

# Pakistan: Baloch leader Yousaf Masti Khan booked for sedition

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**Baloch nationalist leader and member of the Awami Workers Party, Yousaf Masti Khan, has been booked for sedition after a fiery speech criticizing the military establishment of Pakistan. He was arrested by the Gwadar police and sent off for a one-day remand.**

According to details, the Baloch leader had delivered a speech at the “Balochistan Ko Haq Do Movement” where he had criticized Pakistan’s army and security forces. He was charged with sedition for the speech. The FIR registered against Yousaf Masti Khan also mentions Maulana Hidayat Ur Rehman, the leader of the movement, for allowing the protest stage to be used in fomenting “anti-Pakistan propaganda.” The authorities have not taken any action against Rehman yet, but Masti Khan was presented before the court and handed over to the police for a one-day physical remand.

The FIR says that Yousaf Masti Khan’s speech was directed against the Pakistani state and intent on smearing its image. He reportedly said that Pakistan has “occupied” Balochistan with brutal force when the Baloch leaders had clearly denied accession to Pakistan. He had said that the state considers the Baloch people as its slaves. He had said that: “I don’t belong in Pakistan; Balochistan is my identity.” He had said that Dr. Allah Nazar Baloch, Karima Baloch and Balaach Marri – “our children” – will fight you.

Masti Khan’s speech did not go well with the Pakistani authorities who immediately arrested him and surrounded the protest. Protest leader Maulana Hidayat Ur Rehman said that Yousaf Masti Khan is our leader and his illegal arrest will not be tolerated. If Masti Khan is not released, he said, we will carry out a large protest.

Balochistan’s political and lawyer community condemned Masti Khan’s arrest. Former President of the Supreme Court Bar Association Amanullah Kinrani said that his arrest is a violation of individual freedom. He said the authorities must release him immediately.

National Party Chairman Dr. Malik Baloch condemned his arrest and said that the “selected leaders” of this country are now afraid of a peaceful political struggle. He said that the arrest of Yousaf Masti Khan proves that the leaders don’t have any solution to the basic problems of the Baloch masses – the only solution they have is oppression. This situation will inevitably lead to anarchy and the leaders will be responsible for it.

**The Balochistan Post**

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