3.2.2. The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA)

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: October 2026

Pakistan’s Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) deals with complex criminal cases requiring a federal response, particularly those spanning provinces or involving an international dimension. Its mandate includes terrorism, espionage, trafficking in human beings, irregular migration, corruption, blasphemy-related offences, cybercrime and cyberterrorism. In recent years, FIA and other Pakistani authorities have significantly enhanced their surveillance capabilities and extended their control over online and social media content. FIA officials, Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and the armed forces have repeatedly relied on offences relating to ‘hate speech’, defamation and ‘cyber terrorism’ under the 2016 Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA) to target activists, journalists and other critics, as well as members of the political opposition. FIA officials have also reportedly been involved in the arrest, detention and ill-treatment of media workers and, at times, their relatives.

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