

## Balochistan Report Highlights Rising State Violence

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Balochistan, Pakistan, August 17 (ANI): The Human Rights Council of Balochistan (HRCB) has released its biannual review documenting a sharp escalation of state violence in the region during the first half of 2025. Covering January to June, the report details widespread human rights violations, including enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, and suppression of peaceful dissent.

According to the HRCB, 814 cases of enforced disappearances were recorded in the first six months of 2025, nearly matching the total for all of 2024. Victims included students, activists, laborers, and ordinary civilians, who were reportedly targeted by security forces and state agencies.

The report further states that at least 131 individuals were killed without trial through custodial torture, staged encounters, and indiscriminate military operations. Leaders and members of the Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC), described as a peaceful grassroots movement, were subjected to arrests, home raids, and violent dispersal of protests. According to the HRCB, smear campaigns have also been used to silence dissenting voices.

In June 2025, the provincial assembly passed an amendment to the Anti-Terrorism Act, granting broad powers to security agencies. The law allows arrests without warrants, 90-day detention without trial, and the creation of “de-radicalization centers,” which the HRCB described as operating like internment facilities.

The report also highlights the tragic death of 13-year-old protester Nehmat Baloch, who was shot during a police assault on a peaceful sit-in. The HRCB noted that such incidents reflect a longstanding pattern of repression in Balochistan, which intensified after Pakistan’s 1999 military coup. Over the past decades, thousands have reportedly gone missing, and hundreds have allegedly been killed under what the report describes as a “kill and dump” policy.

The Human Rights Council of Balochistan operates both in the region and from Sweden, relying on local volunteers and supporters to gather firsthand information due to strict media restrictions within the province. The organization compiles these findings and presents them to international human rights mechanisms to seek accountability and draw global attention to the crisis.

HRCB emphasized that the current situation is part of a repeated cycle of state violence targeting civilians and peaceful activists. The report calls for increased monitoring and international engagement to protect human rights in Balochistan.

While the Pakistani government maintains that security measures are necessary to combat terrorism and maintain order, human rights groups argue that these policies have disproportionately affected civilians and peaceful political organizations.

This report follows growing international concern over human rights conditions in the province, with advocacy groups urging Pakistan to adhere to international human rights standards and ensure protection for its citizens.