

**Baloch Advocacy and Studies Center
Annual Human Rights Report | 2025 Edition**

**Balochistan Under the Shadow of Pakistan's Oppression:
An Analysis of Enforced Disappearances and
Extrajudicial Killings in 2024**



Compiled and Published by: Baloch Advocacy and Studies Center

Date of Publication: August 2025

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1. Abstract

This study examines the alarming pattern of enforced disappearances and related human rights abuses against the Baloch people in Pakistan during 2024. Data show that 674 individuals were subjected to enforced disappearance over the year, with only 208 (32.3%) released and 466 (67.7%) still missing. Peaks in enforced disappearances often followed attacks by Baloch armed resistant forces, highlighting a pattern of state retaliation, particularly in districts like Kech, Dera Bugti, and Nushki. Students and labourers were disproportionately targeted, with students comprising 50.4% of victims with known occupations. Among those forcibly disappeared, the Makran Division accounted for 42% of cases, reflecting its higher literacy rate and political awareness. The Pakistani state's reliance on poorly regulated intelligence networks and collective punishment practices resulted in arbitrary detentions and prolonged disappearances without due process. Short-term disappearances typically served to intimidate communities, while longer-term cases suggested efforts to break ties to the Baloch national liberation movement through torture and secret military court detentions. Additionally, 32 individuals were extrajudicially killed in 2024, with August recording the highest such killings. The findings highlight a systematic campaign of intimidation, suppression, and human rights violations against the Baloch people, rooted in Pakistan's efforts to maintain control over a strategically important and resource-rich region.

2. Introduction

Enforced disappearance is defined by the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (ICPPED) as: “The arrest, detention, abduction, or any form of deprivation of liberty by agents of the state or by persons or groups acting with the authorisation, support, or acquiescence of the state, followed by a refusal to acknowledge the deprivation of liberty or by concealment of the fate or whereabouts of the disappeared person, placing them outside the protection of the law” (United Nations, 2006). Once placed outside the protection of the law, victims of enforced disappearance are subjected to serious ill-treatment, including torture and other forms of degradation. The prolonged uncertainty about their fate and the harrowing experience leaves permanent psychological scars, even for those who survive and are eventually released (OHCHR, n.d.). According to Article 24 of the ICPPED and established international jurisprudence, the suffering caused by enforced disappearance extends beyond the direct victim. The psychological anguish, uncertainty, and emotional trauma experienced by the relatives and loved ones of the disappeared are so profound that they, too, are considered victims of enforced disappearance under international law. (UN, 2006).

Historically, enforced disappearance traces its origin to Adolf Hitler’s “Night and Fog” (Nacht und Nebel) decree of December 7, 1941, which authorised the secret arrest and disappearance of political dissidents (Finucane, 2010). However, the practice gained widespread international attention during the Latin American military dictatorships of the 1960s to 1980s. Countries such as Argentina and Chile institutionalised enforced disappearances as a counterinsurgency tactic, aimed at spreading terror and suppressing oppositions (Dulitzky, 2018). These practices laid the foundation for the eventual codification of enforced disappearance in international law.

Due to its impact on entire communities and its capacity to undermine fundamental human rights and freedoms, the widespread or systematic use of enforced disappearance constitutes crime against humanity under international law. The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court views enforced disappearance as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population (Arsanjani, 1999).

Despite the establishment of international legal frameworks aimed at prevention, enforced disappearance continues to be practiced globally, particularly in authoritarian or conflict-ridden states. Pakistan is one such country where the practice is entrenched and has become institutionalised.

Pakistan has a long history of enforced disappearances, dating back to East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), with some cases recorded in Bangladesh in the 1970s (Bose, S. 2012). The phenomenon intensified in Balochistan in the early 2000s, as Baloch people's struggle to exercise their right to self-determination gained momentum. Today, the forced disappearance in Balochistan appears to be a systematic and targeted state response to demands for self-determination. Many of those who disappear are tortured in secret detention centers, then extrajudicially executed. Like disappearances, extrajudicial executions, also known as state killing, are the deliberate killing of individuals by government authorities or with their approval, have devastating psychological and socio-economic effects, and also constitute crimes against humanity, and are a direct violation of Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which affirms the right to life (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, n.d).

In its 2013 report on Pakistan, the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID) noted that the state continued to operate in contradiction of international human rights law (UN Human Rights Council, 2013). Pakistan has failed to ratify the ICPPED, despite calls from human rights defenders and former Minister for Human Rights Dr. Shireen Mazari. While it has ratified the ICCPR (in 2010) and other instruments that criminalise enforced disappearance, implementation remains absent. The state authorities resist scrutiny and accountability, often using national security or anti-terrorism as justifications for enforced disappearances. However, under international human rights law, including Article 7 of the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and Article 4(2) of the ICCPR, no circumstances whatsoever, including states of emergency or armed conflict, can justify enforced disappearance.

Rather than criminalising enforced disappearance and conforming to international human rights laws, Pakistan has enacted legislation that effectively legitimises the practice and promotes impunity. Laws such as the Anti-Terrorism Act 1997, the Protection of Pakistan Ordinance 2013 (PPO), and most recently the Anti-Terrorism Balochistan Amendment Act 2025, grant sweeping powers of detention without charge or judicial oversight. These laws permit the authorities to withhold information on a detainee's location and the grounds for detention.

The state's efforts appear to be primarily directed toward obfuscating and concealing enforced disappearances, rather than addressing them. The government-established Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances (COIED), whose impartiality and independence remain highly questionable, has proven ineffective, with no perpetrators having been held accountable to date (International Commission of Jurists, 2020). Moreover, families of victims have consistently reported instances of mistreatment during commission hearings, further undermining the credibility and legitimacy of the process (Human rights commission of Pakistan [HRCP] 2019). The state has even instrumentalised enforced disappearances to facilitate its political lackeys. In the lead-up to the 2018 general elections, certain victims of enforced disappearances were reportedly "handed over" to candidates of the Balochistan Awami Party (BAP), who subsequently returned them to their families in an apparent effort to generate political goodwill and bolster the party's image during the campaign. In other cases, disappeared individuals have been used as bargaining chips in negotiations, particularly in attempts to coerce or exchange them for family members suspected of affiliation with armed resistance groups. Civil society organisations and media persons are threatened for advocating human rights. Peaceful protests by families of the disappeared are routinely suppressed through intimidation, arrests, and media censorship (Human Rights Commission of Pakistan [HRCP] 2019 and 2023).

Due to the clandestine nature of the crime, the complicity of state institutions, and families' fear of reprisal, there are no definitive statistics on enforced disappearances. Baloch Advocacy and Studies Center (BASC) has made every effort possible to gather as much verified data as possible. This report provides a comprehensive analysis of enforced disappearance cases in Balochistan during 2024, with a particular focus on victim profiles and geographic distribution. Data indicate that students, the intellectual capital of society, and labourers, often the sole breadwinners of their families, are the primary targets. Furthermore, spikes in disappearances frequently occur after attacks on Pakistani security forces by Baloch armed resistance groups, revealing a pattern of retaliatory state action.

3. Methodology and statistical analysis

Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources and compared with data compiled by various organisations, including Voice for Baloch Missing Persons (VBMP), Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC), Paank, and Human Rights Council of Balochistan (HRCB). Comparisons between experimental groups were determined using one-way ANOVA. All statistical analyses were performed using Prism version 8.0.1 (GraphPad Software, Inc., San Diego, CA, USA).

4. Results and discussion

4.1 Monthly Patterns of Enforced Disappearances and State Retaliation in Balochistan (2024)

The Baloch people's pursuit of self-determination and a dignified livelihood has come at a tremendous cost. Thousands of Baloch from diverse walks of life and across various regions of Balochistan continue to face severe human rights violations in Pakistan. In 2024 alone, a total of 674 individuals were subjected to enforced disappearance. Of these, 208 individuals, approximately 32.33% were eventually released, while 466 individuals (67.77%) remained missing (see Figures 1 and 2).

October recorded the highest number of enforced disappearances, with 106 people abducted. Among them, 34 individuals (32%) were released within the same month, while 72 (68%) remain unaccounted for. These disappearances often surge following attacks on security forces. For instance, after the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) claimed responsibility for an attack targeting Chinese nationals on October 7, 2024 (Shahid, S., 2024), the number of enforced disappearances rose significantly. The majority of the victims were from Kech district (28 cases) and Dera Bugti (27 cases). Notably, Nushki district—the hometown of the suicide bomber involved in the vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) attack on Chinese nationals—also witnessed a sharp increase in disappearances during October.

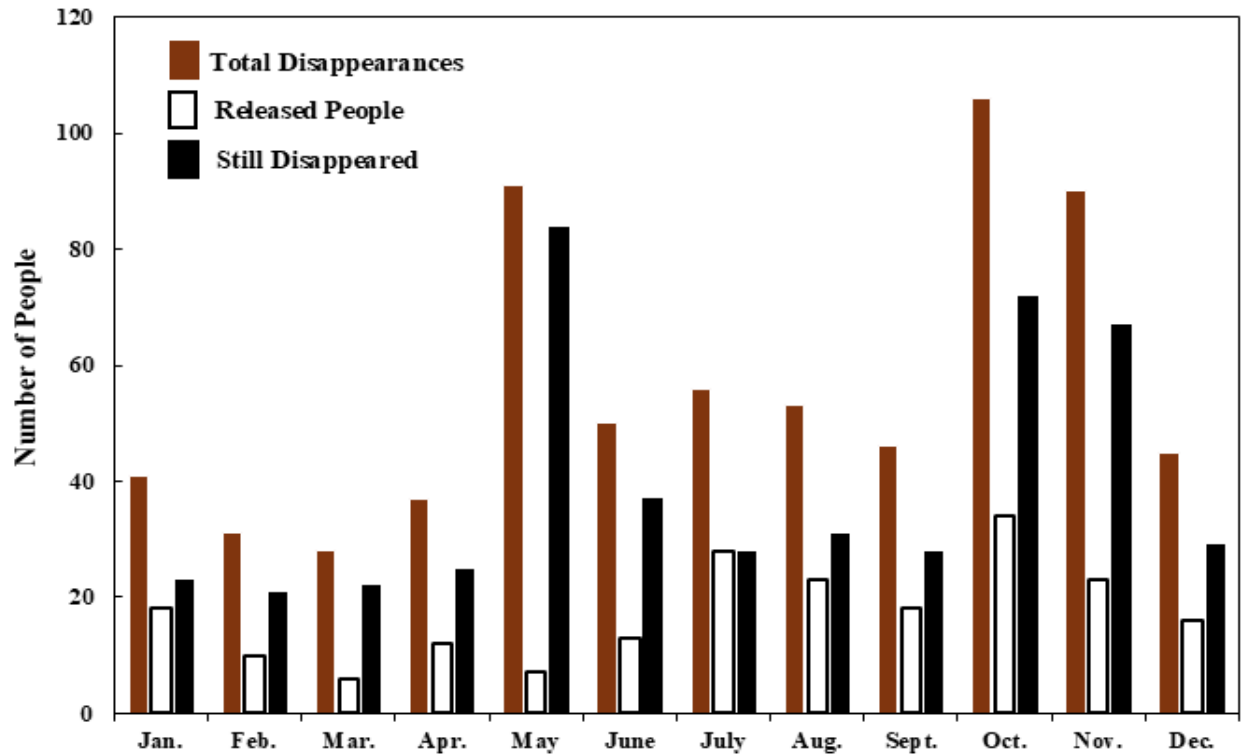


Figure 1. An overview of the total number of individuals subjected to enforced disappearance in 2024, including those who have been released and those who remain missing.

May had the second-highest number of enforced disappearances, with 91 cases. However, only 7 individuals (7.7%) were later released, while 84 individuals (92.3%) remain missing. Nearly 29 of these 91 individuals were from Dera Bugti, abducted after the killing of Allah Rakhia, a close associate of Balochistan's Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti, on May 14 (Shahid, S., 2024). On another incident, seven people from different parts of Punjab were killed by unknown gunmen in the Surbandar area of Gwadar district on May 9, 2024 (Shahid, S., 2024). After this incident security forces abducted 15 people from Gwadar districts, two of whom were released in the same year whereas 13 of them remained missing (Tables 1, 2 and 3).

November ranked third, with 90 individuals subjected to enforced disappearance. Of these, 23 (25.5%) were released, while 67 (74.5%) remain missing (Figures 1 and 2). On November 9, 2024, a suicide attack killed at least 26 individuals. The BLA claimed responsibility, stating that the bomber had targeted troops at a railway station. This attack was followed by retaliatory abductions by state forces, resulting in the enforced disappearance of 90 individuals.

July saw 56 cases of enforced disappearance, ranking fourth. Of those, 28 individuals (50%) were released within the same month, while the remaining 28 (50%) are still missing. This month also witnessed the Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC) organising a “Baloch Raji Muchi” (Baloch National Gathering) on July 28 in Gwadar, protesting human rights abuses, enforced disappearances, and extrajudicial killings in Balochistan.

August has been reported as the deadliest month in Balochistan since the assassination of Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti by the Pakistan Army in 2006. In August 2024, 54 Baloch individuals forcibly disappeared. Of these, 23 (42.6%) were released, while 31 (57.4%) remained missing. A significant portion (26%) of these cases occurred between August 26 and August 31, likely in retaliation for a BLA attack on August 26, 2024. During this attack, BLA fighters stopped several buses en route to Punjab, identified passengers, and killed 26 people. The BLA claimed that the victims were either military personnel or intelligence agents of Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and Military Intelligence (MI) (France 24, 2024).

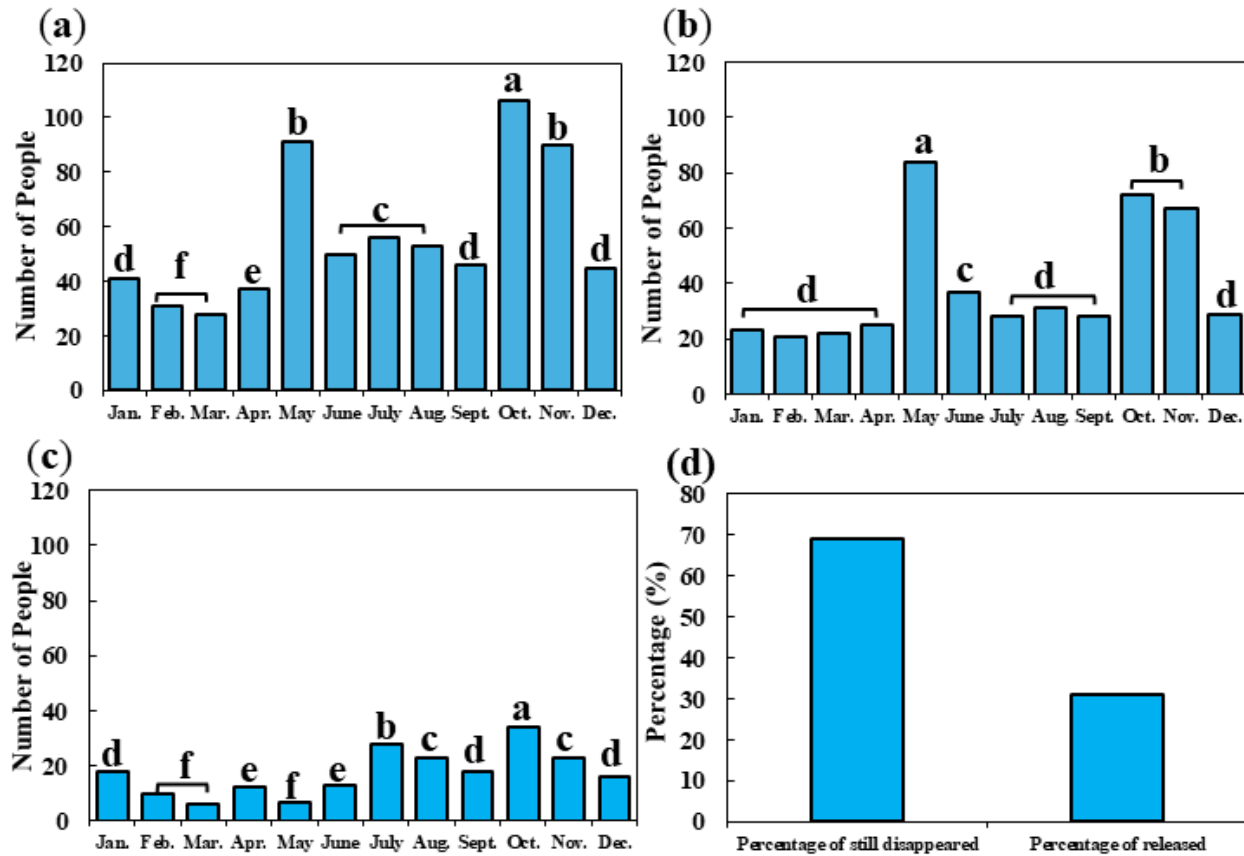


Figure 2. The number of individuals subjected to enforced disappearance in 2024 (a), those who remain missing after being forcibly disappeared in 2024 (b), those who were released after being forcibly disappeared in 2024 (c), and the percentage of disappearances and releases during 2024 (d). The lowercase letters show the significant differences in numbers of disappearances and release ($p < 0.05$).

On February 7, two coordinated bomb attacks killed at least 28 people in Pashto-speaking districts of Balochistan. The first explosion, which claimed the lives of 16 people, occurred at the election office of independent candidate Asfandiyar Khan Kakar in Pishin district, near the Afghan border. The second blast, which killed 12 people, took place near the office of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) in Qilla Saifullah—a religious political party that has previously been targeted. Both attacks were claimed by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) (Al Jazeera, 2024). Unlike the retaliatory operations that the Pakistani military typically conducts following attacks by Baloch armed resistance groups, no such response was observed after these twin bombings by ISIL. Despite the high civilian casualty count, February saw the minimum number of enforced disappearances of 31 individuals, none of these 31 belonged to the Pashto-speaking districts.

However, on January 30, 2024, the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) attacked military and security installations in Mach city, Kachi district, approximately 65 km (40 miles) south of Quetta, the provincial capital of Balochistan. This operation resulted in the deaths of at least four security personnel (Hussein, 2024). In the week following the attack, four individuals forcibly disappeared from Mach city, one of them was released on February 7, after being extrajudicially detained for over a week, whereas another one was released on March 27, after being in extrajudicial detention of the Pakistan army for almost two months. Two of them remained missing until the end of 2024 (Tables 1, 2, and 3), highlighting the continued pattern of enforced disappearances of innocent people in response to activities of Baloch armed resistance forces.

A total of 28 people were subjected to enforced disappearances and extrajudicial detention in the month of March 22 (78.6%) of these individuals remained missing, while 6 (21.4%) of them were released in the same month. On 26th of March, Pakistan Naval Station (PNS) Siddique in Kech district came under the attack of armed men from BLA. PNS Siddique is one of the biggest naval air stations of Pakistan located in Turbat city. In the following month, 11 individuals were forcibly abducted from district Kech, 3 of them were released later, whereas, 8 of them remained missing. There were 37 cases of enforced disappearances in April 2024, 25 (67.6%) of them remained missing, whereas 12 (32.4%) were released later in the same month.

A total of 50 individuals were forcibly disappeared in June 2024, 37 (74%) of these individuals remained missing, and 13 (26%) of them were released in the same month. There were 45 enforced disappearances in the month of December 2024, 29 (64.4%) individuals remained missing, whereas 16 (35.6%) were released in the same month.

The month-wise breakdown of enforced disappearances in 2024 reveals a clear pattern of state retaliation following major incidents involving Baloch armed resistance forces. October, May, and November witnessed the highest numbers of disappearances, often concentrated in politically sensitive districts.

A considerable portion (69%) of forcibly disappeared individuals in the year 2024 remained missing. According to previously published reports on enforced disappearances, there are several reasons why states — particularly those with weak rule of law or authoritarian tendencies — continue to keep a large percentage of victims missing. These reasons include covering up extrajudicial practices (Amnesty International, n.d.), instilling intimidation and fear (International Committee of the Red

Cross, n.d.), push for displacement and migration, avoiding accountability (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2020), and, in some cases, benefiting from weak international pressure, which grants them impunity to carry out such unlawful acts, as observed in the case of Balochistan (Human Rights Watch, 2011).

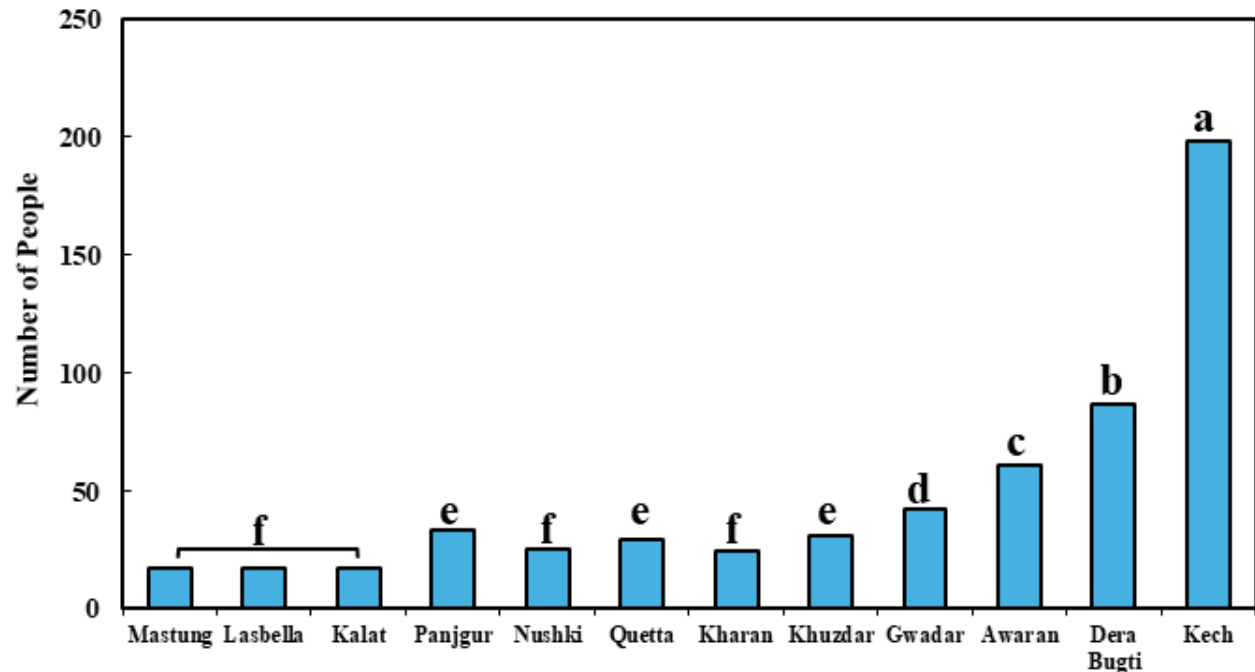


Figure 3. Number of individuals subjected to enforced disappearance in 2024 from various districts of Balochistan. Kech, Dera Bugti, and Awaran show the highest reported cases. Lowercase letters (a–f) indicate statistically significant differences between districts ($p < 0.05$); districts sharing the same letter are not significantly different from each other.

The violation of fundamental rights of oppressed people at the hands of the Punjabi-dominated Pakistani establishment and army is not new. From 14 August 1947 to 15 December 1971, the people of Bangladesh faced similar challenges, including enforced disappearances (Bari, 2021), just as the Baloch people are experiencing today.

4.2 Geographic Distribution of Enforced Disappearances in Balochistan (2024)

Among all districts, Kech was the most severely affected by state-sponsored enforced disappearances. Kech is one of the largest districts in Balochistan, with a population of over one million, according to the 2023 state census. Out of the 664 individuals forcibly disappeared in 2024, 199 (30%) were from Kech district, followed by Dera Bugti with 87 cases (13.1%), Awaran 61 (9.2%), Gwadar 44

(6.6%), Panjgur 35 (5.2%), Khuzdar 30 (4.5%), Nushki 28 (4.2%), Quetta 27 (4%), Kharan 24 (3.6%), and Kalat 20 (3%) (Figure 3 and Table 1). Together, these ten districts accounted for 83.4% of all enforced disappearances reported in 2024.

However, enforced disappearances were not limited to the boundaries of Balochistan. Baloch individuals residing in other parts of Pakistan were also subjected to this grave human rights violation. In 2024 alone, fifteen Baloch individuals were forcibly disappeared from Karachi and thirteen from Dera Ghazi Khan (see Table 1). Notably, a case involving a prominent Baloch leader, Wahid Kambar, was reported in Iran. What makes this case particularly significant is that it highlights the cross-border expansion of enforced disappearances, carried out either with the complicity of Iranian authorities or by Pakistani agents operating within Iran.

According to data from the 2017 census, Kech district had the highest literacy rate in Balochistan—62.66%—followed by Panjgur at 59.22% and Quetta at 58.76% (Gul Muhammad, 2023). Previous reports have indicated that the Pakistani army has been deliberately targeting the educated segment of Baloch youth under the guise of counter-insurgency operations (Badshah, A. et al., 2021). In 2024, the Makran Division—comprising the districts of Kech, Gwadar, and Panjgur, with Kech and Panjgur having the highest literacy rates in Balochistan—was among the most severely affected regions. Of the total 664 individuals who forcibly disappeared, 278 (42%) were from the Makran Division.

Since 2006, following repeated military operations and the eventual assassination of Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti by the Pakistani army, Dera Bugti has remained one of the most severely affected regions in terms of human rights violations (Debashis 2024). These state-sponsored atrocities have been carried out either directly by the Pakistani military or through its local proxies, notably under the leadership of Balochistan's Chief Minister, Sarfraz Bugti. As detailed in Section 3.1, after the killing of one of Sarfraz Bugti's close associates in Dera Bugti in May 2024, 29 individuals forcibly disappeared in apparent retaliation. This reflects a pattern of collective punishment that the people of Dera Bugti have endured for nearly two decades. Since 2006, hundreds of thousands have been

displaced from their homes, and thousands have been subjected to enforced disappearance. In 2024 alone, 87 individuals forcibly disappeared from Dera Bugti (Figure 3 and Table 1).

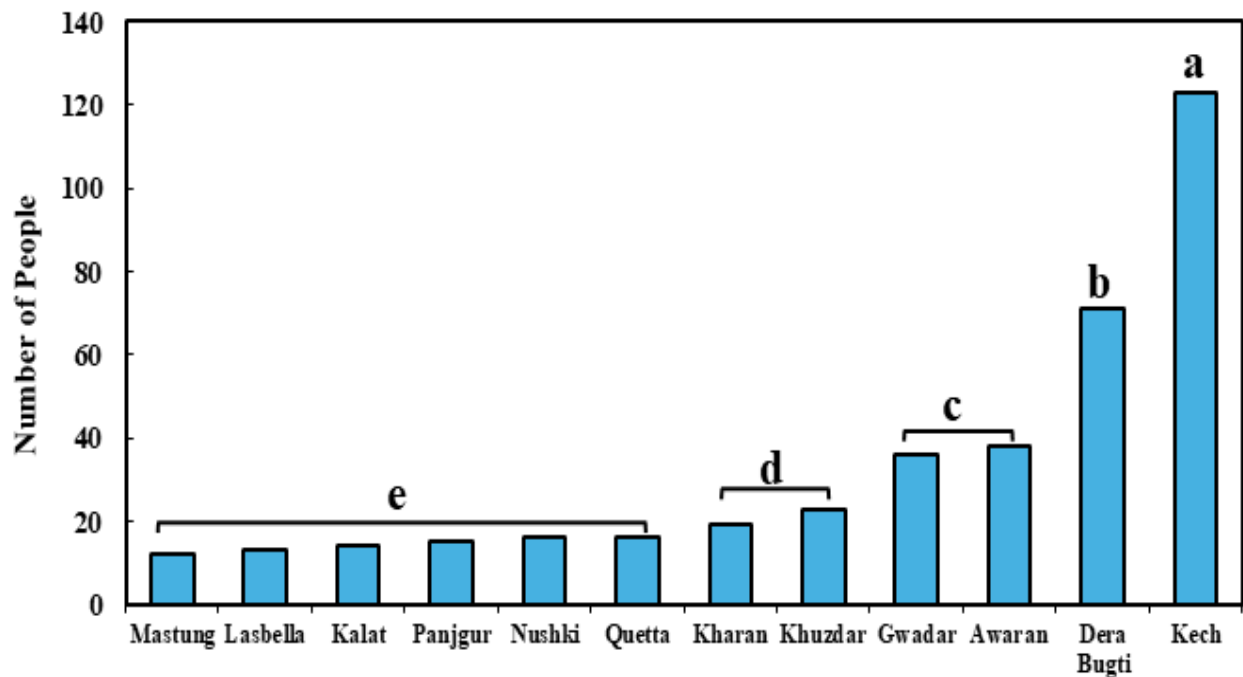


Figure 4. Number of individuals still subjected to enforced disappearance in 2024 across various districts of Balochistan. Kech district shows the highest number of unresolved disappearances, followed by Dera Bugti and Awaran. Lowercase letters (a–e) indicate statistically significant differences between districts ($p < 0.05$); districts sharing the same letter do not significantly differ.

Among 199 individuals who forcibly disappeared from District Kech, 132 (66.3%) remained missing, while 67 (33.7%) were released within the same month (Figures 4, 5 and Tables 1, 2). In Dera Bugti, 73 individuals (84%) remained missing, with only 14 (16%) released. For Awaran, 38 individuals (62.3%) remained missing and 20 (37.7%) were released; in Gwadar, 36 (81.8%) remained missing while 5 (11.4%) were released. In Panjgur, 15 individuals (43%) remained missing and 18 (57%) were released, whereas in Khuzdar, 23 (76.6%) remained missing and 10 (23.4%) were released. In Nushki, individuals (57.1%) remained missing while 10 (35.7%) were released, and in Kalat, 14 (70%) remained missing and 4 (30%) were released (see Tables 1, 2, and 3).

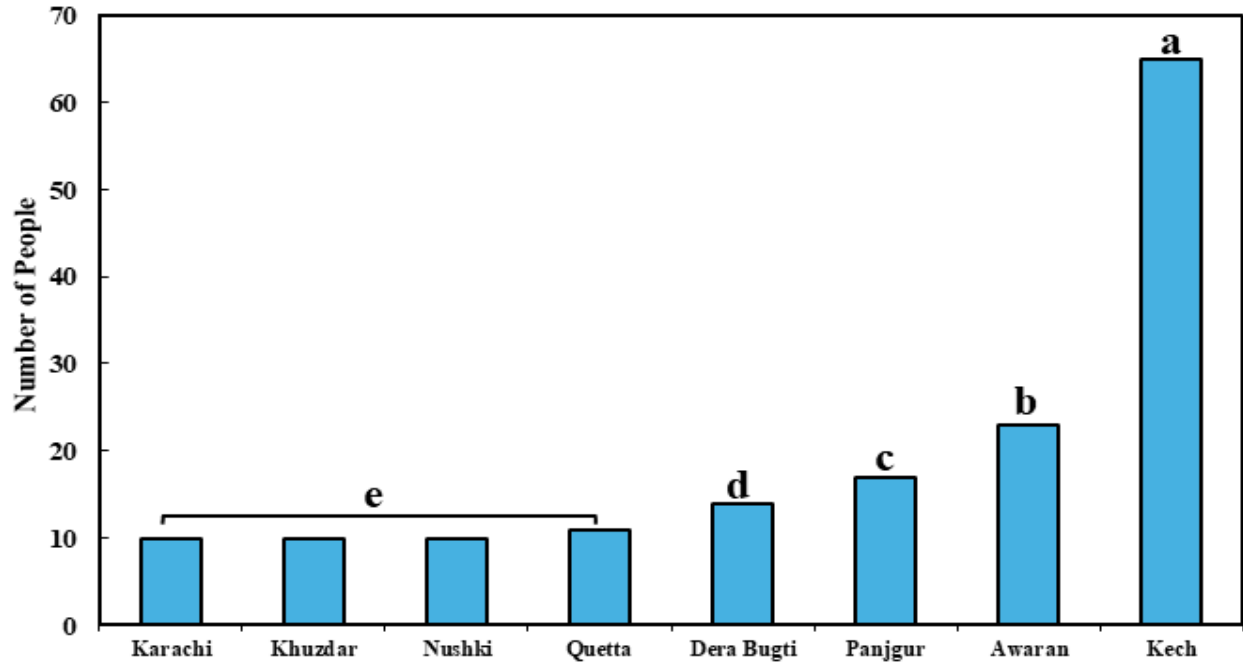


Figure 5. Number of individuals released in 2024 after being subjected to enforced disappearance across various districts of Balochistan, including Karachi. Kech, Dera Bugti, and Awaran recorded the highest numbers of releases. Lowercase letters (a–e) indicate statistically significant differences between districts ($p < 0.05$); districts sharing the same letter are not significantly different from each other.

Table 1. Total number of enforced disappearances reported in 2024 across various districts of Balochistan, including Karachi and DG Khan.

District	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Sum
Kech	21	4	3	11	26	16	8	19	17	28	30	16	199
Quetta	2	2	3	3	0	0	10	5	0	2	0	0	27
Gwadar	1	1	2	2	15	3	4	3	3	2	4	4	44
Awaran	1	4	5	12	8	6	10	2	3	3	7	0	61
Khuzdar	0	3	4	2	1	3	6	5	0	5	1	0	30
Kharan	2	2	1	1	0	2	5	4	4	1	2	0	24
Kachi	2	4	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	10
Dera Bugti	9	0	0	1	29	8	0	1	0	27	9	3	87
Nushki	0	1	0	0	3	6	0	0	1	11	6	0	28
Panigur	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	3	3	10	6	9	35
Kohlu	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	3
Bolan	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Sibi	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Mastung	0	1	3	0	0	0	2	1	3	1	5	0	16
Kalat	0	0	2	0	0	0	3	2	4	3	5	1	20
Lasbella	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	4	10	0	18
Chaghi	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	5
Nasirabad	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	8
DG Khan	0	1	1	1	2	2	0	0	4	0	1	1	13
Karachi	0	1	1	1	1	0	5	1	1	0	0	4	15
Barkhan	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	3	0	0	1	0	6
Washuk	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	4
Pishin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Hub	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	3
Harnai	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
Total Disappearances	39	31	27	39	90	50	56	53	46	103	89	41	664

Table 2. The number of individuals who remained forcibly disappeared in 2024 across various districts of Balochistan, including Karachi and DG Khan.

District	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Sum
Kech	17	1	2	8	23	12	3	13	9	19	14	11	132
Quetta	2	2	3	3	0	0	5	0	0	2	0	0	17
Gwadar	1	0	2	2	13	2	2	1	3	3	4	3	36
Awaran	1	2	3	4	6	6	3	2	3	1	7	0	38
Khuzdar	1	2	4	1	1	3	6	2	1	2	0	0	23
Kharan	2	2	1	1	0	2	4	1	3	1	2	0	19
Kachi	2	2	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
Dera Bugti	1	0	0	1	28	8	2	1	0	22	9	1	73
Nushki	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	6	6	0	16
Panjgur	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	3	1	3	4	15
Kohlu	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
Bolan	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3
Sibi	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Mastung	0	0	3	0	0	0	2	1	0	1	5	0	12
Kalat	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	1	1	3	5	0	14
Lasbella	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	9	0	13
Chaghi	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Nasirabad	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	4
DG Khan	0	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	3	0	1	0	9
Karachi	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	4	8
Barkhan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Washuk	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Pishin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hub	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	3
Harnai	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total	27	20	22	25	82	37	32	24	26	69	67	24	455

Table 3. The number of individuals released after enforced disappearance in different districts of Balochistan in 2024, including Karachi and DG Khan.

District	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Sum
Kech	7	3	1	3	3	4	3	5	8	9	16	5	67
Quetta	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	6	0	0	0	0	13
Gwadar	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	5
Awaran	1	2	2	8	3	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	20
Khuzdar	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	1	3	1	0	10
Kharan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	0	4
Kachi	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Dera Bugti	8	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	14
Nushki	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	4	0	0	10
Panjgur	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	7	3	5	18
Kohlu	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Bolan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sibi	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mastung	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	5
Kalat	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	4
Lasbela	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
Chaghi	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Nasirabad	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	3
DG Khan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
Karachi	0	0	1	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	4	10
Barkhan	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	5
Washuk	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	3
Pishin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Hub	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Harnai	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Releases	18	10	6	12	7	13	22	23	18	34	23	16	202

4.3 A Socio-Occupational Analysis of Enforced Disappearances in Balochistan in 2024

The occupations of a significant number of victims who underwent enforced disappearances in 2024 remain unknown. However, among those whose occupations could be identified, students were the primary targets throughout the year. Since the beginning of the Baloch national movement for self-determination, students in Balochistan have been disproportionately affected, particularly as victims of enforced disappearances (Badshah et al., 2021). In 2024 alone, of 455 victims whose occupations

were known, the number of students forcibly disappeared was significantly higher than that of other occupational groups (Figure 6).

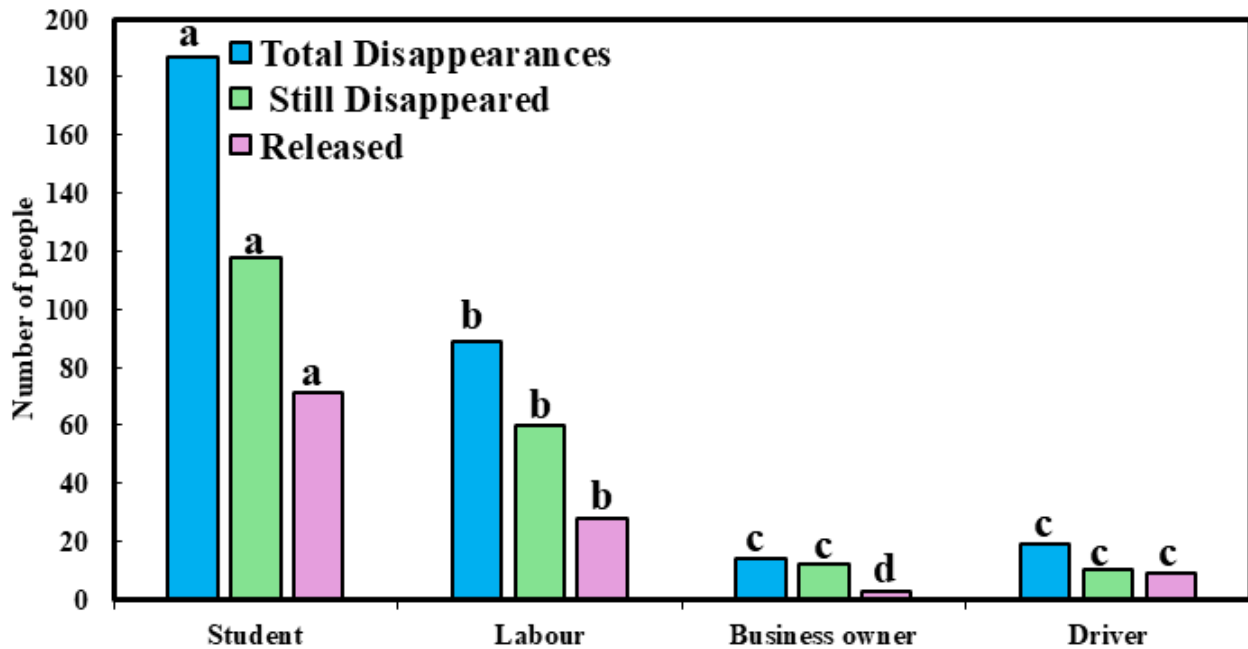


Figure 6. Status of Forcibly Disappeared Individuals by Known Occupation: Students represent the highest number of total disappearances, with a significant portion still missing. Labourers follow as the second most affected group. Business owners and drivers comprise smaller but still notable segments. The chart categorises individuals as still disappeared or released, reflecting the severe and ongoing impact of enforced disappearances across occupational backgrounds. Lowercase letters (a–d) indicate statistically significant differences between occupations ($p < 0.05$); districts sharing the same letter are not significantly different from each other.

In 2024, 187 students forcibly disappeared, accounting for 50.4% of the total enforced disappearances that year (Figures 6 and 7). Of these students, 118 (63.1%) remain missing, while 71 (37.9%) were released within the same year (Figure 6). Following students, breadwinners have been gravely targeted by Pakistani security forces: 89 labourers forcibly disappeared during 2024 (Figure 6), representing approximately 28.5% of the total enforced disappearances in that year (Figure 7). Among these 89 labourers, 61 (68.5%) are still missing, while 28 (31.5%) were released.

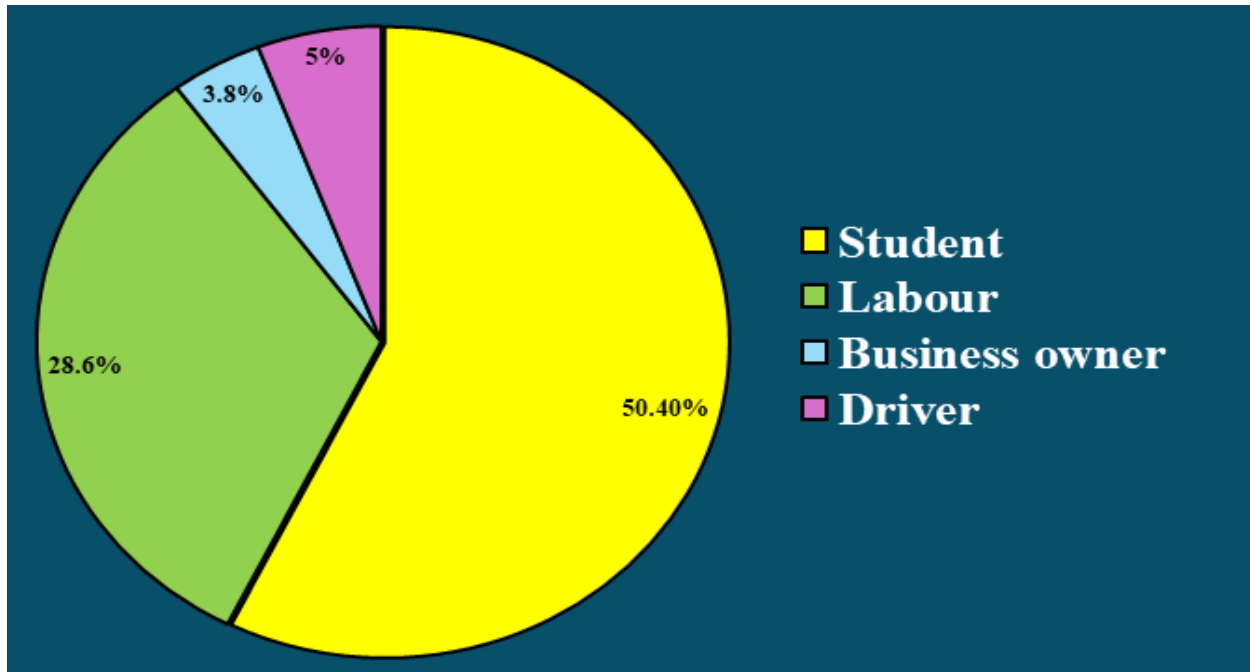


Figure 7. Known Occupations of Forcibly Disappeared Individuals: Among the cases where occupation was identified, students make up the largest group (50.4%), followed by laborers (28.6%), drivers (5%), and business owners (3.8%). A significant number of cases involve individuals whose occupations remain unknown.

Baloch students have been regularly targeted not only in Balochistan but in major cities of other provinces, including the capital city, Islamabad. An escalation in the harassment of Baloch students has recently been reported by *The Diplomat* (Baloch, D. 2025). Baloch students are often highly aware of political and social injustices and motivated by ideals of freedom, justice, and human rights. In Baloch liberation movement, Baloch students take frontline roles in spreading ideas, writing pamphlets, organizing protests, and challenging colonial or authoritarian narratives (Breseege, 2004). Therefore, Pakistan is primarily targeting Baloch youth, particularly students, just as it did with Bangladeshi students during their national movement for the separation of Bangladesh from Pakistan (Bose, S. 2012).

Pakistan has continuously been targeting the family members of those involved in the Baloch national liberation movement. A significant number of labourers forcibly disappeared in 2024. There should be different desired outcomes for targeting Baloch working class. As, many of these working-class individuals are relatives of individuals engaged in either armed or political struggles for Baloch rights and autonomy (Human Rights Watch, 2011). By disappearing ordinary working-class Baloch, the state

hopes to break communal solidarity, discourage resistance, and assert its dominance in a region it perceives as strategically vital due to its natural resources and geopolitical location.

4.4 Duration Patterns of Enforced Disappearances and Releases in Balochistan

A total of 316 forcibly disappeared individuals were released. A significant proportion, 142 individuals (45% of total releases), were freed within one week of their abduction. Another 37 individuals (11.7%) were released within two weeks, while 18 (5.7%) and 13 (4.1%) were released within three and four weeks, respectively (Figure 8). Thirty-two individuals (10.1%) were released after one month of disappearance. Longer-term cases included 12 individuals (3.8%) who were missing for one year, 6 individuals (1.9%) for two years, 4 individuals (1.2%) for three years, and one person who remained disappeared for more than three years.

There can be various reasons that a state abducts people and then releases them within weeks, such as interrogation and intimidation, the pressure from family members' public protests, and short-term disappearances also serve as a tactic to spread fear widely in the community. However, in Balochistan, short-term disappearances are mainly happening because in Balochistan, the Pakistani state's network of informants is often drawn from criminal elements, including smugglers, gangsters, and petty criminals. These individuals, motivated by personal gain or protection, frequently provide unreliable or incomplete intelligence. As a result, the state's pre-investigative procedures and legal frameworks are extremely weak and poorly regulated. This reliance on questionable informants leads to arbitrary detentions, mistaken identities, and collective punishment. Consequently, enforced disappearances occur outside any credible judicial oversight, allowing security agencies to abduct, interrogate, and later release individuals without adhering to due process, creating a climate of fear and lawlessness.

Whereas those who remained disappeared for longer periods — spanning months or even years — are likely suspected of having closer ties to the Baloch national liberation movement or maintaining relationships with its active members. These individuals often face extended secret imprisonment handed down by military courts operating outside the public justice system, or they are held for prolonged torture to extract intelligence or to force them into confessions.

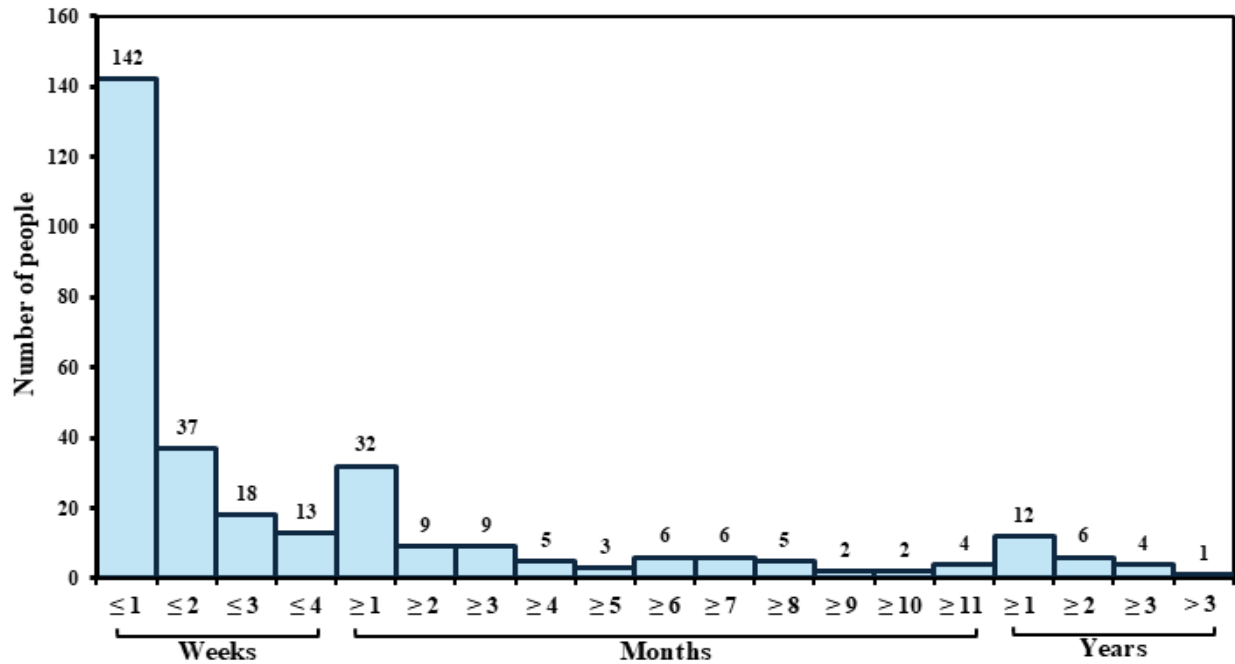


Figure 8. Duration of enforced disappearances before release among Baloch individuals, showing the number of people released after varying periods of disappearance ranging from one week to over three years. The graph highlights that the majority were released within the first week, while a smaller proportion remained forcibly disappeared for several months or even years.

4.5 Extrajudicial killings in Balochistan in 2024

In 2024, thirty-two victims of enforced disappearances were extrajudicially killed. The highest number of extrajudicial killings occurred in August, with 12 individuals killed across different parts of Balochistan (Figure 9).

August has historically been a deadly and emotionally charged month for Balochistan, due to several significant historical events. On 11 August 1947, the Khan of Kalat declared Balochistan's independence from former British Empire (Mss Eur D971/2 and IOR/R/3/1/166). Just days later, Pakistan celebrates its Independence Day on 14 August, a juxtaposition that adds complexity to the month for the Baloch people. Further straining regional sentiments was the controversial accession of Balochistan to Pakistan on 27 March 1948, which deepened political and national tensions. The situation was further exacerbated by the killing of Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti in August 2006, an event that has left a lasting scar on the Baloch national consciousness.

This year as well, August proved deadly: four individuals were killed between 11 and 14 August, while seven others were killed between 26 and 28 August 2024, highlighting the continued cycle of violence and repression during this historically fraught month.

There were six extrajudicial killings in October, making it the second deadliest month in terms of extrajudicial killings in 2024 (Figure 9). It should be noted that Chinese nationals were attacked on 7 October 2024 (Shahid, S., 2024), an event that escalated both the number of enforced disappearances (Figures 1 and 2) and extrajudicial killings in October 2024 (Figure 9).

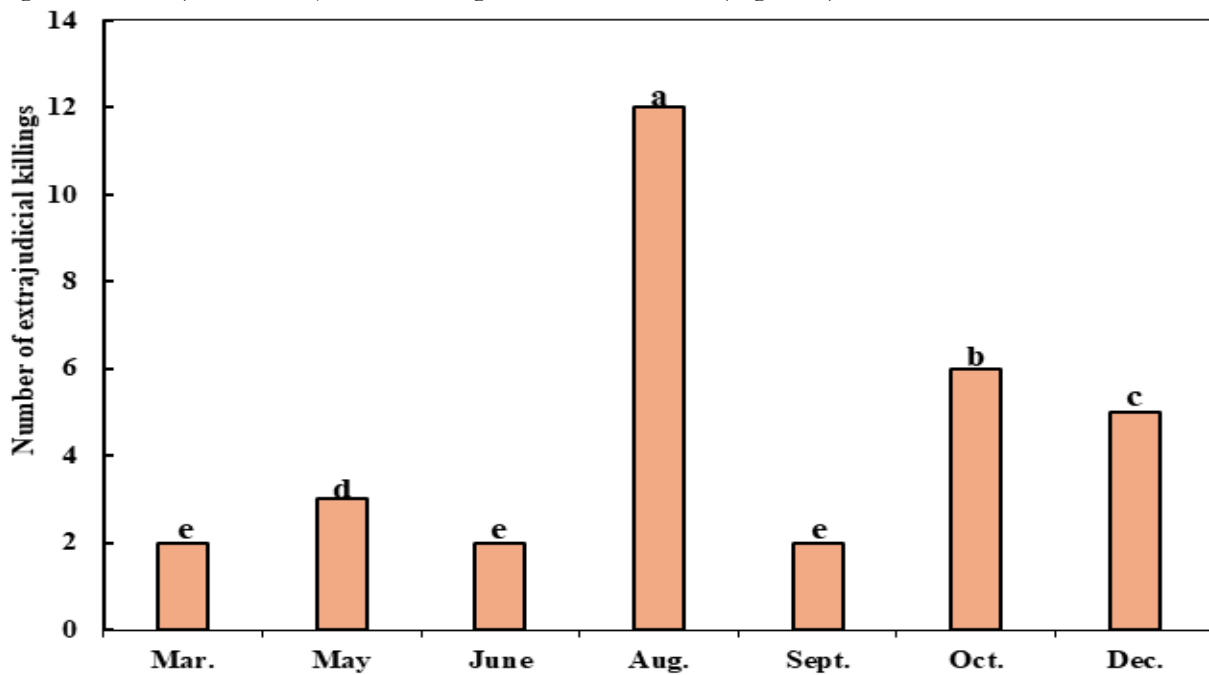


Figure 9. Monthly distribution of extrajudicial killings. The bar graph illustrates the number of extrajudicial assassinations reported in various months, with August showing a statistically significant peak (12 cases), followed by October and December. Different lowercase letters (a–e) indicate statistically significant differences between months ($p < 0.05$).

The district wise distribution showed that Kech has been gravely targeted not only for the number of individuals disappeared in 2024 but also the number of individuals killed extrajudicially, 8 (25%) individuals from district Kech were extrajudicially killed in 2024, followed by Awaran with 6 (18.75%) individuals, Panjgur and Khuzdar with 4 (12.5%) individuals each (Figure 10). Three people from Kalat, two from Gwadar and Karachi, and one person each from Nasirabad, Nushki, and Kharan were extrajudicially killed in 2024 (Figure 10).

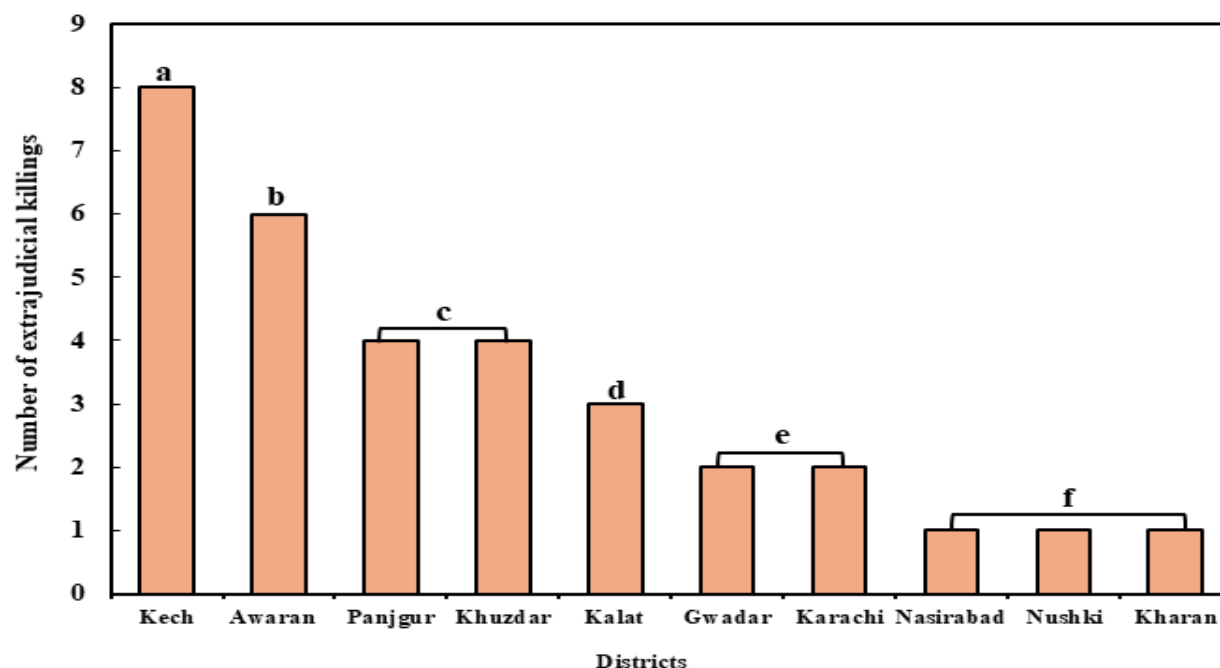


Figure 10. District-wise distribution of extrajudicial killings in Balochistan and Karachi. This bar graph depicts the number of extrajudicial killings reported across various districts of Balochistan. Kech district recorded the highest number (8 cases), followed by Awaran, Panjgur, and Khuzdar. The different lowercase letters (a–f) indicate statistically significant differences among the districts ($p < 0.05$).

The Pakistani security forces and intelligence agencies have been repeatedly accused by human rights groups, Baloch activists, and international observers of carrying out enforced disappearances, torture, and extrajudicial executions of Baloch activists, students, and political workers. While the Pakistani government officially denies these allegations, organisations such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan have documented credible evidence pointing to the involvement of state security forces in these abuses.

Pakistan has attempted to conceal its unlawful practice of enforced disappearances through other illegal means, including the extrajudicial killing of victims of enforced disappearances, either by staging fake encounters or by killing them and rendering their bodies unidentifiable or burying them in mass graves. However, the authorities have failed to hide their crimes against humanity.

5 Conclusion

The data from 2024 underscore a persistent and systematic pattern of enforced disappearances, arbitrary detention, and extrajudicial killings targeting the Baloch people. These practices, deeply embedded in Pakistan's security framework, have devastated families and communities, fostering an environment of fear and collective trauma. The high proportion of students and labourers among the victims highlights the deliberate targeting of the Baloch region's social and economic backbone, threatening the future prospects of the Baloch people. Without meaningful international accountability, the Pakistani state is likely to continue its cycle of repression, further eroding trust and inflaming grievances. Urgent action by global human rights institutions is essential to halt these violations, demand transparency, and ensure justice for victims of enforced disappearance and extrajudicial killings in Balochistan. Fundamental measures in this regard include the ratification of pertinent international conventions by Pakistan, the thorough investigation of all reported cases, the prosecution of those responsible, the protection of victims' families, and the provision of safeguards for journalists, activists, and human rights defenders.

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