



General Assembly

Distr.: General
23 May 2024

English only

Human Rights Council

Fifty-second session

27 February–31 March 2023

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by Association MIMAN, a non- governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[6 February 2023]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



Peoples' Lives and their Future are at Stake in Pakistan.

The natural resource rich province Balochistan is totally notorious for its high rate of poverty literacy unemployment and infant and mother mortality. However, the conceived and discriminatory policies and poor governance has resulted in extreme underdevelopment of the region. These social and economic setbacks have in turn contributed to years of insurgency and counter insurgency operations in the region. The Pakistani army has often been accused of committing crimes ranging from mass killings, disappearances, rape call and forced marriages against women and children and illegal occupation of land holdings.

Gwadar is at the heart of a \$60 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) where workers from Beijing have been involved in the development of the port on the Arabian Sea. The residents of the city, however, maintain the Chinese investment in the region has done little to improve their lives. Many of them have complained about water scarcity and lack of employment opportunities while demanding an end to illegal trawling and removal of unnecessary security checkpoints from the area.

Haq Do Tehreek (An Organization of Locals asking for Basic Rights):

Four days after announcing his plans to head to Gwadar in order to surrender, Haq Do Tehreek (HDT) leader Maulana Hidayatur Rehman was arrested on Friday after he showed up at a local court over the charges killing of a policeman.

A heavy police contingent was present outside the local court to arrest three others along with the HDT leader. The HDT has been protesting against the provincial government for the last more than two months. The HDT has been demanding an end to illegal fishing/trawling and unnecessary check posts. Police have already shifted 13 leaders of the HDT to Quetta. The crimes branch police Quetta has already taken a 10-day remand of Hussain Wadela and 12 other leaders of the HDT. *1

To deal with such Pakistan uses many tactics including the shutdown of internet. I.e. Authorities in Pakistan's southwestern Balochistan province on Thursday restored mobile Internet service in Gwadar port city after shutting it down for 10 days in the wake of clashes between a group of protesters and police personnel in December, said a senior official. *2

Press Freedom:

The Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors (CPNE) has issued the "Pakistan Press Freedom Report 2022". According to the report, freedom of media in Pakistan faced exacerbating scenarios of jeopardy in 2022 whereas freedom of speech was continuously suppressed and sabotaged. According to CPNE's "Pakistan Media Freedom Report 2022", four media persons were killed during the performance of their duties.

The inhumane murder of well-known anchor and journalist, Arshad Sharif, Athar Mateen, and Zia-ur-Rehman Farooqi has exposed the mendacious claims of media freedom by the government and authorities whereas the death of Sadaf Naeem, a female reporter, and journalists, during the performance of her duty as consequences of substandard safety measures.

In September, the Pakistan Media Development Authority Ordinance was proposed, which effectively enabled press censorship by bringing all media under one regulator, granting the government unchecked powers to punish journalists through steep fines, special "media tribunals" and appointing government officials to key positions. Social media app TikTok was blocked by the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority three times during the year after the High Courts of Peshawar and Sindh imposed bans for "vulgarity".

Protection of Minorities:

Minorities are particularly unwelcome in Pakistan and comprise only around 4% of the population. The Pakistani constitution discriminates against minorities and prevents them from rising in the political ranks. Pakistani minorities have been subjected to rising violence and attacks according to media sources. In January 2022, Peshawar priest William Siraj was killed by extremists. In May 2022, two Sikh businessmen and an Ahmadi man were killed in separate incidents across Pakistan. The family of the Ahmadi man accused the chief cleric at his seminary of provoking the murder by inciting violence against the Ahmadi community. In June 2022, a Hindu Temple in Karachi was desecrated. In October, Deutsche Welle reported a rise in hate crimes against minorities in Pakistan.

Claims of blasphemy can be especially dangerous in Pakistan. Human rights groups believe most accusers use these claims to settle personal scores and property disputes as well as other minor issues.

Records show that 1,415 people were accused of blasphemy between 1947 and 2021. According to the Center for Research and Security Studies, a Pakistani think tank, 81 of the accused were killed — 71 men and 10 women. *3

Enforced Disappearances:

the Islamabad High Court which, in June 2022, rendered a decision highly critical of Pakistan's Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances. Chief Justice Athar Minallah observed that the Commission had failed to fulfill its responsibility and called the Commission "a burden" which must "justify its continued existence." The Court also lambasted the government for its involvement in disappearances, stating "you are proving that [forcibly] disappearing people has been the policy of the State since the days of General Musharraf...". *4

Human rights defenders. Whether lawyers, bloggers, journalists or activists, voices of truth are often subjected to harassment, threats and forms of violence. In 2016, the Pakistani government argued that human rights defenders did not warrant special legal status and the protection of human rights defenders was a conspiracy by western countries to interfere in domestic affairs in developing countries. Pakistani state forces usually disappear the Baloch Human Rights Defenders and activists in-order to silence their voices. Human Rights Watch investigated several cases in which uniformed personnel of the Frontier Corps, an Interior Ministry paramilitary force, and the police were involved in abducting Baloch nationalists and suspected militants. In others cases, witnesses typically referred to abductors as being from "the agencies," a term commonly used to describe the intelligence agencies, including the military Directorate for Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), Military Intelligence, and the civilian Intelligence Bureau.*5

Women's rights. Many women in Pakistan face rape, acid attacks, domestic violence and "honor" killings. It is estimated that there are about 1,000 "honor" killings a year on Pakistani women. If a woman is accused of adultery, fornication or an immoral behavior that violates societal and religious norms, she is then subjected to an "honor" killing.

Baloch Students : In the garb of controlling terrorism, the law enforcement agencies attack the Baloch youth who were demanding the right to education, provision of water, removal of armed men from the educational institutions and end to enforced disappearances.

According to Voice for Baloch Missing Persons (VBMP), a campaign group by families of victims, more than 40,000 Baloch men, women, and children are under Pakistani military's custody. VBMP also alleges that at least 5,000 missing persons have been killed and dumped over last one decade.*6

Baloch Voice Association (BVA), Voice for Baloch Missing Persons (VBMP), Baloch Peoples Congress (BPC), NGO(s) without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.

*1 <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2395849/gwadar-police-arrest-haq-do-tehreek-chief>

*2 <https://www.arabnews.pk/node/2226991/pakistan>

*3 <https://www.dw.com/en/pakistan-activists-sound-alarm-over-hate-crimes-blasphemy-claims/a-63396489>

*4 <https://unwatch.org/pakistan-claims-stellar-human-rights-record-ahead-of-mondays-un-review/>

*5 <https://www.hrw.org/news/2011/07/28/pakistan-security-forces-disappear-opponents-balochistan>

*6 <https://www.change.org/p/prime-minister-of-pakistan-balochistan-stop-the-crackdown-against-balochi-students-and-activists>