



Travel



19

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Pakistan Tactical (UPDATE): UK revises travel advisory, security heightened due to international sports event until March 9; maintain vigilance

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Current Situation:

- The UK revised its travel advisory for Pakistan in response to scheduled international sporting events, citing concerns regarding potential threats from militant groups targeting these events.
- The authorities intensified security measures in response to those events scheduled to take place in Lahore, Karachi, and Rawalpindi from February 19 to March 9.
- In Punjab Province, more than 12,000 officers and personnel are deployed to ensure security during the matches at Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium and Rawalpindi's Cricket Stadium.
- In **Lahore**, over 8,000 officers and personnel are assigned to security operations. This includes 12 senior officers, 39 Deputy Superintendents of Police (DSPs), 86 inspectors, and 700 upper subordinates. Additionally, 6,673 constables and 129 female constables will be responsible for security enforcement and screening procedures.
- Similarly, in **Rawalpindi**, 5,000 officers and personnel are deployed, comprising six senior officers, 15 DSPs, 50 inspectors, 500 upper subordinates, 4,000 constables, and more than 100 female personnel.
- Furthermore, the Punjab Police announced the deployment of 10,000 artificial intelligence

(AI)-powered facial recognition cameras, along with additional CCTV cameras across Lahore and Rawalpindi to enhance surveillance capabilities.

- In **Karachi**, the police established an additional Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) unit to respond to emergencies and have conducted preventive intelligence operations to identify potential security threats.
- Additionally, the Pakistani army and paramilitary forces are stationed as a secondary response unit to manage emergency situations.

Source: [GeoTV](#), [Express Tribune](#), [UK Advisory](#), [Dawn](#)

Assessments & Forecast:

1. The security measures are preemptive in nature and align with standard security protocols associated with major international events. While heightened security will be maintained nationwide throughout the duration of these events, the most significant deployments and related travel restrictions will be concentrated in key urban centers, including Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore, and Rawalpindi. Additionally, disruptions to inter-city transportation and long-distance logistics are expected to persist until March 9, primarily due to potential route closures and restrictions aimed at facilitating the movement of attendees, including foreign nationals.
2. Besides, the recent revision of the UK's travel advisory largely stems from elevated militant threats, stemming from the sustained presence of militant outfits such as Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Baloch insurgent factions in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). This reassessment gains further urgency following the US Embassy's [security alert](#) regarding a TTP-released threat video targeting Faisal Mosque in Islamabad on February 12. Given the heightened prominence of such events, militant groups will likely seek to exploit public gatherings by staging plots in proximity to those events' sites. Precedents underscore this risk, as evidenced by the 2009 attack on a bus transporting Sri Lankan cricket players in Lahore, which resulted in multiple casualties. Nevertheless, considering the limited operational capability of such groups in urban centers, the threat of militant plots remains low.
3. In addition, the authorities are anticipated to implement prohibitory orders and extend travel restrictions to multiple areas throughout the duration of the events until March 9. Furthermore, an increase in vehicular and identity checks are expected in major urban centers during this period. Significant disruptions to travel and business continuity are expected.

Recommendations:

Those operating or residing in Pakistan until March 9 are advised to maintain vigilance due to the heightened security measures and associated potential militant risks while allotting for travel disruptions.