



GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN  
PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE  
NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY  
ISLAMABAD



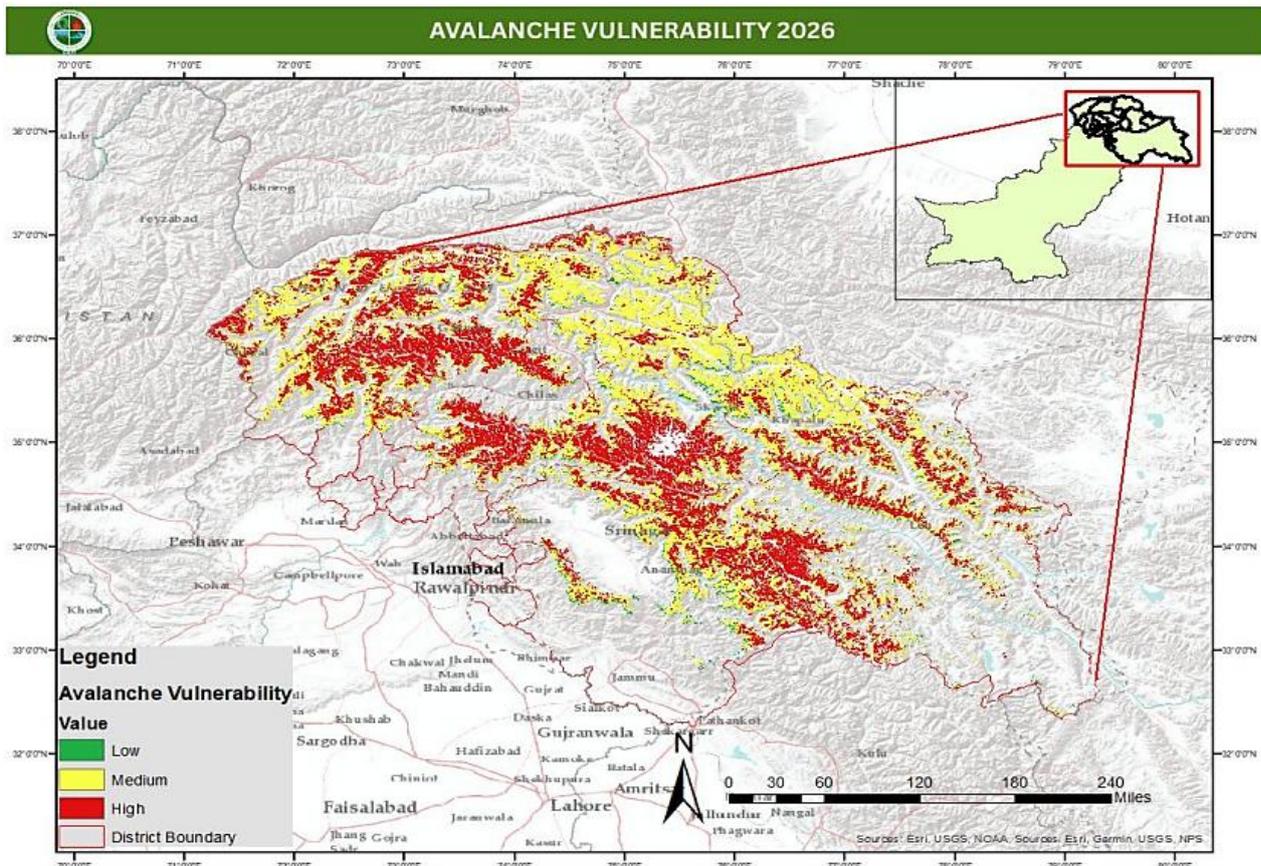
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F. No. 787/IA&PD/Advisory/ NDMA/2026

Islamabad, dated 24<sup>th</sup> February 2026

**Subject: Avalanche Infrastructure Advisory 2026 – Northern Areas of Pakistan**

1. During January and February, the northern mountainous regions of Pakistan experience consistently low temperatures, which help maintain snowpack stability. The cold conditions prevent rapid melting and keep snow layers compact. **However, as temperatures rise in late winter and early spring, the snowpack becomes increasingly unstable.** Melting of lower layers and weak bonding between snow strata create conditions that can easily trigger avalanches. This seasonal warming is a key factor in avalanche formation, posing heightened risks to communities, infrastructure, and travelers in high-altitude areas of northern Pakistan. **The areas of Northern Pakistan that are vulnerable to avalanche are shown in the avalanche vulnerability map.**



2. **Avalanches pose a serious threat to critical infrastructure, particularly in high-altitude areas.** Key assets at risk include:-

- Transportation and road networks
- Residential and public buildings, including schools and healthcare centres
- Bridges and culverts

- d. Water supply and sewage systems
- e. Power grids and communication towers

3. Avalanches can have multiple and cascading effects:-

- a. **Road Blockages and Traffic Disruptions:** Avalanches can block roads, making essential routes impassable and disrupting logistics, medical services, and emergency response.
- b. **Structural Damage:** Buildings, including schools, health facilities, and homes, can suffer from the impacts of avalanches. Snow accumulation and slide force can cause roof collapses, damage to foundations, and even full structural failures.
- c. **Damage to Bridges and Communication Infrastructure:** Bridges located in avalanche-prone areas are particularly vulnerable. Telecommunication lines, power grids, and water supply systems can also be severely disrupted.

4. In this regard, all concerned Federal Ministries / Departments, respective Provincial Governments, their line departments including PDMAs / GBDMA / SDMA / DDMA / local administrations are advised to ensure following along with any other measures deemed necessary:-

- a. **Conduct regular snow-clearance operations** on roads and install snow fences and protective in high-risk avalanche zones.



- b. **Issue timely traffic advisories** and carry out road-closure operations during periods of high avalanche risk.
- c. Maintain early warning systems to alert residents promptly in the event of avalanche threats.
- d. **Conduct regular inspections of roofs, bridges, and other vulnerable structures** to ensure safety.
- e. Vibrations from heavy construction equipment, at glaciated regions, often weaken the snowpack and increase the risk of triggering avalanches. It is advised to **postpone ongoing heavy construction activities during peak avalanche risk** duration particularly on steep slopes across avalanche vulnerable zones especially when temperatures start to rise.

- f. Establish and communicate clear evacuation plans for communities in avalanche-prone areas.
  - g. Identify **safe routes, shelters, and assembly points**.
  - h. Educate communities on avalanche risk signs, safe heating practices, and emergency preparedness measures.
  - i. Disseminate **safety advisories for travellers, households, and schools**.
  - j. Stockpile emergency supplies, including food, medical kits, blankets, and temporary shelters.
  - k. Ensure coordination between road maintenance crews, healthcare providers, law enforcement, and local administrations to optimize response efforts.
5. The following measures are recommended for the Mines & Minerals Department, Mines Development Department, and other relevant agencies:-
- a. Suspend mining operations on steep slopes once temperatures begin to rise, as **vibrations from blasting, excavation, and heavy machinery can destabilize the snowpack and potentially trigger avalanches**.
  - b. Prohibit the establishment of mining camps, storage areas, or worker accommodations within identified avalanche run-out zones to prevent loss of life and equipment.
6. Travellers and the general public are advised to:-
- a. Plan travel taking into account current weather forecasts and traffic conditions.
  - b. **Avoid crossing snow-covered bridges or roads affected by avalanches**, as these may be unstable and structurally unsafe.
  - c. Ensure adequate ventilation when using heaters or generators, and never operate them in enclosed spaces, to prevent the risk of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning.