

# CLAWS Newsletter



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by Shreeya Shubhi Mohanty

## Domestic Affairs

### **26 May (Khama Press ; World Food Programme Report): **Afghanistan Ranks Fifth Globally in Acute Hunger, according to UN Report.****

The Global Report on Food Crises, 2026. Released by the Global Network on Food Crises. Ranked Afghanistan 5th amongst the world's worst-affected countries for acute hunger. According to the report approximately 17.4 million Afghans, roughly representing 36% of the population are facing acute food insecurity, while 4.7 million people remain in emergency or famine like conditions. The report identified conflict, climate shocks, conditions of war and declining international aid as the primary drivers of the worsening crises. Afghanistan's prolonged economic collapse has significantly deepened the vulnerabilities. Aid agencies have warned that without sustained intervention, food insecurity could further destabilize livelihoods, child welfare and broaden national stability. The findings underscore that Afghanistan's humanitarian crisis is increasingly evolving into a structural security and development challenge.

### **28 April (Khama Press; French Republic): **France Sends 42 Tonnes of Humanitarian Aid to Afghanistan via EU Air Bridge.****

France delivered 42 tonnes of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan through the European Union Humanitarian Air Bridge, including therapeutic food and medical supplies for approximately 3,200 malnourished children. The shipment is part of the EU-led emergence supply initiative launched in March 2026, which has already transported over 270 tonnes of life-saving assistance to Afghanistan. Coordinated through UN Agencies, the effort highlights sustained international intervention amid worsening food insecurity and humanitarian distress.

### **April 28 (Khama Press; Reuters; Amu Tv.): **UNICEF Warns Afghanistan Could Face Severe Female Teacher and Health Workers Shortage by 2030.****

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the effort highlights sustained international intervention amid worsening food insecurity and humanitarian distress.

**30 April ([RSF 2026](#); [Khama Press](#)): Afghanistan Ranked 175th in 2026 World Press Freedom index Amid Continued Media Restrictions.**

Afghanistan ranked 175th out of 180 countries in 2026 World Press Freedom Index published by Reporters Without Borders, reflecting the country's deterioration in media freedom under Taliban rule. The report cited censorship, legal restrictions, journalist intimidation, and closure of independent media outlets as major factors contributing to Afghanistan's sustained decline in global press freedom rankings

**4 May ([UNICEF Report](#); [Khama Press](#)): UNICEF Says Over 20 Million People Received Healthcare Support in Afghanistan in 2025.**

UNICEF reported that more than 20 million people in Afghanistan received primary healthcare services in 2025, including 5.6 million children and 1.4 million infants. The agency also stated that 10 million mothers and children received nutrition support, while 2.7 million people benefited from emergency water and sanitation services, amid continuing efforts to address severe acute malnutrition across the country.

**4 May ([Dawat Media](#); [Khama Press](#)) UN Warns Afghanistan's Housing Crisis Is Worsening Amid Rising Returnee Pressure.**

UN-Habitat warned that rising returnee numbers and rapid urban expansion are worsening shelter and infrastructure pressures across Afghanistan. The agency stated that more than five million migrants have returned since 2023, while nearly four million people are expected to require emergency shelter assistance this year, with Kabul's growing informal settlements emerging as a major humanitarian concern ahead of the World Urban Forum in Baku.

**5 May ([OCHA](#) ; [Khama Press](#)): UN Warns Drought and Rising Food Prices Are Deepening Afghanistan's Humanitarian Crisis.**

OCHA reported that drought conditions in northern and western Afghanistan affected at least 3.4 million people in 2025, damaging crops, livestock, and rural livelihoods. The

crisis has been worsened by sharp increases in food prices, with the World Food Programme reporting staple food costs rising by up to 47 percent compared to last year, increasing pressure on vulnerable households already facing severe humanitarian conditions.

**5 May ([KabulNow](#); [Khama Press](#)): **WFP Warns Strait of Hormuz Disruptions Have Tripled Aid Costs to Afghanistan.****

The World Food Programme warned that disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz have tripled the cost of transporting food aid to Afghanistan, forcing agencies to reroute supplies through lengthy overland routes across seven countries. WFP said the alternative routes have added nearly three weeks to delivery times, slowing the distribution of essential assistance, including nutrition supplies for children. Aid agencies warned that rising transport costs, fuel prices and supply chain disruptions could worsen food insecurity in Afghanistan, where millions already depend on humanitarian support amid economic decline, climate shocks and declining international funding.

**6 May ([8AM Media](#)): **Afghan Education Activist Matiullah Wesa Wins France's 2026 Freedom Prize.****

Afghan education activist and Pen Path founder Matiullah Wesa was awarded the 2026 Freedom Prize in France after receiving votes from more than 18,000 young people across 75 countries. The award recognizes Wesa's advocacy for education and girls' schooling in Afghanistan following the Taliban's return to power. Wesa, who was detained by the Taliban for seven months in 2023, has remained a prominent voice calling for the reopening of schools for girls above grade six, which remain banned under current Taliban policies.

**10 May ([Afghanistan International](#), [8AM Media](#)): **Two Killed in Badakhshan During Anti-Poppy Protests.****

At least two people were killed and several others injured after clashes broke out between local residents and Taliban forces in Afghanistan's northeastern Badakhshan province during protests against poppy eradication campaigns. Residents reportedly resisted enforcement operations targeting opium cultivation, a key source of income in some rural areas. The Taliban administration has intensified poppy bans as part of its broader anti-narcotics policy, but enforcement has repeatedly triggered local unrest. Similar clashes

in other provinces have previously resulted in casualties, reflecting tensions between economic survival needs and state enforcement policies. The incident underscores ongoing instability in rural Afghanistan where governance and livelihoods frequently collide.

**7 May ([8AM Media](#); [Khama Press](#)): [Afghanistan Records One Maternal Death Nearly Every Hour, WHO Says.](#)**

The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that Afghanistan continues to experience extremely high maternal mortality, with nearly one woman dying every hour due to pregnancy-related complications. The crisis is attributed to weakened healthcare infrastructure, limited access to medical facilities, and shortages of trained health workers. The figures place Afghanistan among the countries with the highest maternal mortality rates globally, underscoring the ongoing humanitarian and public health crisis.

**10 May ([Khama Press](#)) [3,000 Cargo Containers Stranded in UAE Amid Middle East Conflict, Afghanistan Chamber Says.](#)**

The Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce reported that between 2,500 and 3,000 Afghan cargo containers are stranded in the United Arab Emirates due to disruptions caused by escalating tensions in the Middle East. The delay has affected supply chains for Afghan importers and exporters, leading to financial losses and trade uncertainty. Afghanistan, being heavily dependent on regional transit routes, is particularly vulnerable to geopolitical disruptions affecting Gulf shipping and logistics hubs.

## External Affairs

### **28 April ([TASS](#); [Khama Press](#)): Russia Warns Afghanistan Remains Major Source of Regional Terrorist Threats.**

Russian Defence Minister Andrey Belousov warned that Afghanistan remains a principal of regional terrorist threats, citing the presence of over 20 radical groups with approximately 15,000 fighters. Speaking at CSTO and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Security Meetings, Belousov highlighted the risk of extremist spillover, cross-border crime, and militant infiltration into Central Asia. Russia and regional partners have subsequently increased military coordination, border security measures and strategic engagement to address growing instability along Afghanistan's northern frontier.

### **29 April ([Kabul Tribune](#); [KabulNow](#)) Taliban and UK Envoy discuss Pakistan Border Tensions, Humanitarian Access and De-escalation.**

During meetings in Kabul, Taliban Officials called for an end to ongoing clashes with Pakistan, citing concerns over reported attacks on civilian areas and border instability. UK special representative Richard Lindsay urged diplomatic de-escalation, restoration.

### **30 April ([Khama Press](#); [Hashat e Subah Daily](#)): Pakistan Releases Over 500 Detained Afghan Migrants Amid Ongoing Deportation Crackdown.**

Pakistan released 527 detained Afghan migrants over the past week through the Spin Boldak and Torkham border crossings, according to Taliban authorities. The release comes amid Pakistan's intensified crackdown on undocumented Afghan nationals, with ongoing concerns over arrests, detention conditions and forced reparations affecting thousands of Afghan Refugees and migrants.

### **1 May ([Tawazon](#); [Khama Press](#)): Rights Groups Warn Afghan Embassy Closures Abroad Could Deepen Humanitarian Challenges.**

Human rights activists raised concerns that the closure or weakening of Afghan diplomatic missions abroad, including reported risks to embassy operations in Australia, could severely restrict consular services for Afghan migrants, women, and civil society actors. Advocacy groups warned that reduced diplomatic representation may limit

international support channels for Afghan citizens while increasing humanitarian and political vulnerabilities for diaspora communities.

**5 May ([Khama Press](#)): [Germany Defends Tougher Migration Measures and Deportation Policy for Criminal Asylum Seekers.](#)**

Germany defended stricter migration and border enforcement policies, including the deportation of asylum seekers classified as criminals, amid declining asylum applications across Europe. German officials said tighter controls and increased rejections reflect a broader European shift toward stricter migration management, while rights groups continue to raise concerns over deportations involving Afghan asylum seekers due to ongoing security risks in Afghanistan.

**5 May ([Khama Press](#)): [Pakistan's Former Envoy Warns Inclusive Governance Is Key to Afghanistan's Stability.](#)**

Former Pakistan special envoy for Afghanistan Asif Durrani warned that calls for externally driven “regime change” in Afghanistan risk distracting from the country’s deeper political challenges. In a statement posted on social media, Durrani said lasting stability depends on an inclusive and legitimate political system shaped by Afghans themselves rather than foreign agendas. He also criticized the Taliban for rejecting political pluralism and concentrating power within key leadership circles in Kabul and Kandahar, arguing that the lack of broader participation has weakened both domestic and international legitimacy.

**9 May ([Khama Press](#); [8AM Daily](#)): [Karzai Says Pakistan Seeking Recognition of Durand Line.](#)**

Former Afghan President Hamid Karzai accused Pakistan of using military and economic pressure to push Afghanistan toward formally recognizing the disputed Durand Line border. The Durand Line, established during British colonial rule, remains unrecognized by successive Afghan governments and is a persistent source of diplomatic tension. Karzai’s remarks come amid renewed cross-border strain and broader mistrust between Kabul and Islamabad. The statement reflects long-standing Afghan political resistance to formalizing the border, which many Afghan leaders view as historically imposed and politically sensitive.

**7 May ([News Nation](#) ; [Khama Press](#)): Former US Detainee Says He Was Held 14 Months Without Charge in Afghanistan.**

Dennis Coyle, a former US detainee, claimed he was held for 14 months in Afghanistan without formal charges. He described the detention as politically motivated and emotionally distressing. Cases involving foreign nationals detained in Afghanistan have periodically drawn international attention, particularly regarding due process, transparency, and legal protections under the current governing system.

**10 May ([Afghanistan International](#); [Khama Press](#)): UNICEF Distributes Education Supplies to four million Children in Western Afghanistan.**

UNICEF announced the distribution of educational materials to 4 million children in western Afghanistan and helped build 232 schools, aimed at supporting access to basic learning amid ongoing restrictions and infrastructure challenges. The initiative focuses on providing school supplies, learning kits, and educational support in underserved regions. International agencies continue to play a major role in sustaining Afghanistan's education sector, especially in rural areas where resources are limited.

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**12 May ([Kazinform](#); [Atn News](#)) Afghanistan and Uzbekistan Sign 13 Trade Agreements at Business Forum.**

Afghanistan and Uzbekistan signed 13 trade and cooperation agreements during a bilateral business forum attended by officials and private sector representatives from both countries. The agreements focus on expanding trade routes, improving cross-border logistics, and strengthening economic cooperation in energy, agriculture, and transit connectivity. Uzbekistan has increasingly positioned itself as a key regional

economic partner for Afghanistan, particularly in promoting Central Asia–South Asia connectivity corridors.

**May 13 (*Amu Ty; Khama Press*): Taliban Signs \$46 Million Deal With Indian Company to Upgrade Border Laboratories.**

Taliban authorities signed a \$46.3 million agreement with Indian company TCRC to modernize laboratories in Kabul and at nine major Afghan border crossings. The five-year project includes advanced testing facilities for construction materials, electrical equipment, textiles, leather, and paper products, along with technical training for Afghan staff and efforts to secure international ISO certification standards. The deal reflects continued economic engagement between India and Afghanistan despite limited formal diplomatic ties. The agreement comes as border tensions with Pakistan continue to disrupt Afghan trade and transit routes.

**,May 16 (*Hasht-e-Subh Daily; Khama Press*): CENTCOM Chief Says Afghanistan Remains Key Source of Terror Threat Monitoring.**

Brad Cooper, head of US Central Command (CENTCOM), told US lawmakers that Afghanistan remains “at the forefront” of American counterterrorism monitoring due to continued concerns over militant activity. Speaking during a congressional hearing, Cooper said the United States is coordinating with regional partners to contain and disrupt threats emerging from Afghanistan and remains prepared to respond to potential security risks. His remarks reflect ongoing US concerns about extremist groups operating in the region following the 2021 withdrawal of American forces, although Taliban authorities continue to deny that terrorist organizations are active on Afghan soil.

## REFUGEE CRISIS AND MIGRATION

### **28 April ([BBC](#); [Khama Press](#); [CAIR, Washington](#); [Khama Press](#)): Over 1000 Afghan Refugees in Qatar Face Continued Resettlement Uncertainty.**

Over 1,000 Afghan Refugees in Qatar remain stranded amid delayed US resettlement processing and uncertain third-country relocation plans. Many, including former US allies and their families, have spent over a year at Camp Al-Sailiya awaiting decisions on permanent relocation. Refugees have cited prolonged uncertainty, limited official communication and concerns over returning to Afghanistan under Taliban Rule. However, a recent US federal court allowed Afghan Asylum cases to move forward, ensuring continued processing for thousands of Afghan refugees whose applications have faced prolonged uncertainty, who previously got affected by administrative restrictions. The decision offers renewed hope for displaced Afghan refugees facing ongoing uncertainty over relocation and asylum outcomes.

### **28 April ([GOV.UK](#); [Khama Press](#)): UK requires ARAP-Eligible Afghans to Self-Relocate to Third Countries for Resettlement Processing.**

The United Kingdom revised its Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP), requiring eligible Afghan Applicants to independently travel to third countries before British visa and relocation processing can proceed. Under the updated policy, direct evacuation from Afghanistan is no longer provided, affecting thousands of eligible applicants awaiting transfer. Applicants must not complete travel, biometric enrolment and documentation abroad within specified deadlines to retain eligibility for UK resettlement.

### **30 April ([Khama Press](#); [Amu Tv](#)): U.S. Senators Oppose Proposed Congo Transfer for Afghan Refugees Stranded in Qatar.**

A bipartisan group of 22 U.S. senators urged the Trump administration to reject reported plans to relocate more than 1,000 Afghan refugees stranded in Qatar to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The lawmakers said many of these refugees are former U.S. allies evacuated after 2021 and warned that forced relocation would place them in further uncertainty while undermining America's long standing resettlement commitments.

**30 April (OCHA ; Khama Press) OCHA Warns Pakistan Afghanistan Border Clashes Are Deepening Humanitarian Crisis.**

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that renewed border clashes between Taliban forces and Pakistani troops in Kunar and eastern Afghanistan have worsened humanitarian conditions, killing at least seven civilians and injuring dozens. OCHA said recent shelling and airstrikes damaged key civilian infrastructure, including educational, healthcare, and public service facilities, further intensifying humanitarian pressures in already vulnerable border regions.

**8 May (Khama Press; Dawat Media): Afghan Migrants Accuse Turkish Border Forces of Abuse Near Iran Frontier.**

Afghan migrants have accused Turkish border guards of physical abuse, including beatings and torture, along the Iran–Turkey border during attempted crossings. The allegations were shared through testimonies and video material circulated by rights monitors. Migrants continue to use irregular routes through Iran and into Turkey as part of broader migration flows toward Europe. The reports highlight ongoing risks faced by Afghan migrants in transit, including violence, exploitation, and detention along multiple border corridors.

**9 May (Khama Press; Tolo News): Qatar Urges US to Transfer Afghan Migrants from Doha Camp.**

Qatar has urged the United States to resolve the status of Afghan migrants housed at the Al-Sailiya camp near Doha by September 2026. The migrants were originally evacuated in the aftermath of Afghanistan’s political transition and remain in prolonged uncertainty regarding resettlement. Qatar’s request highlights mounting diplomatic pressure to finalize relocation arrangements, as the temporary facility continues to house individuals awaiting asylum decisions or third-country placement. The issue reflects broader global challenges in processing Afghan evacuees following the collapse of the previous Afghan government.

**9 May ([Khama Press](#); [Dawat Media 24](#)): Afghan Migrants in Tajikistan Fear Arrests and Deportation After Crackdown.**

Hundreds of Afghan migrants in Tajikistan are reportedly facing rising fear and uncertainty after a murder investigation triggered arrests and deportations. Local authorities have intensified scrutiny of Afghan nationals following the case, leading to concerns of broader collective punishment. Many migrants, including workers and asylum seekers, are now at risk of detention or forced return. The situation reflects increasing pressure on Afghan diaspora communities in Central Asia, where legal status and security remain fragile. Humanitarian organizations have previously warned that such crackdowns can push vulnerable populations back into unstable conditions inside Afghanistan.

**10 May ([Khama Press](#); [8AM Media](#)): Afghan Migrants in Pakistan Face Abuse, Detention and Forced Deportation, Rights Group Says.**

The Afghanistan Media Support Organization (AMSO) reported that Afghan migrants in Pakistan are facing arbitrary arrests, mistreatment, extortion, and forced deportation. The report highlights worsening conditions for Afghan refugees, many of whom have lived in Pakistan for years. Increased deportation drives and stricter immigration enforcement have intensified humanitarian concerns, particularly for undocumented families and vulnerable groups.

**10 May ([Kabul Now](#) ; [KhamaPress](#)): More Than 4,000 Afghan Migrants Return Home in One Day.**

More than 4,000 Afghan migrants reportedly returned to Afghanistan in a single day amid ongoing deportations and voluntary returns from neighbouring countries. The large-scale return movement reflects increasing migration pressure in host countries, particularly in Iran and Pakistan. Humanitarian organizations warn that Afghanistan's limited job market and weak infrastructure make reintegration extremely difficult for returnees, many of whom arrive without financial stability or long-term support.

**18 May ([Ariana News](#); [ORF](#)): [Afghanistan and China Advance Wakhan Corridor Road Project.](#)**

Taliban officials and Chinese representatives discussed progress on the Wakhan Corridor road project aimed at creating direct land connectivity between Afghanistan and China through Badakhshan province. Taliban authorities said initial construction work on the strategic route has been completed, while Chinese Ambassador Zhao Xing welcomed the progress and reaffirmed Beijing's support for infrastructure cooperation. The corridor is viewed as an important regional connectivity project that could expand Afghan trade access to East and Central Asian markets despite continuing logistical and security challenges.

**18 May ([DID Press Agency](#); [HT Syndication](#)): [Denmark Donates Over \\$5 Million to Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund.](#)**

Denmark pledged approximately \$5.49 million to the Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund managed by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). The funding is intended to support emergency humanitarian operations, including food assistance, healthcare, and essential services for vulnerable Afghan communities. UN agencies continue to warn that millions in Afghanistan remain dependent on humanitarian aid amid worsening economic hardship and declining international assistance.

**19 May ([UN Afghanistan](#); [Kabul Now](#)): [UN Launches \\$529 Million Plan for Afghan Returnees from Iran and Pakistan.](#)**

The United Nations and partner organizations launched a \$529 million response plan to support an estimated 2.7 million Afghan returnees expected from Iran and Pakistan between April and December 2026. The initiative focuses on emergency border assistance, shelter, healthcare, and long-term reintegration support as rising deportations and economic pressures continue to drive mass returns.

**May 20 ([Khama Press](#)): [CSTO & SCO to Discuss Afghanistan & Central Asia Security.](#)**

Regional organizations including the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) announced discussions centered on Afghanistan-related security threats and stability in Central Asia. Regional governments

continue to express concern over militancy, border insecurity, trafficking, and extremist activity linked to Afghanistan following the Taliban's return to power.

**May 21 ([Afghanistan International](#); [Khama Press](#)): **Russia and China Call Terrorism a Major Threat from Afghanistan.****

Russia and China reiterated concerns about terrorism and extremist threats emerging from Afghanistan, calling for stronger regional counterterrorism coordination.

Officials highlighted fears regarding ISIS-K and cross-border militancy despite Taliban assurances that Afghan territory will not be used to threaten other states.

**May 21 ([HT Syndication](#); [Sam Media](#)): **Kabul Announces New Talks with Turkmenistan on TAPI Pipeline.****

Taliban authorities announced renewed talks with Turkmenistan on the Turkmenistan–Afghanistan–Pakistan–India (TAPI) gas pipeline project. Afghan officials said the discussions are aimed at advancing regional energy connectivity and economic cooperation, although security concerns and financing issues continue to delay implementation of the long-pending project.

**May 21 ([South Asian Terrorism Portal](#); [Afghanistan International](#)): **Taliban Does Not Meet Conditions for UN Seat, Says Afghan Envoy.****

Afghanistan's representative to the United Nations, Naseer Ahmad Faiq, said the Taliban administration still does not meet the conditions required to formally occupy Afghanistan's UN seat. Responding to remarks by Taliban Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi, Faiq stated that legitimate international representation depends on inclusive governance, human rights commitments, and adherence to international obligations. The issue of diplomatic recognition remains unresolved nearly five years after the Taliban's return to power.

**May 21 ([Afghanistan International](#); [Amu Tv](#)): **Senior Taliban Delegation Visits Turkmenistan for Economic and Energy Talks.****

A senior Taliban delegation visited Turkmenistan for discussions on energy cooperation, electricity imports, mining, and regional connectivity projects. The delegation included Taliban officials responsible for mines, agriculture, and energy sectors. The talks are part of broader regional engagement efforts linked to

infrastructure projects such as the TAPI gas pipeline and Central Asian electricity connectivity initiatives

**May 23 (AP News; KTVB7): More Than 300 Afghans Released from Pakistani Prisons.**

Taliban authorities announced that more than 300 Afghan nationals were released from prisons in Pakistan and returned to Afghanistan. The releases come amid continuing tensions over migrant detentions, deportations, and cross-border security disputes between Kabul and Islamabad. Pakistani authorities have intensified immigration enforcement measures against undocumented Afghans in recent months.

**May 25 (AP News; KTVB7): Afghanistan Trade Disrupted by Regional Conflict and Strait of Hormuz Crisis.**

Regional instability linked to tensions around the Strait of Hormuz further disrupted Afghan trade and humanitarian supply chains. Aid agencies and businesses warned that Afghanistan's imports, fuel supplies, and humanitarian shipments have faced severe delays due to blocked transit corridors through Iran and Pakistan. The disruption has increased transportation costs and intensified economic pressure on Afghan markets already struggling with inflation and aid shortages of humanitarian aid routes, and strengthened regional dialogue. Discussions also covered migration, border security, girl's education and women's employment amid rising humanitarian and economic pressures.

## About the Author

Shreeya Shubhi Mohanty is a Research Assistant at the Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS) with a focus on strategic and security issues concerning Afghanistan and Pakistan.

She completed her B.A. (Hons.) in English from St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi and has a M.A. in International Studies from Christ University, Bengaluru.

Experienced in event management for national and international events, with professional expertise as a Communication Consultant at Synodical Board of Social Services. She is also a Certified Youth Resource Trainer with Local Capacities for Peace, with a strong background in communication, training, and organizational coordination.

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