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### **Pakistan: Baloch woman human rights defender Dr. Mahrang Baloch arrested and denied proper treatment in prison**

On 27 March 2025 the sisters of **Dr. Mahrang Baloch** raised serious concerns about her health in prison, due to possibly unhygienic food and the denial of medical treatment. The woman human rights defender has been jailed at the Hudda District Prison since her arrest by Balochistan police on 22 March 2025 during a peaceful demonstration against violations by security forces in Balochistan.

[Dr. Mahrang Baloch](#) is a vocal campaigner for the rights of the Baloch community in Pakistan and has spoken out consistently against ongoing violations by the Pakistan police, military and intelligence agencies. She is a leading figure in the Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC) a network documenting and advocating for human rights in Balochistan. In November 2023, Dr. Mahrang Baloch led the Baloch Long March against extra judicial killings and enforced disappearances. In July 2024 she was part of the Baloch National Gathering in Gwadar, Balochistan, which was brutally suppressed by security forces and police. The woman human rights defender has faced numerous threats to her safety and been targeted with false criminal cases, travel bans and measures under the anti terror law as punishment for her work.

On 22 March 2025, at around 5.30 am, Dr. Mahrang Baloch was arrested by Balochistan Police during a peaceful sit-in to protest police violence against protesters from the previous day, as well as the arrest of Baloch human rights defenders, including Bebag Zehri and his brother on 20 March 2025. On 21 March, police opened fire at peaceful protesters who had gathered to demonstrate against Bebag Zehri's arrest, killing three people and injuring at least 7. Mahrang Baloch's arrest was a clear reprisal for her protest against police killings and the ongoing targeting of Baloch human rights defenders on false grounds of national security and counter insurgency.

For nearly 12 hours after her arrest, there was no information about her whereabouts or place of detention, which raised concerns for her physical and mental safety. She was later confirmed as being held in the Hudda District Jail. Family members were initially denied access to visit Mahrang, but have now been granted very restricted access. Her lawyer was able to visit her following a court order directing jail authorities to provide access to counsel.

Front Line Defenders is especially concerned about Dr. Mahrang Baloch's treatment in prison during her arbitrary incarceration. There are disturbing reports regarding her deteriorating health, possibly due to unhygienic food provided in prison. The woman human rights defender has been denied access to medical treatment despite her worsening health condition raising serious concerns for her health and safety in jail. The frequent shut down of internet services in the area has worsened the situation for Dr. Mahrang Baloch's family, restricting information access and the ability to share updates regarding her health condition and the overall security context.

#### **Front Line Defenders calls on the Pakistani authorities to:**

1. Immediately release Dr. Mahrang Baloch as the organisation believes her imprisonment to be a reprisal for her legitimate human rights work;
2. Provide immediate access to quality medical treatment, access to her family and lawyers without further administrative obstacles or harassment while her release is pending;

3. Cease the targeting of Baloch human rights defenders under the guise of national security and ensure the protection of human rights defenders in Pakistan.

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