

Pakistan's Foreign Policy

EXTRA-JUDICIAL KILLINGS

Pakistan's Policy:

Pakistan reiterates its call for investigation of extrajudicial killings in IIOJK by establishing an independent Commission of Inquiry as recommended by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in its Kashmir reports of 2018 and 2019. The Pakistani government has passed several laws pertaining to extra judicial killing within Pakistan. These laws however have come under international criticism and have not seemed to have much effect on the killings taking place throughout the country.

International Criticism:

The Asian Legal Resource Centre (ALRC) urges the members of the Human Rights Council (HRC) and the body's Special Procedures to intervene with the government of Pakistan (GoP) concerning the grave and widespread human rights violations taking place in the country. The HRC in particular has remained largely silent on abuses taking place there. While Pakistan will soon undergo its second Universal Periodic Review, the scope and severe nature of violations taking place in Pakistan require a more concerted approach by all relevant UN human rights mechanisms and HRC members in particular. According to human rights groups, the politicized police force still functions under the umbrella of the military's powerful intelligence service. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) recorded 293 police encounters in 2020.

Long-promised legislation to make enforced disappearances illegal has still not been passed, and indeed recent amendments to the draft bill would "violate international human rights law and would allow state actors to behave with impunity", Amnesty International said last week. The UN working group on enforced disappearances also expressed grave concerns at the proposed amendments to the bill, including clauses that harshly penalize relatives for reporting alleged cases of enforced disappearances.

Sentiment in Pakistan:

The protest drew people from different walks of life to chant slogans referring to some recent events such as the murder of Irfan Jatoi in a fake shootout with police in Sukkur, the custodial death of a seventh-class student, Jehanzeb, in Peshawar, and the killing of two people in another fake encounter with police in Kanha Nau, Lahore.

Protesters demanded judicial inquiries to investigate all these police operations, along with tough action against those responsible. Many major cities of Pakistan, including Lahore, Karachi and Islamabad experienced protests demanding accountability and the passing of legislation to combat this issue.