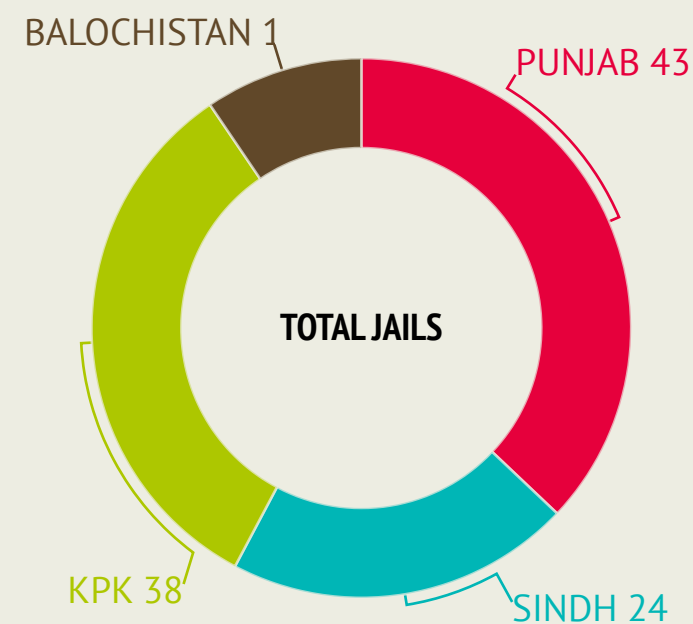


FACT SHEET

PRISON POPULATION OF PAKISTAN (2022)

Over the past two decades, national and international reports have cited ongoing problems in prison reform in the country. The most recent report published in this regard was launched by NACTA in 2018. This fact sheet aims to highlight the current scenario of Pakistani prisons while focusing on key issues such as overcrowding, significantly long under-trial period, lack of infrastructure, insufficient prison staff, inadequate medical facilities, and the problem of appropriately housing women and juveniles.

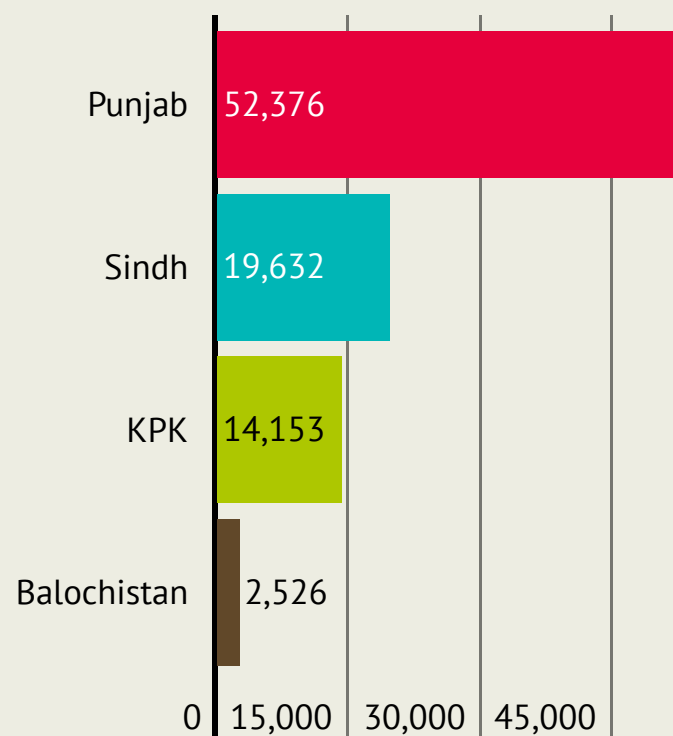
Figure 1: Number of Jails (Province wise)



Each province has a story of criminalization to maintain national security. In Punjab this is the criminalization of religious diversity for Islamic conformity; in Sindh, the criminalization of ethnic diversity as sub-nationalism; in KP the criminalization of dissent as militancy; and in Balochistan, the criminalization of disenfranchisement as separatism. This analysis pushes the boundaries of simplistic understanding of prison as a space of confining deviance to protect free society.

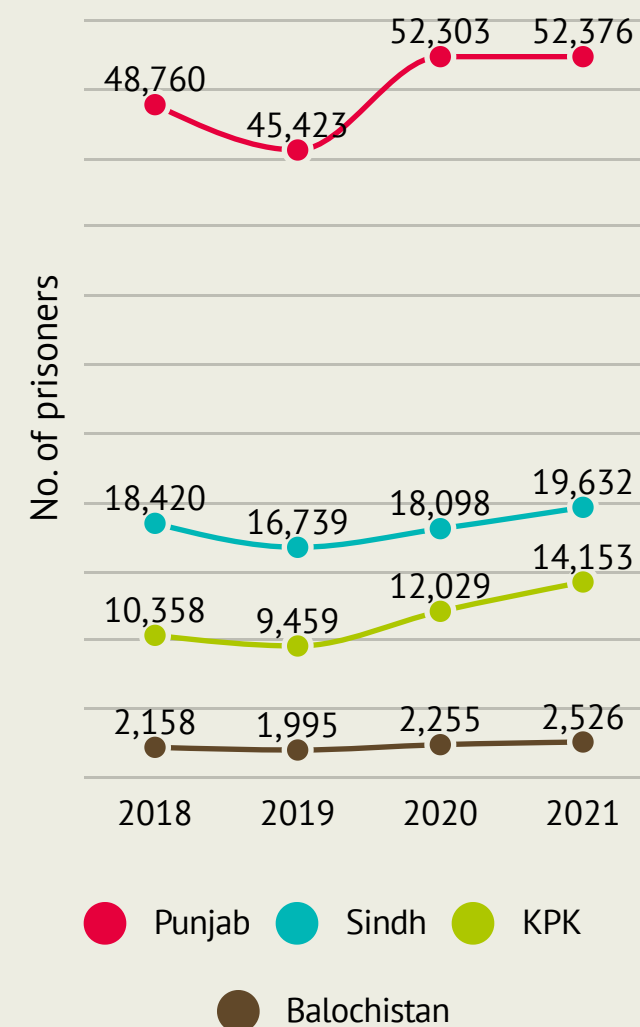
Currently, there are a total of 116 jails in Pakistan, with a total authorized strength of 65,168 prisoners. However, by the end of 2021, there were already 88,687 prisoners in Pakistani prisons – exceeding the sanctioned strength by 23,519 individuals (Figure 2, Figure 4).

Figure 2: Current Prison Population



It is important to note that Pakistan's prison population is increasing in all of the provinces (Figure 3), while jail capacity is significantly lower than the present strength of prisoners (Figure 4).

Figure 3: Increasing Prison Population Trends



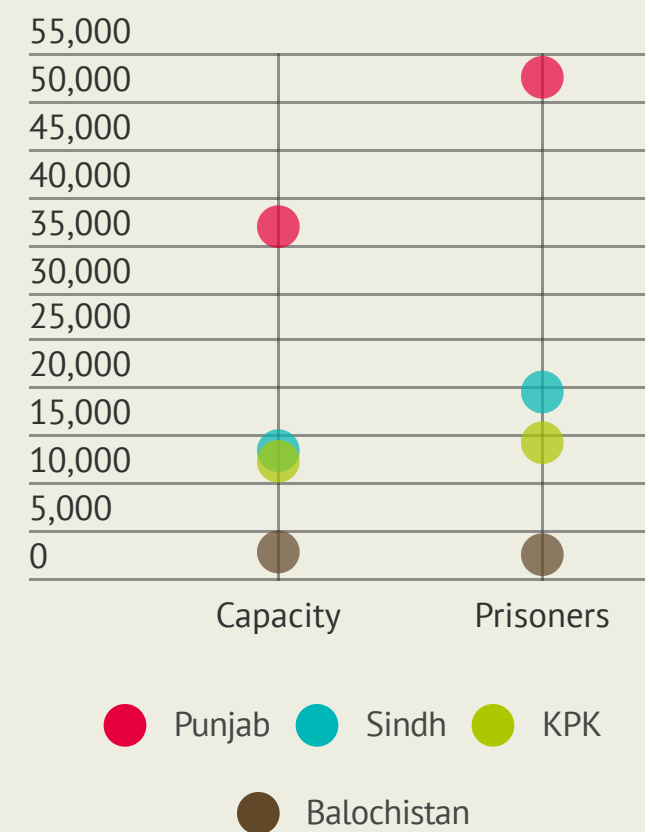
Pakistan's prisons are operating at **136%** of their actual capacity; while, **71.5% of the prisoners remain under-trial**. Provincial analysis of prison population indicates that all provinces, except for Balochistan, depict a considerable gap between authorized capacity and number of prisoners present in jails (Figure 4).

The prison population rate (per 100,000 of national population) is 38 based on an estimated national population of 226.09 million on September 2021 (from United Nations figures).

PUNJAB

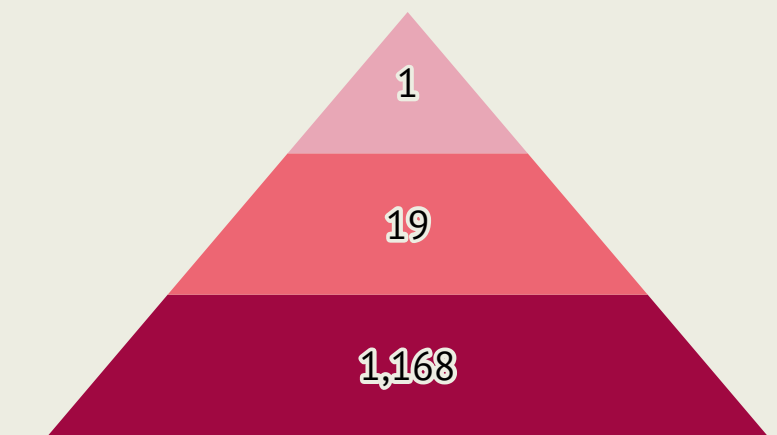
Punjab prisons have the largest share of prisoners in the country i.e., 59.1% of the total prison population. Punjab prisons are **operating at 142.3%** of their authorized capacity (see figure 4). Court backlog is seen as one of the primary causes of prison-related human rights violations as lengthy prosecutions contribute to a growing number of under-trial prisoners causing overcrowding, in which jails are then unable to spout the bottleneck in the legal process.

Figure 4: Prisoners' Strength Exceeding Capacity of Prisons (Province-wise)



According to the Punjab Prisons Department, there are currently 1,188 non-Muslim prisoners, including six women, housed in 34 jails across the province (see figure 5). Of these, 1,168 are Christian, 19 Hindu and 1 Sikh, with 829 currently under-trial; 320 convicted; and 39 condemned prisoners. The majority of prisoners belonging to religious minorities are in jails of Lahore and Rawalpindi.

Figure 5: Minorities Breakdown in Punjab Prisons



● Christians ● Hindus ● Sikhs

Under Rule 215 of the Punjab Prisons Rules, 1978, any convicted prisoner can seek remission in their sentence if they complete formal education and either memorize or finish study of their sacred book. While Muslims often complete their study of the Quran and are granted remission to their sentences, many minorities are unaware that they even have the option, leaving them without any viable avenue to reduce their prison terms. The sole province that has ever granted remission in sentence to a non-Muslim on the basis of study of their holy book is Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa.

According to Punjab Police Department, the arrests made during the past year (July 2021-Aug 2022) included **41,837** arrests for committing crimes like begging, water theft, kite flying, and crimes under sound system act, smoking act etc. (for breakdown, see figure 7).

Arrests under such petty offences* are mainly due to either criminalization of poverty or sectarian differences. The longer than expected under-trial period is due to factors like prison management, inmate treatment, and inadequate judge-to-prisoner ratio.

Figure 6: Percentage of UTPs (Province-wise)

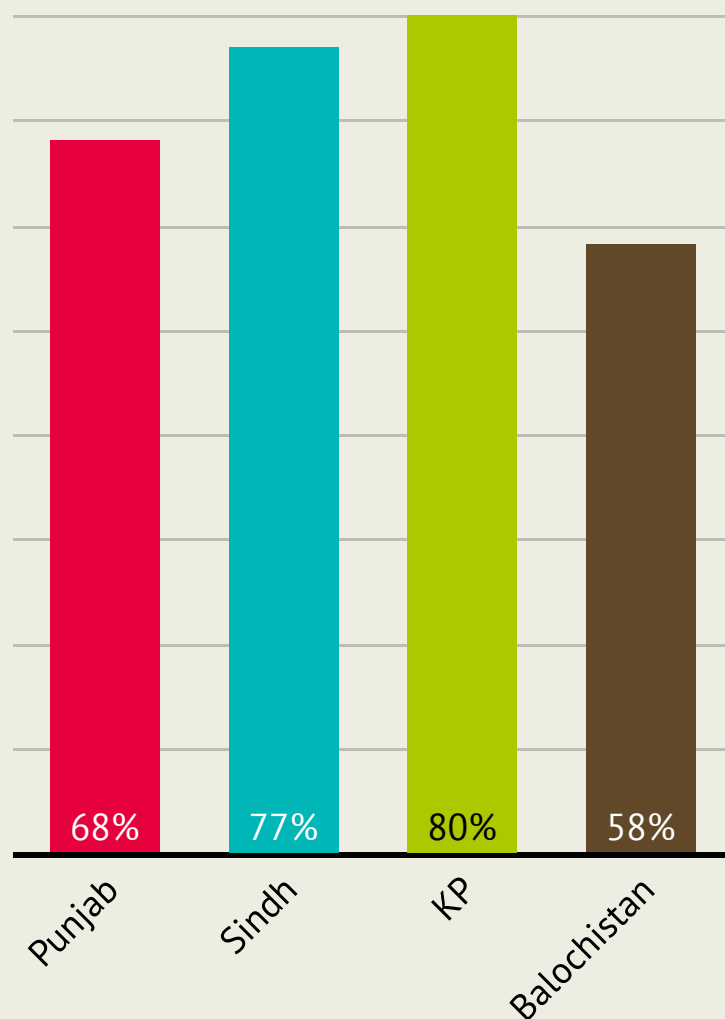
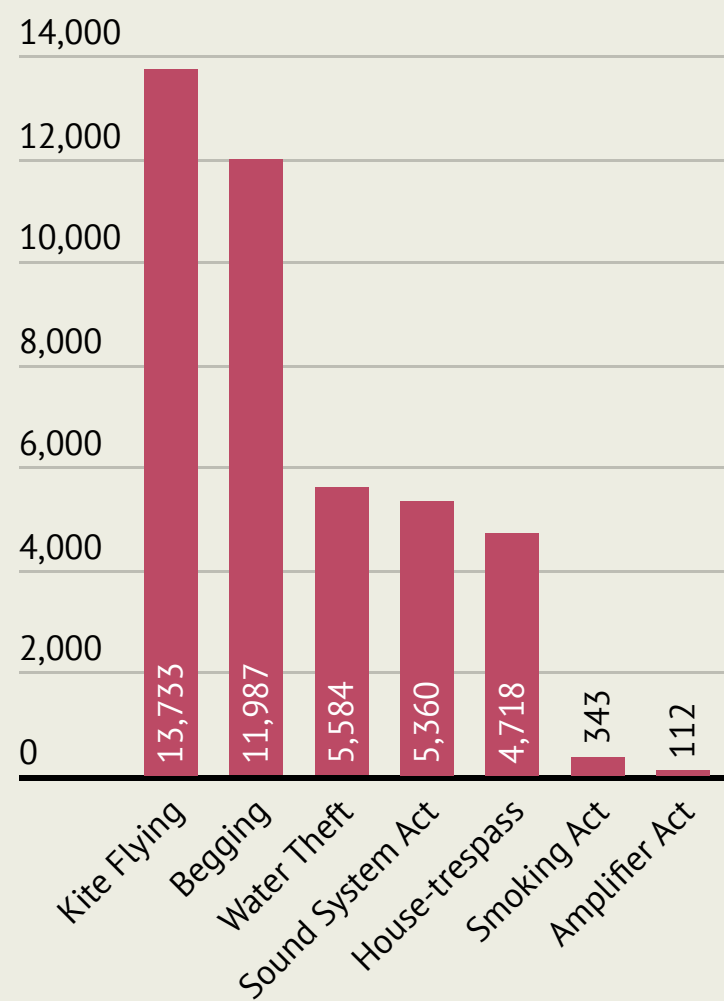


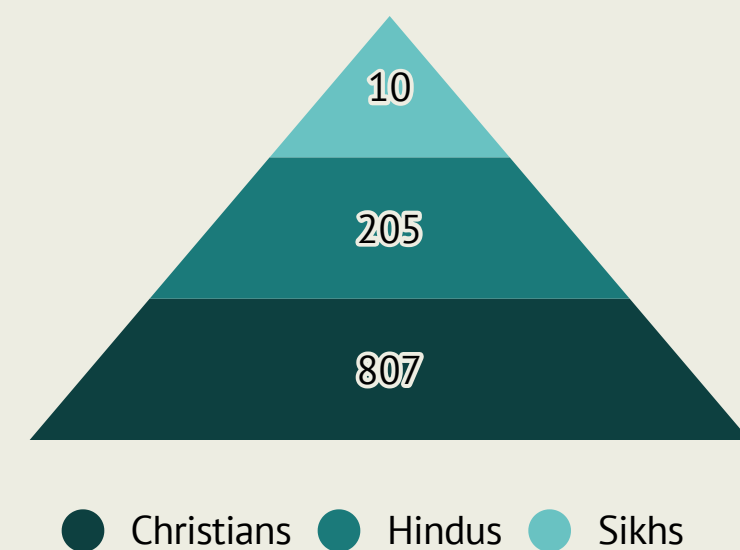
Figure 7: Arrests during July 2021-Aug 2022 (offence-wise)



SINDH

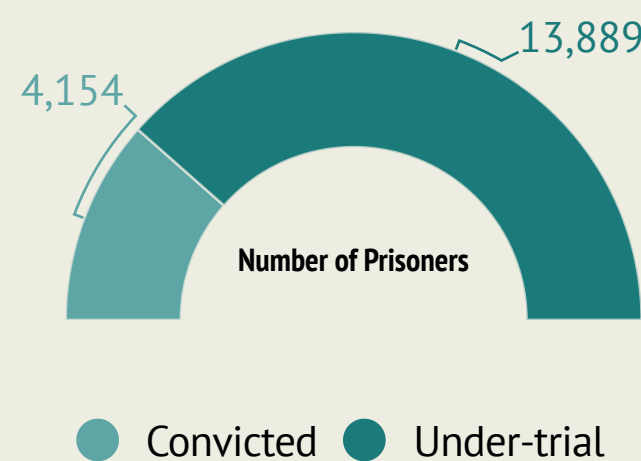
In Sindh, prisons are **operating at 145%** of their actual capacity which is highest among all the provinces in the country.

Figure 8: Minorities in Sindh Prisons



Moreover, population of under trial prisoners (UTPs) is also fairly large i.e., **77%** (Figure 6); whereas, major reasons behind highest number of UTPs include paramilitary clean-up operations in its largest city, Karachi, and interior have seen ethnic violence clash with an urban police state. As they complete their sentences, prisoners find themselves moving through different incarceration facilities. Further, the use of varying jail locations overlays the use of their individual spaces for the segregation of prisoners by ethnic identity and this becomes a spatial map for the securitization of Sindh itself.

Figure 8: Status of Prisoners in Sindh



According to Sindh Prisons Department, there are currently 1,022 non-Muslim prisoners housed in 24 different jails across the province. Of these, 336 are under-trial—184 Christians, 142 Hindus, 10 Sikhs—and 666 are convicted prisoners—21 Christians and 665 Hindus (see aggregate in Figure 8).

KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

Although KP observed significant increase in number of jails over past five years (Figure 9); number of prisoners still remain considerably higher than the authorized capacity (Figure 10).

Figure 9: Number of Jails (Yearly data)

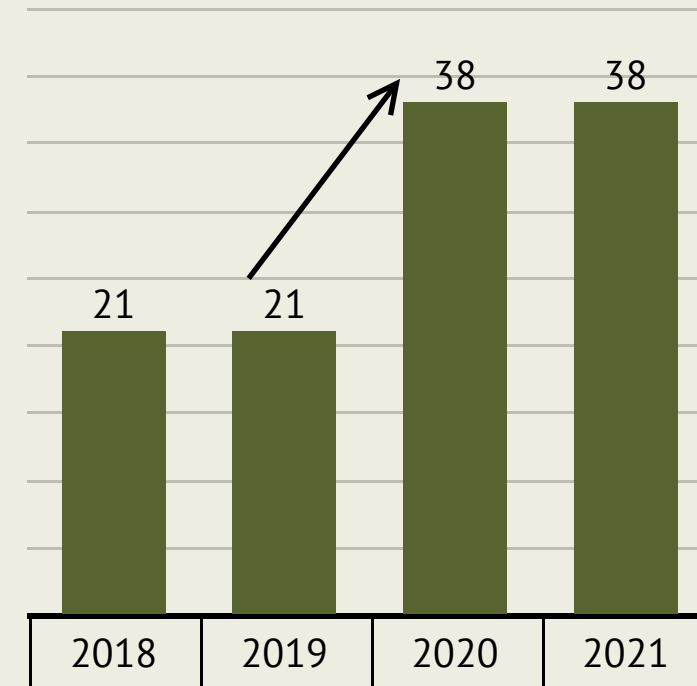
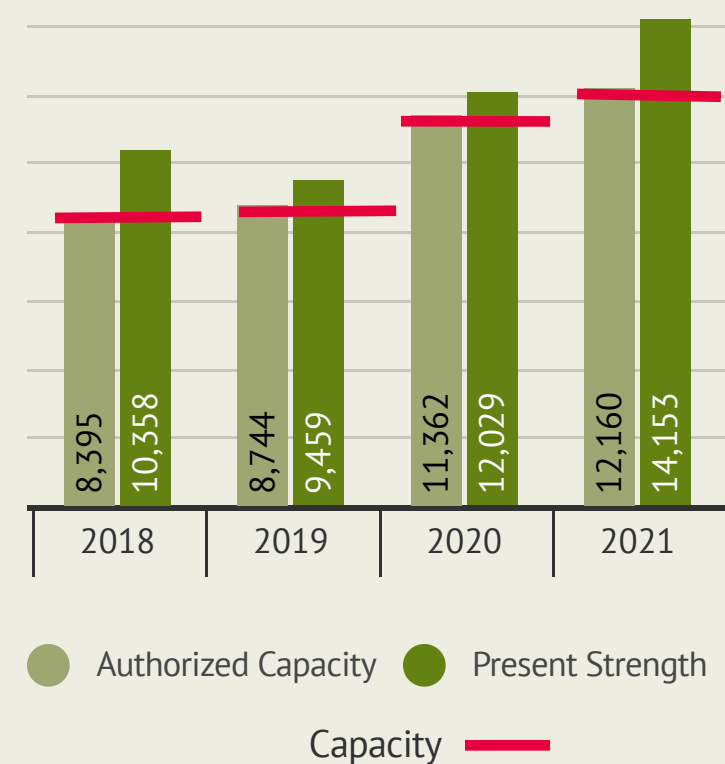


Figure 10: Authorized strength Vs number of prisoners in KP over the years



Currently, there are approximately 1,993 prisoners than the incarceration facilities in KP can accommodate. Also, 80% prisoners remains under trial without any conviction. Reasons behind significantly high proportion of under-trial population include criminalization of politicization. Qualitative data collected in this regard depicts that prisoners from FATA experience kinds of segregation that remind them they are being separated from other prisoners in order to prevent their ability to spread dissent. Through this, the silencing of their politicization is achieved in jail in a way that security forces are unable to ensure in wider society.

BALOCHISTAN

Balochistan jails do not suffer from overcrowding (Figure 4); however, these prisons face multiple issues stemming from under-sourcing and disenfranchisement. To begin with, Balochistan, a province of 26 districts, has jails in 11 districts which automatically puts a barrier to the possibility of regular/ frequent meetings of prisoners with their distantly located families. On top of that, there is **no PCO facility** in Balochistan jails. Thus, contact with the outside world (Mandela Rule 58) for inmates is quite limited which leads to prisoners being emotionally distressed and having little to no contact with the outside world can cause chronic stress (which is likely to lead to the mental health issues too).

Owing to the poor conditions of prisons that result from overcrowding, prisoners become subject to physical and mental illnesses; whereas, there are **no physiologists/ psychiatrists** appointed in Balochistan prisons to analyze mental health of prisoners.

Further, there are no separate jails for women in Balochistan and only two prisons (Quetta jail and Gadani jail) have separate barracks for women. Balochistan has no separate jails for juveniles or transgenders. Moreover, the province, unlike Punjab, has **no Borstal institution or juvenile reformatory centers** for under-age prisoners.

It is not just prisoners in Balochistan that face consequences of under-sourcing, lack/mismanagement of non-development budget results in follows:

1. No daily allowance (DA) or prison allowance for prison officials
2. Inadequate medical allowance.
3. Except for Quetta jail, there are **no fencing walls (“chaar deewari”) in Balochistan jails.**
4. Out of 2,100 prison officials, 200-250 are appointed in protocols for other public offices in the province.

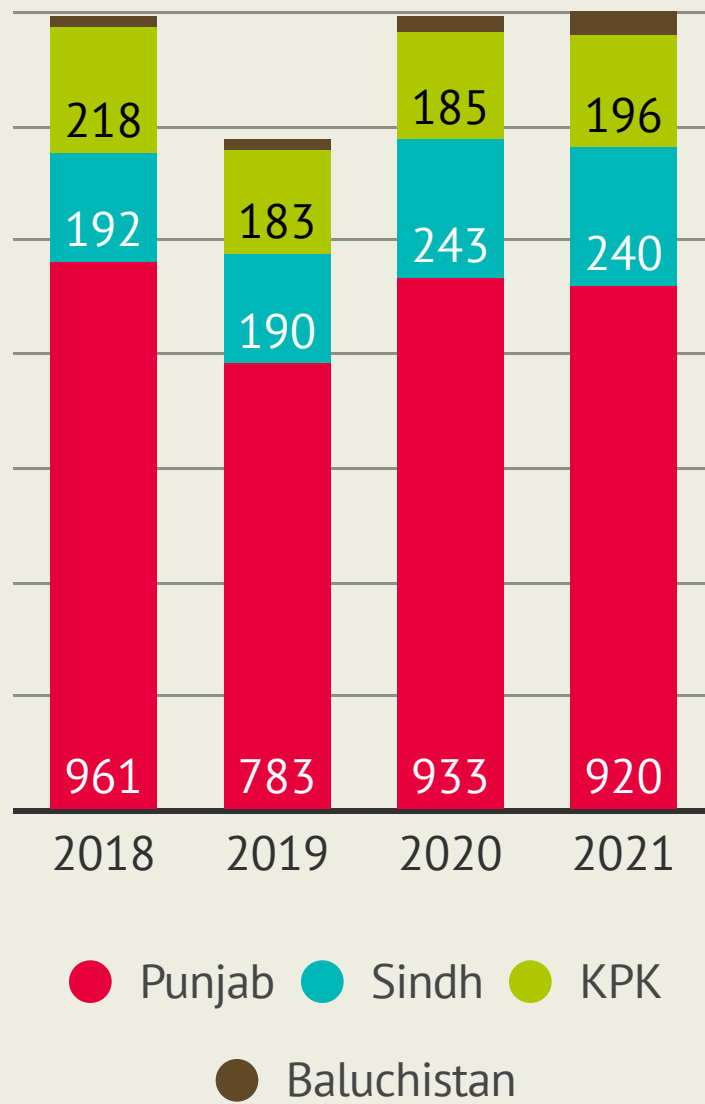
Table 1: Facilities Breakdown in Balochistan

Number of Prison Vans = 0
Number of PCOs = 0
Separate Jails for Women = 0
Juvenile Reformatory Centers = 0
Number of Psychologists/ Psychiatrists = 0

WOMEN & JUVENILES

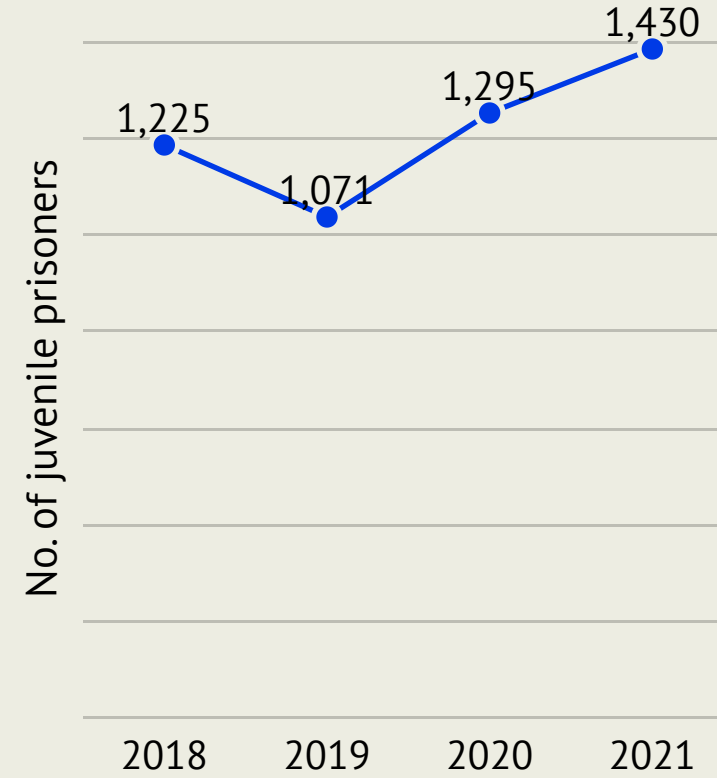
Currently there is a total of 1,399 women prisoners and 1,430 juveniles in Pakistani jails. The year-wise breakdowns depict constant increase in both women and juvenile prisoners’ populations (figure 11-12); whereas, jails in the country lack infrastructure and facilities to accommodate needs of such vulnerable inmates.

Figure 11: Female Prisoners Over the Years (province-wise)



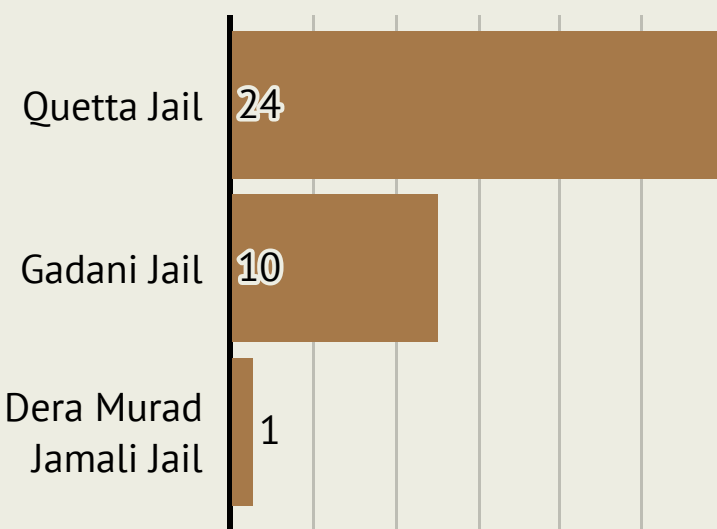
According to data obtained by CODE Pakistan, only Punjab and Sindh have separate jails for women and juveniles (see Table 1).

Figure 12: Juvenile Prisoners in Pakistani Jails (year-wise)



According to Balochistan prison department, there are 35 female prisoners currently in 3 jails in Balochistan (24 in Quetta jail, 10 in Gadani jail & 1 in Dera Murad Jamali jail); out of these 35, 2 female prisoners are mothers with a total of 3 children while there are **no separate cells for female prisoners with children.**

Figure 13: Female Prisoners in Balochistan (Aug 2022)



Male prisoners in Balochistan have earning opportunities like shoe-making, sewing ladies’ purses etc.; whereas, there are no earning opportunities for female inmates in the province.

According to the Bangkok Rules (4), female prisoners should be held in prisons close to their home districts. However, currently approximately 27% of female prisoners in Pakistan are being held in prisons away from their homes, which is severely detrimental in terms of close family contact. This comprises a total of 298 female prisoners who are located in prisons away from their homes. Half of these are female prisoners in Punjab, 58 in Sindh, 60 in KP, and 7 in Balochistan. There are a total of 134 incarcerated mothers with children residing in Prisons in Pakistan. 83 in Punjab, 16 in Sindh, 29 in KP, 2 in GB, and 4 in Balochistan. While children may stay with their mothers in prisons until the age of 5 according to the Pakistan Prison Rules, it is doubtful whether these children are provided with alternate housing or accommodation after being separated from their mothers. In practice, however, reports have found instances of children residing in prison with a parent beyond these age limits - in some cases up to the age of 9 or 10.

Data Sources/ References

- Punjab Prisons Department
- Sindh Prisons Department
- KP Prisons Department
- Balochistan Prisons Department
- Federal Ombudsman Reports 2018-2021
- Ministry of Interior (<https://www.interior.gov.pk>)
- Punjab Police Department
- Cursor for Development and Education Pakistan (CODE), Pakistan
- National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA)
- https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/Nelson_Mandela_Rules-E-ebook.pdf
- https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/Bangkok_Rules_ENG_22032015.pdf

Note: *There is no defined concept of petty offences in Pakistan. The usual classification is cognizable offence (serious crimes) and non-cognizable offence (usually less serious). However, some cognizable offences have very little punishment while some non-cognizable offences have harsh punishments like imprisonment for 7 years. Therefore, data on petty offences is not relied on this classification and have employed the Common Law concept of petty offence (and an established concept in USA) which is usually considered the one in which punishment is very less and not exceeding one year imprisonment.

Data Analysis & Research

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