



Incidences Report

January 2023

Human Rights Violations in Pakistan

"Human rights are not a privilege conferred by government. They are every human being's entitlement by virtue of his humanity."

— Mother Teresa

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"The Awakening" is a rights organization working on protection and promotion of human rights with a focus on women, girls, religious minorities and transgender communities in Pakistan. "The Awakening" maintains an incidences of human rights violation and share it with different partners and stakeholders on regular basis.

For "The Awakening", the rise in terrorism, forced disappearance, shrinking space for civil society, honor crimes, violence against women, climate justice, violation of right to freedom of expression, association, assembly and thought were some of the most pressing issues of the month of January.

Misuse of Blasphemy Law:

"The Awakening" observed that misuse of blasphemy law continues to haunt people belonging to religious and ethnic minorities. An employee of the Civil Aviation Authority in Karachi threatened a female Christian security officer with blasphemy charges over a car parking row in Karachi. According to the footage of the incident at Karachi airport, the incident occurred when a female security officer chastised a man for allowing an acquaintance's vehicle through security without a vehicle pass.

The man allegedly threatened the female officer with blasphemy charges, saying he would "call preachers ... I am mad and will cut [you] up". The video of the incident went viral on social media, inviting criticism and condemnation.

Enforced Disappearance:

3 Baloch students have gone missing from Quetta last week, the report was shared by a reliable source including the aggrieved families. There is no news about them on media. Only the students shared the incidence on social media pages.

Murder of Human Rights Defender:

A nationalist, human rights defender, senior lawyer and former president of the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) Abdul Latif Afridi was shot dead in the Peshawar High Court (PHC) bar room.

A large number of people who remained close to him praised Latif Lala on the social media as a brave voice for the voiceless people who earned huge respect as a politician, lawyer and a rights activist. His death is an immense loss to human rights defenders everywhere.

Freedom of Expression/Freedom of Press

Understandably, freedom of the press faced the worst form of controls. Attacks on journalists continued, as did efforts to gag and control the news and social media. A journalist of BOL news Shahid Aslam was accused of involvement in a November 19, 2022, article in the independent news website FactFocus that used leaked tax data to report on the assets of former Pakistan army chief Qamar Javed Bajwa and his family, those sources said.

On Monday, an Islamabad court ordered Aslam to be transferred to jail while he awaits trial.

"The arrest of reporter Shahid Aslam underscores the dangerous environment for journalists in Pakistan," said Beh Lih Yi, CPJ's Asia program coordinator. "Authorities must immediately and unconditionally release Aslam and respect his right to privacy and the confidentiality of his sources as guaranteed under the country's journalist safety law."

Extrajudicial Killing in Police Custody

In the Swat area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Obaid Jahanzeb a student of Bachelor of Studies (BS) at Saidu Sharif College in Swat was shot dead inside the police station by the police and the police officer ran away and went underground after the incidence.

Faridoon Khan, the uncle of the murdered youth, told Aaj News that "When my nephew was arrested, I also went with him to the Banar police station." When we arrived, the policemen first tortured Obaid. When I complained, the policemen took him to a room, during which a shot was fired." The residents described him as a "good" young man, who belongs to an educated family. Obaid's maternal uncle Faridoon has also been a counselor in this area.

The incidence took place during a patrol of the police against drug peddlers where they breached in to different homes and Obaid had an argument with four to five policemen about their conduct. When the police patrol van arrived, the policemen caught Obaid and took him to the police station

Suicide Attack on Police:

100 people have been killed in a bomb attack targeting a mosque in a security compound in the northwestern Pakistani city of Peshawar, according to authorities.

Sarbakaf Mohmand, a commander for the Pakistan Taliban (Tehreek-e-Taliban, or TTP), initially claimed responsibility for the attack on Twitter.

The mosque is located inside a highly fortified compound that includes the headquarters of the provincial police force and a counterterrorism department.

Authorities said part of the building collapsed and that many people were feared to be trapped under the rubble.

Peshawar's Police Chief Muhammad Ijaz Khan said in a televised statement that the capacity of the main hall of the mosque was nearly 300 and it was "nearly full" at the time of the explosion.

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Note: Considering the limitation of official reports, press accounts and data collected by “The Awakening”, the figures and assessments offered here may not always represent the full or exact picture. They should be taken as a reflection of the trend during the month.