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Balochistan Authorities Criticised Over Child Terror Charge

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Authorities in Pakistan's Balochistan province are facing strong criticism after police filed terrorism charges against a seven-year-old boy. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), a prominent independent rights watchdog, has condemned the decision and called for the immediate withdrawal of the charges. The boy is not in custody, but

reports state that he allegedly shared a video featuring a speech critical of the government.

In a formal statement, the HRCP described the action as “highly reprehensible,” warning that the application of anti-terrorism legislation to a minor is both legally and ethically indefensible. The organisation urged both provincial and federal authorities to uphold constitutional protections and adhere to international human rights commitments, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which Pakistan ratified in 1990.



Legal experts have echoed the HRCP’s concerns, noting that the case highlights the need for greater caution and proportionality in the use of national security laws. Although the child has not been detained, the decision to involve a minor in a terrorism-related case has alarmed rights groups and raised broader questions about the fairness and scope of law enforcement practices in sensitive regions such as Balochistan.

The case has also reignited long-standing debates about the implementation of counterterrorism laws in Pakistan. Human rights observers argue that these laws, originally intended to combat serious threats to national security, are at times applied in ways that may encroach on civil liberties. The inclusion of a young child in such a legal process has amplified concerns that dissenting voices are being targeted through overly broad interpretations of security statutes.

Rights organisations have emphasised the importance of distinguishing between genuine threats and the peaceful expression of opinion, particularly in a context involving a minor. They stress that involving children in complex legal proceedings intended for high-risk security

cases not only undermines legal safeguards but may also have lasting psychological and social consequences.

As public concern grows, the case is expected to test the response of Pakistan's legal institutions and the government's commitment to upholding international human rights norms. Advocacy groups continue to call for the immediate dismissal of the charges and urge authorities to ensure that children are fully protected from inappropriate legal action under all circumstances.

