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Kurram Highway Reopens After 9 Months of Closure

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The Peshawar-Parachinar Highway in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Kurram district, closed for nine months due to sectarian violence, has reopened with strict security measures, providing relief to residents.

After a nine-month closure, the Peshawar-Parachinar Highway in Kurram district, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, has been partially reopened, offering a lifeline to the isolated region. The highway, a critical artery connecting Parachinar to Peshawar, was shut in October 2023 following sectarian clashes that claimed numerous lives and disrupted daily life. The district administration, alongside security forces, announced the reopening on August 1, 2025, allowing traffic from 9 AM to 3 PM under tight security protocols, including convoy travel for safety, according to a statement from the Kurram District Administration. This

development brings hope to locals who have faced severe shortages of essentials like food and medicine due to the prolonged closure.

The closure stemmed from a deadly attack on October 12, 2023, which killed 15 people and prompted security forces to seal all entry points to Kurram. The region has long been plagued by sectarian tensions between Sunni and Shia communities, exacerbated by unresolved land disputes. A jirga, a traditional tribal council, facilitated by the 73 Brigade Commander, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kurram, Commandant Kurram Militia, and District Police Officer, negotiated the partial reopening in a meeting with Sunni leaders in Sadda, as reported by The Express Tribune. Residents are now urged to travel in large convoys to minimize risks, reflecting ongoing security concerns.

The reopening is a pragmatic step toward restoring normalcy, though challenges persist. Local tribal elders have expressed frustration over the government's slow response to securing transport routes, despite earlier peace agreements, according to Dunya News. The Kurram district's strategic importance near the Afghanistan border underscores the need for robust governance to prevent further unrest. The provincial government, led by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), has been criticized for prioritizing political protests over addressing Kurram's crisis, as noted in The Diplomat.

While the partial reopening of the Peshawar-Parachinar Highway is a welcome relief, it highlights the broader issue of instability in Pakistan's tribal regions. The government must prioritize sustainable peace and effective land dispute resolution to ensure long-term security and access for Kurram's residents.