



Afghanistan Human Rights Center

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Press Release:

Report on the Human Rights Situation in Afghanistan (1404)

The Afghanistan Human Rights Center (AHRC) today, April 2, 2026, publishes its research report on the human rights situation in Afghanistan in the solar year 1404. Despite the restrictions and the repressive environment imposed within the country by the Taliban, the Center has been able to collect accurate and well-documented information on the situation of human rights.

The findings of this report indicate that the human rights situation in Afghanistan is gravely deteriorated. The majority of the population's rights and freedoms, particularly those of women, children, and ethnic and religious minorities are being violated in a widespread, systematic, and organized manner by the de facto authorities. Girls and women are deprived of most of their fundamental rights and basic freedoms, and discrimination against women is being enforced in its most severe forms.

Detainees, particularly former security personnel, employees of the previous government, civil society activists, women's rights advocates, journalists, and individuals associated with armed groups opposing the Taliban are subjected to ill-treatment and torture. Detention facilities operated by Taliban intelligence, especially Directorate 40, have become primary sites of torture. Some individuals have died as a result of severe torture. There are also reports indicating that some women's rights activists, in addition to being tortured in Taliban detention facilities, have been subjected to sexual harassment and abuse.

Journalists and media outlets are facing severe censorship and repression, and freedom of expression is being widely violated. The ruling authorities have imposed numerous verbal and written directives on domestic media, all of which have been issued with the aim of restricting, censoring, and intimidating the press. 17 journalists and media sector employees were detained by the Taliban authorities in 2025. Some of these journalists were released after a short period, while others have been sentenced to short- and medium-term imprisonment and are currently serving their sentences in prison. Since the return of the Taliban to power in August 2021, at least 165 journalists and media workers have been detained by the Taliban.

In 2025, at least 20 Afghan journalists were forced to return to Afghanistan from Pakistan. Dozens of other journalists are living in hiding due to fear of forced deportation. Currently, around 200 Afghan journalists, along with their families, remain in Pakistan. If returned to Afghanistan, they risk being identified by the Taliban and subjected to detention and torture. According to Reporters Without Borders, 43% of media outlets have disappeared, and more than two-thirds of the approximately 12,000 journalists active in 2021 have left the profession. Eight out of every ten women journalists have been forced to abandon their work. The small number of journalists still working under Taliban control face numerous restrictions, including lack of access to sources, bans on traveling without a mahram (male guardian), prohibition from appearing on camera in state media, workplace segregation, mandatory face covering, various forms of harassment, and extremely low or even unpaid salaries.

Access to justice has become severely limited for the majority of the population, particularly for women. The country's justice system, which had been based on modern legal principles, has regressed and now faces a bleak future. In the absence of a constitution and other modern laws, the justice system is administered through written and verbal decrees, as well as the discretionary practices of the de facto authorities.

In January 2026, the Taliban leader approved and promulgated a "Criminal Procedure Code for Courts". This document reflects a dangerous shift and redefinition of the criminal justice system, institutionalizing discriminatory classifications and reviving inhumane punishments. Its provisions indicate a deliberate and systematic transformation in criminal procedures, undermining the principles of equality, legality, and fair trial. The current justice system is characterized by disorder and arbitrariness. Sitting judges are Taliban-affiliated clerics, none of whom possess formal academic legal education.

In addition, the enactment and enforcement of the Law on the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice has significantly restricted many of the population's most basic freedoms,

affecting multiple aspects of daily life. This law has severely curtailed economic, social, political, and cultural rights. It has been instituted and implemented as a primary instrument for consolidating Taliban control, repression, monopolization, and domination over the people of Afghanistan. During the solar year 1404, in addition to the dozens of decrees issued and enforced in previous years that restricted fundamental rights and freedoms, more than 25 additional decrees limiting human rights were promulgated and brought into effect.

During the year 1404, Taliban courts issued hundreds of flogging sentences and discretionary punishments, resulting in 1,087 individuals being publicly flogged. These corporal punishments were carried out in most provinces of the country, with the overwhelming majority of victims being men. Women were often flogged on charges such as extramarital relations and “running away” from home.

In 2025, five individuals were executed on charges of intentional murder. On April 11, four men were publicly executed in the provinces of Badghis, Nimroz, and Farah. Since August 2021, a total of 12 individuals have been publicly executed by the Taliban. The death penalty has been carried out in public in the provinces of Farah, Laghman, Ghazni, Jawzjan, Badghis, and Nimroz, in the presence of hundreds of spectators, including children.

According to AHRC’s database, a total of 1,284 civilian casualties (310 killed and 974 injured) were recorded in the solar year 1404. More than 90 percent of these casualties resulted from border clashes between Taliban forces and Pakistani forces, as well as airstrikes conducted by Pakistani forces in various cities across Afghanistan. The primary burden of these conflicts is borne by Afghan civilians, with dozens of civilians killed or injured in each confrontation. Analysis of casualty data indicates that the majority of victims are women and children.

The majority of children in Afghanistan face widespread discrimination and deprivation. Key challenges confronting Afghan children include poverty, hunger, lack of access to quality education, inadequate healthcare services, sexual abuse, physical violence both at home and outside, forced and underage marriage, insecurity, trafficking, and recruitment into armed forces.

More than half of the country’s population, approximately 24.4 million people require humanitarian assistance, of whom 12.9 million are children. The deteriorating conditions have left 8.7 million individuals in a state of emergency-level food insecurity. According to United Nations statistics, 45 percent of child deaths in Afghanistan are attributable to malnutrition. Currently, the prevalence of acute malnutrition exceeds emergency thresholds in 27 out of 34 provinces, and the situation is rapidly worsening.

The quantity and quality of education in Afghanistan have sharply declined. Reductions in international aid, the absence of a responsive government, and the Taliban’s disregard for modern education have contributed to this deterioration. Restrictions on the education of girls and women, uncertainty regarding changes to the curriculum, insufficient investment and infrastructure, weak oversight of the education system, lack of adequate learning materials, a severe shortage of teachers—especially female teachers—and recurring humanitarian crises such as earthquakes, floods, and droughts have placed the education sector under increasing pressure, endangering the future of an entire generation. The de facto authorities have aligned educational objectives with their extremist and violent ideology.

Access to healthcare services in Afghanistan has also declined. Since January 2025, nearly three million people have lacked access to medical care, and by early 2026, an additional two to three million people may lose access to healthcare. In 2025, 364 health facilities were closed, and 220 more are at risk of closure due to reductions in international aid.

The Taliban have imposed restrictions on women’s employment, including in the health sector. Additionally, due to a climate of fear, a significant number of doctors and healthcare workers have left Afghanistan and sought refuge in other countries. These factors have resulted in a healthcare sector facing severe shortages of staff and funding. Women have been disproportionately affected by these developments, with the imposed restrictions further limiting their access to essential health services.

By publishing this report, the Afghanistan Human Rights Center hopes to draw greater attention from the international community, as well as national and international organizations, to the deteriorating human rights situation in the country, encouraging them to take concrete and necessary measures to halt human rights violations in Afghanistan.

The Afghanistan Human Rights Center will also hold an online press conference to provide further details of this report and to discuss specific recommendations with the international community and national and international organizations aimed at improving the human rights situation in Afghanistan. We look forward to your active participation in this online event.

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