



SINDHI FOUNDATION

SINDH'S STRENGTH IS THE WORLD'S STRENGTH

The Second Enforced Disappearance of Aaqib Chandio

July 7th, 2020

On May 30th, 2018, then seventeen-year-old Aaqib Chandio was abducted while walking along a road near his home in Madina Colony, a residential area of Larkana city in northern Sindh along the west bank of the Indus River. Chandio was, by all accounts, a bright student and an engaged community member unaffiliated with any subversive political movements; it is still unclear why young Chandio was taken.



On August 30th of 2019, International Victims of Enforced Disappearances Day, Representative and Chair of the Congressional Sindh Caucus, Brad Sherman, called for the release of young Aaqib Chandio at an event hosted by The Sindh Foundation in Washington, DC. By September 17th, Chandio was finally released, malnourished and badly beaten, having endured sixteen months of enforced disappearance and torture.



Aaqib moved from Larkana, looking to live a quiet life in Karachi in hopes that the anonymity of a new city might protect him.

Sadly, his time in Karachi was short-lived: On July 7th, Chandio was taken from his apartment during the early morning hours around 4am PKT. A video taken by his sister captures a group of men in police and civilian

clothes dragging Chandio away while she and his wife plead for help. During the abduction, the two young women were beaten and tortured as the group of unidentified men broke into their apartment and seized Chandio. Currently, Aaqib's whereabouts are unknown.



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Aaqib Chandio's sister in the wake of his abduction.

On Monday, July 13th, the Chair of the Congressional Sindh Caucus Congressman Brad Sherman posted about Aaqib Chandio and how he is working on finding the whereabouts of Chadio as well as preventing further enforced disappearances in Sindh, Pakistan.

We at the Sindhi American Political Action Committee want to thank Congressman Brad Sherman for everything that he has done for the Sindhi community and for his outreach to spread awareness of Aaqib Chandio's enforced disappearance.



Congressman Brad Sherman ✓

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On July 7th, Aaqib Chandio was abducted from his home in [#Karachi](#), after having just been released in September. His whereabouts are currently unknown. I have brought this to the attention of the Pakistani Embassy and the [U.S. Department of State](#).

As the Chair of the Congressional [#Sindh](#) Caucus, we need information as to Aaqib's whereabouts, and must continue to push back against the pertinent problem of enforced disappearances. (H/T [Munawar Laghari](#))



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The next day, on Tuesday, July 14, American University hosted a conference between Ambassador and Academic Akbar Ahmed and Ambassador of Pakistan to the U.S. Asad Majeed Khan, two ambassadors who are both experts on Pakistan and its relations to other countries, neighboring and otherwise. They discussed peace in South Asia, including in Kashmir, a region that is administered by China, India, and Pakistan, current US-Pakistan relationship, and the impacts of COVID-19 on that part of the world and Pakistan's strategy to contain the virus. [You can view a recording of the conference here.](#)

SAPAC team member, Karie Pinnix, was able to ask Ambassador Kahn a question on Sindh specifically:

“Thank you, ambassadors, for the intriguing discussion. While we know that there are problems occurring in Kashmir, I wanted to point out another region in Pakistan with recurring problems - Sindh. In the province, according to the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan November 2018 update for the European Union, a total of 5,290 cases have been received on cases of enforced disappearances in the country. There have been recent reports on enforced disappearances in Sindh recently, and this has been happening for quite a while. On July 7th, a 20-year-old student named Aaqib Chandio was abducted and disappeared at around 4:30 in the morning. What can Pakistan do to find Aaqib Chandio and bring him back safely, while ensuring that enforced disappearances in Pakistan are being investigated upon?”

Before answering the question, Ambassador Khan denied these statistics to be true, saying how the freedoms of those living in Sindh are protected by the Constitution of Pakistan. Although he has heard of the case of Aaqib Chandio only a day before, he says that Pakistani officials are looking into the disappearance. He then concludes his answer by saying, “If there are any cases, all those individuals have all the remedies that are available.” Not only

does Ambassador Khan completely dismiss answering the second half of the question about ensuring that enforced disappearances in Pakistan are being investigated upon, but he only discusses what can be done to find these missing people on the individual level. He does not provide any support for what the government as well as local police can do in order to prevent further enforced disappearance.