**An uncertain future**

[**Sajad Jatoi**](https://www.nation.com.pk/columnist/sajad-jatoi)

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Another episode of gruesome violence on the streets of Karachi resulted in the death of two young, apparently well-educated men. This time around the lynching did not take place on the allegations of blasphemy; however, it occurred on groundless accusations and false rumours. This sordid story is about a mob lynching of two young men which happened in Karachi’s Machhar Colony. The police version of the story reads that two young engineers, 27-year-old Ayman Javed and Ishaq Panhwar, went to the area to fix the network issues of a tower as they had received complaints. They were in their car in a narrow street when their car was surrounded by an infuriated mob who took them out of the car and started unleashing violence on them. They were branded as child abductors and subsequently were tortured to death.

Minutes after the hair-raising incident, the clips showing gruesome violence went viral in no time. The footage shows a mob surrounding two people and torturing them with sticks, stones, and cemented blocks. While some are busy beating the victims, others are busy recording the incident. How pathetic is it that no one from the crowd, except the one policeman who was also overwhelmed by the mob, tried to intervene to save two innocent lives! What if saner voices had prevailed at that time? Would not it have been great if someone dared to save the unfortunate souls? The incident, among other things, is once more a question mark on our society. It shows the level of barbarism our self-perceived civilised society has reached. How pathetic it is that people have become so barbaric that they do not scruple killing other human beings on mere rumours? Let me ask: did any one of the people present there know for certain that the victims were child abductors? What proof did they have?

[Pakistan reports 41 coronavirus cases, no death in 24 hours](https://www.nation.com.pk/11-Nov-2022/pakistan-reports-41-coronavirus-cases-no-death-in-24-hours)

Leaving the emotional side aside, this is a serious matter in terms of the role of law enforcement agencies as well. We have seen various episodes of such incidents. Who would forget the lynching of Priyanth Kumara, a Sri Lankan citizen working as a manager in a factory in Sialkot? Previously, it was a common perception that anyone can fall victim to lynchings on allegations of blasphemy. However, the Machhar Colony incident reveals that the actual picture is grimmer as anyone can be lynched to death on flimsy matters or rumours as well.

So, another question is did this incident happen as a result of the public’s distrust of the country’s criminal justice system? Is it that people, who perceived themselves as heroes for catching kidnappers, did not believe in the system, so they decided to punish them on their own? Or it happened because of the failure of law enforcement agencies? Because the perpetrators did not fear the consequences of their actions? I believe the failure of the criminal justice system is one of many reasons why this transpired. People took the law into their own hands because they didn’t fear the police or the system. In fact, why should they fear the law when they all have the eyes to see, and ears to hear that those who murder innocent people deliberately are also roaming the streets freely? If you doubt this assertion, look at the Nazim Jokhio murder case.

[Two killed, one injured in road accident in Kahna](https://www.nation.com.pk/11-Nov-2022/two-killed-one-injured-in-road-accident-in-kahna)

The incident has angered Sindhi nationalist parties because they believe that the victims were lynched because of their ethnicity as the area is mostly dominated by Bengalis, Pashtuns, and Urdu-speaking Sindhis. The general perception among them is that they were never given a chance to explain why they were in the area just because they were Sindhi speaking. Because of this many nationalist parties have given a call for peaceful protests. While this may seem like stoking violence along ethnic and linguistic lines, the police should fully investigate the matter and punish the perpetrators.

But the question remains the same: will Javed and Ishaq be served justice? Or will their murderers be roaming the streets like the killers of Nazim Jokhio? More importantly, what will law enforcement agencies, especially the police, do to prevent such incidents in the future? Will we see another Javed and Ishaq lynched to death on the allegations of being a kidnapper or robber? The authorities concerned should come forward and answer these questions. Otherwise, incidents like this give the wrong message that the writ of the state no longer exists and that no one is safe in the country.