



# PAANK

*Peace, Justice & Equal Rights*

2024

## Enforced Disappearances in Balochistan

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# Introduction

Enforced disappearances, also referred to as involuntary disappearances, have been a grim reality in Balochistan, a southwestern province of Pakistan, for decades. Balochistan, known for its vast natural resources, has also been the epicenter of a long-running insurgency by nationalist movements and severe military operations. Amid this conflict, many Baloch activists, students, doctors, and political leaders have been victims of enforced disappearances, with many allegedly taken by Pakistan's security agencies.



In this booklet, we explore the phenomenon of enforced disappearances in Balochistan, focusing on six high-profile cases: Asad Mengal, Dr. Deen Muhammad, Zakir Majeed, Zahid Kurd, Shabir Baloch, and Mahal Baloch. These cases reflect the widespread pattern of enforced disappearances and the severe impact on the Baloch population.

## What Are Enforced Disappearances?

Enforced disappearances involve the arrest, detention, or abduction of individuals by state agents or their affiliates, followed by a refusal to acknowledge their fate or whereabouts. This practice is a grave violation of international human rights, infringing on the right to life, liberty, security, and freedom from torture or inhumane treatment.

Internationally, enforced disappearances are prohibited under several human rights treaties, including the United Nations International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, to which Pakistan is not a signatory. Despite this, the practice persists in regions like Balochistan, where the conflict between the Baloch nationalist movements and state forces has created an atmosphere of repression and violence.



## The Context of Balochistan

Balochistan is currently Pakistan's largest but least developed province, and its people have long demanded liberation, greater autonomy and control over their resources. These demands have often been met with brutal crackdowns from the Pakistani state, which views Baloch nationalist aspirations as a threat to national security.

Since the early 2000s, reports of enforced disappearances in Balochistan have surged. Baloch political activists, students, journalists, and human rights defenders have been targeted, often accused of being separatists or working with armed insurgent groups. The families of the disappeared endure years of uncertainty, seeking justice through protests, hunger strikes, and petitions, often in vain.

Human rights organizations like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have repeatedly called for an end to these disappearances, urging Pakistan's government to investigate the cases and hold perpetrators accountable. However, the lack of accountability and transparency within Pakistan's security apparatus, coupled with the state's unwillingness to address Baloch grievances, means that enforced disappearances remain a persistent issue in the region.

# Key Cases of Enforced Disappearances in Balochistan



**Asad Mengal & Ahmad Shah**

Asad Mengal, a student and activist, became one of the earliest known cases of enforced disappearances in Balochistan. Mengal was abducted along with his friend Ahmad Shah on February 6, 1976, by security forces. At the time, Mengal was involved in Baloch nationalist activities and was accused by the state of working with separatist groups. Despite multiple attempts by his family to trace his whereabouts, there has been no confirmed information about his fate since his disappearance.

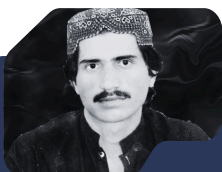
Asad Mengal's disappearance is significant because it marks the beginning of a pattern that would continue for decades, as more Baloch activists and leaders vanished without a trace. Mengal's family, like many others, has continued to demand justice, but his case remains unresolved to this day.



**Dr. Deen Muhammad Baloch**

Dr. Deen Muhammad Baloch, a medical doctor, was abducted on June 28, 2009, from his clinic in Ornach, Khuzdar district. He was known not only for his medical services but also for his involvement in Baloch nationalist politics as a member of the Baloch National Movement (BNM). According to eyewitnesses, Dr. Deen Muhammad was taken by security personnel, but the government has denied any involvement.

His daughter, Sammi Deen Baloch, has become a prominent voice in the struggle for justice for enforced disappearances. She has led protests and walked for miles with other victims' families to demand answers. Despite their efforts, Dr. Deen Muhammad's fate remains unknown. His case exemplifies the targeting of political activists under the guise of maintaining state security.



**Zakir Majeed Baloch**

Zakir Majeed Baloch, a student leader and the vice chairman of the Baloch Student Organization (BSO-Azad), was abducted on June 8, 2009, in Mastung, Balochistan. His family and fellow activists believe he was taken by intelligence agencies due to his political activism and advocacy for Baloch rights.

Zakir Majeed's case has gained widespread attention both nationally and internationally. His sister, Farzana Majeed, has been an outspoken advocate for her brother and other missing persons. Despite extensive efforts to raise awareness about his disappearance, Zakir Majeed's whereabouts remain unknown, adding his name to the growing list of Baloch activists who have disappeared without a trace.



**Zahid Baloch**

Zahid Baloch, also known as Zahid Kurd, is the former chairman of the Baloch Students Organization-Azad (BSO-Azad), one of the largest student political groups advocating for Baloch rights. Zahid was abducted on March 18, 2014, from Quetta in broad daylight. His colleagues and family members allege that security agencies were involved in his disappearance due to his role in mobilizing students and speaking out against human rights abuses in Balochistan.

The BSO-Azad has been one of the most vocal organizations in Balochistan, often criticizing the Pakistani state for its repressive policies. Zahid's disappearance sent a chilling message to political activists across the region. His family and fellow students have campaigned tirelessly for his release, but as with many other cases, the authorities have not provided any information on his whereabouts.



**Shabir Baloch**

Shabir Baloch, another prominent figure in BSO-Azad, was abducted on October 4, 2016, from the Gwarkop area in Kech district, Balochistan. He was involved in political organizing and student mobilization and was taken while on his way to a meeting. Shabir's abduction is widely believed to be linked to his political activities, as many members of BSO-Azad have been targeted over the years.

Shabir's family, particularly his wife and sister, have been active in the campaign for his recovery, joining protests and sit-ins across Balochistan and outside Pakistan. Like the other cases mentioned, his fate remains uncertain, and the state continues to deny any involvement in his disappearance.



**Mahal Baloch**

Mahal Baloch, an activist and daughter of Mohammad Nawaz Baloch, was arrested and disappeared in February 2023. Her case stands out because she was targeted specifically due to her association with Baloch political activism and her family's involvement in the movement. Her detention was carried out under counterterrorism charges,

But human rights organizations believe her arrest is part of a broader strategy to intimidate and silence Baloch voices, particularly women who are becoming more visible in the struggle for justice.

Mahal's case highlights a disturbing trend of women being drawn into the pattern of enforced disappearances. While traditionally male political activists were the primary targets, women like Mahal are increasingly becoming victims, reflecting the changing dynamics of state repression in Balochistan.





## The Impact of Enforced Disappearances

The psychological and social toll of enforced disappearances is immense. Families of the disappeared live in a constant state of uncertainty, not knowing whether their loved ones are alive or dead. This ambiguity, often referred to as "ambiguous loss," leads to profound emotional distress, leaving families in a state of limbo. The social fabric of communities is also deeply affected, as the fear of disappearance silences political activism, curtails freedom of expression, and stifles dissent.

Organizations like the Voice for Baloch Missing Persons (VBMP), formed by the families of the disappeared, have led protests, hunger strikes, and long marches across Pakistan to raise awareness about the issue. Despite their efforts, the lack of



accountability and transparency within Pakistan's security establishment makes it difficult to hold perpetrators responsible.

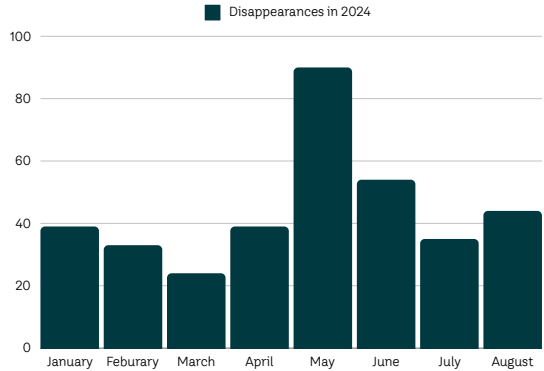


# Report on Disappearances and Extrajudicial Killings for the Year 2024

This report is a detailed account of the number of disappeared persons and extrajudicial killings recorded each month from January to August 2024. The purpose of this report is to inform concerned organizations about the current situation and trends of these human rights violations.

## Disappearances (January - August 2024)

JAN	39 cases reported
FEB	33 cases reported
MAR	24 cases reported
APR	39 cases reported
MAY	90 cases reported
JUN	54 cases reported
JUL	35 cases reported
AUG	34 cases reported

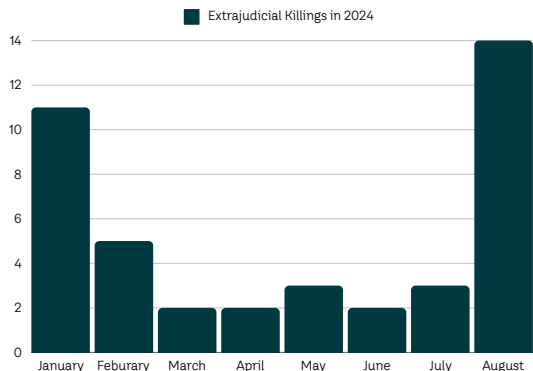


- Total Disappearances (January-August 2024): 358
- Monthly Average of Disappearances:  $358 \div 8 = 44.75$

The data reveals that May witnessed the highest number of disappearances (90), while March saw the lowest (24). On average, 44.75 individuals have disappeared each month.

## Extrajudicial Killings (January - August 2024)

JAN	11 cases reported
FEB	5 cases reported
MAR	2 cases reported
APR	2 cases reported
MAY	3 cases reported
JUN	2 cases reported
JUL	3 cases reported
AUG	14 cases reported



- Total Extrajudicial Killings (January-August 2024): 42
- Monthly Average of Extrajudicial Killings:  $42 \div 8 = 5.25$

The highest number of extrajudicial killings occurred in August (14), with January (11) also reporting a significant number. The months of March, April, and June reported the lowest numbers (2). On average, 5.25 extrajudicial killings occur each month.

# Analysis and Key Findings

## 1. Fluctuations in Disappearances:

- A marked increase is observed in May 2024, where disappearances surged to 90, which is more than double the average monthly figure.
- The data suggests an ongoing and critical issue with disappearances, with a relatively consistent average of 44.75 disappearances per month.

## 2. Extrajudicial Killings:

- The numbers are comparatively lower than disappearances, with an average of 5.25 per month.
- The surge in extrajudicial killings in August (14 cases) raises concerns about a potential escalation in such acts.

## 3. Overall Trend:

- While the number of disappearances has been fluctuating, the spike in May is a point of concern. This suggests the need for immediate attention to the underlying causes.
- Extrajudicial killings remain sporadic but significant, with notable peaks in January and August.

## Conclusion

The arbitrary detentions and enforced disappearances in Balochistan not only represent a severe violation of human rights but also indicate a broader culture of impunity within the Pakistani state apparatus. As these grave abuses continue unchecked, there is an urgent need for international oversight. The absence of transparency in the detention of Baloch individuals has created a vacuum where justice is nearly impossible for the victims and their families. The Pakistani government has consistently failed to conduct fair and impartial investigations, and without international intervention, these abuses are likely to persist.

Given the severity of the situation, it is imperative for international bodies, including the United Nations, to initiate independent fact-finding missions in Balochistan. Such missions would help document the scale of arbitrary detentions and other human rights abuses, ensuring that accurate data is collected. An independent inquiry led by international human rights organizations would help bring transparency, accountability, and ultimately justice to the victims. Furthermore, these efforts would send a strong message to the Pakistani authorities that such actions will not be tolerated and that international norms must be respected.

This extended conclusion emphasizes the need for external involvement and highlights the significance of independent investigations to curb the ongoing human rights violations. Let me know if you would like further edits or additions!

For further information or assistance in addressing these issues, please contact Paank.



# PAANK

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## About us:

Paank is the human rights department of the Baloch National Movement (BNM), which aims to raise awareness and promote human rights in Balochistan. BNM is a political organization dedicated to the rights and freedoms of the Baloch people in Balochistan.

Paank focuses on the protection and promotion of human rights in Balochistan by conducting investigations, documenting human rights abuses, and advocating for change. Its monthly report on the human rights situation in Balochistan provides up-to-date information on the state of human rights in the region and highlights areas where improvement is needed. These reports serve as a valuable resource for those concerned with human rights in Balochistan and provide a platform for BNM to voice its concerns and advocate for change.

One of the key areas of focus for Paank is the issue of enforced disappearances in Balochistan. This is a serious concern in the region and has been widely reported by human rights organizations. Paank works to document cases of enforced disappearances and bring attention to this issue in the hopes of bringing an end to this human rights violation. The website will regularly update information on enforced disappearances, including the number of cases, the names of those who have disappeared, and the efforts being made to secure their release.

Paank is also active in organizing events and activities that promote human rights in Balochistan. These events range from peaceful protests to public awareness campaigns and educational seminars. Paank's events provide a platform for the Baloch people to voice their concerns and demand change. The website will share updates on Paank's events and activities, allowing supporters to stay informed and get involved.

Paank is a vital part of BNM's efforts to promote human rights in Balochistan. Its monthly reports and updates on enforced disappearances provide valuable information and insight into the human rights situation in the region. Its events and activities help to raise awareness and promote change. The website provides a platform for Paank to share its work and engage with supporters, making it an essential resource for anyone concerned with human rights in Balochistan.

Baloch National Movement (BNM) is an organization struggling for the independence of Balochistan from Pakistan. The human rights department of BNM, known as Paank, focuses on raising awareness about the human rights situation in Balochistan. Paank's mission is to advocate on all forums to bring global attention to the atrocities committed in Balochistan and to work towards a better future for the Baloch people.

Paank's team is dedicated to creating a brighter future for the Baloch people. Through their tireless efforts, Paank works to bring justice to the victims of human rights violations in Balochistan and to hold those responsible accountable for their actions.

For more information visit



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