



Rainbow Afghanistan e.v.  
Pappelallee 78/79  
10437 Berlin  
Vereinsregister-Nr.: VR 41890 B  
Steuernummer: 27/676/51775 F36  
Web: [rainbowafghanistan.com](http://rainbowafghanistan.com)  
E-Mail: [info@rainbowafghanistan.com](mailto:info@rainbowafghanistan.com)  
Phone Call: +4915218749672

## **Statement by Rainbow Afghanistan Organization on the Armed Attack Against Two Transgender Women in Peshawar, Pakistan, and the Critical Situation of Afghan LGBTIQ+ Refugees**

**2 July 2026**

Rainbow Afghanistan Organization strongly condemns, in the strongest possible terms, the armed attack against two transgender women in the Faqirabad area of Peshawar, Pakistan, which took place on 2 July 2026. According to the information published so far, unidentified armed individuals riding a motorcycle opened fire on the two transgender women, leaving both of them severely injured. Based on the information currently available to us, one of the victims of this attack was an Afghan transgender woman. Tragically, the medical condition of both victims has been reported to be extremely critical in hospital.

This attack once again demonstrates that Afghan LGBTIQ+ refugees and migrants in Pakistan continue to face serious risks of violence, targeted attacks, threats, killings, and insecurity. Many Afghan transgender and queer individuals who fled Taliban persecution, threats, and the risk of death in Afghanistan are now facing extremely dangerous and inhumane conditions in Pakistan as well.

Rainbow Afghanistan Organization emphasizes that this is not the first act of violence against Afghan transgender individuals in Pakistan. Previously, in 2023, an Afghan transgender woman who had fled Taliban threats and sought refuge in Pakistan lost her life following an armed attack carried out by unidentified gunmen. Despite the repetition of such attacks and violence, no effective and sufficient measures have been taken to protect Afghan LGBTIQ+ refugees.

Today, large numbers of transgender, queer, and other members of the Afghan LGBTIQ+ community in Pakistan are struggling simply to survive. Many of them lack legal documentation, safe shelter, and effective protection. In addition to the constant risk of arrest and forced deportation, they are subjected to violence, sexual abuse, exploitation, threats, coercion, trafficking, and even bacha bazi by powerful individuals and exploitative networks. The absence of security, severe poverty, and the lack of access to legal and humanitarian support continue to push them into increasingly life-threatening conditions.

We are deeply alarmed by the increasing pressure and the growing threat of mass deportation of Afghan refugees from Pakistan, particularly Afghan LGBTIQ+ refugees

who, if returned to Afghanistan, would face direct risks of arrest, torture, sexual violence, and killing under Taliban rule.

Rainbow Afghanistan Organization calls on the Government of Pakistan, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), international human rights organizations, and the European Union to take immediate action to protect Afghan LGBTIQ+ refugees in Pakistan, halt all forced deportations, and expand safe pathways for resettlement and emergency protection.

We further call for an immediate, transparent, and independent investigation into this attack and other targeted acts of violence against Afghan transgender and LGBTIQ+ refugees and migrants in Pakistan.

Silence and indifference in the face of this situation will place even more human lives at risk.

Rainbow Afghanistan Organization expresses its full solidarity with the victims of this attack and with all Afghan LGBTIQ+ refugees in Pakistan.

Rainbow Afghanistan Organization  
Berlin Germany  
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