



Pakistan 2016 Crime and Safety Report: Karachi

Travel Health and Safety; Transportation Security; Stolen items; Theft; Religious Terrorism; Anti-American sentiment; Riots/Civil Unrest; Religious Violence; Assassinations; Floods; Earthquakes; Employee Health Safety; Intellectual Property Rights Infringement; Surveillance; Rape/Sexual Violence; Hate Crimes; Drug Trafficking; Kidnapping; Disease Outbreak; Fraud; Counterfeiting; Hotels; Cyber

South Central Asia > Pakistan; South Central Asia > Pakistan > Karachi

3/29/2016

Overall Crime and Safety Situation

The U.S Department of State warns American citizens to defer non-essential travel to Pakistan. U.S. citizens, other Westerners, and their interests are at risk of being targets of violence.

Post Crime Rating: High

Crime Threats

Crime and safety in Karachi are major concerns. Many areas are considered unsafe due to high crime, lack of effective police control, and the presence of extremist elements and, thus, should be avoided. The areas in Karachi least prone to safety issues include Clifton, D.H.A., and PECHS, but even these areas experience serious crimes and thefts. Major areas of

The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.



northern and eastern Karachi are not recommended for travel due to the frequency of criminal activity and neighborhoods that are controlled by criminal/political gangs or are sympathetic to extremist organizations that are suspicious of, or hostile to, Westerners.

Although a large-scale security operation carried out by the Sindh Rangers and the Sindh Police has resulted in improvements in several categories, the violent crime rate remains high. It also remains to be seen if these improvements will endure when the security operations end.

Other Areas of Concern

U.S. officials throughout Pakistan are instructed to restrict the frequency of movements and to minimize the duration of trips to public markets, shopping centers, restaurants, and other locations. Depending on ongoing security assessments and as part of routine operational security measures, the U.S. Embassy and Consulates often place areas such as hotels, markets, and/or restaurants off limits to official personnel. All U.S. government and official travelers usually receive lodging on the Embassy and Consulate compounds.

Regional travel is not difficult to facilitate provided all necessary documents and permissions are in place prior to travel.

Crime and safety are significant concerns throughout the provinces of Sindh and Balochistan. Most parts of Balochistan province should be considered dangerous and volatile, including

The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.



Quetta, which has experienced high levels of violence. It is difficult to obtain government approval to travel in/around Balochistan.

Transportation-Safety Situation

Road Safety and Road Conditions

Vehicles are right-side drive, and traffic moves on the left side. Driving is chaotic and undisciplined. It is common that intersections have non-working traffic lights. Drivers may not adhere to the concepts of staying in lanes, turning etiquette, or use of mirrors. Traffic is extremely heavy on weekdays, especially during normal commuting hours. Aside from the main arteries through the city, roads are narrow, poorly illuminated in many areas, and not well marked/maintained. Driving outside the city at night is unsafe. Roads in many parts of Sindh and Balochistan provinces are poorly maintained. Highway robbery and banditry are frequent occurrences, especially in areas of Balochistan that the government has difficulty controlling.

Accidents are common, and motorists sometimes become violent when involved in routine collisions. Police generally do not respond to vehicle accidents, and there are no effective emergency medical response services. If an individual involved in a motor accident is in fear of his/her personal safety, s/he may depart the area but should proceed immediately to the nearest police station to report the incident.

The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.



Public Transportation Conditions

Use of public transportation is not recommended and should be avoided. For security reasons, U.S. government employees are prohibited from using any public transportation (buses, taxis, rickshaws, trains).

Aviation/Airport Conditions

There is a risk to U.S. civil aviation operating in the territory and airspace of Pakistan, particularly at low altitude, during the arrival and departure phases of flight, and when on the ground due to extremist/militant activity. In the summer-fall 2015, extremists/militants attacked two remote airfields in Balochistan province that resulted in a number of deaths and injuries.

During the August 2015 attack on Jiwani Airport (OPJI) in Balochistan province, extremists/militants destroyed an air traffic control radar.

In June 2014, extremists/militants attacked Jinnah International Airport (OPKC) in Karachi, resulting in over 30 deaths and damage to airport facilities.

Other Travel Conditions

All U.S. Consulate Karachi American employees are required to travel in fully armored vehicles for both official and unofficial movements. They are not permitted to self-drive.

The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.



Terrorism Threat

Post Terrorism Rating: Critical

Local, Regional, and International Terrorism Threats/Concerns

The presence of several foreign and indigenous terrorist groups poses a danger to U.S. citizens. Karachi and other areas of Sindh and Balochistan provinces continue to experience high levels of violence characterized by bombings, targeted killings, sectarian strife, extortion, kidnappings for ransom, and frequent demonstrations that can turn violent without warning. Tehrik-e-Taliban of Pakistan (TTP) and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) remain the most active terrorist organizations and are capable of planning and executing major attacks.

Incidents of terrorism and politically-motivated violence in Karachi, the remainder of Sindh province, and Balochistan province occur with regular frequency. A variety of groups, ranging from extremist religious elements to criminal gangs associated with local political organizations, orchestrate bombings, assassinations, and other acts of violence in Karachi with grim regularity, to include attacks on police and security forces. Over 160 police and Rangers were killed in Karachi in 2015.

The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.



Anti-American/Anti-Western Sentiment

There were a number of small, anti-American demonstrations in 2015, but the overall number and size declined from previous years. On April 16, 2015, an American citizen resident in Karachi was shot multiple times while driving on a busy street in a targeted attack with possible links to ISIL.

Political, Economic, Religious, and Ethnic Violence

Post Political Violence Rating: Critical

Civil Unrest

Political and sectarian civil unrest in Karachi can erupt at any time throughout residential and commercial areas and can quickly evolve into violent mobs. Transportation strikes and shutdowns occur frequently throughout the city, often in reaction to sectarian violence, political interests, or in protest of government policies.

Police have the capability to mobilize quickly and in force and have been largely effective in protecting diplomatic facilities and Pakistani government buildings. Visitors are advised to avoid demonstrations, large crowds, and public gatherings that appear to be political. Travelers should stay informed of the security situation throughout Pakistan and in Karachi

The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.



through the media and by monitoring U.S. government web sites:
<http://islamabad.usembassy.gov> or <http://karachi.consulate.gov>.

Religious/Ethnic Violence

Incidents of sectarian/ethnic violence in Karachi, the remainder of Sindh province, and Balochistan province continue unabated. A variety of groups representing extremist elements associated with Sunni and Shia sects carry out bombings and assassinations with grim regularity. Minority religious sects and groups are frequently targeted. In 2015, the Center for Research and Security Studies, Pakistan reported 175 people were killed in Karachi as a result of sectarian violence. These violent incidents often lead to retaliatory acts and demonstrations that can spiral out of control quickly.

Post-specific Concerns

Environmental Hazards

Sindh province is prone to floods that, in recent years, have devastated the infrastructure, agriculture, and industries and caused significant loss of life. Many roads, to include major thoroughfares, can flood with relatively small amounts of rain.

The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.



Pakistan is situated in a seismically active area. On September 24, 2013, a magnitude 7.7 earthquake struck the rural Awaran area in Balochistan, killing at least 825 people and destroying more than 21,000 homes. A lack of transportation infrastructure to the area, along with local apprehension of working with emergency authorities, contributed to Pakistan's difficulty in responding quickly to the disaster.

Critical Infrastructure Concerns

Drainage and infrastructure is poorly maintained. If a major earthquake were to occur near Karachi, extensive damage and loss of life would be expected due to poor and inadequate construction standards. Industrial safety and transportation standards fall well short of Western practices. There is little oversight or enforcement of government regulations or safety standards.

Economic Espionage/Intellectual Property Thefts

Counterfeit movies and other goods are widely available. Many garment factories wholesale factory seconds to local outlets, which sell them at a reduced price since they cannot be exported.

Privacy Concerns

The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.



Unauthorized access to personally identifiable information (PII) is quite possible. Few holders of information have adequate safeguards and access controls to prevent dissemination of sensitive personal information. Official intrusions into personal privacy are not well documented.

Personnel-Background Concerns

Men and women are advised to dress conservatively, with arms and legs covered, and to avoid walking alone. It is unwise for anyone to travel on the streets at night.

The Consulate continues to receive reports of U.S. citizen women subject to domestic violence, sexual harassment, verbal abuse, and forced marriage. There have been numerous cases of U.S. women having their and their children's passports confiscated by spouses or other family members and their freedom of movement severely restricted. Women who attempt to report these cases to local police may find their complaints not taken seriously. Nonetheless, U.S. women who find themselves in a life-threatening situation are encouraged to call the police immediately. Some Pakistani NGOs are able to provide assistance to victimized women within the Pakistani community.

Consensual same-sex sexual conduct is a criminal offense; however, the government rarely prosecutes such cases. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) persons rarely reveal their sexual orientation. No laws protect against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. Discrimination against LGBT persons is widely acknowledged privately, but insufficient data exists for accurate reporting on these forms of discrimination due in part to severe societal stigma and fear of recrimination for those who have come

The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.



forward. More detailed information about LGBT rights in Pakistan may be found in the State Department's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices.

Individuals with disabilities will find accessibility and accommodation very different from what is generally found in the U.S. Access for individuals with physical disabilities to public facilities is very limited in major cities and almost non-existent outside major population centers. The law provides for equality of the rights of persons with disabilities, but the legal provisions are not always implemented in practice. Families typically care for most individuals with physical and mental disabilities.

Drug-related Crimes

Drug-related crimes are not well documented by police. While illicit drug use occurs, knowledge of its frequency, type, and proliferation remains based mostly on anecdotal evidence.

Kidnapping Threat

Kidnapping is a serious threat in Karachi and throughout the provinces of Sindh and Balochistan. Criminal and extremist groups often target local businessman and prominent families to extort ransoms for profit or to finance operations. Ransoms are often negotiated and paid by families without police notification or involvement. U.S. citizens, and foreign and local employees of NGOs have been targeted for kidnapping. Groups that perpetrate

The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.



kidnappings are not frequently caught or brought to justice. Vetting of personnel and proper personal security procedures remains key to avoiding this kind of crime.

Police Response

The police services are below the professional standards of the U.S. due to a lack of training/resources and low salaries. The conduct of investigations, arrests, and prosecutions is also affected by political influence. The Karachi police have difficulty in responding to emergencies in many of the more violent areas of the city and are actively denied access to some neighborhoods.

How to Handle Incidents of Police Detention or Harassment

If arrested or detained by police, individuals are advised not to make any admissions, statements, or sign documents without consulting an attorney. Contact the Consular Section at the U.S. Consulate General in Karachi at (92)(21)3527-5000 as soon as possible, as authorities do not necessarily contact the foreign Consulate automatically when a citizen of another country is arrested. The Consulate provides limited assistance with an arrestee's immediate welfare and can provide local legal resource information and contacts. The Consulate does not resolve/investigate cases or take legal positions.

Crime Victim Assistance

The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.



The emergency number for the Karachi police is 15. All serious crimes should be reported to police, but crimes may also be reported to the Citizens-Police Liaison Committee at (92)(21)111-222-345.

Police/Security Agencies

The Special Police (SP) Foreigners Security Cells are responsible specifically for responding to any crime involving foreigners:

Karachi/Sindh SP Foreigners Security Cell: (92)(21)9920-6530

Balochistan SP Foreigners Security Cell: (92)(81)9201-1596

Medical Emergencies

The quality of hospital care and cleanliness is below U.S. standards. Medical facilities require pre-payment, and emergency medical care is only available in larger cities.

There is no standard ambulance/emergency medical service in Karachi and no air ambulance. A private service, Aman Ambulance Service, is the best available and can be reached from a cell or landline at (92)(21)1021 or (92)(21)111-112-626. Other ambulance services should be

The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.



considered merely as transportation without emergency medical personnel.

Contact Information for Recommended Hospitals/Clinics

The Aga Khan University Hospital in Karachi (Karachi Stadium Road, P.O. Box 3500 Karachi, 74800, Pakistan) is among the best in the city for medical and trauma care. The hospital may be reached at (92)(21)3493-0051. The Aga Khan Hospital accepts credit cards, but most other health care facilities do not.

Recommended Air Ambulance Services

Emergency medical evacuation by air is very expensive, and any personally-funded medical evacuation requires funding upfront. Insurers typically coordinate medical evacuations with their contracted air ambulance service directly.

Recommended Insurance Posture

Travelers should confirm overseas hospitalization and medical coverage with their health insurance company before travel. Local hospitals generally do not accept insurance as payment. Travelers must seek reimbursement from their insurer.

The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.



Country-specific Vaccination and Health Guidance

Take steps to avoid tainted food and water. Water is not potable in Karachi, and sanitation in many restaurants is inadequate. Gastrointestinal illness is common and can be life-threatening. The CDC recommends vaccinations for hepatitis A and B, typhoid, Japanese encephalitis (for prolonged travel), polio, and rabies. Prevent insect bites to avoid malaria and dengue fever. The CDC considers the risk of malaria to be moderate and recommends consideration of medication to prevent the disease.

The government has implemented the World Health Organization (WHO) polio vaccination for travelers' guidelines, and travelers may be asked to show proof of recent polio vaccination. Visitors who have stayed in Pakistan for longer than four weeks may be asked to show a yellow vaccination card certifying that they have received a dose of polio vaccine within the past year.

For additional information on vaccines and health guidance, please visit the CDC's website at: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/pakistan>. Information is also available at <http://www.travel.state.gov/travel>.

OSAC Country Council Information

The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.



Karachi has an active OSAC Country Council comprised of members from U.S.-based companies with operations in Pakistan. For more information, contact the Regional Security Officer (RSO) in Karachi at (92)(21) 3527-5504 or the Overseas Security Advisory Council in Washington D.C at 571-345-2223 or via www.osac.gov. To reach OSAC's South and Central Asia team, please email OSACSCA@state.gov.

U.S. Consulate Location and Contact Information

Consulate Address and Hours of Operation

U.S Consulate General

Plots 3-5, New TPX Area

Mai Kolachi Road

Karachi, Pakistan

Hours of Operation: Mon-Fri, 8:00am – 4:30pm

Consulate Contact Numbers

The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.



(92)(21)3527-5000, 24 hours/7 days a week.

Website: <http://karachi.usconsulate.gov>

Nearby Posts

Embassy Islamabad: <http://islamabad.usembassy.gov/>

Consulate General Lahore: <http://lahore.usconsulate.gov/>

Consulate General Peshawar: <http://peshawar.usconsulate.gov/>

Consulate Guidance

Routine public inquiries from U.S. citizens about safety and security in Karachi are addressed in the Country-Specific Information and Travel Warning for Pakistan; specific questions should be directed to the Consular Section (U.S. Citizen Services) of the U.S. Consulate General.

American travelers to Pakistan are strongly encouraged to enroll in the U.S. Department of State's "Smart Traveler Enrollment Program" (STEP) prior to their travel. Doing so provides the U.S. Embassy/Consulate with emergency contact information and allows travelers to receive emergency and security messages sent to U.S. citizens in Pakistan. STEP can be

The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.



accessed at <https://step.state.gov/step/>.

Tips on How to Avoid Becoming a Victim

Scams

Crimes and scams are common in Karachi and include cell phone theft, credit card fraud, and counterfeit money schemes. All travelers should exercise caution with investment and property transactions.

Situational Awareness Best Practices

It is important for visitors to practice a heightened level of security awareness. Maintain a high level of situational awareness and exercise caution at all times. Keep a low profile and do not carry large sums of cash or wear expensive jewelry. Leave wallets/purses secured at home and carry only necessary cash and ID in a front pocket whenever possible.

Do not become time and place predictable. Do not set established patterns. Vary routes/times of departure/arrival by as much as 30-45 minutes. Know primary and alternate routes to all destinations. Ensure any location you visit has secondary exits that would be accessible in an emergency. Know the locations of, and routes to, the nearest police stations and hospitals. Avoid areas with high levels of political or sectarian activity. Always have a means of

The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.



communication (cell phone, local calling cards). Know local emergency numbers, country codes, city codes, and dialing procedures. Leave an itinerary with a colleague or friend so your whereabouts are known. Avoid high risk areas, crowds, and civil disturbances.

Most major hotels in Karachi employ local security firms, which provide adequate security. Valuables should be kept locked in the room safe or kept at the front desk. Firefighting resources are severely lacking; stay on a lower floor in a hotel. Take personal responsibility for your fire evacuation plan from the hotel. U.S. citizens are strongly urged to avoid hotels that do not apply stringent security measures.

Some recommended cyber security measures include: Never leave your mobile devices or media unattended; Place your mobile devices and removable media in carry-on luggage, never in checked luggage; Use strong passwords and encrypt mobile devices and media, if possible; Always assume all calls and emails are monitored; and Keep anti-virus, web browser, and operating system software up-to-date.

The contents of this (U) presentation in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the United States Department of State, or the United States Government, except as otherwise noted (e.g., travel advisories, public statements). The presentation was compiled from various open sources and (U) embassy reporting. Please note that all OSAC products are for internal U.S. private sector security purposes only. Publishing or otherwise distributing OSAC-derived information in a manner inconsistent with this policy may result in the discontinuation of OSAC support.