

《外交部回应中国人在巴遭绑架》

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BEIJING - China's Foreign Ministry has confirmed on Thursday it will do all it can to ensure the safe return of two citizens kidnapped in Pakistan, and promised new measures would be put in place to protect Chinese people and companies positioned in South Asia.

Two Chinese language teachers, based in the Pakistani township of Jinnah, Quetta city, in the southwestern province of Baluchistan, were captured by gunmen pretending to be police on Wednesday, according to a report by a Pakistan newspaper, The Dawn, on Thursday.

The article stated three Chinese citizens - two women and a man - were intercepted by three people in a white car while leaving a language center and forced them into the vehicle at gunpoint.

The report also said the kidnappers were waiting for the individuals in the car, which was parked on the roadside, citing witness accounts and closed-circuit television camera footage.

China vows to rescue kidnapped citizens in Pakistan

Pakistani soldiers stand guard at the site where a Chinese couple was kidnapped in the neighbourhood of Jinnah town in southwest Pakistan's Quetta, Baluchistan province, May 24, 2017. [Photo/Xinhua]

China's national broadcaster China National Radio further reported that, citing witness statement, one of the women narrowly escaped during the turmoil when the kidnappers fired warning shots into the air to scare passers-by before taking the remaining pair away.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang said at a regular briefing in Beijing on Thursday that China had asked Pakistani authorities to "take all necessary measures and do their best to rescue those who have been kidnapped."

"We will also take further actions to ensure the safety of Chinese individuals and organizations in Pakistan," he said.

The Pakistani police, as well as Xinhua news agency and The Dawn, also confirmed a passer-by tried to intervene; however, was shot and wounded in the leg by the kidnappers, and later hospitalized.

Currently, there are thousands of Chinese workers based in Pakistan, working to build new rail, road and power plant under the project of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Some of the workers have been targeted in attacks by anti-government militants, according to a report by The Dawn.

Chinese authorities have also repeatedly urged their Pakistani counterpart to strengthen security at local companies, which would help to keep employees safe.

According to the Xinhua news agency, the couple did hire a private guard; however, he was shot and injured during resistance with the kidnappers.

Police sources told The Dawn a three-member police investigation team, led by Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) Chief Aitzaz Goraya, was formed on Thursday to probe the matter. No one has stepped forward and claimed responsibility for the kidnapping.

