



BALOCH VOICE ASSOCIATION

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BVA Report:

The Conflict in Balochistan: A Detailed Report on the Crisis, Human Rights, Enforced Disappearances, and the Suppression of Dissent



Image Showing the sea route from strait of Hurmoz towards Gawadar



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Executive Summary

Balochistan — Pakistan's largest province by land area and home to roughly 15 million of the country's estimated 240 million people (2023 census) — is rich in natural resources including oil, coal, gold, copper, and vast gas reserves that generate substantial revenue for the federal government. Despite this wealth, it remains one of Pakistan's most underdeveloped and volatile regions. For over seven decades, the Baloch people have experienced what activists describe as systematic political marginalisation, economic exploitation, and cultural suppression, punctuated by at least five armed rebellion movements since Pakistan's formation in 1947.

This report examines the core conflict, the main issues and demands of the Baloch people, the human rights situation — with particular focus on enforced disappearances — and the crisis of freedom of expression and assembly. It draws on documentation from the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCPP), the UN human rights apparatus, Amnesty International, the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, the Baloch Voice Association, and multiple journalistic and academic sources.

1. Background and the Roots of the Conflict

1.1 The Forcible Annexation of 1948

Activists and historians trace the conflict to the incorporation of the princely state of Kalat — then the centre of Baloch political identity — into Pakistan in 1948, which they characterise as a forcible annexation. According to the Baloch Voice Association, "since the annexation of Baluchistan in Pakistan... all Baluchistan political leaders, notables, including The Khan of Kalat had been put in prison for treason." The Baloch people assert that this original act of incorporation was never subject to a genuine democratic consent process, and that subsequent decades of governance have eroded Baloch social and community institutions, liberty, dignity, and property rights.

1.2 Five Phases of Insurgency

The conflict has moved through several distinct phases:

- **1948 and 1958–59:** Early armed resistance by Baloch leaders opposed to integration, led by figures such as Prince Karim and later Nauroz Khan.
- **1960s:** A third phase driven by opposition to military rule under Pakistan's first military government, that of Ayub Khan, and growing demands for political rights shaped increasingly by leftist ideas. Though limited, it reinforced the perception that Balochistan's relationship with the state was governed by force.
- **1973–1977:** The most intense phase. After Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto dissolved the provincial government formed by the opposition National Awami Party (NAP) and accused its leaders of sabotaging the state, the most radical elements of the Baloch nationalist movement joined the guerrilla effort initiated by the Marris and Mengals. Some 80,000 troops were mobilised by the Pakistani army. The demand for outright independence emerged during

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- this period, not as an original claim of the Baloch People's Liberation Front, but as a result of the gradual alienation and radicalisation of Baloch youth.
- **2004–present:** The current insurgency. After a period of relative calm, resentment over the perceived exploitation of Balochistan's natural resources — particularly gas reserves, while local communities remained deprived — reignited open conflict. New Baloch groups challenged the government, and the death toll in the conflict has not dropped below 100 in any year since 2020, with the conflict increasing dramatically in 2024 and 2025.

1.3 The Current Insurgency and Its Drivers

The current phase, gaining momentum from the early 2000s, is driven by a convergence of factors: demands for greater political rights, control over resources, and increased autonomy; the issue of enforced disappearances of Baloch activists and their families by elements allegedly connected to Pakistan's security apparatus; and economic grievances that clash with the perceived exploitation of Baloch resources by the central government in Islamabad.

Crucially, the Pakistani military has consistently conflated all Baloch demands with separatism, branding legitimate grievances as anti-Pakistan nationalism. This indiscriminate approach has not only failed to address underlying issues but has also reinforced the insurgents' resolve, perpetuating a cycle of violence and state repression.

2. Main Issues and Demands of the Baloch People

The demands of the Baloch people, as articulated by movements such as the Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC) and human rights organisations working on Balochistan, are framed not as aspirational but as minimum requirements of international law. They centre on several interconnected grievances:

2.1 Political Marginalisation and Denial of Self-Determination

Baloch activists hold that since 1948 they have been denied meaningful political agency. Every government — military or civilian — is accused of eroding Balochistan's social and community institutions and encroaching on Baloch liberty, dignity, and property rights. Activists have repeatedly urged the United Nations to recognise the legitimate aspirations of the Baloch people for self-determination.

2.2 Economic Exploitation and Resource Theft

Despite sitting atop enormous natural wealth, Balochistan is Pakistan's most impoverished province. The ethnic Baloch allege that the Pakistani state has neglected their community while extracting the province's mineral resources for the benefit of the federal government and external actors. Gas from Balochistan powered industry in Punjab for decades while Baloch villages went without.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a roughly \$60 billion infrastructure initiative, has sharpened these grievances. Gwadar — Pakistan's only deep-sea port on the Arabian Sea and a key CPEC node — has become a focal point of anger. Baloch claim that contracts have been awarded to non-Baloch firms and that most labour employed on these projects is non-Baloch, reinforcing a sense that a natural advantage given to Balochistan is being "usurped and exploited by outsiders, I.e. by Punjabis." Local fishing communities report restricted access to fishing waters, land grabbing, militarisation, and ecological destruction. The Balochistan Assembly itself has demanded inclusion in CPEC



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Phase II, with lawmakers noting that "despite spending billions of dollars, the people of Balochistan have not received any benefits" and that "not a single major provincial project has been included in CPEC Phase II."

2.3 An End to Enforced Disappearances and Extrajudicial Killings

The single most prominent humanitarian demand is an end to the practice of enforced disappearances and the extrajudicial killing of detained persons. Families demand the safe return of the disappeared, accountability for those responsible, and the right to truth and justice.

2.4 Provincial Autonomy and Credible Political Representation

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan has identified the "erosion of provincial autonomy" as a core element of the crisis, warning that the sense of alienation in the province is real and growing and threatens national cohesion. Analysts argue that resolving the crisis requires recognising its political nature, addressing enforced disappearances, ensuring electorally legitimate representation, and establishing a credible Truth and Reconciliation process.

2.5 Cultural and Identity Rights

The Baloch Voice Association has told the UN that Pakistan's security forces "have treated the Baloch people as occupants," with xenophobia "most evident in their crude behaviour and disproportionate response to the most genuine and fundamental demands of the Baloch people to honour their dignity, identity and culture, and respect their sovereignty on their land."

3. The Human Rights Situation

3.1 A "Grave" and Worsening Crisis

In August 2025, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) warned of a "grave" human rights crisis in Balochistan after a fact-finding mission uncovered "a disturbing pattern of continued enforced disappearances, shrinking civic space, erosion of provincial autonomy, and unchecked impunity." The HRCP observed that while state representatives now acknowledged the existence of enforced disappearances, they did so within a security narrative that treated the practice as a byproduct of insurgency — a framing that "risked normalising what international human rights law considers a crime against humanity."

The HRCP noted that the law permits 90-day detentions without meaningful judicial oversight, raising concerns about the potential for torture and abuse. It called for independent investigations into alleged reprisals against those who speak up against the practice, and for the disbanding of the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances (COIED), which has "failed to hold accountable those responsible for such practices despite having the prosecutorial powers to do so."



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3.2 The Scale of Enforced Disappearances

The numbers are contested but uniformly alarming:

- **The COIED's official figures:** Since 2011, the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances recorded at least 10,078 enforced disappearances nationwide. Of those, 2,752 took place in Balochistan province. The COIED reported 8,015 cases "disposed of," with 6,464 people traced, 4,514 returned home, 1,002 present in internment centres, 671 in prisons, and 277 found deceased. There are 2,270 outstanding cases in which the fate of these people is unknown.
- **Baloch activists' figures:** Human rights organisations and families in Balochistan suggest much higher numbers than those provided by the COIED. One detailed list compiled by a Voice for Baloch Missing Persons organiser records 18,000 missing persons from the province since 2001, with a list of 14,000 submitted to the Supreme Court, and records of 1,500 bodies that were dumped. Most of those missing are young men, but the records also include children and 170 women.
- **Recent surges:** A report by BVA documented 109 enforced disappearances in January 2025 alone across 14 districts of Balochistan — with Kech district hardest hit (30), followed by Awaran (14), Dera Bugti (11), Panjgur (10), and Gwadar (10). In the first six months of 2025, BVA documented 885 enforced disappearances and 121 killings. The Balochistan police registered 46 new cases of enforced disappearance in 2025 alone.

The UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances has noted that "between 2017 and 2024, there have been hundreds of reports of enforced disappearances in Balochistan of journalists, human rights defenders, students," and others. BVA has been the main organization reporting most of the cases systematically.

3.3 Extrajudicial Killings and the "Kill-and-Dump" Phenomenon

Enforced disappearances are intertwined with extrajudicial executions. Bodies of previously disappeared persons are frequently found dumped across Balochistan and even in Karachi — a practice activists call "kill and dump." In December 2021 alone, the Human Rights Council of Balochistan reported more than 63 people abducted and missing while 37 were killed. In March 2025, 13 unclaimed bodies — feared to be missing persons — were buried in Quetta; authorities claimed they were militants killed after the Bolan Pass train hijacking, though this could not be independently verified.

3.4 Mass Graves and Torture

Human Rights Watch's landmark 2011 report, *"We Can Torture, Kill, or Keep You for Years,"* documented the systematic nature of disappearances by Pakistan's security forces, including severe torture such as beatings, whipping, being hung upside down, and the insertion of pins under fingernails. Many mass graves have been found in Balochistan, a phenomenon raised before the United Nations in Geneva.



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4. A List of Some Disappeared Persons

The following is a representative — not exhaustive — list of individuals subjected to enforced disappearance in Balochistan, drawn from the documentation of the Voice for Baloch Missing Persons, Paank, the Human Rights Council of Balochistan, the UN human rights apparatus, and press reporting. The Baloch Voice for Justice has noted that Pakistan's forces "are faster abducting innocent Baloch people than us listing them," so any list is necessarily incomplete.

4.1 Long-standing, High-Profile Disappearances

#	Name	Details
1	Dr. Deen Muhammad Baloch	A medical doctor abducted on 28 June 2009 from his clinic in Ornach, Khuzdar district. Known for medical services and involvement in Baloch nationalist politics. Eyewitnesses say security personnel took him; the government has denied involvement. Despite continued protests by his family, including his daughters, his whereabouts remain unknown. His case has been raised by the UN human rights system.
2	Zahid Baloch (Zahid Kurd)	Former chairman of the Baloch Students Organization-Azad (BSO-Azad), one of the largest student political groups advocating Baloch rights. Abducted on 18 March 2014 from Quetta in broad daylight. Colleagues and family allege security agencies were involved due to his role in mobilising students and speaking out against human rights abuses. Remains missing.
3	Bashir Azeem	76-year-old secretary-general of a Baloch political party. Subjected to enforced disappearance three times — in 2005, 2006, and 2009. On 6 February 2009, armed men in civilian clothes blocked his car en route to a press club in Quetta, blindfolded him, and held him. He was severely



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4 **Abdul Wahid Baloch**

tortured for the first week, including beatings, whipping, being hung upside down, and insertion of pins under fingernails. Released after nearly two months on 31 March 2009.

A telephone operator at Civil Hospital Karachi and a Baloch activist. Disappeared on 26 July 2016 after being detained by unknown men near Karachi. Despite his family's efforts, including legal actions, his whereabouts remain unknown; intelligence agencies are suspected due to his political affiliations.

5 **Sajid Hussain**

A journalist reporting on natural resource exploitation and environmental degradation. Fled Pakistan due to threats. In 2020, he went missing in Sweden; his body was later found under suspicious circumstances, underscoring the transnational risks faced by Baloch activists.

4.2 Recent Disappearances (2021–2025)

#	Name	Details
6	Faseeh Baloch	Student at the University of Balochistan, Quetta. Went missing on 1 November 2021, triggering a month-long protest by the Baloch Student Organization.
7	Sohail Baloch	Student at the University of Balochistan, Quetta. Went missing on 1 November 2021 alongside Faseeh Baloch.
8	Salman Baloch	Taken by security forces from Quetta on 13 November 2022. Family has heard nothing in over three years. No charges, no location, no acknowledgment from authorities.
9	Doda Baloch	Student of Karachi University's Philosophy Department. Taken



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10	Ghamshad Baloch	from his home near Maskan Chowrangi, Karachi, on 7 June 2022. Whereabouts unknown. His case was highlighted by the Baloch Voice Association. Student of Karachi University's Philosophy Department. Taken alongside Doda Baloch on 7 June 2022 from near Maskan Chowrangi, Karachi. Whereabouts unknown.
11	Dad Allah Ameen	Abducted on 1 February 2019 from the Talamb area of Mand district, Kech, along with three others. Locals report that during the raid women and children were beaten. Whereabouts remain unknown.
12	Nawaz Dostain	Abducted alongside Dad Allah Ameen on 1 February 2019 from Mand district, Kech. Whereabouts remain unknown. (Two others taken in the same raid — Ahmad Yar Mohammad and Shaho Ameen — were released the following day.)
13	Najib Noor	Abducted from a house in Gwadar city. Whereabouts unknown (one of a group including Rizwan Rahi, Adil Baloch, Naim Deedag, and Bilal Baloch; two were later released).
14	Adil Baloch	Abducted from a house in Gwadar city. Whereabouts still unknown.
15	Naim Deedag	Abducted from a house in Gwadar city. Whereabouts still unknown.
16	Abubakar	Forcibly disappeared in Gwadar, November 2024. Still missing.
17	Hayat Sabzal Baloch	Disappeared July 2024; found dead February 2025.
18	Usman Maqbol	Disappeared in Turbat, August 2025; executed within 48 hours.
19	Zeeshan Zaheer	Student, disappeared June 2025; found tortured within days.
20	Anas Ahmed	Age 15. Taken by military from Khuzdar, January 2025.
21	Farhan	Age 20, student. Disappeared in Panjgur, October 2025.
22	Irfan	Age 22, student. Disappeared in



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23	Asma Baloch	Panjgur, October 2025. Abducted by a state-backed death squad; filmed at gunpoint.
24	Faqeer Jan	Killed in a staged encounter in November 2024.
25	Asa Baloch	Killed in a staged encounter in November 2024.
26	Abid Hussain	Disappeared; later found dead.
27	Masti Khan	Disappeared.
28	Shoaib Ali	Disappeared on 16 October 2024 from a shared residence in Gulistan-i-Jauhar, along with seven others. Families allege law enforcement agencies took them.
29	Haneef	Disappeared on 16 October 2024 from Gulistan-i-Jauhar.
30	Ishfaq	Disappeared on 16 October 2024 from Gulistan-i-Jauhar.
31	Shahzad	Disappeared on 16 October 2024 from Gulistan-i-Jauhar.
32	Bebarg Ameer	Disappeared on 16 October 2024 from Gulistan-i-Jauhar.
33	Zubair	Disappeared on 16 October 2024 from Gulistan-i-Jauhar.
34	Qambar Ali	Disappeared on 16 October 2024 from Gulistan-i-Jauhar.
35	Saeedullah	Disappeared on 16 October 2024 from Gulistan-i-Jauhar.

4.3 Additional Names from BVA Documentation

The following additional names appear on lists maintained by BVA enforced disappearances database, which began cataloguing cases from March 2023: Talal Umar, Zafar Baloch, Amir Baloch, Dostain Bugti, Sattar Baloch, Tariq Baloch, Murad Ali, Ismail Baloch, Gul Hassan, Sami Kurd, Abdul Nabi Baloch, Noman Ishaq, Irshad Baloch, Khan Muhammad Bugti, Abdul Sattar, Azum Airf, Balach Fida, Khuda Dad, Khalil Ahmed, Hammal Hassni, Babar Atta, Noor Muheem, and Iftikhar Ahmed.

Note on numbers: The Baloch Voice Association has stated that these lists are necessarily incomplete and that the true scale of disappearances is far greater than any single database can capture.

5. People Imprisoned for Protesting and Political Activities

A defining feature of the current crisis is the criminalisation of peaceful protest and the imprisonment of human rights defenders. The Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC) — a peaceful civil rights movement advocating an end to enforced disappearances, extrajudicial murder, and economic injustice — has been the principal target.



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5.1 Dr. Mahrang Baloch

Dr. Mahrang Baloch, 33, a trained doctor and central organiser of the Baloch Yakjehti Committee, rose to prominence campaigning against enforced disappearances after her own father was disappeared and killed. She led hundreds of women on a roughly 1,000-mile (1,600 km) march to the capital Islamabad to demand answers, during which she was shot at twice.

- **Arrest:** She was first arrested on 22 March 2025 and detained for 30 days under the Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) law. Her detention was extended twice for further 30-day periods. She was subsequently formally arrested on 21 August 2025 in another case while still in state custody. She was arrested following a peaceful sit-in after 13 unclaimed bodies were buried in Quetta.
- **Charges:** She was charged with over two dozen anti-terrorism cases filed across Pakistan — so many that her lawyers struggled to keep track. She was placed on the Fourth Schedule under Pakistan's Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA).
- **Conviction:** On 22 June 2026, an anti-terrorism court in Quetta sentenced her and fellow activist Sibghatullah Shah to life imprisonment, convicting them of terrorism, sedition, and murder in connection with the death of a paramilitary soldier during a July 2024 protest in Gwadar. The court ordered them to pay a fine of 200,000 Pakistani rupees. The trial was conducted largely in secret, with state-appointed defence counsel representing her in later stages and her joining via video link.
- **International response:** Amnesty International demanded her immediate release, calling the conviction the culmination of "a prolonged period of unlawful detention" and noting the cases were so numerous it was difficult to provide meaningful legal representation. UN human rights experts demanded the release of Dr. Baloch and other detained BYC leaders, expressing "serious alarm at the detention of individuals for merely exercising their right to peaceful assembly." The Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) condemned the sentence as part of a "growing pattern of state repression against nonviolent resistance."

5.2 Sibghatullah Shah Ji Baloch

A central member of the BYC, detained from his home in Satellite Town, Quetta, on 31 March 2025 during a sustained crackdown. He was convicted alongside Mahrang Baloch on 22 June 2026 and sentenced to life imprisonment.

5.3 Bebag Zehri

A member of the BYC central committee and a prominent human rights defender. He was injured in an attack by Pakistan security forces in 2010 and lost the mobility in both legs. On 20 March 2025 at around 5 a.m., he and his brother Hammal Zehri were taken by Counter Terrorism Department officials from their home in Quetta following a press conference by the BYC at the Quetta Press Club. He remains in detention.

5.4 Sammi Deen Baloch

A central leader of the BYC. Arrested on 24 March 2025 in Karachi along with Deputy Organizer Lala Wahab and dozens of women during a protest against "state brutality and enforced disappearances," in defiance of a blanket ban on assemblies in the city. She has been a vocal spokesperson for detained colleagues, stating: "The only crime they committed was daring to speak against the ongoing oppression in Balochistan and bringing it to the world's attention."



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5.5 Other Detained BYC Leaders and Activists

According to the BYC and reporting by late 2025, the following additional leaders and activists have been held in detention: **Beebow Baloch, Gulzadi Baloch, Imran Baloch, and Beebarg Baloch**. They have been held under what Sammi Deen Baloch called an "unjust and unlawful" use of the MPO ordinance, with additional cases registered under anti-terrorism and criminal laws and detention extended multiple times. A number of these detainees reported "continuous mistreatment and harassment" in custody.

In March 2025 alone, Mahrang Baloch and 17 other protesters were detained on 22 March; on 21 March, three protesters were killed through the use of unlawful force by law enforcement during a protest calling for Bebarg Zehri's release.

5.6 Journalists Imprisoned or Charged

Name	Details
Niaz Baloch	A young journalist against whom the Counter Terrorism Department registered a terrorism case for uploading on social media a speech by Dr. Mahrang Baloch that authorities termed "anti-state." He and his family have faced sustained state repression over two years due to his journalistic work. He secured bail after significant effort and is contesting the charges, which were transferred from the Sessions Court in Mastung to the Sessions Court in Quetta.
Maqbool Jaffar	A journalist arrested in Quetta under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA) alongside Dr. Sana, over allegations of spreading "defamatory and propaganda content" on social media. A judicial magistrate granted a two-day physical remand to cybercrime authorities. The case was registered under Sections 20 and 26 of PECA.
Sarfaraz Shah	Owner of the Gadoshia Point channel and a journalism student at the University of Balochistan. Detained, reportedly simply for failing to submit a tenancy form — described by press bodies as "a pretext as feeble as it is" alarming.
Akbar Notezai	Senior Dawn reporter. Issued a government notice in response to a year-old investigative report exposing administrative mismanagement, abuse of power, alleged corruption, and regulatory breaches in Balochistan. Media bodies slammed the move as an attack on press freedom and a violation of Article 19 of Pakistan's Constitution.



6. Freedom of Expression

6.1 "Journalism Is Lost in Balochistan"

A December 2025 report by the media watchdog Freedom Network, titled *"Journalism in Balochistan: State of Media Freedoms, Access to Information and Safety of Journalists and Media Professionals in Balochistan — Way Forward,"* concluded that journalism in Balochistan is no longer free. Reporters face sustained pressure, intimidation, and violence from multiple actors — including state security forces, intelligence agencies, militant groups, tribal elites, and mobs. Enforced and self-censorship have become "widespread survival strategies," significantly limiting citizens' access to credible and independent information.

Over two decades, **40 journalists have been killed in Balochistan; roughly 30 were target-killed**, the rest collateral to bombings or attacks. Khuzdar has been cited among the most dangerous districts for journalism. Journalists are frequently coerced to carry militant claims or assist security services in tracing callers; refusal or cooperation can each trigger threats.

6.2 A Declining Press Freedom Ranking

Pakistan's ranking in the Press Freedom Index declined from 152nd to 158th place in the latest Reporters Without Borders (RSF) assessment of 180 countries, attributed primarily to tightening restrictions on journalistic freedom, growing censorship, and limitations imposed on the media landscape.

6.3 The Weaponisation of Cybercrime Law

The Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA) has been systematically used to criminalise journalists and social media activists. In recent months there has been a systematic crackdown on Baloch activists, a regressive anti-terror law was passed in Balochistan, YouTube channels of reporters and opposition were blocked, and journalists remain at risk. Civil society has continued to call for a repeal of the PECA (Amendment) Act.

6.4 Direct Interference with the Press

In March 2026, authorities forcefully entered the Quetta Press Club and prevented journalists from covering a Baloch Yakjehti Committee press conference. Those stopped included Dauran Baloch (Voicepk.net), Muhammad Zareef Khan (Khyber News), Danish Murad (Pakistan Image News), Israr Sumalani (GNN News), and Shamsullah Kakar (ANN News), among others. The Pakistan Press Foundation expressed alarm, and the Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors (CPNE) strongly condemned the action, calling on the Chief Minister, Additional Chief Secretary Home, and IG Balochistan to act against the officials involved.



7. Freedom of Assembly

7.1 The Criminalisation of Peaceful Protest

The right to peaceful assembly in Balochistan has been severely curtailed. Blanket bans on assemblies have been imposed in cities including Karachi, and protests are routinely met with excessive force — live bullets, tear gas, and mass arrests.

In March 2025, the pattern crystallised: on 20 March, Bebargh Zehri and his brother were taken by the CTD; on 21 March, a BYC protest calling for their release was met with unlawful force, killing three protesters; on 22 March, Mahrang Baloch and 17 other protesters were detained; on 24 March, at least six activists including Sammi Deen Baloch were detained in Karachi for disregarding the blanket ban on assemblies. Mahrang and Bebargh were held under preventative MPO detention, with separate terrorism charges also brought against Mahrang.

7.2 Travel Bans and Surveillance

Activists face travel bans, surveillance, and legal harassment. Mahrang Baloch has faced death threats, legal cases, and travel bans. The Baloch Voice Association has told the UN that Pakistan "has poured in massive deployment of armed security personnel into Balochistan and stepped up vigilance and surveillance over the Baloch diaspora as well," imposing "virtual martial law" in the province.

7.3 The Gwadar Protests

Gwadar has been a recurrent site of peaceful protest over CPEC-related grievances, including under the "Give Gwadar its Rights" banner, where thousands — including women and children — protested Chinese presence, illegal trawling, and strict border management that has deprived local fishermen of livelihoods. These protests have frequently been met with violence and repression.

8. The Baloch Voice Association: Advocacy on the International Stage

The **Baloch Voice Association (BVA)**, a Paris-based NGO headed by **Munir Mengal**, has been one of the most consistent international advocates for the rights of the Baloch people. Mengal is himself a survivor of enforced disappearance and torture, and a UN intervention speaker who has used his platform to shed light on what he describes as the ongoing genocide and struggle for freedom in Balochistan.

8.1 Advocacy at the United Nations Human Rights Council

The BVA has organised exhibitions, conferences, and seminars around the United Nations in Geneva for years:

- **September 2022:** The BVA, in coordination with the Voice for Baloch Missing Persons and the Baloch Peoples Congress, staged a three-day banner and poster exhibition at the Broken Chair in front of the UN office in Geneva during the 51st session of the UNHRC, presenting data on missing people with age and gender bifurcation to show



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the world the trend of enforced disappearances. Munir Mengal stated: "The Pakistani forces are systematically disappearing the Baloch people from their houses, from towns, streets, villages, from schools, colleges, workplaces. This has become an everyday practice." He described Balochistan as a "land of disappearances."

- **February 2024:** The BVA, Voice for Baloch Missing Persons, and Baloch Peoples Congress submitted a written statement to the UN under Agenda Item 4 of the 55th Human Rights Council Session, urging the UN to address grave human rights violations in Balochistan with urgency, uphold the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and declared the CPEC and Gwadar port projects illegal and in violation of international law.
- **July 2024:** The BVA and Baloch Peoples Congress hosted a side event titled "Enforced Disappearances in South Asia; Special Focus on Balochistan" on the sidelines of the 56th Session of the UNHRC, moderated by Munir Mengal, with Prof. Naela Quadri Baloch as a special guest speaker, aiming to amplify the voices of victims and bring global attention to human rights violations.
- **June 2026:** On the sidelines of the 62nd session of the UNHRC, Mengal strongly criticised Pakistan over the life imprisonment of Dr. Mahrang Baloch, describing the verdict as an attempt to suppress the political aspirations of the Baloch people. He stated that imprisoning Mahrang would not weaken the movement but would strengthen resistance among Baloch youth and attract greater international attention. He urged the UN to dispatch special rapporteurs and fact-finding missions to the province and called on member states to pressure Pakistan into ensuring accountability.

8.2 BVA's Core Submissions to the UN

Across multiple sessions, Mengal has told the UN that "during the last seventy years... the Islamic state... and particularly its security forces, have treated the Baloch people as occupants," that enforced disappearances are "a deeply concerning and inhumane practice... ongoing in Balochistan for far too long," that "thousands of innocent people have vanished without a trace, their whereabouts unknown, and their families left in anguish and uncertainty." He has noted that a 2012 visit by the UN Working Group on Enforced Disappearance to Quetta was given a "highly controlled and censored tour" with many questions unanswered, and that family members are "still looking for their loved ones."

9. Conclusion

9.1 A Political Conflict, Not a Security Problem

The conflict in Balochistan is not simply a security problem to be solved by force; it is, as the HRC and multiple analysts have stressed, fundamentally political. The state's reliance on brutal suppression — enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, the criminalisation of peaceful protest, the imprisonment of human rights defenders, and the suppression of journalism — has only deepened grievances and strengthened resistance.

The demands of the Baloch people — an end to enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings, accountability, control over their resources, credible political representation, and respect for their dignity, identity, and culture — are, as the Baloch Yakjehti Committee and human rights organisations have emphasised, not aspirational. They are minimum requirements of international law. The continuation and intensification of abuses through 2025 and 2026 — including the life imprisonment of Dr. Mahrang Baloch and fellow activists — underscores the urgency of these calls.



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9.2 A History of Broken Promises — Why the Baloch Can No Longer Trust Pakistan

A central obstacle to any internal resolution is the Baloch conviction that Pakistan has betrayed them repeatedly and cannot be trusted as a negotiating partner. This is not rhetoric; it is grounded in a documented pattern of broken promises stretching from 1948 to the present.

- **The 1948 betrayal:** As Partition approached, Baloch leaders voiced the demand for full sovereignty. A deal was struck whereby the Khanate of Kalat and the new state of Pakistan would be independent of each other but would share currency, foreign policy, and defence equally. Kalat announced its own independence on 15 August 1947 and began creating the administrative and diplomatic structures of a separate country. Yet, after just six months, Pakistan made a U-turn: on 18 March 1948, Jinnah announced the accession of Kharan, Makran, and Las Bela, leaving Kalat landlocked. With military presence appearing around Kalat's territory and no help from international players, the Khan was forced to accede on 27 March 1948. The accession is viewed among Baloch nationalists as a "forced accession" that laid the foundation for all subsequent resistance.
- **The broken amnesty of 1948:** The Khan's brother, Prince Abdul Karim, repudiated the accession and led the first Baloch rebellion. In July 1948, he was induced to return on an assurance of amnesty — but the promise was immediately broken and he was imprisoned. The rest of Baloch history has been described as "a litany of broken promises, threats and repression by the government."
- **The betrayal of Nauroz Khan (1959):** Nauroz Khan and his followers were likewise given assurances of safety and surrendered, only for the promises to be violated; Nauroz Khan and several companions were subsequently executed.
- **The dissolution of elected government (1973):** The democratically elected Baloch provincial government was dissolved by Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, triggering the most intense Baloch insurgency to date and the deployment of some 80,000 troops.
- **The pattern continuing into the present:** Analysts have noted that "the promises made to the Baloch people, whether in the context of autonomy, political representation, or development, have frequently been broken without remorse," with instances of broken promises in 1948, 1959, 2021, 2022, and 2024 eroding trust. The state's "repeated failure to fulfill its promises has deepened the divide between Balochistan and Pakistan," leaving "a pervasive sense of betrayal, with many Balochs viewing the state as more of an oppressor than a protector." Given this record, Baloch leaders maintain that dialogue with Pakistan alone, without an external guarantor, would only produce another broken promise.

9.3 The Demand for Independence and Sovereignty

The Baloch political leadership has repeatedly and explicitly stated that the goal is not reform within Pakistan but the restoration of sovereignty and independence. This position has been articulated across the spectrum of Baloch leadership:

- **His Highness Mir Suleman Dawood Jan Ahmedzai, the 35th and current Khan of Kalat,** living in exile in Wales, has formally approached the United Nations demanding an end to Pakistan's occupation and a referendum in Balochistan. He has stated: "His Highness Mir Suleman Khan Ahmedzai as the current Khan of Kalat and my Nation Baloch, do not want to be a Part of Pakistan anymore and request the United Nations to conduct free and fair process of referendum in Balochistan under guidelines and supervision of the United Nations." He has declared that "if there will be a referendum by the United Nations, I believe 90% of Baloch will vote for freedom." He has vowed to take Pakistan to the International Court of Justice over what he sees as Pakistani atrocities against his people.

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- **Hyrbyair Marri**, exiled Baloch leader and head of the Free Balochistan Movement, has stated: "We are demanding the restoration of our sovereignty — separatist makes it look a bit radical and militant. We just want independence, which is a basic human right. Every nation has that right." He has explained that "our goal wasn't the creation of an independent Balochistan to begin with... my father and all Baloch nationalist leaders all tried to work out a union within Pakistan. But they were all disappointed since Pakistan cannot exist as a union, because of the hegemony of Punjab of every other nation. So now we've reached the conclusion that we need to struggle for our rightful independent state of Balochistan." He has declared that "we have been cheated, lied to, and treated as inferior for too long. There is too much bad blood. The Baloch nation will not accept anything less than independence." The Balochistan Liberation Charter, drafted under his guidance, articulates the aim of full independence and restoration of a democratic Balochistan.
- **Professor Naela Quadri Baloch**, Prime Minister of the Government of Balochistan in Exile (GoBE) and Chairperson of the Baloch Peoples Congress, has stated that "Balochistan, which was once an independent country, is under the illegal occupation of Pakistan, which is looting its mineral resources and subjecting its people to all sorts of atrocities." She has appealed to the international community for support at the UN for "freedom from Pakistan's illegal occupation," asserting that "we cannot reveal the headquarters... We will lobby with governments and international agencies for the support required." She has urged that the international community recognise the legitimate aspirations of the Baloch people.
- **Mehran Marri**, exiled Baloch leader and Baloch representative, has stated that "we have the right to live as a free nation," and that the Baloch struggle "is centred on sovereignty, territorial integrity and fundamental human dignity." He has described Balochistan as "an open-air prison" and urged the international community to reassess its recognition of Pakistan, describing it as "a colonial construct sustained by geopolitical interests rather than genuine nationhood."
- **Siddique Azad Baloch, Secretary General of the Baloch Peoples Congress (BPC)**, has stated that "Pakistan is a house of cards, it is tumbling. We can expect a better future for the victimised and oppressed people of Balochistan." He has called upon the international community to take urgent notice of abuses and has framed the Baloch struggle as one for national liberation, sovereignty, and the protection of Baloch identity and homeland.

9.4 The Demand for International Intervention

Because Pakistan has betrayed the Baloch people multiple times and cannot be trusted to negotiate in good faith, the Baloch leadership and human rights advocates have called for international intervention to arrange dialogue between the Baloch and Pakistan under external mediation and guarantees.

Specifically, the demand is that the United Nations, the United States, the Arab world, and the wider Western community should intervene to:

1. **Facilitate and mediate a structured dialogue** between genuine representatives of the Baloch people and the state of Pakistan, under international supervision, to reach a binding agreement with external guarantees — so that any commitments made cannot again be broken with impunity.
2. **Dispatch special rapporteurs and fact-finding missions** to Balochistan to independently document the human rights situation, including enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, and the suppression of dissent.
3. **Hold Pakistan accountable** for violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, including the crime against humanity of enforced disappearance.
4. **Arrange for the Baloch people to exercise their right to self-determination** through a free and fair referendum or comparable process conducted under the supervision and guidelines of the United Nations — the mechanism explicitly requested by the Khan of Kalat and echoed across the Baloch political spectrum.



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9.5 An Obligation of the United Nations

The right to self-determination is a cornerstone of the United Nations Charter and the International Covenants on Human Rights. The Baloch Voice Association, the Government of Balochistan in Exile, the Baloch Peoples Congress, and the Baloch Yakjehti Committee have all argued that it is not merely an option but an obligation of the United Nations to make arrangements for the Baloch people to exercise this right.

As Baloch advocates have told the UN: "We strongly urge the United Nations Human Rights Council to address these grave human rights violations in Balochistan with the urgency and gravity they deserve. The principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights must be upheld, and the international community, through the United Nations, must take immediate steps to protect the rights and dignity of the Baloch people."

Bringing about a genuine, internationally supervised process of self-determination and dialogue is, in this view, the only credible path to peace and stability in the region — a region that sits at the vital crossroads of South Asia, the Middle East, and Central Asia, and whose instability threatens not only its own people but the wider world. The alternative — continuing the cycle of repression, disappearance, and resistance — has, by every measure, failed.

10. Sources

This report draws on documentation and reporting from: the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP); Amnesty International; the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances; Human Rights Watch; the Baloch Voice Association; the Voice for Baloch Missing Persons; the Freedom Network; the Pakistan Press Foundation; the Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors; the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO); Front Line Defenders; Reporters Without Borders; the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP); the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point; Georgetown University's Georgetown Journal of International Affairs; the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; the International Crisis Group; Al Jazeera; the BBC; The Diplomat; Dawn; and ThePrint.