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Pakistan: Woman human rights defender Gulzadi Baloch arrested

On 7 April 2025, Pakistani authorities arrested woman human rights defender **Gulzadi Baloch** in Quetta, Balochistan, with disturbing reports of excessive violence being used during the arrest. For several hours following her arrest, there was no information about her fate or whereabouts, causing serious concerns for her physical and mental safety. She is presently held at the Hudda district prison under the regressive Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) Act, which severely restricts access to bail.

[Gulzadi Baloch](#) is a woman human rights defender and member of the Baloch Yajkehti Committee (BYC), an umbrella organisation advocating against human rights violations in Balochistan. Gulzadi Baloch is a vocal advocate on human rights, actively participating in peaceful campaigns in Balochistan. The woman human rights defender is facing reprisals due to her human rights work, calling for an end to violations against the Baloch community and accountability for perpetrators, including security forces.

On 7 April 2025, at around 8 pm, Gulzadi Baloch was arrested by Balochistan police and taken to an unknown location. There are disturbing reports that the woman human rights defender was severely beaten by police and dragged on the street during the arrest. For several hours following her arrest, there was no information about her whereabouts, causing serious concern for her physical safety. Balochistan has a long history of incommunicado detention and custodial torture by security forces, whereby detainees are deprived of their due process rights. Gulzadi Baloch is presently detained at Hudda District Prison under the MPO, which denies her access to bail. There are reports of severe injuries to her face and body as a result of being beaten by security forces.

Front Line Defenders is extremely concerned by the arrest of woman human rights defender Gulzadi Baloch. This concern is heightened by the reported use of disproportionate and excessive violence by security forces during her arrest. The woman human rights defenders' detention forms part of a pattern of escalating violence and legal reprisals used against Baloch human rights defenders, in an attempt to quash their peaceful campaigns for human rights and justice in Balochistan.

Front Line Defenders calls on the Pakistani authorities to:

1. Immediately release Gulzadi Baloch as the organisation believes her imprisonment to be a reprisal for her legitimate human rights work;
2. Provide Gulzadi Baloch access to family visits, legal counsel and medical treatment in detention and ensure her protection from further violence and harassment;
3. Conduct an impartial and effective inquiry into the violence committed against Gulzadi Baloch during her arrest, with a view of publishing the results and holding those responsible responsible to justice in accordance with international standards;
4. Cease the targeting of Baloch human rights defenders and ensure the protection of human rights defenders in Pakistan.

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