
KIIR seeks UNHRC's urgent attention towards intensifying surveillance mechanisms targeting the local population in IIOJK:



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Altaf Hamid Rao.

MIRPUR (AJK): Nov. 20; Chairman of the Kashmir Institute of International Relations, Altaf

Hussain Wani, Thursday sought UN Human Rights Council's urgent attention towards the

intensifying surveillance mechanisms targeting the local population in Indian occupied Kashmir.

In a letter addressed to Dr. Ana Brian Nougères, Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy, Wani noted that GPS-enabled monitors, digital surveillance, and intrusive biometric data collection of under trials in Kashmir have become tools of intrusion, undermining the presumption of innocence and eroding fundamental freedoms.

He said that cases like that of Mukhtar Ahmed reveal a disturbing reality.

Referring to GPS-enabled ankle monitors, mass phone confiscations, digital surveillance, and intrusive biometric data collection in Kashmir, he said, “These practices collectively constitute a systematic erosion of privacy, a fundamental human right enshrined under international law.”

Wani emphasized that the misuse of such instruments transforms legal liberty into a perpetual state of control, further eroding fundamental freedoms.

Calling for an immediate cessation of these practices, he argued that electronic monitoring of undertrial detainees constitutes a grave violation of fundamental rights.

Citing international treaties and covenants, he urged the restoration of fundamental freedoms and rights in accordance with international law.

Terming right to privacy as a cornerstone of international human rights law, he said Article 17 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) guarantees that no individual shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with their privacy, family, home, or correspondence.

He also called on the UN Human Rights Council to mandate an independent investigation into digital surveillance practices in occupied Kashmir and to recommend remedial measures that are necessary, proportionate, and respectful of human dignity.

“Privacy is not a privilege; it is a cornerstone of human dignity, civil liberty, and the rule of law,” he said, adding that the UN Human Rights Committee has clarified that electronic surveillance constitutes a potential violation of these rights when applied arbitrarily or disproportionately, particularly against individuals not yet convicted of a crime.

“Immediate action is essential to prevent further abuse and to reaffirm that no individual should live under constant, state-imposed intrusion,” Wani added.

It is worth noting that Mukhtar Ahmed, son of Mohammad Rashid and resident of Karmara, Poonch, was arrested on charges widely reported to be fabricated. On November 15, 2025, following his bail application, the Court of the Principal District & Sessions Judge, Udhampur,

granted his release but mandated the installation of a GPS-enabled tracking anklet. This device continuously monitors his movements in real time, effectively restricting his freedom of movement and placing him under perpetual state surveillance.