
CHAOS FOLLOWS PAKISTAN-AFGHANISTAN BORDER CLOSURE

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Pakistan's decision to close two border crossings with Afghanistan following a wave of deadly attacks has forced cross-border trade to grind to a halt.

Pakistan closed the Torkham and Chaman borders after Thursday's suicide attack at a sufi shrine in the southern Sindh province which killed at least 88 people.

The attack at the Lal Shahbaz Qalandar shrine in Sehwan was the worst attack on Pakistan soil since 2014 and the latest in a wave of violence last week that claimed more than 100 lives.

Al Jazeera's Qais Azimy, reporting from the Torkham crossing, said hundreds of trucks carrying perishable goods were lined up on both sides of the border with drivers uncertain of when they would be allowed through.

"It's complete chaos here. Truck drivers are waiting for the border to re-open but nobody knows when that is going to happen," he said.

"Most of the trucks from Afghanistan are carrying fruit and they can't stay here for long. Drivers are worried they will lose a lot of money if the crossing doesn't open soon. And it's the same situation on the other side as well."

The Torkham crossing is used by about 15,000 Afghans every day.

Pakistan had temporarily closed the crossing in June 2016 after deadly clashes in the area.

The crossing is a way of making ends meet for many. It is usually packed with cargo-filled trucks and minibuses crammed with passengers.

Some walk, from entire families and merchants to children, often on their own.

Azimy, quoting border officials, said around "800 trucks cross the border at Torkham on a daily basis".

Meanwhile, Pakistan's Dawn newspaper reported that authorities have issued shoot-at-sight orders for those found trying to cross over illegally at the Chaman border.

"A shooting order has been issued to the security forces for those found trying to enter Pakistan illegally from any area of the border," security officials said.

"There will be no traffic between Pakistan and Afghanistan for an indefinite period," border officials said.

Earlier, security forces launched a series of raids following the shrine attack, killing at least 100 people all identified as "terrorists".

On Friday, Pakistan handed Afghanistan a list with the names of 76 "terrorists", demanding immediate action be taken against them.

Pakistan says Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan and other armed groups enjoy safe havens in Afghanistan.

Kaynak/Source: