

OpenVoiceNews Pakistan

Transparent. Unbiased. Yours.

Baloch Protesters Face Surveillance in Islamabad Crackdown

August 11, 2025

— Categories: Human Rights



For the past 26 days, families from Balochistan have held a sit-in protest outside Pakistan's National Press Club in Islamabad. They are demanding an end to enforced disappearances in Balochistan and the release of detained leaders from the Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC), a prominent Baloch rights organization.

The protest has remained peaceful, but organizers report increased government scrutiny. According to BYC representatives, authorities have set up roadblocks around the protest site and deployed surveillance measures including facial recognition cameras. Protesters also report that unidentified individuals have been seen photographing participants. There have been reports of security personnel stopping and questioning Baloch citizens attempting to join the sit-in, contributing to a tense atmosphere. These claims align with longstanding reports from human rights organizations regarding intimidation tactics used in Balochistan.

The BYC and other rights groups have documented cases of enforced disappearances in the province, where thousands of individuals have reportedly gone missing over recent decades. The current protest intensified following the disappearance of several BYC members who had previously organized rallies against extrajudicial detentions.

The Pakistani government has consistently emphasized the need to address security challenges in Balochistan, citing ongoing militant activities and separatist insurgencies that have persisted for years. Officials assert that measures taken in the province aim to maintain law and order and protect state interests. However, human rights organizations and international observers have raised concerns about the impact of these tactics on civilian populations.

The protest in Islamabad has drawn attention from various international bodies. United Nations human rights rapporteurs have expressed concern over reports of enforced disappearances and restrictions on peaceful assembly in Pakistan, highlighting the need for accountability and protection of minority rights.

As the demonstration continues, observers note the challenges Pakistan faces in balancing counterterrorism efforts with respect for civil liberties. The families participating in the sit-in emphasize their demand for transparency and justice regarding the fate of missing persons. Their sustained protest underscores ongoing tensions related to human rights and governance in Balochistan and the broader implications for Pakistan's democratic institutions.