3.2.5. The Pakistani police

COMMON ANALYSIS
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Pakistan’s police consist of federal and provincial police organisations operating under separate administrative structures. Police structures are organised hierarchically, with district police officers reporting through regional and provincial chains of command headed by an Inspector General of Police. In addition to regular police forces, specialised bodies such as Counter Terrorism Departments (CTDs) operate within the provincial systems.

In the former FATA, civilian policing had traditionally been carried out by the Levies and Khasadars paramilitary forces. Following the merger of FATA with KP, both forces were gradually absorbed into the provincial police structure, although reports indicated that inadequate training and continuing tribal loyalties remained significant concerns. In 2025, the Frontier Constabulary, formerly a KP-recruited paramilitary force tasked with border law and order, was transformed into the nationwide Federal Constabulary, now operating across Pakistan, including in operations against criminal gangs and smugglers.

Police forces in Pakistan have been widely criticised for systemic abuses and human rights violations. Extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances were reported. Torture was frequently used, mainly during arrests and interrogations, particularly to extract confessions, as well as arbitrary detention, including cases attributed to CTDs in Balochistan. Alleged bias and arbitrariness in handling criminal complaints, discouragement of crime registration, and inadequacies in preventing and responding to crimes were also noted. Sources also highlighted severe deficiencies in police training, contributing to an institutional reliance on force as a default response mechanism.

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