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### **Pakistan: Human rights defender Gulzar Dost detained in Balochistan**

On 6 July 2025, human rights defender **Gulzar Dost** was abducted from his home in Turbat, Balochistan by officers of the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD). The officers did not provide a warrant or reason for his detention. For almost eight hours, there was no information about his fate or whereabouts, raising serious concern over his safety. On 7 July, the CTD acknowledged that the human rights defender is in their custody and is being held at the CTD headquarters in the Kech District, Balochistan.

[Gulzar Dost](#) is a Baloch human rights defender and the convener of the Kech Civil Society, a human rights group based in the Kech District of Balochistan. The human rights defender documents, monitors, and advocates on human rights violations, despite extremely violent and hostile conditions, and serious risks to his personal safety.

At approximately 12am on 6 July, armed CTD officers in plain clothes forcibly abducted Gulzar Dost from his home in the Turbat area of Balochistan. There was no information about his whereabouts for almost eight hours, raising serious concern over his safety. On 7 July, the CTD acknowledged that the human rights defender is in their custody and is held at the CTD headquarters in the Kech District. His family and lawyers were granted access to Gulzar Dost eleven hours after he was detained. Based on information available at the time of writing, the human rights defender is accused of several offences, including provocative speech against the State.

Gulzar Dost has been targeted previously due to his human rights work. In July 2024, he was placed under house arrest as a reprisal for his advocacy and campaigns against human rights violations in Balochistan. The restrictions were aimed at preventing his participation or involvement in the Baloch National Gathering in July 2024, which was met with violence and oppressive measures by security forces before and during the peaceful gathering. Gulzar Dost was among several prominent human rights defenders targeted during this period. His house arrest was lifted shortly after the national gathering.

Baloch human rights defenders have been increasingly targeted since March 2025, with several human rights defenders that are linked to the Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC) and are currently in detention in Balochistan. The state continues to weaponise counter terror laws, mechanisms, and public order legislation to blatantly quash legitimate dissent and prevent human rights defenders from monitoring and reporting violations. While senior BYC leaders, including [Dr. Mahrang Baloch](#), [Beebow Baloch](#), and [Gulzadi Baloch](#), remain in jail, the spate of violence against ordinary civilians in Balochistan, including extra judicial killings, enforced disappearances, and custodial torture, continues.

Front Line Defenders expresses its deep concern over the treatment of Gulzar Dost and his continued detention on spurious charges aimed at suppressing his human rights work. The nature of his arrest, lack of information regarding his whereabouts for several hours, and the accusations levelled against him reflect the pattern of violence and intimidation faced by Baloch human rights defenders as reprisals for speaking out against human rights violations. Front Line Defenders raises further concern regarding the consistent use of counter terror laws, which far from addressing genuine concerns for public safety, seem to be used to enable violations and secure impunity for authorities.

## **Front Line Defenders calls on Pakistan authorities to:**

1. Immediately release Gulzar Dost and dismiss all cases against him;
2. Ensure the safety of Gulzar Dost in detention and ensure he has access to his family, lawyers, and medical treatment if necessary;
3. End reprisals against Baloch human rights defenders and their family members, and immediately release human rights defenders and family members currently jailed under regressive counter terror and/or public order laws;
4. Ensure that all human rights defenders in Pakistan are able to carry out their work with dignity and safety.

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