

Sindh Human Rights Defenders Network (SHRDN) is a network of hrds of Sindh, Pakistan, established in 2024 to provide support to human rights defenders working on human rights in challenging situations, facing threats. SHRDN assist hrds in improving their safety and security through legal advices, legalaid, protective accompaniment, presence, Go-See-Visit, fact finding, advocacy lobbying and other activities. SHRDN network also observe trials of HRDs who are falsely implicated in criminal cases and provide guidance to them on their cases.

Implication of HRDs in False Criminal Cases, Visa Issues, Enforced Disappearances and Murders of Family members of Women HRDs Making Difficulties for HRDs to continue their work.

Cases of Human Rights Defenders in Sindh, Pakistan

Case # 1 Nazim Jokhio Case: Murder of an Environmental Rights Defender

Nazim was a Environmental human rights defender who was trying to protect houbara birds (migratory birds) from Arab hunters, was allegedly tortured and murdered in Salar Kot Sindh on 3 November 2021. One of the high-profile cases of Sindh province, in which one MNA and a member of Provincial Assembly of the Sindh both from the ruling party were alleged as accused.

Settlement between main two influential accused and legal heir is done outside of the court but case is being proceeded against two other accused given by the main accused as escape goats. Main accused has been elected member of national assembly again and has become more power than before because they have alliance with the federal government as well. Civil Society's application as an intervener in which compromise was challenged outside of the court was also dismissed by the trial court.

Current Updates: All witnesses have been examined; mother of the deceased defender was also examined on the last date. Two accused are being tried inside the prison on the pretext of that this is a case which may cause law and order situation

The fate of this case has discouraged other hrds and also EHRDs who were working on cases of corporations in areas of Gwadar, Thar, Balouchistan, Karachi and their trust on just system has further weakened. SHRDN has taken special efforts for highlighting the positive impacts of Nazim Jokhio case and a special presentation was also given in an hrd meeting that after Nazim Jokhio murder case more young hrds have join this field and have started working on environmental rights.

Four human rights defenders implicated in a false case of rebellion by the SIP Nayardin posted as Sub Inspector Police at Police Station Artillery, Karachi. Case is being proceeded in the Court of District and Session Judge, Karachi where two witnesses have been examined and Investigation Officer (IO) is pending. Next date of the case is on 15th May 2024.

Charge is framed under section 131, 153-A, 34 PPC. PPC 131 PPC is about abetting mutiny, or attempting to seduce a soldier, sailor, or airman from his duty. 153 A PPC – States promoting enmity between different groups, etc. SHRDN condemn false implication of the human rights activists (Nasir, Saeed Baloch, Illahi Baksh Bikak, and Abdul Wahab).

Sections Reproduced:

131 PPC

Abetting mutiny, or attempting to seduce a soldier, sailor or airman from his duty: Whoever abets the committing of mutiny by an officer, soldier, sailor or airman, in the Army, Navy or Air Force of Pakistan, or attempts to seduce any such officer, soldier, sailor, or airman from his allegiance of his duty, shall be punished with imprisonment for life, or with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to ten years, and shall also be liable to fine. [Explanation: In this section, the words "officer", "soldier", "sailor" or "airman" include any person subject to the Pakistan Army Act, 1952 (XXXIX of 1952), or the Pakistan Navy Ordinance, 1961 (XXXV of 1961), or the Pakistan Air Force Act, 1953 (VI of 1953), as the case may be.

153-A PPC

Promoting enmity between different groups, etc.: Whoever (a) by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representations or otherwise, promotes or incites, or attempts to promote or incite, on grounds of religion, race, place of both, residence, language, caste or community or any other ground whatsoever, disharmony or feelings of enmity, hatred or ill-will between different religious, racial, language or regional groups or castes or communities; or (b) commits, or incites any other person to commit, any act which is prejudicial to the maintenance of harmony between different religious, racial, language or regional groups or castes or communities or any group of persons identifiable as such on any ground whatsoever and which disturbs or is likely to disturb public tranquillity; or (c) organizes, or incites any other person to organize, and exercise, movement, drill or other similar activity intending that the participants in any such activity shall use or be trained to use criminal force or violence or knowing it to be likely that the participants in any such activity will use or be trained to use criminal force or violence or participates, or incites any other person to participate, in any such activity intending to use or be trained to use criminal force or violence or knowing it to be likely that the participants in any such activity will use or be trained, to use criminal force or violence, against any religious, racial, language or regional group or caste or community or any group of persons identifiable as such on any ground whatsoever and any such activity for any reason whatsoever cause or is likely to cause fear or alarm or a feeling of insecurity amongst members of such religious,

racial, language or regional group or caste or community. shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to five years and with fine. Explanation: It does not amount to an offence within the meaning of this section to point but, without malicious intention and with an honest view to their removal, matters which are producing, or have a tendency to produce, feelings of enmity or hatred between different religious, racial, language or regional groups or castes or communities.

34 PPC means all accused with common intentions

Booking hrds under these sections and allegation were meant to teach them lesson for holding protest in favor of Miss Mah Rang Baloch who was holding protest in Balouchistan for the return/release of enforced disappeared baloches.

Current Status of the Case:

Witness of the site (press club) is a policeman who stands as security personnel at press club is witness in the case against hrds. He was examined in the court and he said he know them and they were not the people who committed this offence, other chanted slogans and they are not the accused. Investigation Officer of the case has been summoned for examination but he is avoiding the trial. On 15th May he sent medical certificate and used excuse that he is not feeling well. Judge granted his application and fixed 25th May for hearing the case.

Observations:

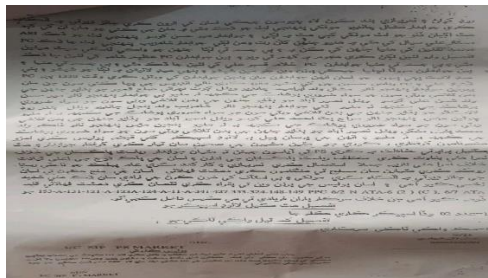
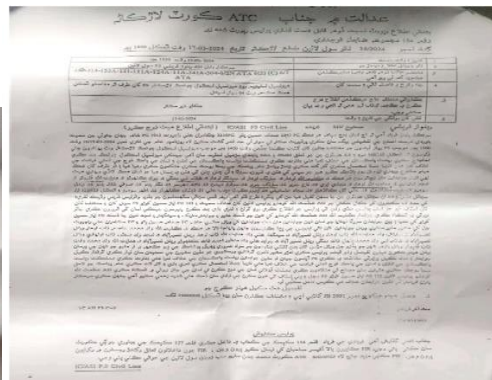
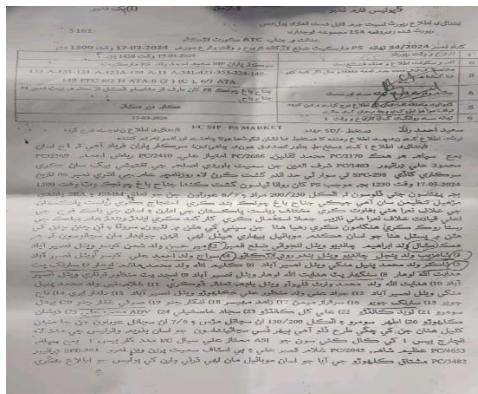
False case is registered against the HRDs to use FIR as tool of harassment, make them feel insecure and keep them under fear of arrest and humiliation at the hands of police. This case was filed against them to make them realize that if they raise voice against missing baloches they will face the same consequences in future).

Police (both investigation officer and constable) are acting as an agent of state agencies. Registration of this false, case, bail, investigation and now trial are punishment to hrds. Teaching them lessons for standing for other hrds and human rights.

All depositions checked by the legal team of SHRDN shows the case should not be proceeded further due to weak evidence and hrds should be acquitted without delay but seems judge also want to run the trial till end because this is a case registered by the state, sections in it are regarding state and state security and agencies are following it.

Case # 3. Cases of Women Human Rights Defenders works on Enforced Disappearances & brothers of women rights defenders Sasui and Sorath, who father was also murdered at Larkana few months ago.

Both are cases of Anti-Terrorism Act against human rights defenders and their family members. Women rights defenders Sorath and Sasui's two brothers are also implicated in both cases by the police. Human rights defender Sarang Joyo is also nominated in the case.



Sindh Human Rights Defenders Network's Larkana division coordinator Advocate Javed Buledi is providing pro bono legalaid to the defenders on request of whrds. Advocate Ali Palh, SHRDN Coordinator and Javed Buledi have decided to file an application under section 265k for cancellation of the case.

Cases are fixed on the May 2024 at ATC Court Larkana.

Case # 4 Aqsa Dayu case:

Aqsa works on enforced disappearances and lives in tribal areas of Sindh province. Her brother Insaf has been missing since more than

General Challenges and Issues of HRD/WHRDs face during their Work

Using Anti-Terrorism law against human rights defenders and filing cases against them under ATA law affects physical mental and emotional health of the HRDs and their families.

False cases also affect their reputation and relationship in the society. Some members of the civil society, donors, international organizations maintain distance from them.

Legal system of Pakistan where independence of judiciary is already eroded works as a harassment tool for HRDs and cause unbearable fear makes it difficult for hrds to navigate their way through the accusations.

In case of women hrds, false cases repel their and their relatives marriage proposals.

After case is filed, fear of arrest, expenses of bail, case, surety bond for submission of the court, hearings from morning till afternoon, and then getting off from work and offices cause stress for hrds.

Sometimes false cases, alter path of hrds, they start distancing from the human rights work. One of our whrd has restricted herself to her house.

Getting visas become difficult for hrds when police cases are pending against them and embassies asking police reports/clearance from them. One whrd was denied shengan visa, whose grounds are still not known but perception is that the cases against her has resulted in the refusal.

Getting new jobs or continuing their jobs becomes difficult for hrds. Those hrds works on refugee rights, rights of stateless or provide legalaid to asylum seekers also not liked by the general public.

Recommendations:

- Those whrd who have law degrees should be encouraged to start their practice and they should be supported for doing their activities.
- Special programmes should be held in their honor and their meetings with diplomats, other UN agencies or state officials so their profiles are positively developed.

- Physical Security trainings should be imparted to them for their safety and security.
- Visa requirement for hrds should be made lenient so their traveling issues should be resolved.
- For false cases, lobbying should be done with state institutions for their cases and action against officers involved in the harassment.
- Work on cases of journalists who are murdered because of their human rights work should be followed and their families should be supported.

Actions Taken:

Sindh Human Rights Defenders Network (SHRDN) has written letter to the Federal Minister for Human Rights, National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR), Sindh Human Rights Commission, Home Minister of Sindh, Inspector General of Police and held meetings with parliamentarians of different parties for raising this issue.

Final draft of the bill on human rights defenders' protection finalized by the SHRDN will also be handed over to parliament in June 2024 for further action and process.

List of Missing Persons compiled and sent to all state official for action and their families were provided legal advices regarding the cases. NCHR (an NHRI) and SHRDN in last workshop on enforced disappearances held at NCHR office decided to invite families affected by the ED led by hrds who work on these cases.

Other Activities of the SHRDN Network



Human rights defenders visited office of the Commissioner of Right to Information Commission Ms Saim Agha who is a whrd and also member of SHRDN and discussed issues hrds face in seeking information under information law and knew opportunities HRDs can have in the implementation of the law and support available when Saima Agha is part of the commission (Now she is member of the Sindh Assembly/Parliament).

Workshop for HRDs on Enforced Disappearances

With joint efforts of SHRDN and National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) a workshop was held for hrds who are working on enforced disappearances in Sindh, Pakistan. Workshop was held to address the issues of the subject, challenges hrds face during their work, who to report incident of enforced disappearances at national and international level. HRDs were exposed to new resources, and also they were encouraged to further strengthen the coalition against the enforced disappearances for its prevention and hrds security. Role of NCHR was also highlighted and few new areas were identified where NCHR can play its important role in the prevention of EDs. SHRDN also emphasized the need of implementation of guidelines on Protection of HRDs, appointment of focal person on hrds.



@ Workshop on Enforced Disappearances @ NCHR Office

Sindh Human Rights Defenders Network (SHRDN) team along with other defenders shares the list of missing persons with media and civil society on Human Rights Day at Karachi Press Club

[Sindh Human Rights Defenders Network shares list of total missing persons of Sindh with media – The Pakistan Daily](#)



Case Hearing by Supreme Court of Pakistan at Islamabad - January 03, 2024

SHRDN team attended the Supreme Court of Pakistan's hearing on the cases of Enforced Disappearances.

Supreme Court of Pakistan directed the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances to submit a comprehensive report on report on the issues along with production orders issued. Order was passed by three members bench comprising Chief Justice of Pakistan, Qazi Faiz Isa, Justice Mohummad Ali Mazhar, Justice Musarat Halali heard the case.



SHRDN Team at SC Bar Islamabad

Human Rights Subjects Added into Syllabus of TLC Law College.

Subjects Environmental Human Rights Defenders, Climate Change, Indigenous People, Human Rights Defenders, ICC, Drug Laws have been successfully added into the syllabus of the law college established by RightsNow Foundation known as TLC and students are getting interest in them.

Seminar on Child Protection and Implementation of Relevant Laws and Policies with T. Law College

It was held on May 20, 2024 Monday at Tando Allahyar Law College. The purpose of the workshop was to teach human rights subjects into the college and prepare lawyers for community support. Refugee law, Statelessness, Business & Human Rights, Indigenous people, environment law, Anti-Slavery law, International Criminal Court will be taught to the future lawyers.

Statements Issued:

- First May on Labour Day, issues of abuse of human rights by corporation, Implementation of ILO Convention, B+HR,
- 2nd May on Freedom of Expression issue of activation of Commission on Protection of Journalists & Media Persons was raised



[RightsNOW Pakistan | human right for all \(wordpress.com\)](https://www.rightsnowpakistan.org/human-right-for-all)

- Statement issued on Attack on Journalists Nasrullah Gadani at Mirpur Mathelo, District Ghotki Sukkur. SHRDN is in touch with his family
- Attacks on Rauf Hassan, Iqrar Hassan and Enforced Disappearance of a Journalist and a poet Ahmed Farhad

[Statement | RightsNOW Pakistan \(wordpress.com\)](https://www.rightsnowpakistan.org/statement)

Nasrullah Gadani, a journalist who was working on social issues was shot by unidentified people

[Sindh Human Rights Defenders Network \(SHRDN\) feels seriously concern for Gadani's life. | RightsNOW Pakistan \(wordpress.com\)](https://www.rightsnowpakistan.org/sindh-human-rights-defenders-network-shrdn-feels-seriously-concern-for-gadani-s-life)

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