



## Missing Persons and Intelligence Agencies

Missing persons are a major human-rights issue in various countries. One niche of the missing persons saga is Asian nationals who went missing after 9/11, kidnapped by the world's intelligence agencies. There are hundreds of people who went missing in the last several years from Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippine, China, Thailand, and Singapore.



The relatives of these missing people are sure that their loved ones were abducted by the intelligence agencies of their countries. In Pakistan the issue of missing persons was raised in 2002 when Dr. Amir Aziz mysteriously disappeared, abducted by state-run intelligence agencies. Pakistan's *Daily Times* reported:

Leading orthopaedic surgeon Dr Amir Aziz, picked up on Oct 21 over suspected links with Al Qaeda, was dramatically released in the early hours of Tuesday after being thoroughly investigated by the US FBI and the Pakistani intelligence agencies.

The missing persons issue was again highlighted when Amna Masood Janjua's husband was picked up by an intelligence agency on July 30, 2005. The brave lady raised her voice against the powerful intelligence agencies and decided to devote herself to the cause of missing persons in Pakistan. She started her own organization for the legal and financial aid of the heirs of the missing persons, called the Defense of Human Rights.

When contacted by this correspondent, she asserted:

I know where my husband is in the illegal confinement of ISI [Pakistani intelligence], and he is in cell No. 20 in sector I-9/3 of Islamabad, where there are the offices and some residential apartments of this intelligence agency.

His detention by the ISI was confirmed by eyewitnesses to his abduction, as well by affidavits of other released detainees. Amna maintained that she wants her husband released at any cost. She commented that the Supreme Court of Pakistan has formed a commission to probe the missing persons issue and also a Joint Investigation Team, but both are powerless to summon the intelligence agencies.

The commission was formed on May 1, 2010, and 203 fresh cases of kidnapping have been reported since then.

In Pakistan the reason behind the sacking of the judiciary by the former dictator and now-exiled President General Pervez Musharraf was the same issue of missing persons. The court sought to recover all the missing persons who were illegally abducted by the intelligence agencies. The masses restored the judiciary of Pakistan, and now again the Chief Justice of Pakistan is encountering roadblocks in recovering the missing persons from the custody of the intelligence agencies.



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Amna claims that at least 392 people have gone missing in Pakistan who are in the hands of the intelligence agencies. According to her sources, the kidnapped people are being brutally tortured and interrogated by both local intelligence agencies and the U.S. CIA. The sources confirmed that there are several people who are interrogated solely by the CIA.

Claims have also been made that there are covert CIA prisons on ships and on the islands of Indonesia — the most notorious, according to numerous Asian periodicals, being Smarata, where the CIA's "Most Wanted" are being kept. The purpose of keeping kidnapped persons on ships is apparently to remove them from the territorial boundaries and laws of any specific country.

Internationally, for the last decade, the issue of missing persons has been in the headlines of the world media. There have been hundreds of protests launched by relatives and loved ones of these missing persons, but the international community has done nothing to help these people.

According to the United Nations' constitution, enforced disappearance and genocide are the two major crimes against humanity; yet despite the organization's vaunted interest in peace and justice in the world, with these particular crimes, the UN's apathy and uselessness are overwhelming.

On the surface the UN would appear to be concerned with missing persons: It has a Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, and it does hold meetings on missing persons. The United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances concluded its 92nd session this past November at the United Nations office in Geneva.

The summary of the 92nd session indicates that the UN took the following actions:

During its 92nd session, the Working Group examined 23 reported cases under its urgent action procedure, 284 newly submitted cases of enforced disappearances and information on previously accepted cases concerning the following countries: Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Belarus, Cameroon, Chad, China, Colombia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, France, Georgia, India, Iraq, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mexico, Morocco, Pakistan, Philippines, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Yemen, and Zimbabwe.

The summary added, "The Working Group also examined allegations submitted by credible sources regarding obstacles encountered in the implementation of the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and decided to transmit general allegations to the concerned governments."

And it stated:

During the 92nd session, the Working Group received delegations from the Governments of Iraq, Japan, Nepal, and Rwanda to exchange views on individual cases and on the issue of enforced disappearance in general. It also met with members of the Committee Against Torture as well as with non-governmental organizations and family members of disappeared persons regarding obstacles encountered in the implementation of the Declaration in their respective countries. Members of the Working Group also held a series of informal bilateral meetings with some States with a view to enhance cooperation.

But despite all these efforts, no progress has been made in the recovery of missing persons, and all of the countries scorn the laws of the United Nations. The Working Group has failed to recover a single



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person that has been abducted by state intelligence agencies, including those taken by the CIA.

In fact, those seeking the UN's aid find that the rules and methods of the Working Group are so complicated that it is difficult to even report a missing person case. The United Nations' actions are a demonstration of doing nothing while looking busy. There is so little sway held by the UN over countries that in some countries people are afraid to even utter the name of these powerful intelligence agencies which have captured their relatives.

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