



Human Rights Council of Balochistan
HAKKPAN BALOCHISTAN

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ANNUAL REPORT - 2025

AN OVERVIEW OF HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN BALOCHISTAN

1482 FORCIBLY DISAPPEARED, 598 KILLED



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Executive Summary

This report documents the systematic and widespread human rights violations recorded in Balochistan, Pakistan, throughout the year 2025. The findings reveal a severe deterioration of the human rights situation in 2025, characterized by a sharp escalation in enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, suppression of peaceful dissent, and the targeted persecution of civil society actors, journalists, lawyers, and activists.

Key findings at a glance:

- Enforced disappearances carried out by Pakistani forces, secret agencies, and their backed local militias surged to 1,482 cases in 2025, representing a 79% increase from the year 2024.
- 598 killings were documented, reflecting approximately a 25% increase from the cases in 2024.
- Security forces and state-sponsored death squads were responsible for 325 killings (54.3% of the total).
- 108 minors were among the enforced disappearance victims; 29 minors were killed.
- The Frontier Corps (FC) was identified as the primary perpetrator in both enforced disappearances (897 cases) and killings (195 cases).
- Peaceful protesters, journalists, lawyers, and human rights defenders faced systematic legal harassment, arbitrary arrest, and physical violence.

These violations took place against a backdrop of large-scale military operations, communication blackouts, restrictions on freedom of assembly, and the weaponization of counter-terrorism legislation to criminalize legitimate political and humanitarian activity.

Introduction

Background

Balochistan is Pakistan's largest province by area, bordering Afghanistan and Iran. It has been the site of a long-running conflict between Pakistani security forces and Baloch separatist groups, alongside significant socio-economic marginalization. The province has historically recorded some of the highest rates of enforced disappearances and extrajudicial violence in the country.

The Human Rights Council of Balochistan (HRCB) has monitored and documented human rights violations in Balochistan for several years. This annual report presents verified incidents recorded between 1 January and 31 December 2025. Findings are based on information received through HRCB's documentation networks and subjected to a rigorous verification process. Each case is cross-checked, wherever possible, through multiple independent sources, including family members, eyewitnesses, local civil society organizations, community contacts, media reports, and publicly available information, including relevant social media content.

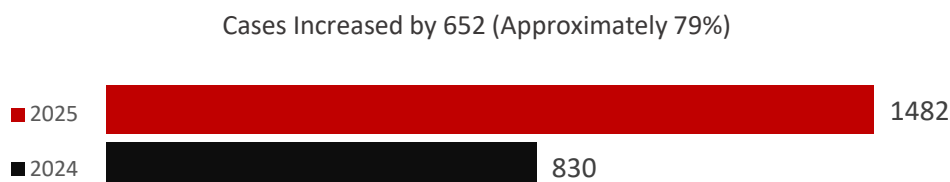
Due to severe restrictions on access to many affected districts, significant reporting gaps remain. Large parts of the region continue to be under strict control of state forces, heavily constraining the flow of information and making independent verification difficult in some areas. Consequently, the figures presented in this report should be understood as minimum documented figures rather than a comprehensive account of all violations that occurred during the reporting period.

This report primarily covers violations documented within Balochistan province. A limited number of cases originating in other regions of Pakistan, including Sindh, Punjab, and Islamabad, but involving Baloch individuals have also been included where relevant.

Cases classified as enforced disappearances conform to the definition established in the United Nations Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (1992). Killings are categorized by mode and alleged perpetrator based on available evidence.

Enforced Disappearances:

In 2025, HRCB documented 1,482 enforced disappearances across Balochistan, a sharp rise from 830 cases recorded in 2024. This increase of 652 cases, or approximately 79 percent, indicates a significant escalation. The majority of victims remain untraced, with only a small number having reappeared. Families continue to search for loved ones with no information on their whereabouts.

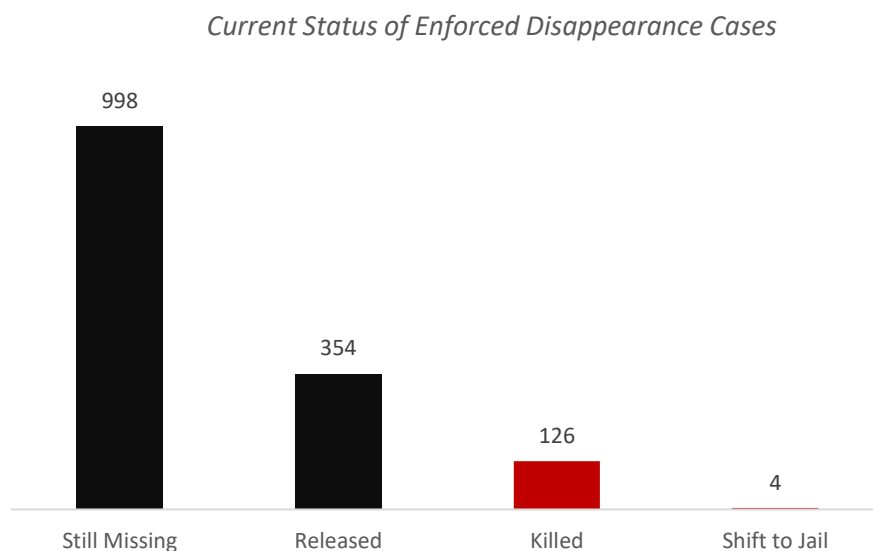


Gender of Victims:

Of the 1,482 cases, 1,470 victims were male, while 12 were female. The data indicate that men remained overwhelmingly the primary targets of enforced disappearances, accounting for more than 99% of the recorded cases. At the same time, the abduction of women by state forces emerged as a growing concern during the year, with cases indicating a sharp surge and increasingly normalized use of enforced disappearance against women in the region.

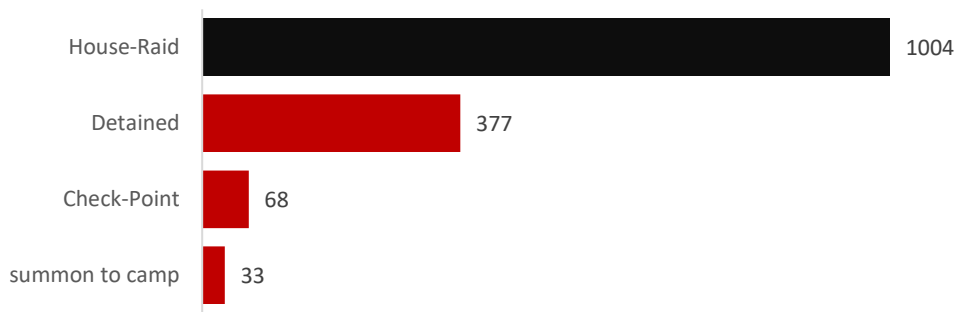
Status of Victims:

Of the 1,482 enforced disappearance cases, 998 individuals remained missing at the time of reporting. Meanwhile, 354 victims were released, 126 were killed, and 4 were shifted to jail. Among the 126 victims killed, 94 were killed during 2025, while 32 were killed between January and June 2026.



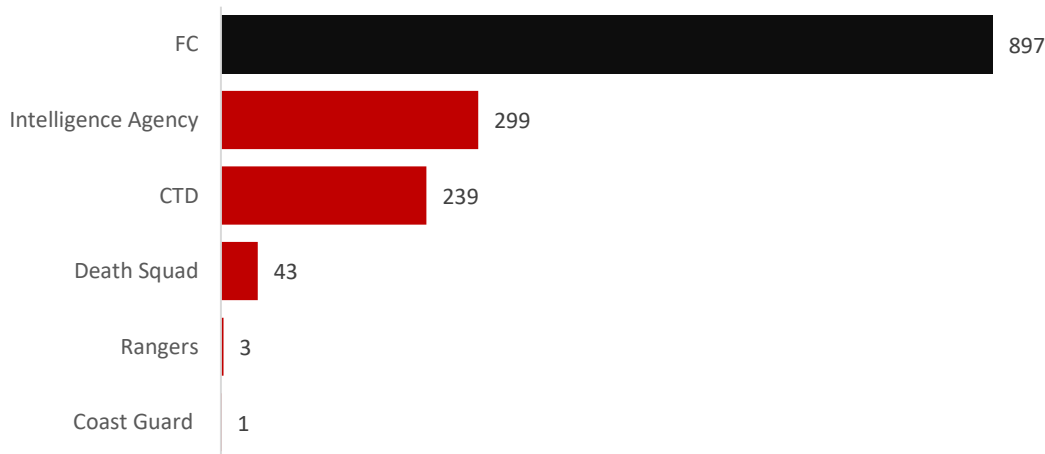
Modes of Abduction:

Analysis of the modes of abduction shows that house raids were the most common method used, accounting for 1,004 cases. Another 377 individuals were detained in public or during routine activities, while 68 victims were abducted at checkpoints. Additionally, 33 individuals were summoned to military or security camps and subsequently disappeared.



Perpetrators:

The data on alleged perpetrators in the 1,482 documented enforced disappearance cases shows that the Frontier Corps (FC) was identified in 897 cases, making it the most frequently reported actor. Intelligence agencies were linked to 299 cases, while the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) was associated with 239 cases. In addition, death squads were implicated in 43 cases, Rangers in 3 cases, and the Coast Guard in 1 case.



Frequency of abductions:

The data show that the vast majority of individuals subjected to enforced disappearance were abducted only once. Of the 1,482 recorded cases, 1,436 individuals experienced their first abduction, while 41 individuals were abducted a second time and 5 were abducted a third time.

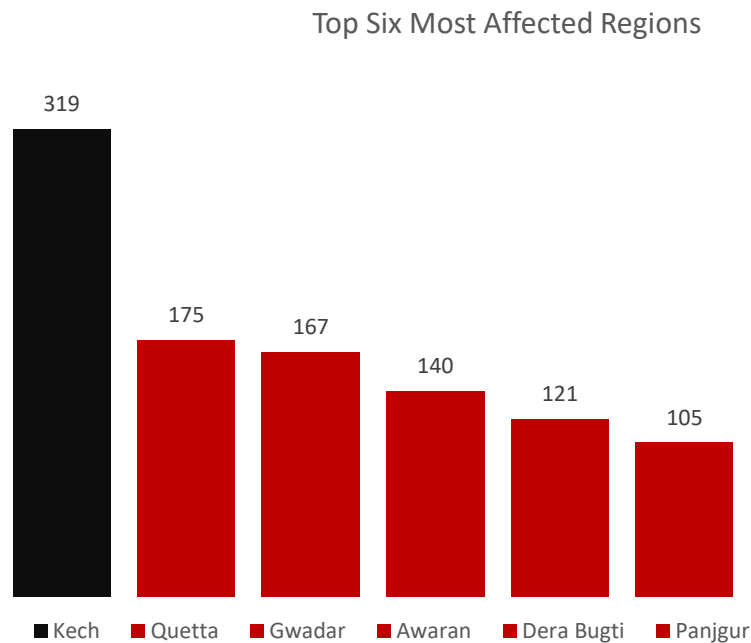
Profession of Victims:

Among the total 1,482 cases of enforced disappearances, the professions of only 752 victims were identified. Students constituted the largest identified occupational group, with 301 cases, followed by laborers (100), drivers (73), shopkeepers (62), and farmers (34). Other affected groups included Levies personnel (15), police personnel (11), fishermen (13), government employees (11), and teachers (8). The recorded cases also included individuals from a wide range of professions and social backgrounds, including doctors, lawyers, journalists, engineers, business owners, skilled workers, religious figures, and activists.

Places of abduction:

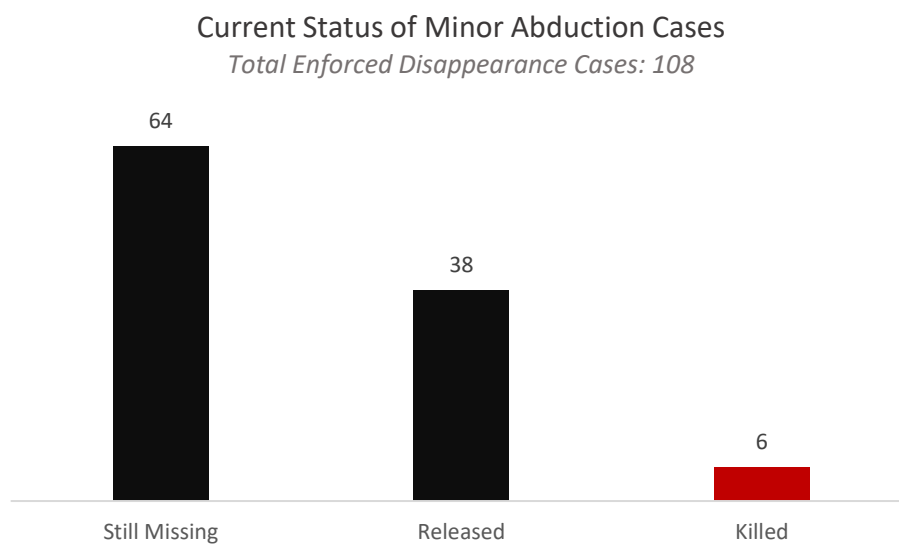
The geographical distribution of abductions shows that Kech recorded the highest number of cases with 318 incidents, followed by Quetta (174), Gwadar (167), Awaran (140), Dera Bugti (121), and Panjgur (103). These districts together represent the main hotspots of enforced disappearances in 2025.

Other affected areas include Karachi (62), Khuzdar (56), Kalat (55), Mastung (54), Barkhan (49), Nushki (43), and several additional districts with comparatively lower numbers. A small number of cases were also reported from Punjab, Sindh, Islamabad, and other locations.



Abduction of Minors:

During the year, children and adolescents were also among those subjected to enforced disappearances, with a total of 108 minors documented among the cases recorded in 2025. Of these, 65 remained missing at the time of reporting, while 37 were released and 6 were killed. The fact that the majority of documented minor victims remained missing highlights the serious impact of enforced disappearances on children.



Monthly Distribution of Enforced Disappearances:

- January: 119
- February: 151
- March: 150
- April: 165
- May: 139
- June: 99
- July: 121
- August: 121
- September: 107
- October: 114
- November: 108
- December: 88

Staged Arrests and the Concealment of Enforced Disappearances

Beyond the criminalization of dissent through courts, police powers, and anti-terrorism legislation, authorities continued to conceal enforced disappearances through staged arrests and retroactive detention orders. In several cases, individuals publicly reported as forcibly disappeared later resurfaced in official custody and were presented as newly arrested suspects, without any explanation for the period they had remained missing. In some cases, authorities presented them before courts and later claimed that they had been killed in armed encounters as militants or terrorists. Such claims raise a basic question: how can a person already shown to be in state custody later be killed in an armed confrontation?

One notable case involved Saddam Hussain Kurd. After reportedly being forcibly disappeared in July 2025, he remained unaccounted for until September, when authorities claimed to have arrested him and presented him before a court. No explanation was provided for his disappearance or the circumstances of his detention during the intervening period. He was reportedly killed in June 2026. The sequence of his disappearance, subsequent presentation as a newly arrested suspect, and eventual death raises serious questions about his detention and killing.

A similar pattern was observed in the case of Chakar Bugti. Following his enforced disappearance in November 2024, he remained missing for several months before the CTD announced his “arrest” in February 2025 on terrorism-related charges. The announcement did not explain the period during which his whereabouts were unknown. He was subsequently released in March 2025.

The case of Mir Yousuf Ali Qalandrani further illustrates how administrative detention can be used to regularize unexplained custody. Qalandrani reportedly disappeared from Karachi in August 2025 and remained missing until October, when he resurfaced in Khuzdar District Jail under a 3MPO detention order. The order did not address the circumstances of his disappearance or explain where he had been held during the preceding months.

Killings:

In 2025, HRCB documented 598 killings across Balochistan, an increase of approximately 25 percent from the 480 killings recorded in 2024. Of the 598 documented killings, state forces and their affiliated death squads were identified as responsible for 325, accounting for approximately 54.3 percent of the total. The remaining cases involved other or unidentified perpetrators.

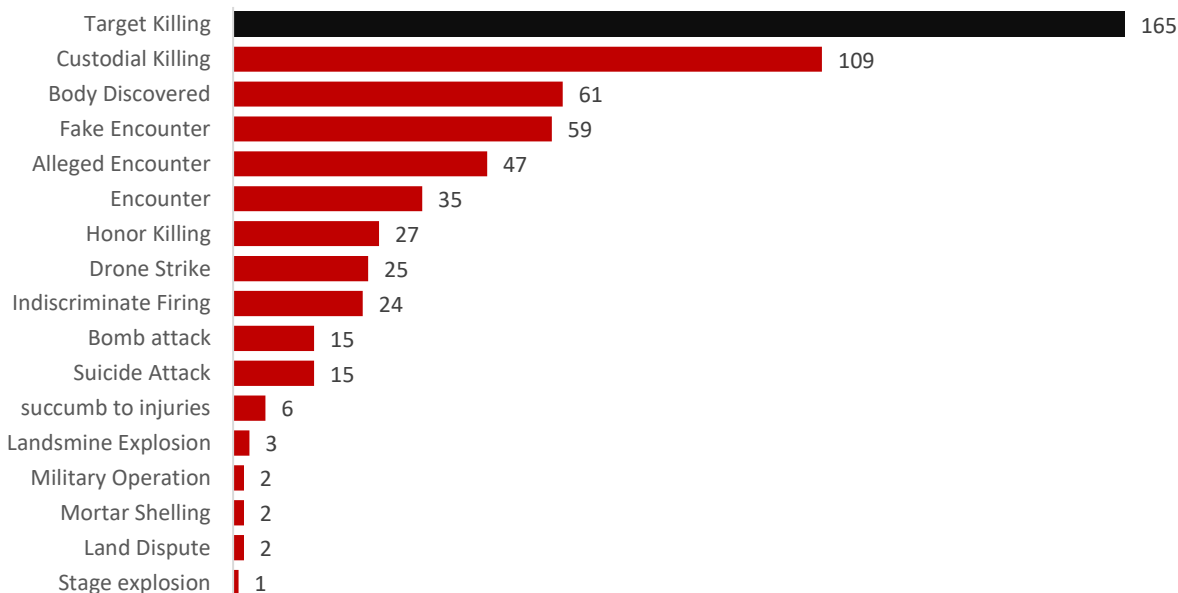
Gender-Based Analysis:

Of the 598 documented killings in 2025, gender information was available for 534 individuals. Of these, 498 were male and 36 were female. Male victims accounted for approximately 93 percent of the cases for which gender was identified, while female victims accounted for approximately 7 percent.



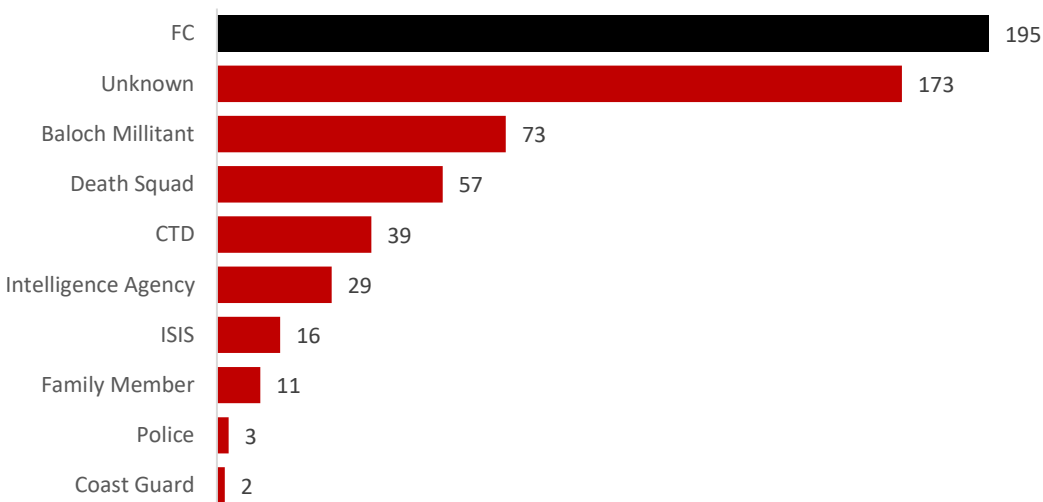
Modes of Killing:

These 598 killings were recorded across a range of different modes. Target killings accounted for 165 cases, followed by custodial killings (104), bodies discovered (66), fake encounters (59), alleged encounters (47), and encounters (35). Honor killings were reported in 27 cases, while drone strikes resulted in 25 deaths and indiscriminate firing in 24. Bomb attacks and suicide attacks each accounted for 15 deaths. In addition, 6 individuals succumbed to injuries, while 3 were killed in landmine explosions. Two deaths each were attributed to military operations, land disputes, and mortar shelling, while 1 death was reported in a staged explosion.



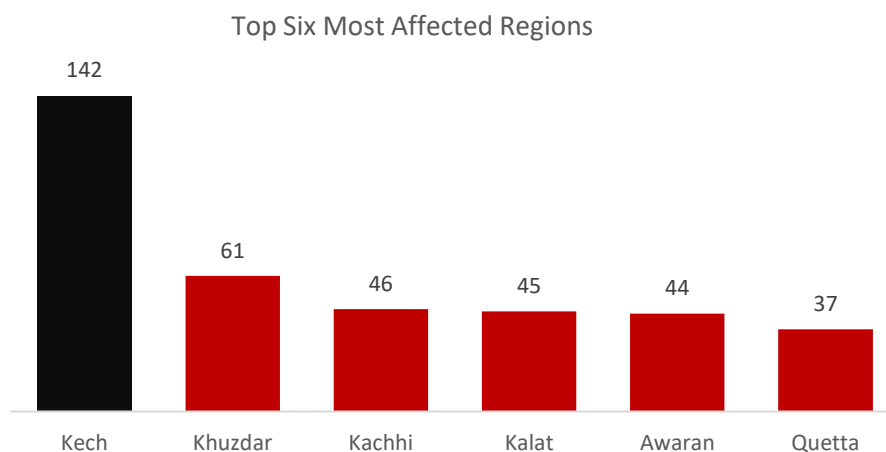
Perpetrators:

Among the documented cases, FC was linked to 195 killings, making it the largest identified perpetrator, followed by unknown actors in 173 cases. Baloch separatists were responsible for 73 killings, while death squads accounted for 57. The CTD was implicated in 39 cases, and intelligence agencies in 29. Violence attributed to ISIS resulted in 16 deaths, while family members were responsible for 11 killings. Police were linked to 3 cases and the Coast Guard to 2.



Geographical Distribution of Killings:

Kech recorded the highest number of killings, with 142 cases, followed by Khuzdar (61), Kachhi (46), Kalat (45), and Awaran (44). Quetta and Panjgur each recorded 37 cases, while Mastung accounted for 26. Other affected areas included Barkhan (20), Dera Bugti (16), Kharan (13), Nushki, Hub, and Washuk (11 each), and Duki (10). Lower but notable figures were recorded in Naseerabad and Pishin (9 each), Gwadar (8), Sohbatpur (7), Harnai (6), Musakhel (5), Lasbela, Qilla Abdullah, and Chagai (4 each), and Jhal Magsi and Surab (3 each). Two cases each were reported from Iran, Usta Muhammad, and Sibi.



Killing of Minors:

Among the 598 killings documented during the year, 29 victims were minors, including 24 males and 5 females. Custodial killings were the most frequently recorded mode, accounting for 7 cases, followed by target killings with 5. Indiscriminate firing and bodies discovered each accounted for 4 cases, while drone strikes and fake encounters were recorded in 3 cases each. Mortar shelling caused 2 deaths, and 1 fatality resulted from a bomb attack.

The FC was linked to 13 of these killings, making it the largest identified perpetrator. Unknown actors were responsible for 6 cases, death squads for 5, and intelligence agencies for 3. ISIS and the police were each linked to 1 killing.

Monthly Distribution of Killings:

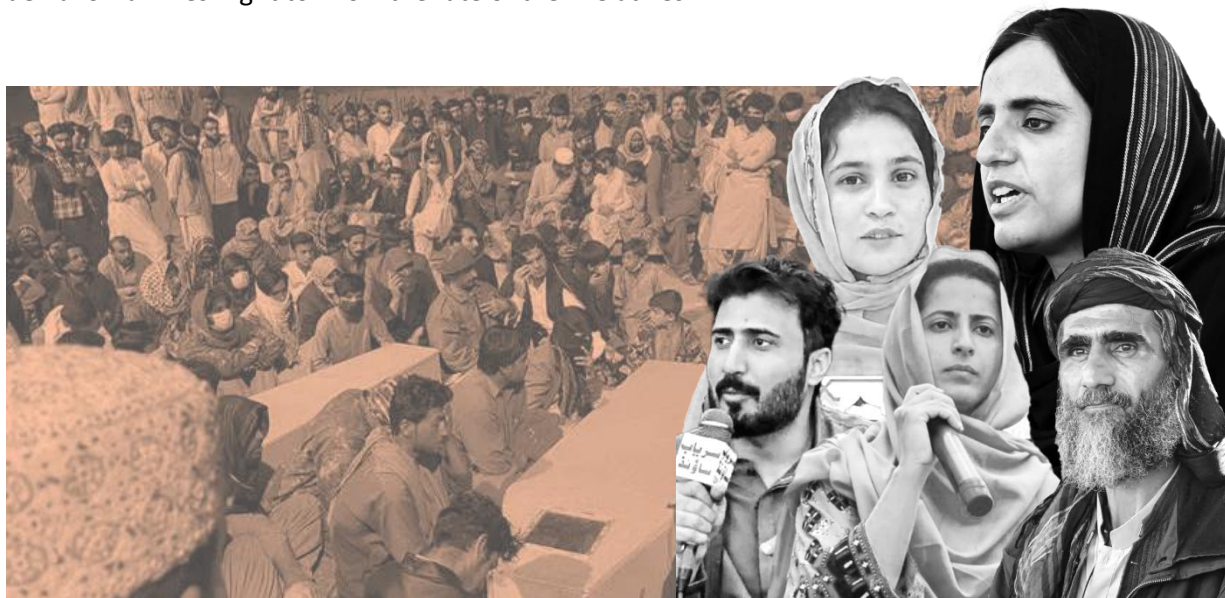
- January: 33
- February: 46
- March: 80
- April: 66
- May: 73
- June: 67
- July: 49
- August: 26
- September: 65
- October: 31
- November: 43
- December: 19

State Repression of Peaceful Protests and Activists Following the Jaffer Express Hijacking

The hijacking of the Jaffer Express by the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) on 11 March 2025 marked a significant escalation in the conflict in Balochistan. In the aftermath of the attack, Pakistani authorities launched a sweeping crackdown that was presented as part of counterterrorism operations. However, the measures adopted by the state extended far beyond individuals allegedly connected to the attack and primarily targeted peaceful activists, human rights defenders, relatives of forcibly disappeared persons, and members of the Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC). The events that followed became one of the most significant episodes of state repression documented in Balochistan during 2025.

Following the military operations, the Pakistani military announced that 33 militants had been killed. The BLA, however, acknowledged the deaths of only 13 of its members and publicly released their names and photographs. Questions surrounding the identities of those killed intensified on 18 March, when security forces transferred 23 bodies to Quetta Civil Hospital and labelled them as militants. Thirteen of the bodies were secretly buried by the forces at Kasi Graveyard without identification procedures. While government authorities stated that the bodies had been handed over to the Edhi Foundation for burial, the organization reportedly denied involvement.

The lack of transparency surrounding the bodies generated widespread concern among relatives of forcibly disappeared persons, many of whom feared that some of the deceased could be missing family members, a well-established pattern where forces killed victims of enforced disappearances during such attacks. Families attempting to enter Quetta Civil Hospital to identify the bodies were reportedly prevented from doing so by security forces. Several individuals were injured during the confrontation, and numerous family members and activists were detained, including activist Saeeda Baloch and her sister on 19 March. The authorities' refusal to allow identification of the bodies and the subsequent burials intensified longstanding concerns regarding enforced disappearances, concealment of deaths, and the denial of families' right to know the fate of their relatives.



In the days that followed, security forces intensified raids and arrests targeting political activists and BYC members. During the early hours of 20 March, the CTD personnel detained key BYC leader Bebagh Zehri together with his brother, Dr. Hammal Baloch, during a raid in Quetta. On the same day, prominent psychiatrist Dr. Ilyas Baloch, his son, and another relative were also detained. Although Dr. Ilyas and some other detainees were later released, a broader campaign against BYC and its supporters followed.

In response to the crackdown and arrests of its members and restrictions imposed on families seeking access to the bodies, the BYC organized demonstrations in Quetta. To disperse the gatherings, police used force against demonstrators participating in a sit-in outside the University of Balochistan on 21 March. Three protesters were killed, including 13-year-old Nehmat Baloch, while several others sustained injuries. The deaths provoked outrage across Balochistan and further intensified public protests.

The following day, protesters continued their sit-in with the bodies of those killed by the police and called for a province-wide shutter-down strike. Security forces again moved against the demonstrators, arresting several BYC leaders and activists, including Dr. Mahrang Baloch and Beebow Baloch, while also taking possession of the bodies. The arrests triggered protests in multiple cities and prompted expressions of concern from civil society groups and human rights organizations and defenders.

The crackdown soon expanded beyond Balochistan. On 24 March, BYC leader Sammi Deen Baloch and numerous supporters were detained in Karachi during protests organized in solidarity with the detained BYC leadership. Although a civil court subsequently ordered the release of several detainees, Sammi Deen Baloch was rearrested under the Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) Act shortly after her release. She was later released again.

Authorities continued targeting BYC leaders throughout the following weeks. On 29 March, BYC leader Sibghatullah Shah Jee was detained during a raid on his residence in Satellite Town, Quetta, along with his brother and two nephews. While his relatives were later released, Sibghatullah remained in custody and was transferred to District Jail Hudda on 1 April. Former detainees later reported being subjected to physical abuse during detention. During the same period, Gulzadi Baloch was also arrested.

Serious concerns emerged regarding the treatment and welfare of detained BYC leaders. Family members, lawyers, and supporters repeatedly reported that detainees were denied adequate healthcare, subjected to solitary confinement, mistreatment, and held under constant surveillance. Particular concern was raised regarding the health and well-being of Dr. Mahrang Baloch, Bebagh Zehri, and Beebow Baloch.

On 2 April, relatives alleged that CTD personnel entered Hudda Jail and attempted to forcibly remove Dr. Mahrang Baloch, Beebow Baloch, and Gulzadi Baloch from the facility. Similar concerns resurfaced on 23 April, when CTD personnel reportedly removed Beebow Baloch from prison. Family members who rushed to the jail were denied access and were unable to verify her whereabouts or condition. According to subsequent reports, Beebow Baloch was transferred to Chaman Jail and separated from other detained leaders. Supporters alleged that the transfer was intended to exert psychological pressure on detainees amid growing international scrutiny of the crackdown.

The treatment of Beebow Baloch became a major source of concern. In protest against her transfer and the alleged mistreatment of detainees, imprisoned BYC leaders launched a hunger strike that was joined

by hundreds of supporters outside prison facilities and in public demonstrations. The hunger strike continued until 28 April, when it ended following appeals from supporters and sympathizers.

Concerns regarding Beebow Baloch's health intensified after reports emerged that she was transferred to the Combined Military Hospital in Quetta on 2 May in critical condition. According to family members, she had endured prolonged physical and psychological abuse while participating in a hunger strike. Medical reports reportedly indicated that she had developed acute kidney injury linked to rhabdomyolysis, a serious condition associated with severe muscle damage. Despite her deteriorating condition, she was returned to Hudda Jail without receiving adequate treatment.

Serious concerns were also raised regarding the health of Bebag Zehri. He had long suffered from paralysis resulting from injuries sustained in a bomb blast, reportedly experienced severe deterioration in his health while in custody. According to BYC statements, he suffered repeated episodes of unconsciousness, severe hypotension, and other medical complications. Family members repeatedly called for his transfer to a hospital, warning that his condition had become life-threatening.

Legal Proceedings and Prolonged Detention of BYC Leaders

Alongside the arrests and detentions, authorities initiated an extensive campaign of criminal prosecution against BYC leaders and activists. Approximately 54 First Information Reports (FIRs) were registered against members of the BYC leadership across multiple districts of Balochistan. The cases primarily stemmed from public protests, sit-ins, awareness campaigns, and political mobilization, including demonstrations against enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, collective punishment, and militarization. Although many of the cases initially related to public order and assembly-related allegations, anti-terrorism provisions were subsequently added to several FIRs, resulting in their transfer to Anti-Terrorism Courts.

In March 2025, BYC leaders were initially detained under Section 3 of the Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) Ordinance. The MPO is a preventive detention mechanism that allows authorities to detain individuals without filing criminal charges or obtaining prior judicial authorization. When the ninety-day detention period expired in June 2025, authorities neither released the detainees nor subjected their detention to the judicial review required under the law. Instead, new cases were initiated under the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA), effectively prolonging detention while bypassing legal safeguards and preventing the implementation of release orders.

After spending approximately three months and fifteen days in detention under the MPO, BYC leaders were repeatedly remanded in various FIRs between July and October 2025. The initial physical remand was granted for ten days, after which successive remands, typically lasting fifteen days each, were repeatedly approved. According to defense lawyers, prosecutors consistently sought further remands on the grounds that multiple investigations remained pending. Rather than pursuing concurrent proceedings, authorities sought remands sequentially in different FIRs, a practice that effectively ensured the continued detention of the accused. Throughout this period, prosecution requests for further remand were repeatedly granted, while applications seeking relief were consistently rejected.

Legal challenges to the inclusion of anti-terrorism provisions and the transfer of cases to Anti-Terrorism Courts were unsuccessful. Bail applications before the Anti-Terrorism Court and subsequent petitions before the Balochistan High Court were also dismissed. According to defense lawyers and family members, when the authorities were unable to substantiate several of their allegations in open court proceedings, including before the Balochistan High Court, hearings were increasingly conducted inside Quetta's Hudda Prison.

By the end of 2025, no final judgments had been issued in the cases against the detained BYC leaders. Approximately 25 cases remained under trial before the Anti-Terrorism Court in Quetta, while additional FIRs continued to be registered across multiple police stations, leaving the leaders facing an expanding cycle of prosecutions. HRCB considers the successive cases and prolonged proceedings a deliberate mechanism to extend their detention and prevent their release. In 2026, the authorities further pursued the cases through so-called "faceless courts", where access for lawyers, witnesses, family members, journalists, and independent observers was significantly restricted. Despite repeated appeals by domestic and international human rights organizations, Dr. Mahrang Baloch and Sibghatullah Shah Jee were sentenced on 22 June 2026 by an Anti-Terrorism Court in Quetta to two terms of life imprisonment. The convictions arose from allegations linked to the 29 July 2024 Raji Muchi gathering in Gwadar, where FC personnel Shabir Ahmad was alleged to have been killed amid unrest involving protesters. HRCB considers these convictions unlawful and part of the state's broader campaign of judicial persecution against BYC leaders and suppression of peaceful political dissent.

The events that followed the Jaffer Express hijacking marked a defining period of state repression during 2025 in Balochistan. The following sections examine the broader patterns of repression that emerged during this period.

Patterns of State Repression Against Civic and Political Space

Beyond enforced disappearances and unlawful killings, 2025 witnessed a broad pattern of restrictions on civic and political freedoms in Balochistan. Authorities employed legal, administrative, and coercive measures to suppress dissent, restrict peaceful assembly, target human rights defenders and journalists, and punish communities perceived to be associated with political opposition. The incidents documented below illustrate how these practices collectively contributed to a shrinking civic space and a deteriorating human rights environment across the province.

1. Criminalization and Judicial Persecution of Dissent

Throughout 2025, authorities increasingly relied on legal and administrative measures to suppress political dissent and human rights advocacy in Balochistan. Criminal laws, anti-terrorism provisions, preventive detention mechanisms, administrative watchlists, and cybercrime frameworks were repeatedly employed against political activists, human rights defenders, and participants in peaceful protests. These measures often appeared designed not to address genuine security concerns but to restrict political mobilization and silence criticism of state policies.

The most prominent example involved the leadership of the Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC). Following demonstrations in March, multiple First Information Reports (FIRs) were registered against Dr. Mahrang Baloch and other BYC leaders. The charges included allegations of terrorism, incitement, and anti-state activities. In a particularly troubling development, authorities filed a case against Dr. Mahrang Baloch in connection with an incident in which security forces had reportedly opened fire on protesters, effectively criminalizing the victims of state violence rather than investigating the conduct of security personnel. Throughout July and August, detained BYC leaders faced repeated remand extensions before being transferred to jail custody in September.

Sammi Deen Baloch was similarly subjected to sustained legal harassment throughout the year. Following her re-arrest under the Maintenance of Public Order (3MPO) ordinance in March, authorities reportedly registered a secret FIR against her in Awaran in July without notice or due process. The case resulted in warrants issued across the province and her designation as a fugitive, creating the possibility of arrest at any time.

The misuse of preventive detention laws emerged as a recurring feature of state policy. The Maintenance of Public Order ordinance was repeatedly invoked against political activists, allowing authorities to bypass ordinary judicial procedures. Among those reportedly detained under such provisions were Dr. Ilyas Baloch, Sammi Deen Baloch, Mullah Farhad, and Comrade Imran Baloch. Rather than addressing specific criminal conduct, these measures appeared aimed at restricting political activity and preventing participation in public mobilization.

Women activists also faced increasing criminalization. In July, Dr. Shali Baloch and several members of the Women Forum were arrested during an awareness campaign in Gwadar and accused of anti-state

activities related to wall chalking and pamphlet distribution, despite maintaining that their activities were peaceful civic outreach. Later in the year, Dr. Shali Baloch and other activists were placed on the Fourth Schedule under the Anti-Terrorism Act, subjecting them to surveillance and restrictions typically reserved for terrorism suspects.

Taken together, these incidents indicate a systematic pattern of legal and administrative repression. Through criminal charges, preventive detention laws, anti-terrorism provisions, secret proceedings, cybercrime investigations, and administrative restrictions, authorities increasingly transformed legal institutions into instruments for controlling dissent and limiting civic and political participation in Balochistan.

1.1 Fourth Schedule and Preventive Security Measures

Authorities used preventive security measures, particularly the Fourth Schedule of the Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997, to restrict civic and political activity in Balochistan. Originally intended to monitor individuals suspected of involvement in terrorism-related activities, the Fourth Schedule was frequently applied to political activists, students, human rights defenders, and relatives of victims of enforced disappearances.

HRCB documented the placement of hundreds of individuals on the Fourth Schedule during the reporting period. Those listed faced restrictions on movement and assembly, enhanced surveillance, mandatory reporting requirements, and in some cases the freezing of bank accounts. Most were not informed of the reasons for their inclusion and had no effective means of challenging the decision.

The implementation of the Fourth Schedule also reflected a pattern of collective punishment, with family members of activists and human rights defenders placed under restrictions despite the absence of available evidence linking them to criminal activity. HRCB's review of official lists further identified deceased and severely ill individuals among those included, raising serious concerns about arbitrariness and lack of oversight.

The widespread use of the Fourth Schedule in 2025 illustrates how preventive security mechanisms have increasingly been used to monitor and restrict dissent, contributing to a shrinking civic space and undermining fundamental rights, including freedom of movement, association, and political participation.

2. Suppression of Peaceful Assembly and Political Mobilization

Throughout the year, authorities employed a range of measures to restrict peaceful assembly, political mobilization, and public dissent across Balochistan. Demonstrations were frequently met with excessive force, arbitrary arrests, and intimidation, while administrative restrictions, road blockades, communication shutdowns, and internet disruptions were used to prevent gatherings and limit the ability of activists and political parties to organize and communicate. Together, these measures significantly constrained civic space and undermined the exercise of the rights to freedom of assembly and expression.

2.1 Attacks on Protests and Demonstrations

Forces repeatedly used coercive measures against peaceful demonstrations organized by political organizations, human rights activists, and families of victims of enforced disappearances.

In January, security forces launched a large-scale crackdown to prevent BYC's commemorative events marking Baloch "Remembrance Day." Authorities reportedly sealed off Dalbandin and Nushki, deployed large numbers of security personnel, suspended communication services, and used intimidation to discourage participation.

On 3 March, police forcibly dispersed a sit-in protest at Hub Chowki and detained several participants, including women. Among those arrested was Seema Baloch, who was reportedly held for approximately eighteen hours and subjected to physical and psychological abuse while in custody.

The most serious incident occurred in March, when security forces opened fire on demonstrators protesting the detention of BYC leaders in Quetta. At least three people were killed and several others injured. On 25 March, police again used live ammunition against protesters in Quetta, seriously injuring a demonstrator who was shot in the leg. During the same period, police reportedly attacked a peaceful BYC rally in Panjgur and other parts of the region.

Political mobilization outside Balochistan also faced restrictions. On 27 March, Punjab police dispersed a peaceful solidarity protest in Taunsa Sharif organized in support of detained BYC leaders. Demonstrators were reportedly manhandled, arrested, and denied access to legal counsel for several days.

The Balochistan National Party (BNP) also faced significant restrictions during its protest campaign demanding the release of detained BYC leaders. On 28 March, security forces blocked and dispersed a BNP march at Lakpass, preventing participants from entering Quetta. According to organizers, more than 250 BNP supporters and activists were arrested during the operation. The following day, a suicide bomber blew himself near the BNP sit-in site but no deaths or injuries were reported. Protesters also apprehended a suspect, allegedly a security officer operating in civilian clothing, trying to cause harm to the protesters.

On 25 April, police disrupted peaceful demonstrations organized by the BYC in Karachi, Hub, Gadani, and Uthal. Protesters travelling by bus to join a rally in Karachi were detained by Sindh police before reaching the demonstration site. Video footage shared by journalists and activists appeared to show police harassment of protesters and the use of force against participants. Authorities subsequently registered an FIR against demonstrators, accusing them of anti-state activities and unlawful assembly.

On 5 July, police opened fire on a BYC rally in Hub that had been organized to protest the killing of Zeeshan Zaheer, son of a victim of enforced disappearance, killed by state-sponsored local death squads for demanding justice for his father. Several participants were detained, including BYC activists, relatives of victims of enforced disappearance, and Abdullah, a representative of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan. The detainees were denied access to legal counsel and had their mobile phones confiscated.

Mass arrests were also used to suppress political mobilization. On 8 September, authorities reportedly arrested more than one hundred activists and political workers across Balochistan during a province-wide shutter-down and wheel-jam strike called in response to the attack on BNP leader Sardar Akhtar Mengal. Those detained included members and leaders of BNP, Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP), Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), and other political organizations.

2.2 Restrictions on Freedom of Assembly and Political Participation

Alongside direct crackdowns on demonstrations, authorities used administrative restrictions and physical barriers to prevent political gatherings and limit public participation.

On 1 August, the Government of Balochistan imposed Section 144 across the province for fifteen days, prohibiting public gatherings, rallies, processions, and assemblies of four or more persons. Similar restrictions were imposed at other times during the year, including in Quetta during December.

Authorities also employed physical obstacles to restrict political mobilization. During the BNP-led protest movement at Lakpass, roads leading to Quetta were dug up and blocked with shipping containers to prevent marchers from entering the city. Footage shared by organizers showed sections of the Quetta–Karachi National Highway being excavated and obstructed in an apparent effort to impede peaceful demonstrators.

2.3 Communication Restrictions and Internet Shutdowns

Communication restrictions were another tool used to control the flow of information in Balochistan. Authorities repeatedly suspended or restricted mobile and internet services, citing security and public order concerns. These disruptions affected access to education, business, journalism, and essential online services, while also limiting the flow of information from areas affected by protests and security operations.

On 1 August, following the imposition of Section 144, the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority suspended mobile internet services across large parts of the province, affecting millions of residents. Internet services remained suspended across much of Balochistan for an extended period in September.

In December, services in Quetta were again disrupted following the imposition of Section 144. Internet access was initially suspended in some areas and later significantly throttled, leaving residents with slow and unreliable connectivity and further restricting communication and access to information.

3. Retaliation and Collective Punishment Against Human Rights Defenders, Journalists, Lawyers, Intellectuals, Community Leaders, and Families of Activists

Over the course of the reporting year, human rights defenders, journalists, lawyers, intellectuals, community leaders, and relatives of activists were subjected to continuous threats, harassment, arbitrary detention, physical attacks, and other forms of retaliation.

Human rights defenders remained particularly vulnerable. In June, authorities registered a criminal case against Syed Gulzar Dost and Waseem Safar following their participation in a peaceful protest organized by the BYC in Kech. On July 7, Gulzar Dost was abducted from his residence in Apsar, Turbat, by police personnel and unidentified masked men. He was produced before a court the following day on speech-related charges and remained entangled in legal proceedings before eventually securing release on bail. Senior members of the Voice for Baloch Missing Persons (VBMP), including late Mama Qadeer and Hooran Baloch, also faced judicial persecution when an anti-terrorism court declared them proclaimed offenders and publicized their names without prior legal notification.

Journalists and media workers were likewise subjected to intimidation and legal harassment. In March, local journalist Mohammad Usman was detained during a raid carried out by uniformed and plain-clothed personnel in Quetta. CCTV footage circulated on social media showed officers entering a mobile phone store and taking him into custody. Although he was later released, the arrest raised concerns regarding the targeting of journalists reporting on politically sensitive issues. In April, journalist and social media activist Bayazid Kharoti was arrested by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on allegations of spreading propaganda against state institutions through social media. Reports indicated that he had previously faced harassment linked to his work. Additional pressure was directed at journalists through threats and intimidation. Niaz Baloch publicly stated that he had received threats from Pakistani intelligence agencies, including warnings of enforced disappearance, while journalist Javed MB also reported threats linked to his reporting. In another case, police registered an FIR against Manzoor Ahmad, Bureau Chief of Daily Intekhab in Turbat, accusing him of participating in anti-state activities during a public demonstration.

Lawyers representing activists and political detainees also came under pressure. On April 17, masked individuals reportedly entered the residence of Israr Baloch, a member of the legal team representing detained BYC leaders before the Balochistan High Court. According to his account, the intruders held his younger brothers hostage, searched the residence, confiscated books, and repeatedly demanded information about his whereabouts. Other lawyers reported direct physical abuse. Waqar Baloch and Tahir Mehmood alleged that they were assaulted and unlawfully detained after visiting a police station to seek information regarding a case registered against Sammi Deen Baloch. According to their accounts, police personnel subjected them to physical violence and held them for several hours without legal justification.

Beyond journalists and lawyers, intellectuals, educators, cultural figures, and community leaders also faced intimidation. Authorities reportedly shut down activities organized by the Kitab Karawan book fair initiative in multiple cities, including Taunsa, Naseerabad, Sibi, and Barkhan. Police reportedly raided book stalls, confiscated literature, and harassed students participating in the initiative. In Gwadar, four students were arrested for organizing a bookstall as part of the campaign. The actions raised concerns regarding restrictions on educational, literary, and cultural activities and reflected broader efforts to suppress spaces associated with learning and intellectual engagement. Prominent community figure Sharif Zakir Baloch survived two separate attacks in February, including a grenade attack on his residence and an armed assault by unidentified gunmen. Reports also documented pressure on members of Balochistan's cultural and intellectual community. Cultural figure Minhaj Mukhtar's residence was targeted in a grenade attack, while Professor Nosheen Qambrani's home was raided and her family subjected to harassment. Climate activist Zunira Baloch also reported that her residence had been vandalized and personal documents and awards destroyed. These incidents suggest that pressure extended beyond overtly political activism to encompass broader forms of civic, educational, cultural, and environmental engagement.

A particularly concerning trend during the year was the targeting of family members of activists, political leaders, and victims of human rights violations. On April 16, the body of Farooq Baloch was discovered in Khuzdar two days after his enforced disappearance. Farooq was the son of Noor Ahmed Mengal, Vice President of the Balochistan National Party (BNP) in Khuzdar, who was actively participating in the party's Lakpass sit-in protest at the time.

Similarly, the father of Baloch Yakjehti Committee leader Dr. Sabiha Baloch was forcibly disappeared in an attempt to pressure her into abandoning her political and human rights activities. He was later released.

The targeting of mothers and female relatives seeking justice was also evidence. In August, Arifa Shah, the mother of Ehsan Shah, who was reportedly killed by state forces in Mastung's Ghanja Dori area, was arrested by Quetta police while participating in a protest outside the Quetta Press Club. According to reports, she and her young daughter were harassed and threatened during the demonstration, which sought accountability for her son's killing.

Restrictions on freedom of expression intensified toward the end of the year. On December 18, Mahzeb Baloch was prevented from holding a press conference regarding the enforced disappearance of her father. According to her account, the Lasbela Press Club was locked and police were deployed to prevent the event from taking place. Authorities reportedly threatened participants with detention under the 3MPO ordinance if they attempted to address the media elsewhere.

The targeting of relatives was further reinforced through administrative measures. During October and November, authorities placed numerous relatives of victims of enforced disappearance on the Fourth Schedule under the Anti-Terrorism Act, subjecting them to surveillance, movement restrictions, and stigmatization despite the absence of any allegations linking them to acts of violence.

Taken together, these incidents demonstrate that repression in Balochistan extended far beyond direct action against political activists. Human rights defenders, journalists, lawyers, intellectuals, community leaders, and family members increasingly faced retaliation for documenting abuses, seeking accountability, providing legal assistance, or exercising their rights to freedom of expression and association. The targeting of these groups contributed to a shrinking civic space and reinforced a broader climate of fear intended to discourage dissent and public participation.

4. Attacks on Civilians, Collective Punishment, and Harm Resulting from Security Operations

During the period under review, military operations, security measures, and counterinsurgency practices continued to inflict significant harm on civilians across Balochistan. Women, children, and other non-combatants were injured or displaced during military operations, residential areas came under fire, homes were destroyed, livelihoods were undermined, and access to essential services was obstructed. In many cases, the actions of security forces appeared to amount to collective punishment, affecting entire families and communities.

4.1 Civilian Casualties and Injuries

Women and children were among those affected by firing, shelling, and grenade attacks by security forces. On 12 August, FC personnel reportedly opened fire on a house in Kolahu, Tump, seriously injuring a woman, Zuleikha, and a child, who sustained a bullet wound to the hand.

In September, a woman named Durrain was seriously injured during a military operation in Kolwah. According to local sources, soldiers stormed her residence, bulldozed the house, and later set it on fire while demolishing several other homes in the area. She was subsequently transferred to hospital for treatment.

Further incidents were reported in December. Durdana, a 22-year-old resident of Sahaky–Balgetar village in Panjgur, was seriously injured while inside her home when FC personnel opened fire into a residential area. In another incident in Panjgur, rockets fired from a military post struck a civilian house, injuring four people, including two children. Among the injured was four-year-old Manahil Zafar. In Awaran, at least seven civilians, including women and children, were injured when mortar shells reportedly struck residential homes, leaving several victims in critical condition.

In June, three civilians, Shakeel, Khalid, and Rashid, were injured in Jiwani, Gwadar, after security forces reportedly opened fire on a passing civilian vehicle following a bomb blast targeting them. The victims had no reported connection to the attack and appeared to have been caught in the forces' retaliatory response, reflecting a recurring pattern in which civilians bear the consequences of security forces' reactions to armed attacks.

Additional incidents during the year included women injured in grenade attacks in Turbat and Tump, further highlighting the vulnerability of civilians living in areas affected by security operations and armed conflict.

4.2 Military Operations, Residential Sieges, and Displacement

Several regions experienced prolonged military operations that significantly affected civilian populations. The operation in Zehri, which continued from September into October, involved aerial bombardment, ground assaults, extensive restrictions on movement, and the occupation of civilian infrastructure. Local residents reported widespread disruption to daily life, while communication services were suspended and access to essential services became severely restricted.

The humanitarian consequences of the operation became increasingly severe as the siege continued. Following weeks of aerial bombardment that caused civilian casualties, including women and children, Pakistani ground troops entered Zehri on 27 September with heavy weaponry and encircled residential areas. Residents reported house raids and looting of valuables, arbitrary arrests, and enforced disappearances, while the region remained effectively sealed off through a prolonged communication blackout and curfew. Continuous air and drone strikes reportedly damaged homes, farmlands, and water sources, while shortages of food, clean water, and medical assistance further deepened the humanitarian crisis. By the end of October, independent access to the area remained severely restricted, making it difficult to assess the full scale of civilian casualties and damage. The prolonged siege raised serious concerns regarding the protection of civilians and the humanitarian impact of military operations in the populated area.

Similarly, military operations in the Sheikhrī area during May resulted in civilian displacement, destruction of homes and agricultural property, and the death of Bakhtiar Ahmed Baloch. Residents reported being forced to flee their homes.

Political activists and their families were also subjected to forms of military siege and intimidation that affected wider communities. Baloch Yakjehti Committee leader Sammi Deen Baloch reported that upon arriving in her native village of Mashkay, the area was effectively placed under military siege. According to her, the village remained under constant surveillance through cameras, drones, and other monitoring mechanisms. Security personnel allegedly restricted movement, harassed relatives, and subjected residents to intimidation, creating an atmosphere of fear.

4.3 Destruction of Civilian Properties and Livelihoods

During the period, security forces repeatedly employed tactics that collectively punished families and communities. Homes were reportedly demolished or burned during military operations, while civilian infrastructure and sources of livelihood were also targeted.

The destruction of homes during military operations in Kolwah represented a severe example documented during the year. Local residents reported that houses were bulldozed and set on fire during the operation, leaving families displaced and without shelter.

Similar concerns emerged during the military operation in Sheikhrī, where residents alleged the destruction of water sources, agricultural crops, and solar-powered infrastructure essential for farming

and daily life. Such actions reportedly compounded the displacement of local populations and undermined their ability to sustain themselves economically.

Reports from Tump further indicated attacks on civilian infrastructure, including water tanks and household equipment, causing additional hardship for affected families and disrupting access to basic necessities.

In a separate case, a disabled fisherman identified as Akram accused Coast Guard and Levies personnel of repeatedly extorting him, using his fishing boat for their own activities, and ultimately damaging the vessel. According to him, the loss of his boat deprived him of his primary means of supporting his family and left him in severe economic hardship.

4.4 Obstruction of Medical Care and Harm Caused by Security Restrictions

Security measures and military practices also interfered with access to healthcare and emergency assistance. During the military operation in Zehri, the area's only civilian hospital was occupied by the Pakistan Army and converted into a military camp, severely limiting access to healthcare for local residents.

In October, a sick girl reportedly died after a passenger bus was subjected to an overnight security inspection in Uthal, preventing her from reaching medical treatment in time. Earlier in the year, a woman was reportedly forced to give birth on the roadside after prolonged delays at the Rakhni Customs Check Post. The newborn infant later died from exposure to cold weather.

Taken together, these cases show the broader human cost of military operations and security-force practices in Balochistan. Beyond their impact on political activists and protesters, state actions frequently affected ordinary civilians, causing injuries, displacement, destruction of homes and livelihoods, restrictions on healthcare, and forms of collective punishment inconsistent with fundamental human rights protections.

5. Digital Surveillance and Restrictions on Online Expression

The shrinking of civic space in the region during 2025 extended beyond physical restrictions on protests and assemblies to include increasing controls over digital communication and online expression. Concerns regarding state surveillance intensified following the publication of an investigation by Amnesty International documenting the acquisition and deployment of advanced surveillance and censorship technologies by Pakistani authorities.

According to Amnesty International, Pakistan has developed an extensive digital surveillance infrastructure through systems such as the Web Monitoring System (WMS 2.0) and the Lawful Intercept Management System (LIMS). These systems reportedly enable the monitoring of online activity, censorship of internet content, and interception of communications across telecommunications networks. Amnesty International further reported that the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) required telecommunications providers to integrate these systems into their networks, raising concerns regarding privacy rights, freedom of expression, and the absence of meaningful legal safeguards or independent oversight.

The investigation also highlighted the international dimension of Pakistan's surveillance capabilities, identifying components supplied through corporate networks involving companies based in China, the United States, France, Canada, Germany, and the United Arab Emirates. These findings renewed concerns regarding the role of foreign technology providers in facilitating surveillance and censorship practices that may contribute to human rights violations.

The expansion of surveillance capabilities is particularly concerning in Balochistan, where activists, journalists, students, political workers, and human rights defenders already face enforced disappearances, arbitrary detention, intimidation, and reprisals for peaceful political activity. HRCB notes with concern that the expansion of surveillance capabilities has coincided with a sharp increase in documented human rights violations in the province. Enforced disappearances increased from 830 documented cases in 2024 to 1,482 cases in 2025, while killings attributed to state forces and their proxies rose from 87 cases to 325 during the same period.

Concerns regarding digital surveillance were further reflected in actions taken against political figures for their online activities. During the year, Pakistan's National Crime and Cyber Investigation Agency (NCCIA) summoned Baloch nationalist leader Mir Javed Mengal, BNP chief Sardar Akhtar Mengal, members of his family, and even referenced his deceased brother, Mir Zafarullah Mengal, in connection with a social media post expressing support for detained BYC leader Dr. Mahrang Baloch. The incident highlighted the growing use of cybercrime and digital regulatory mechanisms to scrutinize and potentially deter online political expression.

Conclusion

The year 2025 marked a severe and alarming deterioration of the human rights situation in Balochistan. The 79 percent increase in documented enforced disappearances and the 25 percent rise in killings represent not statistical abstractions but the lived realities of thousands of families across the province. Behind each figure is a person: a student, a farmer, a shopkeeper, a child.

The patterns documented in this report point to systematic, organized state conduct: the targeting of houses at night, the use of paramilitary and intelligence structures as instruments of control, the legal weaponization of counter-terrorism frameworks, and the deliberate suppression of any space for political or civic expression. These patterns are inconsistent with the obligations of a state bound by its own constitution and international human rights law.

Accountability is not a political demand but a legal and moral imperative. The people of Balochistan have a right to life, dignity, freedom from arbitrary detention, and the ability to exercise their civil and political rights without fear. These rights are not negotiable and cannot be suspended in the name of security operations.

HRCB remains committed to documenting violations, supporting victims and their families, and advocating for accountability until justice is achieved.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

The systematic escalation of human rights violations documented across Balochistan requires immediate and concrete intervention by international bodies, foreign governments, and international trade partners.

1. To the United Nations & Multilateral Bodies

- **Establish an Independent Inquiry Mechanism:** Mandate an international fact-finding mission through the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) to investigate widespread enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, mass displacement, and other human rights violations in Balochistan.
- **Formal Review of Counter-Terrorism Frameworks:** Initiate a formal assessment of Pakistan's weaponization of the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA), Maintenance of Public Order (3MPO), and Fourth Schedule listings used to criminalize peaceful assembly and civil society groups like the Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC).

2. To Member States & Foreign Governments

- **Apply Universal Jurisdiction:** Authorize national judicial authorities to investigate and prosecute Pakistani military, Frontier Corps (FC), and intelligence personnel credibly implicated in gross human rights abuses under universal jurisdiction frameworks.
- **Targeted Magnitsky-Style Sanctions:** Impose travel bans and asset freezes on high-ranking officials and command structures within the Frontier Corps, Counter Terrorism Department (CTD), Balochistan government officials and state-backed militias linked to extrajudicial executions and abductions.
- **Condition Bilateral & Security Assistance:** Immediately halt all military aid, joint security exercises, and defensive equipment transfers to security forces operating in Balochistan until documented disappearances cease and missing persons are accounted for.

3. To Foreign Tech-Exporting Nations & Corporate Actors

- **Suspend Dual-Use Digital Surveillance Sales:** Prohibit the export, licensing, and maintenance of mass surveillance and interception technologies to Pakistani security and telecommunication authorities. Continued exports of such technologies risk facilitating enforced disappearances and other serious human rights violations in Balochistan.

4. To International Trade Partners & Financial Institutions

- **Suspend GSP+ and Trade Concessions:** Suspend Pakistan's eligibility under the European Union's GSP+ scheme and similar trade preference programs, due to its non-compliance with core UN human rights treaties.
- **Integrate Human Rights Safeguards into Development Aid:** IMF, World Bank, and ADB enforce strict human rights conditionality on structural loans and infrastructure projects, preventing funds from subsidizing military operations or human rights abuses in Balochistan.