdächtigt werden, an Aktivitäten des bewaffneten Widerstands beteiligt zu sein oder den mutmasslichen Kämpfern der NRF oder anderer Widerstandstruppen anzugehören. Die *Kontaktperson* gibt an, dass die Taliban alle Personen im Visier haben, die in Verdacht stehen, sich an Aktivitäten des bewaffneten Widerstands zu beteiligen, aber auch diejenigen, die diese unterstützen. Laut einem afghanischen Rechtsprofessor, der von der EUAA zitiert wurde, wird eine Person, die als Mitglied der FRN wahrgenommen wird, systematisch von den Taliban ins Visier genommen (EUAA, Januar 2022). Quellen berichteten BBC im Mai 2022, dass die Taliban Listen mit den Namen von Personen besitzen, die verdächtigt wurden, dem Widerstand anzugehören, und Zivilisten zwangen, ihnen den Aufenthaltsort dieser Personen mitzuteilen (BBC, 16. Mai 2022). Laut *Radio Azadi von RFE/RL* kursieren Videos in den sozialen Netzen, die von den Taliban begangene Kriegsverbrechen zeigten. Diese hätten Widerstandskämpfer hingerichtet und Zivilisten gefoltert, die in Verdacht stünden, der NRF anzugehören (*Radio Azadi von RFE/RL*, 13. Mai 2022). Einwohner*innen sagten gegenüber *Radio Azadi von RFE/RL*, dass Taliban-Kämpfer vor kurzem mehrere gefangene NRF-Kämpfer enthauptet hätten. Zudem wären mehr als 100 Zivilisten im Bezirk Paryan in der Provinz Pandschir Anfang Juni von den Taliban festgenommen worden, ohne dass man wisse, wo diese Personen festgehalten würden. Die Taliban räumten ein, eine unbestimmte Anzahl Personen festgenommen zu haben, denen vorgeworfen wird, in Verbindung mit der NRF zu stehen (*Radio Azadi von RFE/RL*, 7. Juni 2022).

3.3.1 Die Taliban gehen in Pandschir gegen Zivilist*innen vor

Die Taliban werden beschuldigt, im Pandschir-Tal im Zusammenhang mit Zusammenstössen mit NRF-Kämpfern Menschenrechtsverletzungen an Zivilisten begangen zu haben. Schläge, summarische Hinrichtungen, Folter und Zwangsvertreibungen. Laut CBS News haben die NRF-Kämpfer im Mai 2022 eine Offensive gegen die Taliban gestartet, bei der nach Angaben eines Kommandanten der NRF mindestens 200 Taliban getötet oder verletzt wurden. Als Reaktion darauf hätten die Taliban, so dieser Kommandant, Kriegsverbrechen und Verbrechen gegen die Menschlichkeit begangen. In sozialen Netzwerken kursierten Videos, die teilweise von Taliban-Kämpfern gepostet wurden, auf denen zu sehen war, wie Zivilisten geschlagen oder getötet wurden. Der Botschafter der Europäischen Union in Afghanistan, Andreas Von Brandt, reagierte via Twitter und erklärte, er sei «besorgt über die Berichte über die Tötung von Zivilisten und Misshandlungen in Panjshir» (CBS News, 16. Mai 2022). In einer Erklärung vom 26. Mai 2022 brachte Richard Bennett, Sonderberichterstatter der Vereinten Nationen über die Menschenrechte in Afghanistan, ebenfalls seine Besorgnis angesichts der «Berichte über willkürliche Verhaftungen, willkürliche Hinrichtungen, Folter und Vertreibungen im Pandschir und in anderen Provinzen im Norden» zum Ausdruck (*Radio Azadi von RFE/RL*, 7. Juni 2022). *Radio Azadi von RFE/RL* bestätigt auch, dass im Mai 2022 in der Provinz Pandschir Auseinandersetzungen zwischen den Taliban und den NRF-Kämpfern wieder aufgeflammt seien. Nach Angaben von Bewohner*innen der Provinz gingen die Kämpfe, die zu Dutzenden Toten bei den Taliban geführt hätten, mit willkürlichen Hinrichtungen, Folter und Schlägen seitens der Taliban einher (*Radio Azadi von RFE/RL*, 13. Mai 2022). *Radio Azadi von RFE/RL* weist darauf hin, dass die Taliban, seit sie das Tal im September 2021 erobert haben, für Menschenrechtsverletzungen gegen Zivilist*innen verantwortlich wären, darunter willkürliche Hinrichtungen, Folter, willkürliche Inhaftierungen und Zwangsaus-schaffungen (*Radio Azadi von RFE/RL*, 15. März 2022). Laut BBC gehörten zu den Menschenrechtsverletzungen, die von den Taliban im Mai 2022 im Pandschirtal begangen wurden, auch Hinrichtungen von Zivilisten und Übergriffe. Hunderte von Dorfbewohner*innen sollen aus Angst vor Übergriffen durch die Taliban geflohen sein (BBC, 16. Mai 2022).

3.3.2 Die Taliban gehen in Baghlan gegen Zivilist*innen vor

Vertreibungen von Hunderten von Zivilist*innen in der Provinz Baghlan. Tötungen von Zivilist*innen und Folter. *Radio Azadi von RFE/RL* berichtet, dass im Zeitraum von Mai bis Juni 2022 Hunderte von Zivilist*innen in der Provinz Baghlan von den Taliban im Rahmen der Auseinandersetzungen mit Kämpfern der Widerstandstruppen vertrieben worden seien. Einige Häuser von vertriebenen Zivilist*innen sollen in Militärposten umgewandelt worden sein. Diese Auseinandersetzungen gingen mit Vorwürfen von Menschenrechtsverletzungen durch die Taliban, unter anderem Hinrichtungen von Zivilisten und Folter, einher. Nach Aussage der Nationalen Widerstandsfront (NRF), die von *Radio Azadi von RFE/RL* zitiert wird, seien mindestens 70 Familien aus ihren Häusern im Bezirk Andarab vertrieben worden (*Radio Azadi von RFE/RL*, 7. Juni 2022).

3.3.3 Verfolgung von Familienangehörigen

Familienangehörige von gesuchten Personen von den Taliban als Geisel genommen oder sogar gefoltert oder getötet. Taliban werden beschuldigt, den Bruder eines Kom-

mandanten der NRF hingerichtet zu haben. Gemäss der unabhängigen afghanischen Nachrichtenseite *Hasht-e Subh Daily* hätten die Taliban in der Provinz Baghlan Familienangehörige von mutmasslichen NRF-Mitgliedern als Geisel genommen. Die Taliban hätten den Bewohnern des Bezirks Andarab gedroht, sie gewaltsam zu vertreiben, wenn es ihnen nicht gelänge, die Mitglieder der NRF zu überzeugen, die Waffen niederzulegen und sich zu ergeben. Die Taliban starteten Operationen in den Dörfern, um nach Mitgliedern des Widerstands zu suchen. Wenn es den Taliban nicht gelinge, die gesuchte Person festzunehmen, würden sie die Familienangehörigen dieser Person ins Visier nehmen, die Opfer von Erniedrigung und Folter würden (*Hasht-e Subh Daily*, 14. Mai 2022). Laut *Reuters* haben die Taliban im September 2021 Rohullah Azizi, den Bruder von Amrullah Saleh, dem ehemaligen afghanischen Vizepräsidenten, getötet, der einer der Anführer des Widerstands gegen die Taliban im Pandschirtal geworden war. Nach Angaben des Neffen von Rohulla Azizi sei dieser von den Taliban hingerichtet worden. Die Taliban haben erklärt, dass dieser im Kampf getötet worden sei (*Reuters*, 20. September 2021).

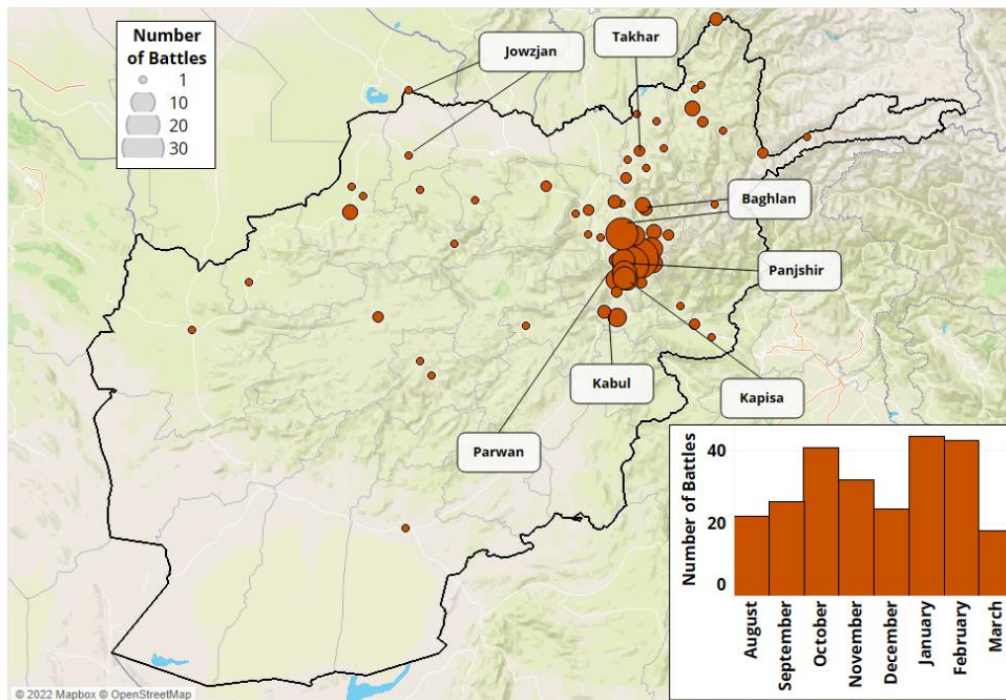
4 Quellen

ACLED & APW, 14. April 2022:

« *National resistance front and emerging anti-taliban forces*

Since the Taliban came to power, new actors have emerged to contest Taliban rule. A key armed group that has emerged is the NRF, which was formed in the Panjshir valley by the son of Ahmad Shah Massoud, a leader in the resistance to the Taliban in the 1990s (The Diplomat, 15 December 2021). Mobilizing against the Taliban, the NRF has been active in the northern provinces of the country, including Panjshir, Kapisa, Baghlan, and Parwan (see map below). Clashes between the NRF and the Taliban increased in January and February 2022. APW has reported on over a dozen NRF-Taliban clashes, diversifying sourcing for such clashes which has previously been reliant to a certain extent on the NRF's own reporting. The addition of the APW reporting contributes to making the ACLED data less dependent on an active, and biased, conflict actor for information.

**Battles between the Taliban and the National Resistance Front and Other Anti-Taliban Forces
(15 August 2021 - 15 March 2022)**



Note: Data shown for August 2021 span from August 15-31. Data shown for March 2022 span from March 1-15.

[...] » Quelle: Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) & Afghan Peace Watch (APW), Tracking Disorder During Taliban Rule in Afghanistan, 14. April 2022: <https://acled-data.com/2022/04/14/tracking-disorder-during-taliban-rule-in-afghanistan-a-joint-acled-and-apw-report/>.

BBC, 16. Mai 2022:

« **The Taliban have been accused of human rights abuses during clashes with resistance forces in Panjshir province, to the north of Kabul.**

One local resident told the BBC his unarmed elderly relative had been shot by the group, who seized power in Afghanistan last August.

Another saw a neighbour beaten by the Taliban until he fell unconscious.

A local Taliban spokesman denied any abuses had taken place or that any of the group's members had been killed.

The fighting is localised and at this stage does not represent a challenge to the Taliban's control of the country, but it is the most significant sustained armed opposition the group has faced since coming to power.

Panjshir was a bastion of anti-Taliban resistance during the group's first stint in power in the 1990s.

In recent days, fighters belonging to the National Resistance Front launched a guerrilla attack on Taliban forces in the area, who responded by sending a large number of reinforcements to Panjshir.

The NRF is headed by Ahmad Massoud, the son of a legendary anti-Taliban fighter, who fled Afghanistan following the Taliban takeover.

The group is also supported by some former commandos who used to be part of the Afghan army.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, local sources told the BBC the fighting erupted over a religious dispute. They said the Taliban attempted to arrest a Panjshiri cleric who had decreed the Muslim festival of Eid should actually be celebrated a day after the Taliban said it should.

Taliban forces were ambushed and a number were allegedly killed - something Taliban officials have denied.

Details on casualty figures, and even the extent of the fighting, are difficult to ascertain. The Taliban appear to be downplaying the clashes, while claims by the NRF often seem exaggerated.

Two local sources said that about 15 unarmed civilians had been killed by the Taliban in Panjshir so far.

Clashes initially centred around the valley of Abdullah Khel, though local sources said the fighting there had now finished.

Residents described hundreds of villagers leaving their homes and heading to the mountains in fear of advancing Taliban fighters.

One villager said his elderly male relative had stayed behind at home, but was ordered by Taliban members to point out the houses of resistance fighters.

He and another man were then shot dead, the villager alleged.

"He wasn't armed and didn't have any link with any group," he said.

It is difficult to verify the exact circumstances around the killings, but the BBC has seen photographs of the bodies of the men.

A request by the BBC to visit the area was rejected by the Taliban.

Another resident of the area told the BBC that one of his relatives had panicked during a search operation by the Taliban and began running away from them. He was shot and killed.

Footage shared on social media shows large numbers of men being detained by Taliban forces.

Residents told the BBC they believed hundreds had been arrested, while they alleged some local elders were temporarily detained in order to try to secure the surrender of resistance members.

A local source in Abdullah Khel said the vast majority of men had now been released by the Taliban.

One resident told the BBC his elderly neighbour's name was on a list drawn up by the group, accused of being in the resistance.

The source said when the man denied the allegation, or owning any weapons, he was "kicked, punched and beaten with the butt of a rifle until he fell unconscious".

A spokesman for the Taliban in Panjshir told the BBC no fighting had taken place in the province, though another local Taliban official had earlier told Afghan outlet Tolo News that six Taliban members had been killed in clashes.

Sources in Helmand province in the south told the BBC the bodies of 15 fighters from there had been flown back from Panjshir.

Clashes and allegations of humans rights abuses have also been reported in other parts of Panjshir, as well as in Andarab, a nearby district in Baghlan province and Warsaj in northern Takhar province.

All are dominated by members of the Tajik ethnic group, whereas the Taliban are Pashtun-dominated. » Quelle: BBC, Afghan resistance attack Taliban, sparking reprisals in Panjshir, 16. Mai 2022: www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-61430836.

CBS News, 16. Mai 2022:

« The NRF, along with several smaller resistance groups, has vowed to "free Afghanistan" from the Taliban's rule.

The Taliban quickly sent forces up to Panjshir to counter the NRF offensive, and the group's leaders claim they captured dozens of NRF fighters before declaring the situation in the region "normal and peaceful" again on Monday.

But both sides claimed battlefield victories, with NRF spokesman Sibghatullah Ahmadi saying on Twitter late last week that at least 18 Taliban fighters were killed in two attacks in Panjshir province alone. He confirmed that the NRF had also sustained casualties.

The NRF's commander in Panjshir, Khalid Amiry, said Monday in a tweet that his troops had killed and wounded at least 200 Taliban militants in the recent clashes.

"When they lost the fight against the resistance forces, in retaliation they commit war crimes and crimes against humanity," said Amiry, adding a call for an "impartial investigation" by global organizations into the Taliban's actions in the region.

The Taliban would not confirm or deny causalities among its forces, but Zabihullah Mujahid, a spokesman for group's central government in Kabul, tweeted a video (below) showing a group of unarmed men sitting in front of armed Taliban fighters. Mujahid claimed "a large number of insurgents in Dara district of Panjshir province surrendered their weapons and joined the forces of Islamic Emirate."

NRF officials claimed the Taliban had actually rounded-up ordinary civilians in Panjshir to stage the video.

CBS News could not independently verify the videos presented by the Taliban regime, or others that appear to show atrocities by its fighters.

Videos shared on social media, including some posted by Taliban militants, have shown other purported surrenders, along with people being beaten and killed in Panjshir and Andarab. In one graphic video, a Taliban fighter can be heard saying, "these are dirty Panjshirs," as he walks over and spits on dead bodies.

European Union Ambassador to Afghanistan Andreas Von Brandt said in a tweet that he was "concerned by the reports of killings of civilians and mistreatment in Panjshir" and he called for "an overdue inclusive solution in governing Afghanistan."

"Many extremely worrying videos, audios, and reports of violations from northern provinces of #panjshir #Takhar #Baghlan. Further verification is needed," said Richard Bennett, the United Nations special rapporteur on Afghanistan, adding that he was watching the situation "closely."

Jamil, a resident and shopkeeper in Panjshir province, told CBS News in a phone interview late last week that more Taliban fighters were still arriving daily. He said residents would sometimes see visibly angry Taliban members taking away their dead comrades.

"We don't want to face them when they're angry," he said.

Despite a Taliban commander in the region's claim on Monday that the fighting had stopped and the situation was "normal," other residents told French news agency AFP that dozens of civilians had already fled Panjshir, afraid of getting caught up in the violence.

"We could only pick up one or two items of clothing," Lutfullah Bari told AFP, saying he'd fled with dozens of other residents and was now taking shelter with relatives in the Kabul area.

Aimal Rahimi, another civilian from Panjshir, told AFP that people were "afraid and escaping to save their lives." » Quelle: CBS News, Afghanistan war rekindles, claiming lives and sending civilians fleeing as Taliban battles Panjshir valley resistance, 16. Mai 2022: www.cbsnews.com/news/afghanistan-war-taliban-resistance-panjshir-massoud-fighting-deaths-displaced/.

EUAA, Januar 2022:

« The Afghan law professor also stated that, although it was hard to say whether the revenge killings were centrally sanctioned or not, the source 'absolutely believed' that the Taliban systematically targeted anyone perceived as a potential threat, i.e. anyone

who could align themselves with the National Resistance Front (NRF); anyone with possible connections to the ISKP; intelligence officials or elite forces of the previous administration who could potentially join antiTaliban movements, and influential figures who could challenge the Taliban. People that were a potential threat to the Taliban were monitored, harassed, threatened or even killed according to the source, especially persons with suspected links to ISKP who were often executed on the spot. Dr. Andrea Chiovenda, adjunct assistant professor of anthropology at Zayed University, told EASO during an interview on 9 November 2021 that the Taliban could not enforce its amnesty, and also mentioned a 'worrisome' situation in Nangarhar with almost daily reports of bodies hanging from trees along the roads, and similar events taking place in Laghman and Kunar. There were also media reports on killings in Nangarhar where bodies were found with handwritten notes in their pockets accusing them of being ISKP fighters. Some feared that accusations of ISKP affiliation made room for the Taliban to target any suspects. » Quelle: European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA): Afghanistan Country Focus - Country of Origin Information Report, Januar 2022, S.47-48: www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/2066332/2022_01_EASO_COI_Report_Afghanistan_Country_focus.pdf.

Hasht-e Subh Daily, 14. Mai 2022:

« Following the taking hostages from the Resistance Front forces' family members in Khost district of Baghlan province by the Taliban, it is now reported that the Taliban have warned the residents of Andarab Baghlan district that they will evict them forcibly if the residents do not make the Resistance forces to surrender and put down weapons.

According to sources, the Taliban fighters are launching house-to-house search operations during the night in Andarab villages for detaining the resistance front forces' members. In case of failing to detain the target individual, members of the family are being humiliated and tortured so harshly.

Local Taliban members in Baghlan province have not yet commented on the matter.

Meanwhile, the arrests, tortures, and killings of civilians by the Taliban have provoked internal and international reactions.

The Taliban spokesman is silent so far and usually denies such allegations. » Quelle: Hasht-e Subh Daily, Taliban Warns Andarab, Baghlan Residents of Forced Displacement In Case of Armed Resistance Continuation, 14. Mai 2022: <https://8am.af/eng/taliban-warns-andarab-baghlan-residents-of-forced-displacement-in-case-of-armed-resistance-continuation/>

Hasht-e Subh Daily, 8. Mai 2022:

« Local sources have reported that the Liberation and the Resistance Front forces have jointly started fierce clashes against the Taliban rebels in the village of Kasa Trash, Baghlan province.

For the last three days, the clashes have been going on in the areas of Taghanak, Paskandi, Darashan, Darbank, and Namak in the district of Andarab in Baghlan, as reported.

The exact number of casualties is not yet reported.

*Two days ago, the NRF forces took over the control of three districts of Panjshir province. »
Quelle: Hasht-e Subh Daily, The Resistance and Liberation Front Forces Jointly Fight Against Taliban in Baghlan, 8. Mai 2022: <https://8am.af/eng/the-resistance-and-liberation-front-forces-jointly-fight-against-taliban-in-baghlan/>.*

HRC, 4. März 2022:

*« 25. Since 15 August 2021, the Taliban leadership has repeatedly announced guarantees of protection (referred to as a “general amnesty” for former government officials and members of the Afghan National Security Forces, notwithstanding the length of the conflict, the multiple layers of grievances and the recent history of the country. The Taliban’s Supreme Leader, the de facto prime minister, the de facto minister of defense, the de facto minister of interior and other senior officials and local officials have, on several occasions, called on Taliban fighters to honour the general amnesty and refrain from harming former government officials. Despite these commitments, **UNAMA/OHCHR has received credible allegations regarding the killing of more than 130 former Afghan National Security and Defence Forces (ANSDF) and Government personnel or their family members. Of them, around 100 were extrajudicial killings attributed to the de facto authorities or their affiliates. For instance, on 4 November 2021, in Balkh province, seven de facto authorities personnel entered a private residence and shot and killed two women and two men. Both women and one of the men were former ANSDF employees.***

26. Since August 2021, UNAMA/OHCHR received credible allegations of the killing of more than 50 persons suspected of ISIL-KP affiliation, of which around 35 were extrajudicial killings attributed to de facto authorities. While the vast majority of these incidents occurred in Nangarhar Province in October and November 2021, with a period of no incidents in January 2022, in the second week of February 2022 there were three extrajudicial killings of persons suspected of ISIL-KP affiliation recorded in the province. Many of those killed were also subjected to enforced disappearance, torture, and ill-treatment by the de facto authorities. In a number of cases, dismembered bodies were found by the roadside.

27. The unnecessary or disproportionate use of force by the de facto authorities during protests, search operations and at checkpoints also resulted in deaths and injuries. On 13 January 2022, Taliban forces shot dead a young woman returning from a wedding party at a security checkpoint in Kabul. In late February 2022, the de facto ministry of interior reportedly issued a directive instructing de facto security personnel to refrain from firing at civilians at checkpoints. The directive reportedly also instructs de facto security forces to refrain from harassing, insulting, and beating suspects and states that de facto security forces have no right to conduct a house search without a court order or under the pretext of monitoring an accused person’s residence. Further, it reportedly instructs the de facto security forces to perform their duties in the presence of lawyers and in broad daylight. [...]

31. Concerns also remain about the continuing practices of arrest, incommunicado detention and alleged torture and ill-treatment of individuals suspected of being affiliated with the former government, ANSDF or ISIL-KP. For example, on 15 November 2021, the remains of a tribal elder were discovered in Chaparhar district of Nangarhar province. He had reportedly been

previously arrested by the de facto authorities' forces on suspicion of affiliation with ISIL-KP.
» Quelle: UN Human Rights Council (HRC), Situation of human rights in Afghanistan, 4. März 2022, S.6-7: www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/2069221/A_HRC_49_24_AdvanceUneditedVersion.docx.

NYT, 12. April 2022:

« *When the Taliban swept into Kabul last year and reasserted control over Afghanistan, they suggested that their rule would be kinder, less extreme and more forgiving than it had been the last time they were in power.*

Taliban leaders insisted they would be merciful toward those who had opposed them, declaring a general amnesty for former government workers and members of the nation's security forces. For some, they even wrote letters of guarantee that they would not seek revenge against their old adversaries.

“We are assuring the safety of all those who have worked with the United States and allied forces,” the Taliban’s spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, said during the group’s first news conference after retaking control of the country last August.

But in the Opinion video above, we show that the Taliban’s promises were hollow, with grave import. The video, the product of a seven-month investigation by the Opinion Video team of The New York Times, reveals that nearly 500 former government officials and members of the Afghan security forces were killed or forcibly disappeared during the Taliban’s first six months in power. [...]

The revenge killings were widespread, touching every region of the country, shattering families and communities, and giving a lie to the Taliban’s promises of tolerance and moderation.

After initially denying that such killings were occurring, the Taliban leadership has come to acknowledge some of them, though has insisted that those acts were the work of rogue commanders and not an authorized campaign.

But the number of killings, and their ubiquity, might suggest otherwise. So would their ruthlessness, including summary executions that were captured on video and are included in our short documentary above. We argue that the United States can still do a lot more to help its former allies — many of whom remain in hiding — find a way to escape the country. » Quelle: New York Times (NYT), The Taliban Promised Them Amnesty. Then They Executed Them, 12. April 2022: www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/04/12/opinion/taliban-afghanistan-revenge.html.

Reuters, 10. Septembre 2021:

« ***The Taliban have executed the brother of Amrullah Saleh, the former Afghan vice president who became one of the leaders of anti-Taliban opposition forces in the Panjshir valley, his nephew said on Friday.***

The news that Saleh's brother Rohullah Azizi was killed came days after Taliban forces took control of the provincial centre of Panjshir, the last province holding out against them.

"They executed my uncle," Ebadullah Saleh told Reuters in a text message. "They killed him yesterday and would not let us bury him. They kept saying his body should rot."

The Urdu language account of the Taliban information service Alemarah said that "according to reports" Rohullah Saleh was killed during fighting in Panjshir.

Saleh, a former head of the National Directorate of Security, the intelligence service of the Western-backed government that collapsed last month, is at large though his exact location remains unclear.

The National Resistance Front of Afghanistan, which groups opposition forces loyal to local leader Ahmad Massoud, has pledged to continue opposing the Taliban even after the fall of Panjshir's provincial capital Bazarak. » Quelle: Reuters, Brother of Afghan opposition figure executed by Taliban, family says, 10. Septembre 2021: www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/brother-afghan-opposition-figure-executed-by-taliban-family-says-2021-09-10/.

RFE/RL's Radio Azadi, 7. Juni 2022:

« [...] Ahmad and his family are among the hundreds of civilians that have been forcibly evicted from their homes in recent weeks in Baghlan, the scene of intensifying clashes between the Taliban and resistance forces, residents and activists say.

The recent surge in fighting in Baghlan and the neighboring province of Panjshir has prompted allegations of widespread Taliban abuses, including extrajudicial killings of civilians, torture, and forced displacement.

"The Taliban are forcing families to flee without even asking what they did wrong," said Ahmad, who did not reveal his current whereabouts. "The telecommunications networks are limited here so people can't get their voices heard. The Taliban can do whatever they want."

Ahmad said the Taliban has turned many of the homes it has seized into military posts and barracks.

Zabihullah Farahmand, an activist in Baghlan, said the Taliban has forcibly evicted at least 50 families from their homes in the districts of Pol-e Hesar, Deh Salah, and Andarab in recent weeks. The districts comprise the long, narrow Andarab Valley.

"They have been forcibly relocated by the Taliban and no assistance has been provided to these refugees," says Farahmand. "These families find refuge in other northern provinces with a lot of hardship. They need help and care."

The National Resistance Front (NRF), an anti-Taliban militia, claimed that at least 70 families have been evicted from their homes in the Andarab Valley in recent weeks.

Mawlawi Hezullah, the Taliban's governor of Baghlan, suggested that the militant group had forcibly evicted civilians from their homes in "some mountainous areas" of the Andarab Valley but rejected claims that the "problem" was widespread.

The Taliban captured Baghlan and Panjshir in early September, weeks after toppling the Western-backed Afghan government and seizing power in Kabul. Since April, deadly clashes have erupted between resistance forces and the Taliban in both provinces.

Last month, heavy clashes broke out in parts of Panjshir, a traditional hotbed of ethnic Tajik resistance to the Pashtun-dominated Taliban. Residents alleged that some civilians accused of having links with the NRF were executed. Others were beaten and tortured in Taliban custody, they said.

'People Are Fleeing'

Richard Bennett, the UN special rapporteur on human rights in Afghanistan, in a May 26 statement expressed "concern about allegations, which require verification, that civilians have been exposed to violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law."

He said that included "arbitrary arrests, extrajudicial killings, torture, and forced displacement in Panjshir and other northern provinces."

In the latest incident, the family of a 40-year-old farmer in Panjshir's Bazarak district said he was arrested and tortured to death by the Taliban. The militant group admitted that Munir Ahmad had died in its custody on June 2.

"This is not the first time that local people have been arrested, tortured, imprisoned, and even killed," a relative who did not want to be named told Radio Azadi.

Meanwhile, locals told Radio Azadi that the Taliban detained more than 100 civilians in the Paryan district of Panjshir in the past week. Their whereabouts are unknown. Earlier, the Taliban said it had detained an unspecified number of people accused of having links with the NRF.

Locals have also alleged that Taliban fighters have recently beheaded several NRF fighters who were captured, a claim the Taliban has rejected.

*The ongoing fighting has forced thousands of people to flee their homes in Panjshir. [...] »
Quelle: RFE/RL's Radio Azadi, Taliban Accused Of Forced Evictions As Fighting Intensifies In Northern Afghanistan, 7. Juni 2022: <https://gandhara.rferl.org/a/taliban-forced-evictions-northern-afghanistan/31887719.html>.*

RFE/RL's Radio Azadi, 13. Mai 2022:

« Resistance to the Taliban is flaring up in northeastern Afghanistan, and as reports of deadly fighting increase, so are claims of war crimes against civilians.

The fighting is centered in the center and south of Panjshir Province, a traditional hotbed of ethnic Tajik resistance to the Pashtun-dominated Taliban and the last province to fall to the extremist group after it seized control of the rest of the country in August.

Residents of the southern Dara district's Abdullah Khel Valley told RFE/RL's Radio Azadi by telephone that an influx of Taliban fighters to counter growing unrest had led to extrajudicial killings, torture, and beatings.

The violence has been attributed by some to defiance of the Taliban's declaration that Eid al-Fitr be celebrated on May 1. Locals marked the Islamic holiday on May 2 after a prominent imam criticized the Taliban's decision as politicized, and issued a fatwa calling for it to be celebrated in keeping with the date set by Mecca.

They also report high casualties among Taliban fighters deployed from other provinces to quell fighting led by the resurgent anti-Taliban National Resistance Front (NRF) and to round up local religious figures and other potential insurrection leaders.

"As they [the Taliban] searched for the resistance, they encountered difficulties but took a number of young men hostage," said one resident of Abdullah Khel Valley, who declined to give his name out of fear of retribution from the Taliban.

"There are dead bodies in every corner," said Mullah Mahad, 41, another resident of the valley. "But they [locals] don't have the right to bury their dead."

Another valley resident, Gul Aqa, said that clashes with the NRF resulted in heavy losses for the Taliban. "The Taliban sent more troops and military weapons to suppress the gunmen, but this time the National Resistance Front forces based in the Abdullah Khel Valley attacked the Taliban convoy," he said.

The reported fighting has led to a war of words between the NRF and the Taliban, with the resistance group claiming in recent days that it had killed scores of Taliban fighters and taken control of large parts of the Panjshir Province's southern Abshar and Dara districts, including the Abdullah Khel Valley.

The Taliban has denied the NRF's claims, with spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid telling Radio Azadi last week that no such militant group is currently active in Afghanistan.

But the Taliban's provincial police chief, Maulvi Dad Mohammad Batar, acknowledged that "there have been shootings," but dismissed them as few in number and as acts of desperation carried out from the mountaintops.

Abubakar Sadiq, a spokesman for the Taliban's governor of Panjshir Province, told Radio Azadi that the police chief in Rokha district had been arrested in connection with recent clashes and that "if it becomes clear that people who have been detained are involved, they will be arrested, and if they are guilty they will be dealt with legally."

The spokesman later confirmed that six Taliban fighters had been killed in clashes in the southern Dara district, according to the Taliban-run Islamic News Agency of Afghanistan.

Reports have suggested that dozens of Taliban fighters have been killed in clashes in Panjshir, in the most significant military resistance to the militant group since it seized power.

The reports of renewed fighting have been accompanied by multiple videos on social media of apparent war crimes being carried out by Taliban fighters. The videos, which RFE/RL was not able to independently verify, purportedly show Taliban fighters beating civilians and firing at civilian homes.

Other videos show alleged Taliban fighters shooting men one by one in a trench and allegedly executing a resistance fighter.

The reports of the mistreatment and killings of civilians led the European Union's envoy to Afghanistan, Andreas von Brandt, to express his concerns about the situation in Panjshir Province. "We mourn the innocent loss of life," von Brandt wrote on Twitter on May 10. "Once more, the situation underlines the need for overdue inclusive solutions in governing Afghanistan."

The NRF was formed after the Taliban recaptured Kabul on August 15, 2021, and held out against the extremist group for several weeks.

The militia is made up of civilians and former Afghan government forces. It is led by Ahmad Masud, son of former mujahedin commander Ahmad Shah Masud, who used the Panjshir Valley as a base to fight the Soviets in the 1980s and the Taliban in the 1990s.

Masud's assassination by Al-Qaeda militants preceded the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States. The September 11 attacks, in turn, led to the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan in October 2001 that overthrew the Taliban's hard-line regime.

Local residents alleged in comments to Radio Azadi that some civilians were being subjected to torture for showing any allegiance to the slain Masud.

The resident of Abdullah Khel Valley who declined to give his name claimed that one man was thrown off a cliff by Taliban fighters because he had been photographed alongside a poster of the legendary commander. The source further claimed that the Taliban cut the ears off the man's 16-year-old companion.

The Taliban has denied accusations by the NRF that it has detained and killed civilians, and has even claimed that many civilians in Panjshir Province's Dara district have sided with the Taliban since their arrival. The extremist group recently distributed a video purportedly showing a gathering of Panjshir residents to discuss their security issues with the Taliban.

Ali Meysam Nazari, who heads foreign relations for the NRF, responded by denouncing the Taliban's claims as lies, saying civilians had only gathered for the video under threat.

Aside from the reports of fighting in Panjshir, there have also been reports of increasing resistance to Taliban rule in the neighboring provinces of Kapisa, Parwan, Baghlan, and Badakhshan.

The Taliban has vowed to counter any resistance in those provinces. » Quelle: RFE/RL's Radio Azadi, New Reports Of Fighting In Afghanistan's Panjshir Trigger Fresh Claims Of Taliban War Crimes, 13. Mai 2022: <https://gandhara.rferl.org/a/afghanistan-panjshir-taliban-atrocities/31848654.html>.

RFE/RL's Radio Azadi, 27. April 2022:

« One of the most visible anti-Taliban groups is the National Resistance Front, led by Ahmad Masud, son of the Northern Alliance leader Ahmad Shah Masud who successfully prevented the Taliban from overrunning Afghanistan until he was killed by Al-Qaeda assassins two days before the September 11 terrorist attacks in 2001.

Former Vice President Amrullah Saleh, who like Masud hails from the northern province of Panjshir, is a close ally. The two left Panjshir in September, just weeks after the Taliban takeover of Kabul the previous month. But their supporters are still launching sporadic attacks against the Taliban in remote Panjshir valleys.

Supporters of former Interior Minister Masud Andrai have offered the most formidable resistance with somewhat regular attacks on the Taliban in Andrab, a high-altitude valley in the northern province of Baghlan.

One of the most significant attacks was in the northern city of Mazar-e Sharif last week when supporters of former warlord Atta Mohammad Noor clashed with the Taliban.

His nephew, Sohail Zmarai, was reportedly killed in an intense firefight that was acknowledged by the Taliban.

Some reports suggest the supporters of late anti-Taliban police commander Abdul Raziq are ready to join the resistance in Kandahar.

Attacks have also been reported in recent weeks in the Kapisa, Parwan, Badakhshan, Takhar, Ghor, Sar-e Pol, and Jawzjan provinces. The violence is distinct from the IS-K attacks that have mainly targeted Shi'ite mosques and schools in Kabul and several Afghan cities this month.

Former Defense Minister Bismillah Khan, ex-General Staff chief Yasin Zia, and Abdul Ghani Alipur -- an ethnic Hazara militia leader -- are other notable names in the resistance.

“The Taliban offered us nothing,” Ahmad Masud said in a video message last month, elaborating on how months of negotiations with the Taliban failed to secure a political agreement.

“They offered us two things: surrender and pledge allegiance [to the Taliban],” he said.

The Taliban's rigid policies are apparently a reason for the increased armed resistance, with the various opposition factions claiming attacks against Taliban officials and fighters in several provinces.

"[Anti-Taliban] groups are popping up everywhere in Afghanistan," the former Foreign Ministry official said. "They were just waiting to see how things would go under the Taliban."

The official said former government leaders involved in the resistance are trying to unite behind a vision in ongoing negotiations. "Sometime soon there will be a conference in Europe," he said.

Former government officials and leading warlords such as ethnic Uzbek leader Abdul Rashid Dostum, Hazara Mohammad Mohaqiq, Noor, and others have a long history of infighting, which might prevent them from posing a serious challenge to the Taliban.

There are also signs that former Afghan Army leaders are trying to rally their troops.

"The Taliban has left us no choice but to pick up our weapons again to win back our freedom," former Lieutenant General Sami Sadat said.

Sadat fought some of the most challenging battles against the Taliban last year and was widely regarded as a capable military leader.

"We will take all practical steps for our homeland," he added. "These include political and civic activism and military engagement."

But the Taliban is not impressed.

"We can control these small and fragmented efforts," Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid told Radio Azadi. "We have the intelligence to prevent and eliminate such efforts."

Mujahid said that after four decades of war, Afghanistan is awash with weapons, which makes it easy to launch attacks. "Yet our forces are capable of providing security to the people and act against those trying to resist [our government]."

Kate Clark, the co-director of the Afghanistan Analysts Network think tank, said that although most drivers of war have not disappeared from Afghanistan, it is not clear whether it will lead to an armed opposition.

She points to the Taliban, which took years to regroup and recover from their ousting in late 2001 to reappear as an insurgency.

"The armed opposition that has emerged is in a relatively weak position by historical standards: it controls no territory next to a border [and] has no neighbor or great power obviously backing it," she told RFE/RL.

Since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in late 1979, rebellions backed by foreign powers have succeeded in Afghanistan. The mujahedin forced the Soviet Union to withdraw from Afghanistan with generous funding and support from the West and Pakistan. And Afghan forces and their Western allies failed to eradicate the Taliban because of its safe havens in Pakistan.

Clark said that the failed republic is tainted in the minds of many Afghans because of widespread corruption and lackluster governance.

“The Taliban are more used to fighting than governing and would probably prefer armed ‘rebellion’ to mass civil disobedience,” she said. » Quelle: RFE/RL's Radio Azadi, Taliban Faces Rising Armed Resistance From Former Government Factions, 27. April 2022: <https://gandhara.rferl.org/a/taliban-resistance-former-government-factions/31823881.html>.

RFE/RL's Radio Azadi, 15. März 2022:

« Newly emerged video of the summary execution of an Afghan accused of fighting against the Taliban in the Panjshir Valley and the torture and killing of a shopkeeper in the northeastern region have added to the growing list of brutal acts of vengeance carried out by the extremist group since its return to power in August.

Video and images obtained by RFE/RL's Radio Azadi indicated that 48-year-old shopkeeper Ghulam Sakhi had been severely tortured, with extreme bruising to both of his legs, signs of beatings to his torso, and his head heavily wrapped with a bandage.

Ahmad Shah Ayubi, a resident of the southeastern district of Khanj, told Radio Azadi that Sakhi was dragged from his home in the village of Mata by Taliban fighters on the night of March 12 after taking part in a rally against the recent torture and killing of another man in the province.

Ayubi said Sakhi's battered body was thrown in front of the deceased's home the next morning. "A number of young people assembled to take [Sakhi's] body to the provincial government building," he said.

Fearing that the rally would spread, the Taliban's governor for Panjshir arrived in Mata and told the protesters that the perpetrators of the crime had been arrested, Ayubi said. Mawlawi Dad Mohammad, the Taliban police chief in Panjshir, told Radio Azadi on March 14 that 12 people had been arrested in connection with the killing and that an investigation had been launched.

Panjshir, a rugged mountain valley located about 100 kilometers northeast of the capital, was the scene of short-lived resistance to the Taliban after the militant group seized Kabul on August 15, 2021.

Since the Taliban conquered the valley in September, locals have claimed that the militants have committed human rights abuses against the civilian population including extrajudicial killings, torture, arbitrary detentions, and forcible evictions.

Sakhi's killing comes after video of the summary execution of 25-year-old Bilal Jawani in Panjshir was posted this week on social media. The killing took place in September in the village of Hesarak in the Rukha district as the Taliban was fighting to wrestle control of Panjshir.

The video shows Jawani, with his hands bound behind his back, being surrounded and questioned by his accusers before he is shot multiple times at close range and falls dead on rocky terrain.

The incident has led to protestations of Jawani's innocence by his family and to an outcry on social media about yet another example of the Taliban's brutality despite its pledges to adhere to human rights standards.

Speaking to Radio Azadi on condition of anonymity due to fears of retribution by the Taliban, a relative said Jawani did not have ties to the anti-Taliban National Resistance Front of Afghanistan or to the former Afghan National Army (ANA). "He had no connection with the resistance front or the previous government. He was a teacher," the relative said.

The relative said Jawani was executed because he was wearing camouflage clothing that resembled that worn by the ANA. "The Taliban martyred him because of his military uniform, without any evidence of [his ties to the] resistance or the previous government."

Revenge On Panjshir

The Taliban announced on September 6 that it had captured the Panjshir Valley, a traditional hotbed of resistance that the militants had never managed to control while in power from 1996 to 2001.

The region is the birthplace of Ahmad Shah Masud, an ethnic Tajik commander who had successfully defended his homeland against Soviet forces and the Taliban and used his clout to unite other ethnic factions to create the Northern Alliance in 1996.

Following his assassination by Al-Qaeda militants in 2001, Masud continues to be revered as a local hero. The fall of the Panjshir Valley in September was seen as a significant step in the Taliban's effort to consolidate power after foreign troops withdrew and the militants toppled the Western-backed Afghan government.

During intra-Afghan and international peace talks that took place in the run-up to the withdrawal of foreign forces, the Taliban attempted to cast itself as a more moderate version of the group that had been accused of extreme human rights abuses during its first stint in power from 1996 to 2001. With that came pledges to observe international human rights norms, a promise it repeated shortly after forcibly taking power.

Following the emergence of the video of Jawani's killing, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid told Radio Azadi that the group was aware of the footage and that an investigation was under way. "The killer will be brought to justice. Whoever he is, whatever he has done is wrong," Mujahid said.

But Jawani's relative expressed skepticism about the Taliban's judicial practices and called for outside intervention. "We are not satisfied with [the Taliban's] government. No one is satisfied," the relative said. "We call on the United Nations to bring the perpetrators to justice."

The office of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has not yet commented on Jawani's killing.

The Taliban has consistently been criticized by UNAMA and international rights watchdogs for its human rights practices, including the treatment of girls and women, acts of retribution

against ethnic and religious minorities, and the killings of former members of the Afghan police force and the ANA despite claims that it had introduced an amnesty to protect them. » Quelle: RFE/RL's Radio Azadi, New Videos Put Spotlight On Taliban Retribution Killings In Afghanistan, 15. März 2022: <https://gandhara.rferl.org/a/panjshir-taliban-retribution-killings/31754517.html>.

USDOS, 12. April 2022:

« Significant human rights issues occurred before and after August 15. Details of which group or groups perpetuated these human rights issues are addressed throughout the report. The human rights issues included credible reports of: killings by insurgents; extrajudicial killings by security forces; forced disappearances by antigovernment personnel; torture and cases of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment by security forces; physical abuses by antigovernment entities; arbitrary arrest or detention; serious problems with the independence of the judiciary; serious abuses in internal conflict, including killing of civilians, enforced disappearances and abductions, torture and physical abuses, and other conflict-related abuses; unlawful recruitment and use of child soldiers and sexual abuse of children, including by security force members and educational personnel; serious restrictions on free expression and media by the Taliban, including violence against journalists and censorship; severe restrictions of religious freedom; restrictions on the right to leave the country; serious and unreasonable restrictions on political participation; serious government corruption; serious government restrictions on and harassment of domestic and international human rights organizations; lack of investigation of and accountability for gender-based violence, including but not limited to cases of violence against women, including domestic and intimate partner violence, sexual violence, child, early and forced marriage, and other harmful practices; trafficking in persons for forced labor and commercial sexual exploitation; violence targeting members of ethnic minority groups; violence by security forces and other actors against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex persons; existence and use of laws criminalizing consensual same-sex sexual conduct; severe restrictions on workers' freedom of association and severe restrictions by the Taliban on the right to work for women; and the existence of the worst forms of child labor. [...]

After August 15, there were numerous reports of reprisal killings by Taliban fighters as they consolidated control of the country. The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and Human Rights Watch (HRW) received credible reports of more than 100 individuals associated with the previous administration and its security forces as being killed, tortured, or disappeared following the Taliban leadership's August announcement of a general amnesty. Taliban leaders denied these incidents reflected an official policy and claimed many were attributed to personal disputes. According to BBC news, Taliban fighters executed two senior police officials – Haji Mullah Achakzai, the security director of Badghis Province and Ghulam Sakhi Akbari, security director of Farah Province.

A November report by HRW documented "the summary execution or enforced disappearance of 47 former members of the ANDSF – military personnel, police, intelligence service members, and paramilitary militia – those who had surrendered to or were apprehended by Taliban forces between August 15 and October 31, 2021." Senior Taliban leaders declared a general amnesty and forbade reprisals, although reports persisted of local Taliban leaders engaging in such actions.

In November the Taliban conducted a crackdown in ISIS-K's stronghold province of Nangarhar, reportedly sending more than 1,300 additional fighters. These fighters arrested, killed, or disappeared scores of suspected ISIS-K collaborators in the campaign. Sources in Nangarhar reported observing dozens of decapitated bodies of alleged ISIS-K sympathizers in the crackdown's aftermath.

Thousands of those who worked for or supported the pre-August 15 government or foreign entities, as well as members of minority groups, sought to flee the country on or after August 15 due to fear of reprisals. Others left their homes to hide from Taliban conducting house-to-house searches for government officials. Unknown actors carried out numerous targeted killings of civilians, including religious leaders, journalists, and civil society advocates (see section 1.g.). [...]

There were numerous reports of torture and cruel, inhuman, and degrading punishment by the Taliban, ISIS-K, and other antigovernment groups. UNAMA reported that punishments carried out by the Taliban included beatings, amputations, and executions. The report showed that the Taliban held detainees in poor conditions and subjected them to forced labor. [...]

There were reports throughout the country in July, August, and September of the Taliban conducting raids on homes and establishments and the detention of citizens as political reprisals, despite assurances from senior Taliban leaders beginning in August that nobody would be harmed and that they did not seek to take revenge. UNAMA documented 44 cases of temporary arrests, beatings, threats and intimidation between August 15 and December 31, 42 of which were attributed to the Taliban. [...]

On September 6, Taliban fighters in Panjshir reportedly detained and killed civilians as a part of their offensive to consolidate control over the province. Reports of abuses remained unverified due to a Taliban-imposed blackout on internet communications in the province. According to Amnesty International, on the same day, the Taliban conducted door-to-door searches in the village of Urmaz in Panjshir to identify persons suspected of working for the pre-August 15 government. Taliban fighters executed at least six civilian men, with eyewitnesses saying that most had previously served in the ANSDF, but none were taking part in hostilities at the time of the execution. » Quelle: US Department of State (USDOS), 2021 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Afghanistan, 12. April 2022: www.ecoi.net/en/document/2071122.html.

Washington Post, 8. Juni 2022:

« Taliban forces have been locked for months in a shadowy on-again, off-again battle with opposition fighters based in the Panjshir Valley. Just a few hours' drive north of Kabul, the province has long been an anti-Taliban stronghold and remains the only significant pocket of resistance to the group since the fall of Kabul last August.

The Washington Post secured a rare visit to the mountains and villages where the fight is playing out, getting a glimpse of a conflict that the Taliban has gone to great lengths to conceal.

Taliban officials flatly deny there is any violence in the area, even though thousands of the group's forces are visible across the valley. "Everything here is fine," insisted Nasrullah Malikzada, the Taliban's local information director in Panjshir. "There is no fighting at all."

Yet residents say assaults on Taliban positions are a regular occurrence, and dozens of people have been killed, with some civilians imprisoned in sweeping arrests. Those residents spoke on the condition of anonymity or used only one name for fear of reprisals.

The clashes in Panjshir are unlikely to pose an imminent threat to the Taliban's control of the province or the country, but the violent resistance here punctures key narratives propping up the movement's claim to legitimacy: that its rule has brought peace to Afghanistan and that its fighters are capable of maintaining security.

When the Taliban swept into Kabul in summer 2021 and the Afghan military melted away, a small band of fighters in the Panjshir held out for weeks. The Taliban claimed to have taken full control of the valley in September, but spokesmen for the National Resistance Front say they never surrendered.

Panjshir has a long history of resistance: It was the one province Taliban fighters were never able to pacify after taking Kabul for the first time in 1996. **The current anti-Taliban movement is led by Ahmad Massoud — the son of legendary resistance leader Ahmed Shah Massoud, who was assassinated by al-Qaeda two days before the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the United States — and former vice president Amrullah Saleh. Both men fled Afghanistan in late 2021, but they continue to direct operations from exile and are believed to command thousands of fighters.**

A commander of approximately 100 fighters in Panjshir said the opposition is mostly armed with weapons shipped into Afghanistan across its borders with Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. But the munitions, including heavy weapons such as rocket launchers, are not enough.

"We are supported by several countries, but we need more," he said, speaking on the condition of anonymity for security reasons.

Taliban leaders have sought to contain news from Panjshir by limiting access to the valley and issuing sweeping denials when confronted with reports of fighting. [...]

Under Taliban rule, information that challenges the official line is increasingly difficult to verify. The country's media landscape has shrunk, civil society faces constant intimidation, and human rights groups have either disbanded or operate under severe limitations.

In Panjshir, there are competing, one-sided narratives. As the Taliban maintains that all is calm, spokesmen for the resistance post near-daily social media updates on their armed struggle. Residents have learned to be skeptical.

"There is a lot of propaganda [on both sides] in the war in Panjshir," said a farmer in Dara village who was once a member of the Afghan police force.

The farmer says he often sees the bodies of dead Taliban fighters driven away in the back of trucks after battle, though he thinks claims by the resistance to have killed more than 300 fighters over the past month are greatly exaggerated.

“It’s a big province. People in one village don’t necessarily know what’s going on in another every single day,” said Ali Maisam Nazary, the head of foreign relations for the resistance. Nazary said the group’s information comes from commanders on the ground and informants inside the Taliban.

The farmer believes both sides are playing down civilian casualties. After a recent clash, he said he attended back-to-back funerals for 10 people killed in the crossfire in his village alone. Talking to friends and family elsewhere in the valley, he estimated the total number could have been four times that in a single day.

Both the Taliban and the National Resistance Front claim that no civilians have been killed in the recent fighting.

“Maybe two or three people have died, [but] it was probably from the cold or from falling off a mountain,” said Malikzada, the Taliban’s information minister. “No one has been killed in clashes.”

Clashes have increased since the end of the holy month of Ramadan in May, according to residents interviewed by The Post. Spring has always marked the beginning of Afghanistan’s fighting season, as the weather in the north becomes milder and makes it easier for fighters to maneuver.

The attacks have become more brutal as casualties have mounted on both sides, according to a tribal elder, Tawhidi, who spoke on the condition that he be identified only by his last name for fear of reprisals. He said he has witnessed Taliban fighters carrying out summary executions after suffering losses in an assault and has heard similar reports from other parts of the valley. [...] » Quelle: Washington Post, Inside the Taliban’s secret war in the Panjshir Valley, 8. Juni 2022: www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/06/08/afghanistan-panjshir-valley-taliban-resistance/.

Die Schweizerische Flüchtlingshilfe (SFH) setzt sich dafür ein, dass die Schweiz das in der Genfer Flüchtlingskonvention festgehaltene Recht auf Schutz vor Verfolgung einhält. Die SFH ist der parteipolitisch und konfessionell unabhängige nationale Dachverband der Flüchtlingshilfe-Organisationen. Ihre Arbeit finanziert sie durch Mandate des Bundes sowie über freiwillige Unterstützungen durch Privatpersonen, Stiftungen, Kantone und Gemeinden.

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