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Systematic attacks and relentless crackdown on Baloch activists must end

Responding to the unlawful detention and harassment of Baloch activists in Quetta and Karachi over the past week in Pakistan, Babu Ram Pant, Deputy Regional Director for South Asia at Amnesty International, said:

“The Pakistani authorities’ relentless crackdown on Baloch activists over the last week and continued detention of several protesters and Baloch activists, including Mahrang Baloch, Sammi Deen Baloch, and Bebarg Zehri, speaks of a [systematic attack](#) on the rights of Baloch community. Amnesty International is concerned by reports from family members that Mahrang and Bebarg – who is a person with disabilities, are not being given access to medical assistance despite their health severely deteriorating during custody.”

“The weaponization of the legal system, through multiple bogus First Information Reports (FIRs) and preventative detentions under the Maintenance of Public Order Ordinance, despite activists being granted bail, is a gross violation of their right to due process and fair trial. It shows wanton disregard by the law enforcement agencies for the rights of Baloch people under Pakistan’s Constitution and the country’s obligations under international human rights law.”

“Pakistani authorities must immediately release all Baloch activists being detained simply for exercising their right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. Amnesty reiterates its call for a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation into the use of unlawful force during the 21 March peaceful protests and ensure those responsible are held to account and the violations are effectively remedied.”

BACKGROUND

Baloch activists, Bebarg Zehri and his brother Hammal Zehri, were [taken](#) by Counter Terrorism Department officials from their home in Quetta on 20 March 2025 following a press conference by the Baloch Yakjethi Committee (BYC) at the Quetta Press Club over their long-standing demand is for justice for families of victims of [enforced disappearances](#). During a protest by BYC on [21 March](#) calling for their release, three protesters were killed through use of unlawful force by law enforcement as per reports from local activists. Mobile network signals were completely shut down in the lead up to and following the protest.

Central leader of the Baloch Yakjethi Committee, Mahrang Baloch, along with 17 other protesters, was detained the next day. Mahrang and Bebarg remain under preventative detention under the Maintenance of Public Order Ordinance (MPO), with separate terrorism charges also brought against Mahrang.

On 24 March, at least six [activists](#), including Sammi Deen Baloch a key leader in BYC, were detained for disregarding a blanket ban on assemblies in the city, following a protest in Karachi in Sindh province.