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## EDITORIAL 01

### Coordinated attacks: On Pakistan and the Baloch conflict

*Pakistan cannot take a militaristic approach to the Baloch conflict*

Ever since the Taliban, hosted by Pakistan's security forces, **recaptured** Kabul in August 2021, Pakistan, especially in its Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces neighbouring Afghanistan, has seen a surge in terrorist attacks. In 2023 alone, there were over 650 recorded attacks, with 23% occurring in Balochistan, which is Pakistan's largest province by landmass and a **hotbed** of separatist **insurgency**. But even in this new normal, Monday was one of the bloodiest days for Balochistan and Pakistan. On the 18th death anniversary of Nawab Akbar Bugti, a Baloch nationalist leader killed by the Pakistani military in 2006, separatists carried out coordinated attacks across the province. The Baloch Liberation Army has claimed responsibility for the many deaths. According to security officials, the separatists damaged infrastructure and executed migrant labourers from Punjab. That the attacks occurred in different parts of Balochistan show the growing reach and capability of the insurgency. Bugti's death anniversaries have seen violent incidents





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in the past, but Pakistan's military and intelligence services were caught off guard on August 26.

Historically, Pakistan has taken a **ruthless**, militarist approach towards the Baloch problem. Balochistan, despite its wealth of natural resources, is the country's most **impoverished** region. Pakistan has historically **neglected** the province. Punjab, on the other hand, grew to be influential in national politics and economically prosperous, leading to strong anti-Punjab tendencies within sections of the Baloch community. This, along with the poor living conditions, was exploited by the separatists to drum up support for their cause. They often attack the federal government "for extracting" resources without offering any help to the local economy. Baloch separatists have **cited** the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, which goes through the province, as an example of this exploitation, and targeted Chinese interests. The Pakistani establishment has also failed to engage with the civil rights movements in Balochistan, such as the Baloch Yakjehti Committee, which organised several sit-ins in Islamabad and Baloch cities this year to draw the attention of the federal authorities to widespread human rights abuses in the province. Such activists were often painted as "enemies of Pakistan", which left the military with the only option of using force against the

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separatists. But state violence has only strengthened the separatists — as the latest attacks **underscore**. If Pakistan is serious about stability and security in its largest province, it should take measures to address the developmental concerns of the locals, stop the rights violations and engage with the peaceful civil rights voices to reset ties with the Balochis.

### SUMMARY

Pakistan has experienced a surge in terrorist attacks since the Taliban recaptured Kabul in August 2021, particularly in its Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces. In 2023, over 650 recorded attacks occurred, with 23% occurring in Balochistan, Pakistan's largest province. On the 18th death anniversary of Nawab Akbar Bugti, separatists carried out coordinated attacks across the province, claiming responsibility for the many deaths. The Baloch Liberation Army has claimed responsibility for the attacks, which damaged infrastructure and executed migrant laborers from Punjab. Pakistan's military and intelligence services were caught off guard on August 26, highlighting the growing reach and capability of the insurgency. To ensure stability and security in Balochistan, Pakistan should address developmental concerns, stop rights violations, and engage with peaceful civil rights voices to reset ties with the Balochis.

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## Vocabulary

### 1. Recapture

**Synonyms:** Retake, reclaim, regain

**Antonyms:** Surrender, release, abandon

### 2. Hotbed

**Synonyms:** Hub, center, nexus

**Antonyms:** Dormancy, slumber, stagnation

### 3. Insurgency

**Synonyms:** Rebellion, uprising, revolt

**Antonyms:** Stability, order, compliance

### 4. Ruthless

**Synonyms:** Merciless, pitiless, cruel

**Antonyms:** Compassionate, kind, gentle

### 5. Impoverish

**Synonyms:** Poor, destitute, deprived

**Antonyms:** Wealthy, affluent, prosperous

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## 6. Neglect

**Synonyms:** Ignore, disregard, overlook

**Antonyms:** Care, attention, concern

## 7. Cite

**Synonyms:** Quote, reference, acknowledge

**Antonyms:** Ignore, disregard, overlook

## 8. Underscore

**Synonyms:** Stress, highlight, accentuate

**Antonyms:** Downplay, minimize, overlook

## EDITORIAL 02

### Reasonable restrictions: On Telegram CEO Pavel

#### Durov's arrest and content hosting

*Laissez-faire approach to content hosting is not commitment to  
free speech*



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That free speech is not **absolute** and is subject to certain restrictions for public order, **morals** and public health is something that has been **codified** in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The founder and chief executive officer of Telegram, Pavel Durov, is a technology creator who has emphasised absolute free speech on his platform and has built an anti-establishmentarian image by risking the **wrath** of nation-states in allowing **dissidents** to use the messaging application. His **detention** and arrest by French authorities, in connection with investigations related to criminal activity on the app, has raised the question if this has been done to provide a chilling effect on freedom of expression on the Internet. But the answer is more complicated. His laissez-faire approach to content on the app has meant that it is host also to extremism, drug dealers, scammers and, according to France, child pornography as well. Mr. Durov has said, “privacy... is more important than our fear of bad things happening ...and that, to be truly free, you should be ready to risk everything for freedom”. But can it be done to override the responsibility to prevent consequences which could endanger people’s safety and freedom? This is a key question to ask about messaging apps and “free speech absolutists” such as Mr. Durov.





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Telegram is more than just a messaging app given some of its social networking features. While its encryption mechanisms allow for ease of access for dissidents and anti-state actors to use the app without **scrutiny**, it does not fully use “end to end” encryption — something that apps such as Signal do. This means that some messages related to criminal activity, disinformation, and child pornography can be read by Telegram; it can act on requests from law enforcement agencies if needed. Telegram, in response to Mr. Durov’s arrest, has said that its moderation “is within industry standards” and has questioned whether the platform/owner are liable or responsible for “abuse of that platform”. That may well be the case, but if in investigations by France, the platform is seen to have wilfully refused to act upon requests to **curb** hate speech, disinformation and contents related to criminal activity, Mr. Durov cannot and should not escape the long arm of the law. In India, the **baleful** effects of misinformation on platforms such as WhatsApp were visible some years ago, before the application came up with certain restrictions. These helped **tamp down** the spread of misinformation. For Telegram to remain a free speech advocate and a platform, it must **eschew** absolutism and become more responsible in moderating content.





## SUMMARY

Telegram CEO Pavel Durov's arrest and content hosting have raised questions about the commitment to free speech and the potential chilling effect of his laissez-faire approach on the platform. Durov's platform has allowed dissidents to use the messaging app, risking the wrath of nation-states. However, his laissez-faire approach has also allowed it to host extremism, drug dealers, scammers, and child pornography. Telegram is more than just a messaging app; it does not fully use "end to end" encryption, allowing messages related to criminal activity, disinformation, and child pornography to be read. If the platform is seen as wilfully refusing to act upon requests to curb hate speech, disinformation, and content related to criminal activity, Durov cannot escape the long arm of the law. For Telegram to remain a free speech advocate, it must eschew absolutism and become more responsible in moderating content.

## Vocabulary

### 1. Absolute

**Synonyms:** Complete, total, sheer

**Antonyms:** Relative, conditional, limited



## 2. Morals

**Synonyms:** Ethical, virtuous, righteous

**Antonyms:** Wrong, bad, unprincipled

## 3. Codified

**Synonyms:** Formal, standard, regulated

**Antonyms:** unsystematic, flexible, ad hoc

## 4. Wrath

**Synonyms:** Anger, fury, rage

**Antonyms:** Peace, serenity, tranquility

## 5. Dissidents

**Synonyms:** Rebels, radicals, heretics

**Antonyms:** Conformists, supporters, adherents

## 6. Detention

**Synonyms:** Custody, captivity, confinement

**Antonyms:** Freedom, release, liberation



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## 7. Scrutiny

**Synonyms:** Analysis, preview, probe

**Antonyms:** Neglect, disregard, oversee

## 8. Curb

**Synonyms:** Limit, control, regulate

**Antonyms:** Increase, expand, unleash

## 9. Baleful

**Synonyms:** Sinister, ominous, evil

**Antonyms:** Benign, harmless, lucky

## 10. Tamp down

**Synonyms:** Compress, flatten, suppress

**Antonyms:** Increase, encourage, express

## 11. Eschew

**Synonyms:** Avoid, shun, abstain

**Antonyms:** Embrace, accept, indulge

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