

Women in the Armed Forces: Pakistan

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EWIC Staff: Datasheet

- ❖ As of 2013, there were about 4,000 women serving in the Pakistani armed forces. Most of the women's positions are in administrative or medical sectors.¹
- ❖ Pakistan is one of twenty-three countries in the world that officially allow women in combat roles, either on the ground, as fighter pilots, or as artillery officers.²
- ❖ Begum Ra'ana Liaquat Ali Khan, wife of the first Pakistani Prime Minister, led the initiative to include women in defense training in the late 1940s. She formed the Pakistan Women's National Guard and the Pakistan Women Naval Reserve in 1949, but these organizations were later disbanded.³
- ❖ In 2002, the first Pakistani women were trained by the Army to be air marshals. This included training in hand-to-hand combat to thwart possible plane hijackers. Out of the 50 cadets who passed training, nine were female.⁴
- ❖ In 2006, the first Pakistani women graduated training to become fighter pilots. As of 2013, there were over 300 women in the Pakistan Air Force (PAF).⁵
- ❖ The Pakistan Air Force Women Association (PAFWA) is a welfare organization within the Pakistan Air Force which provides assistance to PAF personnel and their families. The group has created schools for women and conducts vocational and educational programs.⁶
- ❖ In 2006, the Pakistan Military Academy graduated eight female non-combat officers to serve as the first women honor guards at the National Mausoleum of Pakistan founder Muhammad Ali Jinnah.⁷
- ❖ Pakistan is the only Islamic country to have women major generals. In 2011, Shahida Badshah, already a two-star general, was in the running to become the first female three-star general.⁸
- ❖ In July 2013, a group of 24 women became the first female paratroopers, or military parachutists, of the Pakistan Army.¹

¹ <http://www.britannica.com/blogs/2013/10/2013-in-review-women-in-combat/>

² <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2013/01/25/map-which-countries-allow-women-in-front-line-combat-roles/>

³ <http://storyofpakistan.com/begum-raana-liaquat-ali-khan/>

⁴ http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/2144140.stm

⁵ <http://tribune.com.pk/story/576801/pakistan-army-first-female-paratroopers-make-history/>

⁶ <http://www.paf.gov.pk/pafwa.html>

⁷ <http://ibnlive.in.com/news/pak-army-soon-have-women-officers/29471-2.html>

⁸ <http://archive.indianexpress.com/news/pakistan-woman-in-running-to-become-first-3-star-general/845360/>