

BALUCHISTAN

A CONFLICT OF NARRATIVES

Fida Hussain Malik



LIGHTSTONE
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Major General Fida Hussain Malik, Hilal-e-Imtiaz (Military), (MA English Literature; MSc Art and Science of Warfare; MSc War Studies), was commissioned in the Pakistan Army in 1986. He is a graduate of Command and Staff College Quetta, Defence Inter-Services Staff College Paris, French School of War Studies, and National Defence University Islamabad.

During his thirty-three-year military service, he has held key command, instruction, and staff appointments. He has commanded an infantry brigade along the Pak-Afghan border in North Waziristan Agency during operation Rah-e-Nijat and later a multi-national force as part of a UN Mission in the Ivory Coast. He has served as Chief Instructor in the School of Infantry & Tactics Quetta, and as Brigadier Operations & Plans in Headquarters Southern Command Quetta. He commanded an Infantry Division at Lahore, served as Director General Logistics and later as Vice Chief of Logistics Staff at General Headquarters. He was then Deputy Force Commander at the UN Mission in Sudan. Since November 2018 he has been serving as Director General Doctrine and Evaluation.

He has two books to his credit on law enforcement and counter-insurgency operations, *Hounding the Shadows of Terror*, and *Waziristan: The Simmering Backyard*. He has also authored a number of articles and research papers published in professional magazines of the Pakistan Army and the French War College Paris.

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ACRONYMS USED IN THE BOOK

- AGG - Agent to the Governor General
- BLA - Balochistan Liberation Army
- BNA - Baloch National Alliance
- BNP - Baloch National Party
- BRA - Baloch Republican Army
- BSO - Baloch Student Organisation
- CARs - Central Asian Republics
- CIA - Central Intelligence Agency
- CPEC - China-Pakistan Economic Corridor
- DWT - Dead Weight Tonnage
- EEZ - Exclusive Economic Zone
- ERF - Extra Regional Forces
- FC - Frontier Corps
- HDI - Human Development Index
- HEC - Higher Education Commission
- IDP - Internally Displaced Persons
- IPD - Inverse Population Density
- IPI - Iran-Pakistan-India
- JUI - Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam
- JUP - Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan
- JWP - Jamhoori Watan Party
- KCSI - Knight Commander of the Order
of the Star of India
- LeB - Lashkar-e-Balochistan
- LeJ - Lashkar-e-Jhangvi

Acronyms

- LFO - Legal Framework Order
- MI6 - Military Intelligence 6
- NAP - National Awami Party
- NDS - National Defence Service
- NFC - National Finance Commission
- NP - National Party
- LPG - Liquid Petroleum Gas
- PIPS - Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies
- RAW - Research and Analysis Wing
- TAPI - Turkemenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India
- TCB - Tithian Copper Belt
- TTP - Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan
- VLCC - Very Large Crude Containers

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

When I took upon myself to be the voice of the Baloch, I knew that I would have to be unbiased and passionate in order to understand what happened to the relations between the province and the federation. If Pakistan wants all its federating units to be fully integrated, the state has to play a motherly role — and the foremost among the cardinal rules of motherhood is to be unbiased and impartial when it comes to her dealings with her children.

Despite having served in Balochistan for a long time, my understanding of the problems confronting the province would not have been complete if a few prominent personalities had not consented to share their views and grievances with me in person. I would like to acknowledge their contributions towards this book. My deep gratitude to Senator Mir Hasil Bizenjo, National Party; Sardar Akhtar Mengal, ex-Chief Minister Balochistan, National Party; Mr Awais Ghani, ex-Governor Balochistan; Lieutenant General (retd.) Alam Khattak, ex-Commander Southern Command; Senator Sana Ullah Baloch, Member Balochistan Assembly, National Party; Mrs Zobaidda Jalal Changaiz, Federal Minister for Defence Production; and Dr Shakeel Roshan, President, Al Hamd Islamic University, Quetta.

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Fida Hussain Malik
2019

PREFACE

—The first step in solving a problem is to recognize that it does exist
(Zig Ziglar)

The history of Balochistan since 1947 is characterized by an unending duel of narratives and counter-narratives portraying casus belli of the unremitting conflicts in dissimilar tones and textures. The security mosaic chequered by conflicts and insurgencies exposes several fundamental explanations; each dependent upon the angle of narrative one looks at. The long-standing misunderstandings and antipathy which began with accession to the federation of Pakistan have led the province to its present state of chaos. The accusations which prompted the crisis recount the expectations and aspirations of the basic rights in the domain of economic, ethnic, political, and civil liberties of the people. In reality, insufficient efforts have been undertaken by successive regimes to tackle and settle these issues. Consequently, the abrasions have degenerated and often became the cause of bleeding unrest and insurrections. Though some of the reasons for the conflict are genuine, many have been exacerbated for personal motives and interests; and some more are due to interference by regional and extra-regional players. The grievances of the Baloch people are nothing unusual or absurd. What the Baloch are demanding from the state of Pakistan is exactly what the constitution of Pakistan prescribes as their basic rights. In

short, they demand that contradictory perceptions regarding their national identity be removed and they be given: their due share of representation at the federal level; political and financial autonomy within provincial affairs; and sponsorship of development projects planned in the province. Despite being the largest of all the provinces of Pakistan, Balochistan remains the least developed. Since the 1970s, the province has transformed from a slack tribal state to the status of a full-fledged province. However, it is still lagging far behind its deserved status. Ever since it became a province, the political and socio-economic disorders have had dire and far-reaching consequences on the Baloch and non-Baloch segments of society in Balochistan. From a strategic social standpoint, Baloch society still faces challenges such as the absence of basic amenities and social uplift opportunities, omnipresent insecurity, seditious activities of belligerent outfits, and foreign militants. These sufferings had enduring effects and have resulted in inducing psychological trauma and emotional damage to the Baloch community. Difficult and turbulent conditions have led to discontent becoming entrenched in Baloch society. This phenomenon has created a fundamentally strange relationship between the federation and province which requires a revisit through the social, political, and economic lens for early rectification.

Selig Harrison called this region the focal point of the attention of the world and its potential to turn the region into a major powers' conflict.¹ The validity of his analysis is abundantly manifested by the current environment and ongoing interplay of various powers in the region. The strategic importance of Balochistan was enhanced greatly with

¹ Selig Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow: Baluch Nationalism and Soviet Temptations* (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1981), 1.

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the idea of constructing the Gwadar Port at the beginning of the 21st century, and developing the coastal belt. The mega project, in close proximity to the mouth of Hormuz and energy resources of Central Asia, invited the attention of many regional and global players triggering an unending chain of narratives and counter-narratives.

There has been a complete absence of problem resolution mechanisms for Balochistan which was ignored by the state for seven decades. In its seventy years of history, Pakistan has never appeared serious about addressing the issue of Balochistan. As a result, the people of the province continued suffering at the hands of a cruel and unjust administrative system which was far removed from democratic norms. The government failed to eradicate traditional shackles and emancipate Baloch youth with a true sense of nationhood. The resentments dating back to 1948 have been growing unchecked and have led to the present sense of deprivation and dispossession. The issues that gave rise to the misunderstandings and conflicts are deep-rooted and, unless there is a quick realization of the gravity of the situation, the wounds may develop into deeper maladies and become incurable.

‘The most important lesson of history is that, nobody has ever learnt a lesson from history’.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel

CHAPTER 1

**BALUCHISTAN: THROUGH THE
PRISM OF HISTORY**

“People with a warlike spirit, wearing exalted plumes, like the cocks comb, on their turbans”.

—Firdausi in *Shahnama*

Baluch tribes have traditionally retained their independent identity throughout known history. Not as ferocious as the Pashtun tribes in the northern belt along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, Baluch tribes have a more outward outlook in comparison. Actively participating in commercial business ventures and government service, many Baluch families are well settled in various cities of Pakistan. A majority amongst them can be found in Karachi, a coastal metropolitan of Pakistan.

As the largest province of Pakistan, Baluchistan comprises 44% of the total land mass of the country. It shares over 1800 kilometres of porous border with Afghanistan in the north-west, a 1330-kilometre-long border with Iran in the west, and over 700 kilometres of coastline along the Arabian Sea in the south. The Rabat Fort in west Baluchistan is the tri-junction of the Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan borders. From Rabat Fort, one can see the territories of all three countries. Dominating the mouth of the Persian Gulf and situated at the crossroads of the Middle East and South Asia, Baluchistan also provides a short access route to the energy-rich region

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of Central Asia.¹ Balochistan's coastline in the south has one deep-sea Gwadar Port and five relatively smaller ports. The province's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) promises rich oil, gas, and mineral reserves.

With a mountain-walled barricade securing it from foreign invasion and interference, Balochistan is perfectly suited to the feudal mode of living. A rugged terrain, enormous stretches of land, and deficient means of communication have forced people to bear a life of seclusion. Having the least exposure to democratic norms, the 'Sardari' (tribal chieftain) system suited their way of life as is the norm in many primitive civilizations. Earlier, the honorific title of 'Sardar' was only conferred upon men of principle, valour, and veracity and the Sardar was appointed by notables of the tribe after a deliberate process of reflection. However, as time passed, in order to perpetuate their control over the tribe, the Sardars converted this institution into an inheritable right and, hereafter, the deterioration process began. Now, an individual's status in the tribe is not associated with his virtues and veracity but is classified by his status within the tribal genealogy. A Sardar is the sole owner of tribal property. The entire tribe's land belongs to the Sardar who has propriety of his tribe's earnings and obtains 'shiskak', a form of tax, from everyone. A Sardar enjoys supreme authority over the life and property of his tribesmen.

The latter part of British rule fortified the Sardari system as the British extended full authority to Sardars in return for their loyalty to the Crown. The British realized that a unified Khanate under the Khan of Kalat would be a big hurdle to achieving dominance over the administrative and executive

¹ Robert Kaplan, *Monsoon: Indian Ocean and the Future of American Power* (New York: Random House, 2010), 71.

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system of Balochistan. For that reason, they decided to weaken the political authority of the Khanate and mould it as it suited them. The Sandeman system of administration provided them with a solution as it relegated the position of the Khan of Kalat and brought to the fore the tribal Sardars, thus giving them complete authority over their subjects. Consequently, the British laid the foundation of an autocratic Sardari system.² Tribal Sardars were brought under the complete influence of the British through financial leniency. The British introduced a salary system for the Sardars while a few selected Sardars were showered with additional blessings through the award of the title of 'Nawab'. The Khan of Kalat was left without much authority and the central clout of the Khanate gradually started to erode.

Looking at the major historical events that resulted in the evolution of the Khanate, the late 15th century saw the emergence of Mir Chakar Khan Rind as a powerful leader. Chakar Khan Rind is considered the most prominent Baloch figure and a great hero in Balochistan's regional history. Even today, he is held in the highest esteem by the Baloch all over the world. In 1487, he introduced major political changes including transferring the capital of the confederacy from Kech to Sibi. Having consolidated political and military strength in the eastern part of Balochistan, Mir Chakar then focused on the fertile lands of Punjab. In the early 16th century, he advanced into Punjab and captured Multan. Though short-lived, this new form of confederacy made a few deep imprints on the history of the region and marked the beginning of modern history for Balochistan. During this époque, Balochi language and culture made their influence

² Awais Ghani, ex-Governor Balochistan. Interview with the author, 17 March 2018, Islamabad.

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felt over a vast area. This era is considered to be a period of Baloch heroism. Besides political and military dominance, Baloch culture excelled in literature as well comprising notably, ballads of heroism and romantic poetry. Alongside the expanding influence of the confederacy in the region, Baloch language, culture, and literature flourished.

A few centuries later, the 18th century saw yet another dawn of Baloch history. Halfway through the century, Nasir Khan I (1749–1794) the sixth Khan, surfaced on the political scene as the most powerful and dynamic ruler of the Khanate. He quickly claimed sovereignty over all the lands where the Baloch lived. Despite being assertive and firm, he was extremely popular. Having consolidated his control over the traditional Baloch areas, he focused on the eastern and western parts of the Makran coast and brought many new areas under his administrative jurisdiction. These included Karachi and many parts of Iranian Balochistan. Nasir Khan was able to successfully muster power over a vast territory owing to his leadership qualities and people- management capabilities. He was assertive and expected loyalty and obedience. However, when it came to a subject's welfare, he was kind and considerate. After making his policy decisions, he was not in the habit of micro-managing affairs which were the responsibility of the subordinate Sardars.³ Taking advantage of these personality traits, he managed to obtain a high level of loyalty from his Sardars and swiftly consolidated his dominions comprising Marri and the Bugti areas: Lasbela, Makran, Kharan, and Quetta. Nasir Khan ruled over a vast region, almost 700 km, extending westward from Karachi to the current Iranian border. It extended north up to Quetta and east towards the Derajat border. His territory was considerably

³ Ibid.

larger than Great Britain and Ireland put together.⁴ Illustrating Nasir Khan's military strength, Selig Harrison remarked,

Nasir Khan's most notable achievement was the creation of a unified Baloch army of some 25,000 men and 1,000 camels, an impressive force by eighteenth-century Southwest Asian standards. For the first time in their history, many of the major Balochi tribes were rallied under the banner of an agreed system of military organization and recruitment.⁵

The confederation of a huge Baloch territory into a sole political unit resulted in enhanced stability and promoted commerce. Control over the ports of Makkoran (Makran) turned the Khanate into a vibrant commercial region and vital trading hub between Iran, Central Asia, India, and the Indian Ocean.

Towards the beginning of the 19th century, a few important developments took place in the geo-strategic dynamics of the region. While the Khanate was gradually drifting towards a state of anarchy, Balochistan's eastern neighbour, Punjab, witnessed the rise of a powerful ruler: Ranjit Singh. Towards the west, Iran grew in power. Surrounded on two sides by powerful neighbours, the primary source of income of the Baloch Sardars and tribes vanished. Till then, the Baloch tribes were mostly dependent on their share of war booty during the raids and military campaigns against Mughal India, Iran, and Sindh. This resulted in a serious weakening of the Khanate while the

⁴ Taj Mohammad Breseeg, *Baloch Nationalism: Its Origin and Development* (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 2001), 151.

⁵ Selig S. Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1981), 16.

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individual Sardars gradually became independent and attained more authority in their own territories. By mid-century, the British had started meddling deeply into Balochistan's affairs. In 1854, a pact was concluded between the British and the Khan of Kalat who agreed not to develop direct relations with any country without the endorsement of the British. The Khan also agreed to receive and deploy British troops when required and provide security to the traders traversing through his territory. Under the agreement, the Khan was also required to ensure that his men were prevented from raiding people, property, and installations in British territory. He was to receive an annual subsidy of Rs 150,000 in return. This agreement marked the beginning of a new way of dealing with the Sardars—the arrangement of a subsidy to acquire the allegiance of tribal chiefs. Benefiting from the agreement, the Khan continued to enjoy semi-independent status under the British. The British, nevertheless, wanted the Khan to do more so as to consolidate their hold on Balochistan. Negotiations were conducted again in 1876 with the Khan of Kalat and another pact was concluded at Jacobabad which, thereafter, administered the nature of relations between the British Indian Government and the State of Kalat. By virtue of the new treaty, the British controlled Quetta and its surrounding areas, along with the Bolan Pass, on lease from the Khanate. Through this lease agreement, the whole area was to be administered and governed by the British while the Khan of Kalat would maintain symbolic sovereignty.

For a considerable part of its history, Seistan Balochistan (Iranian Balochistan) had been western Makran. Towards the middle of the 19th century, Iran sensed the weakening political stature of the Khanate and, therefore, started vigorously demanding the demarcation of the Persian-Baloch frontier. In

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1869, the Persian King formally proposed a demarcation of the frontier between the Persian and Baloch territory through a joint commission.⁶ In the same year, on 1 December 1869, a Persian delegation, presided over by the Governor of Bam Ibrahim Khan, and the Khanate delegation, headed by Faqir Mohammad Bizenjo, met under the supervision of General Goldsmid, the British Chief Commissioner of the joint Perso-Baloch Boundary Commission at Bampur. This conference was called the ‘Bampur Conference’. The Baloch delegates vehemently contested the projected border demarcation and also claimed the territories of Iranian Balochistan, demanding the unification of both Baloch territories. They built their argument on historical data claiming that that region was an integral part of the Baloch country, the Khanate.⁷ However in 1871, after a hectic process of negotiations over two years, the Iranians succeeded in convincing the colonial power and dividing Balochistan with assistance from the British. Around the same period in history, the British were working on the ‘Forward Policy’ and were actively pursuing a secure buffer between British India and Russia’s expansionist designs. The demarcated border with Iran suited them as it divided the political power of the Baloch. Soon afterwards, in 1876, under the ‘Treaty of Kalat’, it was agreed upon that British forces could be placed in Kalat territory and that the Khan of Kalat would have no objection. In the following year, the Balochistan Agency was established with its headquarters in Quetta.

Having established a foothold and secured the border

⁶ Inayatullah Baloch, *The Problem of Greater Baluchistan: A Study of Baluch Nationalism* (Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden GMBH, 1987), 29.

⁷ Mir Naseer Khan Ahmadzai, *Tarikh-e Baloch wa Balochistan*, Volume 6 (Quetta: United Printers, 1995), 363–64 and Baloch, *The Problem of Greater Baluchistan*, 167.

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with Iran, the British now wanted to consolidate their political power in Balochistan. In 1877, Robert Sandeman was assigned as Agent to the Governor General (AGG) and put in charge of the Balochistan Agency. That was the start of a new era with regard to the relationship between the British and the Baloch people. Sir Robert Groves Sandeman, Knight Commander of the Star of India (KCSI), a British Indian officer, was the son of General Robert Turnbull Sandeman. He joined the 33rd Bengal Infantry in 1856 and participated in the battle for the capture of Lucknow. After serving briefly in active military duty, he was transferred to the civil services and appointed District Officer of Dera Ghazi Khan in 1866 where he served till 1877. It was in this district that he first showed his natural talent and capacity for dealing with the Baloch tribes and his knack for solving their inter-tribal affairs. Situated on the border between Punjab and Balochistan, the district suffered from law and order problems. Enmity between the Baloch tribes of Mazari, Gorchani, Dreshak, Laghari, Khosa, and Kesrani often created security issues for the administration. At times, these tribes also picked armed clashes with the Baloch tribes of Bugti, Khetran, Buzdar, and Marri. Sandeman had a great knack for understanding the psychology of the natives and thus broke through the close border system fairly quickly. This measure extended British influence in the independent tribes beyond the borders of Punjab. Under him, the new strategy worked well owing to his genius for administering the tribesmen and his aptitude for manipulation through a 'carrot and stick' policy. In 1871, he was authorized to handle political affairs between the warring Marri, Bugti, and Mazari tribes of the Sulaiman Mountains. In 1876, he negotiated the Treaty of Kalat with the Khan of Kalat. Nawab Imam Bakhsh Khan Mazari of Rojhan assisted him in brokering this

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treaty. The treaty had far-reaching effects and later steered the relations between Kalat and the government of British India. The following year, he was transferred to Balochistan. In 1877, a small unit of British Indian troops was deployed at Quetta and Sandeman was appointed the first Agent to the Governor-General. However, Sandeman was still not happy with the security mechanism of British interests in Balochistan. His idea was to exploit the weak control of the Khan over the Sardars and develop direct relations with the tribes, bypassing the Khan. He, therefore, progressively established discreet contacts with Sardars through promises of subsidies and perks and was able to achieve a considerable degree of tranquillity in the region. He authorized unlimited powers to the Sardars to deal with their tribes. They could arrest any tribesman and put him behind bars even for a minor indication of disobedience. Similarly, any convicted person could be released from prison if the Sardar so desired. This was a time in history when the British were deeply worried about Russia's expansionist designs towards Central Asia and Afghanistan. Hence Sandeman developed a method of governance which relied on holding node points in the whole area with substantial force and joining these points with fair-weather tracks. The overall concept was to present a strategic line of defence against the Russian threat of invasion. As a key part of the 'Forward Policy', the British wanted to take this strategic line well ahead of the territory of British India. Therefore, in November 1878, the British attacked Afghanistan and, after a six-month campaign in May 1879, concluded the Treaty of Gandamak with the ruler of Afghanistan. Through this treaty, the Afghan ruler agreed to most of Britain's terms. In 1889, Sandeman occupied the Zhob valley securing a protected route linking Quetta with the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).

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On the strategic junction point in the valley, he established a dominant fortified position called 'Fort Sandeman' after his own name (now known as Zhob). Having served British interests in Balochistan over a long period, Robert Sandeman died on 29 January 1892 at Bela, the capital of the State of Lasbela, and was buried there.

After having fought two wars with Afghanistan in 1893, Sir Mortimer Durand was assigned the task of negotiating a pact with Amir Abdul Rehman of Afghanistan drawing the permanent boundary line between British India and Afghanistan. The line extended from Chitral and the Baroghil Pass in the north up to Peshawar and thence to Koh-i-Malik Siyah, the junction point of Iran, Afghanistan, and British Indian Balochistan. The same line now defines the international boundary between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The border was drawn to develop diplomatic relations and trade between the two neighbours and demarcate the limit of their respective spheres of authority. Afghanistan was regarded by the British as an independent Princely State at the time although its foreign affairs and diplomatic relations were under British control.

Over the next four decades, the British had to continuously struggle against Baloch tribes before being able to consolidate their control and establish military outposts along the Balochistan-Afghanistan border to secure western borders against the Russian threat of invasion. Under the 'Forward Policy', the British wanted the treacherously rugged border to serve as a barricade and therefore decided to keep the area bordering Afghanistan devoid of any major development. No good road network was developed nor was any significant effort made to build infrastructure related to socio-economic services. While the British improved inter-

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city connectivity by developing communication infrastructure, industries, and agriculture in Sindh, Punjab, and the erstwhile North-West Frontier Province (NWFP), they deliberately ignored Balochistan and FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Areas). British interest in Balochistan was of a geo-strategic and military nature and not economic. British rulers assumed that an economically and politically deprived Balochistan would be more compliant, lending itself to British aspirations better; conversely, an affluent and politically awakened Balochistan could become unyielding and may independently develop relations with neighbouring countries. The Indus River was to serve as a natural, formidable line of defence for the British Empire and trans-Indus area including present-day Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP; previously NWFP), and FATA which were to serve as forward areas for the establishment of a strategic defensive belt based on the Durand Line. Under this policy, the British divided Balochistan into the following regions:

British Balochistan comprised all the strategically important areas stretching from north to south including Zhob (Fort Sandeman), Quetta, Bolan Pass, Sibi, Chaghai, and Taftan. The British established military bases and administered directly through the British Agent to the Governor General.

Kalat State comprised the central highlands of Kalat, Khuzdar, and Mastung. It was to be ruled by the Khan of Kalat and held the status of a British Protectorate.

Makran State comprising Awaran, Panjgoor, and Turbat was to be ruled by the Gichki Nawabs and held the status of a British Protectorate.

Lasbela State was ruled by the Jam of Lasbela as a British Protectorate.

Gwadar was owned by the Sultanate of Oman as a British

Protectorate.

Kharan State comprised Kharan and Mashkhel under the Nausherwani Nawabs as a British Protectorate.

Soon after World War I, British colonial authority started waning and the subcontinent witnessed the rapid spread of a political renaissance. When British India was divided into two separate states—Pakistan and India—the Baloch ruler, the Khan of Kalat, Mir Ahmad Yar Khan, also declared independence on 15 August 1947. Pakistan's Governor General, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, nevertheless, kept the Khan of Kalat engaged on the political front and finally convinced him to declare accession to Pakistan on 29 March 1948. The accession of Balochistan came about in circumstances which remained shrouded in mystery for many years and will be explored later in the book.

Makran was made into a district within the province of Balochistan with the exception of approximately 800 square kilometres area around Gwadar which remained part of the Sultanate of Oman until 1958. Pakistan purchased this part in September 1958, raising the money through taxation, and made it a part of the Balochistan province in 1977.

The present-day Balochistan is home to various ethnic entities. However, the three main racial groups are Baloch, Pashtun, and Brahvi with the presence of a few other, relatively smaller communities. Other than the Pashtun, both the Baloch and Brahvi call themselves Baloch. According to Mir Ahmad Yar Khan, the last Khan of Kalat who ruled Balochistan until March 1948, the Baloch and the Brahvis are two factions of the same nation. He stated that the Brahvi community, originally called 'Ibrahimi Baloch' is now

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called 'Brahvi Baloch'.⁸ According to the 1998 census,⁹ the demographic proportion of Baloch and Brahvi combined is 54.76%, Pashtun 29.64%, Sindhi 5.58%, Punjabi 2.52%, Saraiki 2.42%, Urdu-speaking 0.97%, and Hazara, Makrani, Kurd, and others combined about 4.11%. Owing to the dynamics of clan and ethnic-based politics in the country, the census issue in Pakistan became politicised. Khuda Bakhsh Marri, a former Chief Justice of Balochistan, believed that, by 1961, the Baloch population in Sindh was over three million. He considered that the actual number as the Baloch and Brahvi population was mixed with the Sindhi-speaking people without really differentiating between their languages and traditions. He calculated the total Baloch population in the three countries, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Iran, to be between fifteen to sixteen million.¹⁰ The northern part of Balochistan is dominated by Pashtuns whereas the southern part is inhabited mainly by the Brahvi and Baloch. Baloch tribes living on the western belt have a completely different dialect compared to the dialect spoken by tribes living on the eastern belt. According to Awais Ghani, who served as Governor, Balochistan, the western tribes have been 'Persianised' over a period of time due to their proximity with Iran.¹¹ The western Balochi dialect is widely spoken in

⁸ Mir Ahmad Yar Khan Baluch, *Inside Baluchistan* (Karachi: Royal Book Co., 1975), 56.

⁹ The 2017 census has been completed. However, the demographic distribution of population by percentage has yet to be compiled by the Bureau of Statistics.

¹⁰ Mir Khuda Bakhsh Bijarani Marri Baloch, *Searchlight on the Baloches and Balochistan* (Quetta: Nisa Traders, 1985), 15–25.

¹¹ Awais Ghani, ex-Governor Balochistan, interview with the Author, 17 March 2018, Islamabad.

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the western and southern areas of the Pakistani province of Balochistan, in a few Arabian Gulf States, and in parts of Iran and Afghanistan. Most Baloch literature is also based on the western Balochi dialect and Urdu. Eastern Baloch is not a widely spoken dialect.

Balochistan has some of the most desolate, wild, and inhospitable topographies. If it were not for its extremely important strategic location, an attractive, long, and promising coastline at the mouth of the Gulf, and huge economic prospects of natural reserves and other minerals, Balochistan might not have attracted the attention of regional and global players. For the most part, the landscape alternates suddenly between stark, bare mountains and parched expanses of semi-desert with a rare sprinkle of flat patches. Owing to scarce rainfall and no river worth mentioning, the landscape is mostly rocky and barren. The countryside is sparsely populated by nomads clustered around scarce green patches and seasonal gorges. Occasionally, one comes across scattered oases where date trees struggle to survive purely on nature's benevolence. The exceptions to this desolate and uncongenial landscape are the comparatively richly cultivated agricultural pockets of Lasbela, Jhal Magsi, and Jafarabad. The steep peaks are mostly decorated with a 'combed hair' design on one side. Travelling through the valleys is always an adventurous expedition. The Baloch have, therefore, been historically isolated from the external world. A 16th-century Baloch war ballad conveys this in these words,

'The lofty heights are our comrades, the pathless gorges our friends'.

The scarcity of water sources has defined the semi-nomadic lifestyle of many of the Baloch tribes. In most of the

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Baloch areas, the model of land ownership is largely collective. Brahvi-speaking people were the original inhabitants of this vast land. They were of Dravidian origin. Prominent tribes among the Brahvis are Zehri, Langoe, Mengal, Bizenjo, and Bangalzai. Many migrant tribes of Persian and Kurd origin poured into the province from the 2nd to the 14th centuries AD and were called 'Baloch'. The notable Baloch migrant tribes include Bugti, Lashari, Marri, Rind, and Khetran. Though Baloch and Brahvi tribes have now settled reasonably well into the overall concept of a common 'Baloch Nation', they have still not been able to develop a common literature. This is why, even today, most Baloch literature is in Urdu.¹² The process of their settlement in other adjoining areas of Sindh and Punjab continues and now the number of Baloch living in Sindh is almost three times as much as the Baloch living in Balochistan. The number of Baloch living and working in Punjab is even greater.

The history of conflicts in Balochistan has several fundamental explanations. Though many of the reasons are genuine, a few have been exacerbated owing to personal motives and interests; and a few more because of interference by regional and extra-regional players. Seven decades of Balochistan's accession to Pakistan are characterized by perpetual political and security turmoil with the province never emerging from this simmering state of unrest. Successive regimes have been blaming the previous regimes for the chaos but none was able to integrate the province into the larger bond of nationhood.

Traditionally, the Baloch Sardars have enjoyed complete freedom and authority over their tribes and, especially after

¹² Awais Ghani, ex-Governor Balochistan. Interview with the Author, 17 March 2018. Islamabad.

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the implementation of the Sandeman administrative system, Baloch Sardars became the 'all-inclusive masters' of their people. Hence, when the status of Princely State was being considered in light of the forthcoming partition of India, most Sardars dearly wanted to retain the independent character of Kalat State as it suited their way of life. After the accession of Balochistan to Pakistan, a few of the autonomous Baloch Sardars have historically defied state authority, primarily to shield their clout and affluence. Endeavouring to keep the province in a perennial state of conflict, they also sought to blackmail the federal government to agree to their terms which included the provision of development funds and other privileges.

Following two initial insurgencies by 1971, a serious political engagement effort began in Balochistan to foil the effects of the Soviet-India confederacy. Pro-federation Baloch politicians and Sardars spoke to sub-nationalist leaders to convince them to renounce militancy. Considerable effort was made to uplift socio-economic conditions, including constructing several communication arteries such as the Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD) Highway connecting Quetta with Karachi. During the Cold War, the Soviet Union again tried to expand southward and reach the warm waters of the Arabian Sea. Soviet invasion triggered enormous chaos and anarchy in the entire region polarizing Afghan society between socialists and fundamental Muslims. This gave rise to different warring factions with completely divorced ideologies. The American counter-proxy war against the Soviet Army depended mostly upon Afghan mujahideen and support from Pakistan and other Muslim countries and, thus, the influx of foreign jihadi fighters led to the rise of militant pan-Islamism in all Muslim countries, including

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Pakistan. It was under General Zia ul-Haq's rule that Pakistan became the battleground for the Saudi-Iranian proxy war; with both countries pouring in millions of dollars to sponsor parties that propagated their respective religious ideologies.¹³ Desperate to reach the warm waters, the Soviet Union also made every possible effort to create trouble in Balochistan through the active support of Baloch insurgent movements. The objective was to secure a 300 kilometre wide corridor from the Afghan border to the Indian Ocean through Balochistan. The Soviet plan, however, could not materialize and, after the Soviet retreat from Afghanistan in 1989, Balochistan remained peaceful till 2002. Before the end of the century, political processes had once again gained momentum in Balochistan and erstwhile hardcore nationalists were participating in parliamentary politics. In 1981, Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo founded the Pakistan National Party (PNP) despite strong resistance from the Baloch youth. Even his tribe was against this idea.¹⁴ He was quick to accept the reality of Balochistan being a part of the Federation of Pakistan. From there on, he felt that Balochistan would be more secure and prosperous as a part of the federation. Sardar Khair Bakhsh Marri, however, lived as a hard-line separatist and struggled for an independent State of Balochistan. Sardar Atta Ullah Mengal maintained a flexible and wavering stance;¹⁵ sometimes as a separatist and, on other occasions, as a nationalist struggling for provincial autonomy.

Though the province has seen a series of insurgencies since its accession to Pakistan, the present unrest has persisted

¹³ Imtiaz Gul, *The Most Dangerous Place* (London: Penguin Books Limited, 2010), 6.

¹⁴ Senator Mir Hasil Bizenjo. Interview with the author, 16 May 2018. Islamabad.

¹⁵ Ibid.

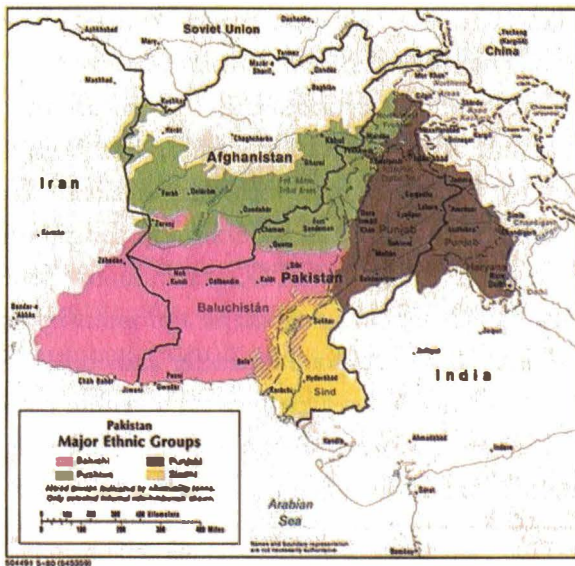
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for over a decade. It was triggered in August 2006 when a senior Baloch leader, Nawab Akbar Shahbaz Khan Bugti, commonly known as Nawab Bugti, was killed while fighting the security forces. Following his death, a surge of militant activities was observed for the next seven years. The present simmering state of insurgency is mainly a recurrence resulting from the ignored grievances of the people. Notwithstanding the variety of reasons behind the unrest, the federal government has never done enough to comfort the masses and provide balm to their wounds. Baloch identity and nationalism were the unifying factors in the initial insurgencies and hence accurate analyses of the roots of Baloch nationalism are required in order to understand the genesis of the Baloch issue.

CHAPTER 2

THE ROOTS OF NATIONALISM

Baloch nationalism is a shared emotion affecting three countries: Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan.¹ In its broader sense, the notion of Baloch nationalism harbours the ambition of uniting all factions of Baloch tribes who live in different countries, speak different dialects, and have diverse social customs and norms and, in the long term, strive for the attainment of a separate Baloch State by carving out a portion from each of the three countries.



¹ “Umbreen Javaid, Concerns of Balochistan: Effects and Implications on Federation of Pakistan”, *Journal of Political Studies*, Vol. 1, Issue 2, Islamabad, 114.

Balochistan is the cradle of one of the oldest civilizations, the Mehrgarh Civilization, a Neolithic Civilization (7000 BC to 2000 BC) located west of the River Indus on the Kacchi Plain of Balochistan near the Bolan Pass. It is considered to be more ancient than the Indus and Gandhara Civilizations.

The unsympathetic climate and rugged, rocky topography creates self-reliant generations with the ability to bravely face privations. Though the topography has shielded the Baloch from external influences, it has also split the Baloch community into various competing communities. Over time, the prevailing environment and circumstances have shaped the Baloch's character and psychological make-up.² In a post-accession period, Baloch nationalism can be defined as an expression of the socio-cultural, economic, and political marginalization of the Baloch.³ Hence, Balochistan's history demonstrates an unending narration of slogans founded on the theme of nationalism. The spirit of Baloch nationalism stems from and augments the continual economic and social discrimination among Pakistan's provinces. This factor has been further aggravated by human rights violations, sometimes by the state but more often at the hands of criminal gangs, terrorists, and the regional ruling elite. Demonstrations of Baloch nationalism have been changing shape and intensity with the passage of time.⁴ It has a unique character and consists of two separate and distinct faces. One face grew within the elitism of tribal structures. More than a question of sociology, this face of Baloch nationalism is a matter of politics and power

² Henry Field, *An Anthropological Reconnaissance in West Pakistan, 1955* (Cambridge: Peabody Museum, 1959), 17; see also Selig S. Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow*, 7–8.

³ Sardar Akhtar Mengal. Interview with the Author. 21 May 2018.

⁴ Senator Mir Hasil Bizenjo. Interview with the Author. 16 May 2018. Islamabad.

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accumulation. This face has a non- permanent character and manifestations of it are more visible in armed struggles and the use of violence. The second face of Baloch nationalism relates to the middle class and, therefore, enjoys consistency and perpetuity. The materialization of Baloch nationalism, as it is more commonly identified today, is the outcome of a protracted and painstaking process of emancipation and intellectual growth of the Baloch middle class. This middle-class nationalism surfaced at the same time albeit retaining a divergent character usually demonstrated through intellectual and peaceful political struggles.

Despite constituting a smaller population, the Baloch have a historic base of being a nation with a separate territory, language, culture, and identity. In addition to a common ethnic bond and history, the Baloch possess a common cultural inheritance including religion and all other cultural expressions like food, dress, and festivities. Nevertheless, Baloch nationalism does not demonstrate having a potent, common voice which prevented the political parties of Balochistan from bonding on a unified stance. Though most of the political parties have a common viewpoint on the core issues concerning provincial autonomy and economic control, they are also at variance on many fundamental issues. The prominent division among Baloch nationalist political parties consumes most of their energy and makes them highly unresponsive to the aspirations of the people. Parties, therefore, display little interest in carrying out any social or infrastructural development in their respective constituencies. The chairman of the Balochistan National Movement (BNM), Senator Dr Abdul Hayee Baloch, believes that, notwithstanding the internal polarisation, the Baloch always

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unite when confronted with an outside challenge.⁵ However, many others believe that Baloch nationalism, though capable of flourishing, can only prosper up to a certain level. Owing to its small population and the resultant dilution in vast mountainous spaces, the Baloch do not possess the critical mass required to develop a strong sense of nationalism. This is why their armed movements wither away in large spaces.⁶ A political ideology based purely on the larger context of Baloch nationalism is less likely to claim a large support base as allegiances of tribal members hardly extend beyond their respective tribal entities. Salzman defines the tribal system as ‘segmentary’. While defining this phenomenon, he mentions, ‘By ‘segmentary system’ we mean a set of equal lineages allied relatively and contingently for political action and decisions being made by assemblies and councils, with no offices and hierarchy of authority, and thus no top.’⁷ Thus, a central authority is either non-existent in such a system or its clout is considerably diminished so as not to be able to affect the lower segments. Segments comprise a number of kindred groups having many smaller sub-divisions and tribes who claim to have blood relations with one another by virtue of common ancestors.

The politics of economic and social development is overwhelmingly influenced by the means that define inter-gender and clan relationship. In Balochistan, as an orthodox tribal society, paternalistic patterns of control continue to dominate. Moreover, tribal support or opposition has always

⁵ Dr Abdul Hayee, quoted in *The Herald*, March 1992, 64.

⁶ Awais Ghani, Ex-Governor Balochistan. Interview with the Author. 17 March 2018. Islamabad.

⁷ Philip C. Salzman, “Why Tribes have Chiefs: A Case from Baluchistan”, in Richard Tapper ed., *The Conflict of Tribe and State in Iran, and Afghanistan* (London: St. Martin’s Press, 1983), 267.

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been critical to the success or failure of nationalist movements and political drives. Ethnicity relates to a multifaceted blend of ethnic, cultural, and historical character by which communities are often defined into separate and sometimes rival political entities. In its simplistic outline, the concept is manifested by ethnic division where the most important factor is skin colour and the other three common factors are religion, language, and culture. According to the *Dictionary of Politics*, ‘ethnicity raises the whole socio-political question of national identity’;⁸ and that is why racial politics are most powerful in economically backward countries where geographical divisions often owe far more to the aspirations of colonial masters who orchestrated these divisions as per their own reading of future scenarios and political interests. Ethnicity not only manifests a prospective drive for mobilisation; it has also turned out to be the most important expression of seeking distinctiveness through shared descent. Contrary to the developed world, where ethnicity is not an influential factor, in the subcontinent, ethnicity is crucial to the structure of the society as it guarantees a sense of security and identity— while religion, cultural, and linguistic elements are used for inner binding and presenting a unified face to opposing groups. Selig Harrison wrote, ‘It is the vitality of this ancient cultural heritage that explains the tenacity of the present demand for the political recognition of the Baloch identity’.⁹ Where one particular religion is common to many ethnicities in a region, language and culture become a central theme of distinction from other groups. In these circumstances, ethnic divisions become more important than religion and are essential for

⁸ David Rober, *The Penguin Dictionary of Politics* (New York: Penguin Books, 1987), 111–12.

⁹ Selig S. Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow*, 11.

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establishing a vibrant political system. Michael Banton defines ethnicity as a value where leaders 'seek to make their fellow constituents conscious of a shared attribute' and to influence followers into believing that the shared trait is more central than the group members previously realized.¹⁰ Ethnicity and nationalism have always been a valuable tool for tribal chiefs and political leaders because they help emphasize national unity. Moreover, harping on threats from other dominant factors assists in generating systems ruptures; a tactic that proves valuable in exerting immense pressures on ruling systems and administrations. In his book *Ethnicity and Politics in Pakistan*, Feroz Ahmad remarks, 'Any person of the Baloch race who may have culturally, economically, and politically assimilated into the Sindhi or Punjabi races is still regarded as Baloch and expected to support Baloch nationalism.'¹¹ Feroz Ahmed nevertheless acknowledges that different Baloch and Brahvi tribes who integrated into the overall Baloch nation concept are not fully integrated into a larger socio-economic construction and are, thus, deficient of a true sense of unity beyond tribal affinity. Resultantly, he discards a common historical, linguistic, geographical, and ethnic base for Baloch nationalism. The Baloch realization of their unique language and shared cultural inheritance, nevertheless, comprises an important basis of their nationalism. They regard themselves as inheritors of an old culture which provides them the feeling of a unique identity and has served as a strong bond for their community. This realization has enabled them to stand against the threat of amalgamation into more dominant cultures.

¹⁰ Michael Banton, "Ethnic Bargaining", in Dennis L. Thompson and Dov Ronen eds., *Ethnicity, Politics and Development* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1986), 14.

¹¹ Feroz Ahmad, *Ethnicity and Politics in Pakistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1998), 180.

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The genesis of Baloch nationalism dates back to the 15th century. Tired of fighting turf battles, the idea of unity under joint leadership influenced the Baloch tribes. During the last century, Baloch national awareness started growing around the 1920s. The enhanced sense of nationalism was a direct result of regional political developments when Persians, Afghans, and Indian states started influencing the socio-cultural and territorial affairs of Balochistan.¹² Both politically and socially, few movements were instrumental in sensitizing the Baloch peoples' nationalistic thoughts. The Young Baloch Movement and the Anjuman-e-Ittehad-e-Balochan-wa-Balochistan also known as Riyasti Balochistan were amongst the most prominent organizations to induce awareness in Baloch people about their political and civic rights. A few external factors like World War I and the ongoing political struggle in India also played a role in further intensifying Baloch nationalism. However, due to the fact that the Baloch population was split in many areas outside Balochistan, the unity in their thoughts was hardly being manifest through the actions on the ground.

Baloch nationalism in western Iranian Balochistan developed progressively as a reaction to the Iranian government's forceful policies of pushing Persian nationalism. The Iranian king pursued a policy of obliteration of all national identities other than 'Persian'. Western Balochistan was finally subjugated to Iran in 1928. Fearing oppression of the Iranian government, a substantial number of families living in western Balochistan migrated from Seistan, Balochistan, to the eastern parts of Balochistan and beyond. A large majority of migrant families settled in Karachi and

¹² Sana Ullah Baloch of the National Party, interview with the Author, 23 March 2018, Islamabad.

other parts of Sindh. Around the same time, another dynamic personality emerged in Balochistan's political scene. Though he did not live for long, Yusuf Ali Magsi left a great impact on Baloch nationalism. He is considered the main influence on the modern Baloch nationalist movement. 'This young man', wrote Sardar Khan Baluch in *Baluch a Nation* in 1947, 'preached a crusade against the Pharaohs of capitalism, though he himself was a capitalist.'¹³ Yusuf Magsi (1908–1935) was the son of the Jhal-Magsi region's chief. The Magsi Sardar not only enjoyed a traditionally dominant political position in the Baloch tribal administrative system but also inherited the most fertile agricultural lands in Balochistan and Sindh.¹⁴ Yusuf Ali Magsi lived in exile with his family in Multan and Lahore until 1929 as his father, Qaisar Khan, had to step down from his position of chief Sardar and leave his native town. Here, Yusuf Magsi had political exposure and much better access to education. Inspired by the political renaissance in the region as well as the anti-colonial political movement in British India, a secret organization called Young Baloch was founded by a group of Baloch nationalists under the leadership of Yusuf Magsi and Abdul Aziz Kurd.¹⁵ In 1931, the organization changed its name to Anjuman-e Ittehad-e-Balochan (Organization for the Unity of the Baloch) and emerged as a political party. The party was deeply concerned by the politically engineered developments under Sandeman which had resulted in weakening the central authority of the Khanate and splitting the Kalat state in a number of dependant regions. The newly formed party's manifesto revolved around

¹³ Muhammad Sardar Khan Baluch, *Baluch a Nation* (Lahore: M. Sanaullah Khan, 1947), 131.

¹⁴ Taj Mohammad Breseeg, *Baloch Nationalism Its Origin and Development*, 203.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 208.

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three key demands:

1. Political reform must restore the Khanate to its original potent structure;
2. All traditional Baloch areas, which were split in three different countries, to be united as one Baloch region; and
3. The unified Baloch territory to be given the status of an independent sovereign state.

Taking a lead from this extraordinary political development, another nationalist organization titled 'Baloch League' was formed by a few Baloch living in Karachi. The Anjuman's political struggle revolved around the focal theme of constitutional reforms which would curtail the direct control and influence of the British over the Sardars and concentrate sovereign authority in the institution of Khan. Such an arrangement would have reversed the effects of Sandeman's Forward Policy and was, therefore, totally unacceptable to the British. The British were using the modified Sardari system as the key instrument for gaining absolute control in Balochistan. Similarly, since Sandeman's modified Sardari System provided more power to Sardars, they vehemently opposed the creation of the Anjuman and its manifesto. The Khan of Kalat, Azam Jam, was, however, in favour of the demands of the Anjuman since it suited the re-creation of his central authority. Nevertheless, because of his poor health and old age, he could not be very assertive in the face of tough combined resistance from the British and the Sardars. In January 1934, the Anjuman's General Secretary, Abdul Aziz Kurd, was apprehended and sentenced to three years rigorous imprisonment by the Shahi Jirga at Sibi.

Having barely ruled for two years, Khan Azam Jam died

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on 9 September 1933 and was succeeded by his son, Ahmad Yar Khan. Ahmad Yar Khan was, obviously, favourably inclined towards the Anjuman's demands and manifesto and wanted the party to succeed in its objectives. The Khan convinced the party leadership to broaden its horizon of influence and take the message beyond the frontiers of British India. In 1934, he assigned a special task to Yusuf Magsi and sent him to Britain as his personal envoy to convince the British authorities to respect the sovereignty of the Khanate and negotiate for the restoration of the original form of the Khanate, and the return of all the leased areas to the Khanate.¹⁶ It was evident from the activities of Baloch nationalist movements that the focus of their strategy revolved around demands for reforms in the political, social, and economic domains. However, these movements wanted this restructuring to take place within the jurisdiction of a united Khanate. When the other regions in British India started voicing, more forcefully, a desire for independence from colonial rule, the stance of the Baloch nationalist movements also altered, concentrating their activities towards consolidating the Khanate of Kalat's status as an independent sovereign state. Towards the middle of the 1930s, the Anjuman was truly picking up momentum when a massive earthquake struck Quetta in 1935. The Anjuman suffered a huge loss in this earthquake as it lost its young and inspiring leader, Yusuf Magsi. After his death, the movement lost considerable impetus. In July 1939, the National Party was banned by the Prime Minister of Kalat and its activists were ordered to immediately leave Kalat territory. The party then shifted its headquarters to Quetta. However, soon afterwards, World War II broke out and all overt political activities were

¹⁶ Inayatullah Baloch, *The Problem of Greater Baluchistan*, 155.

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brought to an end all over India.¹⁷

In contrast with the comparative egalitarianism that prevails in tribal set-ups among the Pashtun tribes, the Baloch Sardari system is centralised and hierarchical.¹⁸ Baloch national identity can thus be based on two indispensable components—an ethnic component which comes from their shared cultural legacy and a territorial component that stems from their historic valour and victories over rival clans. The canvas of Baloch nationalism is coloured with mixed shades of cohesion and division at the same time. Cohesion in Baloch nationalism draws strength from their unique culture, language, and history. However, the geography of Balochistan also has a great role in achieving this form of cohesion. Balochistan has remained isolated from the world mainly due to a lack of high-quality road infrastructure and an absence of seaports. Because of this lack of exposure to the outside world and non-interference, the uniqueness of its culture took deeper roots. The institution of the Khanate was strengthened in the eighteenth century during the reign of Nasir Khan I and revolved around the theme of centralizing Baloch society and culture which is why the British, initially, found it so difficult to access and influence grassroots politics in Balochistan. It was only through their Forward Policy that the system of the Khanate could be ruptured and Baloch nationalism fractured and shattered into smaller pieces of tribal identity. The Baloch from hereon started expressing themselves more in terms of their individual tribe and less so in terms of a common race.

Like other provinces in Pakistan, Balochistan has its

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Fredrik Barth, "Pathan Identity and its Maintenance", in Fredrik Barth ed., *Ethnic Group and Boundaries* (Boston: Waveland Pr. Inc., 1969), 117–34.

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own unique historic and distinctive culture. This factor, some nationalist leaders grumble, has not been paid due consideration while working out development projects in the province. This results in resistance to new ideas of modernization and contemporary lifestyles owing to the fear of losing their traditions and cultural uniqueness. The government has not strategized to counter this fear by developing indigenous human resources so that people could willingly participate in economic development. By the start of the 21st century, the combined effect of such complaints was to start giving new life to the sentiments of nationalism and sub-nationalism. The strong realization of this forced the federal government to take a few steps in the right direction and acknowledge the grievances of the people of Balochistan. By realizing the need for constitutional amendments and an accelerated economic uplift of the province, the state has somewhat achieved the prerequisite of a stable and calm environment for other stabilization measures to take place in Balochistan. The government's resolve is the key to developing and applying tangible policies with consensus. This may lead to the redressal of grievances and the bringing about of socio-economic development and problem-resolution mechanisms. As an old demand, provincial autonomy could enhance the participatory approach which is so essential in ensuring that policy benefits reach the deprived masses at the lowest levels. The basic administrative system which is based on tribal affinity has been a big hurdle in development. However, at the same time, tribal systems provide a strong bond, at least within the clan, in Baloch politics and administration. In the political parties where there is a blend of different tribes, occasional cracks and mistrust between the nationalist and moderate elements become visible. Unfortunately, mistrust

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and circumspection sometimes prevail within the party making the party leadership least receptive to peoples' aspirations. The class disparity existing in Baloch tribes is another significant feature contributing to the inability of local leadership of addressing their problems effectively. The Baloch nationalist movement, therefore, does not perform as a unified and inter-connected power. For many, Baloch nationalism does not carry any worthwhile significance beyond affection and belonging to their own tribe, at best. Even the prominent tribes do not possess a common voice for most of the issues concerning Baloch nationalism. They lack a shared understanding of perspective with which to follow the popular demands concerning nationalism.

Earlier insurgencies based on Baloch nationalism were merely thought to be inspired by separatist tendencies ignited by hostile powers. The state ignored the gradual emergence of Baloch nationalism and thought of the Baloch community only with regard to its traditional tribal character. The current wave of Baloch nationalism is provoked by a feeling that there are systematic attempts to interfere and intervene in the Baloch way of life. This feeling has been deepened and strengthened due to empirical inequalities and injustice by successive regimes.¹⁹ Unfortunately, Balochistan continues to be the 'backwater' of Pakistan even after seven decades of independence. This phenomenon has a legacy based on numerous factors; many are natural like a geographically challenging and rugged terrain and many others are home-grown such as political neglect and administrative incompetence. The jagged mountainous terrain, absence of efficient communication infrastructure, and dearth of water

¹⁹ Sana Ullah Baloch of the National Party, interview with the Author. 23 March 2018. Islamabad.

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are huge hurdles in the development of new towns and improvement of the existing ones. The government needs to focus on attracting big investments and colossal resources for Balochistan to bridge the gap that exists between Balochistan and other provinces. Social and economic development demands may seem secondary in terms of arousing nationalist sentiments but people living in a backward region, subjugated by rigid federal policies, may develop a deep antipathy against what they consider to be a rejection of their fundamental economic and civic rights. Policymakers must also realize, with absolute clarity, that development work alone would never be enough to influence the ongoing conflict which revolves around some core issues. Nationalism generally derives strength from either a real or induced sense of deprivation and dispossession. The more exploitive a governance system toward its community, the more fervent the craving for seeking refuge in the folds of nationalism and sub-nationalism would become. Any mega project would be futile if executed without the ownership of the provincial political leadership. If the development project did not serve the political interests of provincial leaders and was not owned by the provincial government, it would always be insinuated as an 'establishment-sponsored project'. Despite providing services, those ventures would not impact the broader Baloch conflict immediately. Only projects sponsored by the people could prospectively contribute towards conflict resolution. Today, Baloch from different parts of Pakistan and also from other parts of the world are coming closer through their connection over the internet. Modernisation and advances in communication and transportation contribute towards increasing the cultural renaissance of communities making them more conscious of the dissimilarities between them

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and others.²⁰ Boundaries between states are, hence, becoming progressively more permeable not only in the physical sense but also even in cognitive domains like information-sharing, human rights, and civic awareness. Furthermore, deep-rooted kinship bondages are finding fresh ways and means for expression, going far beyond the conventional emotions of nationalism.

²⁰ Walker Connor, *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994), 37.

CHAPTER 3

THE STORY OF ACCESSION

By the early 1940s, the independence movement in India was intensifying with each passing day. Correspondingly, the political mood in Balochistan was also changing fast. Ahmad Yar Khan, the Khan of Kalat, tried to convince the British on numerous occasions to grant sovereign status to Kalat once the British left India. In 1942, the Khan approached the head of the Cripps Mission pleading the issue of independent status for the Khanate of Balochistan.¹ After considering the case in detail, the British came up with a legal answer to the Khan's request. The Secretary of State for India notified the Viceroy regarding the British viewpoint on the status of the Khanate—rejecting its position as an independent and sovereign non-Indian state. The Government of India's legal perspective was conveyed to the Khan in June 1942.² According to the *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Kalat, and Balochistan as a whole, was never a sovereign country.

The rulers of Kalat were never fully independent. There was always, and still is, a paramount power to which they were subject. In the earliest times, they were merely petty chiefs; later they bowed to the orders of the Mughal emperors of Delhi and to the rulers of Kandahar and supplied men-at-arms on demand. Most peremptory orders from the Afghan

¹ Dushka H. Saiyid, *The Accession of Kalat: Myth or Reality*, Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad, Autumn, 2006.

² Ibid.

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rulers to their vassals of Kalat are still extant and the pre-dominance of the Sadozais and Barakzais was acknowledged as late as 1838. It was not until the time of Nasir Khan I that the titles of Beglar Begi (Chief of Chiefs) and Wali-i-Kalat (Governor of Kalat) were conferred upon the Kalat ruler by the Afghan kings.³

Muhammad Ali Jinnah believed in granting autonomy to the provinces so that the centre would handle only federal issues like foreign affairs, defence, and communications. He had promised autonomy to all Princely States in their internal affairs if they acceded to Pakistan. At the time of Partition, there were over 560 Princely States in British India.⁴ In accordance with Article 7 of the Indian Independence Act, all pacts between the British Government and the Princely States were to lapse on 15 August 1947 and, hence, after that date, all Princely States were free to join either one of the dominions: India or Pakistan. The British had, however, imposed a prerequisite before a Princely State could decide which dominion to join. The State had to be geographically contiguous with the dominion to which it decided to accede. On 3 June 1947, the British Government conducted a referendum in Balochistan to gather opinions regarding the accession. A Shahi Jirga was convened to discuss and decide the future of Balochistan. In his book, Syed Iqbal Ahmad writes:

³ *Imperial Gazetteer of India: Provincial Series: Balochistan* (Lahore: Oriental Publishers, 1976), 14.

⁴ Ted Svensson, "*A Federation of Equals? Bringing the Princely States into Unified India*," p. 1 (also available on Wikipedia.org/wiki/list-of-princely-states-of-british-india).

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Fifty-four members of the Shahi Jirga and Quetta Municipality voted *en bloc* to join Pakistan. The eight non-Muslim members of the Quetta Municipality and the Shahi Jirga (seven Hindus and one Parsi) did not attend the meeting. The then member of the Indian Central Assembly from British Balochistan, Nawab Muhammad Khan Jogazai, therefore, joined the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan and not of India.⁵

During a meeting on 19 July 1947, Lord Mountbatten stated that Lasbela and Kharan were disputed districts as their rulers had claimed to be independent of the suzerainty of the Khan of Kalat. Hence, these districts would exercise their own discretion when choosing whether to accede to Pakistan or otherwise. The districts being administered directly by the Khan of Kalat were Makran, Jhalawan, Sarawan, Kachhi, and Domki. All parties present in the meeting reached the consensus that the Khan of Kalat and Jinnah should discuss the issue of accession separately and arrive at a mutually agreed course of action. During the meeting, Mountbatten remarked that, with the transfer of power, paramountcy would lapse and joining either of the two dominions was the only option for preserving a relationship between the British Crown and those Princely States. The Viceroy advised the Khan of Kalat to associate with Pakistan by working out terms.

Through June and July, a series of meetings ensued between the Viceroy as the Crown Representative, Quaid-e-Azam, and the Khan of Kalat. On 4 August 1947, a round-table conference was arranged to determine the future

⁵ Syed Iqbal Ahmad, *Balochistan: Its strategic importance* (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1992), 112.

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position of Balochistan.⁶ That conference was attended by Lord Mountbatten, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Liaquat Ali Khan, and the Khan of Kalat. For hours, all possible options for the status of the Kalat State were discussed alongside the possible fall outs of those options. The series of conferences resulted in the issuance of a communiqué on 11 August 1947.⁷ This communiqué mentioned that the (forthcoming) Government of Pakistan recognized Kalat as an independent sovereign state in treaty relations with the British Government with a status different from other Indian States. Meanwhile, discussions would continue between Pakistan and Kalat with the intention of reaching a formal agreement on the key areas of defence, external affairs, and communications. Nevertheless, the Crown Representative refused to recognize Kalat as an independent sovereign state stating that the Treaties of 1854 and 1876 did not consider Kalat an independent sovereign state and that it had, in fact, always been judged as an Indian State. Based on this communiqué, the Khan of Kalat announced the independence of Balochistan soon after Pakistan's independence. Elections were held and the Kalat Legislative Assembly came into being. Out of about 565 Princely States in pre-partition India, only a few such as Hyderabad, Junagadh, Mysore, Bahawalpur, Jammu and Kashmir, Kalat, and Bhopal did not want to join either of the two dominions and, instead, wanted to become independent. Nevertheless, none of them was permitted to do so and was extended the option of joining either of the two new dominions.

Even after the declaration of independence by Kalat,

⁶ Farhan Hanif Siddiqui, *The Politics of Ethnicity in Pakistan: The Baloch, Sindhi and Mubajir Ethnic Movements* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 59.

⁷ Yogeena Veena, "How Balochistan became a part of Balochistan – A Historical Perspective," *The Nation*, 5 December 2015.

Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the Governor General of Pakistan, kept the Khan of Kalat engaged in talks. There was a regular communication link between Jinnah and the Khan of Kalat and, on a number of occasions, he communicated with him informally. This communication became more frequent from September 1947 onwards. Seeing the inclination of the Khan towards Jinnah, active sub-nationalist leaders started a debate in and out of the assembly about whether Kalat should remain independent or join Pakistan. By autumn 1947, Jinnah had started convincing the Khan of Kalat more vigorously and wanted him to sign the same Instrument of Accession signed by other states that had joined Pakistan. In October 1947, Jinnah held a formal meeting with the Khan in Karachi and tried to convince him to accede to Pakistan. The Khan agreed but advised that the Kalat Assembly be consulted and taken on board regarding that politically-sensitive proposal. The Khan wanted to buy more time so as to be sure of the status of the leased areas: however, matters were quickly slipping from his hands. He was reluctant to abandon the state's independent status although he was prepared to negotiate on matters of defence, foreign affairs, and communications.

Meanwhile, another important political development took place: Kharan and Lasbela, the two districts which were continuously denying the suzerainty of Kalat, displayed a desire to join Pakistan irrespective of the decision of the Khan of Kalat. In a series of letters written to Jinnah, the rulers of those two districts pleaded with him to admit the accession of their states to Pakistan irrespective of Kalat's decision.⁸ Mir Muhammad Habibullah Khan, the ruler of Kharan, wrote to Jinnah on 21 August 1947: 'I announce on behalf of myself

⁸ Dushka H. Saiyid, *The Accession of Kalat: Myth or Reality*, Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad, Autumn, 2006.

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and my subjects, and join Pakistan Dominion as its suzerain and promise to serve Pakistan up to its extent.' He again wrote to Jinnah in November 1947: 'My State will never submit to the dictates of the Kalat State and will continue to oppose any moves aimed at an interference of the State freedom.' The ruler of Kharan also protested that Kalat was interfering in their internal affairs by arming the militants in Kharan with the aim of creating a law-and-order problem. Since the Crown Representative had already conceded independent status for Kharan and Lasbela prior to 15 August 1947, there was a chance that the Government of Pakistan would soon accept their de facto accession to Pakistan. During a visit to Karachi in October 1947, the ruler of Kharan issued a statement claiming that 'Kharan was equal to Kalat and would never suffer subordination to it; Kharan would live and, if necessary, die for Pakistan'. However, Kalat kept denying separate-State status to both the feudatories.

Upon return from Karachi in October 1947, the Khan placed Jinnah's proposal before both houses of parliament. It was a charged session and the Khan had to face a mixed reaction from parliamentarians. A number of the legislators supported the proposal while many opposed it vehemently on the grounds that accession to Pakistan would result in the waning of the Baloch identity. Amongst the most fervent opposingspeakers was Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo who strenuously opposed the Two-Nation Theory as the foundation of the proposal and said, '... being Muslims (the fact that we are Muslims) should not compel us to join Pakistan... as the culture of Iran and Afghanistan is also different from that of Pakistan, should these countries be also included in the territories of Pakistan?'⁹

⁹ Malik Allah-Bakhsh, *Baluch Qaum Ke Tarikh ke Chand Pareshan Daftar*

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It appeared that Jinnah realized that his health was deteriorating rapidly and that he had very little time to wrap up the political chaos. In February 1948, he wrote to the Khan of Kalat: 'I advise you to join Pakistan without further delay and let me have your final reply which you promised to do after your stay with me in Karachi when we fully discussed the whole question in all its aspects.'¹⁰ In his reply to Jinnah, the Khan mentioned that he had asked for a joint session of both Houses of Parliament—Dar-ul-Umara (Upper House) and Dar-ul-Awam (Lower House)—to discuss future associations with Pakistan and that the parliament's decision would be conveyed by the end of the month.

The Kalat Dar-ul-Awam's session took place on 21 February 1948. The House favoured a treaty with Pakistan to determine future relations between Pakistan and Kalat but declined to accede directly. The Dar-ul-Umara's session also pondered the proposal for Kalat to accede to Pakistan. The Dar-ul-Umara was of the opinion that the Khan should ask for three months more to reflect on this proposal. The House was adjourned without a proposed date for another session. On 17 March 1948, the Pakistan Foreign Ministry dispatched a telegram to London declaring that Kharan, Lasbela, and Makran had formally requested accession to Pakistan and that the request had been accepted.¹¹ Following that development, the US Ambassador to Pakistan wrote to Washington on 23 March 1948 that Kharan, Lasbela, and Makran had acceded to Pakistan. He also mentioned the effects of the fresh accessions and stated that those developments had abridged the size of

Anraq (Quetta: Islamiyah Press, 1957), 43.

¹⁰ Quaid's letter attached as annexure.

¹¹ Yogeena Veena, "How Balochistan became a part of Balochistan – A Historical Perspective", *The Nation*, 5 December 2015.

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Kalat by more than half depriving them of the coast. The request for accession was accepted by Pakistan when the Jam of Lasbela, Chief of Kharan, and Nawab Bai Khan of Makran met Jinnah on 17 March 1948 and stated that, if Pakistan was not willing to accept their requests of accession without delay, they would be obliged to take other measures for their protection against the Khan of Kalat's belligerent intent. That served as a severe political blow to the Khan of Kalat.

Those political jolts were badly shaking the status of the Khan with each passing day. Nevertheless, the event that caused him to accede immediately to Pakistan was a news transmission broadcast on All-India Radio on 27 March. The transmission, which was aimed at creating mistrust between Jinnah and the Khan of Kalat, misfired: instead of prompting a knee-jerk reaction by Jinnah, it resulted in an immediate reaction from the Khan. The transmission claimed that the Khan was secretly negotiating with India for the future of the Kalat State. In response to the report, the Khan issued a communiqué, which stated:

On the night of 27th March, All-India Radio, Delhi, announced that, two months ago, Kalat State had approached the Indian Union to accept its accession to India and that the Indian Union had rejected the request. It had never been my intention to accede to India. It is, therefore, declared that at 2100 Hours on 27th March 1948, the time when I heard the false news over the air, I forthwith decide to accede to Pakistan, and that whatever differences now exist between Kalat and Pakistan be placed in writing before Mr Jinnah, the Governor-General of Pakistan, whose decision I shall accept.

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Although this communiqué by the Khan cleared much of the haze surrounding accession, the realities associated with the accession of Kalat to Pakistan remained shrouded in mystery. It is thus evident that the Khan had no choice but to announce accession to Pakistan since Kharan, Lasbela, and Makran had already denied the authority of Kalat and had formally requested Pakistan to accept their accession. The state of Kalat had become isolated and landlocked. The All-India Radio announcement accusing the Khan of negotiating secretly with India, while keeping Kalat's parliament in the dark, came as a hard blow. The cumulative effect of events taking place in quick succession forced the Khan to make a swift decision.

Many trace the origin of the Baloch conflict to the accession of Balochistan to Pakistan. There have been periods of relative calm during which mutual confidence between the province and the centre were nurtured but there have also been periods of severe mistrust. Hardcore Baloch nationalist leadership has always considered Punjab to be dominant in federal affairs eating up the resources of smaller provinces and especially of Balochistan. The President of the Balochistan National Party (BNP) and former Chief Minister of Balochistan, Sardar Attaullah Mengal, holds Punjab responsible for most of the grievances of Balochistan:¹² he might not be entirely wrong as the federal government never complied with the principles spelled out by Jinnah. The Quaid, while addressing a gathering at Sibi Darbar (Sibi Court) on 14 February 1948, articulated his firm opinion on extending equal rights for the Baloch and '... improving the lot of our people in this Province and of enabling them to secure for

¹² Sardar Attaullah Mengal, interview by Malik Siraj Akbar, *The Friday Times*, July 7-13, 2006.

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themselves the same position and the same political status within the polity of Pakistan which are open to their brethren in other provinces.’¹³ If centre-province relations were reconstructed on the principles agreed between Jinnah and the Khan of Kalat, most of the bones of contention could be settled amicably.

The inclusion of Kalat in Pakistan caused protests in Kalat and triggered a revolt. Prince Abdul Karim, younger brother of the Khan, decided to resist security forces with a force of 600–700 tribesmen. He decided to lead the resistance based on the argument that the Khan of Kalat had been coerced into signing the Instrument of Accession and that the Pakistan government had refused to implement Sharia (Islamic Law) in Balochistan. On the political front, the Khan of Kalat distanced himself from that rebellion and asserted that he did not have any knowledge of his brother’s actions. He ordered Kalat’s troops to support Pakistan’s federal forces against insurgents. Not long after, Karim was arrested and, after a legal process, imprisoned for ten years. The act of Balochistan’s accession invoked violent nationalist annoyance and triggered a series of insurgencies which continued even after the imprisonment of Prince Karim.

¹³ Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah’s Speeches as Governor-General of Pakistan 1947–1948 (Karachi: Pakistan Publications, n.d.), 54.

CHAPTER 4

A STRING OF INSURGENCIES

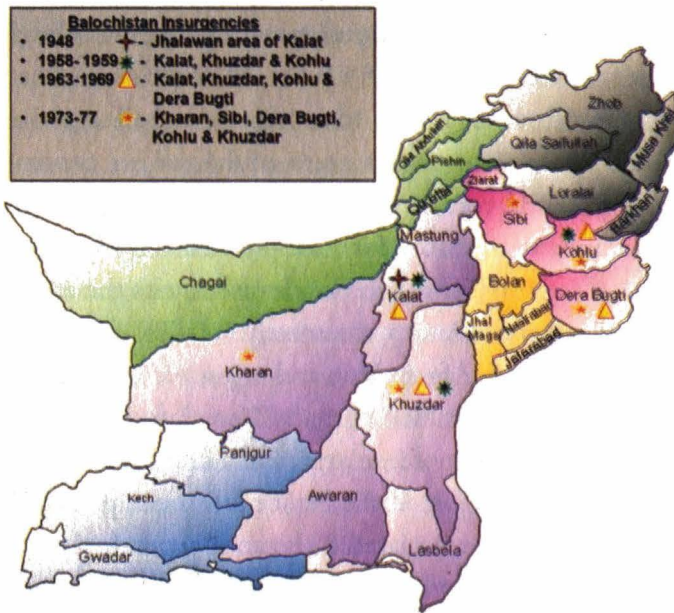
Since the accession to Pakistan, a sense of deprivation has prevailed in Balochistan. The issues behind the misunderstandings and conflicts are deep-rooted. They have relentlessly aggravated, and occasionally led to, unrest and uprisings. The present chaos is mainly a result of the outstanding, unaddressed grievances of the people of Balochistan. The federation has never done enough to comfort the masses and provide therapy to the wounds of hurt egos. Equally responsible is the media hype which, at times, has put disproportionate limelight on insignificant events.

During the initial fifteen years of Balochistan's accession to Pakistan, the insurgency thrived mainly on a separatist agenda. The first and second Balochistan uprisings were founded mostly on a staunch sub-nationalist stance which revolved around the slogan, 'nothing short of independence.' However, that slogan slowly lost its moorings not so much because of some government marvels but because of fundamental rifts within sub-nationalist parties. Nevertheless, the issue has remained alive in nooks and crannies of Balochistan through some diehard Baloch leaders such as Brahamdagh Bugti and Harbiyar Marri. The government of Pakistan has repeatedly accused those factions of getting financial and other support from hostile foreign agencies¹

¹ Pakistan's Secretary of Defence, Lt Gen (retd.) Alam Khattak, "RAW runs special cell to sabotage CPEC," *Dawn*, 13 April 2016

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such as NDS (Afghanistan), RAW (India), and MI6 (UK), but the issue of foreign interference has not been brought to the limelight in powerful world bodies successfully. Seven decades of troubled history has demonstrated many shades of the security mosaic, each generated by a different background. A review of history is required to understand the present circumstances.



The First Baloch Resistance—1948

The accession of the Khanate to Pakistan in March 1948 resulted in unrest in some areas of Balochistan.² The National Party that had promoted the foundation of a ‘Greater

and Pakistan’s Director General Intelligence Bureau Aftab Sultan, “Indian and Afghan Agencies supporting terror in Pakistan,” *Dawn*, 18 October 2016.

² Gul Khan Nasir, *Tarikh-e-Balochistan*, 525–6.

Balochistan', renounced the accession and started agitating. That resulted in the apprehension of its main leaders, Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, Mir Abdul Aziz Kurd, and others.³ Prince Agha Abdul Karim, the brother of the Khan of Kalat, who had never accepted the idea of accession to Pakistan, took up arms against Pakistan. The epicentre of armed resistance was the Jhalawan area. Abdul Karim was an influential figure since he had served as governor of Makran and he also drew political strength from his relationship with the Khan. Abdul Karim then invited prominent figures of other nationalist parties to his cause. When his tone began to challenge the writ of the state, army troops were mobilized to control the situation. The ill-equipped and ill-trained men of Prince Abdul Karim were no match for Pakistan Army troops and, hence, on 16 May 1948, after minor skirmishes with the army, Agha Abdul Karim and his approximately 600–700 followers crossed the border into Afghanistan and organized themselves in a camp at Karez Nazar Mohammad Khan. A few National Party members, who were still at large, and a few Baloch from Sindh and Derajat also joined the Prince in his camp.⁴ While in self-imposed exile, he declared Kalat an independent state and issued a manifesto wherein he distanced himself from the declaration of accession to Pakistan and demanded that negotiations for accession be initiated afresh. Afghanistan served as a safe haven from where a propaganda campaign was launched in Balochistan aimed at creating unrest. Prince Karim's resistance movement approached regional country governments, including Afghanistan's, for diplomatic and material support. Refusing to provide help, Afghan authorities told the Prince to either reside peacefully as a refugee or leave

³ Ibid, 522.

⁴ Ibid, 241.

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Afghanistan immediately. The Prince was left with no choice but to return to Balochistan with his followers. Prince Karim had banked on the Afghan government's support knowing Afghanistan's diplomatic tensions with Pakistan. However, he failed to appreciate that Afghanistan would never support an independent Balochistan because Prince Abdul Karim was struggling for an independent state of Kalat where traditional Kalat districts would fall under its jurisdiction along with territories in Afghanistan and Iran that were part of the concept of 'Greater Balochistan'. On 8 July 1948, Prince Abdul Karim and his comrades returned to Balochistan. The news of their return had reached security authorities before they crossed the border and, after a skirmish with army troops, the Prince and his approximately 100 followers were arrested. Another local account of the event places the blame of deceit on state security forces who, according to this version, had promised a safe exit to the Prince on condition that he laid down arms. On 27 November 1948, he went through a trial by a special Jirga in Mach Jail and was sentenced to ten years of rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs 5,000.

The Second Baloch Resistance (1958–1959)

In 1955, Prime Minister Chaudhry Mohammad Ali merged all provinces and states in West Pakistan (including Kalat) to form a 'One Unit' system. This merger aimed at eliminating ethnic tensions between provinces. The Baloch considered that constitutional amendment a move to fade out their identity and demanded exclusion of Kalat from that 'One Unit' system. In October 1957, a congregation was organized in Karachi chaired by the Khan of Kalat and attended by many Baloch leaders and sardars. In that meeting, Mir Ahmad

Yar Khan asked for the abolition of the 'One-Unit' system and the restoration of the original status of the Kalat state.⁵ The Khan also mobilized large-scale demonstrations against the 'One-Unit' formula. Upon refusal by the government, the Khan of Kalat mustered armed militants to fight against the government and hoisted the ancestral Kalat flag atop his palace. On 7 October 1958, he was arrested on charges of treason. His arrest triggered widespread violence in villages and cities. From there on, Baloch nationalism became a potent movement. The movement initially gained a foothold in the villages of the Jhalawan area and then tribesmen were organized on the basis of a hard-line nationalist posture. The ninety-year-old Nauruz Khan, the Sardar of the Zehri tribe, surfaced as the leader of the small armed group numbering around 700 men. However, Selig Harrison states that he had 750 to 1,000 men.⁶ Soon the insurgency spread all over the Jhalawan area and many smaller groups of armed fighters joined the insurgency. Nevertheless, the lifespan of this uprising was not very long.

Though Nauruz Khan had previously fought in a number of armed rebellions against the British between the 1920s and 1930s, his health and physical endurance had almost given up. By that time, the army had also gained the experience of fighting against insurgencies and so the movement was crushed fairly quickly. Not long before, Nauroz was arrested along with his son and colleagues. According to Mir Hasil Bizenjo, Sardar Doda Khan of the Zehri tribe wanted Nauroz Khan to be arrested as that could boost his political influence in the area.⁷ Nauroz and seven of his fellows, including his

⁵ Mir Ahmad Yar Khan Baluch, *Inside Baluchistan*, p. 172.

⁶ Selig S. Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow*, p. 28.

⁷ Senator Mir Hasil Bizenjo. Interview with the Author. 16 May 2018,

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elder son, were put through trial in Hyderabad on charges of treason and sentenced to death. Later, owing to very old age, the death sentence of Nauruz Khan was changed to life imprisonment. He died in prison in 1964 while a few other colleagues and his elder son, Mir Batay Khan, were hanged on 15 July 1960 in the Hyderabad and Sukkur jails.

Senator Mir Hasil Bizenjo was of the opinion that the second insurgency was actually instigated by the state in order to pave the way for martial law.⁸ The imposition of military rule in October 1958 by General Ayub Khan and the introduction of a new constitution resulted in the re-emergence of political parties in 1962. Prominent Baloch nationalist leaders, Nawab Akbar Bugti, Khair Bakhsh Marri, and Ataullah Mengal won their seats from their respective constituencies in the elections. While the success of the nationalists might have been a result of tribal loyalties rather than nationalistic politics, their participation in the electoral process was an achievement in itself. After the elections, a few of the tribal leaders made critical speeches and led rallies against the government. The government arrested some of those leaders and appointed their replacements. The removal of Sardars prompted the organization of guerrilla movements led by Sher Mohammad Marri in the Jawahalan, Marri, and Bugti areas. That movement was more intense and destructive than the previous insurgencies.

The Third Baloch Resistance (1963–1969) — The Parari Resistance

In 1962, the third rebellion broke out from the Marri

Islamabad.

⁸ Ibid.

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area and the militants chose the title of 'Pararis' (rebels) for themselves. The epicentre then was in the Marri-Bugti areas and the movement was led by Sher Muhammad Marri, a prominent figure and known strategist in the field of unconventional warfare. He had vast experience of planning low-intensity conflicts and had spent a long time in prison on charges of subversive activities. He started consolidating small groups of armed fighters in different areas and began organizing the infrastructure of the Parari Movement. This armed resistance spread swiftly to other areas of Balochistan. By July 1963, the Pararis had set up a number of operational camps of different sizes. Those camps were established in the Mengal area of Jhalawan and the Marri and Bugti areas. In the Marri and Bugti areas alone, there were about a dozen guerrilla fighter base camps. The Pararis avoided large encounters with the army and harassed the security forces by ambushing convoys, targeting trains, and raiding isolated softer military positions. The aim of the movement was to force the withdrawal of the Pakistan Army troops from the districts of Balochistan and coerce the federal government to cancel the 'One-Unit'.

The camps were mostly used to impart guerrilla warfare training to the newly-recruited fighters. Those camps had the capacity of training around 300–400 fighters at a time. The basic training revolved around the concept of 'hit-and-run' tactics to avoid pitched battles and deliver swift violent blows to army troops wherever the opportunity presented itself. The movement of military convoys and road construction activities were the most lucrative targets for those militants. The strategy and tactics of the Parari Movement appeared heavily inspired by the 'Popular Wars' of Vietnam and China. In line with those popular wars, the Pararis also organized

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themselves in different functionary groups which were responsible for a particular domain of life. There were separate cells looking after healthcare, schools, logistics, supply chains, recruitment, and the training of fighters. Benefitting from this elaborate administrative and training system, the Parari Movement continued to pose a great threat to the state for nine years. In reprisal, the security forces conducted a series of raids and counter-ambushes.

The active insurgency continued until 1969 when President Ayub Khan stepped down and his successor, General Yahya Khan, initiated negotiations for a cease-fire with the Pararis. In November 1969, General Yahya Khan announced the dissolution of the 'One-Unit' in West Pakistan and directed the Governor of West Pakistan, Air Marshal Nur Khan, to negotiate a truce with the Pararis. Before abolishing the 'One-Unit', Yahya Khan held a meeting with the leadership of NAP including Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, Akbar Bugti, and Abdus Samad Khan Achakzai. During the meeting, while the administrative boundaries of the proposed new provinces were being discussed, Abdus Samad Khan Achakzai suggested that the Pashtun areas in the north of Balochistan be carved out as a separate province of 'South NWFP'. This was not, however, agreed upon by Yahya Khan.⁹ On 30 March 1970, the 'One-Unit' was dissolved and four separate provinces, Punjab, Sindh, North-West Frontier Province (NWFP), and Balochistan, emerged through a Legal Framework Order (LFO). This LFO was a great step towards recognizing the problem and paved the way towards finding a federal solution to the problem of Balochistan. The same 'Order' also committed to holding free and fair general

⁹ Senator Mir Hasil Bizenjo, Interview with the Author, 16 May 2018, Islamabad.

elections towards the end of the year. After the dissolution of the 'One-Unit' system, the Baloch and Pashtuns formed the National Awami Party (NAP) and contested elections in 1970. Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo was appointed Governor while Attaullah Mengal took over as Chief Minister of the province.

The Fourth Baloch Resistance (1973–1977)

The period from 1969 to 1973 witnessed relative calm in Balochistan. Though nationalist and separatist movements continued expressing their demands intermittently, they always lacked a common forum and unity of voice. Balochistan's provincial government could not last long as Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto dismissed it in 1973 and arrested Ataullah Mengal, Khair Bakhsh Marri, and Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo. Bhutto accused them of plotting against the state, supporting separatist leaders, and smuggling weapons and ammunition with the support of foreign intelligence agencies. Nawab Akbar Bugti, leader of the Bugti tribe, was widely believed to have been behind that political crisis as he fed the allegations to Prime Minister to avenge tribal rivalry. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto had given Pakistan a consensus democratic constitution. However, in 1973, against the norms of the constitution, he dissolved the Balochistan provincial government formed by the National Awami Party (NAP) and indicted its main leaders for trying to weaken the state. The removal of Balochistan's provincial government and the arrest of prominent Baloch leaders incited another armed conflict between the Baloch and the federal government. A few of the hardcore Baloch nationalist elements also joined the armed struggle initiated by the Marri and the Mengals. As a result, the Baloch united and triggered mass-scale violence. Rebels started attacking military

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convoys and government installations. Bhutto immediately ordered a wide-scale military operation against the insurgents. At the peak of the insurgency, more than 80,000 troops, tanks, and aircraft took part in operations against 55,000 Baloch rebels which resulted in an estimated 8,000 casualties on both sides.

As the insurgent movement picked up pace, the Shah of Iran, Reza Shah Pahlavi, provided gunship attack helicopters to Pakistan to suppress the movement, thus, averting its spillover in Iranian Balochistan. As a result of the operations, most of the nationalist leaders fled to England and Afghanistan. The pattern of fighting during that insurgency wave was not very different from the one fought under Sher Muhammad Marri. The guerrillas remained mostly scattered — taking advantage of their knowledge of the terrain — and struck the army convoys and isolated posts whenever the opportunity surfaced. The spread of the insurgency, that time, was larger than the previous uprisings. It ranged from Dadu in Sindh to Nushki in the west; and from Dera Ghazi Khan in Punjab to Sibi. In July 1977, General Zia ul-Haq imposed martial law and dismissed the government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. General Zia immediately entered into negotiations with the Baloch leadership to defuse the situation. He announced the release of the imprisoned Baloch political leadership, withdrew the Hyderabad Conspiracy Case, and announced a general amnesty for the Baloch leadership for political negotiations.¹⁰ After release from prisons, many of the Baloch leaders went into self-imposed exile in other countries and provinces. Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri, one of the most prominent figures, opted to settle down in Afghanistan. From then on, the nationalist movement in Balochistan lost its impetus.

¹⁰ Selig S. Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow*, 39–40.

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After the end of the martial law regime, 'political party-based' general elections were announced for November 1988. Nawab Akbar Bugti took part in the elections as the head of a political alliance of parties known as the Balochistan National Alliance (BNA). The alliance won the elections in the province and Nawab Akbar Bugti became the Chief Minister of Balochistan.

Present Unrest

In August 2006, the simmering state of insurgency suddenly accelerated. After a period of relative peace, Balochistan once again saw protracted turmoil at the beginning of the new millennium. A senior Baloch leader, Nawab Akbar Shahbaz Khan Bugti, commonly known as Nawab Bugti, was killed by the security forces after his refusal to surrender to state authority. Though there were several versions of the circumstances surrounding his death, it was a recorded fact that he had been offered various negotiation forums before the use of force. Ironically, Nawab Bugti had always been seen as a pro-federation figure before 2000. He had never been associated with earlier insurgencies. He held significant government offices of Governor and Chief Minister of Balochistan and Federal Minister for Defence. As the Sardar of a large tribe, he carried remarkable political weight. An uneasy arrangement existed between Nawab Akbar Bugti and the federal government over the issues of royalty for natural gas, control of the province's natural resources, and construction of new military cantonments in Balochistan. None of these issues was unresolvable through negotiations. On some points, Nawab Bugti had been very rigid while, on others, the government failed to show

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the requisite flexibility. Many attempts were made by the government to engage the Nawab in negotiations. However, those attempts remained short of a mutual accord. When the state's security and national cohesion is at stake, the failure of one forum of negotiations should transit into the next and not transit from negotiations to kinetic action without allowing an intermediate period of 'environment shape-up'. The government, therefore, endeavoured to avoid a knee-jerk reaction by making additional efforts to engage the Nawab in talks. In the summer of 2004, the Governor of Balochistan, Awais Ghani, himself travelled to Dera Bugti and tried to convince the Nawab to give up armed resistance against the state. He observed that the Nawab had become very weak; both physically and politically.¹¹ The Nawab tried to impress the Governor with a show of force by having hundreds of his bodyguards stand all around his house. However, there were hardly any prominent political figures assisting the Nawab during the talks. The Governor noticed that the Nawab had been socially isolated by then, even by his own tribe.

In 2005, Nawab Bugti came up with a fifteen-point agenda for the federal government.¹² Mir Balach Marri was also in support of the Nawab on those demands which included provincial control over Balochistan's natural resources, a moratorium on the construction of new military cantonments, and a resolution of the long-outstanding gas royalty issue. Serious efforts at negotiations were made by the federal government but the process was stalled because of an unfortunate incident. On 15 December 2005, the Inspector

¹¹ Awais Ghani, ex-Governor Balochistan. Interview with the Author. 17

¹² The Baloch, available at <http://beludzove-central-asia-su/lib/exe/fetch>, 24.

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General of the Frontier Corps and his deputy were wounded when their helicopter was fired upon from the ground. They were coming back from Kohlu, a town approximately 225 km south-east of Quetta. The incident triggered an immediate reaction from the government and a strong military operation was executed to apprehend the Nawab. As the operations unfolded, the arrest attempt turned out to be a tragic incident in which the Nawab was killed along with several military officers and soldiers as the mountain cave in which the Nawab was hiding suddenly collapsed. When his body was brought for burial, most of the Bugti tribesmen were unwilling to hold his funeral in Dera Bugti¹³ and the Governor had to persuade the notables to bury him in his native town. The death of Nawab Akbar Bugti during an encounter with the Pakistan Army sparked fury and there was a visible surge in the targeted killings of Punjabi settlers in various parts of Balochistan. A fillip to this violent wave came in the shape of Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri's son, Balach Marri's killing in November 2007. Settlers were brutally targeted all over Balochistan especially in the districts of Khuzdar and Noshki. The non-Baloch were looted and their properties torched causing their businesses to suffer. The BLA and BSO circulated several warning letters to Punjabi families threatening them with dire consequences if they failed to leave Balochistan immediately. The wave of terror for settlers then spread to other districts and settlers in Mastung, Turbat, Kech, and Gwadar suffered.

From 2007 to 2012, Balochistan witnessed the worst security breakdown. While the northern part of the country was grappling with the insurgency in Waziristan, Balochistan was facing the after-effects of Bugti's killing at the hands

¹³ Awais Ghani, ex-Governor Balochistan, Interview with the Author, 17.

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of the security forces. Army convoys and army personnel and their families could not move freely in the province for security reasons. Attacks on government buildings and Frontier Corps vehicles took place in routine. During this period, civilian targeted killings, abduction for ransom, and threats to settlers increased intensely. Correspondingly, the intelligence agencies also stepped up their activities and often displayed high handedness. Many criminal groups were activated and, in the garb of security operations by the state, settled their own scores against their rivals. On 3 April 2009, the President of the Baloch National Movement, Ghulam Muhammad Baloch, along with two other nationalists, Lala Munir and Sher Muhammad, were picked up from an office by armed men who, according to eye witnesses, were speaking Persian. Only a few days later, on 8 April, their badly tortured and bullet-riddled bodies were found. A few hardcore nationalists, including the BLA, alleged that intelligence agencies and Pakistan security forces were behind that heinous crime. However, the state denied those allegations and made a commitment to hold inquiries to find out the facts. Neutral international media observers also seconded the government's stance that there was some other force behind that crime. Government security forces could not be so careless as to pick some one up in front of eye witnesses and then throw the bodies in a public area. Nevertheless, the adverse effects of that incident soon resulted in heightened civil unrest and agitation. Along with armed militancy, sub-nationalist political parties were also gaining momentum in their activities. Seminars covering hostile propaganda were routinely organized in European countries in which international observers, especially Indian scholars and think tanks, were invited. Amidst that environment, on 12 August

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2009, the Khan of Kalat, Mir Suleman Dawood, announced a Council of Independent Balochistan and declared himself the ruler of an independent Balochistan. In his self-acclaimed definition of a new state, he included the territories of Iranian Balochistan but excluded the Baloch portion in Afghanistan. Most of the separatist leaders, including Bramdagh Bugti, were included in the Council. By 2012, Balochistan was slowly but surely descending into anarchy. It was being described in newspapers as a bubbling 'cauldron of ethnic, sectarian, secessionist, and militant violence threatening to boil over at any time.'¹⁴ A journalist remarked, 'Balochistan has clearly turned into a security and governance black hole where multiple political, financial, and criminal interests either converge or play out against one another.'¹⁵

During those years, the activities of the BLF and BLA militants intensified. Intellectuals and scholars were the focus of targeted killings. Professor Fazl-e-Bari, a renowned scholar and academic who had served as Chairman of the Balochistan Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, was assassinated in Quetta.¹⁶ In another incident, a well-reputed female educationist and assistant professor at Balochistan University Quetta, Nazima Talib, was shot dead.¹⁷ The Vice Principal of the Pak-German Technical Centre, Chaudhry Muhammad Ishfaq, was killed in a shooting in the Lasbela district while Dr Qamar Hussain, a learned pathologist working for Bolan Medical College, was assassinated by the BLA in Quetta. Those incidents indicated a change in militant strategy and it was evident that they wanted to flush out the

¹⁴ Naveed Hussain, "Fiddling While Balochistan Burns," *Express Tribune*, 15 August 2012.

¹⁵ Imtiaz Gul, "The Dynamics of a Crisis," *The News*, 13 July 2012.

¹⁶ "Educationist shot dead in Quetta," *Dawn*, 23 March 2010.

¹⁷ "Professor gunned down in Quetta," *Express Tribune*, 27 April 2010.

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non-Baloch presence from Balochistan. However, as it was to be realized very soon afterwards, those incidents resulted in a mass exodus of intellectuals and professionals from the province. Staff from universities, medical colleges, and hospitals started resigning from their positions making it suddenly untenable for the provincial administration to continue providing basic services to the people of Balochistan. There came a time when it was hard for educational institutions to find teachers. Many institutions found an alternative by running online courses from Islamabad and Karachi.¹⁸

There was a huge outcry by the locals over the prevailing situation and many started raising slogans against the militant outfits. The militant organizations, many of them financially supported by hostile agencies, immediately realized that their strategy had worked counter to their designs and the people of Balochistan had turned against their agenda. The common Baloch, especially the business community, developed a strong hatred towards the violent militant organizations as they blamed them for the exodus of investors and skilled human resource from the province. The land and property mafia exploited that situation to a great degree to make money. On many occasions, that mafia was involved in sending fake warning letters to Punjabi settlers so that they could dispose of their properties in haste at throw-away rates. A usual practice to send a warning was to mark the door of the house with a 'red cross' which meant that an ultimatum had been given to quit the land of the Baloch.

The continuous deterioration of law and order forced many families to take refuge in relatively safer Pashtun districts of Balochistan. Those who were not ready to take chances

¹⁸ Dr Shakeel Roshan, President Al-Hamd Islamic University, Quetta, Interview with the Author, 18 May 2018.

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with the lives of their family members shifted to Punjab and Sindh. The lives of government officials and their families were under constant threat and a majority of them sought to reside inside military cantonments. Even the chief of the Balochistan Police (Inspector General) vacated his residence in the city and shifted to the military cantonment.

In June 2014, the nationalist movement suffered another blow. Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri, who was considered the most spirited man behind the armed struggle for independent Balochistan, died after a long illness in a Karachi hospital at the age of eighty-six. He was widely believed to be the man behind the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA). Despite many challenges during his long political career, Khair Bakhsh Marri remained unwavering in his passion for separatism and came to earn the soubriquet, 'communist nationalist.'¹⁹ Some believe his demise was a sigh of relief for the government and security forces; however, his death was handled with masterful statesmanship by the military. At the time of his death in June 2014, Lieutenant General Nasser Janjua was the Commander of Southern Command in Quetta. Soon after receiving the news of Nawab Marri's death, he contacted the provincial political leadership and extended every kind of help for transporting the body and funeral arrangements. Immediate instructions were passed on for the provision of a military helicopter in case it was demanded by the heirs. The funeral was provided full security and the Nawab's eldest son, Nawab Changez Marri, was assured every sort of assistance by the military hierarchy. This symbolic gesture went a long way in softening the image of the military with the tribe.

The pace of Balochistan's insurgencies fluctuated. Depending upon the political and administrative handling of

¹⁹ *Dawn*, 11 June 2014.

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the population, the insurgency has ebbed and flowed from medium to high intensity. Since 2014, political developments in the province and the operational understanding and collaboration between political and security prongs have brought down the level of insurgency. The province is now on a steady path towards stability and militant groups have been marginalized to a great extent. There is, however, a huge difference between the earlier insurgencies and the present one. All earlier insurgencies were led by charismatic leaders like Prince Abdul Karim, Nawab Nauroz Khan, and Sher Muhammad Marri who preferred staying with their armed groups and fighting against the security forces. They led their men in combat and suffered the hardships of conflict zones. They were apprehended and incarcerated and a few saw capital punishments awarded to their sons.

However, the present insurgency is quite the opposite as its leaders live abroad in a comfortable environment and enjoy financial philanthropy from countries hostile to Pakistan. They hardly come to Balochistan and try to retain management control over the field commanders of the insurgency by doling out money while they themselves prefer living in tranquillity. The people of Balochistan have gradually started realizing the pretence and real motive of the leadership abroad. There is also a visible lack of commonality of objectives amongst the insurgent groups resulting from frequent infightings. The Baloch community is now reaching the conclusion that, even in the case of success for these insurgent groups, their mutual mistrust and divergent objectives will only help push Balochistan into a deeper chaos.

There is an austere difference in the ideology of the various militant movements in Balochistan. Amongst the separatist movements, the Balochistan Liberation Army

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(BLA), Balochistan Liberation Front (BLF), and Balochistan Republican Army (BRA) are the most prominent and all of them believe in violent means for attaining their secessionist objectives. These outfits have claimed responsibility for many crimes against the state including attacks on government installations, gas pipelines, power transmission lines, electric and telephone poles, oil tankers, security check-posts, and railway tracks. The Lashkar-e-Balochistan (LeB), though a militant organization, has a totally different objective. Its focus is on checking the growing influence of the BLA and keeping the relevance of the Mengal Sardars alive and effervescent. This organization is headed by Javed Mengal, the younger son of Sardar Atta Ullah Mengal and younger brother of Sardar Akhtar Mengal, both of whom have served as Chief Ministers of Balochistan. Amongst these emerging militant outfits, the BRA is the most prominent. As far as the sentiments of the common Baloch are concerned, it is evident that these insurgent groups do not represent the common Baloch people. In fact, the common Baloch people have borne the suffering of exploitation in the conflict between the state and the insurgents. Through victimization, the sentiments of the Baloch people have been continuously targeted by the armed insurgents but these atrocities have been depicted each time as state-sponsored. Many moderate Baloch say that armed insurgent groups do not represent the majority of the province's population as they do not have a good record of serving common people's interests. Their leadership does not speak with one voice nor do they follow the same tactics and modus operandi. These movements do not subscribe to the nationalist viewpoint of attaining the political goal of provincial autonomy and enhanced control over the natural resources of Balochistan. It is due to this significant difference

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that these insurgent groups mostly failed to mount a unified resistance against the state. Their activities, though fairly intense at times, could not create enough synergy to seriously challenge the state.

The BLA has claimed responsibility for the highest number of violent attacks on state infrastructure and security installations. It is led by Harbiyar Marri, son of Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri from abroad and has about 2,500 fighters. Most of its fighters come from the Marri and Bugti tribes. However, BLA exploits unemployed youth from other regions as well. Many of its fighters are experienced and took part in the 1973 insurgency as well. These hardened but old fighters, belonging mostly to the Marri tribe, escaped to Afghanistan when the government crushed the insurgency in the 1970s and came back to Balochistan during General Zia ul-Haq's martial law. The violent measures adopted by the militants are abhorrent. During the early stages of the insurgency, the BLA focused solely on government authorities and fought mostly against security forces. However, after some time, civilians too became the targets of cleansing by the militants. The BLA was declared a terror organization by President Pervez Musharraf in 2006.²⁰ In 2008, the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) led federal government withdrew all cases against Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri and his sons. However, this measure did not have any positive impact on BLA's insurgent activities and so, in 2009, the federal government banned the BLA once again.

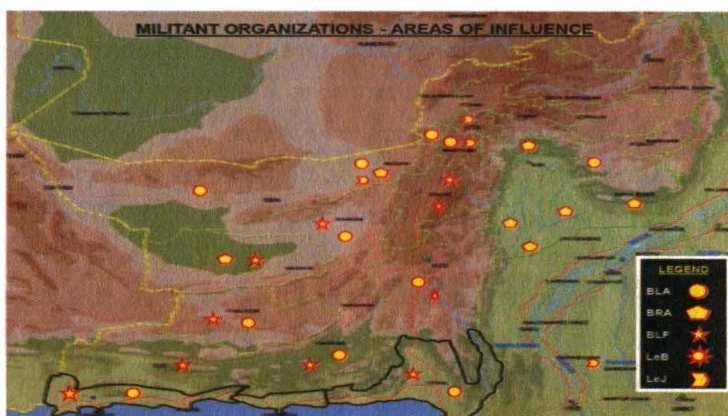
The BLF was formed by Sardar Attaullah Mengal who served as Chief Minister of Balochistan. While the group operates mostly in the Makran division and surrounding areas, it affiliated with the late Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri.

²⁰ "BLA declared a terrorist organization", *The Nation*, 10 April 2006.

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BLF members are mostly educated and it has a strong political wing which carries out diplomatic activities in other countries. The group has chalked out a complete programme for an independent Balochistan including formulating various state policies on education, health, and foreign policy.

The BRA is led by Brahamdagh Bugti, grandson of the late Nawab Akbar Bugti. Most members of the BRA are the erstwhile fighters of Nawab Bugti's private militia which he used to crush the internal rebellions within his tribe and also in armed conflicts against the Marri tribe. Most of the violent activities of this group are confined to the Bugti areas. However, a few incidents in the adjoining districts of Naseerabad, Jafarabad, and Quetta have also been claimed by this organization.



Public discontent, rising militancy, violent insurgent tactics, and a convincingly intricate arrangement of political biases and interests raise a series of challenges for policymakers trying to build and maintain peace in the province. Insurgents always target and establish themselves in areas where the state's writ is relatively weak and the rule

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of law absent. They then gradually inflate the capacity of their organization through building related networks and support capabilities and by capitalizing on the sympathies of the local public. Due to lacklustre government responses to the problems of Balochistan, the insurgency in the province has always given an appearance of state-periphery tension where the federation treats one of its own units as a peripheral part. Many scholars think that the shape and intensity to which the present chaos has risen has to do a great deal with the immensely transformed social factors within Pakistan. Random suppressive measures in the past decades along with the continued neglect of people's rights have increased the level of bitterness among the common Baloch. The establishment of military cantonements in the province, though a federal matter under the purview of defence, should have been handled more prudently through a process of consultation. People and their political leadership must see the complete process as a mutually beneficial development essential for their protection and security.

Since accession, the successive governments have not been able to fully understand the centuries-old culture and complexities of the tribal set-up of Balochistan. Their policies remained inconsistent and variable. Frequently, the decadent demands of a few Baloch Sardars were acknowledged without logic and sometimes governments came to a 'daggers-drawn' status against these Sardars over petty issues. As a result, a few selected tribal chiefs became used to lavish lifestyles funded by government perks. Whenever the government wanted to put a check on these grants and perks, they began eroding the writ of the state under the slogan of 'Baloch rights'. All past uprisings were able to find some foreign sympathizers who continued to fuel the situation to serve their own interests. The

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current turmoil in the Baloch and Brahvi areas of Balochistan has discernible signs of foreign interference and sponsorship. Though the economic backwardness and development lag is a significant contributory factor in the intensification of insurgency in Balochistan, it is not the sole explanation for it. Other than the legitimate political struggle of the Baloch leaders for the genuine demands of provincial autonomy and development rights, a dissident group is being exploited to fuel the environment through an armed struggle by regional and international stakeholders. Many known reprobates and conduits of heinous crimes are hiding behind the refuge of political asylum in Britain and Switzerland. Research scholar, Michel Chossudovsky remarks, 'In the current geopolitical context, the separatist movement is in the process of being hijacked by foreign powers...'.²¹

During all the insurgencies in Balochistan, the political parties have hardly played their role to accord priority to the enduring crisis and raise Baloch concerns of deprivation and disregard at the national level. The ruling parties have not acknowledged the gravity of the situation and also, regrettably, the opposition has overlooked the Balochistan issue. During the All-Parties Conference held in 2007 to formulate a consensual plan of action to deal with the different problems faced by Pakistan, the Balochistan issue was not even a part of the agenda. This was indicative of the government's role and attitude of the lack of seriousness with which the various regimes in Pakistan have been trying to deal with national integration and coherence.

Insurgency in Balochistan needs to be understood

²¹ Professor Michel Chossudovsky, *The Destabilization of Pakistan*, available at <http://globalresearch.ca/the-destabilization-of-pakistan/7705>.

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differently. In many ways, it could be called a very ordinary form of insurgency. However, the government needs to comprehend that a prolonged, simmering conflict in the province could pose a big threat to the overall nationhood. A conventional version of unconventional responses to this insurgency might, therefore, not be in order since a protracted insurgency has a huge potential to threaten political stability. Contemporary insurgency has, over periods of time and experimentation, undergone elementary transformation in its strategic perspective, dynamics, and tactics. Handling this situation makes it necessary for Pakistan's federal and provincial governments to espouse an exceptional approach towards counterinsurgency. The real danger posed by insurgency is the unrelenting and simmering state of divergence which leads to political decline and correlated socio-political ethos. Hence, a long drawn-out state of variance is the real danger and not the insurgent victory in an odd battle. Voices from Balochistan are a blend of old and new demands. Older demands revolved around gaining provincial autonomy, a check on the exploitation of mineral resources, and addressing the lack of development. Ever since the beginning of a new millennium, new grievances have surfaced which voice concerns regarding 'missing persons.' A few nationalists allege that the state is waging a silent war against them through the intelligence agencies. Baloch Pakhtuns have never been part of the violent crimes against the state or civilians. They enjoy good relations with ethnic Baloch Hazaras and even the settlers. While they may empathize with Baloch complaints, they have always eschewed, and often denounced, the violence by its perpetrators. This phenomenon can be defined as the basic difference between the Baloch and Pakhtun way of doing politics in Balochistan. Despite having some genuine

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reservations, they have never resorted to militancy. It is for this reason that many of the settlers, who could not afford to leave their businesses in Balochistan, moved to Pakhtun areas to look for security for their families. Despite being thirty percent of the provincial population, the Pakhtuns have no reserved quota in the government and public jobs. Their abstinence from violence has often harmed their rights and even the Haqooq-e-Balochistan Package has hardly anything for them.

The Pakhtuns, along with the Hazaras, have been the backbone of commerce in Balochistan. They have maintained good relations with all the ethnic and religious communities living in Balochistan. Though there is a clear-cut demarcation of Pakhtun and Baloch habitat areas, the Pakhtuns have never seriously voiced the need for a separate province for themselves. However, with mounting political pressure to have more provinces in recent years, it is quite probable that the Baloch Pakhtuns may also become more politically motivated and demand a separate province based on Pakhtun-dominated areas.

There are several large refugee camps close to the Pak-Afghan border where thousands of Afghan families have lived for decades. These are ideal hideouts and breeding grounds for terrorists and violent, armed organizations. Located perilously close to the border in extremely difficult terrain, no well-thought-out mechanism exists to scrutinize their activities in a cohesive manner. Afghan refugees living in these camps for decades are not eager to go back to their homeland due to the deteriorating law and order situation in Afghanistan and better economic opportunities within Pakistan. Along with additional pressure on Pakistan's economy, their presence has complicated the security environment in Balochistan.

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Violence in Balochistan is not a plain conflict between two parties. Historical developments, challenges, and mistrust that emerged as a result of the accession of the Kalat State, demographic changes during the Soviet-Afghan war, and the role of international players during the US war on terror makes it a complex conflict system.²² Carefully planned attacks against government forces and installations and efforts for ethnic cleansing directed against the non-Baloch population cannot be regarded as simple acts of terrorism. These acts speak of a clear design of integrated insurgency. Like most of the insurgencies, it has a formal wing that coordinates supportive activities from abroad. These supportive activities include the inflow of essentially required funds, the supply of weapons and ammunition, and the periodic projection of an anti-state image on international forums.

There are many conceptual frameworks that explain why a particular group adopts violence to attain political ends. Scholars suggest that it all begins with social movements, people's grievances, and individuals' unfulfilled needs which form their political aspirations. Grievances may or may not be reasonable or even legitimate. However, it is a strategic choice to break away from peaceful demands and choose violence as a method of action.²³

²² "Conflict in Balochistan and State Responses," *Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies* (Islamabad, 2010).

²³ Thomas A. Marks, Sebastian V. Gorka, and Robert Sharp, *Getting the Next War Right: Beyond Population-centric Warfare* (Washington DC: National Defense University, 2010), 83.

CHAPTER 5

A VICTIM OF STATE NEGLECT

Balochistan's history, since before the partition of British India, has been characterized by an unending duel of narratives and counter-narratives and explaining *casus belli* of the perennial conflicts in dissimilar tones and textures. The long-standing misunderstandings which date back to Balochistan's accession to the state of Pakistan have steered the province to its present chaos. The accusations, which prompted the crisis, recount the economic, ethnic, and political expectations and aspirations of the masses. Modest efforts have been undertaken by successive regimes to handle and settle those issues. However, the grievances and sense of deprivation have continued to worsen and have boosted sporadic rebellions and unrests. Ever since Balochistan's accession to the country, there has been a total absence of a problem-resolution mechanism for the people of Balochistan. Though such a mechanism is also hardly visible in other provinces, it requires special and urgent attention in the case of Balochistan. A semi-autonomous state which was integrated with Pakistan based on the promise of fundamental rights merited greater endeavours to raise the living standards to match the levels of the other provinces. There have been sporadic military interventions because of which the democratic process could not continue seamlessly in the country. However, during reasonably long democratic regimes as well, Balochistan has not been given its due share of attention. Despite

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significant natural wealth, Balochistan is still the most under-privileged province in the country and its rightful political and economic grievances have for long not been acknowledged and addressed. Jinnah was mindful of the inequalities of the British era inherited by the people of Balochistan. He thus pledged to address those old grievances. During his address at the first Sibi Darbar on 14 February 1948, he promised 'the same position and the same political status within the polity of Pakistan as were open to their brethren in other provinces'. Decades of grave political and social disregard has created the whole issue. Pakistan's future strategic standing and its economic leap forward are dependent upon the prosperity and development of Balochistan. By the end of the first decade of the new millennium, seven decades of neglect were emerging in the form of expanding fault lines within a fractured society.¹ Due to lacklustre state responses to the problems of Balochistan, the provincial unrest has always given an appearance of the 'step-son treatment'. The kind of shape the present conflict has taken has a great deal to do with another immensely transformed factor within Pakistan. The phenomenal global electronic media revolution has resulted in a better understanding of the situation by the public and has provided disproportionate exposure to both militants and the leaders of the insurgency.

This electronic boom includes both tele-media and social media tools.

The Balochistan issue can be termed a resource-based conflict as well as an identity issue.² Local leadership feels that provincial resources have been exploited for the benefit

¹ Zahid Latif Mirza, "Balochistan-Past, Present and Future", *NDU Journal*, 2013, Islamabad, p. 24.

² Sardar Akhtar Mengal, interview with the Author, 21 May 2018.

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of other provinces. Some nationalist leaders feel that the unique culture and traditions of the Baloch people have not been given due consideration by the state while working out development projects in the province. This apprehension results in resistance to new ideas of development and change. Historically, the federation has largely displayed disrespect to the economic inequality of its people. Even the rectification measures for the reconstruction of national ideology are flawed as those have been based on crude mechanical concepts of national unity, mostly reliant on commonality of religion. The ruling regimes spent most of their energies on trivial political self-interest while neglecting peoples' social and economic grievances. Consequently, despite having a common religion, Baloch society finds itself fractured by way of fault lines like sects and sub-sects.

Historically, the relationship between the central and provincial governments has appeared to some as a patron-client bond. Uneasy and twisted, this association has never been nurtured beyond dependency levels. Many feel that the federal government's motives are that the province should have limited access to the capacity for generating revenues so that it is able to generate revenues adequate only for meeting its preliminary provincial needs.³ For the rest of the province's development needs, it should always have to look to the centre. Economic incentives are often a more important part of the problem-solving mechanism, especially when the aggrieved party has economic deprivation-related complaints.

One of the main resentments that the Balochs have against the centre is that the natural resources, especially gas,

³ Marco Mezzera, Safiya Aftab, *'Pakistan State-Society Analysis'*, IFP/Clingendael, January 2009, available at http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2009/20090300_cru_pakistan_mezzera.pdf.

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is being unduly exploited. A resource on which the people of the province ought to have the first right is being exploited by other provinces, especially Punjab. The people of Balochistan were the last of the beneficiaries of the natural gas being extracted from Balochistan which was utilized by the rest of the country. Ironically, the district from where the gas is being extracted received its share of gas many years after other parts of country. Moreover, the district was not even given its due share of job opportunities in the exploration project. The well-paid top jobs and managerial slots were given to individuals from outside the Sui district and Balochistan while only temporary, un-skilled labour was recruited locally. Also, no serious effort was made towards building technical training institutions or developing human resource to benefit the local population. Till very late, the province had not been paid its due share of revenue out of the provision of natural gas to other parts of the country. In comparison to other gas-producing provinces, Balochistan got fewer shares of the revenue. This unfair treatment has caused much resentment.

There are a few inherent flaws in the discriminatory economic system. As a result, the socio-economic development and modernization have also been erratic and unequal for various regions. This inequality has given birth to mounting economic pressures and a sense of deprivation amongst the poor masses of Balochistan. They consider the current revenue collection and fund-allocation mechanisms faulty and discriminatory and this adds to their feeling of unjust treatment by the centre. In comparison, they see a much advanced and opportunity-based structure in other provinces of Pakistan. The complaints of the local people about the lacklustre pace of development cannot be disputed as not only mega development but also the basic necessities

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of life are not provided properly.⁴ While it may be wrong to search for solutions from a solely economic standpoint, in such poverty-stricken areas, economic incentives often prove to be a more important part of the problem-solving mechanism. The state's reluctance to consent to peoples' right to play a significant role in the decision-making process was also a major contributory factor in increasing antipathy. Some of the secessionist political movements took advantage of the public's sense of alienation by looking for support from militant organizations.

Pakistan's political system, by default, supports feudalism and elitism. Hence, it provides little opportunity for the middle class to flourish and assume leadership roles.⁵ Until a few years ago, there was hardly any middle class in Balochistan. However, the complexion is fast changing. Social and political forces are at work and the Baloch youth is readily accepting the needs of current times by embracing new technology and scientific knowledge. The power of social changes will potentially soon begin to challenge the tribal system. For the new generation, more important issues are inter-province socio-economic equality and opportunities to seek better education and jobs. They feel the need for Baloch society to open up and rightfully expose Baloch culture to the outside world.⁶ The older Baloch generation links the exposure of provincial wealth and geo-strategic importance with the misleading perception that it would result in the elimination of the Baloch identity. They

⁴ Pakistan Bureau of Statistics Islamabad, "Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement Survey (2014–15)," March 2016, p.16.

⁵ Senator Sana Ullah Baloch, National Party, interview with the Author, 23 March 2018, Islamabad.

⁶ Asad Rehman, (Director Programmes, Sungi Foundation), interview by Malik Siraj Akbar, "The Redefined Dimensions of Baloch Nationalist Movement" (USA: Xlibris Corporation, 2011).

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feel that over-exposure to economic development and intermingling with other ethnic groups would reduce the chances of survival for their language, culture, and identity.⁷ Their spirit stems from the persistent economic and social discrepancies among provinces that have been aggravated by the violations of human rights, sometimes by the state, but more often by criminal gangs and terrorists.

The eruption of mega development projects carried out in the province during the first decade of the new millennium added yet another dimension to the concerns of Baloch leadership who felt threatened by the flood of investors from other provinces. The influx of populations from other provinces was fiercely resisted owing to the fear of the non-Baloch population diluting the Baloch majority.⁸ The Baloch youth, who are better educated and aware of their future obligations, resist demographic changes in the province resulting from the development of mega projects in Balochistan. They resent people from other provinces coming to seek jobs and business opportunities. There is a fear in the local population that, in the absence of a comprehensive law, the Baloch majority might turn into a minority in its own homeland as a result of mass-scale demographic shifts in the region. A common accusation is that Islamabad-driven and controlled development projects like the Gwadar Port are imperfectly conceived with doubtful intentions and would thus disturb the demography of the province by resulting in a large influx of outsiders,

⁷ Dr Abdul Maalick, (President National Party), interview by Abdul Basit and Ali Abbas in Islamabad, September 2010, transcript PIPS Resource Center and Library, Islamabad.

⁸ Umbreen Javaid, "Concerns of Balochistan: Effects and Implications on Federation of Pakistan", *Journal of Political Studies*, Vol. 1, Issue 2, Islamabad, p. 115.

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turning the Baloch into an insignificant minority in their own homeland.⁹ Their fears have a *casus belli* in the form of a trail of actions and forgotten pledges that have eroded the confidence of the Baloch people.

The Gwadar Port project came under severe criticism at the hands of a few Baloch sub-nationalist groups. The Baloch Students' Organization (BSO) opposed the project claiming that its construction would endanger the Baloch identity and turn the Baloch people into a minority in their own province. A few learned Baloch leaders argue that, in a province of ten million people, the coastal city is being designed to cater to a population of five million and, hence, the likelihood that people would migrate from other provinces and disturb Balochistan's demographics. As a natural phenomenon, economic development attracts population influxes and, sometimes, unusual demographic shifts take place. Population the world over has seen modernization and industrialization as opportunities to attain prosperity and thus migration from relatively impoverished regions towards wealthier regions has occurred regularly throughout history. In order to benefit from the trade opportunities in Karachi and the big cities of Punjab, the Baloch also migrated from their native areas and are found living in Sindh and Punjab in large numbers. By way of voluntary displacement to other areas, the Baloch are already turning into a minority in their own homeland. Even before the onset of mega development projects, a significant percentage of them have been living in Punjab and Sindh.

Robert Wirsing remarks in his very insightful research, *Baloch Nationalism and the Geopolitics of Energy Resources*,

⁹ "Balochis of Pakistan: On the Margins of History," The Foreign Policy Centre London, available at <http://fpc.org.uk/fsblob/817.pdf>.

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Two important facts should be kept in mind with regard to Baloch demography. One is that many Pakistani Baloch, 23.9 percent of the total if we extrapolate from the figures above, live outside of Balochistan, especially in Sindh. The second is that the Baloch may already be a minority in Balochistan or they are almost certainly heading in that direction. The fact is that modernization, globalization, Pakistan's steadily rising population, and the massive forces of change unleashed by economic development are threatening to leave the Baloch far behind. They are among the poorest, least educated, and least urbanized of Pakistan's population; and they are too easily passed over or pushed aside in the highly competitive social and economic environments now gaining traction in Pakistan.

While this is in part, of course, a structural problem not lending itself readily to policy manipulation, circumstances did not arise unassisted by the government whose policies have almost never been designed to give serious attention to Baloch problems.¹⁰

President Zia ul-Haq's regime is associated with Pakistan's brave fight that checked the Soviet's southward expansion drive. However, that struggle resulted in severe ill effects which deeply penetrated Pakistani society the effects of which can still be felt. Amongst those evil effects, religious and sectarian extremism and intolerance created a deep imprint in the shape of an ugly scar. Like other provinces, Balochistan was equally affected by that menace. Attacks

¹⁰ Robert Wirsing, *Baloch Nationalism and the Geopolitics of Energy Resources: The Changing Context of Separatism in Pakistan*, p. 34.

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on Shia processions intensified and the peace-loving Hazara community was brutally targeted by militant organizations like the Lashkar-e- Jhangvi. A visible surge in those sectarian attacks was noticed in 2012 when massive suicide bomb attacks were conducted against Hazaras in Quetta. There was a strong perception amongst law enforcement officials in Quetta that the Punjab Government was also partly responsible for the gravity of the situation. When public pressure in Punjab demanded strong action against violent sectarian outfits such as the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, the Punjab Government did not act wisely. Instead of eliminating the militants in their native towns in southern Punjab, the government's velvet-glove approach allowed safe exit to the militants who ultimately found refuge in and around Quetta. Since those militant organizations' funding from abroad was dependent upon the terror they performed inside Pakistan, in Hazaras, they found as easy target.

The Balochistan crisis, if not a home-grown one, was at least a home-exacerbated one and could be tackled through correcting political and developmental priorities. A more serious issue was the involvement of foreign hands in that insurgency. Hostile agencies have actively contributed towards aggravating the security situation by exploiting the fault lines in political, economic, and social mechanisms.¹¹ Though the economic and development backwardness was a significant factor in intensifying the insurgency in Balochistan, it was not the sole explanation for it. Other than the legitimate political struggle of Baloch leaders for provincial autonomy and rights

¹¹ Senator Sana Ullah Baloch, National Party, interview with Author, 23 March 2018, Islamabad; and Zobaidda Jalal Changaiz, Federal Minister for Defence Production, interview with the Author, 29 March 2018, Quetta.

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to developmental works, a dissident group was being exploited to add fuel to the fire through armed struggles by regional and international stakeholders. Many known conduits of heinous crimes in Balochistan are hiding behind the refuge of political asylum in Britain and Switzerland. However, the blame for the present situation cannot be placed wholly on external interference. A great number of mistakes have also been committed by the state and its organs. A continued neglect of people's rights and random suppressive measures in the past few years contributed greatly towards raising the level of antipathy in the common Baloch. The Baloch narrative against the state is based on concrete apprehensions which need to be addressed through a well thought-out strategy.

During the rule of Pervez Musharraf, the Baloch developed a perception that, alongside ongoing mega development projects, the construction of new military garrisons in Balochistan would suffocate the political environment and create an atmosphere of military domination. The establishment of military cantonments in the province, though a federal matter under the purview of defence, should have been handled more prudently through a process of consultation. People and their political leadership must see the whole process as mutually beneficial.

In several aspects, Balochistan is the least developed province of Pakistan. The people of Balochistan are living under the lowest indicators of progress in many of the basic fields of life. A broad look at these graphs should serve as an eye opener for the authorities. According to statistics from the Economic Survey of Pakistan, Balochistan has the lowest overall literacy rate.¹² Similarly, with respect to male and

¹² Pakistan Educational Statistics 2015–16, released by Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, Govt of Pakistan, p. 25.

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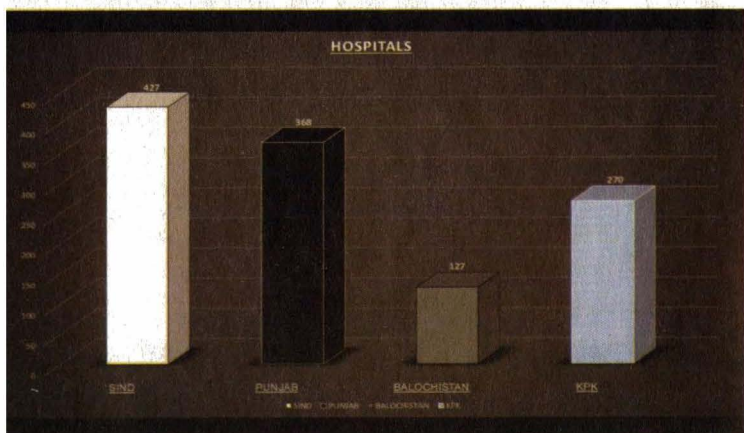
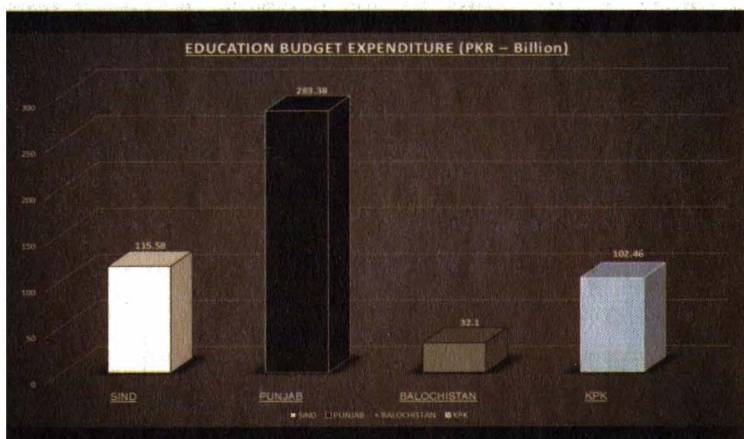
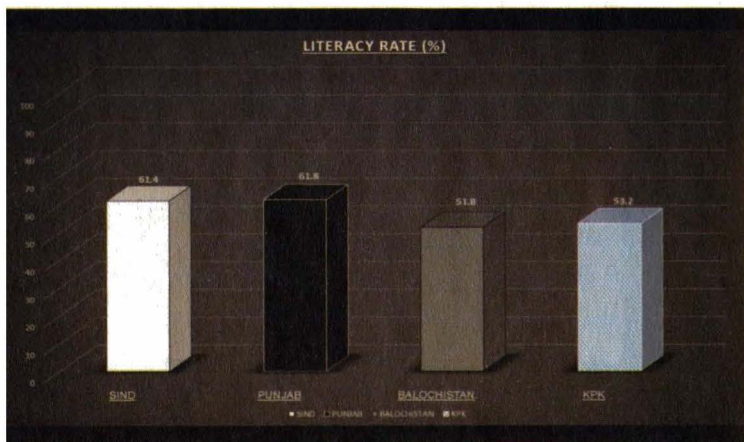
female education, it stands at the lowest rung of the ladder. Balochistan also has the lowest graph in the Gender Parity Index (GPI) ranking and has the most meagre presence of private educational institutes. Balochistan lags behind in the availability of other essential services and, thus, the province has the weakest marker for peoples' basic needs. The transport system and road infrastructure are in a shambles. Neither the federal nor the provincial government is concerned by the absence of essential services staff in remote areas of the province. In the poverty-stricken interior districts of Balochistan, most government buildings look haunted. The dispensaries, schools, communications, and civic service offices all suffer from the same dilemma.

The people of Balochistan endure hardships on account of inadequate communications infrastructure and are not well connected through trade and commerce to various towns and cities. Despite the long inter-city distances, the transport system is old and insufficient. Though recent developments in road infrastructure are likely to ameliorate the situation, Balochistan requires elaborate railway connectivity with other provinces in addition to improvements in intra-city road infrastructure. Inadequate connectivity affects every walk of life including education, health, and trade.

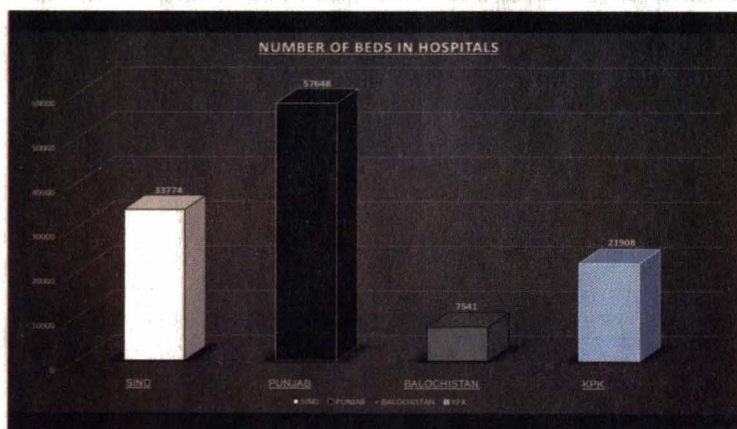
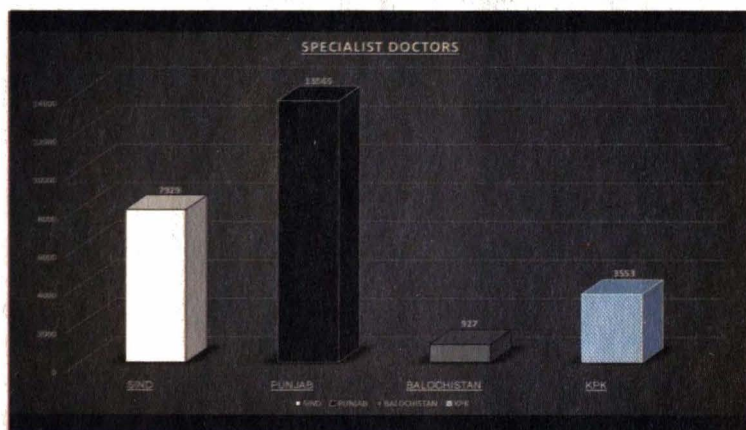
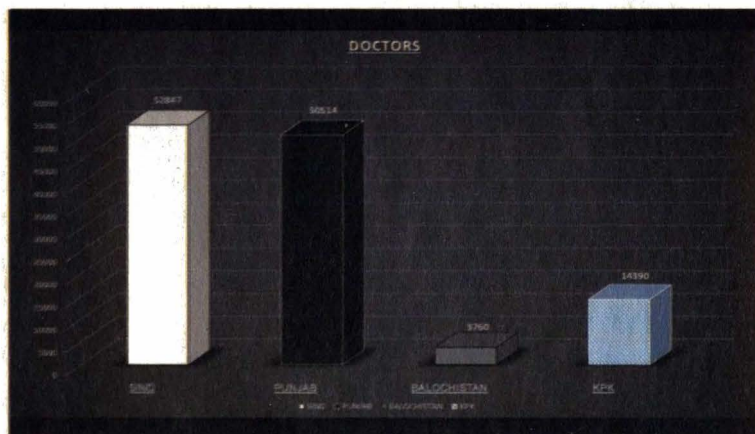
A lack of access to good education is another reality faced by the people of Balochistan. In every facet of lower to higher education, Balochistan lags behind other provinces owing to the sheer negligence of governments at the centre and in the province.¹³

¹³ Report on 'Literacy and Education – Govt of Pakistan', available at <http://balochistan.gov.pk/misc/MISC-4>.

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Every year, a huge portion of the development budget is wasted due to poor planning and bureaucratic mismanagement. More often than not, this mismanagement is intentional with ulterior motives. The finance department keeps the execution of developmental projects pending till close to the termination of the financial year. Thereafter, once all concerned departments have been adequately ‘managed’, the amount is released to them with an already agreed upon ‘kickback formula’.

Economy-related political considerations are more serious in Balochistan as compared to other provinces. The problem has further been compounded because of poor governance and rampant corruption. Politicians and bureaucrats try to make maximum use of their tenure in public office to make illegal money. Despite facing utter humiliation and insult before the nation and the world, a few individuals in politics and the bureaucracy continue hurting the economy of the province. A recent example is that of the Finance Advisor to the government of Balochistan, Khalid Hamayun Langov, and the Secretary Finance, Mushtaq Raisani who were reportedly caught red-handed with hundreds of millions of rupees in Raisani’s house. The trial is underway and it can be assumed that the alleged embezzlement could not have been possible without the connivance of the province’s senior political leadership. The large amount was supposedly meant to be siphoned out of the country.

In contrast to the other provinces, the percentage of the population living in a state of deprivation is the highest in Balochistan.¹⁴ Women are an oppressed class in Baloch society. Right from childhood, girls are given low priority with regards to attaining their basic rights. Barring a low

¹⁴ UNDP Development Advocate Pakistan, Vol. 3, Issue 2.

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percentage of families, girls are not sent to good schools and seldom get the opportunity to go beyond secondary school. The number of educational institutions in the province is meager. The federal government has contributed to the adverse effects of the prevailing local administrative system and the traditional Baloch political system by strengthening the hands of Sardars. The lack of basic facilities, education, and the absence of social development keeps Baloch people entrapped in the political and social structures forced upon them for centuries.

There appears to be an over-centralization of policy-making and execution of authority concerning development projects even for those which would normally be the responsibility of the province. This anomalous practice creates huge gaps between the planning and execution of projects. Both military and civilian regimes have been enforcing an authoritarian version of federalism on provinces especially in Balochistan. The Baloch are grossly underrepresented in federal jobs especially in the civil services and are, thus, deprived of a strong voice in institutional decision-making that could shape their social and economic lives. The weaker representation of the Baloch in federal posts has served as a catalyst for the prevailing hatred. This sense of inferiority has formed the basis of the Baloch thinking on ethno-nationalist terms and has led to their grievances towards the centre increasing progressively.

Representation in the Bureaucracy

Group	% in Bureaucracy	% of Population (1998)
Punjabi	47.9	44.15
Pathan	11.9	15.42
Muhajir	17.3	7.57
Sindhi	4.4	14.1
Baloch	0.7	3.57
Others	17.7	15.19

Source: Katharine Adeney, 2009a. The Limitations of Non-consociational Federalism: The Example of Pakistan. *Ethnopolitics*, Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 96.

The grievance related to administrative and fiscal autonomy is a genuine Baloch demand. The mineral wealth of Balochistan, if utilized on developing the province itself, can completely change the life of its inhabitants. At present, the natural resources, their distribution mechanism, and the respective revenue-share are another cause of the difficult relationship between the federal and provincial governments. Despite natural wealth, the economic output from the province is very low. Other than the inherent negative effects of a naïve and corrupt administrative system, Balochistan also suffers from being a rain-deficit area.¹⁵ The full benefits of fertile land could not be exploited due to the lack of rainfall.

Balochistan has transformed from a loose clan-based confederacy to a full-fledged province of Pakistan. The socio-political disorder encountered since then has had substantial consequences on the Baloch and non-Baloch segments of the province's society. These sufferings have lasting effects and have caused psycho-emotional damage to Baloch society. The psychological trauma has carved out the contours of

¹⁵ *Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences*, "Agricultural Productivity in Balochistan Province of Pakistan – A Geographical Analysis", pp. 292--8.

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the fundamental relationship between the federation and province which needs to be seen through social, political, and economic lenses to draw concrete inferences. A real change is hard to imagine unless the true representatives of the people are empowered. The state of primary and higher education is bleak. A comparative evaluation of the basic facilities available in the provinces is an eye-opener and it is not difficult to conclude why the Baloch political leadership and youth have grave concerns about inter-provincial discrimination.

Provincial Comparison

Social Indicators	Provinces			
	Sindh	Punjab	Balochistan	KP
Literacy Rate	61.4%	61.8%	51.8%	53.2%
Net Enrolment Rate	53%	61%	47%	51%
PSDP for Education	Rs. 4.5 Bn	Rs. 10.4 Bn	Rs. 1.6 Bn	Rs. 9.3 Bn
Hospitals	427	368	127	270
Doctors	52,847	50,514	3,760	14,390
Specialist Doctors (out of the total number of doctors)	7,929	13,565	927	3,553
Infant Mortality Rate / 1000	68	77	82	63
Unemployment Rate	14%	19%	34%	26%
Access to Drinking Water	43%	51%	20%	45%
Access to Sanitation	67%	79%	31%	76%

Sources: Official website of the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. Social and Living Standards Measurements Survey (PSLM) 2014–15, Labour Force Survey 2013–14, Academy of Educational Planning and Management, Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training 2015 Report.

Comparison of Healthcare Facilities

Healthcare Facilities	Provinces			
	Sindh	Punjab	Balochistan	KP
Hospitals	427	368	127	270
Dispensaries	2912	1325	567	915
Maternity & Child Welfare Centers	221	280	96	131
Number of Beds in Hospitals	33,774	57,648	7,541	21,908

Source: Pakistan Statistical Year Book 2016.

The present dismal state of the province can be attributed to the disappointing performance and lack of foresight by successive regimes at the federal and provincial levels. At the federal level, none of the political parties could develop a long-term vision and strategies for understanding and resolving core issues. At the provincial level, the government has been led largely by hybrid coalition governments who would rather serve their own interests than help the poor. Most of the non-local qualified teachers have left the province due to the brutal ethnic cleansing conducted by militants. Most of the universities in Balochistan were practically made non-functional mainly because of the poor law and order situation and threats by militants. The ever-swelling numbers of youth present an enormous challenge to the state of Pakistan particularly in Balochistan. The existing educational system in mainstream government educational institutions does not equip the youth with the requisite competence and skills to earn a respectable living for themselves and their families. This has led to a growing and continuous inflow of half-educated and unskilled youth in an already squeezed job market. These

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unemployed youth are vulnerable to hostile propaganda and the activities of foreign intelligence agencies which dole out handsome amounts of money to entrap them. Hence the task of providing better education, training, and job opportunities to the youth in Balochistan cannot be taken casually.

The development funds allocated to tribal chiefs by the government seldom reached their actual destinations. The purported development projects they executed were in no way meant to uplift the quality of life of the general public. In fact, they never consulted the community before commencing these projects. The underhand intent was mostly to plunder the funds for their own sake. Any attempt by the provincial or federal governments to channel the flow of funds through a system of checks and balances was always furiously resisted and projected as an attempt to harness the authority of the traditional system. The federal government's failure and disinclination to recognize and handle the issues for a protracted period is one of the key reasons for the prevailing crises.

Federal governments have continually endeavoured to institute a potent central authority and, in the process, ignored the basic development rights of people and created a permanent sense of deprivation. The provincial government is equally to blame for the neglect as it failed to represent the genuine interests of the people of Balochistan. The elected representatives of the province have displayed a feudal approach and ignored the genuine needs of their people. Instead of ensuring security for their constituencies, some of them have often exploited the law to their own advantage and supported unlawful activities in the province by issuing directives to the local law and order authorities.

The media's 'over-activism' also gave impetus to

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the growing anxiety in Balochistan. In order to increase their ratings, a few media houses went headlong into hasty analytical reporting in which security and intelligence agencies were especially targeted. Many of Balochistan's problems stem from impetuous reporting and jumping to conclusions based on distorted facts to suit the perception of a particular segment. This resulted in lowering the morale of security forces as the media gave exceptional screen time to the militants who were able to reach out to the masses and convey their convoluted agenda. The state authorities frequently alleged that, instead of portraying the true picture and playing a positive role towards reconstruction, the print and electronic media was reinforcing misperceptions about the role of security agencies and portraying Balochistan as a lost case. In the name of freedom of speech, runaway dissident Baloch leaders were provided much communication space. Media houses belonging to hostile countries were ever ready to cash-in on the opportunity. They were quick to exploit this internal fissure and reported all ills to the world by referring to the reports from Pakistani media houses. There were many instances where direct blame was put on the security forces for negligence or, at times, high handedness. However, the media seldom highlighted the sacrifices made by the security and intelligence institutions.

Announcing packages and reforms would do little good if not accompanied by political will. The 1973 Constitution was a complete document formulated with popular accord. That document spoke of provincial autonomy and equal development in all the provinces of Pakistan. If the constitution is implemented in letter and spirit, Baloch grievances would be fundamentally addressed. The inequality of treatment is felt not only by the youth but also by the senior political

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leadership of the province. Speaking to a learned forum, the former Chief Minister of Balochistan, Dr Abdul Maalick Baloch, maintained that the Higher Education Commission (HEC) spent only Rs 20,000 per university student per annum in Balochistan whereas, in other provinces, the amount spent was Rs 140,000.¹⁶ Grievences stemming from the lack of investment in the development of human resource in the province would harm the cause of national integration.

In the absence of appropriate political processes, even the most sincere government efforts have the potential to be seen as exploitative measures. The initial drawings of the Gwadar Port also caused anxiety amongst the Baloch. Initially, the port was conceived as a mere trans-shipment facility meant mainly to serve as a conduit for Central Asian energy resources. It was envisioned that the port would generate economic activity and result in progress in Balochistan and adjoining regions.¹⁷ The government then prepared a master development plan visualizing the future expansion and growth of Gwadar city and so land was allocated for industrial and residential purposes. Speculation regarding the forthcoming economic boom and the reduction of travel time from Karachi because of the construction of roads quadrupled the population of Gwadar within a period of five years. The Baloch were initially happy about the commercial activities and were aligned with the construction of Gwadar Port but subsequent developments, including the influx of large numbers of people from other provinces and the expropriation of land by the influential land

¹⁶ Dr Abdul Maalick Baloch, President, National Party Balochistan, speaking at a Roundtable Conference organized by the Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies in Islamabad on 4 February 2011.

¹⁷ *"Balochis of Pakistan: On the Margins of History,"* The Foreign Policy Centre London, available at <http://fpc.org.uk/fsblob/817.pdf>.

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mafia, turned them against the project.¹⁸ This obviously raised an alarm for the youth and intelligentsia alike who feared that the Baloch would turn into a minority in their own province. The Baloch also objected to the idea of connecting Gwadar Port with Karachi, a port city in another province, while there would be no connection of the Gwadar Port with major cities in Balochistan. In that case, Gwadar would have only remained a supporting port for the Karachi port operations. The Baloch also complained that the construction of the port would not benefit the local people as most of the laborers and technicians were brought in and employed from other provinces.¹⁹

Historically, the centre has not meted out fair treatment to the people of Balochistan which has resulted in their growing mistrust of the government's intentions related to this mega project.²⁰ Some feel that the Gwadar project and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is another attempt to gain control over the natural resources of Balochistan after the exploitation of Sui gas.²¹ Coupled with this perception, another narrative circulating in the province is that the construction of Gwadar Port would lead to a rise in population along the Makran coast and, hence, Gwadar would have a better share of members being sent to parliament compared to the rest of Balochistan. As a result, they felt the Baloch would not be represented adequately

¹⁸ Priyashree Andley, "*Balochistan A Backgrounder*", New Delhi, Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, 2006, p. 5.

¹⁹ "*Balochis of Pakistan: On the Margins of History*," The Foreign Policy Centre London, available at, <http://fpc.org.uk/fsblob/817.pdf>.

²⁰ Interview of Ataullah Mengal quoted in *The Nation*, 28 January 2005. p. 2.

²¹ Aziz Sanghur, "USA will use Gwadar for military purpose", available at www.balochiunity.org cited on 18 Jan. 2005.

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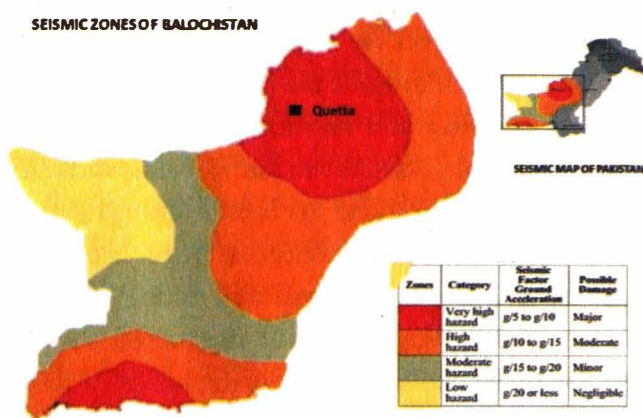
and proportionately in the federal government. The Baloch also feared that large foreign investments and entertainment projects would attract alien cultures threatening Baloch social and cultural values.

Balochistan falls under a vulnerable seismic belt and is in an earthquake-prone area. The people of Balochistan have suffered many destructive earthquakes which have not only destroyed social structures in many regions but have also adversely affected civic life and the economy. However, despite these disasters, the preparations and after-effects are still tackled by provincial and district level organizations. Rather than proactive, preventive steps, disaster management authorities focus more on reactive measures essentially in the domain of damage control. People and infrastructure in Balochistan are immensely vulnerable to the hazards of earthquakes. This vulnerability is greatly enhanced on account of the limited focus on organisational structures. In September 2013, a massive earthquake (8.3 on the Richter scale) struck the southern districts of Awaran and Kech and destroyed every standing structure in the region. Hundreds of human lives were lost and there were huge livestock losses. The relief workers were witness to the absence of civic facilities in the entire area even before the tragedy. The government had no writ and the situation was being exploited by insurgent organizations and criminal gangs.

In the Awaran and Kech districts of southern Balochistan, poverty and under-development are pronounced and the signs of state neglect are visible for miles. There is an acute dearth of government- provided civic services and the effective enforcement of state law. Soon after the earthquake, instead of state rescue mechanisms coming into effect, it was the military that arrived on the scene and started rescue

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operations. Military units stationed at Khuzdar, the second biggest city of the Balochistan province, were immediately tasked with moving to the earthquake-affected area. Some of this move was undertaken by road, some by helicopters, and some also on foot. The foot movement was not undertaken because of any shortage of transport but because the area north-east of Mashkai was littered with land mines and Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs).



Army units arriving in the area reported massive devastation and widespread disease because of the non-availability of clean drinking water. Homeless people were stranded all over the narrow strip of the Awaran valley and had no shelter in which to sleep and store whatever was left of their household. There was no healthcare staff in government dispensaries and no police to control crimes. Army units moving into the area had taken along field hospital facilities which were immediately set up in the available infrastructure. Minor injuries were treated while the seriously injured were flown to Quetta and Karachi in army helicopters. The devastation was enormous and relief and rehabilitation appeared to be a tall order. There was immense desolation but nature had opened

up the situation in Balochistan to the outside world and had provided an opportunity to make patchwork efforts on the tattered security mosaic of Balochistan.

The governance challenges in the province have profound social causes which have a direct link with the political and administrative system prevailing in the province. Since the basic social and administrative structure revolves around tribal fidelity, politically elected representatives generally pave their way through the power of their tribal influence and financial strength rather than on the basis of free and fair elections. The public approach towards the political process, therefore, reveals a lack of trust and very low expectations. Provincial leadership has been insensitive to the problems and sufferings of the Baloch population and has been resisting development projects based on political concerns. Their actual concern was that the allotted funds should flow through them instead of under the direct supervision of the federal government. The people of Balochistan suffer at the hands of insensitive leadership both at the federal and provincial levels. While the federation wants to utilize Balochistan's resources, it is not ready to utilize the potential of the Baloch people. The Baloch feel that they have been leased out to the feudals and Sardars for better administrative control while their basic rights have been disregarded. Over the years, the people of Balochistan have not been able to send their true representatives to the Provincial Assembly. There is an overt sense prevailing in the province that elections are 'managed and rigged' in an organized manner to ensure that only establishment-friendly people, who would remain insensitive to the feelings of the people and serve as 'yes men' for the establishment, get to the floor of the assembly. At many forums, hard core Baloch leaders have expressed similar views in the Constituent

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Assembly concerning the state of Balochistan politics and the representation issue. More than anything else, Balochistan needs an efficient governance mechanism and a transparent structure to deliver their political ownership in tangible terms. Economy-related political considerations are more serious in Balochistan as compared to other provinces and the problem has been further compounded because of the poor state of governance and rampant corruption. Many in the political and bureaucratic chain have been involved in massive corruption and embezzlement of development funds owing to the lack of accountability mechanisms and a stringent monitoring regime. Corruption has been a particularly odious challenge in the province and has the potential of weakening support for the government and amplifying it instead for the militants. It has impeded economic growth in the public and private sectors, burdened the poor, undermined the rule of law, and hurt government legitimacy. As was the case with most funds allotted for development projects in the province, the corruption of government officials and politicians led to the syphoning off of these sparse financial resources from ventures that could benefit the community towards projects that benefited only specific people or clans. The most damaging effect of corruption has been on the social foundation of Baloch society. Numerous private fishing trawlers from Karachi and other coastal areas of Sindh intrude on Balochistan's waters on a daily basis and carry out large-scale fishing without any legal basis. The provincial government raises its feeble voice against the intrusion but is not taken seriously by the Sindh government and Islamabad. This is allowed to happen with the tacit involvement of people in Balochistan's ministry of fisheries who prefer small personal gains over large revenue prospects for the province. During the most troublesome

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years of Balochistan's history, the system of governance in the government of Chief Minister Aslam Raisani was simply unfit to deliver. The functioning of parliamentary democracy in Balochistan, where all members of the legislative body except one were ministers, is itself a big question mark with corruption rampant in the entire government machinery. With hardly any room for the welfare of the common people, this charade of a democracy was a major reason for the deprivation and frustration of the people, particularly the youth. The benefits of special economic packages and the NFC Award did not go down to the common people. Millions of rupees were doled out to politicians for so-called developmental works in their areas but no visible improvement in the road network, communication infrastructure, construction of schools and colleges, provision of water, health facilities, or gas has been witnessed. Such blatant negligence and disregard has further eroded the confidence of the people in their government and the state. There are a few glaring structural flaws in the governance system of Balochistan. In fact, many think that true democracy has never been applied in the province. Individuals and parties have been coming into power based on their wealth. Senators who purchase their seats cannot be expected to contribute towards the democratic process and solve problems.²² The provincial government of Balochistan has to go beyond political affiliations in order to stop the gross misuse of power and corruption which have led to the incapacitation of state and provincial institutions, especially the bureaucracy and law enforcement agencies.

Over time, the divisive political culture, based mainly on tribal and ethnic lines, has led to deep ethnic and sectarian

²² Sana Ullah Baloch (Balochistan National Party), during a TV interview with *Dunya News*, 10 January 2018.

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fissures resulting in social turmoil and widespread crime. During the period from 2009 to 2013, a hostile tussle continued between a hyper-active judiciary and political government which, at times, resulted in bringing the administrative machinery to a standstill. The political elite became so corrupt that the culture of extortion and plunder of public money became a common phenomenon. The family of the senior-most political figure in the province was openly associated with criminal money laundering through carjackings and kidnappings. The absence of a coherent economic policy, coupled with financial mismanagement, was clearly attributable to an incompetent and dishonest political leadership. In order to keep Balochistan simmering and unstable for future benefits, collaboration was taking place with hostile intelligence agencies coupled with the sponsoring of campaigns of ethnic and sectarian target killings through Baloch armed sub-nationalist groups and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi militants and the maligning of Pakistan's law-enforcement agencies. The police and judiciary in the province are under perpetual threat resulting in their functioning and the dispensation of speedy justice being hampered. The criminals involved in heinous crimes, taking advantage of a weak judicial system, move around scot-free and go largely unpunished. Such conditions force people to take law into their own hands,

In Balochistan, the term 'settlers' is meant to identify those 'Baloch' who are ethnically neither Baloch nor Pathan. Many of these 'settlers' have been living in the province for generations. To many, this term is offensive. Strictly adhering to historical record, even ethnic Balochs are settlers as per its definition as are the Pakhtuns. Neither of these racial groups are native to Balochistan as they arrived in the region

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a few hundred years earlier. The migration of people in and out of Balochistan has been going on for at least two centuries. By the start of the twentieth century, a majority of the government employees in Balochistan were Punjabi. The middle class in the province comprises mainly the non-local communities and has been an asset to the province for many decades. These ‘settlers’ have been part of Baloch society. From menial unskilled workers to middle-class professionals, they have been working as teachers, security officers, bankers, architects, lawyers, and doctors. In fact, many of these families now consider themselves an integral part of Balochistan and resent being called ‘settlers’.

Many of the grievances of the Baloch are related to the law and order situation and the inefficacy of the provincial police. The police order governs only 6 percent of all Balochistan while 94 percent of the province is a ‘B’ area and falls under the jurisdiction of the local levies force. Since levies are recruited by the Sardars and paid through their ‘hands’, they always resist the abolition of ‘B’ areas for fear of their authority being eroded. Since the levies are dependent upon the Sardars for recruitment, salaries, and job security, they follow their whims and not the law. In the process, actual criminals are not caught and only the Sardars’ opponents are penalized. Thus the general populace remains deprived of justice.

CHAPTER 6

**THE ROLE OF THE SARDARS:
PART OF THE SOLUTION OR
THE PROBLEM?**

The story of troubles and conflicts in Balochistan could be explained in many ways. The people of this region had been kept deprived and dispossessed by the privileged ruling class for fear of losing authority over them if they received an education and were economically empowered. Over a period of time, tribal Sardars became addicted to enjoying absolute power over their people. Ever since the accession of Balochistan to Pakistan, the authoritative Baloch Sardars defied state authority primarily to safeguard their power and wealth. The present state of chaos in the province owes a lot to the obstinate conduct of a few Sardars who continuously resisted any government attempt to bring about a change in the administrative system. The spirit of tribal governance and the administrative system prospers on people's ignorance, poverty, illiteracy, and backwardness and, therefore, it is averse to ideas and initiatives that might lead to their empowerment.¹

Between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries, a significant transformation took place. The Baloch community saw the transition from clan units to the establishment of bigger units of identity in the shape of chieftaincies which could be seen as the earlier iteration of the present-day Sardari system. While

¹ Lieutenant General Zahid Latif Mirza, "Balochistan: Past, Present and Future", *NDU Journal* 2013, Islamabad, p. 25.

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the hierarchy of leadership went through a transformation, the Baloch peoples' lifestyle also went through a fundamental social transformation. A more permanent form of chieftaincy was implemented and the Sardars commenced accumulating personal stockpiles of wealth not only through acquiring external resources but also by exploiting labour as well as taxing members of their own tribes. This gave birth to class discrimination. The system of 'Sardarkheli' (chieftain's clans) was fundamentally a feudal system in which the Sardar was the feudal lord and the members of the clan were relegated to a relatively lower subjugated status. They not only worked for Sardars but also collected revenues for them using strong-arm tactics, force, and coercion. Once the Sardars started enjoying the charms of their elevated status, the interests of the common man went in the background and ceased to be in line with of the welfare of the tribesmen.

The exploitation of people by Sardars is hidden behind the cover of tribal solidarity and unity. Even the cruelest treatment given to tribesmen is projected as an internal affair of the tribe and the tribal Sardar portrays it to be a joint decision of the tribe in the name of tribal camaraderie and cohesion. Hence, it follows that not only the state but also the Sardars have been equally instrumental in exploiting the poor masses. They have always resisted joining mainstream society and wanted to maintain a monopoly over their people by manipulating traditional laws and regulations. Despite their political influence, they intentionally did not allow any worthwhile development work in their areas as they did not want their tribe to intellectually and economically remove their shackles.

The British colonial government had a special way of managing the Baloch tribes. As the British were scant in

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number, they left law enforcement to the tribal chiefs and, in return for their loyalty, allowed them to deal with the routine running of their tribes. The British kept the masses under the tight control of Sardars as it suited their designs of dominating the border belt with Afghanistan. Sandeman played a major role in realizing this design and, thus, the British were able, every time, to negotiate with the State of Kalat from a position of dominance. The British wanted a stronghold on the administrative and executive systems of Balochistan but the centuries-old tribal traditions were a stumbling block. Consequently, the British decided to weaken the tribal system first. They deftly exploited an existing split between the ruler of Kalat and his subordinate Sardars in order to be able to exert their authority and project their power so as to benefit from the strategically significant territorial belt in the context of Anglo-Russian contention in Afghanistan. Tribal chiefs were brought under the financial leniency of the British who paid them a salary. The Khan of Kalat was left with no direct role of influence over the affairs of tribes under the new system. He did not have the authority to even order or endorse developmental projects. These works were overseen and controlled by British political agents.

Under the old administrative system of tribes, every Baloch tribe had its own jirga which acted as a court of law.² The new administrative system also affected the jirga and changed its basic fibre altogether. The old jirga was a broad-based judicial system but, in the new system, only Sardars and aristocrats could participate. The new system served the British as an authoritative tool to manage any upheaval against their authority. Under the new system, the jirga could

² Mohammad Usman Hassan, *Balochistan: Mazi, Hal aur Mustakbil* (Karachi: Indus Publications, 1976), 174–6.

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expropriate women as a punishment and enforce taxes on property and labour. The decisions of the jirga were to be final and could only be reviewed by the Political Agent of the British Empire. The jirga system remained effective for a long period as it provided a judicial, social, and political structure to Baloch society. Sardars were authorized to take decisions regardless of the opinions and interests of the people whose lives were affected. Within their respective areas, they were in charge of law and order. The levies corps was established for this purpose with their recruitment of manpower coming from the same tribe — and the Sardars were at the helm of this recruitment drive. The Sardars were given funds by the British for the maintenance of the levies forces but most of the funds fed the personal requirements of the Sardars and the forces were paid only subsistence salaries.

The history of conflict in Balochistan has several fundamental explanations. Though many of the reasons are genuine, some have been exacerbated due to the personal motives and interests of Sardars and others because of interference by regional and extra-regional players. Traditionally, Baloch Sardars have enjoyed complete freedom and authority over their tribes. After the implementation of the Sandeman administrative system, Baloch Sardars became the absolute masters of their people. Hence, when the status of a Princely State was being considered in light of the forthcoming partition of India, Sardars dearly wanted to retain the independent character of Kalat State as it suited their way of life. After the accession of Balochistan to Pakistan, the autonomous Baloch Sardars defied state authority to shield their control. By trying to keep the province in a perennial state of conflict, they also sought to blackmail the federal government into agreeing to their terms for the provision of

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funds.

In Baloch politics and administration, the tribal system provides a strong bondage and plays a vital role. Cracks and mistrust between the nationalist parties and, sometimes, circumspection prevailing within the party makes them least receptive to people's aspirations. The majority of Sardars have avoided direct recognition of hardcore nationalist movements and have kept their options open in case they needed support in times of conflict with the federal government. A significant portion of the provincial political structure is predisposed to individuals and entities with vested interests and so hardly any progress could take place especially in the social and economic sectors. The socio-cultural continuum characterized by a Sardar-dominated system, and loaded with traditional conformist expectations, does not allow for positive political and intellectual persuasions. Therefore the masses remained oblivious to political and social trends and did not welcome mainstream political parties developing roots in the deep field. Due to poor governance and the government's lack of work on social development, the tribal system, despite its weaknesses, continues to be purported as the only practicable mechanism. Political parties, therefore, rely on tribal chieftains to fulfil their political agenda while the federation, too, has developed a mechanism for dealing with Balochistan by engaging with a few select, compliant Sardars and political elite.³

Nationalism has always been a handy and valuable tool for tribal leaders as, by accentuating tribal unity and stressing the perils from those who can challenge their dominance, system ruptures could be generated; a useful tactic for

³ Awais Ghani, Ex-Governor Balochistan, interview with the Author, 17 March 2018, Islamabad.

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exerting pressure on the ruling system. Along with the ills associated with the tribal system, other factors such as the geo-strategic location of Balochistan, system fissures within the governance, internal disagreements in Baloch society, the state's lacklustre response, and the involvement of foreigners have also aggravated problems. The Sardari system has, over time, entrenched itself in the Baloch administrative system. This system cannot be uprooted with a stroke of a pen as it is likely to be resisted by stakeholders. However, it cannot also be allowed to continue indefinitely. Many scholars and politicians view the Sardari system as a part of the problem for the province⁴ but they also feel that the federal government has let the system survive through a policy of appeasing tribal chiefs.⁵ Maintaining the status quo suited the federal governments as they were allied politically with the provincial governments.

Despite becoming a fully functional province after the 'One-Unit' was dissolved on 1 July 1970, no worthwhile change occurred in the administrative system as the province continued to be controlled by tribal Sardars. Little effort was made by the central government to bring the administration of Balochistan at par with the other provinces. Whenever a Sardar's authority was challenged, a few of the strong tribal Sardars often resorted to armed uprisings to perpetuate their power and protect their authority. They always portrayed it as an attack on tribal traditions and an infringement of the autonomy of the province.

Arguably the Sardari system has been, and still is the biggest hurdle in the way of settling the political problems

⁴ Zobaida Jalal Changaiz, Federal Minister for Defence Production, interview with the Author, 29 March 2018, Quetta.

⁵ Senator Sana Ullah Baloch, National Party, interview with the Author, 23 March 2018, Islamabad.

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and introducing development and civic activities in their areas of influence. History has presented many opportunities to the federal and provincial governments to abolish the Sardari system. However, on each occasion, political expediency prevailed and prevented the leadership from taking a decision. In 1973, when the Mengal government forwarded a proposal to the federal government regarding the abolition of the Sardari system, political circles expected Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to accept it. However, contrary to his political party's stance, he rejected the proposal. Historian Dr Inayatullah Baloch described that as a strange stance and remarked that, instead of abolishing the system, Bhutto embraced the tribal and feudal chiefs by making alliances with them to overthrow the Mengal government. To quote Dr Baloch, .

Among those who joined him, the most prominent was Nawab Akbar Khan, the chief of the Bugti tribe, who played an important role in the overthrow of the Awami National Party (ANP)-led Mengal Government in 1973.⁶

Nawab Bugti continuously fed exaggerated stories to Bhutto about armed militias being trained and equipped in Balochistan under the patronage of a few tribal chiefs who were in the provincial government. Bugti had been refused the governorship by the ANP government and, therefore, had a vendetta against the provincial government.⁷ Though Bhutto was being fed propaganda against the Mengal government

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ *Journal of Punjab University Historical Society*, vol. 29, No 1, "Rise and Fall of First Political Government of Balochistan", p. 140; Also see USA Bureau of Intelligence & Research, Intelligence Note declassified and available on <http://2001-2009.state.gov/documents/organisation/97518.pdf> (the document speculates that the incident was stage-managed by the Bhutto government).

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with allegations of constitutional authority violations, the final blow was delivered by an incident in February 1973 when a large cache of Soviet-made weapons was discovered in the Embassy of Iraq in Islamabad. Two days after this incident, on 12 February, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto dissolved the Balochistan Assembly which was only ten months old. Allegedly, those weapons were to be transported to some destination in Balochistan. Nawab Bugti was later rewarded by Bhutto and made Governor of Balochistan.

In April 1974, while addressing a political gathering at Quetta, Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto once again tried to challenge the authority of the Sardars and declared:

Today, with great courage, I announce that, legally, the Sardari System is being brought to an end. This is the end of the Sardari System. From today, there will be no Sardar in Pakistan. In the whole of Pakistan, the Sardari System is finished; the most tyrannical, the most cruel, the most dishonest System which has been prevalent for centuries, has been brought to an end through this Law.⁸

Nevertheless, this statement proved to be nothing but a political stunt. As a feudal himself, he adopted a cautious approach and the government was happy to retain the status quo.⁹

Balochistan is an immensely mineral-rich province but its people have remained deprived of the fruits of this wealth. The large sums of royalties from these resources have only made the lives of the Sardars comfortable and the poor masses

⁸ A. B. Awan, *Baluchistan: Historical and Political Processes*, London: New Century Publishers, 1985, 292–3.

⁹ Awais Ghani, ex-Governor Balochistan, interview with the Author, 17 March 2018, Islamabad.

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have not benefited from them. In fact, the more money the Sardars got, the more greedy they became. They endeavoured to keep the masses poor and deprived of all basic needs so that they would never be freed from the clutches of their Sardars. Many Sardars deliberately kept their areas deprived due to the fear of being marginalized if economic opportunities become available to the common Baloch.¹⁰ The emerging Baloch intelligentsia attributes Balochistan's poverty and under-development to the Sardars' resolve not to let forces of innovation and transformation penetrate their strongholds.

Sardars were particularly egotistical and ruthlessly opposed to granting educational facilities to their masses. They kept their subjects illiterate and uninformed so that they would not be in a position to challenge their status. Even the governance challenges in Balochistan have a direct link with the Sardar-led administrative system. Since the basic administrative structure revolved around tribal fidelity, politically elected representatives generally succeeded through the strength of their social contacts and personal influence rather than on the basis of free and fair elections. Thus, the democratic process is hijacked before the voting begins even if the elections themselves are not rigged. The common man knows very well that his basic necessities would be met through his tribe's network and not through the successful completion of democratic procedures. He thus commits his vote to the elder of his clan and not to the character and charisma of running candidates or their party manifesto. The public approach towards political processes, therefore, reveals a lack of trust and low expectations. Quite paradoxically, all those who remain actively vocal for Baloch rights never

¹⁰ Awais Ghani, ex-Governor Balochistan, interview with the author, 17 March 2018, Islamabad.

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seriously attempt to grant basic rights to their own tribal people in spite of having held political power and influence during seven decades of post-independence Pakistan. A few Nawabs maintained private militias equipped with the latest weapons and arsenal but the state displayed helplessness and impotency in dealing with matters of grave lawlessness. The families belonging to the biggest sub-tribe of the Bugti clan, Kalpar Bugti, were debarred from their own lands by Nawab Akbar Bugti out of vengeance. Having been expelled from their homes, this sub-tribe lived in exile in various parts of Sindh and Punjab for over fifteen years.

Most of the provincial political parties are at best 'status quo' structures. Since most of the Sardars themselves are part of parliamentary politics, they do not favour any drastic change in the administrative system, especially changes which have the potential of challenging their authority. Most of the political parties represented in the Provincial Assembly support the status quo, enhance their financial leverage, and maintain 'B' areas and Levies in order to safeguard the traditional writ of Sardars. They vehemently oppose the induction of people from other provinces in the province's job market, especially in managerial positions in the mega economic projects.

Baloch tribal leadership has been mostly insensitive to the problems and sufferings of the Baloch population. It has been resisting development projects based on pleas disguised as political concerns. Their main concerns have been the allocation of funds which they want flowing through them rather than being allocated directly to the project and supervised by the federal government. Many in the political and bureaucratic chain have been involved in massive corruption and embezzlement from development funds. A totally dysfunctional accountability mechanism enables such

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reports of embezzlement to go unchecked. Tribal leadership is purely hereditary. One becomes a tribal chief simply because one finds oneself born as the eldest son in the family of a tribal chief. There is no other virtue or prerequisite to becoming a tribal chief or Sardar. Over the centuries, these Sardars have enjoyed absolute power and authority over the lives of their tribes. Having tasted this kind of power for long, they now find it difficult to shed the privileges gained from the system and have thus defied every government's move to erode their authority.

Private armies and well-defended forts are not what the people of the tribe need. A majority of the tribesmen have very low standards of living owing to the absence of basic amenities. When Sardars display anger and ferocity in defending the system, it is not the well-being of their people but the fear of losing the perks of power. The burden of their incompetence is often deflected towards the state for not keeping promises of financing the Sardars adequately.

Their own desires are disguised as the peoples' demands. Many in Balochistan believe that the state systematically maintained the Sardari system through election management.¹¹ The only way to progressively and constructively erode their power is to empower the common man in Balochistan and, in particular, the youth who have long been used as gun fodder to preserve the authority of the Sardar and serve his whims. Baloch youth have displayed their enormous capacity to excel in any field or profession whenever provided with the opportunity.

The powerful Sardars have treated their tribesmen as a commodity without any qualms or empathy. Some tribal chiefs

¹¹ Senator Sana Ullah Baloch, National Party, interview with the Author, 23 March 2018, Islamabad.

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keep a tight hold on their tribes and do not allow even minor violations of their orders. They are extremely unforgiving and remorseless and treat disobedience with severity. A typical insight into the Sardari way of thinking was provided by Nawab Akbar Bugti in an interview of 29 June 2006 given to the *Economist*. The magazine wrote ‘Mr Bugti claims to have killed his first man at the age of twelve’. It quoted Nawab Bugti, ‘What is better than seeing your enemies driven before you and then taking their women to bed?’¹²

The tribal chieftain’s administrative system has been kept alive by the corrupt political system maintained through a sustained effort by different governments to achieve short-term political objectives at the cost of national development.¹³ The purported development projects they executed were in no way meant to uplift the quality of life of the general populace. In fact, they never consulted the community before commencing these projects. The underhand intent was mostly to plunder funds for their own sake. It was, nevertheless, the responsibility of the federation to ensure equal progress in all entities of the state. If, for any reason, the will of the people was being ignored by the provincial government, the federal authority should have had the capacity to make corrections at the appropriate time. The federal government and Baloch leaders have always had opposing views on the roots of the Baloch crisis. The government blames the Baloch tribal leaders for fuelling Baloch grievances to ensure the survival of old institutions such as the Sardars and their fiefdoms.¹⁴ Government institutions also claim that some

¹² *The Economist*, “Turning a Fight into War”, 29 June 2006.

¹³ Senator Sana Ullah Baloch, National Party, interview with the Author, 23 March 2018, Islamabad.

¹⁴ “Balochis of Pakistan: On the margins of History,” *The Foreign*

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tribal leaders are inciting violence to hinder development projects in Balochistan. Sardars wish to slow down the process of urbanization and social development in order to keep their tribesman ignorant and backward so they can continue to maintain a master-slave relationship. While the government accepts that the demands of the average Baloch are genuine and it is ready to negotiate issues, it warns that militancy perpetrated by the private militias of Sardars would not be accepted.¹⁵ Progressive urbanization, the rapid spread of communications, the growth of the electronic media, and access to education and economic prospects in the province have begun to gradually challenge traditional tribal power. While it might not be prudent to do away with the Sardari system overnight, the system cannot be allowed to continue eroding the social structure. An administrative order to terminate the Sardari system would not be prudent as it is likely to invoke rebellion, uniting all Sardars against the state. As a decadent system, it would be politically feasible if it evolved into a more participatory administrative system.¹⁶ A few prominent Baloch Sardars suggest that traditional tribalism is already non-existent and has long been redundant as a political force in Balochistan.¹⁷ With the progressive emergence of a Baloch middle class, albeit small at present, and the diminishing influence of the traditional character of tribal leadership, the

Policy Centre London, available at <http://fpc.org.uk/fsblob/817.pdf>.

¹⁵ "Sardars and Baloch Nationalism," *The Nation*, 5 March 2013, available at <http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/columns/05-Mar-2013/sardars-and-baloch-nationalism>.

¹⁶ Interview with Lieutenant General (ret'd.) Alam Khattak (Former Corps Commander Quetta), November 2017.

¹⁷ Sardar Akhtar Mengal, Interview with the Author, 21 May 2018.

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promising Baloch youth appear to be enthusiastic about taking on enhanced political responsibilities. A political approach is bound to engage different segments of society in a debate and come out with an alternative system. A democratic political process would surely root out the decaying system as has occurred gradually in the Jhalawan and Sarawan areas.¹⁸

¹⁸ Awais Ghani, ex-Governor Balochistan, interview with the Author, 17 March 2018, Islamabad.

CHAPTER 7

**THE GEO-POLITICS OF
ENERGY AND WEALTH**

Politically, throughout history, Balochistan has fluctuated between obscurity and prominence. However, in the current geopolitical context, the interests of important regional and extra-regional countries like the USA, China, and Iran are linked with stability in Balochistan. A peaceful and stable Balochistan would be favourable for foreign investment in the Gwadar Port and other mega development projects. As a by-product of the improved security environment, better law and order would allow the Pakistani government to focus on, and cut off, the opium highway coming from Afghanistan. On the other hand, the interests of a few regional countries like India and Afghanistan are better served by promoting instability in Balochistan. There is a strong possibility that those countries might benefit politically and militarily from the Baloch conflict. Strategically, Balochistan occupies an important geo-political location which gives it a dominant role in South Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East, the Persian Gulf, and in the ocean trade lines of the Arabian Sea. Coupled with the development prospects of CPEC, this provides Pakistan with a huge potential to negotiate its interests with international players from a position of strength.

Balochistan's strategic importance increased greatly with the construction of the Gwadar Port becoming a reality in the beginning of the 21st century. In 2002, the construction work

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at Gwadar Port started with the help of Chinese investment. The mega project, in close proximity to the Persian Gulf and Central Asian energy resources, invited the attention of the United States, Russia, Iran, and India. Pakistan's objective was to maximize its economic and strategic gains by improving its international trade links through constructing ports with Chinese support and, thus, give much-needed stability to its economically deprived province, Balochistan. However, the United States and India saw this development more in terms of military strategy and considered Gwadar Port as a sequel to the Chinese 'String of Pearls' strategy. They perceived the Chinese presence in Gwadar as a threat to their interests in the oil-rich Persian Gulf region.¹ Strategic onlookers and defence analysts are of the opinion that, from the military point of view, the port situated over 700 kilometres west of Karachi offers strategic depth for the Navy in case of a blockade of the Karachi port.² The Strait of Hormuz is the world's most significant oil passage with an estimated 17 million barrels of oil travelling through it each day.³ The region houses almost 60 percent of the world's known oil reserves and around 25 percent of the world's natural gas resources. Gwadar Port is perilously close to the Iranian border, just 72 kilometres away, and 323 kilometres from Cape al-Hadd in Oman.⁴ It

¹ Christopher J. Pehrson, "String of Pearls: Meeting the Challenge of China's Rising Power Across the Asian Littoral", Strategic Studies Institute, July 2006, available at <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/pub721.pdf>.

² Grare, *Pakistan: The Resurgence of Baluch Nationalism*, 5.

³ "Freedom to Use the Seas: India's Maritime Military Strategy", *Indian Navy*, available at http://indiannavy.nic.in/maritime_strat.pdf.

⁴ Abdus Sattar Ghazali, "India Alarmed on Chinese-built Gwadar Port," Pakistan Defence, 8 March 2009, available at, <http://www.defence.pk/forums/strategic-geopolitical-issues/23017-india-alarmed-chinese-built-gwadar-port.html>.

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has the immense potential of becoming a regional hub of commercial activity in addition to becoming a trans-shipment facility for the Gulf region. Gwadar can also conveniently become a terminus point for energy resources from Central Asia and a trading gateway for Afghanistan and other landlocked countries of Central Asia. The already-established and successfully- running ports around the Strait of Hormuz (called 'the Knuckle' in military language), e.g. Port Jebel Ali of Dubai and Port Salalah of Oman, are handling large amounts of regional transshipment trade and would be strong competitors for Gwadar. Iran, on the eastern bank of the Gulf, is also vigorously exploiting its location by developing the port of Chabahar.⁵ However, Gwadar Port's location is much better than those of the regional ports as it is outside the choke point and, therefore, becomes a preferable option for traders. However, this could only be possible if the port is financially compatible and, more importantly, provides quality services to its users. In view of the port's multiple benefits, Pakistan is pursuing a network of roads and railways to link Gwadar to important hinterland cities and then to Central Asian states through Afghanistan. The network would have the potential of connecting landlocked Central Asian countries with the Indian Ocean through a very short trade route. When operational, Gwadar is envisioned to become the centre of regional trade between Turkey, Central Asia, China, and Afghanistan and would offer great prosperity to Pakistan and other countries in the region. As one of the largest natural deep-sea stop-overs, this port has the capacity of handling huge container carriers and very large crude containers (VLCC)

⁵ Rizwan Zeb, "Gwadar and Chabahar: competition or complementarity?" available at www.cacianalysit.org, cited on 15 December 2004.

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of up to 0.5 million tons Dead Weight Tonnage (DWT).⁶ Unfortunately, Gwadar poses a significant challenge to two of the four immediate neighbours of Pakistan. Iran views this project unfavourably since Gwadar has considerably higher trade potential compared to the Iranian port of Chabahar. The matter attains more prominence in view of Iran's present state of isolation globally. Iran has huge reserves of gas and large volumes of LPG to trade with India. Naturally, both Iran and India would like to carry out this trade through a port situated in Iran rather than through a Pakistani port.

Balochistan's geo-strategic location, its enormous amount of natural wealth, and the unstable internal security situation present a lucrative opportunity for exploitation. The leftover separatist tendencies in the province have irrefutable trans-frontier linkages. In the historical context, Balochistan has come into the limelight many times. In recent history, the end of the Cold War reestablished its geo-strategic location as the region played a very important role in ousting Russians from Afghanistan. Balochistan is located at an immensely significant geo-strategic spot. It offers a series of ideal deep-seaports on the warm waters of the Indian Ocean along the Makran coast. The coast and its ports directly watch over the Strait of Hormuz and also overlook major trade and oil lanes. The coastal belt is gifted with immense natural resources including gas, oil, precious metals, and minerals. Global and regional players interfere in the province's affairs to destabilize it by stimulating insurgency and portraying violations of human rights. These powers feel that a weak, independent state of Balochistan would be much easier to tackle diplomatically and by way of politico-military coercion.

⁶ Mir Sher Baz Khetran, "Crisis in Balochistan: Challenges and Opportunities", Islamabad Institute of Strategic Studies, p. 34.

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The current insurgency is, in many ways, different from previous uprisings. The most prominent difference is that it has more foreign linkages and is less concerned with nationalist slogans. Some prominent leaders in exile have actively pursued foreign diplomatic support while the government of Pakistan has accused those individuals of getting material and financial support from hostile foreign agencies. Diplomatic efforts at the state level, however, have never garnered warmth at the international level and the issue of foreign interference has yet to be successfully brought to powerful world bodies. The Pakistan government claims that, through the support of hostile agencies, simmering issues like sectarian differences have been exploited to fuel the overall security environment in the province. While the common Pashtun and Baloch masses observe the compounding security situation, criminals and opportunists are making the most of the crisis. Balochistan's geo-strategic importance continues and has endured tests of time—due to its proximity to mineral-rich and important regions—from the seventeenth century 'Great Game' to the present day. Stability in Balochistan is linked to important international, regional, and domestic issues. Additionally, Iran and Afghanistan, due to the large Baloch population in their respective countries, observe every significant move in Balochistan closely.

Pakistan has played host to over three million Afghan refugees for well over three decades. Many of these Afghans have married locals and have obtained Pakistani identity cards with the connivance of corrupt bureaucrats and politicians. The refugee camps, spread all over the western border belt with Afghanistan, are natural hideouts for criminal gangs and drug-runners. Narcotics havens in Afghanistan supply drugs to various international gangs who are in contact with foreign

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smugglers and facilitators. Many African nationals, mostly from Nigeria, Tanzania, and Zambia, have been actively involved in narcotics trafficking from Pakistan to various international destinations.⁷ These smugglers are supported by Afghan refugees in crossing borders and also, reportedly, assist insurgents and sectarian terrorists. Likewise, weapon smugglers are also greatly facilitated by some refugee camp residents. They hide by blending in with refugees when pursued by the anti-smuggling law enforcement agencies. The border running along the mountainous terrain is a lucrative corridor for smugglers who run a parallel economy in Balochistan. In the absence of any free-trade zones, illegally smuggled items are finding their way to markets and competing with indigenously manufactured goods without going through the process of customs clearance and import duty implications. Vehicles laden with smuggled goods enter Quetta at night where they are unloaded in infamous markets. Hence, the Quetta ‘Safe City’ project did not suit some stakeholders leading them to pursue different tactics to pressure the government to delay the project.⁸ The government has not been able to offer alternate jobs or business opportunities to the people of the border belt which could enable them to desist from engaging in illegal smuggling. Pakistan’s master-plan to transform Balochistan into an economic success story and a vibrant trade engine through constructing ports, utilizing natural resources, constructing communication arteries, and transnational energy pipelines is linked to stability in the region. India’s desire to pursue its economic interests in

⁷ “Drug Situation in Pakistan and Counter Narcotics Achievements”, Govt of Pakistan Ministry of Narcotics Control Report 2009, p. 26.

⁸ Dr Shakeel Roshan, President Al Hamd Islamic University, Quetta, Interview with the Author, 18 May 2018.

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Central Asia, Iran, and Afghanistan also factors in the security and future of the region. Hence, it is important to examine Balochistan's relevance in the present day geo-strategic and geo-economic environment. This allows the internal and external stakeholders to judge whether their interests in the province are converging or conflicting. The present unrest has continued for two decades and the situation could still be termed 'simmering' at best. Many local and international actors are actively pursuing their specific agenda in the region. There are reports of foreign money being circulated amongst armed groups. State security circles claim that the funds provided by hostile agencies are used to keep the insurgency alive. Every terror act successfully conducted by the militant groups has prize-money attached to it beyond the monthly subsistence stipend. Each militant is paid a handsome salary per month and cash awards are doled out after every successful act of terror depending on the degree of damage that the act has done to the state.⁹

With the onset of mega development projects in Balochistan, the region's prospects of serving as a major economic and trade hub have increased manifold. Correspondingly, the interests of many rival powers have also increased. These powers try to coerce Pakistan into accepting their designs and influence Pakistan's foreign policies and strategic priorities. Towards this end, all tools, even counting on insurgent measures have been unleashed. There have been reasonably sound reports about CIA and other intelligence agencies' involvement in providing training and material support to the rebel groups of Balochistan. Michel Chossudovsky remarked,

⁹ Asif Haroon Raja, Brigadier, Opinion Maker, 7 March 2012, <http://www.opinion-maker.org/2012/03/pakistan-media-ganged-up/>.

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Ten British MPs were involved in a closed-door session of the Senate Committee on Defense regarding the alleged support of Britain's Secret Service to Baloch separatists. Also of relevance are reports of CIA and Mossad support to Baloch rebels in Iran and Southern Afghanistan.¹⁰

In addition to providing safe havens to the dissident group leaders, many of the European-based think tanks have been involved actively in propagating their mindset. Special seminars and study groups are formulated to publish the views of these rebel leaders who are widely known to be behind the armed insurgent activities in Balochistan. In a research article published in the *Pakistan Tribune* in 2006, a current affairs research analyst identified the role played by a British think tank. Farzana Shah writes,

The Foreign Policy Centre (FPC) United Kingdom arranged a seminar on Balochistan province of Pakistan in collaboration with the so-called Balochistan Rights Movement on 27th June 2006 in the House of Commons, London. It was highly disappointing as it was abashedly a one-sided cheap propaganda rather than discussing the real situation.¹¹

¹⁰ Professor Michel Chossudovsky, *The Destabilization of Pakistan*, available at <http://globalresearch.ca/the-destabilization-of-pakistan/7705>.

¹¹ Farzana Shah, "Balochistan at the Cross Roads," *Pakistan Tribune*, 28 July 2006; also available at <http://paktribune.com/articles/Baluchistan-At-The-Cross-Roads-150596.html>.

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A few countries have their interests linked to a 'Balochistan-Boiling Pot' picture and, therefore, try constantly to keep the insurgency fuelled. State authorities allege that Indian agencies are especially active in providing funds to rebellious militant leaders to keep them on a war path. Whenever the level of insurgency fades, it is stirred up to keep the administrative and security mechanism continually engaged. Sometimes the tactics adopted are to kill the tired militants who want to return home. On other occasions, more aggressive diplomatic pressuring takes place to put the government under stress and extract compliant behaviour. On 9 February 2012, the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee of the United States House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs convened a discussion on Balochistan.¹² During this hearing, a resolution was tabled concerning the prevailing situation in Balochistan and claiming that Pakistan was committing atrocities in the province. The bill was initiated by Congressman Dana Rohrabacher and it discussed the efficacy of the political and security mechanism in Balochistan. In his remarks, the Congressman stated that Balochistan was an unstable and disorderly region discernible by human rights violations by regimes that were against US values.¹³ As expected, this resolution encountered a fierce diplomatic response from Pakistan. Initiated by the Foreign Office and Pakistan's Ambassador to US, they raised serious concerns regarding the bill. He mentioned that the resolution would adversely strain the already anxious relations between Pakistan and the US. However, the diplomatic row was defused when the US State Department distanced

¹² Christine Fair, "Beyond Hearing Range", *The Herald*, March 2012.

¹³ Huma Imtiaz, "Baluchistan Grievances heard by U.S. Committee", *The Express Tribune* (Islamabad), 9 March 2012.

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itself from the Congressional hearing and mentioned that Balochistan's internal problems should be addressed through peaceful political means. During a news briefing, the State Department's spokesperson said that the US administration had not changed its policy and continued to see Balochistan as part of Pakistan.¹⁴ The timing of the bill was critical; it was tabled when Pakistan had choked NATO supply lines to Afghanistan which ran through Balochistan in response to the US bombing on Salala Border Post in Pakistan near the Afghanistan border. This move appeared to be part of the US effort to put pressure on Pakistan for opening supply routes. The coercive tactics also attempted to soften Pakistan's stance on enforcing an exit of the US presence in Shamsi Air Base in Balochistan.

Land trade routes through Balochistan cater to 40 percent of NATO supplies to Afghanistan. While NATO forces have other alternatives available from north Afghanistan, the shortest and most cost-effective route is from the Karachi port to the RCD Highway in Balochistan entering Afghanistan at the Pakistani border town of Chaman. During peak supply periods, an average of 100 loaded trucks cross over into Afghanistan through Chaman on a daily basis. As a lucrative and soft target, this supply route has been targeted by militants with varying intensity. Baloch militant organizations and other terror outfits shifted their priority of targeting smaller targets to this supply line and took heavy action from 2009–2010. Over 50 attacks against NATO supply trucks were reported in the year 2010. A common practice was to set fire to the trucks. However, in most cases, these trucks were looted before being torched. In those years,

¹⁴ Anwar Iqbal, "US Government distances itself from Balochistan Hearing", *Dawn*, 10 February 2012.

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Balochistan's markets in cities, especially Quetta, were full of American combat goods. One could find any combat kit item from shoes to M4 rifles in these markets; even NATO's trained sniffing dogs could be found. People had different views about who the real perpetrators of these attacks were. Besides the involvement of militant groups, many believed that the owners of the trucking companies were also involved in destroying the trucks deliberately. After filling oil supplies from Karachi, most of the oil supply trucks sold the oil in secret markets along the route leaving small quantities in the tankers. When the trucks were burnt, the owners claimed the cost of oil from NATO and the price of the trucks from insurance companies.

Once ousted from power in Afghanistan in 2001, Mullah Umar and a few other prominent leaders of the Taliban government evaded capture by US forces and went into hiding. In 2002, the international media alleged that the Taliban leadership was hiding in the areas surrounding Quetta and so created the terminology 'Quetta Shura'. It was alleged that, since the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI), a political party closely associated with the Taliban, was in power in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, they were assisting the 'Quetta Shura' by discreetly handling the Taliban government's affairs in exile. Mullah Dadullah was one of Mullah Umar's close and trusted aides. A war veteran who had lost a leg, he was entrusted by Mullah Umar with the task of recruiting from Pashtun areas on the border between Balochistan and Afghanistan. As a Pashtun from the Kakar tribe, he remained active till May 2007 when he was killed in Helmand, Afghanistan. After his death, his younger brother Mullah Mansoor was assigned the same task. Mullah Mansoor was ultimately arrested along with his brother, Haji Lala, by Pakistani security forces in

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February 2008 near the Afghan border following a gun battle.¹⁵ Nevertheless, such stern action by Pakistani security forces did not alter the US political and military leadership's stance that the 'Quetta Shura' remained active in Balochistan.

Balochistan is intrinsically divided, in almost equal proportion, by Balochs and Pashtuns. In the event of any political struggle for an independent Balochistan, a power struggle between these two majority groups would create deep cracks in politics and governance. Baloch nationalist leaders are well aware that the Baloch ethnic population is thin compared to the large land mass of Balochistan. Hence, the demand for independence does not align with ground realities. Equally valiant Pashtuns, who constitute a considerable portion of the Baloch population, are well integrated into the Pakistani political system and are likely to challenge any such Baloch demand. In fact, the better educated and economically well-established Pashtuns feel they are better able to govern the province.¹⁶ It would be a great strategic error on America's part if they considered the possibility of carving out an independent state of Balochistan. The ultimate chaos would also affect the security situation in Afghanistan. The British were apprehensive about the viability of smaller princely states surviving independently and so did not allow them to claim independence at partition. An independent Balochistan would become like Afghanistan; a perpetual source of concern for world peace with endless turmoil and civil war. World powers have tried this out in a number of places and there has not been a single success story

¹⁵ Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), "Balochistan: Conflicts and Players", Islamabad, 2008.

¹⁶ Interview with Lieutenant General (ret'd.) Alam Khattak, Former Corps Commander Quetta, November 2017.

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amongst them. Somalia, South Sudan, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya, to name a few, have all proven to be disasters for the people of those countries and the region. Leading powers should reject the fallacy of carving out smaller countries ‘in the name of self-determination.’ Instead of being a source of diplomatic convenience and leverage, these small, unstable countries are likely to remain defiant and continue haunting international peace.

Indian think tanks and research organizations often organize anti-Pakistan seminars and invite Baloch self-exiled leaders to speak to international observers on topics potentially damaging to Pakistan’s interests. The Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis (IDSA) and Observer Research Foundation (ORF) in New Delhi, regularly organize seminars and conferences featuring Balochistan.¹⁷ In the conferences titled ‘South Asia 2020 regarding Balochistan’ and ‘Pakistan is the Problem in Balochistan’, specially nominated dissenting Baloch leaders were asked to speak on the subject. A few of those sittings take place behind closed doors, away from the media glare, and are generally chaired by former senior officials from RAW and the Indian military. With the connivance of a few bigger powers, India is actively pursuing the policy of instigating the insurgency in Balochistan with a focus on motivating the Baloch to demand an independent state.

Indian strategic circles are developing the notion that, by breeding insurgency in Balochistan, they can cause yet another dilemma in Pakistan similar to the one caused in 1971 in East Pakistan. However, India finds it difficult because of the non-contiguity of its borders with Balochistan. Unlike

¹⁷ Sajjad Shoukat, “US Support to Baloch Separatists Exposed,” *Kashmir Watch*, 11 February 2012 available at <http://kashmirwatch.com/US-support-to-baloch-separatists-exposed/>.

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the Indian military intervention in support of the Bengali uprising in 1971, where it had a contiguous border with East Pakistan, Balochistan has no adjoining borders with India and Pakistan is not geographically separated from its province. India is simultaneously trying to harm Pakistan by organising clandestine activities in Balochistan and funding insurgents' anti-Pakistan campaigns abroad. Recently, India has started supporting the Baloch self-exiled leadership openly by calling Balochistan 'an arrow in the Indian quiver'.¹⁸ The tactics being practised by the militants in Balochistan reflect their insurgent training from across the border. On 28 December 2013, a suicide blast at the funeral gathering of a murdered police officer in Quetta killed 30 members of the police force. An analysis of this one event revealed that attacks against security agencies were planned so as to generate multiple ripples in society. Earlier, on the same day, a police officer was gunned down on the airport road. Many senior police officers had turned up for his final rituals when his dead body was brought to police lines for funeral prayers. The suicide bombing planners knew it was customary for senior police officers to offer funeral prayers for all their martyrs. Hence, the bigger attack's suicide bomber had already been equipped and brought inside the police lines before the funeral gathering and exploded the bomb when all the preparations for the prayer were complete.

Balochistan represents a blend of ethnic communities, religious groups, and settlers. The province, as it exists today, emerged after the creation of Pakistan. This ethnic and cultural balance is susceptible to instability in view of the prevailing insecurity in the Baloch and Brahvi areas as well the trans-frontier movement of non-state actors. The

¹⁸ <https://www.scoopnest.com> › Technology › Quartz India.

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Baloch, as a tribe, live in three countries: Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan. Historically, the Baloch living in Iranian Seistan near the Pakistan-Iran border have been a nuisance for Iranian authorities. They have attempted a number of armed uprisings before finally accepting the authority of the Iranian government. During the reign of Reza Shah Pahlavi, Pakistan and Iran had a fairly close diplomatic relationship. It was in the mutual interest of both countries to keep Baloch uprisings under control and so Iran assisted Pakistan proactively in suppressing the Baloch insurgency in Pakistan.¹⁹

Though the economic backwardness and development lag are significant factors in intensifying the insurgency in Balochistan, they are not the only explanation. Other than the legitimate political struggle of Baloch leaders for provincial autonomy and development rights, a dissident group is being exploited to fuel the insurgency. Many known individuals and conduits of heinous crimes are hiding behind the refuge of political asylum in Britain and Switzerland. The motives of international players of destabilizing Pakistan have to be seen through the lens of their interests in the region. Balochistan's immensely important geo-strategic location, coupled with the prospect of becoming a regional trade hub, has caused global players anxiety. Chinese interests in Gwadar and land trade routes through Balochistan would greatly increase Chinese leverage and influence over the Pakistan government and, therefore, many countries are concerned.

The US looks at Balochistan and its developing infrastructure through the lens of its rivalry with China. However, what needs to be realized is that the success of the US-led war on terror in Afghanistan is as dependent on

¹⁹ "Balochistan Insurgency", GlobalSecurity.org, available at <http://Www.Globalsecurity.Org/Military/World/War/Pakistan1.Htm>.

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stability in Balochistan as are the Chinese interests in Gwadar Port. Chinese presence and the ongoing building in Gwadar and surrounding coastal areas is a source of growing anxiety for the Americans. The US feels that the Chinese naval presence around Gwadar is a strategic concern for American bases in the Gulf region. The Tithian Copper Belt, a major part of which runs in Balochistan, is a huge economic attraction for the world powers. This world-renowned mineral belt comprises large reservoirs of gold, silver, copper, and numerous precious metals. The presence of armed groups like Sipah-e-Sahaba and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi often result in violent sectarian activities inside Balochistan. These groups have been responsible for massive bloodshed in Quetta and the surrounding areas. It is thus turning out to be a complex and somewhat contradictory position for the US. On one hand, it wants the pot hot enough so that Balochistan is not left to China as an open playground but, on the other hand, the US cannot afford the situation to rise to a boiling point where it is completely out of Pakistan security forces' hands and rogue elements can start using Balochistan to work against US interests in the region.

The US-China relationship is arguably the most significant relationship with economic considerations as the most glaring element. Both powers seek to maintain their respective spheres of influence in the Central and South Asian regions and play key political roles in regional affairs.²⁰ The US looks at Gwadar as a strategic node point from where operations and logistics can be directed easily into southern Afghanistan via the land corridor in Balochistan. Another

²⁰ Howard M. Krawitz, "China's Trade Opening: Implications for Regional Stability", INSS Strategic Forum, available at <http://www.ndu.edu/inss/strforum/SF193/sf193.htm> cited on 20 January 2005.

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American concern is protecting the Indian Ocean and its strategic routes not only for economic reasons but also for dominance over the Middle East and Central Asian regions as Gwadar lies at the mouth of the Strait of Hormuz from where over 40 percent of the world's oil passes. Americans are already well entrenched in the Gulf and the Arabian Sea and will not accept China's influence in the area. China, on the other hand, is not interested in showing its military muscle and is adopting a more cooperative model of development in the regional countries and investing vast sums for its own gain. China seems interested in developing a gas pipeline from Iran through Pakistan and into western China. Due to increasing Chinese interests in Gwadar, Balochistan has all the potential to become the centre stage of the Sino-US conflict. The emerging global power, China, is an eyesore for US interests in the strategic energy corridor of the Indian Ocean. Americans see the Chinese 'String of Pearls' strategy as multiplying the challenges for domination over the Indian Ocean. The US, therefore, is endeavouring to create a counter balance in the shape of reliance on India. Thus the US allows India to continue its subversive activities in Balochistan with assistance from Afghanistan. The US has practically delegated authority to India to plug the power gap in Afghanistan once it thins out and the recent announcement of the 'New Afghan Policy' by the US President is a clear manifestation of this notion.

Balochistan has a long border with Afghanistan which is the world's largest producer (90 percent) of opium. This makes the region vulnerable to drug trafficking.²¹ Because of

²¹ "A Partnership to Counter Trafficking and Consumption of Afghan Opiates – Illicit Drug Trade in Pakistan", United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Country Office, Pakistan, 6.

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the intricate border running through common tribes' areas on both sides, Balochistan is one of the principal routes for the opium trade's destinations in Europe and elsewhere.²² The opium trade serves as the backbone of financing warlords in Afghanistan. The annual funding through the opium trade is safely estimated to be around US\$300 million, an amount the US authorities consider sufficient to sustain the Taliban insurgency for a whole year.²³ Pakistan's Anti-Narcotics Force that works closely with the US Drug Enforcement Administration has limited capacity to fight and dismantle the drug networks in inaccessible Baloch tribal areas. Law enforcement in Balochistan is extremely difficult due to the vastness of the area, inhospitable terrain, sparse population, and bureaucratic hiccups. Furthermore, the state's police jurisdiction is limited to only 6 percent of Balochistan called 'A' or urban areas. The 'Levies Force' is responsible for maintaining law and order in the rest of the province.²⁴ This force consists of local people recommended by Sardars and, thus, cannot go against their wishes. Insurgency and lawlessness in Balochistan alongwith the incompetence and connivance of the Levies Force also facilitates drug trafficking from Afghanistan to Balochistan.

Mega development works in Balochistan and especially the construction of the Gwadar Port have caused affront to

²² Rabeah Sabri, "Balochistan: Af-Pak's Forgotten Frontier", (Washington D.C. Johns Hopkins Institute for South Asia Studies), p. 2.

²³ "Poppies a Target in Fight against Taliban", *New York Times*, 29 April 2008, available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/29/world/asia/29afghan.html?sq=taliban%20afghanistan%20&st=cse&scp=2&pagewanted=all>.

²⁴ Rashid Chohan, "Conflict on Abolition of Levies Force in Balochistan", Islamabad; Joint Training of Pakistan-Afghanistan Journalists on Conflict Reporting by the British High Commission, Pakistan, p. 2.

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Washington's geo-strategic sensitivities. According to the Pentagon report, 'Energy Futures in Asia', Washington looks at the establishment of a port as a part of China's 'String of Pearls' strategy. The Chinese presence at Gwadar can be a serious jolt for the Extra Regional Forces (ERF) in the Indian Ocean as China would be able to project its power overseas through this geo-strategic Strait. Thus, it would have direct influence over all the ocean liners on the high seas. US/NATO supplies in southern Afghanistan are dependent upon trade routes running through Balochistan. The US would, therefore, want complete assurance for a route available to them for maintaining logistic support and supporting an exit strategy.

Pakistan states that, despite diplomatic protests, Afghanistan's soil has been used continuously to cause terror and chaos inside Pakistan. For many years now, armed militant groups are operating from border regions in Afghanistan. Presently, the BLA is known to be functioning from Kandahar in Afghanistan. This organization, like other dissident armed groups, is supported by the Indian intelligence agency, RAW, with finances, logistics, and material supplies. In a report, Christine Fair of RAND Corporation says, 'Kabul's motivations for encouraging these activities are as obvious as India's interest in engaging in them'.²⁵ After achieving some degree of stability in Indian Occupied Kashmir towards the start of the millennium, India focused its attention on creating and nursing insurgent movements in Balochistan to keep Pakistan grappling with a two-pronged threat. More than a defensive move, it aims to dismember Pakistan and create an independent state of Balochistan. At

²⁵ Malik Ayub Sumbal, "The Plight of Hazaras in Pakistan," *The Diplomat*, 4 July 2013.

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various scholarly discourses, Indian strategists have said that India could take advantage of the instability in Pakistan by focusing on developing relationships with Central Asia, Iran, and Afghanistan and benefitting from the oil and gas trade potential from Central Asia and Iran through Afghanistan. Indian strategists also believe that an independent Balochistan could easily become a proxy of Iran, India, and Afghanistan. Captain (retd.) Bharat Verma of Indian Defense Review remarks, 'With Pakistan on the brink of collapse due to massive internal as well as international contradictions, it is matter of time before it ceases to exist. Multiple benefits will accrue to the Union of India on such a demise'.²⁶

Iran and India have developed close ties that would affect not just Pakistan but also the region. India is helping Iran build Chahbahar port quickly and has plans to link Mumbai with Central Asia, Afghanistan, and Europe through the Iranian ports of Bander Abbas and Chabahar.²⁷ Furthermore, better relations with Iran would provide India access to markets and energy resources in Central Asia.²⁸ India would never accept Pakistan's economic dominance in the region and is, therefore, encouraging Iran to build a parallel port and communication infrastructure. This development activity serves another Indian purpose as well. In the garb of skilled manpower required for development works, India has deployed numerous under-cover agents in Iran and Afghanistan who actually generate anti-state activities in Balochistan.

The development of Gwadar and the prospect of Chinese

²⁶ Bharat Verma, *Indian Defence Review*, vol. 23.3, July–September 2008.

²⁷ Donald Berlin, "India-Iran Relations: A Deepening Entente", Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies. US Pacific command, October 2004, available at www.apcss.org/ accessed on 5 January 2005.

²⁸ Interview, Dr Moonis Ahmer, Associate Professor, IR Department, Karachi University, on 5 January 2005.

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naval positioning in the Gulf is causing anxiety to Pakistan's neighbours. The Chinese presence, if it materializes, could not only neutralize any regional or global power's domination of the Indian Ocean but could also make China a dominant naval power. Other than the use of the port, the land route would greatly help China extend its sphere of trade to Central Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. Gwadar serves a tactically dominant point in the energy-affluent Caspian Region by providing an alternate trade route for the Xinjiang province. India is an important regional actor with ever-growing ambition and the desire to exert influence throughout the Indian Ocean. The 'Indian Maritime Doctrine,' published in 2007, clearly defines Indian ambitions in these words, 'the Indian maritime vision for the first quarter of the 21st century must look at the arc from the Persian Gulf to the Straits of Malacca as a legitimate area of interest.'²⁹ India imports 2.4 million barrels of oil per day through sea routes and the Persian Gulf oil accounts for nearly 60 percent of India's imports.³⁰ Oil-laden Indian tankers traverse within 200 nautical miles of Gwadar. In 2008, Indian Naval Chief Suresh Mehta remarked that the Gwadar Port being built by Pakistan with Chinese assistance had serious strategic implications for India. Being only 180 nautical miles from the exit of the Strait of Hormuz, Gwadar would enable Pakistan to take control over the world energy jugular and interdiction of Indian tankers.³¹

²⁹ *"Freedom to Use the Seas: India's Maritime Military Strategy"*, Indian Navy, available at, http://indiannavy.nic.in/maritime_strat.pdf.

³⁰ "Oil and Energy Trends", A Monthly Publication of International Energy Statistics and Analysis, available http://www.oilandenergytrends.com/ger/ger_india.asp, sis.

³¹ "OPRF Marine Report", (Ocean Policy Research Foundation 2008), available at, <http://www.sof.or.jp/en/monthly/pdf/200801.pdf>.

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Since 2002, India has time and again voiced its concerns about Chinese involvement in the Gwadar Port. India believes that China is gradually increasing its influence by setting up potent positions and outposts in the Indian Ocean to monitor energy and trade flows. The prospect of a Chinese naval presence in Gwadar which provides it with the ability to project its power in the Persian Gulf might have a 'pincer effect' on Indian naval operations. India considers the Persian Gulf its sole legitimate area of influence and outside interference in this area is of particular concern to its security and defence establishment.³² India and Iran have a significant military and economic relationship. Iran is the second largest oil supplier for India. Iranian oil accounts for a large percentage of India's total crude oil imports which is rising at a rate of 9.5 percent per year.³³ Owing to a reliance on Iranian oil and its greater economic interests in Central Asia, India is investing in communications infrastructure in Iran and the surrounding region. India is building Chabahar port to gain access to Central Asian oil and gas reserves. This port will allow India to circumvent Pakistan, enter Afghanistan, and reach Central Asia. The port is connected to Afghanistan's Nimroz province through the Indian-built Zaranj-Delaram road. Other than the economic challenge, India considered the military cooperation with Iran essential as a checkmate in the Indian Ocean. Owing to serious strategic concerns about Gwadar,³⁴ India wants to extend its strategic and economic

³² "Freedom to Use the Seas: India's Maritime Military Strategy," Indian Navy, available at, http://indiannavy.nic.in/maritime_strat.pdf.

³³ Nidhi Verma, "India Buys more Iran, less Saudi Crude Oil in '08/09", *The Reuters*, 7 May 2009, available at. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2009/05/07/india-crude-imports-idUKSP39539720090507>.

³⁴ Abdus Sattar Ghazali, "India Alarmed on Chinese built Gwadar Port", *Pakistan Defence*, 8 March 2009, available at <http://www.defence.pk/forums/strategic-geopolitical-issues/23017-india-alarmed-chinese->

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influence inside Iran and Afghanistan as a counter-balance. Indian support to Iran in building Chabahar port and constructing the north-south highway substantiate this line of thought.³⁵ Apart from the traditional bilateral economic cooperation, India and Iran signed a strategic defence deal in 2004. Due to the convergence of its interests with India and of conflicting interests with Pakistan, Iran has considerable interest in the Baloch insurgency. In reciprocity, India funds and supports most development projects in Iran which are close to the Pak-Iran border. Indian development projects and military alliances surrounding Balochistan create legitimate concerns in political and military circles in Islamabad. It could be argued that India's competing interests in the region against China and their nuclear rival Pakistan can best be served by an unstable Balochistan. The insurgency in Balochistan would hinder any meaningful development and would deny China and Pakistan any military or economic advantage. Given the Indian diplomatic and military weight in proximity to Balochistan, India might also utilize Baloch insurgencies as a bargaining lever in the Kashmir conflict.³⁶ The same thought has been demonstrated through statements made by Indian politicians and security officials.

Despite the availability of palpable evidence, the government of Pakistan has been unable to gather the diplomatic clout to present the heinous connection between militants and foreign abettors which is claiming civilian

built-gwadar-port.html.

³⁵ V. K. Shashikumar, "Indian built Zaranj-Delaram Highway under Taliban Control", *Indian Defence Review* (October 2011), available at <http://www.indiandefencereview.com/geopolitics/Indian-built-Zaranj-Delaram-Highway-under-Taliban-Control.html>.

³⁶ Grare, "*Pakistan: The Resurgence of Baluch Nationalism*", p. 10.

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lives and hurting the economy. Indian diplomatic missions in Kabul and Tehran have been implicated in planning and executing violent terror acts inside Balochistan while active spies have been caught confessing their involvement in the militant activities. Terror and violence are now being used as strategic tools by the Indian leadership and intelligence hierarchy. A story in the *India Today* magazine of 19 January 2009 is a case in point. ‘There are lessons that India should learn from the 1971 conflict that was a result of careful strategy and planning’, the article mentions. ‘What the current situation calls for is a similar massive effort with a clear end goal in sight. If the 1971 objective was to dismember Pakistan, then the 2009 game plan should be to neutralize Pakistan so that it can no longer pose a threat to India’.³⁷ The magazine quotes G. Parthasarthy, a former High Commissioner to Pakistan, a hardliner within the Indian establishment, on how to deal with Pakistan; ‘We need to build covert capabilities in Pakistan and mount psychological war. We should not shy away from political destabilization and inflicting economic damage to Pakistan. The time has come for us to say that Pakistan’s border with Afghanistan is disputed’.³⁸ While addressing a gathering in Sastra University, Indian National Security Advisor, Ajit Doval, advocated exploiting Pakistan’s vulnerabilities to India’s advantage. Doval’s game plan was to fund insurgent groups to spread terrorism.³⁹ Doval said that

³⁷ Imtiaz Gul, *The Most Dangerous Place*, Penguin Books Limited, London, 2010, p. 204.

³⁸ Imtiaz Gul, *The Most Dangerous Place*, Penguin Books Limited, London, 2010, p. 205.

³⁹ Dinesh Narayanan, “Strategic Gospel According to Ajit Doval”, *The Economic Times*, Delhi, 27 September 2016.

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terrorist groups depended on the provision of money and they could be lured by doling out more money than that promised to them by the opposing side. Kulbhushan Sudhir Jadhav, an Indian serving naval official, was arrested in Balochistan over charges of terrorism and spying for India's intelligence agency, RAW. Jadhav was involved in subversive activities inside Pakistan and was arrested on 3 March 2016 during a counter-intelligence operation in Balochistan. The Indian government recognizes Jadhav as a former naval officer and maintains that he retired prematurely. Jadhav entered Chabahar with a visa stamped on a fake passport in 2003 and then obtained a fake identity as Hussain Mubarak Patel from Maharashtra, India.

The region's geo-political situation is a catalyst for the already simmering currents in the province. The present geo-political conflict in neighbouring Afghanistan has greatly contributed towards the further deterioration of the situation. A weak regime in the neighbourhood remains impotent against the movement of fugitive insurgent leadership from Balochistan. Taking advantage of the situation, hostile intelligence agencies breed and train their agents in ungoverned Afghan areas. These agents have been intruding into Balochistan to create a law and order situation and target economic, civic, and social activities. Western governments have also played their part in creating this instability. Despite being implicated in various criminal cases, many of the sub-nationalist leaders live comfortably in European countries. Their sympathizers, who are countries and agencies hostile to Pakistan's interests, continue to fund them through clandestine means contrary to international laws which prohibit funding such organizations. In addition to funds, these hostile agencies also provide weapons, ammunition, and

technological assistance.

Afghanistan's interest in Balochistan has historic linkages and dates back to the seventeenth century.⁴⁰ In 1893, the British demarcated a border between Afghanistan and Balochistan called the Durand Line. This boundary demarcation has always been a point of contention between the two countries. There is a sizeable Baloch population residing in Iranian Balochistan which accounts for about 2 percent of Iran's population.⁴¹ Baloch nationalists in Iranian Sistan Balochistan made many unsuccessful political and armed attempts to gain independence. However, the Iranian government successfully contained them through a 'carrot and stick' policy. Most of the Baloch movements in Iran were not unified and suffered because of lack of capable leadership. Iranian Baloch always looked towards the Pakistani Baloch for support of their common cause. Yet, here as well, they lacked cohesion. After the Iranian revolution and the consolidation of the Islamic regime in 1979, the Pakistan-Iran relationship remained cloaked in mistrust. On a number of occasions, Iran has alleged that Pakistan supports Jundallah, a Sunni armed militant group in Iran responsible for a number of massive attacks. This group operates between Iranian and Pakistani Baloch areas and creates security situations in the Iranian Balochistan region. Despite assurances from the Pakistan government to the contrary, there is a lack of trust. Nevertheless, Iran is not believed to be involved in destabilization efforts in Balochistan as Iran feels that Baloch

⁴⁰ Selig Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow: Baloch Nationalism and Soviet Temptations*, p. 141.

⁴¹ "Iran", CIA Fact Book available at, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ir.html>.

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insurgents succeeding in Pakistan would encourage Iranian Baloch to pick up arms against the Iranian regime.⁴² On the economic front, Iran is anxious that the Gwadar Port could play down the significance of Iranian ports, especially of the Chabahar Port, for trade connections with Central Asia and Afghanistan.

Balochistan's peculiar geography provides promising economic prospects but mountainous barricades to development prospects. Huge unexploited natural reserves could alter the fate of its people if the law and order situation could be restored in the province. Yet the difficult terrain would be a major hindrance to its development. In addition to attracting foreign investment, an improved security situation would help boost local business as well. People the world over have seen the prospects of modernization and industrialization as opportunities to attain prosperity and, thus, migration from relatively destitute regions towards wealthier regions has occurred throughout history. The same phenomenon is being observed in the Balochistan coastal belt region. The prospects of economic development, coupled with the massive population explosion, are driving changes in the demographic mosaic. People from other regions are trying to cash in on the development prospects.

One of the biggest hurdles to Pakistan's economic growth is the shortage of energy resources. Recent years have seen a high priority being given to address this shortfall. However, the problem is likely to persist for a few more years even if the government accords the same level of focus to the issue. Finding more energy resources would have to be given

⁴² "Balochistan: Current Situation and Prognosis", Centre for Land Warfare Studies, available at, http://www.claws.in/index.php?action=master&task=1104&u_id=36.

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top priority nationally. Amongst Pakistan's proven natural gas reserves, the reservoirs situated in Balochistan produce about 40 percent of Pakistan's natural gas but consume only 17 percent. Growing industrialization and gas-dependent transport is likely to put tremendous stress on Pakistan's natural gas resources. The coal and marble industry has a huge potential and can be advanced if good road networks are developed to link Balochistan's interior with other provinces. Though Balochistan still holds vast reservoirs of natural energy, their exploration are contingent upon an improved security situation in the province.

Balochistan is a mineral-rich region situated on the famous Tithian Copper Belt (TCB). Almost every type of metallic and non-metallic mineral wealth exists under its soil. Vast reserves of non-metallic minerals include magnetite, marble, sulphur, fluorite, gypsum, and coal. The estimated reserves of coal are around 196 million tons. Due to its location on the TCB, Balochistan possesses huge oil and gas reserves. Proven shale gas reserves in the region accords Pakistan second place, after China, with over 10,000 Trillion Cubic Feet of reserves.⁴³ Balochistan has rightly become the central focus for foreign petroleum firms. International actors in oil politics have centred their attention on the immense oil and gas reservoirs lying uncharted in Balochistan. In addition to huge mineral and energy reservoirs, Balochistan is also a natural gateway between any significant exchanges of inter-state trade as it falls in the transit route of major natural gas transportation projects from either Iran or Turkmenistan to Pakistan and from there to China and India. The sooner the security situation in the province is normalized, the better it

⁴³ Khaleeq Kiani, "Pakistan said to have large reserves of Shale gas and oil", *Dawn News*, 28 August 2013.

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is for the region as it could facilitate energy resources passing from energy-rich to energy-starved countries. Water is also turning out to be a strategic resource in the region, especially in Balochistan. With this strategic resource reducing rapidly, the government must pay attention to improving the state of sub-surface water in Balochistan by constructing more dams. In Balochistan, access to clean drinking water remains a key issue and is linked critically to the evolving security situation and the development of mega projects in the province. For instance, the Gwadar deep-water port is linked vitally to the construction of the Mirani Dam in Makran. Mirani Dam would meet the water requirements for the future expansion of Gwadar city including the port, its fishing harbour, and other commercial and industrial estates. There has always been a dearth of water in Balochistan and, hence, there have been numerous droughts.

Balochistan's economy is fundamentally pastoral. It is primarily dependent upon green patches and rangelands in Southern Balochistan to support the province's livestock population. Nomadic livestock producers get 70 percent of the feed for their livestock from pasture ranges in Balochistan. However, the enormous potential in the livestock sector has yet to be explored. It is a key sector of the provincial economy and accounts for approximately 20 percent of the province's GDP. Estimates show that it is the primary sustainable source of income for about 75–80 percent of Balochistan's population. Careful estimates reveal that Balochistan currently houses more than 30 million livestock. Leather, carpets, and pharmaceutical industries are the main industries consuming the livestock produced in Balochistan. Livestock farming is a favourite business and hobby of the Baloch people. The provincial government can earn vast amounts of

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revenue by providing subsidies to people to further develop this business. The RekoDiq copper and gold project has been under the spotlight for some time. The federal and provincial governments have, until now, failed to understand the economic impact of this project. The politicization of the bureaucracy does not allow it to stand up for the right causes and provide good advice to the political leadership.⁴⁴ The project, if managed transparently by experts, could turn around lives in the entire province. The concerns related to irregularities in the Sandek project need thorough redress. Transparency in contractual processes is essential.

Fishing is the most important industry in the coastal region of Makran where many people are connected to this industry through boat-making, marketing, and transportation. Travelling along the coastal highway, one comes across four major fishing centres along the Makran coast: Ormara, Pasni, Gwadar, and Jiwani. Balochistan's coastal areas have tremendous potential for shrimp and fish farming projects. The federal and provincial governments must invest in developing fisheries to benefit from the huge economic potential of the Makran coast. These industries need help in uplifting local living standards to further isolate insurgents.

With four ecological and climatic zones creating a variety of terrains, Balochistan has great potential for developing agriculture. Agriculture and livestock are the main constituents of the local economy, especially in southern Balochistan where there are many plains. This sector suffers from a lack of water resources and has been seriously hit by natural calamities like droughts, torrential flooding, and heavy rains. The unique climatic conditions offer immense

⁴⁴ Saima Ali Shah, "RekoDiq-Pakistan's Achilles's Heel", *The Express Tribune*, 28 March 2017.

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diversity and variety in fruit production. Nature has been kind to Balochistan; its favourable climate and combination of plateaus further enhance its potential. It produces huge quantities of the best varieties of apples, grapes, cherries, and almonds. If this sector were adequately supported by the government, it could earn substantial revenues and foreign exchange.

Balochistan has the acknowledged capacity of producing 2 million barrels of oil per day compared to Saudi Arabia's 11 million, Iran's 4 million and Nigeria's approximately 2 million.⁴⁵ Coal reserves in Balochistan could provide for 33 percent of Pakistan's total energy requirement.⁴⁶ Balochistan's subsoil possesses one of the world's biggest copper reserves. The net worth of these copper reserves is valued at US\$260 billion alone while the combined worth of gold and copper deposits in Balochistan is estimated around US\$3 trillion.⁴⁷ Pakistan is actively engaged in two major regional gas pipeline projects to meet its growing energy requirements.

The Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline, once completed, would carry over three BCF of gas per day covering a distance of 1690 kilometres.⁴⁸ The other project is 2735 kilometres, the Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) pipeline, which would potentially carry around three BCF of gas daily from Iran.⁴⁹ In addition to meeting Pakistan's

⁴⁵ Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, "Pakistan Security Report 2010", (Islamabad, 2011), p. 2.

⁴⁶ Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, "Balochistan Conflicts and Players", (Islamabad, 2008), p. 29.

⁴⁷ Mir Sher Baz Khetran, "Crisis in Balochistan: Challenges and Opportunities", Islamabad Institute of Strategic Studies, p. 34.

⁴⁸ Robert G. Wirsing, "Baloch Nationalism and the Geopolitics of Energy Resources: The Changing Context of Separatism in Pakistan", Strategic Studies Institute, April 2008, p. 10.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 10.

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energy requirements, the pipeline could meet Indian energy requirements whenever it decided to join those projects. Both gas pipelines would pass through Balochistan before turning northward or entering India. The pipeline would not only meet energy requirements but are also meant to build economic trust and stability in the region. The renewed significance of Balochistan's conflict is largely due to ongoing projects and, thus, those projects have multi-dimensional impact on the conflict. According to Robert Wirsing, the government would be compelled to solve the Baloch conflict on account of Balochistan's economic potential. Second, the Baloch political struggle for the control of natural resources would be reinvigorated. Third, energy-related economic activity in Balochistan would bring more economic opportunities for Balochistan and, thus, better living standards would result from an early and peaceful resolution of the conflict.⁵⁰ Balochistan generates an annual revenue of US\$40 million from the extraction of approximately forty different mineral resources. Energy products extracted from Balochistan serve as the vehicle of industrial growth in Pakistan.

⁵⁰ Ibid., v.

CHAPTER 8

**THE POLITICAL AND
SECURITY MOSAIC**

The history of Balochistan is replete with examples of political fraud, economic exploitation, and broken promises. The occasional high-handedness of state institutions, including the security and intelligence agencies, has also contributed to worsening the situation. However, the federal government is the custodian of the state institutions' actions and mainly responsible for the nation's fate. Till now, the federal government had demonstrated its lack of capability in designing a formal conflict-resolution mechanism and had consistently overlooked the sociological and economic deprivation of the Baloch people. It is obvious that the deliberate negligence of development had given rise to despair amongst the youth. The more jaded the youth became, the more vulnerable they were to the calls of militant elements. To date, very little had been done to attend to and settle those issues by the successive regimes and, thus, alienation had taken the shape of insurgencies and militant struggles. Meanwhile, the people of Balochistan had also started realizing the insincerity and pretence of the rebel leadership abroad. There is a visible lack of commonality of objectives amongst the insurgent groups due to frequent infighting. The Baloch community is now reaching the conclusion that, even when those insurgent groups succeeded, their mutual mistrust and divergent objectives would only push Balochistan into deeper chaos. Balochistan has never experienced a strong and

stable political government as the province has mainly had coalition governments. Instead of guiding the province out of poverty and insecurity, those weak governments had generally focused on serving individual political interests. Nepotism, undue favours, and tribal partiality had dragged the province into deeper crises. The legislators had generally remained entangled in politicizing development projects, enlarging their personal privileges, and securing their hold over their tribes.

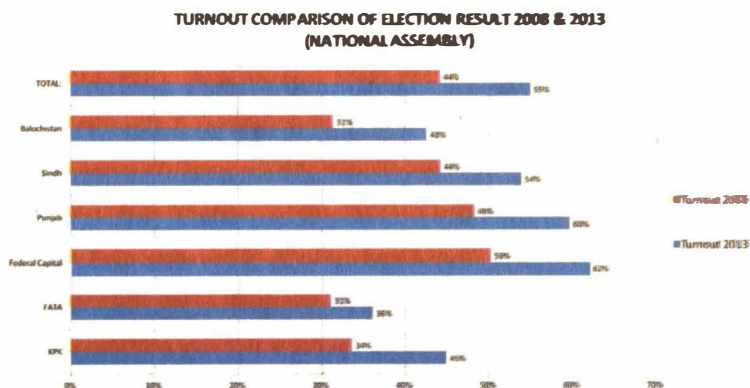
The socio-cultural continuum characterized by the traditional clan-based administrative system was a major hurdle in the way of positive political and intellectual influences. For that reason, the major political parties had been unable to build strong bonds with the people in the interior parts of the provinces. Weak governance and the government's lack of progress on social development gave rise to the perception that the tribal system was the only practicable mechanism. Public discontent, continued militancy, violence-based insurgent tactics, and an incredibly complex variety of political interests posed serious challenges to policymakers in building and maintaining peace in the province.

The provincial legislative structure had been going through abnormal and sometimes odd experiments. During the Pakistan Peoples Party regime in the centre, the Provincial Assembly of Balochistan, led by Aslam Raisani, demonstrated the weakest structure. It had perhaps set a world record—almost all of the legislators, with the exception of one or two, were part of government benches—while most amongst them also enjoyed ministerial and advisory powers. In the absence of an opposition, any meaningful law-making in the public interest became virtually impossible. President Pervez Musharraf introduced the local government system in Pakistan in 2001. The system was well-suited to Balochistan

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as it was almost impossible for the provincial government to gauge commoners' problems because of the scattered population pockets throughout the breadth of the province. However, the provincial government abolished that system in 2010 resulting in the concentration of power back in the provincial capital.

The governance challenges in Balochistan had deep social roots and the public approach towards the political process revealed a lack of trust in and low expectations of its elected representatives. Because of the inhospitable terrain and the lack of communications infrastructure, voter turnout generally remained low during the electoral process as compared to other provinces.



Inherent flaws in the economic system resulted in uneven socio-economic development in various regions. That inequality gave birth to mounting economic pressures and a sense of deprivation amongst the poor masses of Balochistan. They considered the current revenue collection and fund allocation mechanism faulty and discriminatory. That further aggravated their complaints against the centre as they saw a much more advanced and opportunity-based structure in

other provinces of Pakistan.

Balochistan is a stark example of alienation and disempowerment generated by a corrupt political culture. Perhaps one could say that, amongst all the provinces, Balochistan's political culture was the weakest. A handful of individuals had great influence over the poor masses and it was unimaginable that they would allow anyone from the masses to acquire power and subsequently confront them politically. That handful of influential individuals played an important role not only in politics but also in the local administrations.

The benefits of special economic packages and the NFC Award had not trickled down. Millions of rupees had been doled out by the government to politicians to finance developmental works in their areas but no visible improvements were witnessed. While the elite continued enjoying their lifestyle, the development funds they received from the government seldom reached their actual destinations. The purported development projects they executed were not meant to uplift the quality of life of the general public. The community was never consulted before the commencement of those projects as the underhand intent was to plunder the funds for their own gain.

During all the insurgencies in Balochistan, the political parties hardly mitigated the violence or raised the question of dispossession and deprivation at the national level. That criminal neglect was not limited to the governing elite as, regrettably, the opposition parties also overlooked the province's larger issues. For decades, Balochistan had remained under-developed for multiple reasons. The implications of a tribal society, the provincial political landscape, economic and political deprivation, and external influences were the key factors in the existing chaos. In contrast to the restive

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Baloch-inhabited areas, the Pashtun belt in Balochistan was fairly peaceful since the Pathans were comparatively better educated, religious-minded, and remained occupied in business.¹ The Pashtuns and Hazaras always remained inclined towards peaceful political struggles and did not subscribe to calls for violence. Though both the major ethnic groups in Balochistan, the Balochs and Pashtuns, lived in harmony, a leader from either ethnic group was unlikely to be acceptable to the other group. Thus, political leadership from the province had never been able to produce leadership accepted by all. Historically, almost all the Baloch nationalists, including the hardcore, were part of parliamentary politics and, during the tenure of many democratic regimes, they were part of coalitions at the provincial and federal levels. Most Baloch nationalists believed that Balochistan's problems could be resolved through political dialogue and not by militancy.

Pakhtun political parties had their political foundation in Pakhtun nationalism. They believed strongly that there were two separate ethnic groups living in Balochistan and both had distinct cultures and defined areas. Pakhtuns support the Baloch stance with regard to provincial autonomy and control over resources but always renounced the use of violent measures.² The Pashtun factor was an influential feature in understanding the quandary in Balochistan. It was important to know how a large number of Pakhtuns was so comfortably settled in a province which was ethnically associated with Balochi-speaking people. When the British occupied Balochistan, they divided it into several parts. British Balochistan comprised mainly the north and north-eastern regions where Pakhtuns

¹ Interview with Lieutenant General (ret'd.) Alam Khattak, Former Corps Commander Quetta, November 2017.

² Ibid.

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were dominant because of its contiguity with Afghanistan and with NWFP (now KP). Since that region was strategically more important to the British, it received more attention in terms of development works and inter-connectivity with the northern and eastern parts of country. Meanwhile, the part of Balochistan under the Khan of Kalat remained backward and devoid of substantial development. Despite the absence of any geographic boundary between the Pakhtun and Baloch areas, there was a clear cultural divide between both regions; as one travelled from south to north or vice versa, one got the feeling of entering a separate cultural region. In Pakhtun areas, Pakhtoonkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP) maintained a Pakhtun outlook and demands that Pakhtun majority areas be separated from Balochistan and made part of the North-West Frontier Province (now KP).³

Like KP, Balochistan received a major influx of Afghan refugees whenever Afghanistan faced foreign military invasion or an internal crisis. During the early part of the 1980s, a large number of Afghans left their homes to escape the effects of the Russian invasion and came to the Pakhtun areas of Balochistan. As the conflict in Afghanistan was prolonged, many of them were socially and economically settled in the province thus changing its demographic and ethnic balance. The Baloch leadership soon realized that and began voicing their concerns to the federal government. In 1979, Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo warned the government against the influx of refugees and demanded that they be sent back to their homeland immediately. However, Afghan refugees had never been seen as a grave problem by Pakhtun political parties in the province.

All mainstream political parties had prominent

³ *The Nation* (Lahore), 14 February 2006.

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representation in Balochistan. Generally, the scale of their success in Balochistan politics remained proportionate to their success in the centre. Amongst the religious political parties, the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) and Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan (JUP) were prominent. Both parties support the political process but rejected the use of violence against the people and the state.

Balochistan had a mixed ethnic make-up of religious groups and settlers. However, that ethnic and religious blend seemed to be susceptible in the wake of prevalent violence in the Baloch and Brahvi areas because of the trans-frontier movement of non-state actors and the role being played by regional and international players. Balochistan's earlier insurgencies, and the present one, always vacillated in pace and intensity. Depending upon the political and administrative handling of the population, the strength of the insurgency had ebbed and flowed. Since 2014, positive political developments in the province and the operational-level understanding and collaboration between the political and security prongs had brought down the level considerably. The province was on a steady path towards stability and militant groups had been marginalized to a great extent.

Besides the nationalist insurgencies, the political and security landscape of Balochistan had been marred by religious-sectarian violence, politically motivated target killings, attacks on NATO containers, and criminal activities by the drug mafia. Since 2001, there had been a noticeable influx of illegal weapons in the province. Numerous factors contributed to the rising number of weapons in the area. Those fleeing from the Taliban in Afghanistan after 2001 brought along their weapons and many of them, in need of

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money, were forced to sell them in the local markets. NATO supply trucks carrying different items to Afghanistan through the RCD highway were often looted and set ablaze. The pillaged weapons frequently found their way to city markets in Balochistan where they were sold to any purchaser. Those sophisticated weapons were used not only by insurgent groups but also by tribal chiefs who equipped their militias with those weapons for tribal feuds. Gangs of smugglers were often found in possession of modern lethal weaponry which law enforcement forces lacked. Not only small arms but also heavy weapons including rocket launchers, anti-aircraft guns, and land mines were smuggled from Afghanistan into Balochistan for transportation to other parts of Pakistan. Ammunition of heavier calibres and land mines were used to make IEDs for use against security forces. As late as 2013, discontent and resentment in Balochistan was widespread enough to breed dangerous anti-state actors like sectarian militants and target killers.

The security environment of Balochistan remained chequered since its accession to Pakistan. After the insurgency of the 1970s, the period till 2000 saw relative calm in Balochistan. However, after two and a half decades of peace, Balochistan once again saw an upsurge of violence at the beginning of the new century.⁴ The violence began with occasional attacks on gas pipelines, government buildings, and security forces. This became a regular feature by 2002 and 2003. Over 1,500 attacks had been reported by 3 April 2005.⁵ Militants repeatedly targeted development schemes such as

⁴ Anatol Lieven, *Pakistan a Hard Country*, New York: Public Affairs 2011, pp. 348–50.

⁵ Frédéric Grare, *Pakistan: The Resurgence of Baluch Nationalism*,

Gwadar Port, Mirani Dam, and Coastal Highway.⁶ In 2010, Baloch violence surpassed FATA's despite an active, ongoing insurgency in Waziristan. Balochistan became the worst affected region of the country where the highest number of attacks were reported.⁷

In 2003, President Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Zafar Ullah Khan Jamali realized that having only 6 percent of the area under police jurisdiction would not help improve the security situation. It was an unworkable arrangement whereby 94 percent of the province was a 'B' area where the police had no writ and where the Balochistan levies were responsible for maintaining order. Since levies lived on salaries paid by the government through the tribal chiefs, their actions and conduct were driven by the whims of the tribal heads which, at times, ran contrary to the interests of the state. The conversion of 'B' areas into 'A' areas was deliberately planned in phases. In the initial phase, only three districts, Quetta, Lasbela, and Naseerabad were completely converted into 'A' areas through a notification on 4 December 2003.⁸ The conversion process was mildly opposed by a few political parties but it continued. The number of policemen was enhanced from 25,000 to over 30,000. The phased conversion continued and, by December 2005, nine more districts had been converted to 'A' areas while the police continued consolidating their control over these areas. By 2007, all districts of Balochistan had been converted after a painstaking four years.

Washington D.C. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006, p. 5.

⁶ "Balochis of Pakistan: On the Margins of History", The Foreign Policy Centre London, <http://fpc.org.uk/fsblob/817.pdf>.

⁷ Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, "Pakistan Security Report 2010", Islamabad 2011, 2.

⁸ Pervez Musharraf, *In the Line of Fire*, p. 59.

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The period from 2007–2013 marked a dangerous epoch in Baloch history. The social fabric of Balochistan was confronting methodical annihilation leaving behind a dangerous radical component. Not only did the ratio of terror incidents and violent sectarian attacks increase manifold in those years but also the Baloch youth appeared so despondent and exasperated with the prevailing environment that they could be dragged easily into the snowballing insurgency. The dismal state of institutions in Balochistan, the scale of unemployment, and other visible signs of state neglect were pushing the middle class towards taking the ultimate step. Had this educated youth decided to join the insurgents, things could have slipped beyond the possibility of a political solution. The initiation of a new phase of political dialogue around the same time was a timely stitch that repaired some of the damage. The annual report of the Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies established that 2010 and 2011 were the deadliest years in terms of security-related incidents. In 2010 alone, over 700 attacks were recorded across the province in which more than 600 people lost their lives while over 1,100 were injured.⁹ The year 2011 was no less violent with almost the same statistics being reported for it.

A trend began in the same troublesome years of threatening the school staff in various districts against hoisting the national flag on school buildings. In October 2010, the Baloch Liberation Front (BLF) distributed threatening letters to many schools all over the province warning staff and teachers to not fly the Pakistan's flag on their buildings or make children sing the national anthem. The BLF threatened

⁹ Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, "Pakistan Security Report 2010", p. 10.

staff with dire consequences if the practices of flying the national flag or singing of the national anthem by pupils were repeated.¹⁰ The situation was exploited to the fullest by the land and property mafia who made good fortunes by blackmailing the non-Baloch population. At times, the mafia was involved in sending fake warning letters to Punjabi settlers to create panic.

Sectarian violence was another trend which became common. The militants of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) targeted the Shia community living in Quetta and killed many innocent people. Their target was the Hazara Shias who were easily distinguishable because of their appearance and thus soft prey. In 2011, around 100 people from the Hazara community were killed in targeted killings while 2012 saw a new trend wherein the Hazara community was targeted through suicide bombings. Some attacks on the Shia community were devastating and had a great psychological impact on the communities living in Balochistan. In September 2011, militants gunned down over two dozen Hazaras from the Shia community near Quetta. On 28 December 2013, a suicide blast in Quetta killed 30 members of the police force while many others were injured. In January 2013, a double suicide attack killed 92 people in a Quetta locality populated by Shia Hazaras. In February 2013, a devastating bomb blast in Quetta's Hazara town left 89 people dead. The responsibility for most of those attacks was claimed by the LeJ and, for a few, by the TTP.

¹⁰ BBC Monitoring South Asia, "Pakistani Separatists ban Pakistani National Anthem, flag in district", 27 October 2010.

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The LeJ is a brutal, anti-Shia organization which had a strong support base in Quetta in those days. The outfit lost most of its steam when its camps in Kabul and Kandahar were destroyed by US forces after 2001. The remnants then regrouped in Balochistan with support from the Punjab

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faction of the LeJ. In Balochistan, the LeJ operated as two separate splinter groups, the Usman Kurd group and Qari Hai group. In 2012–2013, the Shia Hazara community of Quetta was brutally targeted by militants from the LeJ. The Hazara community areas were subjected to massive suicide bombings and the government seemed to be totally helpless and callous towards improving their security. In one such incident, a powerful bomb devastated a busy business community killing over 80 and injuring many more. Around 4,000 Hazara women began a four-day sit-in on the main road in Quetta and refused to bury their dear ones. It was a heart-breaking scene where young girls and old women were huddled beside their dead during chilly winter nights. They agreed to bury them only when they were assured by the authorities that the perpetrators would be brought to justice.

During those years, there were reports suggesting the strong possibility of a working bond between the LeJ and Jundullah, a militant group operating in Iranian Seistan-Balochistan. Jundullah was an anti-Shia outfit with a nationalist, separatist agenda. When it came under pressure from Iran, a few of its members attempted to slip away towards the east and take refuge in the western districts of Pakistani Balochistan. After the hanging of its leader, Abdul Malik Regi in June 2010, the group called for protests in Balochistan and appealed to the Baloch people to help Jundullah liberate Iranian Seistan-Balochistan from Iranian control. Despite Pakistan government's repeated denial of Jundullah's presence in Balochistan, Iran had frequently flagged the issue at diplomatic levels complaining about the inadequacy of measures taken by Pakistan.

The followers of the LeJ believed in 'Takfiri', a concept whereby they assumed the responsibility of deciding

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who followed the teachings of Islam and who was to be excluded from Islam. They also took it upon themselves to decree who did not deserve to live since they were not following the teachings of the religion. The Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan had also found reasonable support in Balochistan. Although twice-declared 'proscribed' by the government, the organization remained active and provided support to the Lashkar-e-Janghvi militants. On the other hand, the Imamia Student Organization, a leading group among Shia youth, was believed to be playing an active role in sectarian violence.

A deadly nexus developed in Balochistan between the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), the Lashker-e-Jhangvi, and local sectarian groups which had the capacity to continue stirring up the security situation in Balochistan. When law enforcing agencies started 'intelligence-based operations' to root out non-state actors and other terrorist groups, that nexus resisted the armed forces actively. Pakistan's intelligence agencies were mindful of their tactics and had worked out a strategy to counter their moves. Nevertheless, security agencies had to pay a heavy price for those protracted operations and had to offer numerous sacrifices in the process. In September 2011, over two dozen people were killed in two suicide attacks outside the official residence of a senior Frontier Corps officer. This attack was well coordinated. The first suicide bomber struck when the DIG was leaving his house and the second suicide bomber hit six minutes after the first attack when security persons and the general public had gathered at the scene. The trend of targeting relatively smaller and insignificant installations like electric pylons and railway lines continued till 2009. Thereafter, a visible change in the planning process was noted and target selection shifted from a tactical to a strategic nature. Attacks on gas pipelines

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reduced from 68 in 2009 to only 9 in 2010. Meanwhile, attacks on electric pylons dropped from 40 in 2009 to only 16 in 2010. Similarly, railway line blasts reduced from 26 in 2009 to 6 in 2010. This was due mainly to the internal bashing militant organizations got from the Baloch people. Attacks on pylons, gas pipelines, and railway tracks were hurting the local population much more than they were hurting the government and security establishment.

During those turbulent years, settlers were brutally targeted in the name of nationalism. The targeted killings of the Punjabi-speaking minority picked up pace since the killing of Baloch nationalist leader Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti. That was portrayed as an act of revenge for killing Balochis at the hands of the 'Punjabi' Army during the counter-insurgency operations. Nationalist militant groups in Balochistan targeted and killed many 'settler' government employees, professionals, and businessmen. The poor men from other regions who were employed as workers on daily wages were also brutally targeted and forced to migrate. This violence, spread over almost six years, pushed the province to even greater poverty through the brain drain. At one point in time in 2009, people were terrorized to the extent that they migrated from Balochistan without properly disposing of their properties. They were not free to carry out the routine functions of daily lives. The main outcome of the militants' brutality was the large-scale migration of educated Punjabi and Urdu speaking people who lived mostly in Quetta. People from all walks of life were targeted with the aim of paralysing the entire system. Local militants alone would not have been capable of that kind of systematic planning and execution. There were some obvious proofs of the involvement of foreign intelligence agencies. The insurgents and their foreign sympathisers were

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brainwashing the youth through their version of the state narrative against the Baloch people.

The LeB was founded in 2009 with Javed Mengal, son of Attaullah Mengal, as its head. The primary objective of forming this organization was to counter the growing influence of the BLA and thus neutralize the nuisance of the Marris in Khuzdar and adjoining areas. The group had been involved in criminal activities in Balochistan and kept close contact with gang war members in Lyari, Karachi. Whenever the security forces in Balochistan tried to track down its leadership, they would escape and take refuge in Lyari.

Human trafficking through Balochistan was well organised and involved international organisations. This well-knit human trafficking network included political personalities, feudals, the local mafia, labour merchants, and security officials. The traffickers were as varied as the circumstances of their victims. The recruitment, transfer, and sale of vulnerable people (women and children in particular) were a gross violation of human rights and a question mark on the effectiveness of provincial law-enforcement capabilities. Lured through various methods of coercion and deception, trafficked persons were restrained by their agents and abductors, usually under appalling conditions which often resulted in a large number of fatalities.¹¹ Human trafficking incidents across Balochistan witnessed a decline in 2017, when compared to the previous year, as the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) apprehended over 1,600 persons for attempting to cross the Iranian border illegally.¹² The claims of this decrease, however, vanished when, on 15

¹¹ Fahad Nabeel, "Human Trafficking in Balochistan", *Voice of Balochistan*, 7 January 2018.

¹² Mohammad Zafar, "Human Trafficking Declines in Balochistan",

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November 2017, fifteen bodies bearing bullet wounds were found in Buleda near Turbat in Balochistan's Kech district. Those were the bodies of people from different parts of Punjab. Although some victims were enticed by traffickers, most left their homes voluntarily because of financial pressures.¹³ Women trafficking was another issue which went mostly un-noticed. Women from poverty-stricken areas were subjected to trafficking through Balochistan.¹⁴ International and regional crime syndicates were linked together through a complex and intricate network which lured poverty-stricken families to send their young girls abroad for employment. The mafia then used those girls for the sex trade as it was more profitable than other high-risk trafficking involving drug and arms smuggling.

Several national and international development organizations and NGOs were working in Balochistan. Though part of their funding requirements came from local donations, a major share, nevertheless, came from international funding which raised suspicions about their agenda. Pakistanis were amongst the most charitable in the world considering their per capita income. A major portion of the donations was a result of religious appeals while donations given for socio-civic causes were comparatively small. A majority of the NGOs might only have a humanitarian angle but many might be working tacitly for some hostile agencies. Government institutions and intelligence agencies must, therefore, ensure that correct procedures were followed when registering those organizations.

The Express Tribune, 1 January 2018.

¹³ "Human Trafficking Through Quetta", A Report by Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, p. 6.

¹⁴ "Internal Trafficking of Women and Girls in Pakistan", A research report by USAID, December 2012, p. 33.

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Media persons, from the print and electronic media, operated in Balochistan under perpetual threats to their lives and properties. Hence, they could not be expected to show objectivity, balance, and proportion while reporting. The state had been unable to ensure that appropriate security measures were in place for the safety of journalists so that they could focus on objective reporting.

The capacity of government intelligence and security agencies, especially the police, was a key factor in ensuring harmonious counterinsurgency efforts. It was important that the people of Balochistan saw the employment of state security forces as potent, legitimate, and just. Insurgents were better capable of surviving and prospering if the government authorities they were fighting were feeble and lacked legitimacy in the eyes of the population.¹⁵ When the state security institutions lacked capacity, disparate political and militant groups were able to take advantage through acquiring space and engaging in competitive state-building. A state of chaos might arise if the government could not establish, in the German sociologist Max Weber's words, a 'monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory'.¹⁶ The law and order situation in the province was extremely wanting. The government of Balochistan, which was primarily responsible for protecting the lives and properties of the public, seemed to be in a state of inaction with little coordination and harmony among law enforcing agencies.

The Balochistan police was a mediocre-level trained and

¹⁵ Daniel Byman, "Friends Like These: Counterinsurgency and the War on Terrorism", *International Security*, Vol. 31, No. 2, Fall 2006, pp. 79–115.

¹⁶ Max Weber, *Politics as a Vocation*, in H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, eds., *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1958, p. 78.

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equipped force compared to the insurgents and terrorists against whom it was expected to operate. Though the numbers were not inadequate, the gear and weaponry were lacking. The training standards were not high but, since 2013, the Pakistan Army undertook a comprehensive programme to train the provincial police. Police units were organized in manageable batches for training on military facilities inside cantonments. Their syllabus, daily routine including physical training, and games were aligned with those of the army. All overweight policemen were segregated and given special opportunities for physical exertion to bring their weight down to the standard of army men. Along with general and specialized training in fighting low-intensity urban warfare, they were given surge training in firing small arms. The batches of policemen graduated in ceremonial functions attended by the province's political leadership, military hierarchy including the Corps Commander, and senior police officials. In 2013, the Pakistan Army gifted 5,000 submachine guns to the Balochistan police raising their ability to counter the sophisticated weaponry of insurgents and terrorists.

Frontier Corps (FC) Balochistan was a federal force which worked under the Ministry of Interior under Section 3 of the FC Ordinance 1959. Approximately 45,000 FC soldiers were deployed all over Balochistan. Till 2017, there was one headquarter, located in Quetta, for the entire FC force. During the intense phase of the insurgency, the political and military leadership realized that Balochistan's size made it difficult for a single command headquarter to manage the operations of all FC Corps. The diverse anti-insurgent, anti-smuggling, and defensive operations along the Pak-Afghan border demanded reevaluating the whole structure. The solution was to have two separate commands of FC Balochistan. Thus the Northern

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Corps were regrouped with their headquarter in Quetta and the Southern Corps were placed under the command of another two-star general with their headquarter in Turbat.

In the absence of a clear political direction, support, and patronage, the army and Frontier Corps had to face the brunt of public criticism despite the fact that those institutions could only operate under the directions of the federal and provincial governments which seemed to be missing at that point in time. It was, perhaps, the reason that militants and terrorists were taking the lives of innocent people at will. While the extra-judicial summary disposal of any person, even a terrorist, could not be condoned, it was equally imperative to tighten and enforce criminal laws effectively so they could act as strict deterrents.

The year 2014 saw a drastic downward trend in all kinds of terror activities as a result of synergy among various government outfits. Though the overall security situation in the province showed visible signs of improvement on account of various policy initiatives of the government and security agencies, Balochistan, even today, faces a simmering situation. This was characterized by attacks on security forces, sectarian violence, terrorism, target killings, kidnapping for ransom, and many other forms of criminality. Sophisticated weapons and equipment used and the pattern of attacks conducted by militants clearly showed the involvement of foreign elements in Balochistan. It was, therefore, vital that the reasons for the current unrest were analysed objectively by the government so as to suppress the tide of lawlessness in the province.

The geostrategic importance of Balochistan had endured the tests of time due to its proximity to important regions. Stability in Balochistan was linked to important international, regional, and domestic issues. The US-led war on terrorism in

Afghanistan was as dependent on stability in Balochistan as the Chinese interests in the Gwadar Port. Iran and Afghanistan observed every significant move in Balochistan closely because of the large Baloch population in their respective countries. Analysing the security implications, the decision of the provincial government under Chief Minister Raisani to revert the 'A' areas back to the 'B' areas was highly inappropriate and imprudent. The province seemed to have regressed to an outdated colonial system where tribal heads used to be provided with levies to subjugate the public. Traditionally, the levies were more loyal to the tribal heads than to the state and so the state needed to decide whether it wanted to appease the Sardars by maintaining the 'B' areas or it wanted the writ of the state restored by maintaining the 'A' areas.¹⁷ Like all other provinces, the entire province should be brought under the jurisdiction of the police by converting all the 'B' areas of Balochistan into 'A' areas thus bringing the entire province under the full jurisdiction of the law of the state. To achieve the desired outcome, the government would have to empower both the judiciary and police as a precondition. Until those two organs of state were fully empowered, the Frontier Corps would need to support the local administration in addressing the shortcomings of the police force. The state must take the security of its people as a top priority and militants must not feel free to conduct terror activities at will.

A Divided Nation

Confined in one boundary, living together,
 Showing different reactions in the changing weather,
 Stabbing each other, hoping to reach the same destiny,
 Creating a stumbling block as the way, what an irony,

¹⁷ Dr Shakeel Roshan, President Al Hamd Islamic University, Quetta, Interview with the Author, 18 May 2018.

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Loving outsiders in possession of a different gene,
To the point patriotism withers and becomes lean,
Seeing through the binoculars of what lies tomorrow,
Love, patience and unity, there's a need to borrow.

(Funom Makama)

CHAPTER 9

A SILVER LINING

Rebuilding trust is an uphill task especially when it has been broken time and again. Without cultivating trust based on equality and dignity, a constructive way forward in human relations was unlikely. The Balochistan crisis was certainly an exacerbated crisis and could be tackled by setting the right political and developmental priorities. Earlier, there used to be two divergent views amongst native political and scholarly circles. One school of thought, which was not in the majority, supported the right to self-determination for the Baloch. This school of thought believed that the accession of Kalat to Pakistan was not a clean affair as it was carried out with more military weight than diplomatic and political leanings. Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri was the main proponent of this school of thought. He believed that the right to self-determination should be exercised by the people of the province to determine their own future. The other school of thought supported a more flexible political process which provided provincial autonomy and thus strengthened the federation rather than the centre. A larger number of Balochistan's political leaders backed that thought¹ which should be acknowledged by the silver-lining strategists and policymakers.

The National Finance Commission (NFC) was established under the 1973 Constitution to resolve issues related to the

¹ Senator Sana Ullah Baloch, National Party, interview with the Author, 23 March 2018, Islamabad.

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distribution of revenue from the centre to the provinces. Constituted by the President, it was mandatory for the NFC to meet periodically and not ever exceed five years without meeting. The Commission consisted of the federal and provincial finance ministers. The basis of the NFC remained an inter-province controversial subject since the only criteria for the distribution of federal grants was population. Balochistan, the largest province in terms of area and smallest in terms of population, always received the smallest share of the pie from the central government. As a result, it lacked socio-economic infrastructure and industrialization. In 2004, a parliamentary committee was formed to tackle the issues of Balochistan's grievances and inter-provincial harmony.² The committee had two sub-committees designated for separate sets of proposals. The subcommittee working under Senator Mushahid Hussain was assigned to make recommendations with regard to improving the situation in Balochistan whereas the one working under Senator Wasim Sajjad was assigned to propose recommendations for enhancing inter-provincial harmony and strengthening the federation while protecting the rights of each province.

Balochistan's foremost problem was that of 'a Trust Deficit'. For decades, the federal writ had been weakened by protracted neglect by the state and its institutions. Finding a solution to that complex problem or blaming any single institution for it would be difficult. It would be prudent to share the responsibility mutually. Rebuilding the trust of the masses would require better governance both at the centre and the province. In good faith, the problems of Balochistan would have to be accorded top priority in the national

² Report available at www.senatedefencecommittee.com.pk/publication/Report-of-Balochistan-committee.pdf.

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agenda but that should not have remained limited to good planning on paper; the effects of strategies must be seen as translated into actions. People from Balochistan needed to be conciliated through the realization of their genuine and constitutional demands. After the 2008 general elections, the Pakistan Peoples Party formed the government in the centre. A major political development took place when President Asif Ali Zardari presented a public apology to the people of Balochistan for all wrongdoings and promised to announce a reform package. On 24 November 2009, the government announced the 'Balochistan package' during a joint session of Parliament. The package had five distinct fields which concerned certain measures in constitutional, political, administrative, and economic spheres, and a monitoring mechanism. The package promised to initiate a judicial inquiry into the killings of Baloch leaders, moratorium on establishing military cantonments, deployment of FC troops to replace the army, the production of the missing persons in courts, payment Rs120 billion as arrears of gas royalty, an end to all kinetic operations except anti-terror actions, and a few other measures contained in the five-tier package.³ The title of the package was 'Aghaz-e-Haqooq-e-Balochistan' which showed that it was just the beginning of a process of redressing Balochistan's grievances. Amongst a few of the important positive steps taken by the government, the NFC Award was a great achievement where all other provinces displayed symbolic unity for the purpose of national coherence. This award had some significant features for Balochistan.⁴ For the first time in the history of the country, instead of a single

³ *Aaj News*, "Aghaz-e-Haqooq-e-Balochistan", 24 November 2009.

⁴ http://www.balochistan.gov.pk/images/NFC_points%20for_GoB_Web%20Portal.pdf.

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decisive factor, multiple criteria were accepted for resource distribution including population, Human Development Index (HDI), Inverse Population Density (IPD), and revenue generation/collection. An earlier feature of the previous NFC Award was based solely on the criterion of population. In that Award, a share of the province from the divisible pool was augmented from 5.11 percent to 9.09 percent. Balochistan was granted Rs83 billion in the financial year (2010–11) and it was agreed that that share would not be reduced in case of a shortfall of revenue collection by the federal government. Balochistan would also receive Rs 120 billion over a period of twelve years on account of Gas Development Surcharge (GDS) arrears and General Sales Tax (GST) on services shifted from the centre to the provinces which would be an additional source of revenue for the province.

Big leaps were taken to heal the wounds of the Baloch through major political decisions. It recommended that concurrent lists of subjects in the constitution should be transferred to the provinces thus addressing the long outstanding issue of provincial autonomy. On the economic platform, it recommended three different concerns: job creation for the youth of Balochistan, outstanding royalties in terms of natural gas and a formula for future usage, and a mechanism for a shared decision-making process for the launch of new mega-development projects in the province. A grant of Rs 1 billion was pledged for the rehabilitation of Internally Displaced People (IDPs) in the Dera Bugti area. The instrument for the development of the Gwadar Development Authority was also elaborated; it mentioned that it would work under the supervision of the Chief Minister while there would be a board of governors consisting of seven other members from the province. The package also announced the creation

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of 5,000 additional jobs for the people of Balochistan in the government, semi-government, and other organizations. A free economic zone was planned to be established in Gwadar, where all positions up to Grade 16 level would be filled by locals based on merit. For the development of Gwadar, preference would be given to qualified, local contractors. There would be a standard price of gas all over the country for the calculation of the gas development surcharge. Special incentives were planned for the locals of the Kohlu district to facilitate the exploration of gas in the area. The 18th Amendment in the constitution, though controversial, included many steps for revitalizing a good relationship between the state and the people of Balochistan. It would be interesting to watch how the government implemented the agreed measures in letter and spirit. Since the political process had involved consultation with the local leadership, wholehearted implementation was likely to win back the lost confidence of the Baloch. To some extent, the package contained the fundamentals of addressing the basic issues of discord. However, it would all depend on the sincerity with which the government and related institutions were prepared to undertake the measures. The package itself was a long-term solution to Baloch problems. The government should have also included a few essential short-term goals to provide immediate relief. In the face of multifaceted challenges, a fiscal package that did not address long standing grievances and establish a fair political structure would have little impact.⁵

Since 2013, armed violence in Balochistan was gradually giving way to more rational thinking regarding giving opportunities to political processes. That opening must be

⁵ Senator Sana Ullah Baloch, National Party, interview with the Author, 23 March 2018, Islamabad.

exploited by the state to redress grievances and cynicism. The state must accord top priority to repair peoples' loss of trust in the federation by addressing their legitimate concerns. Till a few years back, there was hardly any middle class in Baloch society. However, society's complexion is fast changing. Social and political forces are at work and Baloch youth is readily accepting the needs of the modern era by embracing new technology and scientific knowledge. The power of social change will hopefully soon challenge the tribal system. For the new generation, the more important issues are inter-province socio-economic equality and opportunities for better education and jobs. They feel the need for Baloch society to open up and rightfully expose Baloch culture to the outside world.⁶ The Baloch middle class is fast becoming aware of its rights and obligations and is getting empowered both in education and commerce. The traditional powers of status quo are trying their best to hamper this awareness and empowerment but exposure to knowledge has now started to permeate deeper thus driving the middle class to push for positive change.

Recent political dynamics and the changing environment in Pakistan offer a great opening to address the long-standing grievances of the province. All separatist movements in Balochistan from 1987 have practically died down.⁷ A great political leap was made in 1991 when a political delegation was sent to Afghanistan to convince Khair Bakhsh Marri to abandon his anti-Pakistan activities and come back to

⁶ Asad Rehman, (Director Programmes, Sungi Foundation), interview by Malik Siraj Akbar, *The Redefined Dimensions of Baloch Nationalist Movement* (USA: Xlibris Corporation, 2011).

⁷ Senator Mir Hasil Khan Bizenjo, Interview with the Author, 16 May 2018, Islamabad.

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the country.⁸ Though he came back and thereafter lived in Karachi, he continued his violent anti-state activities and armed militancy under the banner of the BLA. Nevertheless, it was a great gesture by the state and a step towards diplomatic mileage. A majority of Baloch Sardars are pro-federation. However, because of vested interests, a few of them tend to oppose federal initiatives in the province. If the state acts with political wisdom, the present unrest should be the last in the province. The Baloch people, and especially the youth, are tired of militancy and want to contribute positively towards building their province and society.⁹ A dispassionate analysis of the situation which leads to the correct prioritization of institutional reforms with a particular orientation towards federal political initiatives is essential. The insurgency in Balochistan is very different from the insurgency happening in FATA. In Balochistan, religion is not being portrayed as the basis of misunderstandings; it is the grievances of people based on their basic rights. Though most forms of insurgency should be tackled through a 'people centric' approach, the Balochistan insurgency is in dire need of such approaches as people are receptive to development and social works. The current unrest still does not attract popular support.

In the present circumstances, the situation in Balochistan presents a distinct silver lining. The provincial political parties and nationalist parties have consistently shown an inclination to working with democratic processes and believing in parliamentary democracy. They want to strive for the constitutional rights of the province while repeatedly distancing themselves from the violent insurgents who oppose political

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Senator Mir Hasil Khan Bizenjo, Interview with the Author, 16 May 2018, Islamabad.

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dialogue. It is the right moment for the state of Pakistan to display a clear, long-term intent to acknowledge provincial demands and work out a strategy for implementation. This way, the country can move towards resolving the political issues that are creating a wedge between the insurgents and the people of Balochistan thus isolating the former.

Talking of the way forward, the situation at present has been wisely protected from the point of total collapse. The relative stability achieved since 2013 must be capitalized upon through a comprehensive and all-encompassing political dialogue. A fresh effort involving hard-line, self-exiled leaders could be generated under an agreed formula of amnesty. Despite the opinion of a few who think political dialogue would be of limited use, a process must be initiated on the open media and through a body of senior parliamentarians. Such a process is likely to yield results and, even if it did not produce positive results immediately, it would isolate those who refuse to partake of it. Insurgents and their leaders living abroad would become less effective and lose support. Any successful counterinsurgency would need to engage people in all affected parties on an ongoing basis. However, the government must always avoid a policy of appeasement through offering blanket amnesty to criminals and perpetrators of heinous transgressions. Even if it were done with sincerity, it would be portrayed as having been done from a position of weakness and would thus be exploited by insurgents. Pakistan would have to address genuine political aspirations in order to build a more successful counterinsurgency strategy. Whenever resorting to kinetic energy, security forces must keep their actions to a minimum and do their utmost to avoid collateral damage. Any wrong move would breed more hate and violence in a conflict-ridden society.

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Almost all Baloch nationalists, including the hardcore, have remained involved in parliamentary politics actively. In many regimes, they have formed alliances with the mainstream political parties in the centre and provincial levels. A majority of Baloch nationalist leaders believe that the opportunity to address Balochistan's problems lies in the parliamentary process and not in an insurgency. The participation of nationalist parties in Balochistan's politics bestows greater legitimacy to the overall political process. Nationalist parties in Balochistan include the National Party (NP), National Party-Hai (NP-H), Baloch National Party-Awami (BNP-A), Jamhoori Watan Party-Aali (JWP-Aali), and Jamhoori Watan Party-Talal (JWP-Talal). Almost all of these parties share common beliefs regarding provincial autonomy and the province's control over natural resources. Amongst the religious political parties, Jamaat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) and Jamaat Ulema-e-Pakistan (JUP) are prominent. Both of these parties support the political process and reject violence against the people and the state. The Baloch belong mostly to the Sunni sect of the Hanafi belief and are considered moderate Muslims. Mullahs do not have a prominent role in the life of the common Baloch and are confined mostly to essential religious rites. In recent years, Maulana Fazlur Rehman's political party, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI), had penetrated some Baloch communities in the Baloch hinterland successfully but Baloch nationalists attributed that phenomenon to assistance from intelligence agencies rather than any fundamentalist religious revival.

The Baloch youth who moved out of Balochistan for education and other opportunities are returning to their native land with a wealth of knowledge and awareness. The province cannot, therefore, be kept marginalized from national and

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international influences. Social media is also making a big impact on the lives of the masses. Baloch youth, brought up and educated abroad and elsewhere in the country, are returning with an international outlook and enhanced consciousness and have started questioning the fault lines in the system. When this generation enters professional life, a sizeable middle class will emerge with the potential of weakening feudal control over the people. The government should, therefore, remain steadfast in abolishing feudalism through the rule of law, sustained economic reforms, education, and across-the-board social development. In due course, the feudal order would be substituted by a modern, egalitarian system based on democratic values. Balochistan deserves educated and enlightened leaders who understand governance and development.¹⁰ A potent and credible accountability mechanism should be embedded, independent of political affiliations and biases. Pakistan needs to address internal political and security affairs urgently if it is serious about competing with regional players for energy exploitation.

GWADAR — The Game-Changer

Pakistan has a 1060-kilometre-long coastline stretching from the Indian border in the east to the Persian Gulf in the west. However, despite that extensive coastline, the country had only two ports catering to its sea-trade requirements, Karachi and Port Qasim both of which are located in close proximity to each other. The Karachi port has the capacity of handling around 50 million tonnes (75 percent) of Pakistan's import/export cargo annually while 25 percent is handled by Port Qasim. With the expectations of Pakistan's economy

¹⁰ Senator Sana Ullah Baloch, National Party, interview with the Author, 23 March 2018, Islamabad.

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growing at a steady pace, the volume of trade is expected to swell and is projected to be at 100 million tonnes in the year 2020. Different governments worked on projects on both ports to enhance their handling capacity to meet the growing business demands.

Nonetheless, expansion alone could not provide a complete solution and the country needed another seaport to handle the flow of incoming and outgoing cargo and attract potential transit trade from the Central Asian Republics (CARs) and Afghanistan. For many years, government departments and research institutions analysed the feasibility of establishing another port which could offer multiple dividends to the country. After years of deliberation and research, Gwadar was selected as the most appropriate location from eight possible sites which included Keti Bandar, Sonmiani, Hingol, Ormara, Khor Kalimat, Pasni, Gwadar, and Jiwani.¹¹ Although most of those locations were also naturally gifted with deep-sea harbouring, Gwadar was selected to benefit from trade avenues with landlocked regions such as the Central Asian Republics, Afghanistan, and China and promote commercial ties with the Gulf States. Its significant strategic positioning at the mouth of the Gulf, while being at a sufficient distance from Karachi, was another important factor in its selection. Moreover, it could provide an opening for exploring the development potential of Balochistan. An additional incentive was developing another city which could attract and divert the human resource influx from the north. Strategically, a port at Gwadar could provide shorter and safer SLOCs as well as a secure base for naval unit operations in times of conflict. Owing to the significant strategic and economic edge

¹¹ Board of Investment Government of Pakistan, Gwadar: available at www.pakboi.gov.pk, accessed on 18 September 2004.

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that the Gwadar Port offered, Pakistan's Eighth Five-Year Development Plan (1993–94) mentioned the construction of the Gwadar Port as an essential component of its objectives.¹² However, the real push to the Gwadar project took place as an outcome of the Sino-Pakistan pact in March 2002 by virtue of which the China Harbour Engineering Corporation was to build the port. The Gwadar deep-seaport was conceived as a two-phased project. In the first phase, three berths were constructed. The completion of phase one provided the port with handling capacity for Bulk Carriers of up to 30,000 DWT and for Container Vessels of up to 25,000 DWT.¹³ The capacity achieved was at par with that of Karachi or Port Qasim. The construction of the second phase of Gwadar Port was undertaken on the basis of the BOO/BOT concept. It comprised nine more berths including four container berths, one grain terminal, one bulk cargo terminal having the capacity of handling 100,000 DWT ships and two oil terminals for handling 200,000 DWT ships.

Along with essential port facilities, the Gwadar Master Plan envisioned establishing Free Trade Zones, industrial areas, water storages, and new residential areas. Together with those developments, the upgrading of the Gwadar airport would provide safe service and facilitate tourism and commercial activities. The port is spread over an area of 400 hectares but the Gwadar Master Plan also envisaged the development of over 18,000 hectares of land for related port projects¹⁴ to cater to the potential for increased trade

¹² Amanullah Bashar, "Gwadar Port: Pakistan & Gulf", *Economist*, January 19–25 2004 Issue.

¹³ Amanullah Bashar, op.cit.

¹⁴ Syed Fazl e Haider, "Developing Gwadar on the lines of Sokhna port", *The News*, B & F Rev, 24 January 2005, p. 7.

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to and from China, Iran, the Central Asian Republics, and Afghanistan. The Government of Pakistan had initiated several projects for developing Gwadar's strategic location in order to develop it as a focal port facility for the entire region.¹⁵ The new port encompassed conversion facilities to enable the flow of natural gas and act as a terminal point for the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan natural gas pipeline.

The developing geo-strategic equation presented Pakistan with an exceedingly significant opening to act as the regional economic hub for the trade corridor between East and West accumulating economic and cultural benefits from and to the Gulf region, Iran, the Central Asian Republics (CARs), Afghanistan, China, and even parts of northern India. Pakistan's ports happen to be the nearest deep-sea facilities for CARs and Afghanistan. Gwadar is next to the enormously important sea lanes originating in the strategic bottleneck of Hormuz and would enable Pakistan to monitor those sea lanes and keep its own sea lines of communication open. From Gwadar, it would be possible to dominate and influence the entire Indian Ocean including the sea lanes from the far eastern countries and the Gulf region. By developing Gwadar Port, Pakistan would be able to prevent any hostile attempt to blockade its ports. The port provides strategic depth to Pakistani maritime assets, both commercial and military.¹⁶

Owing to the ever-increasing economic and defence ties between Pakistan and China, the port would provide strategic traction to China in the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean albeit to the discomfort of India and the US. It would also

¹⁵ http://www.pakboi.gov.pk/Biz_Guide/investment_opportunities.html.

¹⁶ Malik Ayaz Hussain, "Pakistan's security Concerns and the Navy", *Defence Journal*, April 2002 issue.

enable Pakistan to have a dominant position on the Strait of Hormuz through which 80 percent of the world's energy resources flow.¹⁷ In case Pakistan and China decided to use the port for military strategies, Gwadar would enable an alliance for monitoring energy shipments from the Persian Gulf and offer a quid pro quo capability in case of any hostile interruption in such shipments.

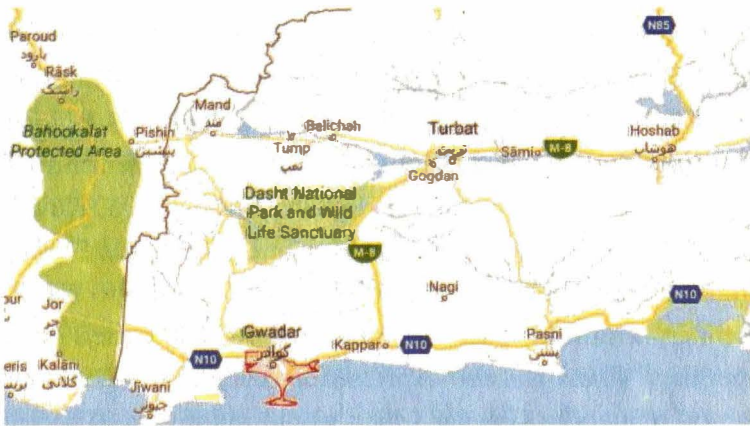
The Chinese presence in the Indian Ocean would enhance its strategic relations with and influence over South Asian nations. That would also help Pakistan's stance of countering the Indian hegemonic designs in the region. The Central Asian Republics are still struggling to establish their political influence. As home to vast natural reservoirs, wealthy states are redefining their political associations with international players and chalking out their policies to manage their priorities through economic development and regional alliances. Meanwhile, other nations, especially the regional and world powers, are eyeing the vulnerabilities of those struggling nations for their own advantages.¹⁸ In order to avert exploitation, those states would have to become politically self-reliant and harness their trade policies and requirements through the most economically-active and safe trade corridor. Though many other routes are available to Central Asia, they are either uneconomical as they are long and difficult or pose threats from regional and international players. Gwadar offers them a straight route to the nearest warm water opening just east of the choke point of Hormuz. The Gulf countries are the focal point of the world's oil commerce supplying two thirds

¹⁷ Tarique Niazi, "Gwadar: China's Naval Outpost on the Indian Ocean", *China Brief*, Volume 5, Issue 4, 15 February 2005.

¹⁸ Asma Shakir, *Pakistan and the New Great Game*, available at www.ipripak.org accessed on 2 Jan. 2005.

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of internationally-traded liquid fuel. Other than business in the oil sector, the Gulf has very few exports and relies mainly on imports from around the world. Because of its proximity to the Gulf States, Gwadar Port would also be significant to the region in terms of incoming trade. It could provide warehousing, trans-shipment, and commercial and industrial openings for international trade.



Trans-shipment would be the backbone of economic activity at the Gwadar Port.¹⁹ Though there are other ports in the Gulf which facilitate the trans-shipment trade, Gwadar has an edge over them because of the strategic location of the port in deep waters. Large cargo ships would not be obliged to turn into the knuckle of Hormuz to off-load their cargo as Gwadar would instead provide them bigger handling capacities outside the choke point before entering the Strait. A pre-requisite for this activity is the development of a local warehouse industry and an increase in national export and import. Gwadar has numerous natural advantages that most ports do not have.

¹⁹ Nirupama Subraminium, "Pakistan Showcases Gwadar Port" *The Hindu*, 11 Jan. 07 edition. Also available at WorldWideWeb@ <http://www.hindu.com>.

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There is great opportunity for Gwadar to potentially become the top choice for major shipping lines.²⁰ Once connected with the land infrastructure, it would be the shortest outlet to sea for inland countries like Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan in Central Asia and would become a new logistics and shipping hub in the region.²¹ The government of Pakistan is planning on establishing a petrochemical zone at Gwadar to attract foreign energy investment to advance its petrochemical industry that would be advantageous to Pakistan and the entire region. The master plan also comprises at least two major oil storage facilities to supply to regional countries besides meeting the growing national demand for fossil fuel and petroleum products.²² In June 2006, Kuwait signed a contract to establish an oil refinery at Gwadar. Under that contract, Kuwait would invest USD1.2 billion to build a refinery with the capacity of producing 100,000 barrels of oil per day.²³ China has also expressed a willingness to construct an oil refinery in Gwadar which would refine 60,000 barrels of oil per day.²⁴ Gwadar Port would also help promote tourism and generate subsidiary industries such as fishing, seafood preservation, ship-building, and the marine industry. Free trade and industrial zones would attract investors from Pakistan as well as abroad. The construction of Gwadar Port, along with other mega projects related to CPEC, could thus

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Cheng Xiaowen, Jiang Nanchun in article “The Operation Right of Gwadar-Benefit and Strategic Significance”, *China Shipping Gazette*, World Wide Web @ <http://www.snet.com>

²² Article by Arif Rana in Business Recorder, 2 November 2006. also available at World Wide Web @ <http://pakistanidefenceforum.com>.

²³ *People's Daily*, China. 20 June 2006. World Wide Web @ <http://english.peopledaily.com>.

²⁴ Syed Fazal-e-Haider, “Energy Port of the Future”, *Business and Finance Review*, 26 June 2006.

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serve as tools for the transformation of Balochistan into a modern province. Currently, Gwadar's principal industry is fairly rudimentary and consists mainly of fishing and associated sub-industries such as net-making, ice factories, cold storage, boat-repairing, etc. The waters around Gwadar are famous for housing quality prawn, lobster, and fish which would be a key focus of investments in processing, preservation, packaging, and exporting seafood. It is estimated that potentially around 70,000 tonnes of seafood remain unexploited on an annual basis.²⁵ Fish preservation and packing are the most needed and feasible projects for the support and growth of the local economy. This initiative would help improve the economic conditions of locals and uplift living standards along the Makran coast. The development of those sectors would be dependent on the provision of capital financing, easy loans, and the availability of related infrastructure such as electricity and roads. The federal and provincial governments could help bring prosperity in locals' lives by addressing those issues and thus giving them a respectable living and winning their loyalties. Above all, substantial amounts of foreign exchange could be earned. Simultaneously, the government should offer training sessions in fishing, fish processing, refrigeration, and boat-making/repairs in the existing technical schools and polytechnic institutes in the area.

As a by-product of a state-of-the-art port at Gwadar, associated industries have great potential. Those include tuna farming, prawn and shrimp farming, fishing boat industry, and desalination plants. Those small industries could contribute to uplifting the per capita income of the local population who are already in the same business but with low yields. Uplifting

²⁵ Potential and Constraints Gwadar, available at www.gwadar.sdnpk.org/ accessed on 25 December 2004.

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locals' living standards would ensure sustainable development in the province while pulling people away from militant activities.

Pakistan's coastline with long stretches of golden beaches and vast empty spaces has a huge potential for tourism as well as commerce and trade. The temperature of the Makran coastal belt is moderate and ranges from 12 to 35 degrees centigrade. The temperatures in winter range from 12 to 25 degrees centigrade,²⁶ due to which the seawater remains warm, even during winter. The provision of infrastructure facilities including land, air, and sea links to other regions of the world would, therefore, offer great potential for tourism in this coastal area of Pakistan.²⁷ The areas adjoining Gwadar are famous for good quality dates. There are more than 130 varieties of high-quality dates which could be processed, preserved, and exported through that port.²⁸ The government should consider establishing a Special Economic Zone for processing and exporting food items. The development of economic zones in the port area would create employment opportunities and private investment in the province.

Balochistan is rich in mineral and energy wealth. Until a few years back, it produced more than 40 percent of the main energy source of the country in the form of natural gas and coal.²⁹ Geological surveys suggest the presence of 19 trillion cubic feet of gas and 6 trillion barrels of oil reserves. Among non-metallic minerals, unlimited reserves of limestone are present in Balochistan. The estimated reserves of coalfields

²⁶ Alauddin Masood, "Gwadar Deep Seaport All-round Economic Benefits", *The News*, B & F Rev, 28 June 2004, 8.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Syed Fazl-e-Haider, "Special focus on Gwadar", *Dawn*, 23 June 2003.

²⁹ Syed Fazl-e-Haider, "Xingjiang and Balochistan", *The News*, B & F Rev, 31 January 2005.

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are 196 million tonnes.³⁰ The total anticipated iron ore reserves are about 273 million tonnes. With the development of facilities like Gwadar Port, it is evident that investors would be eager to tap those resources. Once fully explored, those resources would provide a tremendous boost to the economy of the province and country. The people of Gwadar and Makran would get ample job opportunities which would raise their standard of living. The province lags behind in terms of human resource development. That is a key area that needs immediate government attention. The allocation of considerable resources for human resource development is a necessity so that locals could take advantage of the likely rise in economic activities in the province. In the absence of good quality human resources, the benefits of developments would remain out of reach for locals.

Transit trade, including imports and exports of Central Asia, Afghanistan, and western China bordering Pakistan, would be another mainstay of Gwadar.³¹ The strategic location of the port could also promote significant transit trade between a large number of other regional countries of the Middle East, South East Asia, and SAARC. Those countries would prefer to open their offices and warehouses in Gwadar to manage the transportation of goods and for the storage of imported goods for onward shipment to their respective countries.³² Pakistan's own exports/imports destined for the Gulf could be routed through Gwadar as well as through Karachi thus guaranteeing efficiency. Overland trade between

³⁰ Mineral Resource: available at <http://www.balochistan.sdnpk.org/> cited on 28 December 2005.

³¹ M. Osman Ghani, "Transit Trade Potential of Gwadar Port", *Dawn*, 22 March 2004.

³² Alauddin Masood, "Gwadar Deep Seaport All-round Economic Benefits", *The News*, B & F Rev, 28 June, 2004, p 8.

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Iran and Pakistan would also be boosted by the Coastal Highway linking South Western Balochistan to Karachi and the proposed highway from Kandahar to Khuzdar.³³ The port would also provide an alternative trans-shipment facility for both West and East bound cargo and oil shipments originating from the Dubai or Salalah ports.³⁴

China has been able to accomplish an economic miracle over the past three decades and set a model for the developing world. It has achieved an average growth rate of the economy at 10.5 percent and 17 times the growth in its foreign trade.³⁵ With fast-growing trade with the rest of the world, China needed a shorter outlet towards the west which could cut short the transit period. In the energy-rich Gulf region, Gwadar provides a strategic foothold to China with an alternative commerce connection to western Chinese provinces. With further expansion and upgrading of the Karakoram Highway, that road would offer faster and easier access between western China and the Indian Ocean through Gwadar.

Gwadar has a vast potential for commercial benefits to Pakistan as well as Afghanistan which has large reserves of lithium, gold, iron ore, copper, and fossil energy.³⁶ By providing a viable sea outlet to Afghanistan, Pakistan could exploit that enormous economic potential. With the emergence of Gwadar and the improved law and order situation in Afghanistan and Balochistan, that scale is likely to be further enhanced

³³ Fazal Hakeem, "Balochistan uplift & Gwadar Port", *Pakistan Observer*, 19 October, 2004.

³⁴ M. Osman Ghani, op.cit.

³⁵ Jamil A. Siddiqui, "Pakistan's Potential as a Trade Route", *Dawn*, 28 January 2002.

³⁶ M. Osman Ghani, "Transit Trade Potential of Gwadar Port", *Dawn*, 22 March 2004.

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providing huge economic benefits to both Afghanistan and Pakistan. The Central Asian Republics are gifted with large sub-surface reservoirs of fossil fuel that are not utilized. With the rapid depletion of fossil fuel reserves around the world, fuel-starved economies are focusing on that region.³⁷ Pakistan, in enormous need of energy resources, might also import other forms of energy from that region. Gwadar is only 1,200 km from Turkmenistan while the nearest Black Sea Port in Ukraine is 3,400 km from the region. In order to fully exploit its benefits, Gwadar needs to be connected with all other provinces and neighbouring countries.

The Gwadar Port project is the lynchpin in the overall concept of CPEC and, hence, developing that port as a world-class facility requires the provision of high-quality and customer-friendly services and facilities. Only then could that port compete with other regional ports which are already in the business. The grievances and apprehensions of the local people should be addressed politically by providing them short and long-term assurances. The provision of education and technical skills to locals would ensure better awareness of national interests as well as job opportunities and thus incentivise them away from violence. Related communications infrastructure (road, rail, and air links) might be developed on a priority basis so that the port is accessible easily for cargo as well as traders. Gwadar holds great potential for tourism. The sloping beaches of the Makran coast could be a great tourist attraction with the skilful development of good quality water sports and hotels. Attractive tourist packages from the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) could

³⁷ Nick Wilkinson, "The Modern Great Game", Conflict Studies Research Centre, Min Def UK, June 2002, available at <http://www.da.mod.uk/CSRC/documents/CentralAsia/K32>.

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help increase domestic and foreign tourism.

A friendly and stable Afghanistan is crucial for the success of Gwadar Port as the Central Asian Republics trade would pass through it and so Islamabad needs to establish trust and cooperation with Kabul. Pakistan has to develop cordial and friendly relations with Iran so that, instead of dealing with unfriendly neighbours, the focus could shift to economic development. Local as well as foreign investment could materialize only if a safe and secure environment is ensured. National will, political harmony, the rule of law, justice, and good governance would ensure a safe and conducive environment for investment which would lead to economic growth and prosperity. The provision of multiple road, rail, and air links to Gwadar should be expedited with the rest of the country and beyond, extending to Afghanistan, the Central Asian Republics, and China. Efforts should be made to increase development work at Gwadar through focused attention, injection of the required resources, and ensuring transparency through stringent reviews and quality audits. Consistent and investor-friendly policies are essential for attracting foreign and local investment and sustained industrial development.

The Way Forward

The present circumstances offer a silver lining for the settlement of outstanding issues. It is the responsibility of the state to demonstrate sincerity and the will to acknowledge the grievances which had been left to develop into deep wounds. A reconciliation drive could begin by conducting a Grand National Dialogue with participants invited from all stakeholder segments. A candid environment should be

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provided where opinions could be expressed frankly for reconstruction and national integration. Presently there is no mainstream Baloch nationalist politician advocating an independent Balochistan. Most of them consider the 1973 Constitution as the most suitable framework for restructured and reinforced federalism in which provinces have greater autonomy.

In the typical tribal, politics-based administrative system, an articulate second-tier middle class leadership does not generally exist. Whatever middle class there is still supports moderate, federally-inclined Baloch politicians. For this reason, anti-state violence has not been the preferred methodology of political parties and, for the majority, the federal constitutional structure remains the preferred way of tackling grievances. Unfortunately, governments have consistently shown their inability to capitalize on this silver lining. Baloch and Pakistani nationalism are not two competing ideas. Pakistani nationalism is an overarching umbrella for all ethnicities and regional identities.³⁸ While there is a clear-cut willingness on the part of Baloch leadership to remain in mainstream politics, there has been a lacklustre response from the state to address misconceptions. Federal and state institutions, therefore, have to rethink their strategy for dealing with the issue in an inclusive manner.³⁹

The concept of regional nationalism could be transformed into a broader, state-level nationalism if constitution rights, as enshrined for every province, are respected by the state. In such situations where fissured relations are being repaired, the federation should go the extra mile towards extending

³⁸ Sana Ullah Baloch, National Party, interview with the Author, 23 March 2018, Islamabad.

³⁹ Sardar Akhtar Mengal, interview with the Author, 21 May 2018.

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cooperation and assistance even if it is at the cost of cutting down elsewhere.

During the 2013 general elections, the participation of nationalist parties in Balochistan's politics conferred sufficient legitimacy on the provincial government with its immediate positive impact becoming visible soon after. On the part of the central government, it was a prudent step to offer chief ministership to the candidate from the National Party instead of having their own chief minister. A fair and credible provincial government could reinstate the state's writ, help address security issues, and plead Balochistan's grievances at the federal level. Chief Minister Abdul Malick was the first chief minister of the province who was not a Sardar. This political farsightedness helped the province develop political awareness.

By realizing the need for constitutional amendments and accelerated economic uplift of the province, the state is likely to achieve the prerequisite of a secure and calm environment for other stabilization measures to take place. The government should plan on building and executing concrete policies with a consensus that would lead to socio-economic development and political reconciliation. An agreed-upon provincial autonomy could augment the participatory approach essential for ensuring that policy benefits reached the deprived masses at the lowest levels. The government must strategize to develop human resources to enable people to participate in economic development. All mainstream political parties are prominently represented in Balochistan and the scale of their success in Balochistan's politics remains generally proportionate to their scale of success at the centre. Hence, these major parties cannot absolve themselves of responsibility towards the people of Balochistan.

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Through a protracted experience of democracy, based on fair and transparent elections, the province would ultimately get to elect its true representatives. A free electoral process should be allowed to take place in which all parties, including the nationalist parties, have fair opportunities of participation. The state must not interfere in the electoral process through any unfair means since a 'managed' electoral process would result in bringing sham democratic representatives to the legislative assembly. Clearly, coercive political management is harmful.

The 18th Amendment in the Constitution of Pakistan has given the much-demanded autonomy to the provinces. However, in order to have a self-reliant governance system, human resource capabilities need to be built. The neglect of human resource building has resulted in a blackout of senior Baloch bureaucratic leadership. In the absence of a transparent and capable system of governance, resources are likely to be plundered and wasted. There is a need for a continuous and protracted dialogue to repair the broken trust and rebuild the social contract. The people of Balochistan need to be made aware of state initiatives which have the potential of changing their lives.⁴⁰ A dispassionate analysis of the situation which leads to essential institutional reforms with particular reference to federal political initiatives and civic rights is essential. The crisis in Balochistan is a reflection of the overall prioritization of national issues by policymakers. None of the governments and state institutions could be acquitted of the share of blame for the prevalent chaos. In order to bring stability and peace, fundamental factors have to be addressed. The people of Balochistan and their representatives have to

⁴⁰ Senator Sana Ullah Baloch, National Party, interview with the Author, 23 March 2018, Islamabad.

be entrusted to manage provincial resources as “autonomy without the possession of resources and representation at the federal/ national levels is useless.”⁴¹ Though a few groups have adopted a more hard-line approach by going into a confrontational mode against the state, the majority still believes in addressing issues through a democratic approach.⁴² Pakistan would have to make a fresh start. However, that does not necessarily mean announcing a blanket amnesty for criminals. The practice of randomly and arbitrarily labelling individuals as traitors or patriots is fatal for the spirit of nationhood. Besides developing ethical and regional cracks, it amplifies hatred. Rebuilding trust is an uphill task especially when it has been broken time and again. Without refining and restructuring trust based on impartiality and dignity, positive developments in human relations are not possible. Whenever having to resort to force, security forces must keep their actions limited to a minimum use of force and do their utmost to avoid collateral damage. Any mistake is likely to breed more hate and violence in a conflict-hit society.

In order to develop more successful counterinsurgency strategies, Pakistan has to address the legitimate grievances of the Baloch people. History tells us that a group's grievances are primary drivers of social movements which ultimately result in national catastrophes.⁴³ Any uprising against government policy should not be called ‘anti-state rebellion’. The 1970s uprising was initiated as an effort to restore the NAP government. However, with the continuous rhetoric of

⁴¹ Naseer Memon, Chief Executive, “Strengthening Participatory Organization”, speaking at Roundtable Conference, organized by Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies in Islamabad on 4 February 2011.

⁴² Sana Ullah Baloch, National Party, interview with the Author, 23 March 2018, Islamabad.

⁴³ Stark, “*Sociology: Social Change and Social Movements*”, p. 613.

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an anti-state rebellion, it eventually turned out to be a full-scale insurgency.⁴⁴ Many uprisings could have been addressed by ensuring the delivery of services such as education, healthcare, the administration of justice, the provision of electricity and water, and ensuring that development funds reached the common man. In order to neutralize seven decades of neglect, the central government needs to initiate some extraordinary measures. Carefully worked-out and deliberately-planned exchange programmes should be introduced in other provinces for the youth of Balochistan which would broaden their outlook and equip them with the mandatory skills to compete with their compatriots. As a parallel effort, the Higher Education Commission should encourage opening Balochistan university campuses in other provinces of the country. These are, however, temporary arrangements while the long-lasting ones would have to be made by the province itself through an improvement in the law and order situation thus providing a secure and favourable environment to Baloch students and faculty.

Pakistan came into being as an ideological state founded on the Two-Nation Theory. This ideology has kept the nation together and was abundantly manifest during the Russian invasion of Afghanistan when the entire Pakistani nation stood behind the government's decision to rush to the help of their Muslim brethren in Afghanistan. With the changing environment, there seems to be a need to start a fresh dialogue of creating a refined balance between Muslim brotherhood and nationhood based on the concept of a nation-state. The Pakistani nation must keep in mind that the Two-Nation Theory was essential for creating a clear differentiation

⁴⁴ Senator Mir Hasil Khan Bizenjo, interview with the Author, 16 May 2018, Islamabad.

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between two distinct nations living in a united India. Since a separate nation has been created, another bond is critically needed to keep all the federating units bound together by a single string. The comments of Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo during his speech in the Kalat Assembly session, while discussing the issue of accession to Pakistan, are still fresh in the minds of hardcore, nationalist leaders. Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo strenuously opposed the Two-Nation Theory as the foundation for accession and said, ‘... being Muslim should not compel us to join Pakistan ... as the culture of Iran and Afghanistan is also different from that of Pakistan, should these countries be also included in the territories of Pakistan?’

Similar sentiments were prevailing in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as well and nationalist parties favouring an independent Pashtunistan had appealed to the people of the province to boycott the referendum conducted by the British for gauging people’s opinion about the proposal of joining Pakistan. The Pashtunistan movement, however, soon began to wither away in the post-independence era. A major contributory factor was the rich representation of Pashtuns in all spheres of life including the armed forces and civil bureaucracy. A similar effort would also be required in Balochistan to embrace the province in the overall Pakistani nationhood concept.

Above any other measure, Balochistan requires a good system of governance and a structure that creates political ownership. The continuation of political dialogue and economic development for the general masses should not be contingent upon the achievement of an ideal security environment in the province. These two streams could progress simultaneously. Progressive and ‘law abiding’ Sardars should be taken on board to gather popular support

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for economic and civic development. It is imperative for the government to take immediate measures for capacity-building and indigenous human resource development in Balochistan. At present, there is a dearth of skilled labour including technical staff and experts in almost all departments. They are, therefore, recruited from other provinces and that gives rise to further frustration among the locals and the unemployed youth. It is, therefore, incumbent upon the state to establish professional institutes and polytechnic colleges in the entire province where Baloch youth could be trained. Simultaneously, capacity-building should take place in existing institutes to make them fully functional. Until the local youth are trained and developed to handle the technical requirements of departments, the staff pooled in from other provinces should be provided fool-proof security and adequate incentives to stay on. Educational institutions, including all government and private universities in Balochistan, need full security to ensure the continuous delivery of education.

The practice of allocating development money directly to politicians proved counter-productive in the past. A better way could be to ask politicians to identify projects in their respective constituencies which should then be implemented through an independent implementation organization with an efficient mechanism for carrying out audits. Any serious effort to bring Balochistan at par with other, more developed provinces should start with building educational institutions. Through education alone would opportunities and the emancipation of the new generation be guaranteed. The Pakistan Army and the Frontier Corps have done admirable work by promoting the educational infrastructure and standards in the entire province. A number of polytechnic institutes and general-purpose colleges have been established

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throughout the province. These efforts however, should not be equated with the effects likely to be generated by long-term government policies. In view of the current surge in economic activities across the province, polytechnic institutes are the need of the hour. Government-sponsored institutes could contribute immensely by training people in various skills and thus creating a human resource base that could be integrated in ongoing and planned development projects across the province. Developing a skilled, indigenous human resource would not only create job opportunities in the province but would also dispel fears of the locals about their resources and rights being taken over by outsiders.⁴⁵

The ‘jirga’ system is one of the strongest institutions in the province. The system has endured the test of time and has been used by tribal chiefs and governing regimes to conduct important functions of administration. Every tribe was supposed to have a separate jirga under the traditional set-up. The jirga has a host of functions to perform including making decisions on blood fueds and the maintenance of law and order in the tribe with the help of local administration. In Baloch politics and administration, the tribal jirga system provides a strong bond and plays a vital role. While the Sardari system is progressively transformed into a modern democratic political set-up, provincial and district courts should also expand their influence. As society modernizes, the people of Balochistan would develop trust in the country’s judicial system rather than aspiring to seek justice from the ‘jirga’.

The government security and intelligence agencies should engage proactively in the information and

⁴⁵ Safdar Sial and Abdul Basit, “Conflict and Insecurity in Balochistan-Assessing Strategic Policy Options for Peace and Security”, Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, October–December 2010, p. 47.

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communications domains in order to counter the propaganda and misperceptions about extrajudicial killings and forced disappearances. Meaningful talks and political reconciliation remain far-fetched ideas as long as those misperceptions continue. The federal government and all federal agencies implicated in the issue of missing persons should take all possible measures to display sincerity in finding a permanent solution to the issue and ensuring their transparent role in the discovery and resolution of all cases.

A school of thought believes that military cantonments in the province should be reduced further as part of confidence building. However, that measure would undermine the strategic defence of Pakistan and also reduce the capacity to respond in support of other law enforcement forces in aid of civil power. The military has already suspended the construction of cantonments in Dera Bugti and Kohlu on the directives of the government. Any further reduction would be counter-productive especially in the wake of the security requirements of upcoming mega projects of CPEC such as the Gwadar Port, a network of motorways, and the construction of dams and power plants. Port facilities and associated industries around the Makran coastal belt would, in fact, entail enhanced and elaborate defence planning incorporating all security apparatus. Nevertheless, the planning process for the creation of any defence installation should be done in consultation with the provincial authorities. That would help address local grievances.⁴⁶

Baloch representation in the federal bureaucracy must be enhanced on the same footing as being done for the military. Similarly, job quotas for Baloch youth should be

⁴⁶ Zobaida Jalal Changaiz, Federal Minister for Defence Production, interview with the Author, 29 March 2018, Quetta.

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increased for all development projects being undertaken in the province. The unskilled labour of the province, especially those living on the Makran coastal belt, should be given labour opportunities in Gwadar Port and related industries. The youth of Balochistan deserve much more than their due share in social development to enable them to compete with the youth in the rest of the country. An inclusive long-term approach is required for a sustainable development of Balochistan. A detailed roadmap for developmental projects is essential so as to keep a focus on priority areas such as education, health, fisheries, livestock, agriculture, mining, and the exploration of minerals.

Laws and regulations must be clearly defined for all international donors and development agencies regulating the channelling, funding, and transparency of projects. Parallel to that, a highly structured security mechanism should be put in place for their security so as to attract the maximum investment in the development of civic facilities and public services. The poor economic state of the province and the desperate state of the people has made them vulnerable to militant tendencies and religious extremism. Illiterate and unemployed youth serve as easy prey for insurgents. The lack of writ of the state, low literacy standards, and an acute sense of deprivation had aggravated unacceptable and extremist behavior. It is obvious that economic incentives are often a more important part of the problem-solving mechanism especially when the aggrieved party has economic deprivation-related complaints.

The armed forces are doing a great service to the people of Balochistan by establishing technical institutions all over the province. The provincial government should take ownership of those projects to give them permanency. That would also

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develop human resource for the management of such future projects. In recent years, the Pakistan Army had opened up new vistas for the grooming and education of Baloch youth.⁴⁷ Many technical institutes had been constructed throughout the province where lower to middle tier technical education was imparted thereby enabling graduates to earn a respectable living. As part of a national integration drive, the army lowered the prevailing recruitment criteria for officers and soldiers from Balochistan. A special training centre was established in Quetta where newly recruited youth obtained basic soldierly training. Much more still needs to be done for the emancipation and intellectual development of Baloch youth. In order to increase the understanding of the armed forces, they have undertaken substantial youth awareness programmes in the province over the past few years. As a result, Baloch youth appeared in large numbers for tests of recruitment in various 'armed forces selection and recruitment centres'. The substantial induction of Baloch youth is an important and historical landmark for the youth and the province. Baloch boys are being integrated into mainstream professions as officers and soldiers thus helping the armed forces achieve an image of a national armed force comprising people from all regions.

The Pakistan Navy had taken the initiative of introducing the 'N' Cadet Scheme. Through that scheme, Baloch boys were being educated and groomed in various cadet colleges. Those boys would have the choice to join Pakistan Navy after the completion of their studies. As an incentive, Baloch youth had been given exemption from competing in the Inter-Services Selection Board (ISSB) with other boys from across

⁴⁷ "Army's contributions in development of Balochistan", available at <http://www.pakistanarmy.gov.pk/awpreview/details.aspx>.

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the country and would be directly inducted as officers. Two years after getting commission, those Baloch officers would have to appear before the selection committee in ISSB. Having attained an experience of two years, they would be adequately groomed and trained to pass the tests. The navy had introduced similar schemes for the induction of Baloch youth into other ranks as well. The army had given instructions to all units and headquarters in Balochistan for facilitating the education of poor children. At many places in the cantonments, tuition centers and academies were being run under army supervision where the children of ordinary Baloch were studying. The army bore all their expenses including boarding, lodging, food and tuition. An elaborate education programme by the name of 'Chamalang Beneficiaries Education Programme' was being run all over the country. Children from Balochistan were studying in high-quality schools, colleges, and universities in all provinces. Besides better education, those children got an opportunity to interact with youth from different backgrounds and regional cultures. They were given opportunities to travel to various sites and institutions to enhance their awareness. A chain of technical education institutes had been set up where the qualified youth were guaranteed a job immediately after graduation.

Recent political dynamics and the improving security environment offered a historical opening to tackle longstanding complaints in the province through a variety of unorthodox measures. Sports could be instrumental in bringing people closer and keeping them away from violence. State institutions and political leadership must always keep in mind that an overwhelming majority of the Baloch are pro-federation and diehard patriots. Hence, the tendency of branding compatriots as anti-state should be shunned

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and endeavours should be undertaken to bring separatist elements into the mainstream political process. The media could be instrumental in this endeavour. The senior military commander in Balochistan could play an important role in harmonizing the developmental activities while improving the security situation in the troubled areas of the province. He should work proactively to correct misperceptions and facilitate economic progression especially in the far-flung and militancy-prone areas. An elaborate border management mechanism would potentially end many security issues. In addition to ensuring a check on illegal border crossings for insurgent activities, drug trade, and smuggling, it would assist in correcting relations with Afghanistan and Iran. The long-standing issue of the Jundullah presence in Balochistan should also be addressed.

Media personnel are working under extreme stress and duress in Balochistan. They face threats to their lives and property every day⁴⁸ and hence their reporting lacks balance and proportion. The feelings of a large majority of patriotic people of Balochistan are set aside under threats from anti-state elements. While the media should remain independent and free from the restrictive measures of the government, it should be discouraged from promoting an anti-state agenda. Government authorities must engage the media house owners by regularly briefing them on facts to keep them updated on developments. Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) is doing a good job by projecting the army's viewpoint on important issues. However, the military should realize that the modern hybrid war environment had placed enhanced demands on the output of such organizations. Those organizations

⁴⁸ "Blackout in Balochistan: Media Reporting in Fear, Living under Threat", Freedom Network Special Report, November 2017.

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were required to function as extended arms of 'Information Operations' as well and, therefore, require specialist handling.

There is definitely a dire need to organize and activate a strong civil defence system in Balochistan. It is absurd that a country like Pakistan, which has experienced three wars and has hostile neighbours, could not devise an effective civil defence system. Law enforcement agencies could not be expected to act as supra-human, omnipresent creatures to be deployed in every part of the country, particularly in the prevailing situation, when they were already over-stretched due to anti-terrorist operations and security surveillance on all frontiers of Pakistan.

The silver lining to that conflict is that the situation had still not fully slipped out of the hands of the state. A majority of Baloch politicians and Sardars genuinely desired the continuation of the political process through which they could fulfil the social and economic ambitions of the Baloch. The state and its organs must accept their share of responsibility towards the uplift of living standards of the province and make all endeavours to improve Balochistan and bring it at par with other developed provinces thus eradicating the province's grievances.

'Silence of the patriots is more disturbing than the betrayal of traitors and treachery of the foes.'

ANNEXURES

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GOVERNOR GENERAL'S HOUSE,
KARACHI.

2nd February 48.

My dear Khan Sahib,

I was glad to meet your Prime Minister, Nawabzada Mohammed Aslam, today when he came to talk over matters with me on your behalf. We have discussed the matter, and he will convey to you the result of our talk.

As your friend and well-wisher, I advise you to join Pakistan without further delay. I do hope that you will carefully consider the matter and let ^{final} me have your/reply which you promised to do after your stay with me in Karachi when we ~~dis~~ fully discussed the whole question in all its aspects.

Yours sincerely,

R. Jinnah

His Highness the Khan of Kalat.

Annexures

Text of the Instrument of Accession

- NOW THEREFORE, His Highness Baglar Begi Khan of Kalat (signed) Ruler of Kalat State, In the exercise of my sovereignty; in and over my said State DO hereby execute this my Instrument of Accession and I hereby declare that I accede to the Dominion of Pakistan with the intent that the Governor-General of Pakistan, the Dominion Legislature, the Supreme Court and any other Dominion authority established for the purposes of the Dominion shall, by virtue of this my Instrument of Accession, but subject always to the terms thereof, and for the purposes only Dominion, exercise 1n relation to the State of Kalat (hereinafter referred to as “this State”) such functions as may be vested in them by or under the Government of India Act, 1935, as in force, in the Dominion of Pakistan on the 15th day of August 1947 (which Act as so in force is hereinafter referred to as “the Act”). I hereby assume the obligation of ensuring that due effect is given to the provisions of the Act within this State so far as they are applicable therein by virtue of this My Instrument of Accession. I accept the matters specified in the Schedule hereto as the matters with respect to which the Dominion Legislature may make laws for this State. I hereby declare that I accede to the Dominion of Pakistan on the assurance that if an agreement is made between the Governor-General and the Ruler of this State whereby any functions in relation to the administration in this State of any law of the Dominion Legislature shall be exercised by the Ruler of this State, then any such agreement shall be deemed to form part of this Instrument and shall be construed end

have effect accordingly. Nothing in this Instrument shall empower the Dominion Legislature to make any law for this State authorising the compulsory acquisition of land for any purpose, but I hereby undertake that should the Dominion for the purposes of a Dominion law which applies in this State deem it necessary to acquire any land, I will at their request acquire the land at their expense or if the land belongs to me transfer it to them on such terms as may be agreed, or, in default of agreement, determined by an arbitrator to be appointed by the Chief Justice of Pakistan. The terms of this my Instrument of Accession shall not be varied by any amendment of the Act or of the Indian Independence Act, 1947, unless such amendment is accepted by me by an Instrument supplementary to this Instrument. Nothing in this Instrument shall be deemed to commit me in any way to acceptance of any future constitution of Pakistan or to fetter my discretion to enter into arrangements with the Government of Pakistan under any such future constitution. Nothing, in this Instrument affects the continuance of my sovereignty in and over this State, or, save as provided by or under this Instrument, the exercise of any powers, authority and rights now enjoyed by me as Ruler of this State or the validity of any law at present in force in this State. I hereby declare that I execute this Instrument on behalf of this State and that any reference in this Instrument to me or to the Ruler of the State is to be construed as including a reference to my heirs and successors. Given under my hand this 27th March 1948, Nineteen hundred and forty-eight Signed by: His Highness Baglar Begi Khan of Kalat (Ruler of Kalat State).

Annexures

I do hereby accept this Instrument of Accession. Dated
this 31st March 1948 Nineteen hundred and forty-eight
Signed by: MA Jinnah (Governor-General of Pakistan).

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INSTRUMENT OF ACCESSION OF BALUCH STATE

WHEREAS the Indian Independence Act, 1947, provides that as from the fifteenth day of August, 1947, there shall be set up an independent Dominion known as PAKISTAN, and that the Government of India Act, 1935, shall, with such amendments, additions, adaptations and modifications as the Governor-General may by order specify, be applicable to the Dominion of Pakistan;

AND WHEREAS the Government of Baluchistan, 1946, as so adopted by the Governor-General provides that all Indian State law accede to the Dominion of Pakistan by an Instrument of Accession executed by the Ruler thereof;

NOW THEREFORE

I, His Highness Begla Begi Khan of Baluchistan
Ruler of Baluchistan, in the exercise of my sovereign
in and over my said State do hereby execute this my Instrument
of Accession and

1. I hereby declare that I accede to the Dominion of Pakistan with the intent that the Governor-General of Pakistan, the Dominion Legislature, the Supreme Court and any other Dominion authority established for the purposes of the Dominion shall, by virtue of this my Instrument of Accession, but subject always to the terms thereof, and for the purposes only of the Dominion, exercise in relation to the State of Baluchistan (hereinafter referred to as "this State") such functions as may be vested in them by or under the Government of India Act, 1935, as in force in the Dominion of Pakistan on the 15th day of August 1947 (which Act as so in force is referentially referred to as "the Act").

2. I hereby assume the obligation of ensuring that due effect is given to the provisions of the Act within this State so far as they are enforceable therein, in virtue of this my Instrument of Accession.

3. I accept the matters specified in the Schedules hereto as the matters with respect to which the Dominion Legislature may make laws for this State.

4. I hereby declare that I accede to the Dominion of Pakistan on the assurance that if an agreement is made between the Governor-General and the Ruler of this State whereby any functions in relation to the administration in this State of any law of the Dominion Legislature shall be exercised by the Ruler of this State, then any such agreement shall be deemed to form part of this Instrument and shall be construed and have effect accordingly.

5. Nothing in this Instrument shall empower the Dominion Legislature to make any law for this State authorizing the compulsory acquisition of land for any purposes, but I hereby undertake that should the Dominion for the purposes of a law which applies in this State deem it necessary to acquire any land, I will at their request acquire the land at their expense or if the land belongs to me transfer it to them at such terms as may be agreed, or, in default of agreement, determined by an arbitrator to be appointed by the Chief Justice of Pakistan.

6. The terms of this my Instrument of Accession shall not be varied by any amendment of the Act or of the Indian Independence Act, 1947, unless such amendment is accepted by me by an Instrument supplementary to this Instrument.

Annexures

7. Nothing in this Instrument shall be deemed to commit me in any way to acceptance of any future constitution of Pakistan or to fetter my discretion to enter into arrangements with the Government of Pakistan under any such future constitution.

8. Nothing in this Instrument affects the continuance of my sovereignty in and over this State, or, save as provided by or under this Instrument, the exercise of any powers, authority and rights now enjoyed by me as ruler of this State or the validity of any law at present in force in this State.

9. I hereby declare that I execute this Instrument on behalf of this State and that any reference in this Instrument to me or to the Ruler of the State is to be construed as including a reference to my heirs and successors.

Given under my hand this 22nd March 1948.
Nineteen hundred and forty eight.



I do hereby accept this Instrument of Accession.

Dated this 21st March 1948.
Nineteen hundred and forty eight.


(Governor-General of Pakistan).

Balochistan: A Conflict of Narratives

NOW THEREFORE
I, His Highness Begla Begi Khan of Kalat
Ruler of Kalat in the exercise of my sovereignty
in and over my said State DO hereby execute this my Instrument
of Accession and

Given under my hand this 27th March 1948.
Nineteen hundred and forty eight.



I do hereby accept this Instrument of Accession.

Dated this 31st March 1948.
Nineteen hundred and forty eight.

Asa Jinnah
(Governor-General of Pakistan).

Balochistan Package. On 25 November 2009, the Federal Government presented a special package for the people of Balochistan named the “Aghaz-e-Huqooq-e-Balochistan” package to a joint sitting of the parliament. The following was included in the package presented by Senator Raza Rabbani of the ruling Pakistan People’s Party:

- Ø Constitutional Matters
- Ø Political Matters
- Ø Administrative Matters
- Commission. A commission should be constituted in respect of the missing persons. The commission should be headed by sitting member of the superior judiciary from Balochistan, including the federal defence, interior ministers and the home minister of the province. The proceedings of such a commission shall be held in camera.

Annexures

New Army Cantonments. Construction of new cantonments in Sui and Kohlu be stopped for the time being. Army will be withdrawn from Sui after handing over the duties to FC. FC will also take over the already constructed Cantonment at Sui.

Conversion of 'B' Areas into 'A' Areas. In view of the decision of the provincial government, the policy of conversion of 'B' areas into 'A' areas may be reviewed from time to time. Urban areas may have regular police.

Gas Development Surcharge. The federal government agrees to pay the arrears of Gas Development Surcharge from 1954 to 1991. This is a total amount of Rs 120 billion payable in 12 years.

Ownership in oil and gas companies. In organisations such as PPL, OGDCL and Sui Southern, the province will be able to purchase up to 20% of the right shares when offered in the open market.

Sandak Project. The federal government from its 30% shares in the project will immediately give 20% to the province. On completion of the project and when the foreign company withdraws, the project shall be owned exclusively by the province.

Uniform Price of Gas. There shall be a uniform price of gas throughout the country for the purpose of calculation of GDS.

Kohlu District. Special incentives should be given to the local tribes to facilitate exploration in the area, which continues to be closed due to security concerns.

Balochistan: A Conflict of Narratives

TABLE OF TRIBAL STATISTICS

Sr. No	Tribe	District	Population	% of Baloch People
1	Bugti	Dera Bugti, Jaffarabad, Naseerabad	258,556	10.8%
2	Marri	Kohlu	96,291	4.02%
3	Magsi	Naseerabad, Jhal Magsi, Bolan	75,000	3.13%
4	Jamali	Naseer Abad, Jaffarabad	107,000	4.48%
5	Rind	Tbt, Jafarabad, J Magsi, Sibi, Bolan	52,280	2.19%
6	Nausherwani	Tbt, Panjgoor	25,118	1.05%
7	Gichki	Tbt, Panjgoor	20,437	0.85%
8	Jamot	Kalat, Awaran, Khuzdar, Lasbela	58,000	2.43%
9	Khetran	Barkhan, Loralai, Ziarat	103,622	4.33%
10	Qaisrani	Musakhel	6,700	0.28%
11	Buzdar	Musakhel, Barkhan	27,788	1.16%
12	Zamri	Musakhel	6,700	0.28%
13	Bizenjo	Kalat, Awaran, Khuzdar, Lasbela	53,900	2.25%
14	Lango	Kalat, Awaran, Khuzdar, Lasbela	19,800	0.83%
15	Bhotani	Kalat, Awaran, Khuzdar, Lasbela	23,500	0.98%
16	Khoso	Jafarabad, Nasirabad, Bolan	146,600	6.13%
17	Umrani	Jafarabad, Nasirabad	57,000	2.38%
18	Lashari	Jafarabad, Jhal Magsi	55,000	2.30%
19	Darzada	Turbat, Panjgur	135,563	5.67%
20	Naquibs	Turbat, Panjgur	95,314	3.98%
21	Ghulam	Turbat	44,376	%1.85

Annexures

22	Dashti	Turbat, Gwadar	48,059	2.01%
23	Raees	Turbat, Panjgur	33,374	1.40%
24	Sungar	Turbat	20,640	0.86%
25	Hoth	Turbat	16,512	0.69%
26	Dashani	Turbat	16,512	0.69%
27	Beel	Turbat	13,416	0.56%
28	Askani	Turbat, Gwadar	22,690	0.95%
29	Buledi	Turbat, Panjgur	20,437	0.85%
30	Barakzai	Turbat	9,288	0.39%
31	Mulozai	Panjgur	42,129	1.76%
32	Kashani	Panjgur	37,448	1.56%
33	Kohdai	Panjgur	23,405	0.98%
34	Kulachi	Gwadar	27,824	1.16%
35	Maed	Gwadar	55,649	2.32%
36	Kalmati	Gwadar	46,374	1.94%
37	Bhangar	Jaffarabad	7,000	0.29%
38	Gola	Jaffarabad	20,000	0.84%
39	Gorgoach	Sibi	39,000	1.63%
40	Chandio	Sibi	15,000	0.63%
41	Salachi	Sibi	2,000	0.08%
42	Bapall	Sibi	16,000	0.67%
43	Moragzai	Sibi	8,600	0.36%
44	Gashokai	Sibi	3,900	0.16%
45	Halli	Sibi	3,500	0.15%
46	Mundwani	Sibi	600	0.02%
48	Mugheri	Bolan	1,860	0.07%
49	Machi	Bolan	2,500	0.10%
50	Margazari	Bolan	2,200	0.09%
51	Badini	Noshki	28,000	1.17%
52	Jamaldini	Noshki	28,000	1.17%
53	Notezai	Dalbandin	29,400	1.23%
54	Kishani	Dalbandin	4,900	0.20%
55	Sanjrani	Dalbandin	19,600	0.82%
56	Reki	Dalbandin, Kharan	14,770	%0.62

Balochistan: A Conflict of Narratives

57	Samalani	Kharan	13,819	0.58%
58	Mix	Quetta	140,000	5.86%
59	Misc.	Small tribes	38,378	%1.61
	Baloch	ALL BALOCHISTAN	2.342.329	%39.96

BRAHVI TRIBES

Sr. No.	Tribe	District	Population	%
1	Mengal	Kalat, Mastung, Awaran, Khuzdar, Lasbela, Noshki,	127,000	19.82
2	Zehri	Kalat, Awaran, Khuzdar, Lasbela	76,000	11.86
3	Raisani	Mastung, Bolan	5,940	0.93
4	Muhammad Hassani	Kalat, Mastung, Awaran, Khuzdar, Lasbela, Noshki, Dalbandin, Kharan,	140,818	21.98
5	Sasoli	Khuzdar, Lasbela, Kharan, Kalat, Awaran	49,241	7.68
6	Lehri	Kalat, Mastung, Awaran, Khuzdar, Lasbela,	19,400	3.03
7	Jattak	Kalat, Awaran, Khuzdar, Lasbela	19,600	3.06
8	Bangalzai	Bolan	2,700	0.42
9	Kurd	Mastung, Bolan	35,000	5.46
10	Sarpara	Mastung	2,000	0.31
11	Mix	Quetta	87,982	13.73
12	Misc	X small tribes	75,000	11.70
	Brahvi	ALL BALOCHISTAN	640,681	%10.69

Annexures

PATHAN TRIBES

Sr. No.	Tribe	District	Population	%
1	Achakzai	K. Abdullah, Pishin	129,170	7.25%
2	Syeds	K. Abdullah, Pishin, Ziarat, Musa Khel	106,453	5.6%
3	Tareen	K. Abdullah, Pishin, Ziarat, Loralai	153,912	8.6%
4	Kakar	K. Abdullah, Pishin, Zhob, K. Saifullah	450,213	25.26%
5	Sherani	Zhob	75,712	4.25%
6	Mandokhel	Zhob	46,428	2.6%
7	Lawoon	Zhob	12,661	0.72%
8	Jogezai	K. Saifullah, Loralai	13,490	0.78%
9	Nasir	Zhob, Ziarat, Loralai	43,555	2.45%
10	Sulaimankhel	Zhob, Ziarat	2,477	0.14%
11	Essakhel	Loralai	3,191	0.18%
12	Looni	Zhob, Sibi, Bolan	19,425	1.09%
13	Zarkoon	Loralai, Kohlu	36,363	2.04%
14	Musakhel	Musakhel	53,600	3.0%
15	Essot	Musakhel	40,200	2.26%
16	Noorzai	K. Abdullah	13,611	0.76%
17	Harifal	Zhob, Ziarat	15,768	0.88%
18	Mardanzai	Zhib, Loralai	19,611	1.10%
19	Dummar	Ziarat	27,718	1.55%
20	Usmankhel	Loralai	15,389	0.86%
21	Hamzazai	Loralai	32,597	1.83%
22	Sargarh	Loralai	3,484	0.20%
23	Mix	Quetta	341,973	19.19%
24	Misc.	28 x small tribes	125,154	%7.02
	Pashtun	ALL BALOCHISTAN	1,782,155	%29.73

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Lieutenant General (retd.) Alam Khattak, ex-Commander Southern Command.

Senator Sana Ullah Baloch, National Party.

Zobaida Jalal Changaiz, Federal Minister for Defence Production.

Dr Shakeel Roshan, President Al Hamd Islamic University, Quetta.

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