PAKISTAN’S OTHER PROBLEM: NARRATIVES, ENDURING INJUSTICE AND ETHNOPOLITICAL CONFLICT IN BALOCHISTAN

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ABSTRACT

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After an interval of more than two decades during which Baloch nationalist leadership actively participated in the mainstream politics, contested elections and was striving to achieve its objectives through parliamentary politics, insurgent violence returned to Balochistan in 2002.

The emergence of conflict in Balochistan occurred when the local elite, who were benefiting from the developments during the 1990s, argued that they felt left out from what the Centre was planning. The construction of mega projects especially the Gwadar port without consulting the Baloch political leadership, construction of military cantonments, devolution of power plan and the victory of Mutahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) (United Council for Action) in 2002 elections created a rift between the Centre and the province. After Abkar Bugti’s death in 2006, the insurgent violence intensified. The Baloch (periphery) claims to be fighting for its tribal honor whereas Islamabad (center) claims to be fighting to ensure national security.

This thesis explores the causes of the resurgence of insurgent violence within an historical context.

Drawing upon the literature on ethnopolitical conflicts, the thesis is based on the premise that ethnopolitical conflicts occur due to the politicization of ethnicity. In the process of politicization of ethnicity, the elite or leadership of that ethnicity and ethnic group plays the most important role. Once ethnicity is politicized, again, it is the ethnic elite / leadership which decides whether the politically active ethnicity will turn violent or not. When it turns violent, government symbols and installations are targeted, as are other ethnic groups. This is done for two reasons; one, to signal resolve, second, to achieve a stronger bargaining position vis-a-vis the central government. In the process of the politicization of ethnicity, the elite employ the tool of narrative(s) based on the collective memory of an actual or perceived injustice to the ethnic group. However, the presence of a memory of a past injustice could only be used to politicize an ethnic group when an actual or perceived injustice is happening to the ethnic group at the time.

Using this framework and employing the historical analysis method, this thesis analyzes the relations between the center and province from 1947 to 2013. The thesis argues that Baloch nationalists as well as the center use a standard narrative
when dealing with each other. Although there are a number of internal divisions and differences in the Baloch leadership, when it comes to its position towards the Centre, it follows more or less the same narrative. According to the Baloch narrative, Islamabad has never accepted and granted them the equal rights and uses Balochistan’s natural resources without giving Balochistan, its due share. The Centre’s narrative emphasis the tribal character of the Baloch society and that the Baloch sardars especially the three sardars Mengal, Marri and Bugti are the biggest problem in Balochistan’s integration with the federation.

The thesis makes three main points, first; both of these narratives are flawed and present a precipitous picture of the problem, second; the Baloch leadership is divided along tribal lines and lacks a unified voice, and third; the Baloch elite only uses the narrative of enduring injustice as a source of politicization of Baloch ethnicity when an actual or perceived injustice is taking place.

**Keywords:** Ethnopolitical conflict, Pakistan, Balochistan, Baloch, Centre-province relations, narrative, ethnic elite, Centre-periphery relations, tribal societies, tribalism, ethnic relations, national security, tribal honor
Declaration Page

This thesis contains only sole-authored work, some of which has been published and presented at conferences and/or prepared for publication under sole authorship. The bibliographical details of the work and where it appears in the thesis are outlined below.

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Signature:……………………………………………………………………………………………………

Conference Papers

Does India have a Pakistan Policy?, Australian Political Science Association (APSA) Conference 2013 Proceedings, held at Murdoch University, Perth on 30 September-2 October 2013

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To Ammi and Abu
This is for you
And
To Bushra, Huzaifah and Maryam

Though much is taken, much abides; and though
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

Ulysses, Alfred, Lord Tennyson

In the End, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.

Martin Luther King Jr.

Facts do not cease to exist because they are ignored.

Aldous Huxley
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T.S. Elliot once wrote *what we call the beginning is often the end. And to make an end is to make a beginning. The end is where we start from.* Finishing a PhD is not only an end but also a beginning. A beginning of endless possibilities. For me, during the last five years, I felt like Prometheus, fighting the gods to snatch the proverbial fire: PhD.

Writing a doctoral dissertation on ethnopolitical conflict in Balochistan, after working on strategic stability issues between India and Pakistan with particular focus on nuclear security, doctrines and Indo-Pak conventional imbalance and strategic stability for almost a decade, was a decision which was made for me as a condition of scholarship. This remarkable research journey turned out to be my *Ray Buduick story.*

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but not least I must remember my parents late Aziz Shaheen and late Muhammad Bahir Ahmed. It was my mother who inculcated the love of books in me and my father who throughout supported me. He wanted me to do my PhD as soon as possible. It is my regret that he could not witness the fulfilment of perhaps his last wish.
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INTRODUCTION

Pakistan, located at the junction of South, Central and West Asia bordering Afghanistan, China, India and Iran is the world’s sixth most populous country. It is the only nuclear state in the world with a predominantly Muslim population. At the same time, Pakistan is faced with a myriad of challenges stemming from economic mismanagement, competing political institutions, and multiple socioeconomic problems. Pakistan's inability to forge a national identity has led to an intensification of ethnic, linguistic, and regional nationalism, which has splintered and fragmented the country. The most dramatic example of this splintering occurred in 1971 when the government's failure to address the needs of the ethnic Bengali community led to East Pakistan becoming the independent nation of Bangladesh.1

Pakistan has been a frontline state in the on-going global war against terror. Pakistan has made considerable contributions in combating al-Qaeda2 yet it has also been described as a nursery of global terrorism.3 It is considered a part of the problem as it is alleged that at least some elements in Pakistan continue to support the Taliban in Afghanistan and have preserved their links with the Jehadi groups as an option.4 Due to the global focus on the war against terror, whatever attention

2 Islamabad’s contribution in the WoT is well documented and the allies have praised its role in it. According to a report published at the time of the American President’s visit to South Asia: “Pakistan has to date arrested more than 700 members of Al-Qaeda and killed a further 850 of them. Pakistan’s security forces, meanwhile, have suffered a loss of 350-400 personnel, with injuries to another 760 in this war. Some of the high-profile terrorists arrested include Abu Zubayda (March 2002), Ramzi bin Alshibib (September 2002), Khalid Sheikh Mohammad (March 2003), Mustafa Ahmed Al-Hawsawi (March 2003), Mohammad Omar Abdel-Rahman (March 2003) and Abu Faraj al-Libbi (May 2005). Pakistan has also helped in freezing bank accounts of Al-Qaeda and its affiliated welfare organisations, such as the Al-Rasheed Trust and the Rabeta Trust.” For a detailed and comprehensive account of Pakistani contribution to the WoT see; Ghaniji Jafar and Rizwan Zeb, Pakistan: Countering Global Terrorism, (Islamabad: Institute of Regional Studies, 2006); also see “General Musharraf is still riding high,” (editorial), Daily Times available at <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2006\10\12\story_12-10-2006.pg3_1>, “Al Qaeda caught and killed: Tally highest in Pakistan: Cheney,” Daily Times, Thursday, October 19, 2006, available at <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/print.asp?page=2006\10\19\story_19-10-2006.pg1_2>
Pakistan gets, it is mostly because of the war against terror, its lawless tribal areas which are the alleged sanctuary for the Al-Qaeda and the Taliban leadership.

**Aim and Significance of Research**

What is mostly ignored by the world and the Pakistan watchers is the ongoing insurgency in Balochistan. Balochistan accounts for 43.6% of the total territory of Pakistan. At the same time it is the least populated province of Pakistan. According to official figures the population is 6.51 million (5.1% of the national population)⁵. It is the least developed province of Pakistan.

In all the previous insurgencies in Balochistan (1948, 1958, 1973-77), this demand for secession that exists today did not exist which makes the Baloch insurgency very dangerous for the security of Pakistan.⁶ Balochistan has the energy and mineral resources which if utilized properly, can provide a way out of Pakistan’s current economic downturn. The port of Gwardar in Balochistan also provides Pakistan with strategic and economic significance in an area close to the entrance of the Persian Gulf. The secession of Balochistan — if it occurs— would deny Pakistan this access. Furthermore, if the Baloch are ever able to establish a unified front, a successful separatist movement among the Baloch could create serious security concerns for the state by starting what could be referred to as the Balkanization of Pakistan.⁷

The aim of this research is to understand and analyse the ethnopolitical conflict in Balochistan by focusing on the Baloch Nationalist narrative(s). As narratives do not exist or operate in a vacuum, the study also looks at Islamabad’s counter narrative.

The study used the historical analysis method to study the Baloch nationalist narrative(s). This research is primarily based on empirical analysis of the available literature (books, newspapers, journals and documentaries etc.) on the Baloch

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⁵ http://www.balochistan.gov.pk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=37&Itemid=741
⁷ Waheed Khan, "Pakistan's Other Problem Area: Baluchistan," Time Magazine, November 1, 2009; and Nicholas Schmidle, To Live or To Perish Forever: Two Tumultuous Years in Pakistan (New York: Henry Holt and Company, LLC, 2009), 74.
problem. The Baloch narratives are gathered through regular monitoring of the numerous websites established by Baloch nationalists as they provide latest data, information and statements from the political and insurgent leadership of Balochistan. Baloch newspapers such as *Baluchistan Express, Balochistan Post, Baloch Hal* and *Daily Independent* etc. were regularly consulted to understand the Baloch nationalist viewpoint.

**Limitation of the research**

This study suffers from a few limitations which must be stated here for the reader. Due to the fact that the University of Western Australia would not have provided the ethics clearance due to worsening security situation in Balochistan, a field trip to Balochistan to conduct interviews with the Baloch political leadership and to consult the Balochistan provincial government records and archives could not be arranged. This would have immensely benefited this research but as the journalistic expression goes, no news is more important than your life. Therefore, this thesis totally relies on published and web-based research material.

The biggest treasure trove of information and record regarding the Baloch and Balochistan is in England. Of particular interest were the Mountbatten archives in University of Southampton which would have shed light on a number of so-called *mysteries* regarding the partition of India and Balochistan, and the British library and India office library for the information on British views and policy towards Kalat and Balochistan. These two factors play a very significant role in the Baloch narrative. One of the most important part of the Baloch nationalist narrative is the claim that Kalat was treated by the British authorities in India as an independent sovereign state with treaty relationship with the British and that the British government in India and the London office always acknowledged that. This thesis argued and highlighted that that was not the case. However, due to differences in opinion and of view among the British officers on how to deal with Balochistan especially Kalat and how to incorporate it into the British India resulted in an ambiguity about the status of Kalat. When the Kalat team raised this issue in the meeting with Mountbatten and the Pakistani team, Mountbatten not only rejected it but also shared the legal opinion
with the Kalat team about it. This and related information is still buried in Mountbatten archives. A number of other British officers left important papers e.g Showers, Corfield and Barlow papers that are archived at IOR and Cambridge University’s Centre for South Asian Studies. As this thesis is about the Baloch nationalist narrative, consulting these archives could have addressed a number of points in the Baloch narrative. However my supervisor was of the view that the trip to England is not required as adequate data is already available to me.

Recently, Baloch nationalists have published a few books which I could not get hold of. Despite the excellent work done by the information services and the Reid library staff of the University of Western Australia (UWA), sometimes, locating research material and documents such as the Economic Surveys of Pakistan particularly from 1977 to 1999, that would have been useful in further tightening the argument, especially when one is on a strict time line, has proven to be problematic. Unfortunately, the inter-library loan service could not locate them and the hard copies from Pakistan could not be arranged either.

**Research design/ Outline of the thesis**

The thesis has seven chapters and an Introduction and a conclusion. Unlike other works on Pakistan that mostly follow the chronological model in discussing the political developments in Pakistan, this thesis loosely following the chronological model, looks at the *important mile stones* in center-province relationship and uses them as *cornerstones* of various chapters. Every chapter focuses on the developments in the area during the time period and how it contributed to the Baloch narrative. By doing this, the aim is to see how the narrative evolved and how each development contributed to or added to the existing narrative of grievance. In this way, a clear picture emerges of the Baloch narrative since the arrival of the British in Balochistan. An attempt is made in every chapter to focus on the developments during the time period under discussion and how it is linked with the over all narrative.

Chapter one looks at the available literature on ethnopolitical conflicts and how ethnicities get politicized and the role of different actors especially the ethnic elite in the process. The chapter also attempts to establish the reasons how and why some ethnopolitical conflicts get violent and others do not. An important point which
the chapter makes is that in the process of the politicization of ethnicity, the biggest tool which is used by the ethnic elite is a narrative based on the collective memory of an actual or perceived injustice to the ethnic group. However, the chapter argues that the presence of a memory of a past injustice could only be used to politicize an ethnic group when an actual or perceived injustice is happening to the ethnic group at the time.

The remaining chapters (2-7) are divided into two parts. Part one includes chapters 2 and 3. Chapters Two and Three cover the history of the Baloch and Balochistan from earliest record to the departure of the British from the Indian subcontinent. These chapters cover different views about the origin of the Baloch and epic battles they have fought against invaders according to the legend. Chapter two, however, challenges the Baloch nationalist claim that before the arrival of the British, Kalat was an independent state.

Chapter three looks at the policy confusions of the British officers dealing with the Baloch throughout their engagement with Balochistan. The chapter argues that it was this confusion that led to a situation where the last Khan of Kalat claimed that Kalat’s status is different from other princely states of India. This confusion further complicated the situation when Pakistan and Kalat negotiated the issue of accession.

Chapters four, five, six and seven comprise part 2 of the thesis and cover developments in the province (Balochistan) and Centre (Islamabad) relations that have taken place after Balochistan become a part of Pakistan.

Chapter four covers developments that took place from 1947-1969. A number of important developments took place during this period. Khan of Kalat claimed that Kalat enjoyed a special status during the British raj and with the lapse of paramountcy has become independent. He formally declared independence of Kalat as well. However, this chapter challenges this view. The chapter argues that Ahmad Yar Khan failed to take a firm and singular position on a number of issues. He kept promising one thing to the founder of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah and another to his sardars. The effects of the policy of One Unit on Balochistan (a policy which was actually aimed at East Pakistan) have also been discussed in this chapter. The
chapter argues that in the 1960s, with the political decline of Ahmed Yar Khan, a new nationalist Baloch leadership emerged. Khair Bakhsh Marri, Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, Attaullah Mengal and Akbar Bugti were the main pillars of this leadership.

Chapter five covers arguably the most important time period in the history of Balochistan-Islamabad relations especially in terms of its significance in the Baloch narrative of centre’s injustice towards the Baloch and Balochistan. The chapter starts with General Yahya Khan, then president and the martial law administrator of Pakistan granting Balochistan, for the first time in the history of Pakistan, the status of a full-fledged province of the state of Pakistan. 1970 national elections were tragic for Pakistan as the post-election developments resulted in the dismemberment of the country. For Balochistan, the elections were a positive development. For the first time since 1947, the Baloch got the opportunity to elect their own representatives. Barring Akbar Bugti who could not contest the elections due to a legal issue, all other nationalist leaders; Mengal, Marri and Bizenjo managed to reach the provincial assembly and eventually established the first Baloch provincial government. Attaullah Mengal became the chief minister and Bizenjo was appointed the Governor of Balochistan. This proved to be a short-lived government as the political developments in the country and the Bhutto led center and Mengal led province soon got to loggerheads which resulted in the dissolution of the provincial government. This resulted in the most serious insurgency in Balochistan which left long-lasting scares on the memory of the Baloch political activists as well as on the center-provincial relationship. This chapter also highlights the various factors and reasons that contributed in the worsening of the situation.

Chapter six covers a long span of almost twenty three years of center-provincial relationship. I have titled this chapter Balochistan’s Peace Interval or Balochistan and the peace interval. This chapter is important as the developments that took place during this time period support one of the main arguments of this research that in the process of the politicization of ethnicity, the biggest tool which is used by the elite is a narrative based on the collective memory of an actual or perceived injustice to the ethnic group. However, the presence of a memory of a past injustice could only be used to politicize an ethnic group when an actual or perceived injustice is happening to the ethnic group at the time. As it was not the case during
this time period in Balochistan, there was an absence of violence. Hence, a peace interval in Balochistan. This peace interval started with General Zia’s martial law and ended with General Pervez Musharraf’s coup of 1999. During this period, although, most of the concerns/grievances of the Baloch nationalists, at least according to them, remained unaddressed yet Balochistan remained largely and mostly peaceful. Let me clearly state here that by peace interval, I mean absence of violence (as it was witnessed in the 1970s). General Zia, due to a number of regional and international compulsions, took several conciliatory steps towards the Baloch political leadership and Balochistan. During the second part of this peace interval, when democratic practices were restored in the country, Baloch leadership not only participated in the national politics but Baloch leaders like Akbar Bugti and Ghaous Bux Bizenjo emerged as national level leaders with political clout, influence and respect throughout the country. This however changed after 1999.

Chapter seven, Return of insurgency in Balochistan, covers the developments from 1999 to 2013. During this time period, just like at the beginning of the peace interval, Pakistan was ruled by a military government led by General Musharraf (General Zia during the peace interval) followed by democratic governments of People’s Party and Muslim League Nawaz, just like it was during the peace interval. The main reason that this chapter has combined both the military and the civilian government is that it focuses on the Baloch insurgency which returned and continued since early 2000. This chapter details the events which led to the return of violence in Balochistan. The chapter argues that the main reason for the return of violence in Balochistan is the clash of interests between the Baloch elite and the Central elite. Musharraf-Bugti personal clash further complicated the situation. Islamabad’s lack of clarity and long term policy towards addressing the Baloch grievances is the major reason why the violence continues.

The conclusion sums up the main findings of the thesis and also identifies possible areas of further research and academic attention.
CHAPTER ONE

ETHNOPOLITICAL CONFLICTS, ETHNIC ELITE AND CONFLICT-SUPPORTIVE NARRATIVES

Introduction

In Akira Kurosawa’s classic _Rashomon_, different characters narrate their perspective of the story. _Vantage Point_ treats the plot and its execution in a similar way. The story of the film is presented through the perspectives of different characters and just like the classical Indian fable, _the blind men and the elephant_, a complete picture emerges only after piecing all the perspectives and views together. By doing this, one gets a whole picture of the story.

What we learn from these examples is that by taking into account all versions of an event or a series of events; one gets a complete picture or at least a better understanding of how and why it happened. Can one apply this method to understand real political events? Take for instance the single shot that shook the world; the murder of Hapsburg Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sonia in Sarajevo that resulted in developments that culminated into the First World War. They were murdered by one Garvrilo Princip. Who was he? Was he just a man who happened to be at that street with a gun? Understanding Mr. Princep’s narrative of why killing Archduke was important and why he volunteered for this action would be really helpful in understanding the underlying reasons behind this murder. This narrative would bring to our attention the Serb independence struggle. In this narrative, Princip, a Serb nationalist, is a freedom fighter and a hero; a martyr for the cause of freedom.

Scholars like Francis Fukuyama were quick in forecasting a peaceful world after the dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and the end of an almost fifty years long cold war. Then American President George Bush

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8 Archduke Franz Ferdinand assassinated, [http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/archduke-franz-ferdinand-assassinated](http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/archduke-franz-ferdinand-assassinated)
9 “Gavrilo Princip is arrested after assassinating Archduke Ferdinand,” [The Guardian, 28 June 2013](http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/picture/2013/jun/28/gavrilo-princip-franz-ferdinand);
famously proclaimed a new world order.\textsuperscript{11} For some time, it appeared that the decade of 1990s would be a decade free of fear. This however proved to be an incorrect assessment as 1990s turned out to be one of the bloodiest decades in recent history.

The ethnic conflicts in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Rwanda resulted in genocide, ethnic cleansing, and mass displacement. Ethnic conflicts in Sri Lanka, Indonesia and elsewhere brought to fore the ugly reality that ethnic conflicts would continue, despite the current emphasis on terrorism and the war against terrorism, to be a major source of instability in the world. Cases like Bosnia Herzegovina and Rwanda continue to pose a challenge to the students of ethnic conflicts. A major question which continues to be discussed is what led to such violence? How those, who were behind the most cruel and gruesome acts of violence, justify it? What narrative they had which led to and justified such hatred? How and why these new rivalries, based on older differences and rivalries emerged?

How the narrative based on a \textit{collective memory} of past injustices came into play to instigate a new wave of violence? How significant was the role of the ethnic elite in the process of ethnic awakening, politicization and violence?

Over the years, a number of scholars have provided several explanations for the emergence of ethnic conflicts. These explanations range from ancient rivalries to political interests and sense of security dilemma. All such explanations have valid points yet they fail to answer several questions especially regarding the timing of the eruption of ethnic conflict.

This chapter instead of arguing for one theory of ethnopolaritical conflict against the other, focuses on understanding the \textit{process} of ethnic conflict: ethnic awakening, ethnic politicization and ethnic violence and the \textit{role played by the ethnic elite} in this process and the \textit{tools} these ethnic elite employ in this process.

I argue in this chapter that ethnopolaritical conflicts occur due to the politicization of ethnicity. In the process of politicization of ethnicity, the elite or leadership of that ethnicity and ethnic group play the most important role. Once ethnicity is politicized, again, it is the ethnic elite/ leadership which decides whether

\textsuperscript{11} President of the United States of America, George Bush’s speech to the Congress on March 6, 1991. A Youtube clip can be viewed on http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=byxeOG_pZIo
the politically active ethnicity will turn violent or not. When it turns violent, government symbols and installations are targeted, second, as are other ethnic groups. This is done for two reasons; one, to signal resolve, second, to achieve a stronger bargaining position vis-à-vis the central government. In the process of the politicization of ethnicity, the biggest tool which is used by the elite is a narrative based on the collective memory of an actual or perceived injustice to the ethnic group. However, the presence of a memory of a past injustice could only be used to politicize an ethnic group when an actual or perceived injustice is happening to the ethnic group at the time.

The chapter is divided into four main parts. First part briefly discusses ethnicity and ethnic groups, second part surveys different theories of ethnicity and ethnic conflicts. Third section looks at the significance of the narratives based on collective memory of a group and the fourth section looks at the role of ethnic elite and how they use these narratives to mobilize the ethnic group, the challenges they face and why the ethnic group responds to their call for mobilization.

**Ethnicity and Ethnic Groups**

The world *ethnic* of the English language has its roots in Greek word *ethnos*. Ethnos was used to describe non-Christian and non-Jewish pagans. In Homer, *ethnos* have been used to describe a tribe (*ethnos Lukion*: tribe of Lycians), a band (*ethnos hetarion*: a band of friends). Pinder mentioned *ethnos aneron* (a race of men). Plato mentioned *ethnos Kerukikon* (a castle of heralds).

One thing which stands out in the above mentioned examples is that in all of them exists an idea of a group in which the members share certain attributes and that it is different from the rest.

The usage of the term *ethnicity* in the English language could be traced back to 1950s. *Ethnicity* first appeared in the Oxford English dictionary in 1953. Since then, the meaning of the term has remained obscure. The term has been used to

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12 For details see John Hutchinson & Anthony Smith, eds., *Ethnicity*, (Oxford: OUP)
describe a field of study and inquiry and labelling of people. Most commonly used meaning are: a group of people that shared a language and a culture.

According to DeVos, ethnicity is the use of culture to identify them and differentiate themselves from other groups. Hobsbawn states that ethnicity is grounded in cultural practices. These cultural practices, according to Hobsbawn, provide people a sense of belonging to a certain group even if the members of the group do not live in the same area.14

According to Smith, ethnicity can only be established when it has a name, a myth of common ancestry, shared historical memories, a common culture and economy, link with historical territory and a measure of internal solidarity.15 He further states that ethnicity can shape individual identity and self-respect because of the myth-symbol complex.16 Anthony Smith described an ethnic group as:

Named human populations with shared ancestry myths, histories and cultures, having an association with a specific territory and a sense of solidarity.17

Schermerhorn believes an ethnic group consists of a collectivity within a larger society, having common ancestry (real or perceived), collective memory of the past (real and/or perceived) and some cultural similarities and practices. Handleman identified four steps or stages of the formulation of an ethnic group. The first stage is when the group has a sense of its identity and distinctiveness from other groups and people. Second stage is when the members of the group interact and communicate as a group. At the third stage, as a result of this communication among the group members, common interests are developed. Fourth and final stage is when an ethnic group consolidates its position in a territory with which it identifies and also, in most cases, establishes political institutions.

16 Myths and symbols according to this view are historical memories and central values of ethnic groups which are transmitted to future generations.
To sum up, an ethnie or an ethnic group has six main features:\(^{18}\)

1. A name
2. Common ancestry, actual or perceived.
3. Shared historical memories, actual or perceived.
4. Common culture
5. Homeland
6. A sense of solidarity

Theories of Ethnicity and Ethnic Conflict

What exactly is an ethnic conflict? Scholars and analysts are still divided on this question? Jeffrey Murer aptly voiced this when he stated that there are “few terms in academic analysis that divide, befuddle, and confuse” as an ethnic conflict."\(^{19}\) In 2010, Stefan Wolff opined that the term ethnic conflict is a misnomer.\(^{20}\)

How, why and when a conflict is viewed as an ethnic conflict? Murer believes it depends on how a conflict is coded and framed by the parties to the conflict and by analysts studying it.\(^{21}\)

Roger Brubaker and David Laitin defined ethnic conflict as: “we define ethnic violence on first approximation as violence perpetrated across ethnic lines, in which at least one party is not a state (or a representative of a state), and in which the putative ethnic difference is coded by perpetrators, targets, influential third parties, or analysts as having been integral rather than incidental to the violence, that is, in

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\(^{18}\) John Hutchinson & Anthony Smith, ed., *Ethnicty* (Oxford:OUP) 6-7


which the violence is coded as having been meaningfully oriented in some way to the different ethnicity of the target.”

Building on Brubaker and Laitin’s approach that in an ethnic conflict “at least one party was not a state,” Murer argued that in such conflicts, the other side is also defined in ethnic terms and not as a state. This is the reason why Murer states the Chechen conflict was described as the Russian versus Chechen conflict and not Chechens struggling for independence against Russia, the state. This is something which we witness in the ethnic conflicts in Pakistan where all ethnic groups (Baloch, Sindhi, Pashtun, Siraiaki) identify the state with an ethnic group i.e. Punjabis. This point would be discussed in detail in the proceeding chapters when the ethnopolitical conflict in Balochistan would be discussed.

When exactly the ethnic identity of an individual and a group becomes important? When exactly the group members identify themselves with their ethnic identity? According to Vamik Volkan, individuals are more likely to relate to their ethnic identity and ethnic group when the group is under threat.

… under conditions of threat individuals become more defined by their large group identities to the point where it may far outweigh any concerns for individual needs, even survival.

Citing several examples of violent acts between the members of different ethnic conflicts that did not become an ethnic conflict, Brubaker and Laitin argued “ethnic violence is not intrinsic to the act itself; it emerges through after-the –fact

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26 Vamik Vokan, Bloodlines: From Ethnic Pride to Ethnic Terrorism, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1997) 25 as quoted in Murer, 564
27 Brubaker and Laitin, 443
interpretive claims. Such claims may be contested generating what Horowitz has called a meta conflict—“a conflict over the nature of the conflict” that may, in turn, feed back into the conflict in such a way as to generate (by furnishing advance legitimation for) future violence.28

Charles Tilly once stated that if there was ever a Noble prize for political science, it would go to someone who can solve the riddle of how and why people bounded by ethnicity start struggling for their separate state? Other leading experts in the field, for instance, Horowitz also hinted on the formidable obstacles in working out a thorough and holistic theory of ethnic conflict.29 These formidable obstacles perhaps explain why although a number of theories of ethnicity and ethnopolitical conflict exist yet none of these holistically explains or covers the whole process. Main schools or theories are: primordialist, modernist, instrumentalist, relative deprivation, internal colonialism and security dilemma.30

Shils is credited to be the one who introduced the primordialist theory. According to primordiats, ethnic identity is a given.31 According to primordialist theory, belonging to a particular religion, language group, shared history and cultural bonds play an important role in defining who a person is. After Shils initial work, Clifford Geertz further elaborated and linked the primodialist based ethnicity with political conflicts. According to Geertz:

These congruities of blood, speech, custom, and so on, are seen to have an ineffable and at times overpowering coerciveness in and of themselves. One is bound to one’s kinsmen, one’s neighbor, one’s fellow believer, ipso

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28 Brubaker and Laitin, 443-444. Also see Horowitz
facto; as the result not merely of personal affection, practical necessity, common interest, or incurred obligation, but at least in great part by virtue of some unaccountable absolute import attributed to the very tie itself.32

Greeley, DaSilva and Berghe are a few other scholars who have using different case studies, argued in favor of the primordialist theory.33

Karl Deutsch argued that ethnic conflict is an essential part of the process of modernization.34 According to him, whenever a state goes through a process of modernization, interests vary and often clash. This conflict of interest among various groups could result in ethnic based rivalries.35

The instrumentalist theory argues that ethnicity is a social and political construction of the ethnic elite. Paul Brass stated:

Ethnicity is the study of the process by which elites and counter elites within ethnic groups select aspects of the group’s culture, attach new value and meaning to them, and use them as symbols to mobilize the group, to defend its interests and to compete with other groups.36

Brass is of the view that competing economic as well as political interests between the dominant ethnic group and the peripheral or non-dominant ethnic groups

result in an ethnic competition. It is this ethnic competition which results in an ethnic conflict. According to the instrumentalist theory, it is not the primordial factors such as language and/or culture that causes conflict but the manipulation of these factors by the ethnic elite.

Instrumentalists further argue that inequality among different ethnic groups in itself does not translate into a competition or conflict. Only when the elite of a group highlight this inequality and try to mobilize an ethnic group against it, ethnic conflict arises. Brass contends that such elite competition especially when it is between local elite and foreign/national elite (national or central government), results in a serious competition to safeguard its interests, be it economic or the right to a particular piece of land.37

How far this competition would go and how this politicization of ethnicity and ethnic group would actually materialize depends on how the ethnic elite decide to proceed from this point onwards.38 If the elite intend to take it to the level where the ethnic group is mobilized (with or without violence) against, in most cases, the central government, they have to, according to Brass, ensure that they incorporate (or at least appear to do so), the interest of other members of the ethnic group into their demands.39

Ted Gurr argues that when there is a perceived gap between the value expectation and the value capabilities of an ethnic group, ethnic conflict arises.40 In simple words, when an ethnic group believes that its rightful share is not been given to it and that it has the capabilities to get much more if it is in control of its resources and affairs, a sense of deprivation emerges in the group. This sense of, what Gurr describes as relative deprivation results in conflict with the dominant group (central government).41

38 Brass, 41.
Michael Hechter divides a state into two parts: the core or the centre and the periphery. Deeply grounded in the modern European state building experience, Hechter’s internal colonialism theory argues that with the emergence of these states, a group (core or centre) emerged that was responsible for the functioning of the state. This role provided immense power to the core or the centre. As a principle, according to Hechter, the core attempts to preserve the status quo. In response, the peripheral groups who are not part of this setup and have no stakes in maintaining the status-quo, start a struggle against it.\footnote{For details on Internal Colonialism theory see, Michael Hechter, \textit{Internal Colonialism-The Celtic Fringe in British National Development 1536-1966}, (London: Routledge, 1995).}

Another proponent of this theory, Casanova defined internal colonialism as:

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\text{... a structure of social relation based on the domination and exploitation among culturally heterogeneous, distinct groups. If it has a specific difference with respect to other relations based on super ordination, it inheres in the cultural heterogeneity which the conquest of some people by others historically produces.}\footnote{Pablo Casanova, \textit{“Internal Colonialism and National Development,” Comparative International Development,} Vol. 1, Year not given, 33.}
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According to the proponents of security dilemma, when a state’s institutions are weak or the state is anarchic and/ or going through a major transition, certain groups would tend to ensure that their security is guaranteed and interests are met and secured.\footnote{See for details, Barry Posen, \textit{“The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict,”} in Michael E. Brown, ed., \textit{Ethnic Conflict and International Security}, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 103-124.} According to the group of scholars who believe in security dilemma as the most plausible explanation for ethnic conflicts, ethnic groups act just like states and take steps to consolidate their position and influence. As one group acts to ensure its security and interest, it comes into conflict with other groups. This results in a competition or conflict in which the quest for security in fact results in further insecurity.\footnote{On this point see Erik Melander, \textit{Anarchy Within: The Security Dilemma between Ethnic Groups in Emerging Anarchy}, (Uppsala: Department of Peace and Conflict Research, 1999), i.}
The variable here is anarchy under which according to Robert Jervis\(^46\) even "nonaggressive moves to enhance one’s security" are perceived as threatening by others.\(^47\) Security dilemma theory was originally formulated to explain international relations especially interstate wars, it was later applied to explain ethnic conflict.\(^48\)

… given an historical record of serious intergroup hostilities (amplified and distorted, of course, in the retelling), groups are likely to view one another’s nationalist mobilization as threatening by the other group, engendering a mobilization spiral that can lead to violence.\(^49\)

As the above mentioned brief survey of the major theories of ethnic conflict indicate that no single theory can answer all the questions regarding the ethnic conflicts, although all of these theories have several valid points. Primordialist theory focuses on emotions and ethnicity but ignores different influences such as political and economic. Eller and Coughlan have perhaps best summed up the main flaw in the primordialist approach:

> It offers no mention for the genesis of its phenomena, nor does it recognize or explicate any significant relationship between ethnic attachments and the ongoing social experiences of ethnic members.\(^50\)

Modernist theory as propagated by Deutsch is also problematic. While on one hand, he argues that the process of modernization would bring ethnic groups within a

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\(^{47}\) Brubaker and Laitin, 437


state into conflict, on the other hand, he believes that the process of modernization would result in the integration of various groups. The most valid criticism on security dilemma was made by scholars like Laitin and Yong. The critics of security dilemma argue that ethnic groups are not like states and to treat ethnic groups as states and ethnic conflict as inter-state wars is erroneous.

Instrumentalist theory has its flaws too. While it makes a strong case of how an ethnic conflict occurs, it fails to answer the question why certain ethnicities at certain times get politicized and mobilized? The timing and why the masses follow the elite are the two main points which are not clearly elaborated in the Instrumentalist theory.

**THE ROLE OF THE ETHNIC ELITE**

A very important factor in ethnopolitical conflicts is the behavior of the leadership/elite and how they politicize ethnicity. The existence of ethnic differences and consciousness could not lead to violent conflict between two or more than two ethnic groups. It occurs when the ethnic elite of a particular ethnicity realize that they can achieve their objectives through politicizing the ethnic differences. The ethnic elite then use different methods such as a particular narrative based on historical memory of an actual or perceived injustice committed against the ethnic group to politicize the ethnicity. They create fear of the other in the ethnic group by pointing out that what is or could be happening to the ethnic group was in fact the continuation of the past injustices. Gurr argued that this fear of other groups would

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then turn into aggression against what he called the source of that frustration. 54 Ivan Siber also emphasizing the role of the ethnic elite points to the choices and decisions made by the ethnic elite as a major factor in deciding what shape a particular ethnic conflict would take. 55 Siber argued that the ethnic elite have a choice whether to deal with the problems or to create fear and hatred of the other. 56

Before surveying the role of the ethnic elite in ethnic conflicts, one needs to look at the term ethnic elite.

Who are ethnic elite? Are they the political and tribal leaders of an ethnic group who already hold a position of considerable influence and authority which they use during such situations or an ethnic conflict can create a situation which can provide an opportunity to someone, who could identify and utilize the circumstances to emerge as a leader of a group? What strategies and techniques the ethnic elite use to achieve their objective and goals? More so, why the masses accept what the ethnic elite say and follow them? Why their i.e. ethnic elite’s position and plan resonates with the public?

David Laitin believes that ethnic elite is someone who is in a position to provide incentives to people to join in the struggle. Traditionally, ethnic elite is someone with a certain position of authority within the group. Barring a very few exceptions, he is not part of the masses and is in a position to provide a narrative of events linking it with the past and the collective memory of the group. He is aware of what to say and how to formulate his narrative within the group so that it resonates with the people. He would present the problem and conflict as a collective problem of the whole group. By doing this, he consolidates his position as the leader of the group and uses it to gain political legitimacy. He then uses this political legitimacy during the negotiation with the center/government. This point can be substantiated with several examples. Take for example the case of Kenya. Joseph Mboya 57 a noted

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57 Thomas Joseph Odhiambo Mboya (1930 –1969) was a Kenyan politician during Jomo Kenyatta’s government. He was founder of the Nairobi People's Congress Party, a key figure in the formation of the Kenya African National Union (KANU), and the Minister of Economic Planning and Development. Mboya was assassinated on 5 July 1969.
Kenyan politician stated that in Kenya, a number of leaders used the past memory of victimization and hostilities to gain their own political objectives. According to Mboya (who was referring to his own country and the region, though this principal has universal applicability), when a leader could not achieve its objective at the national level, he reverts back to his tribal support base. He uses the political language that provides him the support of his tribe and strengthens his political standing.58

Gurr agrees. However, he argues that how the ethnic elite campaign to consolidate their position would have implications for how the situation would develop. According to Gurr, the danger of violence would increase if the ethnic elite accentuate the threats to the ethnic group and instigate fear and hatred of the rival or other groups.59 Ivan Siber is of the view that most conflicts have political and economic causes and it depends on the leader of a group how to deal and contextualize the problem. According to Siber, it depends on the ethnic elite whether he engages with the central government or the rival group to solve the problem or takes the route of confrontation and of utilizing people’s feelings to create fear.60 Nedegwa concurs and states that the choices made by the ethnic elite would decide the course of ethnic politics as well as conflict. He further states that as the ethnic elite’s position depends on how much authority and following he commands within the ethnic group, he would ensure that he comes out as some one that is safeguarding the rights of and struggling for the needs of the masses.61

Rothschild also points to the role of ethnic elite as the deciding factor in the politicization of ethnicity.62 He argues that ethnic elite, to achieve their objective use certain myths and symbols as rallying points. They use the historical memory of the past glory and often the defeats that should not be repeated. By doing this, they embark on the path of using force and violence.63 The existing literature on ethnic conflict points to the veracity of this view. Rene Lemarchand while discussing the Hutu-Tutsi conflict wrote:

58 Tom Mboya, *Freedom and After*, (Boston: Little and Brown, 1963)
61 Nedegwa, *Citizen and Ethnicity*, 601.
63 Ibid.
The crystallization of group identities is not a random occurrence; it is traceable to specific strategies pursued by ethnic entrepreneurs centrally concerned with the mobilization of group loyalties on behalf of collective interests defined in terms of kinship, region or ethnicity. …clearly, one cannot overestimate the part played by individual actors in defining the nature of the threats posed to their respective communities, framing strategies designed to counter such threats, rallying support for their cause, bringing pressure to bear on key decision makers, and, in short, politicizing ethnoregional identities…

The role played by Milosevic in the Bosnian conflict is perhaps the best manifestation of how ethnic leaders can shape and decide the course of ethnic politics and conflict. According to a number of scholars who have studied the ethnic conflict in Yugoslavia and the subsequent disintegration consider Milosevic as the main actor in the disintegration of Yugoslavia. According to Agneza Roberson, the disintegration of Yugoslavia was a logical outcome of Milosevic’s politics. Milosevic quite early in the conflict started referring to the power of the people. This was followed by his emphasis on the Serb grievances. Milosevic’s speech to a large crowd of Serbs on April 24, 1987 could be considered the most important step in the politicization of the Serb politics. During this speech, Milosevic cautioned the police (mostly ethnic Albanian) not to be sturdy with the Serbs in attendance. During his speech, he stressed on the Serbian national pride and stated that the Serbs never stopped or backed off due to an obstacle in their way. In the same speech, he stereotyped the Albanians and warmed them that “there will be no tyranny on this soil anymore.”


According to the literature, once the ethnic elite embark on the course of the politicization of ethnicity, among the first steps they take is to marginalize the moderate voices within their ethnic group. This could be done in a number of ways such as labeling the moderates the enemy’s agent or motivated by personal gains and greed. Milosevic did exactly this once he started using the power of the people card. He made sure that all moderate voices and elements especially those opposing his adopted course of action are sidelined and eventually removed from party positions in the Serbian League of Communists. In the following months and years, Milosevic increasingly used language grounded in ethnic terms and based on selective historical memory of the Serbs. For instance, on the occasion of the 600th anniversary of the battle of Kosovo, Milosevic stated that the defeat of the Serbs from the hands of the Turks was mainly due to the internal divisions and lack of a united front and leadership of the Serbs. This internal division was the prime reason for the Serb suffering up till the communist era. He accused the Serb leadership of making compromises at the cost of the Serbian dignity and honor to enjoy their own petty benefits. He pledged that it would not happen again. Linking the past with what was happening at the time, Milosevic stated that after six centuries, the Serbs are once again facing similar battle fronts, though not armed battles yet but this might not be the case for long.68

Over the course of time, Milosevic’s political vocabulary got increasingly ethnic. At the same time, using selective historical narrative, he started stereotyping the rival ethnic groups. This narrative which was soon picked up by the Serbian media blamed the Albanians for the violence, accusing them of despoiling churches and graveyards. In this narrative, the rival ethnicities especially the Albanians were projected as terrorists and separatists, where as the Serb were the victim of massacres and were presented as endangered and as a refugee or internally displaced due to the atrocities committed against them.

Available at <http://connection.ebscohost.com/c/articles/15370942/words-before-war-milo-evics-use-mass-media-rhetoric-provoke-ethnopolitical-conflict-former-yugoslavia>

How the other side is perceived also plays an important role in the initiation of an ethnic conflict. \(^{69}\) Brown is of the view that in a conflict situation, the other side is often demonized and *ethnic mythologies* are created. \(^{70}\) Gurr and Harff argue that ethnic conflict is most likely to occur when there is a strong sense among a minority of imposed group disadvantages, and where the ethnic group is characterized by a strong group cohesion and represented by leaders with a political agenda. \(^{71}\)

The case study of Milosevic’s use of a narrative based on collective memory of a historical injustice (actual or perceived) during the Yugoslav crisis brings to our attention the most important tool which he and the ethnic elite in general use to manipulate the masses. This is important because this would provide an answer to the question why the ethnic elite often succeed in mobilizing the masses.

**THE SIGNIFICANCE OF NARRATIVES**

Milosevic’s use of a narrative based on the Serbian collective memory of the historical events brings to our attention the significance of a clearly crafted but based on what is generally perceived to have happened, narrative as a tool of ethnic elite in the politicization of the ethnicity. This is not unique to the ethnic conflict in Yugoslavia. A closer look at all the ethnic conflicts especially those that emerged after the end of the cold war and the breakup of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) points to the presence of a narrative based on the collective memory of the ethnic group which was used by the ethnic elite to mobilize the masses.

The significance of perceptions based on memory cannot be over emphasized. Memory plays an important role in our lives. A particular perspective of the past makes humans what they are today. Collective memory of a group, whether it is actual or perceived or a mix of both, serves two important purposes; one, it provides the group members an identity by providing an answer to who they (the group members) are and second, who is the *other*? How the *other* has acted towards them (or us) in the past. Tilly argues that people often develop accounts about themselves. Tilly calls these accounts *boundary stories*. These boundary stories,

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\(^{70}\) Brown, *The Causes of Internal Conflict*, 13  
according to Tilly not only provide a sense of who these people are but also how they differ from and interact with other groups.

A number of scholars have pointed the importance of collective memory of the ethnic group in its relations with other groups. Van Evera, for instance, linking the past with the present argued that whether the groups or nationalities will be peaceful or in a conflict would depend on how they have treated each other in the past. Conflict would be greater between groups where the history would be rife with mistrust and bad blood. The experiences of the past would result in conflict and the chances of normalization would be minimal. Why the past would dictate a group’s actions? Kaufman states that the answer lies in symbolic politics. According to Kaufman and other proponents of symbolic politics theory, people instead of making decisions rationally, follow their emotions. This, according to Kaufman, is the prime reason why the masses mobilize. The masses would react once the ethnic myths and symbols that they hold dear appear to be in danger. According to Kaufman, at the individual level, people respond to the emotionally laden ethnic symbols and collectively when other groups are blamed for their problems.

The idea of the **other** that is in most cases evil, inhuman, tyrannical, antagonistic and violent plays an important role in the formation and strengthening of the ethnic identity of a group. In ethnic histories, this **other** is often projected as a threat to the very existence of the group. This creates a fear of the other, which not only strengthens the identity of the group; it also consolidates and unites the members of the group. Such narratives while blame the other for whatever wrongs the group suffers, also create a sense of victimhood in the group. Once this happens, everything which the group does would be projected as self defence. The other would be blamed for the hostilities and atrocities committed against the group. In such a situation, only one’s sufferings would appear to be of any significance whereas the other is portrayed as a total evil or whatever is happening to it would be justified under different pretexts. Renee Hirschon calls such a behaviour a victim complex. Almost all ethnic conflicts especially in Bosnia and Rwanda are prime examples of the fact that the groups involved were suffering from a victim complex. Once this victimhood complex takes roots in a group, the members of the group
could only anticipate the persistence of violence against them. Based on what he observed in Brundi, Jean-Pierre Chretien wrote:

Fear … lies not in the décor of the drama, but becomes the principle actor. What does it mean to be Hutu or Tutsi? It doesn’t mean being Bantu or Hamite, nor serf or lord. It means remembering who killed those closest to you fifteen years ago, and asking yourself who will kill your child ten years … 

Narratives

Bar-Tel, Oren and Zehngut define a narrative as “a story about an event or events that has a plot with a clear starting point and end point, providing sequential and casual coherence about the world and/ or a group’s experience.” According to Brunner a narrative is a “community’s collective experiences embodied in its belief system.”

Bruner described narrative as:

Social constructions that coherently interrelate a sequence of historical and current events: they are accounts of a community’s collective experiences, embodied in its belief system and


represent the collective’s symbolically constructed shared identity.\textsuperscript{75}

Beckerman and Zembylas argue that “historical collective narratives are embedded in particular emotional discourses about collective (national) belonging and otherness.”\textsuperscript{76} Beckerman and Zembylas further argued that such narratives create reality for the people and they identify with the narratives and believe in these passionately.\textsuperscript{77}

Narratives do not exist or operate in isolation. It has been pointed that “rival groups in a conflict, motivated by contradictory goals and interests, adopt negating collective narratives, while viewing the other as a perpetrator with no legitimate claims, fostering a sense that acknowledging the other side’s narrative undermines one’s own narrative.”\textsuperscript{78}

**Main elements of a Narrative**


Collective memory plays an important role in the creation of a narrative. Scholars such as Bukley-Zistel, Liu and Hilton who have worked on the subject are of the view that narratives are used to justify the case or cause of the group.\footnote{Susanne Bukley-Zistel, “Nation, narration, unification? The politics of history teaching after the Rwandan genocide,” \textit{Journal of Genocide Research}, 11, 1, 2009, 31-53; James Liu and Dennis Hilton, “How the past weighs on the present: Social representations of history and their role in identity politics,” \textit{British Journal of Social Psychology}, 44, 4, 2005, 537-556 as quoted in Bar-Tal, et.al., 664}

It is normal to have more than one narrative in the group which might be dealing with and/or addressing the concerns of the sub-group within the main group. Take for instance the example of the Baloch. When we look at the Baloch narrative, we realize that it is a collection of a number of sub-narratives. There is a Kalat narrative, a Brahui narrative, a Bugti narrative, an Allah Nazar narrative to name just a few. All these narratives focus on specific issues. Once all these narratives are combined, the Baloch narrative emerges. More of this would be discussed in subsequent chapters. This is exactly what Moscovici states in his study.\footnote{Serge Moscovici, “Notes towards a description of Social representation,” \textit{European Journal of Social Psychology}, 18, 3, 1988, 211-250 as quoted by Bar-Tal, et.al., 644.} Moscovici states that in such a situation, a master narrative emerges that covers all sub-narratives and develops it into a large, comprehensive master narrative.\footnote{Serge Moscovici, “Notes towards a description of Social representation,” \textit{European Journal of Social Psychology}, 18, 3, 1988, 211-250 as quoted by Bar-Tal, et.al., 644.} According to Hammack such master narratives incorporate “collective story lines that range from a group’s history.”\footnote{Philip Hammack, “Identity as burden or benefit? Youth, historical narrative, and the legacy of political conflict,” \textit{Human Development}, 53, 4, 2010, 173-201 as quoted in Bar-Tal, et.al, 644. Further relevant information on the subject could be found in Philip Hammack, “Narrative and the Cultural Psychology of Identity,” \textit{Personality and Social Psychology Review}, 12,3, 2008, 222-247; Philip Hammack, Narrative and the Politics of Identity: The Cultural Psychology of Israeli and Palestinian Youth, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011)}

Narratives do not exist in isolation. These are constructed and strengthened in the presence of competing and/or counter narrative. Narratives are often used to justify a group’s position and negate the opponent or rival group’s position. Bar-On argued “The negation of the other allows construction of a monolithic narrative, which excludes the other, including its narrative.”\footnote{Dan Bar-On, “Ethical issues in biographical interviews and analysis,” in Ruthellen Josselson, (ed.) \textit{Ethics and Process in the Narrative study of Lives}, (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1996) 9-21; Dan Bar-On, \textit{The Other Within Us: Constructing Jewish Identity}, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) as quoted in Bar-Tal, et.al, 664.
Within such narratives, a group can focus on one or more than one issue. For instance, a number of groups emphasize identity and the purity of their race. In conflict narratives, one can see that groups focus on the atrocities committed against them by the rival or opposing group. This focus develops a sense of collective victimhood in the group. It is also used to justify any action taken by the group against the rival group(s).

Narrative and ethnopolitical conflict

Narratives play a significant role in ethnopolitical conflicts. Groups involved in ethnopolitical conflicts develop conflict supportive narrative that “form a collective self-presentation and describe the causes of the conflict, its nature, the image of the rival, the conditions needed to win the conflict.”

Apart from the master conflict supportive narrative, there could be event specific narratives but these narratives are also used in the master narrative. If one looks at the Baloch narrative one can see and identify a number of event based and tribe or personality based narratives that feed into the master Baloch narrative. These narrative such as the narrative of Ahmed Yar Khan of how he was forced into joining with Pakistan, narrative of Nauroz Khan’s struggle against the Pakistan Army, the narrative of the battle of Chamlang have been used by the relevant Baloch actors at various time periods in the history of centre (Islamabad)- province (Balochistan) relations. When the Baloch master narrative is issued, all of these narratives then feed into this master narrative. This would be discussed in the coming chapters.

Scholars such as Paez and Liu, Bar-Tal and Oren to name a few, point to the two main elements of a conflict-supportive narrative: the eruption of the conflict and how it evolved plays an important role in the development of the narrative. The

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second important element in this regard is the nature and orientation of the group or society involved in the conflict.87

Bar-Tal analysing the Bosnian, Rwandan and other such conflicts88 argued that the master conflict-supportive narrative has eight key themes or points:89 “First, the master narrative justifies involvement in the conflict and the course of its development which at the same time, discrediting the goals of the other side as unjustified and unreasonable. Secondly, it delineates the dangers that the conflict constitutes to the security-threat to its cherished values, identity, and territory. Thirdly, it delegitimizes the opponent. In essence, delegitimization denies the adversary’s humanity and serves as a psychological permit to harm the rival group. Fourth, in contrast to the opponent, the master narrative presents a glorified image of the in-group. Fifth, it presents the in-group as the sole victim of the conflict and the opponent. Sixth, it encourages patriotism, which is essential in order to mobilize people for achieving its group goals, especially for violent confrontations with the rival-including readiness to make the ultimate sacrifice life. Seventh, it emphasizes the importance of maintaining unity, by ignoring internal discords and disagreements, in the face of an external threat. The eighth and final theme consists of the desire to live in peace, as the conflict situation inflicts suffering and losses.90”

The aim of a conflict supportive narrative is not to provide an objective and accurate account of the development but to unite the group for a struggle.91

Conflict-supportive narratives are constructed selectively and ignore facts and information that does not suit the story line. When the Baloch narrative is analysed in light of these points, one can see that the Baloch narrative suffers from the same

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87 Bar-Tal, 665
88 There is vast literature available on these conflicts. For details see David MacDonald, Holocausts? Serbian and Croatian Victim-centered Propaganda and the War in Yugoslavia (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002); Nikki Slocum-Bradley, “Discursive production of conflict in Rwanda,” in Fathali Moghaddam, Rom Harre and Naomi Lee, (eds.), Global Conflict Resolution through Positioning Analysis, (New York: Springer, 2008) 207-226 as quoted in Bar-Tal, et.al, 665
89 Bar-Tal, et.al, 665
91 Bar-Tal et.al. 666
shortcomings. The Baloch narrative ignores facts that do not support its claim that Kalat was an independent state (chapter 3) and the British treatment of Kalat (chapter 4), the failure of the NAP government and Marri-Mengal and Bugti rivalry (chapter 5) and the absence of violence (chapter 6) and lack of a unified position, structure or leadership (chapter 7).

In conflict supporting narratives, often the information that supports the case of the party are highlighted. At the same time, facts that do not fall in line with the overall theme are ignored. If that is not possible due to these facts too well known, a justification/ explanation is created. For instance, in the Baloch narrative, the decade of 1970s was a decade of bloodshed and the centre committed grave atrocities against the Baloch. The narrative is totally silent on the role of the Baloch leaders including Sardar Akbar Bugti, Ahmed Yar Khan and the Jam of Las bela during this time period. When probed further, Baloch nationalists would argue that the center always used *divide and rule* policy in Balochistan and (without naming them) used its agents in Balochistan for this purpose. Regarding the forcible accession of Kalat with Pakistan, Baloch narrative is totally silent on Ahmed Yar Khan’s double speak. These and other issues related to the Baloch narrative would be discussed in the subsequent chapters.

The statement of Sardar Attaullah Mengal regarding the returning of the Punjabi civil servants to their parent departments is a clear manifestation of the point that in a narrative, actors often ignore information or fabricate it to support their position. After the dismissal from the chief ministership and the dissolution of the NAP government of Balochistan, Mengal claimed that it was Ghulam Mustafa Khar, then governor of Punjab who called all the Punjabi civil servants to their home departments to create an administrative vacuum in Balochistan. By claiming this, he completely ignored the fact that returning the Punjabi and other non-Balochistani domiciled civil servant to their domiciled provinces and parent departments was NAP’s electoral promise that it repeatedly made during the election campaign (chapter 5).

Nadir Tsur argues that in conflict supporting narratives, a framing language is used “that triggers emotions, memory, cognition, and motivations related to past
events, nurturing and shaping these in line with the current conflict-supporting narrative.”

In every narrative and especially conflict supportive narrative two factors play an important role in its construction: one, the cause the group is pursuing is just and worth dying for and that in the conflict, the group is the victim or the aggrieved party that must struggle to get justice. A closer look at all major ethnopolitical conflict revealed that every group involved in the ethnopolitical conflict had a narrative justifying their position and action in the conflict. These conflict-supportive narratives not only justify the group’s action in the past but also provide motivation and justification for current policy and action as well as the future course of action. It has been rightly argued that “each party’s adherence to its own narrative fuels the conflict by further entrenching the differences at the root of the conflict and creating a new battle ground on the issue of historical fact.”

Ethnic elite and conflict supportive narratives

Ethnic elite play the most important in the construction and dissemination of a narrative. Brubaker and Laiting argue that the ethnic elite play this role by “engendering ethnic insecurity through highly selective and often distorted narratives and representations.”

Another aspect of ethnic elite’s role in narrative making is the framing of the other. How do Sinhalis came to the conclusion that the Tamils are “superhumanly cruel and cunning,” or that the “Serbs really feared Croats as latter day Ustasahs?” This point can be further elaborated using the Baloch narrative. Who

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inform the common tribal and nomad Baloch who may never have any direct contact with an outsider that he is deprived of basic human needs because the Punjabis are looting and plundering the natural resources and wealth of Balochistan, his mother land? How Punjabis as an ethnic group became a rival in the Baloch narrative because before 1947 Punjabis were not present in the Baloch narrative and there is no evidence of any rivalry and resentment between the two before 1947.

An important point in this regard is that it is the elite that use this collective memory in a coordinated and well crafted narrative emphasising the grievances and injustices faced by the ethnic group. Such a narrative is not static. It evolves. New elements are incorporated in it to give a sense of enduring injustice. For instance, whatever Milosevic said in his various speeches and statements was not something new for the Serbs or that they were unaware of. Despite this, it was Miosevic who established a link with the past and the present.

It is the elite who decide what is to be included in the narrative. For instance when the American president William McKinley was assassinated on September 11, 1901, the New York Times declared that this event would be remembered and would have a number of effects on the coming generations of Americans. At present no body even remembers that event as it is not part of the over-all American narrative. Perhaps, that is why Richard Bulliet argued that “there are broad ideas that emerge from historical narratives. Perhaps most important is that the historical memory is fleeting and can be easily manipulated.”\(^\text{97}\) The elite use the historical memory to create a well crafted narrative. Abdesselam Cheddadi is correct that “history is used to construct a version of events that is accepted as true and immutable…”\(^\text{98}\)

The discussion so far about the narratives based on collective memory of an actual or perceived past in which the other or the rival group (other, them) has acted odiously against a group (us) raises three points: one, is the past experience or history a sufficient reason for ethnic elite to politicize the ethnicity and mobilize the masses? second, somewhat related to the first point is why only at a certain time and

\(^{97}\) See for details, Clash of Civilizations or Clash of Perceptions? In Search of Common Ground for understanding, (New York: World Policy Institute, ND), 19.

\(^{98}\) Ibid.
place ethnic elite manage to politicize and mobilize the ethnic group? Third, (perhaps a fundamental question in itself) why the elite opt for this course of action? Is this the only way certain leaders do their politics or there is some reason behind it.

To adequately answer the first two questions, we need to first seek an answer to the third question. Once it is established why an ethnic elite instead of participating in the political activities at the national level decides to revert back to its ethnic group for support and making his presence felt, we would be in a better position to answer the first two questions. A closer look at various ethnic conflicts around the world and, the main actors who were involved in these conflicts indicate that most of these ethnic elite that led their groups during these conflicts, at one point or the other were part of the political leadership of the country at the national level. Why these leaders decided to revert back to their ethnic groups? Was it because they were not effective at the national level or they were no more in a position of authority or significance within the larger political set up of the country?

Ethnic elite or for that matter all politicians seek political influence and power especially in the area in which they do their politics. Once they feel that their position is challenged and they might lose the power and authority, be it political, social and/ or economic, they revert back to their home base and use the ethnic card. Added to this could be another explanation, if the ethnic elite is operating in a state which is weak or dysfunctional, this could provide an altogether different set of incentives for the ethnic elite in using the ethnic card. However, the prime reason for ethnic elite to use the ethnic or the power of the people card is the fear of losing political and economic influence.99 According to Gagnon, if the ethnic elite fear that apart from losing power, he might be prosecuted for past crimes, the chances that he would use the ethnic card get maximized.100 The most important tool the ethnic elite use to instigate the people’s power is a narrative based on a collective memory of an actual or perceived injustice committed against them. The political career of Late Nawab Akbar Bugti is a case in point. He served as the defence minister of Pakistan, Governor and Chief Minister of Balochistan and was active in Pakistan’s national

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politics during the 1990s. During this period, he projected his party, Jamhuri Watan Party as the third political force in the country. After the murder of his son and developments that took place during General Musharraf’s era, he restricted himself to Dera Bugti. After the differences emerged and intensified between Nawab Bugti and General Musharraf led centre, he increasingly used ethnic language regarding centre’s policy towards, him, his tribe and Balochistan. These points are discussed in chapter six and seven.

This brings us back to the first two questions: Why the members of the ethnic group believe in this and why they follow the ethnic elite? And whether the narrative of an historical injustice fed to them by the ethnic elite is the only reason for mobilization? If so, it would be logical to ask why, the masses or group members mobilize at certain times and not others?

One of the common characteristics of different ethnic groups is the presence of people and leaders with extremist and uncompromising views. Despite the presence of such views and actors, ethnic group members go on with their lives. If the ethnic group is financially and politically secure and most of their political and economic as well as social rights are being met, the masses would ignore the extremist views. This would happen even if the past was ugly as only an ugly past is not a reason enough to lose all what they have today. Take for example, the French-German and French-English experiences.

This would however change, if the group members would feel that their political, economic and social rights are under threat. According to Joshua Smith, ethnic group members face four types of threats to their security: physical, political, economic and social and cultural. They would be inclined to heed to the ethnic elite who would link what is currently happening with the historical experience of the group and the injustice committed against them by the ruling elite. In other words, in the process of the politicization of ethnicity, the biggest tool which the ethnic elite use is a narrative based on the collective memory of an actual or perceived injustice.

to the ethnic group. However, the presence of a memory of a past injustice could only be used to politicize an ethnic group when an actual or perceived injustice is happening to the ethnic group at the time. This is then linked by the ethnic elite with the past memory. The current insurgency in Balochistan is a case in point. After the insurGENCY in Balochistan, during the 1970s, the province was peaceful for more than two deacades. This is discussed in detail in chapter six. However the situation changed when differences emerged between Akbar Bugti and the centre on gas royalty payments. This was then linked by the Baloch leaders with the past grievances of the Baloch towards the centre (Chapter seven).

Once the ethnicity and the ethnic group are politicized, whether this would remain peaceful or get violent would depend on the ethnic elite. A number of factors such as geography and demography, state structure, regional environment, availability of weapons and external support would play an important role in the ethnic elite’s decision to use violence as a strategy.102

If an ethnic group is scattered in different parts of the country, it would be extremely difficult for it to start a violent movement against the rival group or the state. However, if an ethnic group is concentrated in one geographical area, it would be easier for it to launch an armed struggle. For an effective armed movement, a suitable terrain is an advantage.103 A number of experts of guerrilla warfare have pointed to the advantages of a so-called rough terrain such as mountain or forest. Such a terrain provides the armed militants an advantage and they can achieve successes despite being numerically inferior to the security forces.

How strong and effective a state and a state’s institutions are would also be a very important factor. A state with a stable system and effective institutions would be in a far better position to rule and administer the area under its sovereignty. In most of the cases where violent ethnic mobilization took place, the state was either defunct or swiftly losing its sovereignty and its institutions were in disarray. Regional environment also plays an important role in the decision to use violence. If the region in general is unstable or if there is increasing instability, a war or a war like situation


103 For details on this see; Walter Laqueur, *Guerrilla Warfare*, (New Brunswick: Transaction, 1997)
in the neighbourhood, the chances of violence increase as it would provide a much more favourable environment to the ethnic elite to operate in.

The two most important factors which play almost a decisive role in an ethnic elite’s decision to turn the mobilization violent is the external or regional support and the availability of arms. If there is a state in the immediate neighbourhood, be it a kin-state or a state that has its own objectives or score to settle, the chances of ethnic elite deciding to turn the movement into a violent movement would increase as it can use the support of the neighbouring state. This support could be of different types such as direct military support, providing safe havens or moral and diplomatic support. Above all, however is the availability of arms as without weapons, there could be no armed struggle. A steady supply of arms would make the ethnic group bold and effective. The arms could be provided by the supporting state, sympathetic diaspora, and arm traders through black market or through a crime syndicate. A number of studies point to the nexus between drug smuggling and weapons supply where a number of tribal elite facilitated the drug smuggling through their area in return of arms and ammunition. If the on-going Baloch insurgency is analyzed, one will find all the above mentioned elements in it (chapter seven).

Existing literature on Balochistan and ethnopolitical conflict in Balochistan

There is very little academic work available on Balochistan. Other than few exceptions, the literature on the history of Balochistan is sparse and mostly outdated or one sided. Most commonly available and cited sources for the early history of Balochistan are the Arab historians such as Al-Tabari and Al-Baladhuri.104 The British officers who have served in Balochistan have also written on the history and society of the Baloch. Henry Potteniger’s *Travel in Baluchistan and Sind* is perhaps the most important work. Potteniger has written in detail about the history, geography and politics of the area before the arrival of the British. Other important works on the history of the Baloch are *The Baloch Race* by Longworth Dames, Charles Masson’s *Narrative of Various Journeys in Baluchistan, Afghanistan, the Panjab*, and Huges’s *The Country of Baluchistan*. These accounts provide ample detail about the history and culture of the Baloch people and land. What is not clear is that how much of these books are reincarnation of the Baloch oral history.

104 For details see, Longworth Dames, *The Baloch Race*, (California: University of California, ND)
Baloch scholars have also written on the history of the people and the land of Balochistan. The most important and authoritative work is by Gul Khan Nasir who wrote a book on the history of Balochistan in two volumes.\textsuperscript{105} Other notable works are \textit{Baloch a Nation} and \textit{History of Baloch Race} and \textit{Baluchistan} by Sardar Khan Baluch. Another important nationalist account of the history of the Baloch race and land is Khuda Bukhsh Marri’s \textit{Searchlight on Balochs and Baluchistan}. These books although written under the nationalist zeal, provide vital information not only about the history of the people and the region but also what they view as injustices done to them by various groups and states. One can derive a nationalist narrative out of these works. A most recent and important work in this group of literature is Malik Siraj Akbar’s \textit{The Redefined Dimensions of Baloch Nationalist Movement}.\textsuperscript{106} A collection of Malik Siraj Akbar’s articles about the recent developments in Balochistan and interviews of prominent Baloch nationalist leaders, this book is a very important source of Balochistan’s contemporary history.

Paul Titus’s edited volume which brings together the works of different scholars from various part of the world on Balochistan focuses on ethnicity and change in the post-colonial Balochistan. This is a significant contribution to Baloch studies and deals with various aspects of Baloch social life and how Baloch identity and ethnicity has evolved.\textsuperscript{107}

Akbar S. Ahmed’s \textit{Pakistan Society: Islam, Ethnicity and Leadership in South Asia} provides vital information about the centrality of sardars in the the Baloch tribal system.

Taj Mohammad Breseeg’s \textit{Baloch Nationalism, Its Origins and Development} and Paul Titus’ \textit{Knights, Not Pawns: Ethno-Nationalism and Regional Dynamics in Post-Colonial Balochistan}, and Martin Axman’s \textit{Back to the Future} bring out one very important point regarding the Baloch psyche that since the arrival of British in

\begin{thebibliography}{10}
\bibitem{105} Gul Khan Nasir, \textit{Tariikh-e-Balochistan}, (Quetta: Qalat Publishers, 2005)
\bibitem{106} Malik Siraj Akbar, \textit{The Redefined Dimensions of Baloch Nationalist Movement}, (___ : Xlibris Corporation, 2011)
\bibitem{107} Paul Titus, ed., \textit{Marginality and Modernity: Ethnicity and Change in Post-Colonial Balochistan}, (Karachi: OUP, 1996)
\end{thebibliography}
Balochistan and how they established their foothold in Balochistan till the creation of Pakistan in 1947, Baloch have known nothing but intrigue and subterfuge on the part of outsiders. Pakistani leadership, alleged Khan Ahmad Yar Khan in his Inside Baluchistan followed the same pattern. Ahmed Yar Khan was the last Khan of Kalat. He was in the position to provide an authoritative account of the Baloch history, British involvement in Balochistan and Kalat’s accession with Pakistan. His book leaves much to be desire in all three aspects. An important point which Martin Aymann’s book brings out is that the Baloch have, throughout history, worked really hard to stay independent.109

The existing literature on ethnic conflicts in Pakistan does not adequately address the question of ethnic minorities and their circumstances in the four provinces of the country. Rounaq Jahan had addressed this issue during the period leading up to the breakup of Pakistan in 1971 in her seminal work Pakistan: Failure in national integration110 but barring few exceptions, similar research does not exist on the areas of what is now known as Pakistan. Professor Tahir Amin’s Ethno-National Movements in Pakistan: Domestic and international Factors111 and Farhan Hanif Siddiqui’s The Politics of Ethnicity in Pakistan: The Baloch, Sindhi and Mohajir Ethnic Movements, are noted exceptions.112 Professor Amin is of the view that ethnopolitical conflicts and movements are manageable. Analyzing the emergence of Sindhi, Pashtun and Baloch ethnopolitical movements, he argues that they have emerged due to the failure of the centre to incorporate the leadership of these movements into the decision-making set-up. One of the main conclusions of Professor Amin’s book is that power sharing at national level is the best solution to ethnopolitical movements.

111 Tahir Amin, Ethno-National Movements in Pakistan: Domestic and international Factors, (Islamabad: Institute of Policy Studies, 1988)
Dr. Siddiqui has used three case studies to study ethnic conflicts in Pakistan. According to him, Sindhi nationalism during the 1980s evolved in a rural setting, Baloch nationalism during the 1970s in a tribal setting and the Mohajir movement during the 1990s in an urban setting. He argued that in understanding an ethnic conflict the environment in which the conflict arises could not be ignored. Other notable works are Adeel Khan’s Politics of Identity Ethnic Nationalism and the state in Pakistan, Rakisits’s National integration in Pakistan : the role of religion, ethnicity and the external environment and Centre-Province Relations in Pakistan Under President Zia: The Government's and the Opposition's Approaches, Jetley’s Ethnicity and nation-building in South Asia: case studies of the Baluch movement in Pakistan and the Khalistan movement in India and Akbar S, Ahmed’s The Thistle and the Drone: How America’s War on Terror became a Global War on Tribal Islam.

Selig Harrison’s In Afghanistan’s Shadow (1981) is a significant work on Baloch nationalist movement. However, his focus on democracy does not extend to taking into account the local traditions and understanding of ideas of democracy. As the title indicates the book was written in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. It provides vital information up till the early 1980s.

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116 Dr Jetly Rajshree, *Ethnicity and nation-building in South Asia: case studies of the Baluch movement in Pakistan and the Khalistan movement in India*, (PhD Australian National University, 1999)

Mahnaz Ispahani’s Road and Rivals provides detail about the strategic significance Balochistan held for the Americans and the Soviets during the cold war. It also provided data about the developmental projects in Balochistan under taken by the government of Pakistan especially in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.\textsuperscript{118}

Among the most recent works on the region and Pakistan, Professor Akbar S. Ahmed’s\textsuperscript{119} *The Thistle and the Drone* provides a detailed analysis of the clash between General Musharraf and Nawab Akbar Bugti in the chapter *Musharraf’s Dilemma: Balancing Center and Periphery*. The scope of Professor Akbar S. Ahmed’s book is wide and deals with issues such as war against terror and its effects on Muslim tribal societies globally. Within this spectrum, he has discussed the political developments in Balochistan and the rise of insurgent violence. The chapter is useful because it provides a detailed expose of Nawab Akbar Bugti’s family and the notion of tribal honor.\textsuperscript{120}

However, there is hardly any literature which looks at the ethnic conflict in Balochistan in detail investigating its causes and implications, and other related questions such as the relationship between the Baloch and other ethnicities such as the Pashtun, Sindhis and the Punjabis residing in Balochistan. Even on the question of Balochistan-Islamabad relations, there is almost nothing available. One can find mention of this in books on the history of Pakistan such as Cohen’s *The Idea of Pakistan* and Talbot’s *Pakistan a Modern History* or chapters in books such as Amin’s\textsuperscript{121} and Siddiqui’s.\textsuperscript{122} Since the beginning of the current insurgency, a number


\textsuperscript{119} Ibn Khaldun Chair of Islamic Studies at American University in Washington, D.C, a non-resident Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution; and a Visiting Professor at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, M.D. where he was the First Distinguished Chair of Middle East and Islamic Studies. Professor Ahmed served in the Government of Pakistan as a senior civil servant and was Pakistan’s High Commissioner and Ambassador to the U.K. and Ireland. He is an internationally recognized authority on Islam and tribal societies including Balochistan.


\textsuperscript{121} Tahir Amin, *Ethno-National Movements in Pakistan: Domestic and international Factors*, (Islamabad: Institute of Policy Studies, 1988)
of Pakistani and foreign scholars have written about Balochistan conflict with particular focus on the current insurgency and its causes. This body of literature can easily be divided into two sections: One, which blames Islamabad for the failure of Balochistan’s integration into the state, second, which focuses on the Baloch society, sardari system and culture as the main reason behind the crisis in Balochistan. The first set includes writers such as Selig Harrison, Frederic Grare and Tarique Naizi who consider Islamabad as the main reason for the problems as well as the on-going insurgency in Balochistan. Selig Harrison believes that the failure of Bhutto government in giving provincial autonomy to Balochistan resulted in insurgency in 1970s.123 Harrison ignores what was happening in the internal politics of Balochistan in 1970s and even today. Expropriation, marginalization, and dispossession of the Baloch by the centre, according to Frederic Graré’ are the reasons for the resurgence of Baloch nationalism.124 Robert Wirsing is of the view that the main reason for the conflict between Islamabad and Balochistan is the ownership of the resources as the expropriation of the natural resources is the biggest grievance of the Baloch.125

Abid Husain Shah represents the views of the second set. According to him, the internal politics and the sardari system of Balochistan are the main reason behind Balochistan’s problems. He lists five major reasons for the 1973 insurgency: Baloch demands for a separate state, the Influence of the tribal system, economic causes unjustly inflated by the sardars, the tribal sardars, and the influence of foreign governments.126 In his thesis, Abid Hussain Shah totally ignored the policies of then Prime minister, Z.A. Bhutto and how he refused to grant Balochistan provincial rights and dismissed the provincial government. Shah further argued that the tribal


126 Abid Hussain Shah, *The Volatile Situation of Balochistan - Options to Bring it into Streamline* (Masters, Naval Postgraduate School, 2007)
organization of the Baloch is a great contributor to the current problems in Balochistan.

Justin Dunne also looked at the relevance of the Baloch sardars to their political problems and the cultural divide between the Baloch and the Punjabis and how this has been used by the sardars to influence the political landscape of Balochistan.\(^{127}\) The sardari system in Balochistan has been a focus of a number of anthropological studies. Akbar S. Ahmed, Paul Titus, Selig Harrison, and T. Hungerford Holdich all explain the Baloch leadership system.\(^{128}\) However what is missing is the role or impact of the sardari system on the Baloch conflict. A number of scholars and observers have also pointed out the possible role of India in supporting the insurgency in Balochistan.\(^{129}\) However there is no serious analysis of this possible angle of the Balochistan conflict.

CONCLUSION

This chapter argues that despite a number of theories explaining the reasons and causes behind the occurrence of an ethnic conflict, a number of questions still remain unanswered. Cases such as Bosnia and Rwanda continue to pose a challenge to the academics researching ethnic conflicts to provide explanations to what led to such violence? How was it justified? How the old rivalries were utilized to address

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new concerns and target new opponents? This chapter argues that to make a comprehensive attempt to seek answers to such questions, there is a need to take all accounts into consideration as a complete picture would only emerge after all narratives are pieced together.

The chapter further argues that all theories of how ethnic conflicts emerge, be it ancient rivalries, political interests, a sense of security dilemma or resentment have valid points yet they fail to cover all aspects of the immensely varied and dynamic phenomenon such as ethnic conflict especially regarding the timing of the eruption of ethnic conflict.

This chapter looks at the process of ethnic conflict with particular focus on violent ethnic conflicts. According to this chapter, this process of armed ethnic conflict occurs in three steps; ethnic awakening, ethnic politicization and ethnic violence. In all these steps, the ethnic elite play a decisive role. However, the ethnic elite, operating within the ethnic group utilize certain tools to achieve their objectives. The most important and effective tool which the ethnic elite employ is a narrative based on a collective memory of past injustices committed against the ethnic group. Another point raised and addressed in this chapter is why the masses follow their ethnic elite? Why the ethnic elite’s mobilization call resonates with them? Why they follow the call of their ethnic elite?

The chapter argued that the masses only respond to the mobilization call of the ethnic elite when an injustice is happening to the ethnic group. In their call for ethnic mobilization, the ethnic elite link the past injustices with the one happening at the time. This linkage results in a sense of enduring injustice among the group members. This sense of enduring injustice makes the masses mobilize.

CHAPTER TWO
BALOCH AND BALOCHISTAN THROUGH HISTORY

INTRODUCTION

The land which is at present known as Balochistan is among the earliest human settlements in the world. The site discovered by French archeologists in Mehergarh or Mehregan makes Balochistan the earliest civilization in the world predating both Egyptian and the Mesopotamian civilizations. At Mehergarh, the collected evidence indicate that it was occupied from 7000 B.C to 2000 B.C and its inhabitants were cave-dwellers and fishermen. Mehergarh is the earliest Neolithic site where first evidence of domestication of animals and cereal cultivation - wheat and barley were found and is also believed to be a centre for craftsmanship as early as 7000 B.C. Who were these people is not clear as there is no evidence or record available about these cave dwellers.133

Most of the historians are of the view that the origins of Baloch cannot be precisely established. It is called by them, an insolvable riddle of history. G. P. Tate believes that because of lack of historical evidence, the question cannot be finally disposed-off. Most popular explanation about the origin of Baloch is that they are a Semitic race and lived in Syria and migrated from Allepo to Kirman in present day Iran and from there finally to what is today called Balochistan. Another view is that they are Aryans from Asia Minor. Third explanation is that they are Arabs and around seventh century migrated to Mekran and Turan.

The land only came to be known as Balochistan when the British occupied / conquered the Brahuui kingdom. They called the newly conquered land not Brahuistain but Balochistan, which means land of the Baloch.

This chapter aims at providing an overview of the history of the Baloch and the land of the Baloch from the beginning up till the time when it was taken over by the British. As no verifiable historical sources are available, the reliance is on Baloch

sources. An important point in this regard is that the British colonial officers, spies and administrators have published vast literature on Balochistan, however, even that relies too heavily on Baloch oral tradition when discussing the history of the Baloch and Balochistan. The chapter begins with providing basic facts about its geographic locations, tribes, their types and locations. Next section looks at the Baloch tribal system, its core features, principles and players. Next section looks at the history of Baloch and Balochistan. In this section an attempt has been made to separate the information about the people and the land which appears in “outsider sources,” although it is too limited, from what the Baloch sources provide us. An attempt has been made to make sense of the relationship between the khanate of Kalat and the tribal sardars and the relationship between the khanate and the Afghan rulers. The last section sums up the chapter.

BALOCHISTAN: BASIC FACTS

The Pakistani province of Balochistan is the largest province of Pakistan in terms of geography. It covers 134,000 square miles of territory, yet it is the least populated province of Pakistan. Historically, Balochistan has been isolated from the great power struggle going on around it. The Baloch were left on their own most of the time and there was hardly any outside interference in Balochistan. Baloch tribes were the masters of their own destiny and territories. A Baloch ballad often quoted by the nationalist and other readers of Baloch history, described this sense of isolation in these words: *The lofty heights are our comrades, the pathless gorges our friends.*134 Balochistan’s only significance was that it was used as a route or a place to seek refuge by kings and princes on the run. The present significance that Balochistan enjoys is solely based on its strategic location and mineral wealth. As Selig Harrison once wrote, “were it not for its strategic location, long coastline at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, and potential for discoveries of oil and gas and other minerals, Balochistan may not have assumed the importance it currently enjoys.”135

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Balochistan, in terms of geography is divided into three parts: North, central and South Balochistan. The Baloch are divided into seventy main groups and more than four hundred groups. However, the most prominent and significant of the Baloch groups include Suleiman Baloch or the eastern Baloch and Mekran Baloch or the Western Baloch.

The Suleiman Baloch or the Eastern Baloch comprised tribes of Bugti, Buzdars, Dombkis, Kaheris, Khetrans, Magasis, Marris, Mugheris, Rind and Umranis. Mekran Baloch or Western Baloch comprised tribes of Dashti, Gichki, Kandai, Rais, Rakhshani, Rind, Sangu and Sangrani.136 Rind tribe, the direct

136 For details see, Muhammad Sardar Khan Baluch, History of Baluch Race and Baluchistan, (Quetta: Gosha-e-Adab, 1977), Ricardo Redaelli, The Father’s Bow The khnate of Kalat and British India, (Ilmastrale, 1997), Gul Khan Naseer, Tarikeh Balochistan, (History of Balochistan. In Urdu) (Quetta:
descendant of the eldest son of Mir Jalal Khan, the father of all Baloch and named after him, is considered to be the most prominent of the Baloch tribes. Other notable tribes are the Bugtis and the Marris.  

Brahuis constitute another significant group. Within the Brahis, there are three main groups: the core Brahui group includes tribes of Ahmadzai, Gurguari, Iltazai, Kalandari, Kambrani, Mirwari, Rodeni and Sumalari. The other two are the Jhalawan Brahui and the Sarawan Brahui. It was the Ahmadzais who established the Khanate of Kalat. This is perhaps the reason that within the Brahis, Ahmadzais enjoyed the highest prestige. The following map indicates the areas where various Baloch and Brahui tribes reside. A number of Pashtun tribes also reside in Balochistan.

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137 Ibid., also see, Deny Bray, *The Life-History of a Brahui*, (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1977)  

138 Deny Bray, Ibid.
There are a number of tribal feuds in Balochistan: Bugti vs Kalpars, Bugti vs Ahmedans, Bugtis vs Mazaris, Bugtis vs Raisanis, Gazinis vs Bejranis, Marris vs...
Loonis, Hameedzais vs Ghaibeizais, Rind vs Raisani and Suleman Khels vs Lawoons. Due to the tribal nature of the Baloch society, the emergence of the unified leadership of the Baloch is not possible. Every tribe and the tribal sardar primarily works for his tribe.

**Origin and development of the Baloch tribes and the Baloch political system**

The true origin of the Baloch is shrouded in mystery. The most commonly held view is that anything about the Baloch can only be stated with authority, when the Baloch started to migrate to what is at present known as Balochistan, from Iran in the eleventh century. These groups or bolaks comprised blood relatives. These bolaks roamed the land and earned their living from robbery, assault, looting and plundering the land and enslaving people. How effective and bold these bolaks were in their escapades, mostly depended on the leadership of the bolaks. A charismatic leader drew larger numbers and at times other bolaks under his leadership. The gathering of various bolaks under a common leadership gave birth to the Tuman. Unlike a bolak, a tuman was not homogeneous and consisted of a dominant bolak which constituted its main and several other bolaks.

In perhaps the most authoritative work on the Baloch tribes and history, Dames stated that the Baloch comprised forty to forty four bolaks. These bolaks evolved into five tumans: Rind, Lashari, Hot, Korai and Jatoi. These tumans derive their names from the direct descendants of Amir Jalal Khan, the father of all Baloch. These five tumans are considered to be the *cream de la cream* of the Baloch tribes.139

Barth emphasizes the role of partrilineality and honor in the Baloch tribal structure140 whereas Huges-Buller believes that the main pillars of Baloch tribal structure are the Shadi-ghum (Common good/ joy and sorrow/ grievance) and Khun Bha (blood feuds), shared history, place and identity.141 Looking at various works on Baloch tribal structure, one could sum up the main features of this tribal structure as the sense of a common identity, belonging, shared history and place and the need to

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maintain and retain the honor of the tribe. This is why an insult to an individual would be taken as an insult to the whole tribe and the whole tribe would share the agony and the joy of its individual members (concept of Shadi-ghum). Baloch tribal principle of honor emphasizes that a Baloch must fulfill its commitment, whatever might be the cost. This principle of honor should be kept in mind when looking at the battles, the Baloch have fought through history.  

Scarcity of natural resources such as water and pastoral lands resulted in these tumans to claim certain areas as their territories. Each and every member of the tuman contributed to whatever little economic activity that occurred and every member of the tuman had unlimited access to whatever pasture land and water resources tuman held in its possession.

Fred Scholz in his book described the structure of a Baloch tribe:

The amalgamation of several clans (takkar, paro), each in their turn consisting of subtribes (shalwar, phalli) which, yet again, were composed of families (pira, para, firqah) marked the organizational structure of the tribe (tuman, qom). Amongst the individual organizational units and their leaders there existed at the respective levels, a hierarchy determined by genealogy. A group that genealogically was not connected with the ruling class and unrelated to it, the lower class, the class of the dependents (hamsayahs), had associated itself with the thus organized and socially structured actual tribe, upper or ruling class (raj-o-kabila). This lower class was divided into three groups in accordance with its members occupations, and the social esteem the ruling class accorded those occupations: slave (Maratha, gadra, ghulam), traders, artisans, musicians (hindus, lohars, doms), and peasants, farmhands, shepherds (gosbi, khafi).  

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The Brahui, just like the Baloch were divided into several smaller Bolaks. Ahmadzai is considered the most prominent of the Brahui tribes. Mir Ahmad Khan I is often credited for bringing the Brahui tribes under some form of a joint organizational setup of Kalat. Nasir Khan I is credited to have converted this gathering into some sort of a loose/preliminary confederation. Nasir Khan I divided the Brahui tribes into Jhalawani (Low landers) and Sarawani (high landers). These Brahui tribes, following the rule of shadi-ghum, were obligated to provide military force to the Khan of Kalat Nasir Khan I, in case of a war. Nasir Khan I, like all following Khans of Kalat, paid homage to the ruler of Kandahar.

The whole tribe collectively shared the responsibility for the behavior of its individual members. Nina Swidler, in her seminal and widely quoted research on Kalat, quoted how a tribesman described this collective responsibility in the Baloch tribal society:

In our tribal law the whole family is responsible for a man’s actions, even the tribe is responsible, A man who absconded, his relatives were responsible, along with his chief, his tribe, his village. If anything took place in the old days … if there were tracks going to a village, the people of the village were accountable for them, to explain them or show that they had gone on to another area. If the tracks went on to the Rind’s (another tribal unit) village … we handed the tracks over to him. He either gave us the thieves or he showed us the tracks (leading out of the village) … Ultimately when the tracks got lost, those people had to produce the thieves or they had to pay the compensation.

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145 Ibid.
146 Nina Swidler, The Political Structure of a Tribal Federation: The Brahui of Balochistan,(PhD: Columbia University, 1969)
Baloch tribal culture, like most other tribal cultures in the world, considers loyalty and hospitality as part of its value system. The Baloch are fiercely independent and follow a traditional code of honor, the Rivaj. Rivaj has certain commonalities with the Pashtunwali (the traditional law of the Pashtun tribes). According to this code of honor, a Baloch could go to any length to maintain its independence and would be extremely suspicious of an outsider, who, a Baloch sees as a threat to his independence, provide unconditional sanctuary to any one requesting it and would provide the best possible hospitality and could go to any length to ensure security of his guest. However, when targeted would not settle down till he has achieved his revenge. Henry Pottinger, a British spy, who was sent to Balochistan in the nineteenth century to scout the area, wrote: “When they once offer, or promise to afford protection to a person who may require or solicit it, they will die before they fail in their trust.”

The main unit in a Baloch tribal culture is the tribe and tribe’s loyalty to its sardar (Chief of the tribe). Baloch tribes are governed by a tribal system/ Rivaj. This tribal system which is often mistakenly referred to as the sardari system follows a multi-tier leadership system: Motebars, Takkaris and the sardar. Motebars and Takkaris work under the sardar who is the overall chief of the tribe. The position of the sardar of the tribe is hereditary. And traditionally the eldest son of a sardar becomes the sardar. If for some reason, the eldest son could not be considered fit for the position, a council comprising motebars and takkaris would elect another sardar, mostly from other sons or close relatives of the deceased sardar.

The traditional justice system of the Baloch is the sardar and the Jirga. Within a tribe, a sadar is the final authority regarding any dispute and crime. The Jirga system in Balochistan has three tiers: local, joint and shahi. Local jirgas address local issues, joint jirgas handle inter-tribal disputes. In such jirgas, sardars of different tribes would sit together and reach a collective decision binding to all parties. In principle, such Jirga decisions would be respected as an over-all ruling related to a certain situation even by those sardars that were not part of this Jirga. Shahi Jirga, is the highest level, in which tribal sardars would take a decision which

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would be extremely important for the Baloch qom (tribe). It was a Shahi Jirga in which majority voted in favor of joining British Balochistan to Pakistan in 1947.

The sardar plays the most important and authoritative role in the Baloch tribal system. In other words, a sardar is the center of the Baloch tribal universe. However, a sardar is very much part of the tribe and both the sardar and the tribe are dependent on each other in a number of ways. Sardar’s income comes from various sources. One major source is the sardar land. Sardar also collected a tax called Malia on all types of items such as land produce and/or animal husbandry in the tribe. However, Maliya is not a universal tax as in many parts of Balochistan it is collected regularly whereas in others, its collection is occasional/sporadic. In Jhalawan (Low Lands) malia is an important and regular source of income for the sardar where as in Sarawan (High land), it is collected irregularly. Before the advent of the modern mode of transportation especially trains, the sardars also used to charge a fee for the caravans crossing through their territory. Sardars are also entitled to collect Shishak, an agricultural tax and Bajar, a tax collected at marriages and other festivities. In the past, sardars had to be static as well as mobile. The sardar’s camp included not only the sardar but also his staff and servants. Traditionally, a sardar’s public court is held daily. Tribesmen would bring in their cases, disputes and problems to the sardar. The sardar is bound by the tribal code to give all of them a proper audience and provide some solution to their problems. According to the tribal code, the sardar could not close the business of the day unless he has heard each and every one.

These issues and cases could range from property disputes, marriage settlement to theft. The sardar plays the role of a councilor, a mediator and a magistrate. Sardar uses the traditional Baloch code, the Rivaj and the Islamic law, the Sharia to work out the solution of these problems. Baloch tribesmen want their sardar to be authoritative, decisive and autocratic. Yet sardar is mostly a fatherly figure, a strict, no non-sense disciplinarian father but a father nonetheless. Professor Akbar S. Ahmed commenting on the centrality of the sardar in the Baloch tribal system stated: “The tribe is a self-contained world. At its centre is the Sardar or chief of the tribe. Tall, full-bearded, in flowing clothes and heavy turban, the Sardar is not unlike Sean

150 Hatu Ram, , Aziz Bugti, Tahrik-e-Balochistan,
Connery playing a tribe chief. He symbolizes Baloch custom and tribal tradition. Honor, hospitality, and bravery are displayed in his behavior. The tribe revels in his glory. The word of the Sardar is law, his authority total. In an area threatened by nature, and often, invading tribes, unity under the Sardar became the key to survival. The Baloch have a saying the Baloch will swear on the Holy Quran but never on the head of the Sardar.”

History of the Baloch and the Land of the Baloch

What exactly is the meaning of the word Baloch? Where the word came from? These questions could not be satisfactorily answered, at least not any more. One explanation, which has wide validity among the Baloch especially the nationalist Baloch is that Baloch was derived from Belus. Belus, was the title for the Babylonian kings. Nimrod, one of the most famous of the Babylonian kings was called Nimrod the Belus. Nimrod’s followers, according to Baloch historians, were called Belusis. These historians argue that belusis, in Arabic became Balos. Balos further corrupted into Baloch.

Throughout history, present day Balochistan has been identified as Macka or Mecka, Mackiya and Mackiyan, Gedrosia, Gedroshia or Gedrozia. Makoran or Makran was also used for Balochistan. Holdrich opined that actual word was Mahi Khoran (fish eaters) which corrupted into Makoran. Marco Polo referred to Balochistan as Kasmakoran or Kasehkoran. Moreover, not much is known about the earlier inhabitants of Balochistan. Greek historian Arian claimed that when Alexander the great passed through the present day Balochistan, two different groups of people Ichthyophagi and Oreitai lived there. We don’t know much about these people, especially whether there was any link between these people and the Baloch. One thing that stands out is that these people fought courageously to ensure their freedom. Something acknowledged by the generals in the Alexander’s army. This aspiration for maintaining freedom at all cost was something which these people definitely shared with the Baloch.

Later, Balochistan remained under the Mauryan dynasty, invaded by the White Huns and Saka. Sassanian dynasty ruled it for a period and was then taken over by the Hindu rulers of Sindh before falling to the Arabs.

Firdosi, in his epic Shahnama, described the Baloch as

An army of the Baloch & Kouch (Brahui).
bred and ready like Ewes.
They never turned their back to the battlefield.
They were armed to teeth - not even a finger uncovered.
Their brave heads could reach the glaring Sun

After the conquest of Iran, the second Muslim caliph, Omer ibn-ul-Khatab sent two scouting missions to Balochistan. Both of these scouting missions provided negative reports and stated that the area is of little strategic value and would be a logistical nightmare as a smaller force would not be able to conquer it mainly due to a strong resistance it would face from the locals and a larger army would require much greater logistical support than the strategic value of the area. However in the seventh century, Hajaj bin Yusaf’s geostrategic and geo-economics concerns resulted in Arab conquest of parts of Balochistan and Sindh. The Arab conquest of Balochistan introduced Islam in Balochistan. The people of Balochistan converted from Zoroastrianism to Islam. From 1559-1595, and then again from 1638-1708, Balochistan was under the Safavids. In between these time periods, Balochistan remained under the Mughals (1595-1638) and eventually under the Pashtun Ghilazis.

Baloch Narrative of Baloch History

Late Akbar Bugti, apart from being one of the strongest Baloch sardars, was also credited to be an authority on Baloch history. He was reportedly in possession of the largest and perhaps the oldest collection of Baloch poetry including the Daptar Shaar (Chronicle of Genealogies). He once opined that there is no need to glorify the Baloch past or link it to one great personality from history or another. He criticized those Baloch nationalist historians (Gul Khan Nasir, Inayatuallah, Taj Mohammad Breseeg and Malik Muhammad Saeed Dehwar etc.) that link the Baloch

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156 Breseeg, Baloch Nationalism.
157 For details see, Malik Hatu Ram, Tarikeh e Balochistan, (in Urdu) ( Lahore: Sange Meel, 2001)
to Babylon, or claim that the Baloch are the descendants of the god Baal and/ or Nimrod. He wrote:

I cannot understand why they shy away from the fact that the Baloch as a national group do not find mention in any history prior to the advent of the Christian era, and they never set up any empire nor made conquests of any consequence. At the most, they must have been simple nomads and pastoral people who led an uncomplicated life roaming the vast steppes of central Asia in search of sustenance. 158

However, Late Nawab Akbar Bugti was alone in presenting this simple and uncomplicated account of Baloch history. Most Baloch believed otherwise. Baloch poetry including the daptar Shaar that dates back to the time of Chakar, a legendary Baloch ruler (1479-1524 AD) described the Baloch as:

We (the Baloch) are followers of Ali, firm in faith and honor through the grace of the Holy prophet Lord of the earth. We are the offspring of Amir Hamza, victory rests with God’s shrine. We arise from Halab and engage in battle with Yazid in Karbala and Bampur, and we march to the town of Seistan. 159

One can infer from this passage that the Baloch or at least some of the Baloch were originally Shia. This fact is acknowledged by Rai Bahadur Hatu Ram. In his book on the history of Baloch, Haturam claimed that that was the case in the past but since 1800s, almost all of the Baloch are Sunni Muslims. 160 He however is silent on how exactly and when this conversion took place.

Mir Khuda Bux Bijnari Baloch claimed that the Baloch, just like the Kurds originated in Aleppo (Haleb) in Syria. The Kurds settled in present day Turkey, Iran

158 For details see Akbar Bugtis forward in Aziz Bugti, Balochistan (in Urdu) (Lahore: Fiction House, 1996)
159 Mir Khud Bakhsh Bijrani Marri Baloch, The Baloches through Centuries: History verses Legend, (Quetta; Mir Baloch, 1965)
160 Hatu Ram, 34.
and Iraq, whereas the Baloch moved south and eventually settled in the present day Pakistani and Iranian Balochistan.  

The Baloch historians emphasize the bravery of these Baloch and the epic wars they fought to defend their freedom and territory against the forces of the mighty empires of the time. For instance, the Baloch not only defended themselves against the advancing Sasanian forces during the reign of King Ardeshir but also raided deep into the Sasanian territory. One of the greatest battles of all times was fought between the Baloch and the mighty Persian Empire’s army during the rule of one of the greatest and mightiest Persian Kings: Anosheervan. According to Baloch sources, Anosheervan who was fed up with the continuous Baloch defiance against him personally led a Persian army against the Baloch. However, the Baloch historians does not shed much light on the actual fighting of this battle and there is almost no authentic and/or independent historical record of this event to ascertain the outcome of this “one of the greatest battles of all times.”

In the 15th century, Mir Chakar, arguably the greatest Baloch in Baloch history, who belonged to the Rind tribe, asserted and consolidated his position around the area of Kalat. According to the Baloch historians, Chakar the great founded first independent Baloch kingdom. According to them, Chakar’s kingdom included a vast territory and spanned from southern Afghanistan, present day Balochistan, parts of Sindh and Multan in Punjab. Chakar the great, according to Baloch sources ruled his kingdom from his capital in Sibi from 1487 till 1511. He died and was buried in Satygraha, present day Okara, in Punjab, Pakistan. Chakar’s era is highly romanticized by the Baloch nationalists but the fact of the matter is that Chakar spent most of his time in fighting a civil war with Mir Gohram of the Lashari tribe.

162 Gul Khan Nasir, Inayatuallah, Taj Mohammad Breseeg and Malik Muhammad Saeed Dehwar to name a few.
163 Gul Khan Nasir, Inayatuallah, Taj Mohammad Breseeg and Malik Muhammad Saeed Dehwar to name a few.
164 Gul Khan Nasir, Inayatuallah, Taj Mohammad Breseeg and Malik Muhammad Saeed Dehwar to name a few.
The rise of the Ahmadzais and the establishment of the Khanate of Kalat itself is a historical riddle. 166 Dehawars played an important role in the rise of the Ahmadzai from the very beginning.167 This alliance not only resulted in the rise of Ahmed Khan to a coveted position, it also provided him with the agricultural and economic resources and surplus which played a significant role in his rise as he used these resources to win allies. 168 In return of this support provided by the Dehawars, Ahmed Khan appointed a Dehawar as his chief minister.169 This practice continued for a long time.

Khan utilized these agricultural resources to expand his influence and alliance with other Baloch sardars. In exchange for a pledge of providing military support to the Khan in case of a war, the Baloch sardars were provided cultivatable land.

The British records indicate:

The Khan … gradually engaged the assistance of the chiefs of their kindred tribes in the neighborhood by giving them fiefs in Kalat. In return for these fiefs they were bound to furnish troops, in certain specified cases and numbers, for the aid of the Khan. This is highly significant, as although primarily entirely independent in their own territories, these chief’s became, doubtless, as regards these fiefs, quasi-feudal vassals of the Khan. By means of the troops so raised, the territories of the Khan were extended by conquest, such conquest being on behalf of the khan only, and for the affiliated tribes … thus bound together, and finding mutual cohesion essential against their powerful neighbors, Persia, Afghanistan, and Sind, the petty state of Kalat, the independent Baloch and Brahui tribes, and their joint conquests gradually became amalgamated into one feudal state under the authority of the Khan. The condition of this agreement, however, secured to the confederate chiefs practical self-

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168 Swidler, Kalat

169 Swidler, Kalat
government in their previously independent territory.  

With the passage of time, the Khan of Kalat managed to convert Kalat into a center of elite interaction by maintaining a lavish court. Baloch-Brahui coalition resulted in later khans despite being Ahmedzai Brahui able to claim to be Khan-e-Baloch. Nina Swidler claimed that with the advent of the Khanate of Kalat, this area upgraded from a borderland refugee area to chiefdom.

In 1740, Kalat formally accepted the sovereignty of Nadir Shah of Persia. Nadir Shah rewarded Kalat with the Kacchi plain. This further expanded Kalat’s agricultural resources. Nasir Khan I further refined Kalat’s administration. Under Nasir Khan, Kalat comprised two different types of areas. One that belonged to Kalat and the Khan of Kalat directly ruled it through his Naibs (deputies). He also established a proper administrative set up and appointed a prime minister and a council of sardars. Second area comprised of two provinces of Sarawan and Jhalawan.

Akbar Bugti commenting on Nasir Khan and Kalat stated:

Mir Nasir Khan (Nuri) set up a loose tribal confederacy on some parts of Balochistan. Most Balochi speaking people were never a part of this confederacy, for example: The Marri, Bugti, Buledi, Khosa, Bijrani, Sundrani, Mazari, Lund, Drishak, Leghari, Gishkori, Dashti, Ghulam-Bolak, Gophang, Dodai, Chanday, Taalbur, and a number of other smaller clans never vowed allegiance to the Khans of Kalat.

Nasir Khan established an army of 25,000 men and 1,000 camels. Nasir Khan initially paid tribute to Nadir Shah, however, Nadir Shah’s assassination in 1747,

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172 Axmann, *Back to Future*, p 21
173 Nina, *Kalat*
174 Akbar Bugti’s forward in Aziz Bugti, *Balochistan, Saksiyat key ayney mian*, 6
freed him. But this turned out to be just a change of masters for Nasir Khan. Ahmed Shah Abadali who provided Nasir Khan refuge for almost nine years when as a young boy, Nasir Khan was exiled from Kalat by his step brother and the then Khan of Kalat, established a new kingdom of Afghanistan. Nasir Khan accepted his suzerainty. Nasir Khan agreed to ensure the safe passage and security of the Afghan trade caravans, pay Rs. 2000 annually to Abdali and station and maintain 1,000 strong military contingent at Kandahar. This had a number of favorable outcomes for Kalat: Kalat received a vast area including Quetta and Mastung. In 1758, after a brief clash, both Nasir Khan I and Ahmed Shah Abdali negotiated a new treaty. Under the new treaty, Kalat would provide military contingent to Afghanistan in case of a war. Nasir Khan also agreed that Kalat would not support or provide shelter to any anti-Abdali element. Ahmed Shah Abdali, on his part, agreed not to interfere in Kalat’s internal affairs, provide financial support and return all captured areas of Kalat on these favorable terms. Nasir Khan I readily accepted Abdali’s suzerainty and Afghanistan as the dominant power. As per the tribal tradition, to further strengthen the relationship, Nasir Khan’s brother’s daughter was married to Ahmed Shah Abdali’s son.\footnote{Gul Khan Nasir, \textit{Tarikh-i-Balochistan}, (Qeutta: Kalat publishers,2005), 110-114.}

Baloch nationalists\footnote{See the works of Gul Khan Nasir, Inayatuallah, Taj Mohammad Breseeg and Malik Muhammad Saeed Dehwar for this.} claimed that this was a treaty signed by two equals, a claim, Nina Swidlers, a leading historian of Kalat disagreed with.\footnote{For details see Nina, \textit{Kalat}}

After securing his position with Afghanistan, Nasir Khan focused his energies to his southern neighbors and one by one captured and incorporated Makran, Les Bela and Kharan into Kalat. Nasir Khan died in 1795. Unfortunately for Kalat, his successors could not match Nasir Khan’s charisma or his achievements. Kalat plunged into a civil war between several claimants to Kalat’s throne. Different claimants were supported by various tribal sardars. A number of sardars, who previously pledged allegiance to Kalat, defected. A number of areas of the khanate of Kalat were captured or reclaimed by Sindh and Afghanistan. Kalat’s financial and

\footnote{Gul Khan Nasir, \textit{Tarikh-i-Balochistan}, (Qeutta: Kalat publishers,2005), 110-114.}
\footnote{See the works of Gul Khan Nasir, Inayatuallah, Taj Mohammad Breseeg and Malik Muhammad Saeed Dehwar for this.}
\footnote{For details see Nina, \textit{Kalat}}
trade domination was severely diminished as much of the trade activity shifted to Karachi. Trade caravans, due to increased threat and multiple taxing rerouted.\textsuperscript{178}

Akbar Bugti wrote:

Nasir Khan started his career in the service of Nadir Shah of Persia as a “Yasawal.” Later, after Nadir Shah had been assassinated, he shifted to Ahmad Shah Abdali, who had also been in service of Nadir Shah before his death. Ahmed Shah appointed Nasir Khan to the gadi of Kalat in place of his elder brother, and Ahmed Shah remained as a loose suzerain to whom Nasir Khan ever remained loyal. Soon after Nasir Khan’s death, his confederacy almost immediately fell back into anarchy, and the powers of his successors as rulers diminished even more rapidly than Nasir Khan had augmented it.\textsuperscript{179}

Khanate of Kalat’s checkered relationship with the tribal sardars

The Khan of Kalat always had a checkered relationship with the Baloch sardars. In the court of the Khan of Kalat, sardar of Sarawan sat to Khan of Kalat’s right and sardar of Jhalawan to his left. The hierarchy of the sardars was clearly indicated by the presents given to them by the Khan of Kalat. Zarakzai sardar would receive a Kashmiri shawl, one length of Brocade, a horse with silver harness and a dagger with a golden hilt. Mengal sardar would also receive all these items except the dagger where as a Bizenjo sardar would only get a shawl and brocade. When an influential sardar would die, Khan would personally visit the grieving family for condolences, whereas, on the death of a minor sardar, the khan would send his son or a representative for condolences.

Khan of Kalat’s army comprise of a dasta khas (special regiment), dasta Sarawan (regiment of Sarawan) and dasta Jhalawan (regiment of Jhalawan). Dasta Khas comprised soldiers of Khan’s own Brahu tribesmen numbering 1,750 whereas the dasta Sarawan and dasta Jhalawan were provided by sardars of Sarawan and

\textsuperscript{178} Nina, \textit{Kalat}
\textsuperscript{179} Akbar Bugti, \textit{Forward}, 7.
Jhalawan. Dasta Sarawan had 1750 tribesmen and dasta Jhalawan had 4800 tribesmen. These two dastas were part of the ghami lashkar. Each dasta was further subdivided into sections Palu Sherik (partners).

One twelfth of these ghami lashkar was permanently stationed at Kalat and was maintained by the Khan of Kalat. This group was known as the Saan. These troops were loyal to their sardars and not to the Khan of Kalat. Charles Masson, a British soldier and spy, who visited Kalat, witnessed a clash between a group of Saan soldiers and soldiers loyal to the Khan of Kalat. Masson’s assessment was that Saan soldiers were ill trained, under disciplined and of a questionable loyalty.\textsuperscript{180}

Khan of Kalat might have had a lavish court attended by most of the sardars yet the Khan of Kalat and his court had little relevance and no direct connection with the Baloch tribesmen. For these tribesmen, the tribal sardar was the authority and they were dependent on their tribal sardar. Hence joining Khan of Kalat’s court offered a number of benefits to the sardars but on ground, it further reinforced their hold on their tribes and tribal affairs.

CONCLUSION

Very little authentic and historically verifiable information about the Baloch and Balochistan is available. Most of the scholars of Baloch history agree that Balochistan for a very long time served as a corridor for invaders going to India or Afghanistan and returning from Afghanistan and India. Scholars like Axmann and Swidler suggest that prior to the establishment of the Khanate of Kalat in 1666 the country served primarily as a refuge area for kings and princes who needed a refuge or sanctuary after being uprooted from their thrones by their rivals.

Little is known of Balochistan before the fifteenth century. Therefore, one has to rely on the Baloch sources when discussing the history of the people and the area. The British have left considerable historical works on the various tribes of Balochistan. However, they have relied on Baloch oral tradition and mostly translated the Baloch historical narrative. Henry Pottinger and other such British spies, who have written earliest books and monographs on the Baloch history, have

nothing in their writings except what they heard from the people of Balochistan. The very name Balochistan was given by the British after they occupied the land.

Like most of the tribal groups, the Baloch too regard themselves as the descendants of a single eponymous and mythical ancestor, to whom they turn when they wish to extoll the valor and dignity of their own tribal group and lineage.\(^{181}\) One thing which clearly stands out by this overview is that the Baloch strongly believe that they once were part of a mighty empire and have fought and defeated other empires. It also brings to our attention the Baloch belief that Kalat was an independent state representing the Sovereignty of the Baloch and was equal to Afghanistan. It is claimed that the then Khan of Kalat and the ruler of Afghanistan Ahmed Shah Abdali negotiated as equal sovereigns. This constitutes first major point of the Baloch nationalist narrative that before the arrival of the British, Kalat (Balochistan) was an independent state.

During this period, the establishment of the confederacy of Kalat was indeed a significant development. Kalat operated at a level ahead of a tribe but it was still far away from attaining the status of a state.\(^{182}\) Despite the infighting and the internal fissure and instability after the death of Nasir Khan Nuri, had the British not intervened, there was a fair chance that, under a more assertive Khan, Kalat might have been able to inch towards statehood.\(^{183}\) However, Kalat’s internal conflicts, combined with the movement of Russia into Central Asia, led the British to intervene and initiate policies which froze the chiefdom. This will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

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\(^{182}\) Nina, *Kalat*

\(^{183}\) Nina, *Kalat*
CHAPTER THREE

BALOCHISTAN DURING THE BRITISH RULE IN INDIA

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, we saw how for the first time various Brahui and Baloch tribes came under the leadership of the Ahmedzais and established a tribal confederacy at Kalat. Although, it was not a state per se, but the emergence of a tribal confederacy in Kalat was an important step in the direction of a statehood. During the reign of Mir Nasir Khan Nuri, a significant number of Baloch were untied under his leadership. His tenure can rightly be called the golden era in the Baloch history but the unity faded after his death and civil war like situation started in the land of the Baloch where the khan of Kalat and the Baloch sardars were competing for influence and territory.

The warring Baloch tribes were not aware of a bigger threat looming on the horizon: the so-called rivalry or the great game between Russia, France and England. Afghanistan which was to be the center of this great power competition eventually dragged the land of the Baloch into the British area of influence. For the first time in history, the Baloch had to deal with an invader, who was not crossing through their land but wanted to stay and establish military posts and camps.

The initial British interest in Balochistan was purely geostrategic. The initial British policy towards Kalat was to strengthen the Khan of Kalat and provide full support to him so that he can control the sardars. However, soon the British realized that this policy is not working and under Sandeman, the British decided to actively engage the sardars. This policy resulted in strengthening the sardars immensely.

This period of Baloch history is very important in understanding the Baloch narrative. The nationalist Baloch historians claim that the British treated Kalat as an independent and non-Indian state. They claim that the British treatment of Kalat was similar to its treatment of Nepal.

184 Gul Khan Naseer and Inayatullah prime amongst them.
British policy and position, however, is different as it is demonstrated in this chapter. British policy makers in India considered Kalat as an Indian state at least from 1920s onwards but could not incorporate it into the British India due to administrative and political reasons. A number of British documents and statements point to this inconsistency in British policy. This failure in bringing clarity to its position on Balochistan created problems for Pakistan after 1947. Another important factor of the period under discussion is the role of Ahmed Yar Khan, the last Khan of Kalat. While he was loyal to his core to the British, he was also highly ambitious and wanted to restore the past glory, mostly how he perceived it, of Kalat and the Khan of Kalat.

This chapter covers the British involvement in Balochistan and analyzes how the British policy evolved in Balochistan. The chapter is divided into six parts: first part looks at the initial geostrategic concerns of the British and the place of Balochistan; second part looks at the various approaches adopted by the British to engage the Baloch leadership and the change in British perception and policy towards Kalat; third section looks at the Sandeman system and how it changed the British-Balochistan relations; fourth section looks at the appointment of Ahmad Yar Khan as the Khan of Kalat and how he started projecting himself as the king of the independent state of Kalat; final section before concluding the chapter would analyze the British position and debates about the status of Kalat, leased areas and the British Balochistan.

**BRITISH COLONIZATION OF INDIA AND THE GEOSTRATEGIC COMPETITION BETWEEN ENGLAND, FRANCE AND CZARIST RUSSIA**

Steam engine, arguably one of the greatest inventions of all time, made it possible for the European powers to voyage deeper into the sea and compete for naval supremacy. India, the so-called land of the spices was one of the destinations which at the time held almost mythical charm for the European admirals. By the time, the Portuguese and the Dutch reached India, who were the first to arrive in India, the golden era of the Mughals was inching toward oblivion. The English and the French followed the Portuguese and the Dutch and soon overshadowed them. The Europeans who arrived as traders established their East India companies and started trading. As the Mughal empire lost its prime and started to fizzle into a number of
smaller fiefdoms, these states or fiefdoms locked in disputes and rivalries. As these states were weak, almost all states aspired to win the Europeans as their allies so that they can share with them their much needed financial support and superior military might. The European companies were eager to oblige as they saw it as an opportunity to increase their influence in the Indian subcontinent.

This expanded the traditional rivalry between France and England into the Indian subcontinent as the French and the English East India companies struggled to win allies and compete for influence. Due to a shortage of European man power, the French initiated a program of military training for local recruits. The sepoys (soldiers) turned out to be an effective force and soon caught the eye of the local princes, who were willing to exchange land and capital to acquire French trained sepoys to guard their interests. This resulted in French gaining influence in most parts of the southern India. The prime example of this is Tipu Sultan, the most respected and feared British rival who was in alliance with the French. The British followed the French model and started training their own Sepoys.

A number of factors such as the seven years war (1756-63), British overall naval supremacy and effective leadership of Robert Clive almost eliminated the French threat to the British interest and presence in the Indian subcontinent. Clive effectively used his superiorly trained Sepoy force in the battle of Plassey (1757) and made England a dominating player in the Indian subcontinent.

However, the British also had to worry about another, more serious rival to their interest in the region: Czarist Russia. Lacking an all-weather port of its own, Russia since the days of Peter the Great (1672-1725), was desperately looking for an access to warm waters. After the Russian forces managed to conquer the khanates of Central Asia, it started sending diplomatic missions to Persia (present day Iran), Afghanistan, Sindh and Punjab (at that time under the rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh). The British forces in India viewed these developments as a threat to the British interest in the Indian subcontinent. When the Russians defeated the Persian force at Arpatch and signed the treaty of Fars with Iran, to counter the ever increasing Russian threat, the British approached the shah of Iran and offered him all types of aid and support against their common enemy; Russia. At the same time, the British officials in India reached out to Afghanistan. The Governor General of India
commissioned the governor of Bombay to approach Shah Shuja, the ruler of Afghanistan. The mission was successful and a treaty was signed in 1809. However, Shah Shuja was forced out as the ruler of Afghanistan and after struggling for some time to recapture his lost throne, he fled to Lahore in 1813. The British continued to court Shah Shuja and sanctioned a monthly stipend for him.

In 1838, a trilateral agreement was signed between the British government in India, Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Shah Shuja. According to this agreement, the British and Ranjit Singh agreed to help Shah Shuja regain the throne of Afghanistan in exchange of him accepting Ranjit Singh’s control over Peshawar and the areas currently part of the Pakistani province of Khyber Pakhtun Khawa and Kashmir. According to this agreement, the British raised an army known as the Army of Indus in support of Shah Shuja. According to the plan, the Army of Indus would attack Kabul and install Shah Shuja on the throne in Kabul. However, Both Ranjit Singh and Shah Shuja had their differences and Ranjit Singh withdrew his support from the plan and denied the Army of Indus the passage from his territory.

Desperate to find an alternative route for the Army of Indus to reach Afghanistan, General Keane decided to explore alternative routes via Sindh and Balochistan. By that time, the British had almost no official contact with Balochistan and their knowledge of Balochistan was limited and at best sketchy. Earlier as part of their strategy to contain the emerging French and Russian threat, the British sent expeditions to neighboring areas as it wanted to identify the areas which can be used as buffer states between the British India and Russia. Two such expeditions were sent to Balochistan. In 1809, Captain Grant was sent with the task to identify the possible route of an invading army from Persia. He scouted Makran and the surrounding area. In 1810, one year after the Grant mission, Colonel Henry Pottinger was sent to Kalat. Pottinger failed to understand the complex dynamics of the tribal Balochistan and was fascinated with the Khan of Kalat. His account of Kalat emphasized the centrality and sovereignty of the Khan of Kalat without any clear indication of the position of sardars. This was the understanding of the Baloch affairs

General Keane had, when he approached the Khan of Kalat for a passageway for the Army of Indus to reach Afghanistan through Balochistan.\textsuperscript{186}

Khan of Kalat Mir Mehrab Khan (1817-1839) at that time was struggling to consolidate his position with the tribal sardars when the British approached him for an agreement for the passage. An agreement was reached between the Khan of Kalat and the British on March 28, 1839. Although, the Khan was not happy in agreeing to acknowledge the sovereignty of Shah Shuja over him yet he had to accept this as a condition because he was under tremendous pressure in his constant struggle with the tribal Baloch sardars. Khan of Kalat agreed to facilitate the movement of the Army of Indus to Kandahar through Khangarh (later renamed Jacobabad), Dhadar, Bolan pass, Quetta and Khojak pass and provide supplies and protection to the army of Indus while it is on the move. In return, the British agreed to pay Mir Mehrab Khan an amount of 150,000 rupees. It was a much needed sum which would provide the Khan of Kalat, Mir Mehrab Khan a desperately needed support in his struggle against the sardars. However, what the British were not aware of was that the Khan of Kalat was not in total control and that there were Baloch tribes that operated independently and outside his control. When the British forces were passing through the Bolan Pass, they were attacked by the tribes of Kacchi and Bolan area. The British accused the Khan of Kalat of double crossing them and violating the treaty agreement. General Willshire besieged Kalat. The great Khan of Kalat, Mir Mehrab Khan, refused to surrender and stood against the British might and fought till his last breath in a heroic battle against the British forces which deserves a glaring mention in the annals of military history. After his death, the British occupied Kalat and installed a new and more amiable Khan.

On October 6, 1841, the British signed a new treaty with the new Khan of Kalat. According to the newly reached understanding, the British government in India would station British troops in Kalat, control its foreign relations and a British resident would oversee and conduct the business of the state of Kalat. Although, the Khan of Kalat was a mere figurehead yet even if he wanted to shed away with the British shackles, it would have been almost impossible as the British occupied neighboring Sindh in 1843 and Punjab in 1849. After further strengthening their hold

by occupying Sindh and especially Punjab, the British decided to make further
inroads into Balochistan as well as to minimize their too visible involvement in the
area. Despite being involved in the Balochistan and especially Kalat affairs, the
British were still operating under the assumption that the Khan of Kalat was an
independent and sovereign ruler.  

Under this assumption, in 1854, the British signed a new treaty with the Khan
of Kalat on May 14 at Mastung. Under this treaty, the British authorities in India
recognized the Khan of Kalat as an independent ruler and also recognized Khan’s
authority from south of Kalat to the Arabian Sea and Las Bela. The British also
promised to pay 50,000 rupees annually and to provide military training and
assistance in case of an invasion or attack on Kalat. In return, the British demanded
that the Khan of Kalat ensured that the Bugti and Marri tribes were reined in by the
Khan of Kalat. In exchange of this recognition, the Khan of Kalat pledged not to get
into an alliance with any British rival/adversary and facilitate the British and its
allies. The agreed subvention was doubled in 1862 by the British. The treaty was
revisited by both sides in 1863. According to the revised treaty, the Khan pledged to
ensure the safety and security of the British personnel and installations stationed in
the area. The British agreed to pay the Khan of Kalat Rs. 20,500 annually.

As the British got involved in the affairs of Balochistan, they continued to
treat the Khan of Kalat as the sole authority in the area, a policy which was ignorant
of the basic principles of the tribal federation and the role of sardars in it. Throughout
this period, the British supported and on occasions encouraged the Khans of Kalat
(Nasir Khan II and Khuddad Khan) to centralize power. The Baloch sardars viewed
the British policy and its support to the Khan of Kalat as an attempt to contain and
minimize their position and hold. As a consequence, the sardars started revolting
against the Khan. Soon, one group of sardars was fighting with the Khan of Kalat
and the sardars who were supporting the Khan against them. In this power struggle,
the khanate of Kalat and larger Baloch territory got increasingly anarchic. Khan of
Kalat, Mir Khudadad Khan, in his effort to assert his position and maintain the
balance of power, got more and more dependent on the British in his struggle against
the sardars. A closer look at the treaty of 1854 clearly illustrated the fact that under

187 Ann Kalayil, *British Relations with the Khanate of Kalat, Baluchistan, 1838-1882*, (PhD.,
University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1997)
this treaty the Khan of Kalat was answerable and accountable much more to the
British then his fellow sardars. As the British officials dealt with the Khan of Kalat
and with the political realities of the Baloch tribal politics, the romanticized account
of Pottinger, started to appear hollow. This led a few officers in the British
government in India to start questioning the wisdom of following the policy of
supporting the Khan of Kalat. The particular puzzle for the British was the
relationship between the Khan of Kalat and the sardars. Were the sardars mere rebels
or part of a confederation and a disgruntled part at that, who wanted their share of the
pie? Colonel Graham, the Commissioner of the Derajat and Colonel Phayre, the
political superintendent of the Upper Sindh Frontier, were not even sure whether
Balochistan was a confederacy or a state with a sovereign ruler. Henry Green wrote:

The Khan is absolutely powerless to exert unaided by
any physical force over his unruly Chiefs and their
followers: he can but rule by setting Chief against
Chief and the tribe against tribe, and he can only do
this with the assistance of money and by its use
maintaining on his side the most powerful of his
Chiefs. By depriving him of his subsidy we have
reduced him to equality with the weakest of his
Sardars. We have deprived the country of any
semblance of a head.188

Robert Sandeman, who later became one of the most effective and prominent
British officer who served in Balochistan, was of the view that the British authorities
in India have almost given up on the idea that even with their full support, the Khan
of Kalat can actually assert his authority and establish a stable and functioning
government in his state. The British tried everything, provided military aid and
financial support, and did everything else to raise his stature as a ruler yet nothing
worked. He proposed that the British policy should be reworked and the British
officials should take charge to ensure the safety and security of the British interests,
personnel and installations.

188Ann Kalayil, British Relations with the Khanate of Kalat, Baluchistan, 1838-1882, (PhD.,
University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1997)
Another reason for the increasing anxiety among the British officials in India about the instability in Balochistan was the traditional fear of a possible Russian encroachment into the area. The British authorities in India feared that once the Russians were successful in establishing themselves in these areas, it would be much easier for them to further spread into the settled areas directly under the British sovereignty and suzerainty. Due to this uncertainty of how to deal with their Balochistan problem, the British soon found themselves playing the role of a power broker and mediator between the Khan and the sardars. To address this uncertainty, the Baloch officials in India involved in dealings with the Baloch, met at Mithankot, an event, which came to be known as the Mithankot conference in February 1871.

The officials in attendance were clearly divided into two groups. According to one group spearheaded by Sir W. Merewether, chief commissioner of Sindh and Captain Harrison (Political Agent at Kalat), strongly voiced their view in favour of the Khan of Kalat and urged that the Khan of Kalat should be treated by the British as the sovereign ruler of Kalat and the sardars as his subjects. Merewether was totally against negotiating with the Baloch tribes and sardars directly and interfering in the internal affairs of Kalat and strongly advocated strengthening the Khan. The other group which included Colonel Graham, Colonel Phayre and Robert Sandeman and mostly represented the British government in Punjab with a noted exception of Col. Phayre, was of the view that the Khan of Kalat was just a head of a confederacy and that the British needed to actively and directly support the tribal leaders/sardars. The Mithonkot conference remained inconclusive as both sides failed to reach an agreement on what would be the correct course of action. Despite the fact that the Mithankot conference was inconclusive, as later events proved, the group that advocated reaching out to the tribes and working with them as well as the Khan of Kalat decided to approach the tribes. This difference in approach towards the Baloch

189 Axmann, op.cit.
resulted in a serious clash between Merewether and Phayre, who eventually lost his job when Merewether dismissed him for disobeying his orders.

Regardless of these developments, it became obvious that London was inclined towards exploring various options to address this policy dilemma. Robert Sandeman, who had experience of dealing with the Baloch tribes during his posting in Punjab, was tasked to go to Balochistan and prepare the ground for a further interaction between the sardars and the British government in India. Sandeman’s expedition to Balochistan failed to achieve desired results and he had to return to Punjab due to a fresh wave of tribal violence in Balochistan. Despite this, Sandeman managed to make contacts with several tumandars. Merewether strongly objected to Sandeman’s mission and accused him of operating beyond his orders or knowledge of the concerned authorities. This was only partially correct. Sandeman went to Balochistan with full knowledge and approval of the British government in India. However, he transgressed his orders and established or at least attempted to establish contacts with the tribal chiefs.

The viceroy of India, Lord Northbrook provided Sandeman one more opportunity to establish contact with the Baloch tribes. Armed with a letter from the viceroy of India, Lord Northbrook, Sandeman reached Kalat in May 1876. He presided a meeting in which the Khan of Kalat and the sardars voiced their grievances against each other. The Khan of Kalat and the Baloch sardars willingness to make Sandeman their arbitrator spoke volumes about who they thought was the true sovereign and authority in the area. In July 1876, Sandeman worked out the Mastung Settlement which on one hand, authenticated the Khan of Kalat’s status as the ruler of Kalat and increased his stipend, on the other, pressed the Khan to acknowledge the position of the sardars and address their grievances. Sandeman’s arbitration was accepted by both, the Khan of Kalat and the Baloch sardars. The acknowledgement of British ascendancy and its role as the arbitrator in disputes between the Khan and the sardars was perhaps the most important outcome of this agreement. This agreement reinforced the 1854 treaty between the then Khan of Kalat and the British. The success of Sandeman’s mission won him a number of accolades.
By the time of Sandeman’s mission to Balochistan, London was once again caught in its fear of Russian expansion into British areas of influence. British strategic planners in London envisaged the creation or identification of buffer states and/or areas to counter the perceived Russian thrust towards British India via Afghanistan. The British decision to follow the forward policy in Afghanistan and the idea of developing Buffer zones was one of the tasks given to the new viceroy of India, Lord Lytton. The significance of Kalat as one of the buffers could be gauged from what Lytton once said, “if, at length, we succeed in binding more closely to us the people of Khelat... We shall have added an additional bulwark to our Empire.”

As a consequence of the British forward policy and Sandeman’s effective penetration of Balochistan’s political and tribal affairs as demonstrated by his arbitration between the Khan of Kalat and the Baloch sardars cut the status of Khan to a mere ceremonial head of the state by reducing his status as nothing more than a tribal Sardar with sanguine ego193 and also indirectly sabotaged any chances of integration of the tribes into the state of Kalat and Khan of Kalat’s status as a independent ruler of Kalat.194 In 1877, the British administration in India transferred the administration of the Derajat to the Punjab government. This change brought a number of Baloch tribes; Buzdar, Khetran, Khosa, Leghari and Mazari under the administration of the Punjab government. In 1877, Robert Sandeman was appointed as the agent to the governor general at the newly established Balochistan Agency, headquartered at Quetta.

**Sandeman’s Policy towards Balochistan**

Sandeman, a Scot highlander himself, realized quite early in his career that to achieve and secure British interests in Balochistan, the British authorities would have to cultivate strong and effective relationship with the tribal sardars. This section points to the policy and its main points devised by Robert Sandeman to deal with the Baloch tribes especially the Baloch sardars. It also looks at the effectiveness of this policy in achieving the British interest in Balochistan and its effects on the Baloch tribe and how it brought Baloch sardars to the fore and made them in the process, the most effective and decisive factor in the Baloch tribal society.

Sandeman’s initial contact with the Baloch took place when he was working for the Punjab government. He was able to deal with them successfully. He then started making inroads and established contacts with the Baloch tribes in Balochistan. He convinced the Khetrans and Hasni tribes who had age long feud with the Kakars and Lunis, Pashtun tribes of Balochistan, to come under British protection. However, the high time of Sandeman’s interaction with the Baloch came when in 1879, he established contact with Marri and Bugti tribes and convinced them to tone down their activities and accept British officials as advisors.

As it was stated in the previous section, Sandeman belonged to the so-called Punjab group versus Sindh group in the policy debate about Balochistan. Sandeman’s sole concern was to uphold the British supremacy in the region. His primary concern in dealing with the Baloch tribes was to ensure the security of British imperial interests in Afghanistan and against the Czarist Russia. Sandeman argued that having a strong British presence in Balochistan would provide the British forces a strategic advantage in case they have to move into Afghanistan. Balochistan corridor would play an immensely important role in case of a war in Afghanistan. To ensure that Balochistan stayed peaceful and secure for such a movement, Sandeman advocated the creation of a community of interest with the Baloch tribes. According to him, as long as the British would address the interest of the Baloch tribes, these tribes would uphold British interest as their own.

Sandeman from his experience of dealing with the Baloch tribes while serving in the British government in Punjab understood the centrality of the sardar in the Baloch tribal system. He argued that once the British authorities established an understanding with the sardars and ensure them of its full support, these sardars would turn out to be excellent guardians of the British interest in Balochistan. To achieve this objective, Sandeman took several steps that clearly compromised the Khan of Kalat’s suzerainty and clipped his wings of already very limited power. The 1876 treaty as mentioned in the previous section, was one such instrument using which Sandeman not only ensured that the British are recognized as the arbitrator in any dispute between the Khan of Kalat and the sardars but also by default, lowered the status of the Khan to a level where the Khan and the sardars were to be treated at

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195 These terms are my own formulation.
the same level. He also managed to ensure that the British have a permanent military presence in Balochistan, expansion of railway and telegraph in to Balochistan.

Sandeman was successful in achieving most of the above because of an intelligent manipulation of the Baloch tribal culture. Quite early in his interaction with the Baloch tribes, he realized the centrality of sardars in Baloch tribal culture. The most important point of his policy was that he provided the Baloch sardars with the financial support, administrative functions, glamorous titles and the assurance of continued British support. These steps strengthened the position of a sardar within his tribe as well as in the Baloch tribal culture as he was no more accountable to his tribe and had other sources than his tribe to derive power, authority and support. Sandeman also introduced jirga (council of elders) to address and solve inter-tribal disputes. Over the years, it became an effective forum for the British to interact with the Baloch wherever and whenever there was a problem. The Baloch sardars also found it useful and this system of negotiation and mediation achieved wider acceptability. Sandeman also setup a Levy system in Balochistan as a local law and order body. According to Thornton, this system was primarily aimed at inculcating judicial responsibility among the tribesmen.\(^{196}\) The main purpose of the Levy force which was recruited from the Baloch tribes was to be the eyes and ears of the British authorities.\(^{197}\) The Levy force served a dual purpose; they were recruited from and served in their own tribal area, and were paid a stipend by the sardar who was provided a special levy fund by the British. This not only enhanced the stature of the sardar but also of the personnel of the levy force. At the same time, this provided the British political agent in Balochistan a financial leverage over the sardars as whenever the sardars failed to achieve desired results or tried to act independently, their levy fund was suspended.\(^{198}\)

The Baloch sardars prospered under the British administration. With the British support, they were politically empowered in their tribe and were no longer dependent on their tribe and tribal loyalty as they used to be in the past. They also used the Levy system to strengthen their position by appointing their family

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\(^{196}\) Thornton, *Colonel Sir Robert Sandeman*, op.cit.,


members, loyalists in the force and according to Redaelli, integrated the levy system with traditional tribal society. 199

These policy steps enhanced the role and status of the sardars in the Baloch tribal system. The levy stem, the introduction of the jirga also had long term effects on the Baloch tribal society and structure. This policy which later came to be known as the Sandeman system also redefined the nature of the relationship between the Khan of Kalat and the Baloch sardars. Unlike the earlier policy of the British authorities especially the Sindh group, spearheaded by Merewether that relied on the Khan of Kalat to achieve British interest in Balochistan, Sandeman’s policy reduced the status of the Khan of Kalat to a mere ceremonial head of a state completely in control of and run by the British. According to the administrative report of the Balochistan agency 1886:

The Agent to the Governor-General has practically taken the place of the Khan as head of the Baluch confederation. His Highness is still the nominal head; the Sarawan and Jhalawan chiefs still sit on his right hand and his left in the durbar as of old, and till he is invested by the Khan with the khilat or mantle of succession, a sirdar is not to be legitimized as the representative of his tribe. But in the essential questions of the nomination of sardars, the summoning of jirgahs for the settlement of inter-tribal disputes, and the general preservation of peace in the country, the Agent of the Governor-General is recognized all over Baluchistan as having taken the place of the Khan, and his mandate naturally commands a great deal more respect and obedience than ever did that of His Highness. 200

On 29 January 1892 in Las Bela, Sandeman passed away after a short illness. By the time of his death, he was successful in securing the British interests in

199 Redaelli, Father’s Bow, 62-74.
200 Government of India, First Administrative report of the Baluchistan Agency for 1886 (Lahore: Combine Printers, 1988)
Balochistan. The effects of his policy towards the Baloch and Balochistan were interminable. It transformed the Baloch tribal system and almost after 110 years of his death, his model of dealing with the tribesmen of Balochistan, the so-called Sandeman system was considered perhaps the most effective case of dealing with a tribe. In the post 9/11 world, there was a renewed interest in understanding the Sandeman system and perhaps implement it.

However, by the time Sandeman died, despite the fact that he achieved British interests in Balochistan; views were divided about him and his methods. This division of opinion indicated the existence of personal and professional rivalries among the British authorities in India and also of a persistence of policy confusion on how to deal with Balochistan. Sandeman system might have been able to silence the likes of Merewether, but they were not completely sidelined. A number of British officers had not so favorable view of Sandeman and his way of dealing with Balochistan. Henry Mortimer Durand, the foreign secretary, for instance stated “it seems impossible to make him ever understand that Balochistan is not his private property. His attitude always seems to me to be rather that of a suspicious native chief than that of a British officer.” Later, Durand accused Sandeman of being the real danger to British interest and working beyond the British foreign office’s control.

An important development which took place in 1895 was the demarcation of the border between Balochistan and Afghanistan. In 1895, a Baloch-Afghan commission was established to finalize the demarcation of the international border between Balochistan and Afghanistan. This commission under the chairmanship of Colonel McMahan worked on extending the international border, part of which covered Afghanistan and NWFP was demarcated by Durand and was named after him. The part of the border between Afghanistan and Balochistan was named after McMahan and was called the McMahan line.

At the turn of the 20th century, Balochistan was divided into four parts:

1. British Balochistan
2. Agencies
3. Tribal Areas

4. Khanate of Kalat, Kharan, Las Bela and Makran

As the name indicated, British Balochistan comprised the area that was directly administrated by a chief commissioner representing the British government in India. It included the areas it acquired under the treaty of Gandermak of 1879.

Agencies included Quetta, Bolan and Chagahi. These were the areas which the British acquired on lease from the Khan of Kalat due to the strategic significance of these areas. Bolan was strategically a very important passage route which the British had to keep under their control as it would be the key to any military expedition to Afghanistan. The area acquired through the treaty of Gandarmak: Zhob and Loralai also constituted agency areas. The agent of the governor-general of India was the administrative head of agency territories.

The Marri and Bugti areas comprised the tribal area. This was the most difficult and delicate area for the British to handle as the Marri and Bugti tribes were fiercely independent. Here the British control was exercised indirectly without any provocation to the Marris and Bugtis.

The states comprised Kalat, Kharan, Las Bela and Makran. Out of these, Kalat was the most important state with territorial claims on the remaining three states. Here the British retained some kind of ceremonial political setup in the sense that these states had their rulers and government despite the fact that the real power and decision making authority was held by the British.

Soon after the beginning of the Great War (World War I), the Khan of Kalat and the Baloch sardars assured the British authorities in India of full support to the British forces and the British war effort. The Khan of Kalat contributed handsomely to the war relief fund. The Khan of Kalat also as a gesture of support offered the British, his Kalat and Las Bela camel crop and also fully supported and encouraged the British policy of recruitment from Balochistan, a fact fully appreciated and acknowledged by the British authorities in India. The administrative report of Balochistan (1917-18) noted the efforts of the Khan and the sardars in this regard.
The report stated that most of the sardars responded positively to the British authority’s call for recruitment.\textsuperscript{201}

During this period, there were a number of uprisings in Zhob, Qila Saifullah and Loralai area. However, the views were divided on the reasons and causes for the emergence of these uprisings as a number of British sources linked these uprisings with the situation in Afghanistan and especially the third Afghan war (1919).

The Marri and Bugti tribes were of particular concern for the British authorities in India. The British were worried that the Bugtis and Marris would create trouble and revolt against them. Serious troubles occurred in Jhalalwan (1915-1916) and in Marri and Bugti area (1918). There were British intelligence reports about the presence of German spies in Afghanistan and Balochistan. The death of two British officers in Makran in Balochistan was attributed to these German agents.

To counter the ever-increasing German threat whom the British authorities in India believed were considering invading India via Balochistan, Brigadier Dyer\textsuperscript{202} was sent to Balochistan to access the nature and scope of the threat and possible counter measures.\textsuperscript{203} However, as it turned out, most of the British intelligence reports were incorrect. Yet Brigadier Dyer’s mission to Balochistan was successful, as he managed to make useful contacts and inroads into Balochistan with the help of Baloch tribesmen.\textsuperscript{204} However, the biggest satisfaction for the British authorities in Balochistan and India came at the end of the war and during the post war period, when the whole of India was going through a frantic Khalifat Movement; Balochistan remained totally aloof and completely unaffected by this movement.

**KALAT’S GROWING ADMINISTRATIVE QUANDARY**

In Balochistan, the increasing instability and administrative mismanagement in the khanate of Kalat presented a challenge for the British. One March 29, 1893, the nominal Khan of Kalat, Mir Khudadad Khan was arrested by the British


\textsuperscript{202} General Dyer, *Balochistan key sarhadi chapa maar*, translated by Mir Gul Khan Nasir (in Urdu) (Quetta: Nisa, 1990)

\textsuperscript{203} General Dyer, *Balochistan key sarhadi chapa maar*, translated by Mir Gul Khan Nasir (in Urdu) (Quetta: Nisa, 1990)

\textsuperscript{204} General Dyer, *Balochistan key sarhadi chapa maar*, translated by Mir Gul Khan Nasir (in Urdu) (Quetta: Nisa, 1990)
authorities and was kept captive along with most of his family members at Pishin. He remained under captivity till his death almost fifteen years later on May 21, 1907. The British appointed Mir Mahmud Khan II as the new Khan. This Khan of Kalat had no interest in the affairs of the state and remained confined into Miri, the traditional/official residence of the Khans of Kalat. He had a weird personality and suffered from a mania of collecting stuff and then destroying it. During this reign, the administration of Kalat was completely run by the agent to Governor General of the British India. Nawab Sir Mir Shams Shah who was appointed Wazir-e-Azam (Prime minister) by the Khan of Kalat Mahmud Khan in later years of his so-called rule but was later sacked by Mir Azam Khan, who succeeded Mahmud Khan as the Khan of Kalat. Mir Mahmud Khan died on November 2, 1931. Mir Mahmud Khan’s reign as the Khan of Kalat was equally erratic and inefficient. As it turned out, the Khanate of Kalat was increasingly becoming ungovernable.  

It became clear to the British that their objective of having a politically stable and secure Kalat that is capable of providing a stable base for the British forces in British India’s western borderlands could not be achieved unless some drastic measures were taken to improve the situation. The policy confusion of the British authorities on Kalat and Balochistan persisted. With the political developments in the Indian subcontinent and the emergence of political activities in Balochistan, a group of British officers were of the view that the British government in India had to revise its treaties with Kalat and introduce administrative reforms.

Edward Wakefield was appointed as Kalat’s first British Wazir-e-Azam (prime minister). His appointment was an indication that the British authorities in India were not happy about the way the state was run. This was rather ironic, in keeping with the fact that since the sacking and imprisonment of the then Khan of Kalat, Mir Khudadad Khan in 1883, the political agent to the governor general of India was running the state as almost a de facto ruler of Kalat. 206 Another important point that emerged from Wakefield’s appointment was that the so-called Sandeman system could no longer resolve all the issues faced by the British in Balochistan. Even Wakefield expressed this view when he wrote:

205 Wakefield, Past Imperative, 109-12, 134.

206 Wakefield, Past Imperative, 109-12.
Sir Robert Sandeman, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, had temporarily reconciled ancient enmities and established a modus vivendi for the Khan and the sardars. But the maladministration of recent years had placed too great strain on the Sandeman compromise. The old system had broken down, and some new relationship between the Khan and the sirdars had to be established. 207

The Appointment of Ahmed Yar Khan as the Khan of Kalat

After the death of the Khan of Kalat, Azam Jan, his second born Ahmed Yar Khan was appointed as the new Khan of Kalat on 10 September 1933. He remained the Khan of Kalat till 1948 when the Khanate of Kalat acceded with Pakistan. Unlike the previous Khans of Kalat, the British authorities had closely followed Ahmed Yar’s upbringing and played a role in training him for his future duties. He at one point of time served as an intelligence officer in the Levy forces of Balochistan.208 His loyalty to the British throughout this period remained unquestionable yet a number of British officers considered him to be fickle, vacillating and easily influenced. Wakefield who was the Wazir (prime minister) at the time of Ahmed Yar’s appointment as the Khan, described him as fickle and vacillating to a degree and that due to this reason, he would never become a good and strong ruler.209 According to Wakefield, Ahmed Yar Khan could be easily dominated and influenced and swiftly changed his opinion. His loyalty to the British, according to Wakefield was the only constant factor.210 Agent to Governor General Carter agreed with Wakefield’s assessment. He wrote:

(He) has yet little experience of government and it would be wrong to disguise the present fact that he is

207 Wakefield, Past Imperative, 109-12
208 For details see; Zahid Chaudhry, Pakistan ki Siyasi Tareekh, volume 4 (in Urdu) (Lahore: Idera Mutaleya—e-Tarekh, 1994), vol.4
209 Redaelli, Father’s Bow, 118; Axmann, Back to the Future
210 Axamann, Back to the Future, 82.
of a somewhat vacillating character and liable to be swayed by the last opinion or advice offered to him.\textsuperscript{211}

Regardless of these views, Ahmed Yar Khan was educated and intelligent enough to soon realize the loopholes in the British legal position on Kalat. He understood that the treaties which the British authorities in India have signed with his predecessors provide him enough space to maneuver and assert his position as the Khan of Kalat. This was exactly what a group of British officers in India assumed would happen and suggested that the British should revise and sign a new treaty with Kalat. Axamann in his book argued that Ahmed Yar Khan’s dissatisfaction regarding his entitlement as the Khan of Kalat soon became obvious. One year after Ahmed Yar’s appointment as the Khan of Kalat, Frederick Squire, Political Agent of Kalat wrote in November 1934, “the present Khan after waiting a year to find his feet discovers that he does not know where to put them.” \textsuperscript{212} Ahmed Yar Khan in his autobiography wrote:

\begin{quote}
The Agent to the Governor-General in Balochistan … the administrative head of Kalat. The Khan-e-Baluch functioned merely as a figure head with no powers at all. He was, as it were, a mechanical contraption which could function as an instrument by putting his signature on the dotted line on orders issued by the political agent, who also functioned as the prime minister (i.e vezir of Kalat) … The Khane-Kalat was the head of state merely on paper.\textsuperscript{213}
\end{quote}

Ahmed Yar Khan was aware that if he wanted to assert his position as the Khan of Kalat, he needed the support of the Baloch sardars. Historically, the Khan of Kalat provided the Baloch sardars with financial subsidies in return of their support when required. Since the second Anglo-Afghan war (1878-1880), the British

\textsuperscript{211} Axamann, \textit{Back to the Future}, 82.
\textsuperscript{212} Axamann, \textit{Back to the Future}, 82.
continued this practice which resulted in the shift of the Baloch sardars loyalty from the Khan of Kalat to the British authorities. Ahmed Yar Khan knew that if he had to assert his position as the Khan of Kalat, he should be in a position to provide subsidies to the sardars.

In keeping with these two factors, in February 1935, Ahmed Yar Khan, to reclaim his status of the Khan of Kalat and to assert his position wrote a letter to the Agent to the Governor General requesting that the power of the political agent to be transferred to him. In his letter, he thanked the British for taking care of the affairs of Kalat up till now. Ahmed Yar Khan reproduced this letter in his autobiography. He wrote:

I do not for a moment deny that during this period circumstances have in fact required that certain functions of government, which might ordinarily have remained with the Khan, should be exercised by the political agent; and I personally am conscious of the debt which the Kalat state owes to those officers who have done so much for it. But I would ask you now to consider whether such circumstances still exist. I am myself willing, and I believe myself to be capable, of assuming the full responsibility of my position as Khan of Kalat and head of the Brahui confederacy; and I feel confident that it will be to the advantage alike of the British government and of the Kalat state that I should do so. I am well aware of the special position which the sardars hold in my state, and I have therefore been careful to consult my state council before sending this murasila to you, and they are in accord with my views.\textsuperscript{214}

What was surprising for the British authorities in India was not that Ahmed Yar Khan wanted more powers but his claim that the sardars of Sarawan and Jhalawan fully supported him in this request. Ahmed Yar Khan in his autobiography

quoted from the memorandum of support the sardars presented to him on 27 January 1935: “We the sardars, the dignitaries and citizens assure you on behalf of our followers, dependents and we, of our full faith and confidence in your leadership. We would remain faithful to you in the same manner and degrees as our forefathers were in the past to the Khan-e-Azam of the blessed memory and his ancestors.”  

A closer look at this memorandum points to an interesting element. The sardars promised to support Ahmed Yar Khan exactly how their forefathers supported previous Khans of Kalat. This clearly meant that this pledge of allegiance was based on a give and take. There was a mixed response from the British authorities on the letter by Ahmed Yar Khan. Riccardo Redaelli maintained in his book, *The Father’s Bow* that the British were willing to transfer certain powers to the Khan, *provided* he accepted the political agent and the wazir as his advisors in all decisions. At the same time, it was made clear to Ahmed Yar Khan that the British authorities in India would not accept the demand that Ahmed Yar Khan should be the one paying financial subsidies to the Baloch sardars. Ahmed Yar Khan was informed of this in an official communication.

However, by this time, Ahmed Yar Khan had a change of heart. He realized that it would be almost impossible for him to achieve this demand and decided not to pursue it further. Three years later, in 1938, Ahmed Yar Khan once again raised the issue of transfer of power. This time the British response was straight forward. Ahmed Yar Khan was informed that he neither had the authority nor the resources to run the state and that even if the British transfer the power to Ahmed Yar Khan, the sardars would reject such a transfer of power.

Ignoring this rebuttal, Ahmed Yar Khan’s next move was even more daring. He announced and implemented a number of political and administrative reforms in the Khanate of Kalat. He created a cabinet and a council of state. He contained the powers of the wazir and made him answerable to the cabinet. The British although

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215 Khan, *Inside Baluchistan*, XIX.
216 Redaelli, *Father’s Bow*, 22-23.
217 Redaelli, *Father’s Bow*, 123.
218 Redaelli, *Father’s Bow*.
219 Redaelli, *Father’s Bow*, 125.
clearly not happy with this, adopted a cautious approach and asked Ahmed Yar Khan to appraise them of what exactly he intended. Ahmed Yar Khan’s response, according to Redaelli, surprised the British even further. It became clear that Ahmed Yar Khan wanted to establish himself as the king of the Khanate of Kalat which would incorporate Kharan and Las Bela, other than the territory of Kalat.222

After exhaustive discussions, the British agreed to transfer the powers of political agent to Ahmed Yar Khan as the Khan of Kalat.223 At the same time, the British authorities also expressed their willingness to allow the Khanate of Kalat to pay allowances to the Baloch sardars.224

However, in a separate communication, the British authorities made it quite clear to Ahmed Yar Khan that it was the British who were calling the shots and would continue to do so. It was made clear to him that he could not make any decision without consulting the British authorities first and whatever directive comes from the British authorities in India, the Khan of Kalat would have to follow it in letter and spirit.

**British Persistent Policy Confusion about Kalat/ Balochistan**

The introduction of the Sandeman system in Balochistan resolved the dilemma for the British authorities on how to deal with the Baloch leadership (both the Khan of Kalat and the Baloch sardars) so that the British geostrategic interests could be ensured. However, by 1920s, a debate started to resurface among the British officers in India and Balochistan about the states and the future course of the British interaction with states especially Kalat. Although by that time, British authorities faced no problem in Kalat and Balochistan due to the loyalty of the Baloch sardars and British backed but administratively and politically toothless Khans of Kalat. An emerging view among the British authorities in India was to revise its treaties with Kalat and legally declare it an Indian state.225 Under this line of thinking that Kalat would eventually be included into the British India federation, two seats in the Council of the States and one seat in the federal legislative assembly was allocated to

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222 Redaelli, *Father’s Bow*, 130.
223 Redaelli, *Father’s Bow*, 132.
224 Redaelli, *Father’s Bow*, 132
225 For details see, Axmann, *Back to the Future*
That the British were planning to include Kalat into the Indian federation could be substantiated from a communication between London and Delhi (British government of India) of January 1935; “the ultimate sanction for relations with these frontier states will be paramountcy of the crown, exercise through the viceroy, to the same extent as in the case of other Indian states which are units in the federation.”

Axmann quoting British official communication argued that by 1939, Ahmed Yar Khan, realizing that the British would rebuke his attempts to assert his position as an independent and authoritative Khan of Kalat, demonstrated an interest in the affairs of the Indian federation. The AGG in Quetta, according to Axamann also stated that Ahmed Yar Khan wanted to be informed whether Kalat would be incorporated in the Indian federation so that he could start participating in the Indian affairs. However, the British authorities continued to debate the issue and failed to come up with a clear stance on whether Kalat was or not an Indian state. Interestingly, another caveat was included in the debate: Whether Kalat was, as a state administratively and politically ready to be incorporated into the Indian federation? The answer was an overwhelming no. Regardless of the fact that it was the failure of the British authorities in India who were virtually in control of Kalat since 1842 but used it only to secure its geostrategic interests. It was now stated that administratively Kalat could not meet the requirements to join the Indian federation.

On the issue of Kalat joining Indian federation under the Government of India Act 1935 that required all heads of states to sign instruments of accession to join the Indian federation, foreign secretary Olaf Caroe addressing the issue of Kalat’s joining of Indian federation commented that the Khan of Kalat was not in a position to ensure that he was the sole authority in Kalat and that the rulers of Las Bela and Kharan would never accept Khan’s sovereignty over them. Equally problematic was the issue of the Baloch sardars. Caroe was of the view that at this point of time, moving forward with making Kalat a part of the Indian federation would result in an inter-state and tribal war.

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226 For details see, Axmann, Back to the Future
227 For details see, Axmann, Back to the Future
228 For details see, Axmann, Back to the Future
229 For details see, Axmann, Back to the Future
By 1940, it emerged that the British viewed Kalat as an Indian state. The British authorities claimed that Ahmed Yar Khan demonstrated willingness to participate in Indian affairs as a ruler of an Indian state yet Kalat could not be incorporated into the Indian federation at the time because it lacked proper administrative and political institutions. The advent of the decade of 1940 witnessed the intensification of the Second World War and the geo-strategic significance of Balochistan for the British strategies was reinforced which obscured the British policy and position about when to legally incorporate Kalat into the Indian federation.

Effects of British Involvement in Balochistan

British lack of knowledge about the Baloch and Balochistan was the prime reason why the British authorities in India could not formulate a policy to deal with Kalat and Balochistan. It was the perceived threat from Czarist Russia to the British interests in the southern Asian region including Afghanistan that the British authorities decided to scout the area. Pottinger who was tasked for this job, gave a faulty and inadequate assessment about the Khan of Kalat, his powers and his authority over the Baloch sardars. British initial policy was heavily reliant on Pottinger’s account and suggested that to ensure the security of the British India, British government of India should adopt a policy of non-interference in the internal affairs, strengthen the rulers of the buffer states and cultivate strong economic and trade relations with them and eventually expand the trade into Central Asia to develop an economic incentive against any war effort against the British India. The proponents of this policy were called the closed border policy school. Another view, the forward policy school was that the British authorities in India should establish a network of states that would be dependent on British protection. This view gained prominence with the British authorities in India dealing with Balochistan especially once the initial policy of strengthening the Khan of Kalat failed. The Forward policy school argued for cultivating strong relations with the Baloch sardars. The British managed to firm their grip on Balochistan when Robert Sandeman successfully penetrated the Baloch tribes and brought the Baloch sardars in his hold. However, as the primary interest of the British in Balochistan was geostrategic, they hardly paid any attention to uplifting the standard of living of the Baloch and provide them with
basic human needs. They constructed roads, built railway lines, established cantonment cities such as Quetta, which had affected the Baloch but that was an unintended outcome. That is why Balochistan had the Command and Staff College in Quetta but no medical facility like the Lady Reading Hospital in Peshawar or educational institution like Government College, Lahore.

This lack of interest in economically and socially improving Balochistan became the prime reason, why despite their repeated assertion that Kalat is a normal Indian state, the British authorities in India could not incorporate Kalat into the Indian federation as the wide spread poverty, lack of administrative structure and minimal population would have put a huge financial and administrative burden on the British India. Despite a lack of direction and a clear-cut policy towards Balochistan, the British involvement affected the Baloch and Balochistan in a number of ways. According to Nina Swidler, there was a rise in sendentaization and as a result new villages were founded and urban population increased manyfold.\(^{230}\) Kalat as the center of financial activity had to back step as Quetta emerged as the new power center and the financial capital of Balochistan. Traders moved their businesses from Kalat to Quetta. A number of sardars built houses in Quetta so that they could stay closer to the corridor of power. The British introduced the modern taxation system and the ownership of private property in Balochistan, something that was alien to the Baloch tribes up till that time. The advent of railway in Balochistan affected the Baloch tribes in a number of ways. It eventually disrupted and almost minimized the caravan trading. This had an effect on camel breeding in Balochistan and affected particularly those tribes that economically relied on this. This affected the trade patterns of the Baloch tribes. As a result of the advent of railway Karachi port, became a major trade hub.

However, the biggest effect of the British involvement in Balochistan was that the evolutionary process of Kalat from a tribal confederacy to a state was halted. With the British take over, the subsequent Khans of Kalat increasingly became irrelevant as all powers resided with the agent to Governor General and for all practical purposes he was the ruler of Kalat. The Baloch sardars who understood this transformation of power, soon shifted their loyalties to the AGG. Ahmed Yar Khan,

the last Khan of Kalat understood that unless the British signed a new treaty with Kalat or officially incorporated Kalat into the Indian federation as an Indian state, he was arguably in his legal rights to demand more authority, what he forgot was that he was in no position to demand anything from the British. Another impediment for him was that he was ignoring the ground realities and envisaged a great Baloch state with himself as the ruler of it. His mythical independent state of Kalat never existed. Even if it did, Ahmed Yar Khan lacked the leadership quality and political perspicacity to acquire it. His attempts to become a king of Balochistan and at the same time remain a loyal subject of the British crown were irreconcilable. He failed to acknowledge this dichotomy.

This chapter overviews the second element of the Baloch nationalist narrative: the British treatment of Balochistan especially Kalat. The Baloch nationalist narrative claims that the British throughout their engagement and involvement in Kalat and Balochistan, always treated Kalat as an independent state. This chapter aimed at analyzing this part of the Baloch narrative and has demonstrated that the Baloch nationalist’s position regarding the Kalat’s status is not based on facts.

To conclude, the British authorities used Balochistan as a military outpost and failed to bring it at par to other part of British India. A Baloch historian, M.S.K Baluch stated that the British rule of eighty years centered round the policy of how to divide and create a wider gulf of enmity and hatred between the same tribes of the same country. The country stands politically, economically and socially in the back waters of civilization.
CHAPTER FOUR
INDEPENDENCE OF PAKISTAN, ACCESSION OF KALAT AND CENTRE-
BALOCHISTAN RELATIONS
(1947-69)

INTRODUCTION

The last chapter demonstrated how Khan of Kalat, Mir Ahmad Yar Khan
after becoming the Khan, tried hard to convince the British to accept the independent
status of the Kalat state and him as the undisputed ruler of Balochistan. Now with the
British decision to leave the Indian subcontinent in 1947 and grant India and Pakistan
independence, Khan of Kalat made one last attempt to achieve his goal.

He got partial success when Jinnah agreed to accept Kalat’s status as different
from the rest of the princely states of the subcontinent during the negotiation between
him and the Khan for a possible merger of Kalat with Pakistan. Jinnah as his policy
and statements regarding princely states that would join Pakistan indicate, was more
than willing to provide Kalat maximum autonomy, with Pakistan only taking
responsibility of defence, foreign and economic affairs. In keeping with his personal
relations with Ahmed Yar Khan, Jinnah hoped that Ahmed Yar Khan would accede
to Pakistan. Jinnah underestimated Ahmed Yar Khan’s intentions, who dreamed of
becoming the ruler of an independent country. However, he apparently played a
double game as it is demonstrated in this chapter, not only with Pakistan and
especially with Jinnah but also with the Baloch sardars and people of Kalat and
Balochistan.

On the one hand, he kept ensuring Jinnah and the Pakistani government that
everything would be sorted out which would be mutually acceptable. On the other
hand, to Baloch sardars and so-called elected representatives of Kalat, he discussed
Kalat’s historical place and destiny. His decision to not take the decision to accede to
Pakistan alone and ask his rather hastily and dubiously elected House of Lords and
Commons was nothing but delaying tactics as the details provided in the chapter
demonstrate.

However, despite all this, Ahmad Yar Khan had to sign Kalat’s accession
agreement with Pakistan, although seeds of discontent and misperception between
Pakistan and the Baloch were sown deep by then.
Once Pakistan managed to get the accession of Kalat and British Balochistan voting in its favour, it started working on administrated reforms in the province. A number of steps and measures were taken with mixed results. The one unit policy, the ill-conceived arrest of Ahmed Yar Khan in 1958 on dubious charges, the mishandling and disrespectful treatment of Nauroz Khan added to the Baloch grievances towards the centre which, according to Baloch nationalist narrative was strongly anti-Baloch and consisted of the Punjabi ruling elites.

This chapter covers the first 23 years of Pakistan and Balochistan history. It is divided into two parts. First part briefly looks at the process of partition of the Indian subcontinent and the creation of Pakistan and the challenges of state and nation building faced by the Pakistani leadership. The second part which is the main body of this chapter looks at the whole process of accession of Kalat with Pakistan challenging a number of established myths in Baloch as well as in Pakistan’s history. Looking at the whole process of negotiations between the Khan of Kalat and Jinnah and between Mir Ahmad Yar Khan and his team (prime minister of Kalat Muhammad Aslam Khan and foreign minister Douglas Fell) and his speeches to the two houses of Baloch sardars and notables, this chapter argues that it was the Khan of Kalat who made the whole process, which could have been straightforward, difficult and complicated. The use of different narratives and tone by him in his communication with Jinnah and with Baloch sardars not only resulted in confusion between the Baloch opinion-makers and the centre but also developed the perception that Pakistan wanted to occupy Kalat. It was this role played by Mir Ahmad Yar Khan that resulted in Prince Karim’s localized armed struggle against Pakistan. The letter which he wrote to Ahmad Yar Khan is a clear indication of the fact that Baloch perception about Jinnah and Pakistan became extremely negative as early as 1948. The chapter also demonstrates the failure of Pakistani policy makers in moving beyond the British model and policy of ruling Balochistan. With increased political instability in the country and differences between the East and the West Pakistan, the leadership of Pakistan could not do much about backward areas like Balochistan. The proceeding sections cover the developments of the decades of 50s and 60s and the implications of these developments on perceptions and policies of both the centre and Balochistan towards each other. The chapter concludes with Ayub’s regime’s end in 1969.
This chapter covers a number of important points of the Baloch nationalist narrative. The Baloch narrative argues that Pakistan forced the Khan of Kalat to sign the agreement of accession. After occupying Kalat, the center treated the Baloch as second class citizens and used the resources and wealth of Balochistan for its own needs completely ignoring the Baloch and depriving them of the basic human needs.

**Partition of the Indian subcontinent and the creation of Pakistan**

Soon after winning the 1945 elections, the British prime minister Clement Attlee, sent a three member Cabinet Mission to the Indian subcontinent to work out the best way of transferring of power to the Indian political leadership. It soon became clear to the Cabinet Mission that the differences between All-India Congress and All-India Muslim League are irreconcilable as both parties remained firm on their stated positions: Congress for a united India, Muslim League for a Muslim Pakistan. On 16 May 1946, the cabinet Mission announced its own plan. According to this plan, the federal government of the Indian subcontinent would only be responsible for foreign affairs, defense and communications. The provinces would be divided into three groups. Group A would include Madras, Bombay, United Provinces, Bihar, Central Provinces and Orissa. Group B would comprise Punjab, North-West Frontier Province and Sindh. Group C would comprise Bengal and Assam. A closer look at these groups indicates that the cabinet Mission plan separated the Hindu majority provinces from the Muslim majority provinces by placing them in separate groups. According to the Cabinet Mission plan:

> The constitution of the union and of the Groups should contain a provision whereby any province could, by a majority vote of its Legislative Assembly, call for reconsideration of the terms of the constitution after an initial period of 10 years and at 10 years intervals thereafter.

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This plan was unacceptable to All India Congress which stood for a united India. In a resolution passed on May 24, 1946, All India Congress rejected the plan on the grounds that it supported a weaker center. All India Muslim League accepted the plan as it was quite close to what it had been demanding. The differences between the leadership of All India Congress and All India Muslim League, in subsequent months reached to a point of no return.

On February 20, 1947, Atlee announced that the British government would transfer power to the Indian leadership by June 1948. Lord Louis Mountbatten was appointed the last viceroy of India and incharge of the process of the transfer of power. On June 3, 1947, a partition plan was announced by the British, according to which the transfer of power would take place in August 1947. As the name suggested, the partition plan envisaged the division of the Indian subcontinent into two states: India and Pakistan. Sir Cyril Radecliff was appointed the chairman of the Boundary Commission which divided the Indian subcontinent into India and Pakistan.

Views are extremely divided on the performance of Sir Radecliff and the commission. The partition award, though ready by August 13, 1947, was only announced four days later on August 17, 1947, when India and Pakistan had already attained the status of dominion states. Both India and Pakistan expressed dissatisfaction on the award. All India Muslim League leadership which was already suspicious of the trio of Nehru, Edwina Mountbatten and Lord Mountbatten, declared the award a conspiracy against Pakistan.

**Pakistan’s State and Nation Building Challenges**

Pakistan as Emerson aptly described it, was a state that “almost no one had foreseen and few could credit in advance as even a possibility.” In Clifford

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237 Emerson, *From Empire to Nation*, 92.
Geertz’s terminology, Pakistan belonged to the category of old societies and new states. Perhaps the biggest challenge for the leadership of Pakistan was to build a Pakistani nation as there was no such thing as a Pakistani nation prior to 1947. Ironically, the area that comprised Pakistan (West Pakistan in 1947) was not in the forefront of the struggle for a separate homeland for the Muslims of India. The biggest reason for this was that these were Muslim majority areas and had no fear of Hindu domination and discrimination against Muslims. Punjab which became most important province of Pakistan till 1946 was under the rule of the Unionist party. The political leadership of Punjab sided with the Muslim League only when it became obvious that Pakistan would be created and that Punjab would be a part of it.

NWFP (now Kyber Pakhtunkhawa) had a significant pro-Congress/ United India sentiment under the leadership of charismatic Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the frontier Ghandi. Using Joseph Strayer’s view on successful nation building that those states that “correspond closely to old political units; those where the experience of living together for many generations within a continuing political framework has given the people some sense of identity; those where the political units coincide roughly with a distinct cultural area; and those where there are indigenous institutions and habits of political thinking can be connected to forms borrowed from outside.” One cannot disagree with Emerson’s claim that “by the accepted criteria of nationhood there was in fact no such thing as a Pakistani nation.” Moreover, the problems that emerged and multiplied such as the flow of migrants from India, the problem of Kashmir, Nehru’s decision to block the supply of Pakistan’s share from the assets to Pakistan created an atmosphere of distrust between the two states and despite Ghandi and Jinnah’s intention of good relations both countries went on a path of adversity. Pakistan being a weaker state became a National Security state. As early as 8 October 1948, the prime minister of Pakistan, Liaquat Ali Khan in an address to the nation declared “the defence of the state is our foremost consideration … we will not grudge any amount on the defence of our country.”

238 Geertz, Old Societies.
240 Emerson, From Empire to Nation, 92.
241 Jinnah once in an interview stated that the relations of India and Pakistan would be similar to USA and Canada. Jinnah wanted to live his retired life in Bombay whereas Gandhi had reportedly expressed a desire to live his last days in Pakistan.
242 Ali, Emergence of Pakistan, 376.
The lack of democratic values and in Ian Talbot’s words, the overarching tradition of bureaucratic authoritarianism or viceregalism\(^{243}\) in West Pakistan especially in Punjab, differences between the East and West Pakistan and the threat it faced from India made the task of nation building and state building for the leadership of Pakistan, most of which were migrants themselves including Jinnah, the Quaid-e-Azam (Great leader) extremely difficult, if not impossible.

**Balochistan and the separation of India**

It was decided by the British authorities in India that a referendum would be held in the British Balochistan to decide its future. For Kalat (and also Kharan and Las Bela), it was decided that according to the partition plan, Ahmed Yar Khan had a choice to decide his future course in negotiation with Pakistan.

**Referendum in British Balochistan**

The referendum took place on 29 June 1947. The Electoral College included the members of the Baloch shahi Jirga, excluding the members from the states and the non-official elected members of the Quetta Municipal Committee. The last Khan of Kalat, Ahmed Yar Khan tried to get members from the leased areas excluded from participating in the referendum on the grounds that these leased areas should be returned to Kalat. He was not successful in this. The referendum in British Balochistan would not only decide which way the British Balochistan would go, but also the very fate of Pakistan. According to a number of historians of the Pakistan movement, the result of the referendum would have impacted the outcome of a similar referendum to be held in NWFP in July 1947.\(^{244}\) If the British Balochistan voted no to joining Pakistan, these historians implied that NWFP would follow suit and there would be practically no Pakistan.\(^{245}\) Nawab Muhammad Khan Jogezaiz and Mir Jaffar Khan Jamali aided by M. Masud\(^{246}\) were spearheading the campaign for Pakistan whereas Abdul Samad Achakzai, a leading Pashtun nationalist leader and popularly known as the Balochistani Ghandi and Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo were leading the pro-United India camp in the British Balochistan. There are a number of conflicting accounts of this referendum varying from the British conspired to hold  

\(^{243}\) Talbot, 64.  
\(^{244}\) Syed Iqbal Ahmed, *Baluchistan Its Strategic Importance*, (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1992)  
\(^{245}\) Ibid.  
\(^{246}\) A former civil servant and the deputy commissioner of Nawab Shah, Sind.
the referendum a day earlier so that the British Balochistan became a part of Pakistan to there was no referendum held at all. The Pakistani camp believed that the British and pro-Congress elements joined hands and conspired against Balochistan becoming part of Pakistan. However, voting did take place and the majority voted in favour of joining Pakistan.

According to the partition plan, the princely states of the Indian subcontinent had a choice between staying independent and joining India or Pakistan. However, the British communicated to the princely states that the British would like them to join with India or Pakistan. Jinnah on July 30, 1947 declared that Pakistan would follow a policy of non-interference towards the states and that they would be free to decide their own future. 247

*Kalat and Pakistan: The Issue of Accession*

As it was located on the periphery of the Indian subcontinent, Kalat was never a key issue between India and Pakistan. Certainly Kalat did not hold the same importance as Kashmir and Hyderabad. On July 19, 1947, Kalat was discussed in a meeting. In the meeting, Lord Mountbatten as the Crown representative made two important points. One, the status of Las Bela and Kharan was disputed as the rulers of Las Bela and Kharan have declared that they were not under the suzerainty of the Khan of Kalat. 248 Second, referring to the partition plan, Mountbatten stated that although Kalat had the option of independence, it would be appropriate for Kalat to work out a working relationship with Pakistan. Mr. Aslam Khan, the prime minister of Kalat responded that the Khan of Kalat Ahmed Yar Khan wanted to reach a mutually acceptable understanding and agreement with Pakistan.

After ensuing discussions between Kalat and Pakistan, a joint communique was issued. This communique is an important document. It was a huge achievement for Ahmad Yar Khan as he achieved though short lived and on ad-hoc basis, his biggest objective. Pakistan accepted that Kalat was an independent sovereign state in treaty relations with the British government in India. This was a huge mistake on part

248 PS-54, Minutes of Viceroy’s Twentieth Miscellaneous Meeting, R/3/1/166, 135.
of the Pakistani negotiating team. It also demonstrated their lack of understanding of the dynamics of Kalat-British relations as well as their inadequate homework on the subject. It was agreed between both parties that expert legal opinion would be sought about the leased areas and whether there would be any legal problem in Pakistan inheriting them. What was most important was that both Pakistan and Kalat agreed to a *stand still* till a final agreement was reached between them especially on defence, external affairs and communications.\(^{249}\) According to a Baloch historian, Dr. Abdul Rehman Brahui, there was another point of agreement: that if Pakistan and Kalat failed to establish a solid working relationship, Kalat, if it so desired, could join Afghanistan.\(^{250}\)

**The Standstill Agreement between Pakistan and Kalat**

Following is the text of the standstill agreement agreed to by Pakistan and Kalat.

1. The Government of Pakistan agrees that Kalat is an independent state, being quite different in status from other states of India; and commits to its relations with the British Government as manifested in several agreements.

2. Legal opinion will be obtained to find out whether the Pakistan government is legally bound by the agreements and the treaties that already exist between Kalat and the British government.

3. Further talks will be held between the nominees of Pakistan and the Khan-e-Azam of Kalat after obtaining the legal opinion of the above points.

4. In the meantime, a standstill agreement will be made between Pakistan and Kalat by which Pakistan shall stand committed to all its responsibilities and agreement signed by Kalat and the British Government from 1839 to 1947 and by this, Pakistan shall be the legal, constitutional and political successor of the British.

\(^{249}\) *New York Times*, 12 August 1947

\(^{250}\) Dr. Abdul Rehman Brahui, *Balochistan aur Pakistan, Ailahaaq ke kahani, Haquaq ke Zubani*, 21.
5. In order to discuss finally the relations between Kalat and Pakistan on matters of defence, foreign relations and communications, deliberations will be held in the near future in Karachi.

A closer look at this document indicates the contradictions in different points/clauses. Apparently in an attempt to satisfy each other, the authors of the document have incorporated points which both parties were sensitive about. First point was acknowledgment of what Ahmed Yar Khan had been struggling for, from the day he became the Khan of Kalat. Through this agreement, Ahmed Yar Kahn finally achieved what British refused to acknowledge and accept. The fourth point, on the other hand, acknowledged Pakistan as the constitutional and legal heir of the British in its relations with Kalat. Ahmed Yar Khan himself alluded to this fact when in a meeting with Jinnah, he informed Jinnah that because of the standstill agreement, Kalat-Pakistan relation would be administered exactly as between the British and Kalat since 1938. More so, he suggested to Jinnah that Jinnah should order the Agent to Governor General (AGG) to Balochistan to use his position and influence to convince the sardars in favor of accession.

**Kalat’s declaration of Independence and Reforms**

Regardless of the standstill agreement with the government of Pakistan, Khan of Kalat Mir Ahmed Yar Kahn declared independence and promulgated a constitution. Speaking on the occasion, Ahmed Yar Khan stated that Kalat would take every step necessary to preserve, ensure and defend its independence. Going one step further, he expressed his resolve to work for a single and unified Balochistan. Outlining his foreign policy priorities, Ahmed Yar Khan stated that Kalat’s foreign policy would be based on the principle of non-interference and would particularly sought friendly relations with neighboring states, Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, Iran and the Muslim world.

Inayat Baloch, a noted Baloch historian, quoted from an official document issued by the government of Kalat which ensured the people of Balochistan that the

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251 Brahui, 95, Khan, Tahrik, 97.
252 Brahui, 95.
253 Awan, Baluchistan, 205.
254 Axmaan, Back to the Future, 178.
255 Axmaan, Back to the Future, 178.
Khan of Kalat had consulted Jinnah in everything and that both are in agreement and were following same policy.\textsuperscript{256} It was also claimed in the document that Jinnah was in total agreement with the independence of Kalat, the return of the leased areas, and the merger of Baloch areas with the state of Kalat and that Jinnah assured all kind of support.\textsuperscript{257}

These claims were in total contradiction with the understanding reached between the negotiating teams of Pakistan and Kalat. According to the joint communique, legal opinion would be sought on leased areas and Kalat and Pakistan would further negotiate on the issue of accession. The so-called other Baloch areas that comprised British Balochistan had already voted in favor of joining Pakistan.

Soon after declaring independence, the Khan of Kalat Ahmed Yar Khan also issued a number of political and administrative reforms. The Khan promulgated a bicameral legislature in the state comprising the Dur-ul-Umra (House of Lords) and Dur-ul-Awam (House of Commons). Dur-ul-Umra comprised the sardars. Dur-ul-Awam comprised elected representative of the Baloch.\textsuperscript{258} The biggest puzzle was when and where the elections were held in which the people’s representative were elected? In the absence of an administrative apparatus, resources and electoral machinery, how the elections were conducted? More so, were the elections conducted on adult franchise? Who exactly voted in these elections? Who were the candidates? How and for how long the candidates campaigned for the elections? The fact is that these elections were not conducted in the sense elections are conducted. Local jirgas acted as the local Electoral College. There were no proper candidates. Khan of Kalat’s representatives went to the local jirgas and the Jirga members picked people from their area, who they thought were most suitable for the job. In 2000, Agha Nasir Khan, who was the governor of Jhalawan at the time of these elections, in an interview with Martin Axamann, explained how these elections were conducted:

\textsuperscript{257} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{258} For details see, Axmann, \textit{Back to the Future}, 227.
The governors of the provinces were called (and told) that you should go to your areas and that every area has got some seats; now you should go there and according to the rules and regulations conduct the elections. At that time, I was the governor of the province of Jhalawan, so I went to Khuzdar and there I took a public leader-Ghous Bukhsh Bizenjo who became later on Governor of Balochistan- he was a political leader and I took him as public leader and went throughout the area of Jhalawan and we conducted the election. The principle was adopted that in every tehsil the Jirga members (i.e. members of the local Jirga of village elders) will be the electorate. ... so, all those Jirga people elected their members (to the House of common) according to the seat given to the different categories of society of Kalat ... we went to every tehsil and conducted the election through those people and all those that were elected by them became members of the House of Commons of Kalat state. We finished this work within a week…259

The selected members of the house of common were all active members of their areas. This was perhaps the only criterion which was considered when selecting the members to the House of Commons. This explains why a significant number of activists and members of the Kalat State National Party (KSNP) were elected.

Agha Nasir Khan further explained:

Elections were held on a non-political basis when these elections were conducted the people who were very energetic were elected by the people. Generally, during the British period, there was a political party in Kalat state called Kalat State National Party. Though, when the Khan of Kalat declared the constitution of the House of Commons, generally, the people, because the Party had served the causes of the people so much that they generally, during that elections, elected their (i.e. KSNP’s) members. Though, the party didn’t work for

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259 Axmann, Back to the Future, 227-8.
the elections. The people themselves were so much in favor of that party. But the elections were conducted without any political parties. 260

According to Inyatullah Baloch, the KSNP won thirty-nine seats out of a total fifty-one seats.261 Remaining were independent candidates who toed KSNP’s line.262 Members of the house of Common belonging to KSNP established a block in the house of Common and spoke with a unified voice. This suited Ahmed Yar Khan and his political agenda as KSNP members were nationalists and against accession with Pakistan.

Despite declaring independence and claiming that Jinnah fully supported his position, Ahmed Yar Khan was scheduled to meet Jinnah in October 1947 to discuss the future of Kalat. Ahmed Yar Khan had a detailed meeting with Kalat’s prime minister and foreign minister to discuss possible options available to Ahmed Yar Khan regarding the future of Kalat. Inayatullah Baloch in his book has provided details about this discussion.263

In this meeting, five options were discussed: accede to Pakistan, accede to India, join Afghanistan, join Iran, and apply to UK for a protectorate status. Ahmed Yar Khan considered accession with Pakistan complicated as he claimed public and political opinion was against it. How exactly he gauged it or what exactly he meant by that, we don’t know. It was a unanimous view of the participants that accession to India would be impossible. Other than the fact that there is no direct geographical link between Kalat and India, this action would be considered extremely adversarial by Pakistan and even London might not approve it. Ahmed Yar Khan also claimed that Nehru hated him and All India Congress never trusted him.264 Kalat’s foreign

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261 Axmann, Back to the Future, 227-8.
262 Axmann, Back to the Future, 227-8
minister Douglas Fill had a favorable opinion about joining Iran. Elaborating on the historical ties between Iran and Balochistan and the fact that a significant number of Baloch lived in Iran, Mr. Fell argued that joining Iran would be good for the Baloch and the unity of the Baloch. Khan of Kalat and a number of family members were positively inclined towards the option of joining Afghanistan. Douglas Fell argued against it on the grounds that Afghanistan was already an unstable state and a close ally of communist USSR. Ahmed Yar Khan, being a devout Muslim rejected this option. Khan of Kalat was personally quite keen on the last option and considered it most suitable for his personal ambitions and vision for Kalat. Fell, however reminded him that the British consider Kalat an Indian state and would never accept this request.\footnote{Inayatullah, \textit{The Problem of Greater Baluchistan, A Study of Baluch Nationalism}, (Stutgrat: GMBH, 1987), 182. According to Mr. Fell, Khan was of the view that “independence of Kalat required a powerful backer.”} This meeting ended without reaching an agreement on what should be the future course of action for Kalat.

Jinnah and Ahmed Yar Khan met in Karachi in October 1947. Jinnah asked Ahmed Yar Khan to accede and assured him that he (Jinnah) would personally make sure that his (Ahmed Yar Khan) concerns were addressed. Ahmed Yar Khan stated that this is a decision he cannot take on his own.\footnote{Brahui, 72.} He claimed that he needed to consult his tribes and ascertain their view on the issue.\footnote{Mir Ahmad Yar Khan Baluch, “Partition of India, Its effect on Kalat State,” unpublished, 12-13 as quoted in I. Baloch, \textit{The Problem of Greater Baluchistan, A Study of Baluch Nationalism}, (Stutgrat: GMBH, 1987)} This claim had a little historical validity. Perhaps the only positive outcome of this meeting was that both sides agreed to meet again. Ahmed Yar Khan, during the meeting presented a draft treaty to Jinnah. According to the draft, Ahmed Yar Khan wanted Pakistan to recognize Kalat as a sovereign and independent state and sign a friendship and mutual defence treaty against any aggressor.\footnote{Inayatullah, \textit{The Problem of Greater Baluchistan, A Study of Baluch Nationalism}, (Stutgrat: GMBH, 1987). I. Baloch claims that both Ahmad Yar Khan and Fell gave copies of this draft treaty to him.}

On his return to Kalat from Karachi, Ahmed Yar Khan summoned the inaugural session for both houses on 14 December 1947. During his address to the joint session, he highlighted his role and support to Pakistan’s freedom struggle. He
went on to say that recently on certain issues between Pakistan and Kalat, the Baloch are getting concerned and want the Khan to resolve the matter. He urged the members to remain peaceful and give Pakistan some time as it was going through a very difficult time and he did not want to create further problems for Pakistan.

This address raised a number of questions. What exactly Ahmed Yar Khan wanted? The developments of past 5 months (August-December 1947) and his varied stances would puzzle any student of this period. Why was he giving conflicting messages to Jinnah and his sardars? Was he trying to say that Pakistan was not thankful for his role during the freedom struggle? Or he was projecting himself as an ally of Pakistan?

Mr. Douglas Fell presented detailed report to the house about the status and stage of negotiation with Pakistan on the issue of accession. He emphasized Ahmed Yar Khan’s stated position that Kalat was not an Indian state and had a different status in British India. The most important announcement was made by the Prime Minister Muhammad Aslam Khan. He informed the members of both houses that Ahmed Yar Kahn had decided that the decision whether to accede with Pakistan would be taken by the house.

This decision could be viewed through various angles. One way of looking at it is that Ahmed Yar Khan through this decision was introducing and empowering democratic values and practices in a tribal society. It could be argued that this was consistent to Ahmed Yar Kahn’s policies throughout his tenure as the Khan of Kalat as he tried several times in the past to introduce political, democratic and administrative reforms in Balochistan. Another way of looking at it would be that this was an intelligent move and a safe bet on his part. He knew a hand-picked parliament dominated by KSNP which was politically closer to the Indian Congress would never vote for accession with Pakistan. In this way, Ahmed Yar Khan would

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269 Brahui, 73.
270 Brahui, 73.
271 Brahui, 74.
272 Brahui, 74.
273 Brahui, 77.
be able to argue to his negotiating counterpart in Pakistan that it was a decision of the
elected representatives of people which as the Khan-e-Baloch he had to respect.

What followed was hardly unexpected. When the issue of accession was
debated in the Darul Awam (House of Commons), the leader of KNSP in the house,
Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo in his speech stated:

> Why should we be asked to join Pakistan, merely, because we are Muslims? For that matter, then Iran and Afghanistan, as they are Muslim countries, must also join Pakistan. Under no circumstances would we join Pakistan and sign the death warrant of 1.5 crore (ten and a half million) Baloch of Asia. We have unlimited resources and if we are forced, we will fight back to preserve our independence.  

A number of other members spoke on more or less same line. A resolution was passed against the accession of Kalat with Pakistan. Dar-ul-Umra (House of Lords) met on January 4, 1948. The house passed a resolution, which was different in wording but similar in spirit to the one passed by Dar-ul-Awam on December 14, 1947.

In his meeting with Jinnah, who came to Sibi for this meeting and to attend the Royal Sibi Darbar, Khan of Kalat Ahmed Yar Khan informed Jinnah that Kalat’s accession with Pakistan is not possible as people’s representatives disapproved it. However instead of ending it at this point, during the two meeting sessions with Jinnah, Ahmed Yar Khan made a startling claim. He told Jinnah that “the sardars were totally against accession but I tried hard to convince them and shared with them the advantages of acceding to Pakistan.” He claimed that after his personal effort and reasoning in favor of acceding to Pakistan, the sardars have agreed to a conditional accession with Pakistan. In Ahmed Yar Khan’s book, there is no mention of the names of the sardars who he convinced or how and when he discussed

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274 Brahui.
276 Ibid.
these issues with them. There is no other information available to verify this claim of Ahmed Yar Khan. Ahmed Yar Khan claimed that the sardars had set the following conditions:\(^{277}\)

1. Without the consent of the Baloch, no interference will be made in the Rivaj (traditional practices/customs) of the Baloch and as an assurance and guarantee to this; Jinnah and Ahmed Yar Khan should sign a document.
2. When a formal accession agreement is signed by the Khan of Kalat and Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the sardars should be there to witness it.
3. Quaid-e-Azam and the government of Pakistan should officially acknowledge the contribution of the Khan of Kalat and the Baloch in the creation of Pakistan and should issue a declaration in this regard.
4. Quaid-e-Azam, in a traditional gathering of the Baloch, should recognize and acknowledge the participation and contribution of the sardars in the freedom struggle.

It seems that Pakistan that was closely monitoring the political developments in and the statements coming from Kalat, in the meanwhile, revised the draft instrument of accession, which Jinnah shared with Ahmed Yar Khan during their meeting. According to Ahmed Yar Khan, the revised draft had references to the Government of India Act 1935 and the Independence Act 1947 which were not present in the earlier draft.\(^{278}\) He claimed that this amounted to his month-long hard work going to waste. He was so shocked that he had a nervous breakdown.\(^{279}\)

Jinnah, who up till now was personally negotiating with Ahmed Yar Khan, on his return from yet another meaningless round of discussion with Ahmed Yar Khan decided to hand over the issue of accession of Kalat to Pakistan and any further negotiation with Khan of Kalat Ahmed Yar Khan to the ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). Colonel S.B. Shah, the secretary General of the ministry of Foreign affairs

\(^{277}\) Brahui, 94.
\(^{278}\) I. Baloch, 185, quoting Khan, The Partition of India, 17-18, unpublished paper.
\(^{279}\) I. Baloch, 185, quoting Khan, The Partition of India, 17-18, unpublished paper.
was tasked for this job. Baloch historians accused Prime Minister of Kalat, Muhammad Aslam Khan to be working on Colonel Shah’s pay role. Ahmed Yar Khan, though still living in his world of denial, claimed that this change (from Jinnah to Colonel Shah) happened due to Jinnah’s illness. Ahmed Yar Khan continued to give conflicting signals and informed Islamabad that he would sign the accession agreement in three months.

The rulers of Kharan and Las Bela indicted to Pakistan that they would accede to Pakistan regardless of Kalat’s decision. Moreover, Makran, which was a district of Kalat, also wanted to part ways with Kalat and become a part of Pakistan. The ruler of Kaharan and the Jam of Las Bela wrote a number of letters to Jinnah. The ruler of Kharan, Mir Mohammad Habibullah Khan had developed his argument more or less on similar lines as Ahmed Yar Khan. According to Mir Habibullah Khan before coming under the British rule in 1883, Kharan was under the influence of Afghanistan. Under the British, Kharan was an independent state. Kalat never accepted this fact and attacked Kharan in 1939 to subjugate it. Habibullah Khan declared that after the departure of the British, Kharan became independent. He as the ruler had decided to accede to Pakistan. Pakistan initial response to Kharan and Las Bela’s offer was mute as Pakistan was optimistic that Kalat would also accede with Pakistan.

On this lack of enthusiasm on Pakistan’s part, Habibullah declared that whether Kharan joined Pakistan or not, Kharan would under no circumstances accept Kalat’s domination. In March 1948, the Jam of Las Bela and the ruler of Kharan met Jinnah in Karachi. During the meeting, they accused Ahmed Yar Khan of stirring trouble in Mekran and spreading false propaganda about Jinnah and Pakistan. They also informed Jinnah that they might have to reconsider their options if Pakistan continued to show cold feet on Kharan and Las Bela’s request of accession to Pakistan. 280

Government of Pakistan was already fed up with the double speak of Ahmed Yar Khan. The new team handling the case of accession of Kalat with Pakistan saw

this as an opportunity. After a detailed emergency meeting, Pakistan accepted Kharan and Las Bela’s offer of accession.\textsuperscript{281} At the same time, Pakistan also accepted Makran’s request for acceding with Pakistan.\textsuperscript{282} On March 18, 1948, a press note was issued by the government of Pakistan that announced this development.

Losing Kharan, Las Bela and Makran limited Ahmed Yar Khan’s ambition to rule an independent state of Kalat. Now Kalat became a landlocked state without any direct access to the outside world. Ahmed Yar Khan threatened to appeal to the United Nations.\textsuperscript{283} A declaration was made that if Kalat was to be forced into accession, this accession would not be a voluntary one.\textsuperscript{284} The government of Pakistan, on its part, accused Khan of plotting against them and seeking British protection, all the while approaching India through an agent.\textsuperscript{285} These allegations echoed the discussion which the Khan had earlier had with his prime minister and foreign minister. Ahmed Yar Khan, in his book, totally ignoring the timeline and historical facts stated that it was the accession of Kharan, Las Bela and Makran to Pakistan that adversely affected Pakistan’s regional relations.\textsuperscript{286} He listed four major adverse effects: \textit{firstly}, relations with Afghanistan soured; \textit{secondly}, the humiliation of the Baloch persuaded the Nazam of Hyderabad to accept accession with India; \textit{thirdly}, Maharaja of Kashmir changed his decision of acceding to Pakistan and joined India; \textit{fourthly}, the sheikhs of Gulf states who had initially favored Pakistan, aligned themselves with India.

\textit{The last straw on the camel’s back: All India Radio’s report about Khan’s contact with India}

Khan of Kalat, Ahmed Yar Khan consistently denied considering accession with India as an option. Even during the meeting with his prime minister and foreign minister in which various options available to Kalat were discussed, Ahmed Yar Khan, reportedly was not enthusiastic about accession with India option. Yet the

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{281} I. Baloch, 187.
\textsuperscript{283} I. Baloch, 187 quoting IOR.L/P+S/13/1847
\textsuperscript{284} \textit{Daily Bolan}, 2 April 1948, 187
\textsuperscript{285} I. Baloch, 187, Ch. Muhammad Ali, \textit{Emergence of Pakistan}, 282, IOR.L/P+S/13/1847
\textsuperscript{286} I. Baloch,105.
\end{footnotesize}
diplomatic circles in Pakistan were rife with reports that Ahmed Yar Khan has used the option of joining India as a bargaining chip in his negotiation with Pakistan. The UK High commissioner to Pakistan wrote “there is good reason to believe that he (Ahmed Yar Khan) has been flirting with both India and Afghanistan.”

On March 27, 1948, All India Radio in Delhi broadcasted a report that in January 1948, Ahmed Yar Khan, the Khan of Kalat, approached New Delhi to discuss Kalat’s accession with India. New Delhi rejected the request/offer.

Denying that he ever made such a request, Ahmed Yar Khan sent a telegram to the Governor General of India to protest on this false report and asked New Delhi to release any communications they had, if he really did approach them.287

However the damage was done. Pakistan that was already annoyed with Ahmed Yar Khan’s indecisiveness and double speak took this as a dangerous development. In view of the minimal options left for Ahmed Yar Khan, Baloch nationalist historians have argued that the Khan of Kalat, at this juncture had two choices: accede to Pakistan or refuse to accede and prepare for any eventuality including armed resistance. Ahmad Yar Khan went for the first option. He announced that Kalat would accede to Pakistan and signed the instrument of Accession. Ironically, before acceding to Pakistan, he did not call an emergency session of his council or the parliament to debate/discuss the matter in light of the latest development (All India Radio Report). In his biography, Ahmed Yar Khan denying that he ever intended to accede to India, claimed that the moment, he heard the report on All India Radio, he decided to accede with Pakistan. 288

Commenting on Ahmed Yar Khan’s decision, Inayatullah Baloch wrote:

The ruler of the Khanate of Baluchistan, Mir Ahmed Yar Khan, was forced to sign the document of accession. The Khan was not an absolute monarch; he was required to act under the provisions of the Rawaj (the Baluch constitution) and had no authority to sign the merger document without the consent of the

287 I. Baloch, 188, IOR.L/P+S/13/1847
288 Ahmed Yar Khan, 159.
parliament. The Khan, in his biography, has admitted that he violated his mandate by singing the merger document. The Khan claimed that despite his unconstitutional step; the Baluch nation did not raise a single voice of any nature to protest.  

Another Baloch historian Sardar Khan Baluch, commenting on this decision, commented:

Nasir I united all. Nasir II endeavored to maintain it. Khudadad Khan fought for the whole of his life to organize a government. Mahmud Khan II prepared the coffin for the state. And Ahmed Yar, the present Khan, buried all the glory and vanity of his line.  

The All India Radio broadcast has been projected as the final factor in pushing Ahmed Yar Khan into acceding to Pakistan. Ahmed Yar Khan, himself gave the same impression, however this might be stretching it too far. After the accession of Kharan, Las Bela to Pakistan, Ahmed Yar Khan’s dream of becoming the ruler of an independent kingdom of Kalat had ended and as it was stated, he had only two options, accede with Pakistan or lead a struggle against Pakistan. As he lacked the will and resolve to lead a guerrilla struggle, he was left with only one option; accede to Pakistan. The All India Radio broadcast just provided Ahmed Yar Khan an opportunity to claim that he was acceding to Pakistan to prove himself an honest and pro Pakistan person.

THE MYTH OF MILITARY INTERVENTION AND FORCIBLE ACESSION OF KALAT

The developments detailed above clearly indicate that in this whole process of accession of Kalat with Pakistan, Pakistan army was neither involved nor it played any role in the actual accession of Kalat yet it is one of the most tenacious myth propogated by the Baloch historians. One of the most authoritative experts on

289 I. Baloch, 162.
290 M. Sardar Khan Baluch, History of Baluch Race and Baluchistan, 125-126.
291 Inyatullah Baloch, Gul Khan Nasir to name a few.
Balochistan, Professor Akbar S. Ahmed in his book wrote that the in March 1948, the Pakistan army troops crossed into Balochistan and the Khan of Kalat agreed to join Pakistan.\(^{292}\) What exactly happened? The answer to this lies in Makran and its decision to join Pakistan. Unlike Las Bela and Kharan, Makran was a part of the state of Kalat. It was administrated by the nawabs and sardars of Kech, Panjgur, Tump and an official appointed by the Khan of Kalat. It seems that once the government of Pakistan got disappointed and frustrated by the behavior and double speak of Ahmed Yar Khan, it decided to accept any application for accession.

When Nawab Bai Khan Gichki applied for accession with Pakistan, Pakistan readily accepted it. Makran along with Las Bela and Kharan joined Pakistan on 17 March 1948.

At the time, Prince Abdul Karim, younger brother of Khan of Kalat, Ahmed Yar Khan was representing Kalat in Makran. He publicly refused to accept Makran’s accession with Pakistan and continued to operate from his office. Tension rose between Prince Karim and Nawab Bai Khan, the newly appointed Wali (ruler) of Makran. Soon the situation reached an impasse. All the communication lines to Makran were abstracted. Heavy rain fall added to this. After Ahmed Yar Khan stopped rations and other supplies to Makran Levy Corps, the only option left was to air drop or supply them through Jiwani.

Under such circumstances, under the advice of AGG, Sir Ambrose Dundas, a high level meeting took place in which it was decided that to ensure that no unpleasant event takes place and to avoid any further disturbances, to send enforcements. It was decided to send security forces for securing the key installations and communication lines and roads. It was also decided that the Khan of Kalat would be informed of this development before hand so that no unpleasant event occurs. However, before any of this happened, Khan of Kalat, Ahmed Yar Khan, after listening to the All India Radio report, announced an unconditional accession to Pakistan.

**Frist Baloch Insurgency**

At the time of acceding Makran with Pakistan, Nawab Bai Khan demanded that Pakistan should make sure that Prince Agha Abdul Karim, younger brother of the Khan of Kalat, Ahmed Yar Khan, and Kalat’s governor in Makran must leave Makran before his return to Makran. Prince Karim was told to leave. Prince Karim felt disrespected. On his way back to Kalat, he met a number of Baloch notables including Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo. On Ahmed Yar Khan’s suggestion, Prince Karim also acquired the support of the sardars of Sarawan. May 16, 1948 is often cited as the date when Prince Karim started his armed resistance against Pakistan. Inayatullah Baloch later claimed that prince Karim’s armed resistance was a national liberation movement. There is hardly any evidence to substantiate this claim. Prince Karim’s armed resistance was a reaction to his sacking from the position of the governor of Makran and what he thought was an unwarranted accession of Kalat to Pakistan. He crossed over to Afghanistan and tried to win the support of Afghanistan against Pakistan. The Afghan government refused to support him.

Khan of Kalat, Ahmed Yar Khan on May 24, 1948 issued a statement in which Ahmed Yar Khan claimed that Prince Karim rebelled against the state of Pakistan against his wishes and issued an order in which he prohibited the Baloch tribesmen from supporting Prince Karim.

Baloch historian Dr. Marri contested this claim and pointed that Ahmed Yar was again playing a double game. According to Dr. Marri, at the time of issuing this farman (order), he was in contact with Prince Karim and he sent his emissary to Prince Karim encouraging him to continue the armed resistance.

In June 1948, Prince Karim wrote a letter to Ahmed Yar Khan in which he outlined his reasons for taking up arms against the state of Pakistan. He claimed that forced and illegal accession of Kalat, Kharan, Las Bela and Makran to Pakistan is the reason of his taking up arms. If this letter (which is reproduced in Inayatullah Baloch’s book) is genuine, it is perhaps the first ever clear manifestation of a sentiment against the “Punjabi fascism.”

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293 I. Baloch,190.
294 I. Baloch,190
296 I. Baloch, op.cit.,192, quoting Prince Abdul Karim’s letter to the Khan of Kalat in Prince Abdul Karim versus Pakistan state, unpublished.
From whatever angle we look at the present government of Pakistan, we will see nothing but Punjabi Fascism. The people have no say in it. … There is no place for any other community in this government, be it the Baluch, the Sindhis, the Afghans or the Bengalis, unless they make themselves equally powerful.297

It is quite difficult to ascertain the authenticity of this letter. More so, the letter was written on June 28, 1948. From August 1947 to June 1948 when Pakistan was mostly ruled by migrants that included Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan, how much of Punjabi domination was there in Pakistan, at that time, remains a question. Like Dr. Marri, Selig Harrison has claimed that the Khan supported Prince Karim’s action because it might help him to reassert his power in Kalat.298 Former foreign minister of Kalat Fell in his interview with Inayat Baluch refuted this.299

During Prince Karim’s armed resistance, a certain narrative was developed and used by the propaganda team of the resistance. This narrative persisted beyond Prince Karim’s armed resistance. The resonance of this narrative exists even today. The narrative claimed:

Jinnah and his grand colleagues in whose hand the English have given the government, wish to enslave us, and to have our dear homeland (Balochistan), every inch of which was secured by our forefathers at the cost of blood, inhabited by foreigners. We are not prepared to be unworthy sons of our ancestors. We are to fight for every inch of our home land to maintain its freedom. … Jinnah and other colleagues of this shameless person intend to liquidate our Baluch culture, so that we may not be able to call ourselves as Baluch in future, shall not be able to speak our mother

297 Ibid. Akbar S. Ahmed’s also quotes from this letter in the chapter Musharraf’s Dilemma in his book _The Thistle and the Drone_, 139.
298 Selig Harrison, In Afghanistan Shadow, 26.
299 I. Baloch,193.
tongue and neglecting our modest customs, shall follow their shameful ways. We are determined that we will save our culture and will not give up our mother tongue while living and will defend our honor to the last.\textsuperscript{300}

Prince Karim’s failure to win support from Afghanistan and USSR coupled with internal differences especially on what strategy to follow and Ahmed Yar Khan’s indecisiveness or double speak resulted in Prince Karim’s return to Balochistan and seeking a negotiated settlement with the government of Pakistan. Douglas Fell met him at Harboi to convey to him Ahmed Yar Khan’s message that if he surrendered, he would be pardoned. It is not clear what exactly this message implied. Does this meant that Ahmed Yar Khan would forgive him for taking up arms without his consent or the government of Pakistan assured Khan of Kalat, Ahmed Yar Khan that Prince Karim would not be put to trial. Whatever was the case, Prince Karim surrendered unconditionally. He was arrested and a Jirga sentenced him to ten years imprisonment. Baloch nationalists argue without providing any concrete evidence/ proof that Prince Karim surrendered after he was assured that no harm would come to him. Yet he along with his followers was arrested. This act, according to the Baloch nationalists, was Pakistan’s first act in a series of betrayals and broken promises.

**Balochistan States Union (BSU)**

From 1948 when Kalat, Makran, Kharan and Las Bela became part of Pakistan till 1951, different departments of the government of Pakistan continued to debate how to best deal with Balochistan. Despite Jinnah’s commitment of personal interest, Liauqat Ali Khan’s reform committee on Balochistan, the government more or less failed to work out a feasible and workable plan to deal with Balochistan. What was compounding the problem was the existence of states of Kalat, Kharan, Las Bela and Makran. The agent to Governor General in February 1951 questioned

\textsuperscript{300} I. Baloch quoting Prince Vs Pak, 194
the rational of keeping these states and suggested their merger into one administrative unit to end this administrative dilemma.

After intensive discussion among various departments of the government of Pakistan, in March 1952, it was decided that these four states (Kalat, Kharan, Las Bela and Makran) will be merged into a Balochistan States Union (BSU). An agreement was signed by the rulers of Kalat, Kharan, Makran and Las Bela. All of them accepted the integration of their territories into a single state union with a common executive, judiciary and legislature. Another important development which took place and is often ignored by Baloch nationalists account of events is that the rulers of Kalat, Kharan, Makran and Las Bela, on April 11, 1952 also signed supplementary instruments of accession. According to these instruments of accession, this state union was acceded to Pakistan. According to Wilcox, the rulers of Kalat, Kharan, Makran and Las Bela were handsomely paid for doing this and there annual allowances were increased. 301 Ahmed Yar Khan, the former Khan of Kalat viewed the establishment of the Balochistan States Union and his appointment as the head of it as the restoration of his right to be the legitimate ruler of Balochistan and revived his dream of being the king of a unified Balochistan. Under this illusion, he approached the Marri and Bugti sardars and suggested that they should apply to the government of Pakistan for inclusion of their territories into the Balochistan States Union. 304 However the BSU failed to achieve any of the stated objectives. The council of rulers comprising Khan of Kalat (head of the council), and rulers of Las Bela, Kharan and Makran could not reach an agreement on any/ every issue and constantly remained at loggerheads. The proposed elections for the legislative body of the Balochistan States Union never took place and due to this the cabinet never reached its full strength. 305 Some positive developments did take place in the improvement of law and order, health and education. 306 Saeed Dahwar argued that soon after the establishment of the Balochistan States Union, people like Chaudhry Muhammad Ali started advocating the establishment of a One Unit (joining all territories of then West Pakistan into a single administrative unit to

301 I. Baloch, 150-51.
302 Awan, 215.
303 Wilcox, 151.
305 Ahmed, Balochistan, 151.
306 Dehwar, Contemporary Importance, 334, Wilcox, 151.
counter the East Pakistan’s majority status) which ultimately nailed the BSU experiment down. 307 Awan pointed out another important reason for BSU’s less than adequate performance. According to Awan, BSU lacked the financial resources to achieve any meaningful progress even if the rulers of the states had reached an agreement on any of the issues. This financial handicap restricted BSU till it was finally dissolved. 308 In February 1954, during the Sibi darbar, a petition was submitted by a number of Baloch sardars to dissolve the BSU and merge the territories under BSU into the chief commissioner’s Balochistan. Views on whether it was a genuine move or a doctored one persist even today. 309

In keeping with the fact that the government of Pakistan was, at that time, already working on its One Unit scheme and that within four months of the filing of this petition, the government dissolved BSU and merged it with Balochistan on June 16, 1954 indicate that the government might have been already working on it and would have done it with or without this petition. Ahmed Yar Khan’s dreams and hopes were shattered once again and he accused the government of betrayal and for the first time, threatened the government of Pakistan of violence. In a lost vein and act of frustration and without any legal justification, he asked for the return of the leased areas. The government of Pakistan however brushed away his rants. 310

Despite his claim of betrayal, in January 1955, Khan of Kalat along with rulers of Kharan, Makran and Las Bela signed an agreement according to which:

His Highness the Khan-e-Azam hereby cedes to the Government of the Dominion of Pakistan his sovereignty and all his rights, authority and powers as President of the council of Rulers of the Union, together with all his territories, including territories known as the leased areas, and having been duly authorized to that end by members of the Council of Rulers, that is to say the Rulers of Mekran, Las Bela and Kharan, their sovereignty and all their rights, authority and powers as such Rulers together will (i.e.

307 Dehwar, 334.
308 Awan, , 215-16.
310 Awan, 216-17.
with) all their territories … The Government of the Dominion (of Pakistan) shall exercise all powers, authority and jurisdiction for the governance of the said union and territories in such manner and through such agency as it may think fit. 311

The BSU was officially terminated on October 14, 1955 and soon after became part of the One Unit. According to the article 6 of the Balochistan State Union Merger Agreement, all previous agreement and accession agreements signed between the four states and the government of Pakistan became invalid and obsolete. It resulted in the permanent dissolution of the states. The rulers of the four states were provided hefty pensions, increase in annual allowances and a number of other entitlements.312 Baloch nationalists, however claim that all this was done without the approval of Ahmed Yar Khan and most of the Baloch sardars.313

One Unit and Balochistan

The challenges faced by Pakistan at the time of its creation in 1947 pushed its ruling elite to emphasis on its security at the expense of state cohesion. Soon after 1947, serious differences between the East and West Pakistan emerged. The politico-military elite belonging to West Pakistan distrusted the ethnically Bengali East Pakistan which was in majority in terms of population.314

To end this disparity and counter the Bengali majority, the politico-military elite of West Pakistan decided to merge all provinces and former princely states into a unified administrative unit called One Unit. The policy of One Unit failed to achieve the desired objectives. The East-West Pakistan differences persisted and ethnic rivalries surfaced among various ethnic groups (Pathan, Baloch and Sindhis)

311 Wilcox, 240-42.
312 Wilcox, 240-42.
313 Dehwar, 336.
and anti-Punjab sentiment rose as Lahore (the capital of Punjab) was made the capital of West Pakistan.315

The government of Pakistan, at the time of appointing the representative for Balochistan in the One Unit administration demonstrated total lack of understanding and learning about the dynamics of Baloch society and politics and appointed Dr. Khan sahib, a Pashtun from NWFP province as the representative for Balochistan. Baloch, who had been historically averse to traveling beyond their borders and were used to of getting their jobs done in their tribe or at the maximum in Quetta during the British rule, now had to travel to Lahore. More so, the appointment of an outsider to represent the Baloch was considered an insult.

**Rise in resentment against the Abadkars (setters) in Balochistan**

The abadkars (setters), the majority of them ethnically Punjabi, settled in Balochistan mostly in Quetta at the time of partition in 1947 were not as affected as the Baloch by this development. Due to their ethnic and blood relations in Punjab, this change was actually beneficial for the settlers or so it was perceived. The resentment against the abadkars was on the rise even before this change as the abadkars were in greater number in government jobs as well as dominating the business sector. According to a study conducted by Dr. Robert Wirsing, by 1958, only 10 per cent of the government officials in Balochistan were locals and were 20 per cent of the total police force in Balochistan.

Ahmed Yar Khan initially supported the One Unit. However when the opposition and protest against the One Unit grew, Ahmed Yar Kahn revised his position and started struggling for the restoration of his state. According to Awan, now Ahmed Yar Khan focused his energy on campaigning for the establishment of a province of Balochi speaking areas including Dera Ghazi Khan and Jacobabad districts. He organized several anti- One Unit demonstrations and urged the government of Pakistan to establish a single province for Balochi speaking people.316

According to a follow sardar, Sardar Sherbaz Khan Mazari, Ahmed Yar Khan

316 Awan, 220.
aspired to be the king of a greater Balochistan.\textsuperscript{317} It was precisely this self-centred approach that resulted in the failure of the largest ever gathering of the Baloch sardars in October 1957.

Ahmed Yar Khan and 35 Baloch sardars including Sherbaz Khan Mazari, Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri, Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti, Nawab Ghaus Bakhsh Raisani and Mir Jaffar Khan Jamali held a meeting in Karachi, ostensibly to protest against One Unit and to decide the future course for Baloch politics in Karachi.\textsuperscript{318} During the meeting, Ahmed Yar Khan not only demanded the dissolution of the one Unit but demanded the creation of a new Baloch province. However, by the time the proceedings of the meeting were taking place, the enthusiasm of most of the persons present had already veined. This happened due to a conversation which took place earlier that day between the then President of Pakistan, Iskandar Mirza and Ahmed Yar Khan. According to Sharbaz Mazari, on the day the meeting of the Baloch sardars was held, Iskandar Mirza invited the participants of the meeting for tea at the presidential residence. In the presence of the most prominent Baloch sardars: Akbar Bugti, Khair Bakhsh Marri, Ghaus Bakhsh Raisani, Mir Jaffar Khan Jamali and Sherbaz Mazari, Iskandar Mirza asked Ahmed Yar Khan:

\begin{quote}
Why are you trying to mislead these sardars…”, were the words he used to begin. Then scathingly, he continued, “These days you are opposing the One Unit and talking about the new linguistic province, but when that same One Unit was created you were making long gushy speeches in its favour. What you really hanker for, is the recreation of your old Kalat State. All the rest is merely eye-wash. You now just want to fool these people into supporting you.” The Khan looked embarrassed and remained silent. We finished our tea and left quietly. At the conference the enthusiasm ebbed. Later when some of the leaders belonging to the old Kalat state demanded the break-up of the One Unit
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{317} Sherbaz Khan Mazari, \textit{Disillusionment}, 83.
\textsuperscript{318} Sherbaz Khan Mazari, \textit{Disillusionment }, 82.
scheme and the restoration of Kalat, the majority of the other Sardars left the gathering in protest.319

First Martial Law in Pakistan and Nauroz Khan’s armed resistance in Balochistan

The political instability, increasing gulf between the political leadership of West and East Pakistan and the political ambitions of the President of Pakistan, Iskanadr Mirza resulted in a military coup in Pakistan, which turned out to be the first in a series of martial laws in Pakistan. Professor Ishtiaq Ahmed, a leading expert on Pakistan argued that by 1958, there was a wide-spread resentment and sense of alienation from the Centre among the minority ethnic groups. This resentment and alienation manifested in Ahmed Yar Khan’s alleged attempt to once again secede from Pakistan in 1958.320 It was alleged that Ahmed Yar Khan approached the Shah of Iran for a possible inclusion of Balochistan in Iran,321 sought Afghanistan’s support in a Baloch armed rebellion322 and that Ahmed Yar Khan raised the old state of Kalat flag.323 Shuja Nawaz, one of the most authoritative historians of Pakistan Army also believed that Ahmed Yar Khan was planning to secede.324 However, Shuja Nawaz also stated that General Ayub Khan believed that President Iskandar Mirza instigated Ahmed Yar Khan to plan to secede. The reason behind this, according to Ayub Khan was that President Iskandar Mirza wanted to use this to stage his coup.325 Ayub Bakhsh Awan (A. B. Awan), who served as the director of the Intelligence Bureau and also as home secretary in the government of Pakistan also highlighted the role President Iskandar Mirza played in this incident.326 According to Awan, Ahmed Yar Khan stayed with Mirza as his guest. Ahmed Yar Khan, on his return from Karachi, redoubled his efforts to regain the pre-independence status of Kalat and publically claimed that President Iskandar Mirza

319 Sherbaz Khan Mazari, Disillusionment, 82
320 Ishtiaq, 109.
321 Mazar, 83.
323 Wilcox, 240-42.
324 Shuja Nawaz, Crossed Swords Pakistan, its Army, and the Wars Within, (Karachi: OUP, 2008)
325 Shuja Nawaz, Crossed Swords Pakistan, its Army, and the Wars Within, (Karachi: OUP, 2008)
had assured him of his support in this regard. Ahmed Yar Khan in his autobiography, gave a much more detailed and colorful account of this episode. According to Ahmed Yar Khan, President of Pakistan, Iskandar Mirza asked for Rs. 500,000 to allow Kalat to secede from One Unit.

A closer look at Ahmed Yar Khan’s political career thus far clearly indicated that he lacked the resolve and determination to take up arms against its opponents, in this case the government of Pakistan. He was an expert of drawing room/ arm chair politics and court intrigues but was not a man of action. Whatever was the case, Pakistan Army took action against Ahmed Yar Khan. Although the alleged force preparing for armed resistance could not be found, Ahmed Yar Khan was arrested and taken to Lahore. Sherbaz Khan Mazari stated in his book that the act caused a wave of anger among the Baloch and further compounded existing ill-will which had been caused by an incident that had occurred the previous year by an act of administrative insensitivity. After his arrest, Ahmed Yar Khan was ripped off of his titles and his son Agha Daud Jan was nominated as his successor by a presidential order. On 7 October 1958, President Iskandar Mirza abrogated the constitution of Pakistan, dismissed the central and provincial governments, proclaimed martial law and appointed General Ayub Khan as the chief martial law administrator. General Ayub in turn, with Mirza’s approval, imposed martial law throughout the country from midnight 7-8 October. This coup was a classic case of a reform coup as defined by Samuel P. Huntington. Ironically, after a few days Iskandar Mirza was thrown out by the Pakistan military and General Ayub also appointed himself the president of Pakistan in what General Ayub called a revolution.

Nauroz Khan’s armed resistance against the Pakistan Army

328 Ahmed Yar Khan, Inside Balochistan, 174.
329 Sherbaaz Mazari in his book wrote that in 1957, a Baloch woman accused of adultery had been murdered by members of her husband’s family. Ignoring the precedents of the local jirga law, the authorities had insisted on sending the dead woman’s clothing for forensic tests to Lahore. A post-mortem was also carried out much against the wishes of the family. This affair had incensed the tribal community in every part of Kalat. It was generally viewed among the locals to be a calculated insult and a degradation of Baloch honour and traditions.
330 S. P. Huntington, “Patterns of Violence in World Politics,” In Changing Patterns of Military Politics, pp.32-40. According to Huntington (p.33), in a reform coup “a combination of military and civilian groups seizes power intending to make reforms in the political, economic or social structure. They usually do make some reforms, though they do not instigate a convulsive revolutionary process. As quoted in Rounaq Jahan, Pakistan: failure of national integration, (New York: CUP, 1972), 51.
As the events unfolded, the theory that Ahmed Yar Khan was used by Iskandar Mirza to stage a coup got credence. They way Ahmed Yar Khan was arrested, angered the Baloch, regardless of their views about Ahmed Yar Khan. It was the dishonoring of the Baloch which was the main issue for the Baloch. To rub salt on injury, the government of Pakistan ordered the Baloch tribesmen to hand over their weapons to the police. More so, security forces patrolled different areas. Nauroz Khan of the Zarakzai, the legendary old lion who was a proud symbol of resistance against the British colonizers and twice escaped from British captivity in 1926 and 1927, in an old age of eighty years took up arms against the dishonoring of the Baloch. A band of around 1000 men under the leadership of Nauroz Khan took to the hills and started targeting government forces. They demanded the release of Ahmed Yar Khan, dissolution of the One Unit and a guarantee to maintain and respect Baloch honour and the tradition.

This is a classical Baloch way of negotiating where all the demands are packaged together to take a strong bargaining / negotiating position. In 1960, the representatives of the Pakistan Army and Narouz Khan met and discussed the disarming of the guerrillas and restoration of peace. Selig Harrison claimed that this meeting was inconclusive as no agreement was reached. Baloch nationalists argued that an agreement was reached. Nauroz Khan agreed to disarm and disband his guerrillas in return of a general amnesty and rehabilitation. Nauroz Khan’s nephew, Sardar Doda Khan Zehri Zarakzai carrying a Quran, assured Nauroz Khan that the Pakistani authorities have accepted all their demands. On this, Nauroz Khan and his guerrillas returned from the hills. Pakistani security forces denying that they made any such pledge arrested Nauroz Khan and his guerrillas. They were tried in a military court and were sentenced to death. Later, Nauroz Khan’s death punishment was converted into life imprisonment. Nauroz Khan’s son Batay Khan and five others were hanged in July 1960.
Though the details about the actual happening of this event never came out, soon a number of stories and legends started to circulate among the Baloch. These stories raised the status of the bravery and gallantry of these martyrs to mythical proportions. According to such accounts, all six cried Long Live Balochistan before being hanged. These heroes were immortalized in the poetry of Gul Khan Nasir, a famous and nationalist Baloch poet. These legends continue to inspire the Baloch nationalists even today. Sherbaz Mazari mentioned one such legend in his book:

Is this one your son? An army officer cold-heartedly asked Nauroze Khan as he pointed to the body of the elderly warrior’s son. Nauroze Khan stared at the soldier for a moment then replied quietly, “All these brave young men are my sons.” Then looking at the faces of the dead supporters, he noticed that the moustache of one of them had dropped in death. He went over to the dead body and tenderly curled the moustache upwards while gently admonishing, “Even in death, my son, one should not allow the enemy to think, even for one moment, that you have despaired.

The treatment extended to Nauroz Khan and his men after their surrender and arrest and by allegedly backing off from its pledge of general amnesty to these men, according to Baloch nationalist accounts, it was once again proven that the government of Pakistan does not honor its commitment with the Baloch. Baloch nationalists argued that after what they did to Prince Karim and his men in 1948, the treatment the government of Pakistan extended to Nauroze Khan and his men indicated that Pakistan treated Balochistan as a colony.

Basic Democracies System in Balochistan

The Ayub regime’s first attempt at political institution-building was the establishment of the system of local bodies known as the Basic Democracies. Ayub

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338 Harrison, 28-29.
339 Mazari, Sherbaz Khan Mazari, Disillusionment.
Khan was of the view that parliamentary democracy was not suitable for Pakistan. His concept was that the people should elect their representatives locally, who would then constitute an electoral college that would elect the chief executive. Consequently, 80,000 directly elected Basic Democrats; 40000 from each wing (East Pakistan and West Pakistan) of the country constituted the lowest level of a tiered system of decision-making. The lowest unit was the union council. Each union council comprised ten elected members and five appointed members, all called Basic Democrats. Union councils were responsible for local community development and the maintenance of law and order. The system formed a sort of pyramid, with the union councils at the bottom and the divisional councils at the top. The most important were the union councils; the most important members were the 80,000 elected Basic Democrats assigned the central role of electing the president. In 1960, they voted to confirm Ayub Khan as president.

The introduction of the Basic democracies system coincided with the construction of cantonments in Balochistan. Although these two developments were not linked, Baloch nationalist viewed both of these developments as encroachment on their rights and power. An important effect of this system’s introduction in Balochistan was that it brought to the fore a new generation of the Baloch leadership. Sardars Khair Bakhsh Marri, Attaullah Mengal and Ahmed Nawaz Bugti were elected to the office. Ironically though, at that time, a number of Baloch nationalist viewed them as representative of the government of Pakistan’s encroachment on the political autonomy of the local and regional governments.

Ayub Khan’s regime was also not happy with the election to office of sardars Marri and Mengal. Soon, Ayub government replaced Sardars Attaullah Mengal, Khair Bakhsh Marri and Akbar Bugti from their positions of the sardars of their tribes in an attempt to limit their political and tribal clout and appointed new sardars. This was, obviously not acceptable to the Baloch who viewed it as an intrusion and violation of the Baloch tribal code. A new wave of violence started with the murders of the government appointed sardars. This time the violence was carried out by the Parari under the command of a firebrand and a committed Marxist, Sher Muhammad Marri, popularly known as General Sherof. He, using classical guerrilla

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340 Parari, is a Baloch word used to describe a person or persons whose grievances cannot be solved through talk.
warfare methods, established more than twenty training camps in various parts of Balochistan. Parrari guerrillas were well-trained and organized and focused on military and governmental target such as military conveys, trains and army camps. Despite this organized violence, the main voice of the Baloch viewpoint remained the political leadership of Balochistan that was now operating under the banner of NAP. \(^{341}\)

CONCLUSION

This chapter covered perhaps one of the most important part of the Baloch nationalist narrative: Kalat’s accession with Pakistan. This chapter analyzed this narrative by detailing every step of the process. The chapter covered the political developments of the first two decades of the centre-Balochistan relations. The developments of the first two years of this interaction especially the way Kalat’s accession took place created a distrust and contempt for the state of Pakistan in Baloch eyes which got worse with the passage of time. Ill-conceived policies of the centre further complicated the situation. For the first two decades of Pakistan’s history, the center’s main worry was how to address the Bengali problem. This one point agenda and the policies which were made due to this, created further problems for the centre and its relations with the smaller provinces and ethnic groups of Pakistan. Pakistan’s policy makers perused the same policy towards Balochistan which was followed by the British and the policy debates about how to or not introduce reforms in Balochistan which took place among the Pakistani policy circles were not very different from how the British administration viewed this issue. In the last chapter we have discussed how the British policy makers viewed Balochistan’s tiny population and huge geography and lack of education as one of the reasons why it is not financially viable to introduce large scale reforms in the area. This chapter detailed same arguments made by Pakistani policy makers especially during the deliberations of the reform committee on Balochistan.

Further analyzing the Baloch narrative, this chapter argued that the Khan of Kalat, Ahmed Yar Khan also played a negative role during this period. His personal ambitions overshadowed his judgment about what is good for the people of Kalat and

\(^{341}\) Parari is significant not only because its military force would grow to over a thousand during the 1960s but also because it would be responsible for establishing a parallel government in many areas of Balochistan that built schools and provided medical services.
Balochistan. During his meetings with Jinnah, he repeatedly stated that he cannot decide the future of Kalat and that this decision can only be made by people’s representatives. However, it must be noted that Ahmed Yar Khan in 1946 while discussing the return of the leased areas with the British authorities, clearly stated that the people inhabiting the leased area must not be consulted. Was it because, he suspected that the Baloch living in relative ease under the British rule might not approve the return of the leased areas to the Kalat state? Where as in the case of Kalat’s accession with Pakistan, he insisted on the people’s verdict through their representatives was due to the fact that he was sure that a House of Commons dominated by the members of Kalat State National party (KSNP) would never approve accession of Kalat with Pakistan.

The way, he maneuvered for gaining an independent status for Kalat at the time of independence and then shifting sides and supporting the centre especially when the policy of one unit was adopted and then once again going against it and aspiring for a greater Balochistan with himself as the Khan-e-Azam of Greater Balochistan are clear indications of his dubious role.

Ayub Khan’s regime was equally disastrous for the centre-Balochistan relations. The way Ayub government handled the Baloch issue created a number of problems for the state which have over the years been further strengthened. However, it was during this period that a new generation of Baloch nationalist leadership such as Attaullah Mengal, Khair Bux Marri and Akbar Bugti emerged on the political landscape.

Another important player in this game which emerged during this period is the armed Parari movement under the leadership of Mir Hazar Khan which initiated a guerrilla struggle against the state of Pakistan. This Marxist-Leninist guerrilla movement played the most important role during the most violent and serious Baloch insurgency which took place in 1970s. It is discussed in detail in the next chapter.
CHAPTER FIVE
CENTRE-BALOCHISTAN RELATIONS
1969-1977

INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers the developments in Centre-Balochistan relations from 1969 to 1977. The chapter argues that for Balochistan, the decade of 1970s, started with a positive note as General Yahya Khan accepted an important Baloch demand and granted Balochistan the status of a province. Another positive development for Balochistan was the 1970s election in which for the first time, Baloch people were given the chance to elect their representatives. Sardar Attaullah Mengal, Akbar Bugti and Khair Bakhsh Marri who emerged as the political leaders of Balochistan in 1960s sided with NAP in the 1970 elections.

In 1970 election, in NWFP and Balochistan, the two provinces bordering Afghanistan, NAP emerged as the majority party. The vote was fractured along tribal lines, and the NAP did not have the same overwhelming support in NWFP and Balochistan that the Awami League had secured in East Bengal. During the civil war in erstwhile East Pakistan, General Yahya also banned NAP for allegedly conspiring to start an insurrection in West Pakistan. This was the historical and psychological baggage that the state of Pakistan carried along with it when Bhutto emerged as the leader of and struggled to stabilize the new Pakistan. Bhutto was a Bonapartist and this factor also played a huge role in the political developments which took place in the decade of 1970s.

The developments that took place during the decade of 1970 play an important and significant role in the Baloch narrative. Two developments or events hold the most important position in this narrative: the accession of Kalat under duress and the military action of the Pakistan army in Balochistan during this decade. 1970s also witnessed the dismissal of the first elected government of Balochistan and the

342 Khalid bin Sayeed, Politics in Pakistan: The nature and direction of Change, 91.
most serious insurgency in Balochistan. These developments became the most important and commonly mentioned grievances in Baloch nationalist literature.

This chapter argues that the lack of political acumen of the Baloch leadership, Bugti and Mengal-Marri rivalry, tribal feuds in Balochistan, Bhutto’s unwillingness to share power and accept the existence and the mandate of NAP, state’s security perception in the wake of the 1971 war and the separation of east Pakistan were the main reasons for the political instability in Balochistan during the 1970s.

Pakistan under General Yahya Khan

After the nation-wide demonstration against his government and spiralling political unrest in Pakistan, President Ayub Khan resigned as the president of Pakistan and handed the helm of affairs of the country to then chief of the army staff, General Yahya Khan, who became the martial administrator and president of Pakistan on 25 March 1969. After assuming the presidency, Yahya aimed at resolving the constitutional dilemma faced by the country and the increasing ethnic rivalry between the eastern and western wings of Pakistan. To address the grievances of East Pakistan, General Yahya doubled the quota for East Pakistan in the armed forces. He dissolved the One-Unit and restored the provinces of West Pakistan as they were in 1955 when One Unit was established to achieve parity against the majority of the Bengali-dominated East Pakistan.

He also granted Balochistan the status of a full-fledged province of Pakistan. General Yahya also declared that the first direct, based on adult franchise elections will be held in Pakistan in December 1970. He promised these elections to be free and fair. In keeping with the political trends and past experience, a number of observers have argued that General Yahya was under the impression that these elections would result in a hung parliament and that he would be able to continue his role of a power broker between the political leadership of the country. According to the estimates of his team of experts, in the forthcoming 1970 election, Awami League would get 80 seats in the National assembly, where as Qayyum League and Daultana Muslim League would get 70 seats each, National Awami Party (NAP)
would get 35 seats and Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) would get 25 seats. This generally accepted interpretation was challenged by G.W. Choudhury, who stated that Yahya knew beforehand that Awami League would win majority seats in the elections and that Mujib assured him that the six-points would be modified.

**1970 elections and Balochistan**

For Balochistan, General Yahya Khan’s decision to grant provincial status to Balochistan was a welcome development. Although a group led by Ahmed Yar Khan advocated the restoration of the Balochistan States Union or a province to be based on this, it was ignored. The new Baloch leadership comprising Gahous Bakhsh Bizenjo, Nawab Khair Bux Marri, Sardar Attaullah Mengal and Nawab Akbar Bugti that rose to prominence during the Ayub regime, also decided to participate in the forthcoming elections. Barring Bizenjo, who had a long-political career and understanding, Nawab Marri, Nawab Bugti and Sardar Mengal only aimed at safeguarding Baloch identity and rights. According to Sardar Sherbaz Mazari, they believed in the concept of Balochiyat to the fullest. After some deliberations, the three decided to join National Awami Party (NAP), a decision in which Bizenjo played the most important part. During the election campaign in Balochistan, Bizenjo, Marri, Mengal and Bugti spearheaded the election campaign of the NAP.

In 1970, Balochistan had four seats in the National Assembly of Pakistan. Out of these four seats, Bizenjo and Marri won each, Abdul Hayee Baloch, the president of the Baloch Students Organization won the third seat. The fourth seat from the Pashtun constituency was won by JUI. As a result of these elections, for the first time in Balochistan since the creation of Pakistan in 1947, just like elsewhere in the country, people were given the opportunity to elect their own representatives. For the first time, the people of Balochistan were represented by the leaders of their own province.
As it turned out, NAP was able to emerge as the majority party in two provinces, NWFP and Balochistan. In Balochistan, in the house of 20, NAP had won 8 seats where as five seats were won by independent candidates and three seats were won by Qayyum League. Therefore, it became quite clear that NAP would make the government in Balochistan.

**National Assembly Election Results, 1970-1**

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<td>40</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>300</td>
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</table>

1970 National elections and the separation of East Pakistan

Despite all estimates and claims, as the election day approached, it got obvious that the main contestants in the election were Mujibur Rehman led Awami League (AL) and Bhutto led Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP). In East Pakistan, Awami League managed to win all seats where as PPP emerged as the majority party in West Pakistan. As Awami League had won 160 seats as compared to the second best 81 seats won by PPP, it became obvious that the numbers were favoring the Awami League and that AL would be forming the next government.
However, Yahya and Bhutto dragged their feet and started applying delaying tactics. This agitated the East Pakistanis as they viewed this as a deliberate attempt to deny the Awami League its right to establish the national government and Mujirur Rehman to become the Prime minister. The resultant political unrest got violent on occasions. General Yahya adopted a militaristic approach to solve the problem and ordered a military crackdown to restore law and order and establish the government’s writ in East Pakistan. On 25 March 1971, Operation Searchlight was launched and law and order was soon restored in East Pakistan as most of the activists were either arrested, dispersed or went underground. This crackdown, however, widened the already existing gulf between the two wings of the country. Soon after, the activists resurfaced and the political agitation graduated into an insurgency. The insurgents were trained, equipped and fully supported by India. Soon the situation deteriorated to such an extent that India attacked Pakistan on the eastern front which resulted in the creation of Bangladesh on December 1971. More than 90,000 Pakistanis including 20,000 women and children became Indian prisoners of war (PoWs). The Indians also captured 5795.64 square miles of Pakistani territory on the western front. 348

Academics are still divided on who is responsible for the dismemberment of Pakistan. One group blames Yahya; another blames Bhutto where as a third group considers it an Indian conspiracy in which Mujibur Rehman acted as an Indian proxy. 349

PAKISTAN: PICKING UP THE PIECES

In the wake of the fall of Dhaka, two developments in Pakistan were significant; one, after the secession of East Pakistan and creation of Bangladesh, Punjab’s significance increased immensely as other than the political clout it enjoyed since 1947, it was now ethnically the majority province of Pakistan. Second,

although initially General Yahya had no plans of stepping down, under intense pressure from the Pakistani armed forces especially the junior officers of the Pakistan Army, General Yahya stepped down and handed the power over to the chairman of PPP, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto.

**BREAKDOWN OF PAKISTANI POPULATION IN 1972**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>58% (including the roughly 9.83 % Seraiki speaking areas of Southern Punjab)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sindh</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NWFP</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balochistan</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribal areas</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
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**ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF THE MILITARY AFTER EAST PAKISTAN’S SEPERATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Punjabi</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakhtun</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohajir, Sindhi, Kashmiri, Baloch</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**THE ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF THE OFFICER CORPS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>First estimate</th>
<th>Second estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Punjabis</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakhtuns</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muhajirs</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bhutto took over at a time when Pakistan was going through its most tragic phase of history. The country was dismembered; the army had to face the humiliation of surrendering to India and accept defeat in East Pakistan. It was believed that only Bhutto had the qualifications and credentials to revive the national spirit and rebuild the country.

Bhutto at the time of assuming power delivered a highly emotional speech and pledged that he would pick pieces, very small pieces but will make a new Pakistan. Ian Talbot commenting on Bhutto as the leader of the new Pakistan and the potential problems he would face, stated:

He also possessed the experience of representing Pakistan on the wider world stage. Aside from his own sense of destiny, no Pakistani politician was in fact better placed to rebuild the machinery of government and national morale shattered by the Bangladesh debacle. Its tangible consequences were equally serious and involved the loss of the foreign exchange brought by jute and tea exports and of an assured market for up to 40 per cent of the products of West Pakistan’s manufacturing base. Although the breakaway of the eastern wing dramatically altered the context of Pakistan’s politics, Bhutto faced the same dilemmas which had defeated his predecessors, namely how to assert the authority of the elected institutions of the state over the military and bureaucracy establish a functioning federal system and resolve the role of Islam in constitutional theory and practice. \(^{350}\)

\(^{350}\) Talbot, 216-7.
Bhutto became the martial law administrator and President of Pakistan and also held portfolios of defence, foreign affairs, internal affairs and inter-provincial coordinator for himself and appointed a 12 member cabinet. 351

He also appointed his loyalists and party members as governors of the four provinces. 352 Among the first decisions, he took was the release of the Shiekh Mujibur Rehman and allowed him to return to what was now Bangladesh. 353 He also lifted the ban on NAP, political ally of the Awami League in 1970 elections.

Political reconstruction and the constitutional Debate: PPP and the Opposition

Among the first challenges, Bhutto faced after assuming the leadership of Pakistan was to develop a political consensus among different political parties so that a new constitution could be prepared. He met with Khan Abdul Wali Khan, leader of the National Awami Party (NAP) and Mufti Mahmud, leader of the religious political party Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam (JUI). These two parties were the main opposition parties and majority parties in the provinces of NWFP and Balochistan and it was clear that they were heading towards establishing coalition government in these provinces. 354 As a gesture of goodwill and to ensure a congenial political environment, Bhutto formally offered NAP and JUI to join the government and offered them two cabinet slots. 355 Both NAP and JUI declined the offer. The main points of difference between PPP, NAP and JUI were the martial law and appointment of governors in NWFP and Balochistan, where NAP and JUI were majority parties. While Bhutto favoured a gradual restoration/return of democracy arguing that the martial law provided him the powers to implement and ensure the effectiveness of the reforms. Opposition parties especially NAP and JUI disagreed.

351 The two non-party members of Bhutto’s cabinet were Bengalis, Nurul Amin and Raja Tridev Roy, who were elected to the national assembly from East Pakistan in 1970. Their inclusion in the cabinet was intended to emphasise Bhutto’s refusal to recognize the secession of East Pakistan. See Keesing’s Contemporary Archives, 5-12 February, 1972, Vol. 18, 25091.
352 Ghulam Mustapha Khar, Hayat Mohammed Sherpao, Rasul Baksh Talpur and Ghaus Baksh Raisani were appointed governors of Punjab, NWFP, Sind and Balochistan respectively.
353 Outlook, 29 April 1972, 7.
355 Kessing’s Contemporary Archives, 5-12 February, Vol. 18, 25091.
NAP demanded that the martial law should be lifted immediately and a session of the National Assembly be called as soon as possible.  

NAP also demonstrated its street power when it organized rallies to protest the appointment of governors in NWFP and Balochistan without consulting NAP. Although the government managed to contain the fall out of such political hyperbole the political atmosphere got charged and the goal of political reconciliation seemed to be unattainable. Under such circumstances, the leaders of PPP, NAP and JUI met for a second round of talks in March 1972. After intense negotiation, an agreement was finally reached between the three parties on March 6, 1972. As per the agreement, PPP acknowledged the constitutional right of NAP and JUI to establish provincial governments in NWFP and Balochistan and have their nominees appointed as the governors of NWFP and Balochistan. In exchange, NAP-JUI agreed to withdraw their opposition to the martial law till August 14, 1972. All parties also agreed on the main points of an interim constitution which would be endorsed in a National Assembly session in April. It was agreed that the session of provincial assemblies will take place on 21 April. It was decided that a committee would be established which would prepare the draft constitution of Pakistan.

However, the political goodwill achieved through this agreement proved to be short-lived. PPP’s political stratagem in NWFP and getting into alliance with the Mazdur Kasan Party (MKP) and Qayyum Muslim League (QML), both political rivals of the NAP, and the appointment of Qayyum Khan, the head of QML, as the interior minister was taken by NAP as a deliberate attempt on part of Bhutto to curtail NAP’s political standing and clout in NWFP.

When the National Assembly session took place, Bhutto surprised everyone by announcing that the martial law would be lifted on 21 April 1972. He expected that the interim constitution should be adopted by the house for the smooth
functioning of the state. The opposition accepted this and the interim constitution was adopted on 17 April.\textsuperscript{364}

As per the agreement reached between PPP, NAP and JUI, on 29 April, Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo and Arbab Sikander were appointed the governors of Balochistan and NWFP respectively. Sardar Attuallah Mengal and Mufti Mahmud became the chief ministers of Balochistan and NWFP respectively.

By looking at these developments, one can argue that the political climate in Pakistan was neither frosty, nor too warm. While the ruling party and the opposition parties had serious differences, they managed to implement the March Accord. Another explanation for this could be Bhutto’s foreign and regional policy compulsions. Pakistan-India negotiations at Simla regarding the PoWs, lands under occupation and other contentious issues were coming up. Bhutto, in keeping with Wali Khan’s warning that Bhutto would be representing only half of Pakistan, if he went to Simla without taking the governments of NWFP and Balochistan on board,\textsuperscript{365} wanted to ensure that the political waters in the country should not boil.

Barring Jamaat slami and few other minor opposition parties who accused Bhutto of succumbing under Indian pressure and of a sellout, generally the Simla Accord was welcomed by the political leadership of the country including NAP and JUI.

In October, an all parties meeting took place to reach a consensus on the principles and main points of the constitution of Pakistan. Major political parties who attended the meeting included: NAP, JUI, JI, QML, Council Muslim League (CML) and Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Pakistan (JUP). An accord was signed on 20 October. As Wali Khan was in London for a medical checkup, Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo and Arbab Sikander signed the accord on his behalf. Despite the fact that Bhutto personally would have preferred a \textit{de Gaulle style}, presidential system\textsuperscript{366} the accord stated that the future constitution of Pakistan would follow a federal parliamentary system.

\textsuperscript{364} The Interim constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan 1972; \textit{Pakistan Times}, 18 April 1972
\textsuperscript{365} \textit{Pakistan Times}, 23 June 1972.
Political scientist Khalid bin Sayeed has described the urge to establish personal control over the state as Bonapartism. According to him, Bhutto was primarily motivated by *animus dominandi*, that is, the aggrandizement of his own power base and by making it subservient to his will and power.367

On 10 April 1973, the draft constitution was passed and approved by the National Assembly. 125 votes were casted in favor of the draft constitution.368 Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri and Mir Ali Ahmed Talpur were two noted nay sayers. As per the newly adopted constitution, Bhutto was sworn in as the prime minister of Pakistan on 14 August 1973.

CENTRE-BALOCHISTAN RELATIONS

In March 1972, When Bhutto was holding talks with the opposition parties; he invited Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri and Sardar Attaullah Mengal to Islamabad as the leaders of NAP Balochistan to discuss the political situation of Balochistan. This turned out to be a very difficult meeting. According to the accounts available of the meeting, Nawab Marri acted as a senior sardar dealing with a minor wadero.369 According to Rafi Raza who attended the meeting, “sardar Marri was throughout abrasive. I do not recall anyone else speaking in this tune to ZAB, nor ZAB being so restrained.”370

One of the most important points of discussion was the governorship of Balochistan. Sherbaz Mazari in his memoirs has detailed how this decision was made during the meeting. Initially, Bhutto offered Nawab Marri to accept the position. According to Sherbaz Mazari, the Marri sardar coldly turned his face aside without bothering to comment.371 Bhutto then offered the position to Sardar Mengal who as per the Baloch tradition and manners responded that he rather Nawab Marri have it. Nawab Marri, responding to Bhutto’s second request, “arrogantly turned his face away from him and haughtily announced that Attaullah should have it.”372 While this political ping pong was going on, Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, who was attending the

367 Khalid bin Sayeed, 91.
368 Ishtiaq, 213.
369 According to the tribal hierarchy, Khair Bakhsh Marri was a superior sardar. However, Bhutto was not only a minor wadero, he was also the head of the state.
371 Sherbaz Mazari, 243-44.
372 Sherbaz Mazari, 243-44.
meeting uninvited, jumped in and said to Bhutto, “they are sardars. It is beneath their dignity to accept such an office. Give it to me instead.” 373 Bizenjo was appointed the governor of Balochistan.

Bhutto, however, made it clear that he has only agreed to appoint a governor who is neither a ruling party’s member nor an apolitical person, to achieve national unity and that the governor would stay in his position as long as he enjoyed his support.374

**Major events during the NAP government in Balochistan**

NAP-JUI government in Balochistan was unique in a number of ways. For the first time, Balochistan was to be ruled and governed by elected representatives. Attaullah Mengal and others were nationalists that faced prison terms and were considered anti-state during the previous Ayub regime. The provincial government expressed its intention of promoting democratic values, improve law and order and address concerns regarding basic human needs in the province. The provincial government also expressed its willingness and desire to work closely and in collaboration with the central government. Sardar Attaullah Mengal after assuming the chief ministership of Balochistan, promised to make Balochistan a shining Balochistan.

However, soon after, the provincial government started taking decisions which were taken as hostile by the centre. Among the very first decisions Mengal administration took was to repatriate 5500 (mostly Punjabis) civil servants from Balochistan. Out of these 5500 civil employees, 2880 were serving in the Police force.375 According to Mengal government, out of the 12000 government employees, only 3000 were Baloch. 90 per cent of the personnel of the Frontier Force (FC) were outsiders. Mengal government created a new police force, Balochistan Dehi Muhafiz (BDM).

Another bone of contention was Mengal government’s refusal to allow the Coast Guards, a federal force, to patrol the Makran coast. While these decisions by

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373 Sherbaz Mazari, 243-44
the provincial government were creating a rift between the centre and the province, Marri and Mengal tribesmen attacked the Punjabi abadkars (settlers) in the Pat Feeder area. In Quetta, armed Bugti tribesmen besieged the provincial secretariat and demanded that Ahmad Nawaz Bugti resigned from its ministership from Mengal’s cabinet.\footnote{Outlook, 9 December 1972.} If all this was not enough, on December 26, a tribal war started between the Jamotes and Mengals when the Mengal lashkar (tribal force) attacked the Jamotes. Forty two people were reported killed in the attack. The provincial government failed to restore law and order. Cynics argued that as the Mengal tribe was involved, Mengal government was a party in the tribal clash. Eventually, the federal government intervened and sent in Army troops to restore law and order. It was believed that the Governor of Balochistan, Bizenjo had requested the federal government to intervene but Bizenjo later stated that he only asked for security forces and not the army. Mengal government and the NAP leadership sharply criticized the federal government’s intervention into the provincial matters. Bizenjo openly accused the federal interior minister, Qayyum Khan as the man behind the whole incident. According to him, it was Qayyum, who encouraged the Jam of Lasbela to go on this path.\footnote{Dawn, 27 January 1973.} NAP leadership claimed that the main reason behind this episode was the refusal of the Jamotes to implement reform measures introduced by the Mengal government in their areas.\footnote{Dawn, 28 January 1973.} Wali Khan in a statement declared the federal government action’s as a breach of the constitutional right of the provincial government and interference in the internal affairs of Balochistan.\footnote{Dawn, 10 February 1973.}

The London Plan

An important issue which had adverse effects on centre-province relations was the so-called London Plan. In 1972, a number of Pakistani politicians, mostly from the opposition parties, particularly NAP visited London for various reasons.\footnote{A. B. Awan, Balochistan: Historical and Political Process, (London: New Century Publisher, 1985)} The presence of so many leaders of Pakistan in London at the same time coupled with the presence of Sheikh Mujibur Rehman, the leader of Awami League and now the founding father of Bangladesh, prompted the newspapers of Pakistan, mostly
belonging to the government owned National Trust Newspapers to report that these political forces were planning to overthrow the Bhutto government and dismember the state of Pakistan. This, according to these media outlets was the so-called London Plan. The NAP leadership declared these allegations as baseless and denied the existence of any such plan. NAP leadership accused the central government of making all these allegations up to malign the Mengal government in Balochistan. While this tug of war was going between the Bhutto administration and the leadership of NAP, on 10 February, the federal security forces found a cache of Russian made ammunition, when it raided the Iraqi embassy in Islamabad. It was claimed that these weapons were for the Baloch insurgents in their so-called struggle against the state of Pakistan. Responding to this development, Bhutto government, using its constitutional rights dismissed the Mengal government and a thirty day presidential rule was imposed upon Balochistan. Within 24 hours of this, the NAP government in NWFP resigned in protest to this decision. On 16 February, a number of NAP leaders including Bizenjo, Mengal, and Marri and score of NAP workers were arrested. Several cases were registered against the leaders of NAP especially Bizenjo, Marri and Mengal. These charges and filed cases included charges of running smuggling gangs, possession of arms, raising private militias and misuse of public funds. The Mengal government was accused of providing government ammunition to its own private force which mostly comprised Mengal tribesmen. It was also charged that these three leaders were running guerrilla training camps. Bhutto, appointed Nawab Akbar Bugti and Aslam Khattak as the governors of Balochistan and NWFP respectively.

Balochistan under Akbar Bugti’s Governorship

Soon after assuming the governorship, in a total reversal of the NAP government’s policy, Nawab Akbar Bugti asked the center to send on deputation a few officers from the central pool to assist the Balochistan government. He also sacked a few local officials who he considered too close to the previous provincial government. Bugti’s style of governance was that all decisions were made by a single authority; Akbar Bugti himself. He exercised total control over the executive,

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382 *Dawn*, 11 February 1973
financial and political matters related to Balochistan. During this tenure, nothing ever got approved without his consent. Stanley Wolpert wrote, “whether it was allotments of tractors and bulldozers, construction of new tube wells, or electricity connections, permits or licenses nothing could go to the chief minister unless the governor i.e. Nawab Akbar Bugti first approve or reject it.” Wolpert also points to another interesting aspect of Akbar Bugti’s governorship. According to Wolpert, Nawab Akbar Bugti at times, sent detailed reports to Bhutto about the political and security situation in Balochistan solely based on his own view. One of these so-called situation reports stated:

Counter insurgency forces are in ... disarray. Bhutto ... has not yet realized the situation. He is still dreaming his dreams of one party government. His love for whole and sole power blinded him to the danger of not sharing power. ... Bhutto is convinced that sooner or later Bugti will turn against him. ...Bugti knows this and so a situation of mistrust prevails. ... the national leadership does not support Bugti. ...The People’s Party press gives him no build up. ... So Bugti is unable to give the people what they want. ... if affairs continue to move as they are moving today, Balochistan is lost to Pakistan.

Nawab Bugti resigned from Governorship of Balochistan on 31 October 1973. According to Bugti, he accepted the position of governor with the hope that he could be able to help the people of Balochistan in improving their condition but despite his best efforts, a number of factors impeded his several attempt to achieve this objective. Bhutto accepted Bugti’s resignation and appointed Khan-e-Baloch, Mir Ahmad Yar Khan as the new governor of Balochistan. An important aspect of this time period in Balochistan was that the provincial administration could not perform well as the Governor and the chief minister and his cabinet did not see eye

383 Wolpert, Zulfi Bhutto of Pakistan, op.cit.
384 Anonymous report on Baluchistan, enclosed by Governor M.A.K Bugti in his letter of 3 August 1973 to President Z.A.Bhutto held in BFLA, as quoted by Wolpert
385 Wolpert, 225.
386 Wolpert, 230.
ball to eye ball. The main reason for this was their tribal differences and the fact that the only reason they were together in the provincial administration was their opposition to the NAP leadership of Balochistan. Bhutto dismissed the chief minister and his cabinet and imposed federal rule in the province on December 1975.  
Governor as the representative of the federal government in Balochistan was made incharge of the province. Ironically though, all members of the dissolved cabinet including the chief minister were appointed advisors to the governor.

In April 1976, while visiting Balochistan, Bhutto announced to officially abolish the sardari system in Balochistan.  This decision was ironic in the sense that a number of sardars were closely supporting him and his policies in Balochistan and the biggest sardar, Ahmed Yar Khan was his governor in Balochistan.

Bhutto understood that nothing in Balochistan would change unless its financial and developmental issues were addressed. He was also aware that this backwardness was the biggest tool which the Baloch nationalist and insurgents’ use to justify their struggle. To address the Baloch economic grievances, Bhutto embarked upon a massive development plan for Balochistan. He increased federal fund for Balochistan. As per the official data, the federal fund for Balochistan increased almost hundred per cent in one year. In the year 1972-73, it was Rs. 120 million where as in 1974 it was Rs. 210 million. During his government, according to official sources, the revenues of the province increased from Rs. 88 million to Rs. 226 million in one year (1974-75). This was achieved by providing the province with the royalty money and excise duty for the Sui gas. A number of new development projects were also started. Special attention was given to improving the communication network, construction of roads, hospitals, schools, banks, technical institutions as well as health facilities.

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387 *Dawn*, 1 January 1976  
388 *Dawn*, 9 April 1976  
390 Ibid.
The Baloch Insurgency

The dismissal of the Mengal government and the subsequent arrest of sardar Attaullah Mengal, Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri and Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo and others, was taken as an attack on the Baloch honor. Due to this, a number of Baloch rose against the central government. According to Selig Harrison, “The Ryvaj, the traditional code of honor, requires the true Baloch to fight, if necessary, to defend his personal and tribal honor, and the overwhelming majority of Baluch tribal leaders regarded Bhutto’s action as a deliberate insult to all Baluch, requiring military redress.” Six weeks after the ouster of the Mengal government, Baloch insurgents were targeting army conveys. Most significant of these attacks took place on 18 May 1973 at Tandoori in which the Baloch insurgents targeted a team of Dir Scouts patrolling the area, killing all of them and taking away their weapons. In a different attack which took place on the same day, the Baloch insurgents targeted the additional deputy commissioner of Kalat.

As it was stated in the previous chapter, the Pararis decided not to completely dismantle and keep their network intact despite agreeing to a ceasefire in late 1960s. Bhutto’s breach of Baloch honor provided the Parari leadership reason enough to restart their militant activities. As it happened, the Pararis under the leadership of Mir Hazar played a significant role in the Baloch insurgency during the Bhutto regime. Selig Harrison stated that “The authority of the guerrillas was largely unchallenged in the Marri area, where they enjoyed the active, albeit covert, support of the tribal sardar and received food and other necessities from the Baloch populace. Here, in particular, the Pararis hoped to establish a ‘liberated’ zone of base area, comparable to Mao’s Yenan, in the event that the Baloch embarked on a full-scale struggle for independence from Pakistan.”

The militant presence was particularly strong in Sarawan, Jhalawan and Marri-Bugti areas. The Baloch guerrillas had an elaborate command structure. The prominent commanders of the Baloch insurgent included Mir Hazar Khan, Lauang

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391 Selig Harrison, 36.
392 Harrison, 36
393 White paper, 23.
395 Selig Harrison, In Afghanistan’s Shadow, 33-34.
396 Harrison, 33-34.
By July 1974, the casualty figure of the security forces was on the rise. The Baloch insurgents managed to control most of the roads and highways and almost cut the province off from other parts of the country. This resulted in the occasional disruption of the rail links and supply of coals to Punjab. The insurgents also regularly targeted and almost halted any oil and gas exploration and further drilling and surveying.

This changed with the battle at Chamalang which lasted for six days. At present, the battle at Chamalang occupies a significant place in Baloch narrative of injustice and atrocities committed against them by the center. Every year, during the summer, Marris used to relocate to the valley of Chamalang. In 1974, while most of the Marri men were engaged in fighting with the Pakistan Army, the women, children and older men came to the valley with their flocks of animal. According to various accounts, Pakistan Army decided to use this as a tool to lure the Baloch insurgents into a decisive battle. The plan worked and a number of minor skirmishes took place between the Baloch insurgent and the Pakistan army. On September 3, 1974, Pakistan army attacked the 1500 strong Baloch insurgent force, supported by the Pakistan Air force. Around 125 insurgents were killed and 900 were captured, although most of the important guerrilla leaders managed to escape. Baloch insurgents claimed that they killed 446 Pakistan Army soldiers. Although the Baloch insurgents at the time claimed that they inflicted heavy losses on the Pakistan army, it became obvious that the battle of Chamalang proved disastrous for the Baloch insurgents as they never fully recovered from the losses they suffered in the fighting. Although the violence continued sporadically, the momentum of the insurgency was lost. Another indication of this fact is that in 1974, more than 5000 Marri tribesmen surrendered and handed over their arms to the government in exchange of full pardon.

397 Harrison,38.
After the surrender of the Baloch guerrillas, Bhutto in a statement claimed that the insurgents have been defeated and the writ of the state has been restored. 398

In 1978, the government released a report in which it was stated that 70000 strong forces were deployed to quell the insurgency in Balochistan. According to official estimates, the Baloch insurgents numbered 55000 which included cells and groups with proper command and control structure as well as loosely organized guerrilla groups. During the insurgency, more than 340 engagements took place between the two sides in which 5,300 Baloch insurgents and 3,300 Pakistani security forces personal lost their lives. 399

The insurgency of 1970s was the bloodiest insurgency in Baloch history till the time and what differentiated it from the earlier insurgencies (1948 and 1958) was the direct involvement of two of the most prominent tribes; Marri and Mengal and their sardars; Nawab Khair Buakhsh Marri and Sardar Attaullah Khan Mengal in it and the presence of a group of revolutionaries belonging from the elite class families of Punjab and studying in various British educational institutions including Cambridge University and the London School of Economics.

The London Group

Most of the details about this group are still not available but as per what is now publically available, the known members of this group included Najam Sethi, Ahmed Rashid, Dalip Johny Das, Asad Rehman, Rashid Rehman and Muhammad Ali Talpur. 401 According to A. B. Awan, the member of London group received military training at PLO camps in Jordan and a few of them were trained in India. 402 This assertion is strongly denied by the members of the group. It was reported that the members of the London group were involved in the logistical side and motivational training of the insurgents. A former Director of the Intelligence Bureau, A. B. Awan, claimed that “Most of them came back without making any contribution, except that of providing some amusement for the tough Baloch

398 Baluchistan Revolt over, Bhutto says, Washington Post, 17 October 1974
400 White paper, 25.
401 Shuja, 333.
402 Ibid., 334.
fighters.” As true Marxists and those who strive for a Marxist revolution in Pakistan, the members of this group had a fundamental difference with the Baloch insurgents. The Baloch insurgents were fighting for their rights and a few of them for the Baloch independence and not for an ideological revolution, something which eventually resulted in the parting of ways between the two. However, the known members of the group, Rashid Rehman, Asad Rehman, Najam Sethi and Muhamad Ali Talpur are still considered authority on the Baloch problem in Pakistan and regularly express their views on it.

WHAT WENT WRONG? CENTRE VERSUS BALOCH NARRATIVE

Centre’s Narrative

Despite a promising start in which both sides expressed their desire and willingness to work together, the rift in relations between the centre and the province started to appear very soon. The Mengal government’s decision regarding certain issues already discussed in the earlier section that involved federal government and/or issue that required the approval and consent of the federal government irritated the Bhutto administration. The decision to send all non-Baloch civil servants back to their provinces of domicile, taking over and restructuring of the police and not allowing the coastguards to operate were decision which were taken without consulting or discussing their implications and ramifications with the federal government. This clearly irritated Bhutto. Bhutto regime viewed these policies as an attempt by Attaullah Mengal and other like-minded sardars to ensure that the sardari hold of the province continued and that Bhutto’s agenda of modernization which included abolishing of the sardari system was not implemented which clearly went against their interest in the province.

405 White Paper
406 This stance of the government contradicted its own strategy of extending support to “the good Sardars” or “cooperative Sardars”. This argument of the government lost its credibility due to its protection and extension of privileges to these sardars who were in its good books. It was Lawrence Ziring’s point of view that Bhutto exploited the Marri and Mengals against the Bugtis. He also sided with the Khan of Kalat when the Bugtis were no longer needed. For detail see Lawrence Ziring, Pakistan: The Emergence of Political Development, (Kent: W Dawson & Sons, 1980).
Bhutto was of the view that the Mengal administration was preparing the ground for secession from Pakistan. The decision to send all non-Baloch government employees back to their home provinces, according to Bhutto regime, was a deliberate attempt to create an administrative vacuum. The new changes in the structure of police and the creation of the Balochistan Dehi Muhafiz (BDM), was taken as a deliberate attempt to induct its own people in the security forces which would then be used to fulfil this agenda. 407

As the memory of the East Pakistan debacle was fresh, the regime also believed that the Baloch sardars have external support in their alleged plan to secede from Pakistan. The reason, the Mengal administration didn’t allow the Coast Guards to operate, according to this view was to ensure that they receive arms and equipment from their regional foreign supporters without any hindrance. The seizure of a large cache of arms from the Iraqi embassy which was destined for the Baloch insurgents was considered a clear proof of this outside support. 408

Regarding the tribal feuds especially between the Mengal and the Jamotes, the centre was of the view that the Mengal government was totally involved in this and the chief minister Attaullah Mengal led the tribal lashkars from Mengal, Bizenjo and almost nine other tribes including the Balochistan Deli Mufiz (BDM) forces, against the Jamotes and killed, looted and plundered the Jamotes. During the fight a number of Jamotes were killed and a large number of them had to seek refuge in the nearby hills where they were besieged by these tribal forces. As the provincial government was totally involved in this, the centre had no option but to intervene to restore law and order in the province. This is exactly why Pakistan Army was sent in to take control of Lasbela on 9 February 1973. Bhutto also clearly stated that the Pakistan army has a constitutional obligation to ensure national security and that was what it did in Balochistan. 409

Bhutto was particularly proud of the fact that he introduced land reforms in the country. He believed that these Baloch sardars were one of the major hindrances in its implementation. Speaking in the parliament, he stated:

407 Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto’s Speech in the parliament, Situation in Baluchistan, April 26, 1976, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Directorate of Research, Reference & Publications, Government of Pakistan, Islamabad
408 Ishtiaq, 214.
409 Ishtiaq, 214.
We introduced land reforms on national scale but the sardars of Baluchistan, thinking themselves to be above the law, did not file the forms required. They threw out these forms contemptuously and said: “We would like to see who will come into our territory to implement the land reforms. We are the masters of all that we survey. In our jurisdiction, nobody will dare”. In their manifesto, they had a provision for land reforms, but when it came to implementation, they refused to even comply with the first step which was to make a declaration of their land holdings. This is how true they are to their word. This is how faithful they are to the pledge which they had given to the people of Baluchistan.  

Bhutto, speaking in the parliament, gave another reason why he thinks that these sardars (Mengal and Marri) are the trouble makers. He mentioned a meeting which took place in Murree which was attended by a large number of political leaders from all major parities of Pakistan such as Attaullah Mengal, Khair Bakhsh Marri, Ghaous Bakhsh Bizenjo, Maulana Mufti Mahmood and Professor Ghafoor Ahmed. A number of issues were discussed related to the political stability of Pakistan. An important issue under discussion was the political developments in Balochistan.

We made certain tentative proposals. I said, “Now in two days I am going to the United States; let me come back and we will pick up these negotiations and hold discussions”. Everyone agreed, each and every one of them agreed. While they were getting up to go, sardar Mengal asked them to sit down. Everyone sat down. He said, “No, I am breaking this tentative agreement. We will continue to fight; our man will be in the hills,

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we will not tell our men to come down; our men will resist government of Pakistan, our men will resist you. We will waylay and burn the buses; we will not stop until we come to the final agreement.” I said, sardar sahib, what are you saying? If you do that, the whole thing will escalate. You will fight but do you think we will stand by and watch? You will waylay buses and set fire to villages and shall we take it lying down? Why do you want to do that? Can’t you wait for a few days? I am returning soon. All of you agreed only a few minutes earlier.” He said, “Now I am a man of ‘Ghairat’. I do not believe in all this talk and negotiations. This is all rubbish. I am a man of action”. I said, “Do you realize the consequences? This is going to escalate. You will fight, we will have to resist. Your men will go into the hills; we will have to follow them. They will burn villages; we will have to take action. This thing will get out of hand, out of the political domain”. He said: “that we know. We realize it but we have always been fighters; we have fought in the past and we will fight in the future until the final agreement is reached on our terms. Now this is the position they take in negotiations that until the final agreement comes on their terms, they will continue the fight.411

Bhutto’s lack of trust of the Baloch political leaders (sardars) was so great that despite the fact that Sardar Akbar Bugti sided with him against the Mengal government and other NAP leadership (Khair Bakhsh Marri, Ghaous Bakhsh Bizenjo), Bhutto did not trust him. While Bhutto used him as a tool against the other Baloch sardars and to quell the Baloch insurgency yet his biggest worry was what would happen if Nawab Bugti decided to side with the other Baloch sardars. 412

Government of Pakistan’s White paper on Balochistan

The government of Pakistan issued a white paper on Balochistan on 19 October 1974. This was an important document in the sense that it clearly stated how

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the centre viewed the situation in Balochistan and who, according to the government of Pakistan, were responsible for the violence and political unrest in Balochistan. The situation worsened because of two reasons, according to the white paper: one, the threat to the status quo or the position of these sardars due to the development policies of the centre, second, the objective of succeeding from the federation.413 According to this document, the sardars especially Attaullah Mengal and Khair Bakhsh Marri were anti-development as they saw it as something which would minimize their hold on the people and the land. Therefore, these sardars strongly opposed the modernization policies for the province. 414

The Whitepaper also clearly stated that the Baloch insurgents had regional and international support. The document cited a number of examples as proof of the existence of such active support. This, according to the while paper, was the reason why Mengal government did not allow the coast guards to operate in the strategic Makran coast area as this would have exposed their supply line.415

Regarding the insurgents and their training and equipment, the Whitepaper stated that most of the insurgents encountered by the Pakistani security forces were well-trained and had no shortage of arms and ammunition. Establishing a link with the coup in Afghanistan, the White paper alleged that since the coup in Afghanistan, the militant activities in Balochistan also intensified.416 The white paper also elaborated in detail the role of the regional players especially Afghanistan in Balochistan.417

Regarding the ultimate objective of the Baloch insurgents, the Whitepaper stated that the final aim was the creation of a Greater Balochistan.

**Baloch Narrative**

Baloch narrative of why all this happened is totally different. According to this narrative, Bhutto had no intention of handing over the powers in the province to the elected representatives of the NAP. This was clearly illustrated in his decision to appoint Ghaous Bakhsh Raisani as the governor of Balochistan. However the

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413 White Paper, 2.
415 White Paper, 15.
people’s demonstrations on the streets and the fact that the situation at the borders was still not totally under his control, and that the numbers were not in his favour in the Balochistan assembly, made him realize that he was not in a position to have another confrontation with NAP.\textsuperscript{418} The moment he managed to achieve his objectives of getting the constitution passed from the parliament and politically felt his feet on firm grounds, he started moving against the NAP government in Balochistan. The centre under his leadership took every step to make the day to day functioning of the provincial government of Balochistan almost impossible.

Regarding the Mengal government’s decision to send all non-Baloch government employees back to their provinces of domicile, the Baloch narrative or Mengal government’s position was that most of these civil servants belonged to Punjab and Punjab cadre of the bureaucracy.\textsuperscript{419} The PPP government in Punjab instructed these civil servants to put every possible obstruction in the Balochistan provincial government. As these government employees were more concerned about their jobs, they completely ignored the instructions of their relevant ministers in the Mengal administration and followed the instruction of the Centre. They were also given the impression that NAP government is there for a short while and they should not destroy their careers by complying with the orders of the Mengal government in Balochistan.\textsuperscript{420} It was this administrative paralysis inflicted upon the Mengal government by the center that pushed the Mengal government to raise its own rural police, the Balochistan Dehi Mufiz (BMD). According to Bizenjo, the centre was onboard on the decision of the establishment of the BMD, yet, after its establishment it strongly objected to this force and called it a private army of the NAP.\textsuperscript{421} Ironically though, once the Mengal government was desolved, the PPP government retained this force after sacking its chief, Colonel Sultan Muhammad Mengal and changing its name to Balochistan Reserved Police. In 1981, Sardar Mengal in conversation with Tariq Ali said; “When we tried to correct the balance in the Police force, Bhutto and his Punjabi aide Khar organized a police strike against our government.” \textsuperscript{422} The governor of Punjab, according to Sardar Mengal was following a plan to create

\textsuperscript{418} Friday Times, April 18-24, 1997
\textsuperscript{419} M.M.S.Dehwar, \textit{Contemporary History of Balochistan}, 390.
\textsuperscript{420} M.M.S.Dehwar, \textit{Contemporary History of Balochistan}, 390.
\textsuperscript{421} M.M.S.Dehwar, \textit{Contemporary History of Balochistan}, 390.
\textsuperscript{422} Tariq Ali, 117-118.
problems for the Mengal government in Balochistan. It was Khar, according to Sardar Attaullah Mengal who withdrew the Punjabi civil servants from Balochistan and not the Mengal government. By doing this, he wanted to create an administrative vacuum in the province which would have made Mengal government’s functioning very difficult, if not impossible. This decision was followed by the Police strike, which according to Mengal was again instigated by Bhutto and his aide Khar.

Attaullah Mengal’s stance on this whole issue conveniently ignores the fact that sending the non-local government servants back to their provinces was an electoral promise of Balochistan NAP.

According to this narrative, the law and order problem in the Pat feeder area and in Las Bela was instigated by the PPP government in the centre. NAP leadership also accused Bhutto of being the mastermind behind the Jamote uprising against the Mengal government. Ghaous Bakhsh Bizenjo in a speech in March 1973, stated:

The Lasbela incident is there for everyone to see. In Lasbela, the Muslims Leaguers led by Qayyum Khan paid the Jamote bribe money and provided weapons so that they could rise against the Baloch government and Governor Rule could be imposed in the province. I issued warrants against the miscreants but they were not implemented. When we asked the provincial militia to apprehend the miscreants, the centre did not allow the militia to do so. Thus, the only option left for us was to call upon our people to suppress the rebellion. The people were successful but even then the democratic government of Balochistan was dismissed.

Ghaous Bakhsh Bizenjo further alleged that the aim of this move was to put Balochistan under the governor rule. When the BDM and other provincial resources

423 Zainab Rizvi, The last warrior, 24.
425 T. Bizenjo, Bab-e-Balochistan: Statements, Speeches and interviews of Mir Ghous Bux Bizenjo, (Quetta: Sales and Services, 1999), 75.
came in to resolve the situation, the federal government intervened. Despite this the Mengal government was able to eliminate the problem but then it was accused of instigating a civil war in the province.427

The NAP leadership in Balochistan also questioned how the PPP which had no elected representative in the Balochistan assembly in 1970, managed to have a majority in 1974 despite the fact that no elections took place during this period? This was achieved, according to them, by unconstitutional means such as use of force, black mail and political and monetary bribes. The appointment of Jam Ghulam Qadir as the chief minister of Balochistan was made by breaching almost every clause of the constitution.430

The NAP leadership in Balochistan also accused Bhutto of double standards. Bhutto, according to them blamed the sardars of being the main reason behind the Balochistan crisis and the backwardness of the province as they don’t want to lose their grip on the province. Whereas, all his supporters and allies in Balochistan were sardars.431 Jam of Las Bela, Jam Ghulam Qadir, sardar of Zarakzais, Sardar Doda Khan Zarakzai, sardar of the Bugtis, Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti and Khan-e-Baloch, Mir Ahmed Yar Khan were in Bhutto’s camp. The NAP leader, Wali Khan in an interview stated that: Bhutto claimed that he is against the Sardari system. According to him (Bhutto) Bizenjo was removed because he was a sardar- which he was not. But then he replaced Bizenjo with Akbar Bugti- a really big sardar. Akbar Bugti was a bigger sardar than Bizenjo and now of course he has the Khan of Kalat, the Khan of all sardars put together and yet Mr. Bhutto claims that he is totally against the sardars and the sardari system.432

The rivalry between Nawab Bugti and Bizenjo, Sardar Mengal and Nawab Marri also was a factor in the developments which took place in Balochistan. According to Bizenjo, Bhutto had been all too willing to believe the exaggerated
stories Akbar Bugti fed him about a guerrilla army being raised in Balochistan. Bugti’s motivation was thwarted ambition, according to Bizenjo, since the NAP had refused to make him Governor under the deal they had struck with Bhutto for the formation of the NAP-JUI government in Balochistan. Akbar Bugti was duly rewarded for his anti-NAP activities by being made Governor after the NAP government was dismissed. 433

As regard the discovery of the arms cache from the Iraqi embassy, the Baloch narrative was that it was all a setup. It was part of a conspiracy against the NAP government in Balochistan. 434 No proof that these arms were for the Baloch insurgents were ever found, not even after the arrest of NAP leaders and the Hyderabad trial, or later under General Zia. 435

Baloch nationalists also argued that the Shah of Iran was also part of the conspiracy against the Nationalist government in Balochistan. According to this line of reasoning, the Shah of Iran assumed that a nationalist government in Pakistani Balochistan would encourage the Iranian Baloch to stir up trouble in their area. According to Harrison, “Bhutto told me in 1977 interview that the Shah had been very insistent, even threatening, and he promised us all sorts of economic and military help, much more than we actually got. He felt strongly that letting the Baloch have provincial self-government was not only dangerous in itself, for Pakistan, but would give his Baloch dangerous ideas.” 436

Sardar Attaullah Mengal in particular and the national Baloch leadership in general also opined that another reason for the illegal sacking of NAP government in Balochistan was the fact that the people were witnessing how in the two provinces, namely NWFP and Balochistan where NAP was in control, educational, land and labour reforms were taking place and things were improving as compared to the two provinces, Punjab and Sindh where PPP was ruling, everything was a mass. 437 NAP Balochistan leadership categorically rejected the claim that the Baloch insurgents were fighting for independence or separation of Balochistan from Pakistan. 438 All

433 Breegs, 325.
434 Harrison, 35.
435 Dehwar, 399.
436 Harrison, 97.
437 People’s Front, 1974, 3.
438 Breegs, 336.
they wanted was a province in which they have full provincial autonomy and control of their wealth and a federal system in which the centre would only take care of defence, foreign affairs, communication and currency.  

WHY THE BALOCH LEADERSHIP FAILED?

1970 election was the first opportunity the Baloch leadership got to run their province. As political affiliations and allegiances were based on tribal loyalties, there was no solid political base and the promises made during the election campaign were rather emotional than grounded in socio-economic realities of the area. Barring Bizenjo, the NAP leadership in Balochistan had no political training and lacked any administrative experience. A closer look at the dynamics of the Baloch political landscape of the 1970s indicate that the NAP Balochistan government suffered from four weaknesses and these weaknesses played a paramount role in its downfall.

Tribal feuds

The Baloch society is primarily a tribal society and the leadership of NAP Balochistan included Sardar Attaullah Mengal and Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri, two of the most prominent Baloch sardars. The NAP Balochistan leadership could not rise above the tribal level. The Pat feeder incident which made headlines during the NAP government as a conflict between the locals and non-locals was actually a result of a long standing tribal rivalry. What is ironic is that it was a Baloch Sardar, Sardar Ghaous Bakhsh Raisani who projected it as a conflict between the locals and the non-locals.  

The differences between the Mengals and the Zehris and Zarakzais, who had been closer to Islamabad since the days of General Ayub Khan culminated into Doda Khan Zarakzai establishing a parallel government in the Jhalawan area.  

When Governor Bizenjo accused Nabi Bakhsh Zehri of providing arms and ammunition to Doda Khan and declared that the provincial government would soon

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440 *Dawn*, 7 December 1972  
441 Awan, 268.  
442 Awan, 268.
take steps against Doda Khan, Doda Khan responded with a promise of a blood bath if the provincial government moved against him.443

The fact that the insurgent violence during the 1973-77 took place and mostly remained limited to a certain area was a clear indication of the fact that a number of Baloch tribes and tribal leaders were not supportive of the Baloch cause as postulated by the Baloch nationalists.

**NAP leadership’s lack of political acumen**

Barring Ghaous Bakhsh Bizenjo, who started his political career as a student activist during his stay at the Aligrah University, the other two prominent leaders of NAP-Balochistan; Sardar Attallah Mengal and Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri were pure and simple tribal sardars without any political training. Another thing which both had in common was their hatred for Bhutto which they never tried to hide, which in itself was an indication of their lack of political acumen.

Bizenjo in a meeting with Sherbaz Mazari expressed his helplessness in this regard. He told Mazari that he tried his utmost to resolve the political crisis in Balochistan but all his efforts failed because Attaullah Mengal and Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri who following their sardari mentality, according to which one should never negotiate when one is weak, had such an obstinate attitude towards this.

**Bugti-NAP differences**

Nawab Akbar Bugti was one of the most prominent members of the new generation of Baloch leaders that emerged during the 1960s. Despite the fact that he could not participate in the 1970 elections due to a legal complication, he was an active member of the NAP Balochistan and not only funded NAP but it was mostly because of his influence that NAP managed to get a respectable presence in the provincial assembly. The first sign of disagreement emerged when NAP decided not to accept Nawab Bugti’s nomination for a reserved seat for women.

However, the differences spiked when Bugti was asked to leave the NAP’s provincial working committee meeting as he was not a member by a junior member and Sardar Mengal and Nawab Khair Bakhsh remained silent.444

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Bizenjo claimed that Bugti wanted to be the governor of Balochistan and when NAP leadership could not comply with his wish, he went against the Mengal government and was rewarded with the governorship by the Bhutto regime.445

**Bhutto Factor**

Bhutto also played an important role in the downfall of the NAP government in Balochistan. Bhutto wanted to make Pakistan Peoples Party the ruling party in the whole country and NAP’s governments in Balochistan and NWFP were a total abomination to him. His opponents believed that the whole episode of the discovery of weapons from the Iraqi embassy allegedly to be handed over to the Baloch insurgents was a plan prepared by Bhutto himself to use it to discredit and eventually dismiss the NAP government in Balochistan. He was aided in his designs by Sardar Doda Khan Zarakzai, Jam Ghulam Qadir of Lasbela, Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti and Ahmed Yar Khan.

Mengal and Marri’s attitude towards Bhutto added to this. According to Sherbaz Mazari:

I suggested that he seek a rapprochement with the Baloch leaders of NAP. Surprisingly Bhutto now revealed his growing state of despondency. He said, “Who should I talk to?” He then pointed out that Attaullah Mengal openly used “the filthiest of language” against him, adding that it was not just directed at him, ‘but also on my office, as after all I am the President of Pakistan.” Then he criticized Khair Bakhsh Marri. The Marri sardar, he said, ‘is so arrogant that when I talk to him he turns his face away. I find his behavior intolerable.446

He did not even trust his one-time ally Nawab Akbar Bugti. After Bugti’s resignation from governorship, Bhutto in an interview stated, “(He)... is suffering

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444 Mazari, 240-41
445 Breegs, 325.
446 Mazari, 308-09.
from schizophrenia. He’s frightened now because he betrayed his old friends. ‘Politics is a game of chess’, ‘and Bugti played his chess badly.’

THE ROLE OF REGIONAL COUNTRIES (AFGHANISTAN, IRAN AND USSR)

Pakistan-Afghanistan relations had been problematic since 1947. In keeping with the historical affinity between the Baloch tribes and Afghanistan, that was where they had always sought refuge and support when required. Prince Karim, after declaring mutiny crossed over to Afghanistan in 1948. Although its support for Pashtunistan is well documented, however, what exactly was Kabul’s position on Balochistan was not clear. Despite this lack of clarity, Kabul provided full support to the Baloch insurgents.

After the fatal battle of Chamalang, most of the members including the top leadership of the Parari movement relocated to their safe heavens in southern Afghanistan. Under the patronage of the Daud regime, the Pararis were facilitated. According to Selig Harrison, the Daud regime also paid salaries to Mir Hazar’s men. For quite some time, Pararis used their sanctuaries in Afghanistan as resting places after conducting raids against Pakistani army positions and conveys. Here, Mir Hazar Ramkhani, leader of the Pararis, revised his strategy, worked out a new plan of action, renamed the group Baloch People’s Liberation Front (BPLF).

Apart from fully supporting the Baloch insurgents, Kabul also warned Islamabad of a war if it continued to target the Baloch guerrillas. Afghan deputy foreign minister Waheed Abdullah in a statement stated that ‘a number of Baloch refugees have already fled into Afghanistan’ and that an increase in the flow ‘would cause grave problems, not just for Afghanistan, but for the region and the world.’ If this was not enough, there were some reports that Kabul also tried to get Bhutto assassinated. According to Sherbaz Mazari, a leading Pakistani parliamentarian and a

448 Mazari., 81.
449 Harrison, In Afghanistan’s Shadow, 39.
450 Harrison, 39
Baloch sardar; “In August 1974 a BSO student named Majid died in a grenade explosion during a failed attempt to assassinate Bhutto in Quetta. I was to later learn that the Afghans had trained a team of Baloch extremists to kill Bhutto during his visit to the province.”

It was a generally held view especially among the Pakistani scholars that Afghanistan was supporting the Baloch insurgents with the full support and encouragement of the USSR, yet a number of scholars believed that USSR actually never showed much interest in aiding the separatist struggle in Balochistan.

During this phase, the interest, involvement and the role of Iran in Balochistan is often not only mentioned but at times exaggerated by the Western as well as the Baloch scholars. Iran had a Baloch population of its own and Tehran closely observed the development in the Pakistani Balochistan as it was under the impression that the developments in Pakistani Balochistan could have implications for the Iranian Balochistan. This worry could be considered misplaced as the Iranian Baloch were far less organized and strongly under the control of Tehran.

Baloch scholars and writers go to the extent of claiming that Bhutto started the whole operation against the Baloch on the whims of the Shah of Iran and was in fact acting on his behalf. They argue that Iranian pilots flew Iranian helicopters to crush Baloch insurgency during the civil war, and these helicopters provided the key to victory in a crucial battle at Chamalang.

However, many knowledgeable analysts have questioned this assertion. The Bhutto-Shah relationship, their rivalry for presenting themselves as the regional leader and what Bhutto has written about Shah in his writings point to the fact that they were perhaps not as close as this group believed them to be. For instance, Bhutto wrote: “There was an uncomfortable perversity about him,” He could be jealous and mean in small things… unrelentingly ruthless and disparaging about

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453 Sherbaz Mazari, .
455 Janmahmad, Essays in Baluch National Struggle in Pakistan: Emergence, Dimensions, Repercussions (Gosha-e-Adab, Quetta, 1989), 389.
personalities… in their absence. … he could tell a big lie without blinking. He spoke disparagingly about almost all his neighboring countries and their leaders. … he had a complex towards me. He respected and feared my capabilities.” Bhutto noted that the Shah was intensely envious of him and even more revealingly, perhaps, of his own fall—that his grandiose designs and fanciful ambitions… contributed in no small measures to his ruin. … He lost touch with reality.457

CONCLUSION

Yahya Khan ended the One Unit and granted Balochistan the status of a province. The general perception is that just like in the rest of the country, the election in Balochistan was free and fair and the Baloch people were given the opportunity to elect their own leaders. The election in Balochistan was contested on tribal lines hence it became very clear that there was no chance of any unified Baloch leadership emerging out of this election. The nationalist sardars or leaders of Balochistan (Mengal, Marri along with the seasoned Baloch politician Bizenjo) were part of the National Awami Party (NAP). Their election campaign was more emotional then practical. They promised too much too soon and that became a source of huge embarrassment for them once they came into power. For instance, they promised in their manifesto that they will abolish Shishak and the sardari system. Both of these election promises were impractical, in keeping that the NAP leaders in Balochistan were all sardars and the sardari system was their only source of power and political clout. Same is the issue of shishak. Once they came into power and failed to fulfill their promises, there were violent protests in the province.

The developments that took place during this decade added to the Baloch nationalist narrative which continued to evolve since Khan of Kalat joined Pakistan. Contrary to what actually happened (detailed in the relevant chapter) Baloch nationalists claimed that Pakistan actually occupied Kalat and the Khan of Kalat assigned the accession document under duress, the developments of 1950s especially the treatment of Neuroze Khan and the arrest of Khan Ahmed Yar Khan added to the

Baloch narrative of injustice and grievances. In the Baloch narrative, the decade of 1970 further added to this narrative of injustice. 1970s is the decade of bloodshed and Islamabad’s brutal military action against the Baloch masses and whatever they held dear. This Baloch narrative expediently ignores that this is also the decade as amply demonstrated in this chapter, where the Baloch leadership failed to perform. Baloch nationalist narrative claimed that NAP or Baloch elected leadership was not successful because the Punjabi establishment, Pakistan Army and the federal government created problems for them. This claim has the echo of Prince Karim Khan’s rationale for taking up arms against the state of Pakistan in 1948.

In this narrative, there is no mention of the infighting, tribal feuds, miscalculated and impractical decisions made by the Baloch/ NAP leadership. The differences between Attaullah Mengal and Akbar Bugti and how Bugti sided with Bhutto against his own fellow Baloch sardars played an important role in the events which followed. The tribal feuds and the clashes between the Jamotes and Mengals, the role of the Zehri brothers and the tribal way Mengal as CM reacted to all these problems by mobilizing a Mengal lashkar against them are cases in point.

There is no denying the fact that Bhutto also contributed to the problems NAP faced. He wanted PPP to be the single power in the country and Pakistan to be a single party country; however most of his partners in all what he did, were Baloch sardars: Raisani, Akbar Bugti and no other than Ahmed Yar Khan.

The NAP government in Balochistan took decisions which were untimely and unwise. For instance, the decision to send all the non-Baloch government servants back to their parent departments or provinces was not a wise decision especially when they knew that they do not have the trained manpower in Balochistan.

Same happened with their armed struggle. It collapsed primarily under the weight of its own internal contradictions. The goals of the Baloch movement also remained inconsistent, ranging from provincial autonomy to the demand for an independent Balochistan. The Baloch Peoples Liberation Front (BPLF), the Baloch Students Organization (BSO) and the NAP remained divided on both the means and ends of the struggle. The BPLF and the BSO epitomized the militant face of the Baloch movement and engaged in guerrilla warfare against the state, while the NAP
represented the moderate side of the struggle and stood for greater autonomy for the Baloch within the constitutional framework of Pakistan. While these factors stood to weaken the movement at one level, they also simplified the task of the federal agencies in overcoming the Baloch resistance.

At the national level, the situation in Balochistan and Bhutto’s decision to send Pakistan Army there undermined his own attempt to establish civilian supremacy. Bhutto’s handling of political developments in Balochistan has been regarded by a number of writers as representing the Achilles heel of his regime. His dispatch of around 80000 troops into the sparsely populated province of fewer than 5 million people to deal with the tribal/autonomist insurrection of 1973-6 returned the Army to a political role. Many viewed this heavy handed use of force carrying echoes of Yahya’s ill-conceived actions in East Pakistan.

One can conclude that it was Bhutto’s Balochistan policy which contributed in his downfall. General Zia, in a peaceful coup dubbed Operation Fair Play over threw Bhutto government, suspended the constitution and dissolved the parliament. Thus began a new era in Pakistan’s history which forever transformed the country. This would be discussed in the next chapter.
CHAPTER SIX
BALOCHISTAN AND THE PEACE INTERVAL
1977-1999

INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers the longest and the only peace interval in centre-Balochistan relations. The previous chapter detailed the developments which took place during the 1970s after Balochistan was granted the status of a province and the nationalist leadership managed to establish the provincial government *though short lived* in Balochistan. The dismissal of the provincial government and a number of other developments resulted in the bloodiest phase of Baloch history in recent time. However, this period was followed by a peaceful period which lasted for 23 years (1977-1999).

This chapter is significant in the sense that it, *first*, directly contributes to/makes the case to support the contention made in the first chapter (literature review, conceptual framework) that ethnopolitical conflicts mainly occur due to the politicization of ethnicity. The regional/local elite play the most important role in the process of the politicization of ethnicity, once it is politicize, the regional elite have a choice to keep it peaceful or turn it violent. In this process, they use two tools: a narrative based on collective memory of an actual or perceived injustice and a current and ongoing event which sparks the current politicization which they link with the historical narrative to prove their point. Second, the narrative only implies the selective use of memory and it construal the memory which strengthens the position of the elite (who create the narrative).

During the peace interval in Balochistan, hardly anything changed for the common Baloch and the province of Balochistan yet it remained peaceful. There are a number of reasons for this: divisions in the political and militant leadership of the Baloch nationalist movement, two of the three Baloch nationalist leaders left Balochistan and started living in London, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the Afghan war. As a result of which Pakistan army concentrated more on Balochistan because it was considered a possible target of the Red Army. During the second phase of the peace interval, Pakistan went through its decade of democracy (1988-
Baloch leaders participated in the political activities in the country, and a number of Baloch sardars and politicians such as Akbar Bugti, Bizenjo and Zafarullah Khan Jamali emerged as a national level politicians and played a significant role in the Pakistani politics. Baloch nationalist narrative is silent on these developments. Instead, it focuses on the influx of the Afghan (Pashtun) refugees during the Afghan war and the change in population figures in Balochistan. Regarding the second part of the peace interval, the narrative claims that the center continued to interfere in provincial matter because of which the Baloch elected representatives could not perform. In this narrative, no mention is made of why, for instance, Akhtar Mengal not only continued to contest elections but became the chief minister of the province, why a number of prominent Baloch politicians were participating in politics at the national level and the absence of nationalist/insurgent violence in Balochistan.

This chapter argues that although Zia-ul-Haq channeled a lot of money into Balochistan in the shape of developmental projects, his main concerns was strategic as he could not afford any trouble in Balochistan in the wake of the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. During the decade of democracy, Balochistan was never a major issue for central and/or the Baloch provincial governments which continued to conduct business as usual. During this phase, a number of elections took place in which the Baloch leaders fully participated. Nationalist leaders and their sons actively participated and supported their candidates in the elections and became chief minister of the province (Akhtar Mengal is a case in point). A number of Baloch politicians for the first time in Pakistani history participated in the politics at the national level. This all happened without any major change in the lives of Baloch people and they continued to follow the same system of governance. The only reason which explains the absence of violence and Baloch participation in politics is that during this period the centre decided not to follow a policy of confrontation and pursued a policy of engagement. Hence, there was no sparking or triggering event using which the Baloch leader could continue or start a new wave of violent conflict. Another point which proves this point is that a number of projects and development that later became contributing reasons for the return of insurgency in Balochistan actually started during this period but no major violence took place.
The chapter is divided into two parts; the first part looks at the Zia era and the policies pursued by him and the decade of democracy and the political development which took place during it and the trends that emerged in the evolving political culture of Pakistan, the second section which is the main body of the chapter, details the strategic and political developments in Balochistan during this time.

**ZIA AND PAKISTAN**

When Bhutto appointed General Zia-ul-Haq as the chief of Army staff superseding five senior generals, his main consideration was to have a chief of Army staff he could trust and who would support his policies. In other words, Bhutto wanted another General Tikka Khan. Apparently, General Zia had all the qualities Bhutto was looking for. General Zia, however, could not fulfil Bhutto’s expectation and in the midst of a political crisis in Pakistan, took over the helm of affairs of Pakistan on July 5, 1977, in a coup de tat code named Operation Fair Play. Initially, General Zia claimed that he or the army had no intention of staying in power and that elections in Pakistan would be conducted within 90 days. As the political parties and political activities were not banned, political parties including Bhutto’s Peoples Party started their campaign. Bhutto who was arrested when his government was toppled on July 5, 1977, was in an unprecedented move released by the army on 29 July 1977. Bhutto immediately started his campaign and soon regained his lost popularity among the Pakistani people. During the campaign, he repeatedly stated that after making the government, he would ensure that all those who staged the coup against his government were punished. This alarmed General Zia and his fellow coup makers. General Faiz Ali Chishti famously told General Zia that it is either Bhutto’s neck or our neck (Army Generals, the Coup makers). This led Zia to change course. Zia now claimed that without accountability, elections in the country would be meaningless. Zia also claimed that his government has found out that the Bhutto regime had committed a number of irregularities and have abused power and used it to silence the political opposition in the country. Zia’s new position was supported by the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) leadership especially Asghar Khan. After witnessing the resurgence of public support for Bhutto, PNA leadership was not much optimistic about its election prospect.

**Zia’s view of Pakistan and Pakistani Polities**
Zia was a practicing Muslim and ideologically close to the Deobandi school, although for some time, he was considered a Jammat Islami sympathizer. General Zia, belonged to a middle class migrant family from Jilandar in the Indian Punjab and strongly believed that Islam was the only binding force that could keep Pakistan together and that Pakistan can only survive as an Islamized Pakistan. Throughout his regime, he ensured that the centre should hold most of the powers. He used the constitution of 1973 to this advantage and granted tremendous powers to the centre including dismissing a provincial government, a power which Bhutto used to dismiss NAP government in Balochistan.

Zia was of the opinion that Pakistan was created on the two nation theory and to establish a state in which Islamic system would be introduced and implemented. Islam, according to Zia, would be and should be the force that would lead the Pakistani state towards national integration.\(^{458}\) To achieve this objective, Zia believed that a holistic program of Islamization of Pakistan should be devised and implemented. For Zia, the success of Pakistan National Alliance (PNA)’s political agitation movement against election rigging in Pakistan depended on its use of the language of Islam. PNA used religious slogans to put its point across. A movement that started as a reaction to the Bhutto government’s election rigging in 1977, culminated into demanding Nizam-e-Mustafa (system of Mustafa, another word for Islamic system) for Pakistan. General Zia in his maiden speech stated that this (use of Islam to galvanize the people by the PNA leadership) proved that in Pakistan, only Islam can save the country and the people of Pakistan. For this reason, Islamization of the country’s administrative system should be a priority.\(^{459}\)

He started his process of Islamization with the Pakistan Army and sought to transform it into an Islamic fighting force.\(^{460}\) At the same time, General Zia claimed that to preserve Islam and the freedom of Pakistan, Pakistan Army has a vital role to play.\(^{461}\) Islam now graduated from an ideology for the state of Pakistan to the reason de etre of its existence. Now the propagation of any other ideology would not only be

\(^{458}\) The President on Pakistan's Ideological Basis, Address by President General Zia-ul-Haq at the inauguration of Shariat Faculty at the Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, 8 October 1979 (Islamabad: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, n.d.), 2.

\(^{459}\) Pakistan Times, 6 July 1977.

\(^{460}\) Ishitaque, 230-31.

considered treason but also a deliberate attempt to jeopardize the existence of the state of Pakistan.\textsuperscript{462} Under the PLO, the advocacy of any secular ideology was prohibited.

Zia in one of his statements stated: “Pakistan and Islam are the names of one and the same thing and any idea or notion contrary to this would mean hitting at the very roots of the ideology, solidarity and integrity of Pakistan.” \textsuperscript{463}

In a speech in 1980, General Zia emphasized the vital role of Islam in Pakistan’s national integration:

Pakistan was achieved in the name of Islam, and Islam alone could provide the basis to run the government of the country and sustain its integrity...The present government would provide the opportunity to others to serve the country after it had achieved its objectives...(but) no un-Islamic government would be allowed to succeed the present regime. \textsuperscript{464}

The emphasis on the role of Islam in Pakistan and the Pakistan’s freedom struggle implied that there was no room for ethnic, linguistic and sectarian groups propagating their own views. General Zia once echoed Field Marshal Ayub Khan’s (ironically, perhaps the most irreligious and secular of all rulers of Pakistan by that time) words: “One God, one Prophet, one Book, one Country, one system – no discussion.” \textsuperscript{465}

\textbf{Political Opposition to Zia’s regime}

\textsuperscript{462} Mumtaz Ahmad, p382.
\textsuperscript{463} \textit{Dawn}, 27 October 1982
\textsuperscript{464} \textit{Muslim}, 10 June 1980
\textsuperscript{465} Mumtaz Ahmad, 384.
General Zia’s approach towards Pakistan’s politics resulted in the emergence of a number of challengers. The most significant challenger was the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD), which was established in February 1981. MRD compromised Pakistan People’s Party (PPP), Pakistan National Party (PNP), Pakistan Democratic Party (PDP), Jamiat-e-Ulema-i-Islam (JUI-Fazlur Rehman group), Qaumi Mahaz-i-Azadi (QMA), Khaksar Tehrik (KT), Muslim League (Malik Qasim group), Awaini National Party (ANP) and Pakhtoonkhwa National Awami Party (PNAP).

MRD’s leadership especially from the three smaller provinces: Sindh, NWFP and Balochistan considered General Zia’s policies as another ploy to establish the hegemony of Punjab over the three smaller provinces of Pakistan. Punjab, being the largest province in terms of population was dominating two of the most important institutions of the state of Pakistan. Pakistan Armed Forces especially the army and the civil bureaucracy. General Zia’s Islamisation policy had the largest number of supporters in the Punjab as compared to other provinces. This so-called Punjabisation of Pakistan, according to this group of political leaders, would have an adverse effect on the national integration of Pakistan. 466

For quite some time, MRD posed a serious challenge to General Zia’s regime. As a group of different political parties belonging to various sides of the political divide, MRD had only one uniting factor: opposition to General Zia’s regime. However, the MRD soon got bogged down with internal rivalries and political jealousies. Almost all other member political parties in MRD were suspicious and jealous of Pakistan Peoples Party’s mass following and its leadership’s motivation and policies. PPP’s mass following and popularity was larger than all other MRD’s political parties put together. The smaller parties were worried that PPP would overshadow them. Air Marshal (Retired) Asghar Khan led Tehrik-i-Istiqlal which was most active and vocal during the PNA agitation against Bhutto’s government and was PPP’s biggest critic with in the MRD. At times, both parties seemed to be struggling against each other than against General Zia’s regime. Asghar Khan’s approach to this indicated that he considered PPP as the main

466 Mumtaz Ahmad, 384.
obstacle to his rise as a political leader.\textsuperscript{467} Therefore, it came as no surprise that Tehrik-i-Istiqlal parted ways with the MRD and applied for the registration of the party as per the Political Parties Amendment Act, 1985.\textsuperscript{468}

MRD’s other major problem was its lack of consensus on its demands. When the creation of the MRD was announced in 1981, it demanded the restoration of 1973 constitution. However, Khan Abdul Wali Khan considered the 1973 constitution redundant and demanded that a new constitution that ensured the rights and interests of the smaller provinces should be framed.\textsuperscript{469} The heart of the problem was that MRD’s leadership was sharply divided on almost everything especially on issues like provincial autonomy. It also lacked a clear vision and understanding about the steps required to convert MRD into a real political alliance with a proper organizational set up and manifesto.\textsuperscript{470}

Therefore it came as no surprise when MRD ran out of steam. Apart from the factors mentioned above, lack of popular support especially in Punjab and NWFP contributed to its failure.

\textit{Sindhi-Baloch-Pashtun Front (SBPF)}

On 18 April 1985, a London-based political party Sindhi-Baloch-Pashtun Front (SBPF) was created. It included a member of Peoples Party’s stalwarts such as Hafeez Pirzada who was Bhutto’s cabinet minister and a member of the team negotiating with the PNA team during the final days of Bhutto regime and Mumtaz Bhutto, a former governor and chief minister of Sindh. Baloch section of the front was represented by Sardar Attaullah Mengal, former chief minister of Balochistan, whose government was sacked by the Bhutto government. Afzal Bangesh, a Marxist leading a political party Mazdoor Kisan Party (worker-peasant Party) represented the Pashtun section of the front. These four leaders were considered the main pillars of the SBPF.

SBPF’s one point agenda was to make Pakistan a confederation on the model of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). According to SBPF, unless this objective is

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{467} \textit{Nawa-i-Waqat}, Lahore, April 12, 1986, Hasan Askari Rizvi, 1078.
\item \textsuperscript{468} Hasan Askar Rizvi, 1078.
\item \textsuperscript{469} The Frontier Post, February 26, 1986
\end{itemize}
achieved, Pakistan would continue to be dominated by the Punjabis. SBPF leadership claimed that to end this Punjabisation of Pakistan, Pakistan must revert back to the principle laid out in the 1940 Lahore Resolution. Just like Khan Abdul Wali Khan, the SBPF leadership also believed that the 1973 constitution could no longer serve as the constitution of the country as it has failed to ensure the rights and interests of the three smaller provinces of Pakistan. SBPF argued that in the new political and administrative set up of the country, the centre should only exercise its control on defence, foreign policy, communications and currency. It should also have arbitration powers in disputes between the states. According to SBPF, all states should have a right to raise their own militias and security forces. The President of the Confederation, according to SBPF, would be elected through an alphabetic rotation among the states. SBPF also strongly argued to keep a check on the armed forces of this proposed confederation. During peacetime, defence expenditure would not exceed 3 per cent of the GDP.

SBPF failed to make much impact on the ground and its struggle remained an intellectual endeavor.

Controlled Democracy under Zia

To provide some sort of legitimacy to his regime, General Zia in 1984 held a referendum to be elected as the president of Pakistan for the next five years. If the majority of the voters elected Zia as the president for the next term, it would imply that they have also endorsed his Islamization policy. In fact, the question which the voters were asked to answer in a yes or a no was not whether they elect General Zia as the President of Pakistan, but whether they (the voters) endorsed the Islamisation policy. A yes answer implied a vote for Zia’s next term as President. Official estimates claimed that the voter turnout was 64 percent. Out of this, 96 per cent voted a yes. Reuters, on the other hand, claimed that the turnout was close to 10 percent.

As a next step, national and provincial elections were held in 1985. These non-parties elections were solely contested on ethnic, business, tribal, class and clan

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471 C. G. P. Rakisits, “Centre-Province Relations in Pakistan under General Zia, Pacific Affairs, Spring 1988 ; Rizvi, Ibid.
473 Bhutto, 270 as quoted by Istiaque, 233.
linkages. General Zia appointed Muhammed Khan Junejo as the Prime Minister. Three years later, on May 29, 1988, General Zia dismissed the Junejo government and dissolved national and provincial assemblies. General Zia, once again promised elections within 90 days.

**DECADE OF DEMOCRACY (1988-1999)**

After the death of General Zia in a plane crash on August 17, 1988, the top brass of Pakistan Army under the leadership of General Mirza Aslam Beg, who assumed the post of COAS, decided that the civilian set up would continue to function. Ghulam Ishaq Khan, chairman of the Senate of Pakistan at the time was asked to take over as the President of Pakistan. It was also decided that general elections would not be postponed and 19 November 1988 was announced as the election date.

Soon after, political activities and campaigning gained momentum. More so, it became quite clear during the election campaign that the real contest would be between Benazir Bhutto led PPP and Nawaz Sharif and like-minded politicians who established a political alliance Islamic Jamhoori Ittehad (IJI). These elections marked the beginning of the decade of democracy (1988-1999) in Pakistan. This decade long era of democracy ended with General Musharraf’s coup against Nawaz Sharif government on October 1999.

Although a number of restrictions were imposed on the politicians and certain guarantees were sought before inviting Benazir Bhutto to form a government after PPP emerged as the victorious party in 1988 election, yet according to many this was the beginning of the journey towards democracy and two party system started in Pakistan. Both Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif served two terms as Prime Minister of Pakistan. However, both never finished their terms in office as their governments were sacked.

**Return of democratic practices and political musical chair (1988-1999)**

PPP won 94 out of 217 national assembly seats in the 1988 election. After the members for tribal areas, minority groups and women members (from a specified

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474 Ishitaque, Ibid
475 Ishtiauq, 281.
quota of seats for women in the national assembly of Pakistan) joined the PPP, the figure rose to 122. This made PPP the single largest majority party in the national assembly. After some reluctance and intense negotiation, President of Pakistan Ghulam Ishaq Khan invited Benazir Bhutto to form the central government in Pakistan. On 2 December 1988, Benazir Bhutto took oath as the first Muslim woman prime minister of Pakistan and the world.

On 6 August 1990, President Ghulam Ishaq Khan, using his power under the article 58 (2-b) of the constitution, dismissed Benazir Bhutto’s government. President Ghulam Ishaq Khan accused Benazir government of abuse of power and corruption. It was widely believed that General Aslam Beg, the then Chief of Army staff supported President Ghulam Ishaq Khan’s decision. In the next election, Nawaz Sherif became the Prime Minister of Pakistan. President Ishaq Khan once again using his presidential power under the article 58 (2-B) of the constitution of Pakistan sacked Nawaz government on 18 April, 1993. Nawaz Sharrif went to the Supreme Court of Pakistan against this decision. In an unprecedented move, the Supreme Court restored Nawaz Sharrif’s government on May 26, 1993.

However, the political crisis continued. General Abdul Waheed Kakar intervened and instead of imposing martial law, settled the matter with both Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Nawaz Sharif resigning from their posts. The election that followed, once again brought Benazir Bhutto at the helm of affairs in Pakistan. Benazir Bhutto managed his confidant and old Bhutto loyalist, Farooq Leghari elected as the new President of Pakistan. Ironically, Farooq Leghari, using the same article 58 (2-B) sacked Benazir Bhutto’s government. In the following elections, Nawaz Sharif’s led Muslim League won a two-third majority in the National Assembly. Although Farooq Leghari continued as the President of Pakistan, with 165 members supporting Nawaz government and an understanding with Benazir Bhutto, Nawaz Sharif got the thirteenth amendment to the constitution passed from the parliament which ripped off the President of Pakistan of the power to dismiss a democratically elected government from office. Soon after, Nawaz Sharif government passed another amendment (fourteenth amendment). This amendment

476 Ishtiaque, 281-82.
477 Ishtiaque, 282.
478 Ishtiaque, 284.
479 Ishtiaque, 288.
subjected the members of parliament to strict party discipline. This eliminated the chances of removing the prime minister through a no confidence motion.

The emerging trends of political culture of Pakistan during the decade of democracy

During the decade of democracy certain trends in Pakistan’s political landscape emerged. Politics in Pakistan became a zero-sum game in which both ruling and opposition parties instead of agreeing on rules of the game and strengthening democracy in Pakistan continued to undermine each other. It was fairly common during this period that political figures were accused of being foreign agents especially American and Indian agents and of working against the ideology of Pakistan. Hardly any meaningful legislation took place in the parliament throughout this period. Most of the legislation was done through Presidential ordinances.480

Decade of democracy confirmed a number of long held perceptions about Pakistani politics. Punjab, the most populated province of Pakistan held the largest number of seats in the national assembly. Whoever wins the election in Punjab would play the dominant or king making role in the parliament. MQM which was created during General Zia’s regime to counter the influence of religious politics in urban Karachi continued to be the dominant political force in Karachi. In Balochistan, political leadership continued to be in the hands of the tribal sardars. In Pashtun majority areas of Balochistan, Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam (Fazlur Rehman’s group), emerged as the dominant force. Overall, politics and politicians in Pakistan instead of national issues were clearly divided on clan, family, class and ethnic lines. Due to these factors, national questions during Pakistan’s decade of democracy remained unresolved.481

During the decade of democracy, due to continued political rivalries between the ruling parties, not much was done to uplift the economy of Pakistan. As a result, the economic bubble which was created during General Zia’s era due to the massive aid money coming in during the Afghan Jihad busted and Pakistan’s economy started

480 Ishtiaque, 292.
showing signs of fatigue. Observers of Pakistani politics are still divided on what caused the failure of the democratic regimes to perform: lack of grass root political institutions, nature of the society and state of Pakistan, law and order problems, imbalance between institutions and limited powers of political leadership and the struggling economy of Pakistan.

Balochistan remained part of this political musical chair. A number of provincial governments were changed along with the national governments. Baloch politicians especially representing opposition continued to complain about Centre’s continuous and persistent intrusion into provincial affairs.

During the decade of democracy, three political developments with reference to Balochistan took place: One, politicians in Balochistan, regardless of their party affiliation, demonstrated their eagerness to stay in power. At times in Balochistan, parties that were opposing each other in the national assembly were coalition partners in the provincial assembly of Balochistan. On occasions, all members of the ruling party in the provincial assembly were ministers; or all members of the provincial assembly were in government. Second, a number of prominent Baloch politicians such as Nawab Akbar Bugti, Zafarullah Khan Jamali and Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo emerged as national level politicians and actively participated in the national politics of Pakistan. Third, the sons of staunch nationalist leaders Sardar Attaullah Mengal and Nawab Khair Bux Marri, with their father’s approval actively participated in Balochistan politics. Sardar Akhtar Mengal served as the chief minister of Balochistan.

BALOCHISTAN DURING THE PEACE INTERVAL (1988-1999)

General Zia’s approach and policy towards the Baloch issue

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483 Shirin Tahirkhlafi, 24-26.
484 Mehtab Ali Shah, 102.
General Zia had a particular vision for Pakistan in which there was no room for ethnic differences. For him, Pakistan could only be united under the banner of Islam. For him, the only identity that should matter in Pakistan was Islam. Zia believed that if the objective of a strong, unified Pakistan is to be achieved, the people of Pakistan must abandon their differences and should stand united as a nation. He believed that the One Unit policy provided perhaps the best solution to Pakistan’s national integration. He, however, also made it clear that for the sake of national unity, he would not reinvent the wheel and alter the constitution of 1973.

He also rejected ideas/suggestions to amend the constitution so that the central government could not dismiss the provincial government. He was of the view that making any changes to the constitution would be opening a Pandora’s Box.

As regard the political crisis and insurgency in Balochistan, General Zia believed that both Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and Baloch nationalist leaders Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri, Sardar Attaulah Mengal and Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo were at fault. Bhutto could not accept the fact that NAP and not the PPP was the majority party in Balochistan and NAP leadership, on the other hand, lacking any political experience, acted as ruling their tribal fiefdom. They ignored the fact the Balochistan was part of Pakistan. They insisted on over-stepping their constitutional rights and obligations and insisting on having their own policy, openly providing arms to their tribesman and blocking federal/central government’s departments and forces access in Balochistan. Despite all this, General Zia was of the view that the problem of Balochistan was primarily a political problem and should have been addressed/resolved using political means.

Bhutto in General Zia’s view infact used NAP’s Baloch leadership’s lack of political acumen and outsmarted them. Therefore, according to General Zia, it was not the constitution that was lacking or that it did not provide enough rights to the province. He was quoted as saying that if something is not implemented properly, you should not blame the system.

According to Selig Harrison, General Zia in several conversations with him between 1978 and 1980 detailed his views about Balochistan. General Zia, according to Harrison, differentiated between Balochistan as a geographic entity and the
Baloch, the people of Balochistan. According to Selig Harrison, Zia believed that Balochistan was strategically and militarily too important for Pakistan. It had ample energy and mineral resources that the whole Pakistan required. Balochistan’s total population equals the population of Lahore, in Punjab. Baloch are citizens of Pakistan and can go anywhere in Pakistan to work. Baloch problem, according to General Zia was the threat of a possible Soviet invasion into Balochistan.

General Zia’s approach and policy towards Balochistan was visibly different from Bhutto’s policy. However with hindsight one could argue that other than the difference in approach about how to deal with Balochistan, General Zia’s policy regarding Balochistan was based on its geo-strategic significance. This multiplied with the possibility, though remote, of a possible Soviet invasion of Balochistan.

Releasing the Baloch prisoners and general amnesty to the insurgents

General Zia considered Bhutto’s heavy handed approach towards Balochistan counterproductive. Bhutto on the other hand claimed that it was General Zia who stopped him from withdrawing the army from Balochistan. He claimed that General Zia argued that after sacrificing so much, if the army withdrew without achieving the objective, it would have adverse effect on the morale of the soldiers.

However, soon after taking over the helm of affairs, General Zia adopted a cautious and visibly more accommodative policy towards Balochistan. He released sardar Attaullah Mengal, Sardar Khair Bakhsh Marri and Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo. General Zia also ordered the release of almost 6000 Baloch prisoners held captive in Kohlu and Loralei prisons. Going one step further, in January 1978, General Zia declared general amnesty for all Baloch insurgents and dissolved the infamous Hyderabad Tribunal investigating treason charges against the NAP’s top leadership: Khan Abdulwali Khan, Ghulam Muhammad Balore, Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, Sardar Khair Bakhsh Marri and Sardar Attaullah Mengal among others. All charges and cases against them were dropped. A score of other political prisoners were released. This was followed by the withdrawal of the army from Balochistan.
General Zia also tried to establish direct contacts with the Baloch leaders and started pouring developmental funds into Balochistan. He tried to convince the Baloch leaders that the army never favored military action in Balochistan and that General Zia personally tried to convince Bhutto that he should resolve the Baloch problem through political means.

**Zia’s initial contact with Attaullah Mengal and Khair Bakhs Marri**

After Attaullah Mengal, Khair Bakhsh Marri and Ghaus Bakhsh Binzenjo were released by General Zia in 1977, General Zia was hopeful that he would be able to reach a mutually agreeable understanding with them. However, it seemed that the Baloch sardars have not learned any lessons from the events that took place in Balochistan in the last four years (1973-1977) and talked in absolute terms. They insisted on the removal of Raja Ahmed Khan, Chief Secretary of Balochistan, a Punjabi, from this position. General Zia refused to accept this demand. To accommodate the Baloch leaders, he appointed Lt. General Rahimuddin Khan as the new governor of Balochistan. This was considered inadequate by Sardar Attaullah Mengal and Khair Bakhsh Marri. They believed that despite this change, Balochistan would continue to be ruled by Punjabi officers.488

As a consequence of this inflexibility demonstrated by the Baloch leaders, especially Sardar Attaullah Mengal and Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri, the talks were halted and eventually failed in 1978.

**Finding other allies in Balochistan**

After the failure of General Zia’s dialogue with Marri-Bizenjo-Mengal trio in 1978, General Zia started his search for new political allies in Balochistan. General Zia was aware of the tribal feuds and rivalries and also of the fact that a number of other Baloch sardars do not share Sardar Attaullah Mengal and Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri’s political views and would be more accommodating and forthcoming with the centre. Such tribes were the Zarkzai and Jamali. Doda Khan Zarkzai had been a supporter of Center’s policy towards Balochistan and had been close to

Islamabad. Jamalis were also considered close to the centre and were willing to support General Zia’s effort in Balochistan.

After initial contacts were maintained and an understanding reached, General Zia visited Quetta on 29 July 1979. During this visit, he met with various Baloch notables. It was reported that almost all of these Baloch notables urged General Zia to remain in office.490

At the time, especially in Balochistan, it was rumored that General Zia and Sardars Attaullah Manegal and Khair Bakhsh Marri have reached a secret understanding. Under the secret deal, General Zia had permitted Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri, Attaullah Mengal and General Sharoff to leave the country.491 It was also believed by some Baloch political activists that General Zia had also cultivated contacts with the Baloch Student Organization (BSO). According to this line of reasoning, Balochistan government’s recent attempts to provide jobs to Baloch graduates and students were part of this understanding.492

Pakistan and the Soviet Union’s invasion of Afghanistan

On 27 December 1979, Soviet forces invaded Afghanistan. Pakistani defence planner’s worst nightmare scenario and long-held fear had materialized. Pakistan was sandwiched between two enemies: India and USSR. This event had significant implications for global peace and USA which was engaged in the so-called Cold War with USSR. Villanova University Professor Hafeez Malik summed up Pakistan’s dilemma: “the consolidation of the Soviet hold on Afghanistan, along with the Indo-Soviet treaty of friendship would enable the two powers to crush Pakistan in their future pincer movement; Afghanistan, with the accretion of Soviet protection and support for its armed forces, would become unmanageable for Pakistan; ideologically Pakistan would become vulnerable to a Socialist revolution.”493 Pakistani security policy makers just like their western especially the Americans allies believed that the

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489 Harrison, 153.
490 Harrison, 68.
491 Harrison, 69- 70.
492 Harrison, 72.
493 For details see Rizwan Zeh, “Russian and South Asia,” Spot Light on Regional Affairs, (Islamabad: Institute of Regional Studies, January 2004)
Soviets wanted to reach the warm waters of the Indian Ocean. Pakistan’s defence planners calculated/worked out three possible routes of an invading Soviet Army. Two of these passed through Balochistan: from Khjoak and Bolan passes to Sukkur and Karachi or Quetta to Karachi via the RCD highway.

Pakistan’s threat perception was not totally ill founded. Being a member of the American block, it has been threatened of grave consequences by top Soviet leadership in the past. The USSR has, in the past blown both soft and hard by signaling open hostility and by helping Pakistan in its economic and industrial activities.

Balochistan has been of particular interest to USSR. Mir Ahmed Yar Khan as early as 1948 warned that the Soviets were eyeing the Gwadar area in Makran coastal area of Balochistan. Interestingly, in 1960s, the issue of Soviet interest in Gwader re-emerged. This time it rang alarm bells in India. A few members of the Lok Sabha, (the Indian parliament) raised the question of Soviet Union’s naval presence in the Gwadar area and that the USSR is building a naval base in Gwadar. These members were particularly concerned about the implication of this development on India, an ally of the Soviet Union. The Indian government in response to these questions stated that USSR, according to reports was only helping the development of the port. In 1969, with visible improvement in Pakistan-Russia relations, one of the projects which was discussed between Islamabad and Moscow was a highway linking Chaman to Makran Coast. USSR also offered to build a port at Gwadar.

According to another report which is mostly contested by observers of Pakistan’s foreign policy and politics, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, who by the end of his era (1972-1977) became increasingly suspicious of the Americans and suspected American hand in the political agitation against him and his government, reached a deal on Gwadar with USSR. The deal included Soviet Union’s pledge to support Pakistan in its dispute with India on Kashmir, help resolve the Pashtunistan problem and that USSR would arm Pakistan’s armed forces. Eventually, Pakistan would join

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494 For details see Rizwan Zeb, “Russian and South Asia,” Spot Light on Regional Affairs, (Islamabad: Institute of Regional Studies, January 2004).
the Soviet bloc. Even after the fall of Bhutto, USSR renewed its offer to General Zia who declined the offer.

Balochistan in the wake of Soviet invasion of Afghanistan

A huge set of literature is available on the implications of Pakistan’s extensive involvement in Afghanistan. Pakistan not only hosted more than three million Afghan refugees, Islamabad’s continued involvement in the Afghan jihad adversely affected Pakistan’s society. Most affected with this huge Afghan refugee influx were the provinces of NWFP and Balochistan. The influx of Afghan refugees, most of them ethnic Pashtun, adversely affected the demographics in Balochistan. Pakistan received huge amount of aid during the Afghan jihad against the Soviet Army. The uneven distribution of this aid money further widened the rift between Punjab and the smaller provinces, especially Balochistan and the NFWP. Late Khan Abdul Wali Khan summed up this resentment by comparing the Afghan refugees with a cow. According to Wali Khan, the Frontier (NWFP) was holding the horns of the cow while Punjab its teats.

Baloch nationalists also observed the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and their options. Sardar Attaullah Mengal was willing to support and accept the Soviet ingress into Pakistan from Afghanistan:

Punjabi domination...means ten of thousands of them coming in civil servants and army fellows telling you what to do, people from Lahore buying up our farms, buying the best lands in Quetta, more and more of them crawling all over us, annihilating us. We Baloch must choose,...between losing our identity at the mercy of the Punjabi or stretching our hands to others. If the Russians came, he said, If it comes to that conclusion, we might at least have some kind of conditional freedom. They may send their technocrats and their soldiers, but they would not send a whole population to occupy Balochistan as the Punjabis are doing, step by

498 Wirsing, Pakistan’s Security under Zia, p 52
step. Russia is too far away. They might do some good things, they might educate our children. What “freedom” do we have to lose?...we know there is a difference getting freedom and changing masters. But would the Americans be better?...and would no doubt insist on having military bases, perhaps the Americans would be satisfied if they could just keep the Russians out. They might not be as bad.” 499

The Americans realized Balochistan’s strategic significance even before the creation of Pakistan. After the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan this strategic significance of Balochistan multiplied. Zibignieu Brzezinski, then American National Security adviser believed that the Soviets would soon advance towards Balochistan and would be in a position to control maritime movement in the Indian Ocean. To counter such an eventuality, Admiral Thomas Moore, US naval Chief suggested building a naval base in Gwadar. 500

Centre’s economic and development policy towards Balochistan

We saw in the previous chapter that Bhutto time and again took pride in the fact that he had invested heavily in the development of Balochistan and done more for Balochistan than any previous government of Pakistan. His government’s particular emphasis was on the construction of new roads. General Zia’s government however claimed that up till 1977 not much has been done in this regard and what little has been done was due to Pakistan Army’s efforts.

Throughout General Zia’s period, especially due to Balochistan’s reinforced strategic significance, Balochistan’s economic and developmental share expanded. For the first time since gas was discovered in 1950s, it was supplied to Quetta, the airport was updated with facilities to handle more and large flights and a TV station was established. Due to the changed circumstances in the wake of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, apart from Pakistan’s regular five year plan, in 1980, a Special Development Plan for Balochistan was announced. The Special Plan alluded to the urgent need to uplift the living and social condition of the Baloch. The plan

499 Harrison, 67.
500 Imitaz Ali, p59.
emphasized the construction of new and improvement of existing infrastructure and transportation routes. It did not hide the fact that some of it might be used to strengthen Pakistan’s defence along its Afghanistan border.\textsuperscript{501}

Once again, as was the case in the past, road construction in Balochistan was among the top priorities of the central government. Makran and its coastal routes received special attention.

As per the new plan in which Rs. 82972 million (4.6 million US dollars) were allocated for improving and building new transportation and communication infrastructure in Balochistan, Liyari to Ormara-Karachi-Pasni-Gwadar highway was to be improved. Rs 742 million were allocated for the construction of Kohlu-Kahan road. Going through the Marri territory, this road, according to the Central government would play an important role in the economic uplift of Balochistan by facilitating the oil exploration in Balochistan. During General Zia’s era, a number of foreign governments and donor agencies also contributed to several projects in Balochistan.\textsuperscript{502} Mahnaz Isphani in her book mentioned the financial aid provided by the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED).\textsuperscript{503} KFAED provided a loan of $17.5 million for the construction of a gas pipeline. According to media reports, KFAED also expressed its willingness to invest $400 million in several other projects ranging from irrigation to electricity.\textsuperscript{504} The Americans also provided huge financial aid for projects in Balochistan. The Americans were particularly interested in the development of the Makran area. The Americans provided $40 million for a road project linking Las Bela to Turbat. USAID, the organization responsible for handling all such aid also considered funding a highway construction project from Karachi via Makran coast to the Iranian border.

Throughout this period one area that stood out was the Makran coastal area especially Gwadar. Both the Americans and Pakistan believed that the Soviets were eyeing Gwadar area for further expansion into the Indian Ocean. Experts now considered Gwadar ideal not only for a naval base but also as a hub of maritime trade activity. How the Baloch viewed this economic development and how it affected the

\textsuperscript{501} For details about this point see Isphani, 58-81.
\textsuperscript{502} Isphani,76.
\textsuperscript{503} Isphani, 76.
\textsuperscript{504} Isphani, 76.
common Baloch? While all this economic activity was good but all this economic activity could not trickle down to improve the Baloch masses. The Baloch needed basic human needs, in particular, clean drinking water, hospitals and schools etc. In these sectors, much was left to be desired.

**Baloch Nationalist Movement during the peace interval**

By the end of 1970s, the Baloch nationalist leadership started to fell apart. It became visible that Khair Bakhsh Marri and Attaullah Mengal saw little logic in continuing political activities. Baloch political leadership in general demonstrated no keenness in joining MRD; not because they supported the military regime but because of what happened to the Baloch during Bhutto’s era. They still doubted PPP’s intention and saw hardly any point in getting rid of one Punjabi dominated government to get another Punjabi dominant government. Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, who was now heading Pakistan National Party (PNP) joined the Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD). Within MRD (as we have seen in an earlier section) the views were divided on the issue of centre-provincial relations and provincial autonomy. Bizenjo argued that in Pakistan four identity groups live. The solution to Pakistan’s national integration problem, according to Bizenjo was in recognizing and accepting the existence of the ethnic groups and to establish a loose federation. Such a loose federation, in its essence, according to Bizenjo would be closer to the Lahore (Pakistan) resolution of 1940. Bizenjo was convinced that only the formula of a loose federation could save the country from disintegration. Ironically though, he was also convinced that the Punjabis would not allow this to happen.

There were many in Balochistan especially the Baloch militants and student groups who considered Bizenjo to be a political fraud. They believed that Bizenjo would have reached an understanding with General Zia in return of some petty benefits, had he not been stopped by the Sardars Mengal and Marri. Bizenjo haters even disputed his Marxist-Leninist credentials, arguing that his political career was backed by Akbar Musti Khan, a Baloch businessman.

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506 Harrision., 59.
Moscow, according to Selig Harrison, treated Bizenjo as a possible future head of the State of Pakistan. Aziz Bugti argued that after witnessing the insurgent violence and Pakistan security forces response, Bizenjo as a Baloch political leader vowed that he would do as much as he can politically before pushing his fellow Baloch into another round of violence. His whole political strategy during the 1980s revolved around this realization.

Nawab Khair Bakksh Marri, who was considered to be the staunchest Baloch nationalist among the trio of Mengal-Bizenjo-Marri was not convinced that they should negotiate with General Zia. He demanded that General Zia must withdraw Pakistan army from Balochistan and pay the Baloch who suffered during the four year (1973-77) violence before they can discuss anything with him. In 1981, he went to Afghanistan and met with Mir Hazar Ramkhani, the commander of the Balochistan Liberation Front.

He saw no point in negotiating with the Punjab or Punjab dominated Pakistan government. According to him, Punjabis would never give the Baloch their due rights. According to Harrison:

When I (Harrison) suggested that a settlement with Pakistan would be preferable to achieving independence under Superpower tutelage, he responded...that if Punjabis or the Pakistani state are prepared to talk to us in a mature way, with some kind of realism and some understanding of how our people feel, we are prepared for a settlement, as we have always been. But there is no use wasting time talking of minor matters. They must be prepared to talk in terms of a national status to us, of a relationship with us based on that status. I must confess that I cannot ever remember a Punjabi talking in such terms.
The third member of the trio of Baloch nationalist leadership, Attaullah Mengal considered General Zia’s effort towards the Baloch (end of the military operation, release of political prisoners and general amnesty to the Baloch guerrillas) inadequate. Mengal stated that in many areas of Balochistan, army was still present and patrolled those areas.\(^{513}\) Mengal argued that General Zia’s actions have reinforced the feeling among the Baloch that they (the Baloch) are second class citizens of Pakistan. He informed Selig Harrison that the younger generation of the Baloch are convinced that they have no future in Pakistan.\(^{514}\) These young Baloch believe that in keeping with them so few in number, the Baloch would never get due rights in a democratic Pakistan. For them (the younger generation of the Baloch) the only solution to all Baloch suffering was independence.\(^{515}\) Just like Nawab Marri and Bizenjo, Attaullah Mengal was convinced that the Punjabi dominated establishment (bureaucracy and the army) would never let General Zia reach a meaningful understanding with the Baloch.\(^{516}\) This group of Punjabis, according to Mengal pressurized General Zia not to accept our (Baloch nationalist leadership) demand to replace the Punjabi Chief Secretary of Balochistan.\(^{517}\) Speaking with Lawrence Lifshultz, Mengal stated that this group of Punjabis takes the attitude that we have to prove our patriotism. This would not happen anymore as we had had enough. According to Mengal, now onwards, they have to come to the Baloch. He further stated that “if he was called a traitor by this Punjabi group, this would mean that I (Attaullah Mengal) am loyal to my people.”\(^{518}\)

By mid-1979, both Sardar Marri and Sardar Mengal decided to continue their political activities from abroad. Both left the country for medical treatment.\(^{519}\)


\(^{514}\) Harrison, 64.

\(^{515}\) Harrison, 64.


\(^{518}\) Harrison, 65.

\(^{519}\) Harrison, 66.
Sardar Attaullah Mengal continued to alter his position on a settlement with the State of Pakistan. Up till 1978, he was ready to accept the Bizenjo formula of a loose federation.\(^{520}\) By 1980, he argued that the Baloch, in keeping with their less numbers in the federation, could only feel secure if the federation followed the formula of parity among its federating units regardless of the population ratio.\(^{521}\) To support this position, Mengal argued that the Punjabi dominated (then) West Pakistan opted for the parity formula through the establishment of One Unit to counter the majority of the East Pakistan. They (the Punjabis) according to Mengal (at the time) insisted that the Bengalis should sacrifice for the sake of the unity of the country. Now according to Mengal, it was time for the Punjabis to sacrifice.\(^{522}\)

Going a step further in 1983, Sardar Attaullah Mengal issued a declaration of independence of Balochistan. At the time of issuing this declaration, Mengal emphasized the timing of this declaration. According to Mengal, a crucial turning point\(^ {523}\) has been achieved in Balochistan problem. He has issued the declaration for independence because the situation has reached the point of no return. What exactly he meant by the crucial turning point or why he thought that the relationship between Islamabad and Balochistan had reached a point of no return, he did not elaborate. However, he stated that the present government (of General Zia) is not fundamentally different in its treatment of and approach towards the Baloch. Mengal argued that all governments in Islamabad want to colonize Balochistan and plunder its wealth and resources. That is the only constant in Islamabad – Quetta relations.\(^ {524}\)

Mengal further stated that the only purpose of Pakistan is to provide its Army with all privileges. As it happened in 1971, as soon as an ethnic group decides to


challenge Army’s supremacy, it suffers the fate Bengalis faced.\textsuperscript{525} The only solution to this for the Baloch according to Attaullah Mengal was independence:

\begin{quote}
If the Baloch are to survive, then we must struggle for an independent Balochistan, outside the framework of Pakistan. We are conscious of ourselves as a national entity. If the present situation is allowed to prevail, then that entity will be lost. Efforts are being made in Pakistan at the moment to drown us with an influx of refugees and immigrants. The authorities in Pakistan want to outnumber the people of Balochistan by bringing settlers from outside Balochistan into the province as labourers, peasants and businessmen. The goal is to bring people in and force the Baloch out... it is my firm belief now that the Baloch will never realise their rights within the framework of Pakistan. \textsuperscript{526}
\end{quote}

Again Mengal blamed Punjab for this. According to Mengal, Punjab’s population was rising and this population needed to be employed. Balochistan provided an ideal place, with its vast land, resources and wealth. Balochistan could accommodate thousands of people, according to Mengal.\textsuperscript{527} Punjab was doing exactly that and in the process was destroying the Baloch.\textsuperscript{528}

\begin{quote}
If you give the gun to the Punjab and at the same time you designate 56 percent of the seats in a National Assembly to the Punjab, then how can there be any safeguards for provincial rights? Now all three provinces together could not beat the Punjab in such an Assembly. When there was East Pakistan the votes would have been overwhelmingly against the vested
\end{quote}

interests of the Punjabis. In this sense we constituted a clear majority in the country. It is precisely for this reason that the Army would not abide by the 1970 elections and kicked East Pakistan out of the federation. Now all the guns lie with the Punjab. The Army and the civil service are overwhelmingly Punjabi. \(^{529}\)

\*The decline of the Baloch Nationalist Movement*

The decade of 1980s witnessed the gradual decline of the Baloch nationalist movement. General Zia’s policy of accommodation and reconciliation played an important role in it. Though most of the thorny issues remained unresolved and the common Baloch continued to survive under similar conditions as in the past, Balochistan and Baloch politics became more restive and peaceful.

With the Pakistan Army taking the helm of affairs, Baloch leadership considered the Pashtun element within the NAP becoming accommodative to the centre. This led to a split in the NAP. Bizenjo’s Pakistan National Party (PNP) was banned within months. By early 1980s, the Balochistan Peoples’ Liberation Front also started showing signs of fatigue. Views got divided on the outcome or ultimate objective of the struggle. One group led by Mir Hazar and Khair Bakhsh Marri wanted independence of Balochistan where as another comprising mostly of BPLF’s non-Baloch members, wanted to expand the struggle into Pakistan.

A number of vocal and vibrant Baloch leaders and workers especially belonging to the Baloch Students Organization (BSO) were arrested that robbed the movement of its grassroots worker and second and lower tier of leaders and activists.

Perhaps the most important factor was the parting of ways of the trio of Bizenjo, Marri and Mengal. Bizenjo, through his PNP and later as a national level leader of Pakistan opted for peaceful political struggle and focused his energies on the issue of greater provincial autonomy within the framework of the federation of

Pakistan. Attaullah Mengal and Khair Bakhsh Marri left the country to continue their struggle for independent Balochistan. However it never became clear what exactly was the stand of the Baloch nationalist leaders especially Sardar Attaullah Mengal as he navigated from one position to another swiftly as it has been detailed in an earlier section. From 1978 to 1983, he navigated for advocating a loose federation to issuing a declaration of independence of Balochistan.\(^{530}\) He once again changed his position when he returned to Pakistan in 1990s and allowed his son to participate in provincial politics of Balochistan, contest elections and become Chief Minister of Balochistan. General Zia also found a number of Baloch Sardars more than willing to help him. Doda Khan Zarakzai, a lifelong Muslim leaguer and pro-Centre Sardar extended his full support to General Zia. Moinuddin Baloch, younger brother of Ahmed Yar Khan and Zafarullah Khan Jamali joined General Zia’s cabinet. Another important Baloch who supported General Zia was the marble king of Balochistan. Mir Nabi Bakhsh Zehri.\(^ {531} \)

Due to these factors, the Baloch nationalist movement faced a gradual decline.

**Political activities in Balochistan during the decade of democracy**

When General Zia appointed Junajo as the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Bizenjo’s PNP joined the Junajo government. In 1988 elections, PNP only won two seats in a house of 45 in Balochistan. Bizenjo who was widely respected in Balochistan and was called the father of Balochistan also lost in the 1988 elections.

The beginning of the decade of democracy in Balochistan was marked with a political crisis in Balochistan. On the advice of the chief minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, the Governor of Balochistan General (retired) Mohammad Musa dissolved the Balochistan assembly on December 15, 1988. The rationale behind this decision was that no party or alliance had a majority to form a government in

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\(^{531}\) Harrison, In Afghanistan’s Shadow, 153, Phadnis, Ethnicity and Nation building in South Asia, 189.
Jamiat-e-Ulema-i-Islam (JUI) and the Balochistan National Alliance (BNA) eventually reached an understanding and established a coalition government in Balochistan in which Nawab Akbar Bugti became the Chief Minister of Balochistan. However, when the PPP government initiated the developmental projects under the banner of People’s Programme worth Rs 2 billion, differences appeared between the central and provincial government. The program was aimed at providing and improving basic human needs (drinking water, health facilities, education) to the people of Pakistan. Bugti government considered the program against the provincial autonomy.\textsuperscript{533}

**New Political parties in Balochistan**

In 1970s, Balochistan had only one political party, National Awami Party (NAP). When NAP was banned by Bhutto government, Baloch politicians such as Bizenjo started political activities under Pakistan National Party (PNP). With the restoration of democratic practices in Pakistan, a number of new political parties and groupings emerged in Balochistan.

Bizenjo’s PNP continued to participate in provincial politics. PNP, like most of the political parties in Pakistan, aspired to remain in power and supported Muslim League led by Nawaz Sharif and Pakistan People’s Party led by Benazir Bhutto. Just before 1988 elections, PNP was part of the interim government. After PPP won the 1988 election, PNP established an alliance with PPP. In 1990 elections, it switched sides and got into an alliance with Muslim League. The 1993 elections were most devastating for PNP as only one if its members managed to win his seat. Even that was because of his tribal connection. At one point, while PNP was in alliance with the Muslim League in Balochistan, at national level it supported PPP’s (rival political party of ML) candidate for the slot of prime minister.\textsuperscript{534}

From within PNP emerged the Balochistan National Youth Movement (BNYM). Dr. Abdul Hayee Baloch, former BSO president established this youth focused group in PNP to ensure smooth transition of Baloch student activists into PNP via BNYM. Bizenjo however disagreed with this approach and charged Dr.\textsuperscript{532, 533, 534}

\textsuperscript{532} Harrison., 112, 113.  
\textsuperscript{533} Harrison., 117.  
\textsuperscript{534} Aziz Bugti, 150.
Hayee of violating the party rulers and expelled Dr. Abdul Hayee and his group for the PNP.

Dr. Abdul Hayee Baloch now established BNYM as an independent and proper political party. BNYM had a number of inherent advantages: most of its cadre including the leadership came from the Balochistan Student Organization (BSO). The current BSO automatically provided it a base of support group among the Baloch youth. More so, BNYM was able to secure the support of Nawab Bugti and Attaullah Mengal.

BNYM was part of the BNA-JUI alliance which established the government in Balochistan after the 1988 election. In 1989, the leadership of BNYM decided to expand BNYM’s political focus and decided to drop the Y (youth) and rename it Balochistan National Movement (BNM). Though BNM is credited to be the only Baloch political party representing the middle class, it had a number of Sardars in its cadre. Prime amongst them were Akhtar Mengal and Muhammad Arif Hasani.

The alliance between BNM and BNA turned out to be short-lived as BNM and Akhbar Bugti differed on the issue of no-confidence motion against the then prime-minister Benazir Bhutto. While Bugti was actively campaigning for this no-confidence motion to succeed, BNM decided that it would vote against the motion.

Eventually in 1990, BNM left the provincial government of Balochistan. BNM suffered another setback just before the 1990 elections, when a group led by Akhtar Mengal left BNM. BNM could not perform in 1990 elections and managed to win only two provincial assembly seats in Balochistan. For the 1993 elections, BNM followed the seat to seat adjustment formula. When Nawab Magsi became chief minister of Balochistan, four BNM provincial assembly members joined the Magsi cabinet.

*Jamhuri Watan Party (JWP)*

Akbar Bugti was one of the most prominent Baloch sardars and politicians. His critics considered him to be a self-centered, egotistic and a strict sardar. He was

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535 Bugti, 156.
536 Bugti, 157.
also a pro-Pakistan and pro-federation Baloch politician who stayed in Balochistan throughout the Zia Period.\textsuperscript{537}

Nawab Akbar Bugti, since the restoration of democratic practices in Pakistan, argued that there is a need for a new political party in Pakistan. On 16 August 1990, Akbar Bugti announced the establishment of a new political party: the Jamhuri Watan Party (JWP). As its creation almost coincided with the election, JWP’s organisational issues and set up was delayed. However, as it was widely believed that JWP would form the next government in Balochistan, a number of Baloch politicians who did not share Akbar Bugti’s political ideas bandwagoned into joining the JWP.\textsuperscript{538}

After the 1990 elections, JWP emerged as a strong party and could have formed the government, had IJI (Islamic Democratic Alliance) decided to align with JWP, its electoral ally. But IJI, PPP, PNP, JUI and BNM established a coalition government in Balochistan. JWP became a very strong and vibrant opposition party in the assembly. This also provided Akbar Bugti the time to focus on organizational and other party issues. The biggest problem with JWP was that it was Akbar Bugti’s party. He was the leader, the political ideologue, the political worker and the decision-maker of the JWP. Another incident which hampered the evolution and progress of the JWP as a political party was the murder of Salal Bugti. This sad incident not only gave rise to tribal infighting between the Bugti sub tribes, it also resulted in Akbar Bugti’s decision to confine himself to Dera Bugti. These factors hindered the emergence of the JWP as the third force in the Pakistani politics as envisaged by Akbar Bugti.\textsuperscript{539}

**Balochistan and Pakistan’s Central Asian Dream**

The decade of 1990 began with the triumph of the West in the cold war. The fall of the Berlin wall marked the end of the cold war. Soon after, the USSR was dissolved. This resulted in the emergence of a number of new states including the energy rich (Oil and gas) Muslim Central Asian Republics (CARs). As the CARs were land-locked and in the case of Uzbekistan, the largest of CARs, double

\textsuperscript{537} Bugti, 168.
\textsuperscript{538} Bugti, 169.
\textsuperscript{539} Bugti, 172.
landlocked, these states were keen to find alternative routes to transport oil and gas to outside world. This search also aimed at finding alternative routes from and reliance on Russia.

Pakistan reached out to CARs leadership and revived and expanded the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO). Pakistan’s prime ministers and federal ministers frequently visited CARs. The significance of Gwadar which was repeatedly emphasized by the American and other Western analysts during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was reinforced as it was the closest outlet to the sea for the CARs. Both Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto offered the CARs leadership to avail Pakistan and Gwadar as their gateway to the outside world via the Indian Ocean. Nawaz Sharif in 1992 stated that Pakistan would be a gateway to Central Asia. Pakistan also signed an agreement with Turkmenistan to build a pipeline transporting gas from Daultabad gas facility of Turkmenistan to Afghanistan to Pakistan. The pipeline was Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan pipeline (TAP). In 2006, India also joined this project and the pipeline was renamed TAPI.

During the decade of democracy, Pakistani leadership initiated a number of projects in collaboration with the Central Asian States. Pakistan started the construction of the Gwadar Port. Pakistan also initiated the ambitious plan of constructing extensive road and railway and pipeline networks linking Gwadar with the rest of the country. Pakistan’s leadership was optimistic that due to these economic projects and region based activities Pakistan would not only be projected as the energy corridor, it would immensely improve Pakistan’s economic situation. More so it would integrate Afghanistan, Pakistan and the Central Asian states into an economic partnership. However continued political uncertainty in Pakistan, unending civil war in Afghanistan and continued competing regional interests halted the progress on Gwadar port project and other such projects. When General Musharraf took the helm of affairs in 1999 and tried to move forward on the Gwadar and related projects without taking the Baloch political leadership on board, Balochistan was inching towards the end of its peace interval in its relations with Islamabad. This would be discussed in the next chapter.

CONCLUSION
Balochistan went through a peace interval which lasted for 23 years (1977-1999). This peace interval is largely missing from the Baloch nationalist narrative. The most plausible explanation for this is that it does not fit into the narrative of enduring injustice against the Baloch and Balochistan.

During this period, the strategic significance of Balochistan was reinforced after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Soviet interest in reaching the warm waters of the Indian Ocean and their long term interest in Balochistan especially Makran and its port (though undeveloped at the time) Gwadar, made General Zia, the president of Pakistan at the time, focus more on Balochistan.

Zia, a strong believer in making Pakistan an Islamic state and a strong opponent of a multiethnic and multicultural Pakistan, followed a policy of reconciliation in Balochistan even prior to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. He withdrew the army from various parts of Balochistan, dissolved the Hyderabad tribunal, declared amnesty for Baloch insurgents and provided them compensation money. However, after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the emergence of an American-Pakistani-Saudi-Chinese alliance to support the Afghan resistance, Balochistan gained a strategic position for the Pakistani and American decision-makers as it was Balochistan which provided the USSR, its shortest and most viable outlet to the warm waters of the Indian ocean. Zia poured in a lot of money to build roads, airports, gas supply and other developmental projects which other than being visible development projects, were also strategically important in case of a Soviet invasion of the area.

During the decade of democracy, Baloch politicians participated in Pakistani politics. Akbar Bugti, Zafar Jamali and Bizenjo played important role in the national politics. A new generation of Baloch politicians emerged and actively participated in politics. This group included people like Akhtar Mengal, Abdul Hayee Baloch, Abdul Malik and a number of others.

Throughout this period, it became clear that Baloch politics was still conducted on tribal lines and the sardars play the key role in Baloch politics. This was despite the emergence of a number of political parties in Balochistan but every Baloch political party sought the patronage of a sardar. Baloch National Movement
which is led by Dr. Abdul Hayee Baloch, representing the Baloch middle class, only became a significant political player in Baloch politics when it got the support of Akbar Bugti and Attaullah Mengal.

After the disintegration of the USSR and the emergence of the Central Asian republics, Balochistan especially Gwadar once again became the focus of attention. This time due to economic reasons; all governments during the 1990s projected Pakistan as an energy corridor and an outlet for the landlocked Central Asian states. It was Nawaz Sharif government which started the mega Gwadar project(s).

Throughout this period, Balochistan was peaceful and the Baloch leadership was fully participating in the political activities in the province and the country. Akbar Bugti was projecting its Jamuri Watan Party as the third political force in the country. These were positive signs for Balochistan, Pakistan and centre-province relations. This, however, soon changed and insurgent violence returned to Balochistan. This would be discussed in the next chapter.
CHAPTER SEVEN
THE RETURN OF INSURGENCY IN BALOCHISTAN

INTRODUCTION

The central question raised in this chapter is why after a 23 years long peace interval (absence of militant violence), insurgent violence returned to Balochistan? And how and why this contributed to the Baloch nationalist narrative of enduring injustice. This question is important to understand the Baloch nationalist narrative. As it has been demonstrated in the previous chapters, different developments in Balochistan and centre-province relations contributed in the evolution of this narrative. Had the peace interval continued, the whole Baloch narrative would have fallen apart.

It is important to address this question for two reasons, one, by addressing this question one can understand the immediate causes for the return of violence and second to understand the overall narrative of enduring injustice faced by the Baloch.

Before October 1999 most Baloch nationalists were part of the mainstream politics, contesting elections and seeking to resolve what they considered the province’s grievances through parliamentary means. Nawab Akbar Bugti’s JWP was duly represented in the Assembly. Khair Bakhsh Marri’s sons contested elections – Balach Marri was a member of the Balochistan provincial assembly representing the Baloch Haq Tawar Party. Akhtar Mengal like Nawab Akbar Bugti, served as the Chief Minister of Balochistan. A group representing the Baloch middle class had its members in the provincial assembly as well as the parliament. Dr. Abdul Hayee Baloch renamed his party as National Party to underline its all Pakistan identity.

These positive developments were halted when General Musharraf took over the government and the subsequent developments in and around Pakistan. General Musharraf, soon after assuming power started taking steps to consolidate his power in the country assisted by a group of likeminded political actors. At the same time, he
started a number of ambitious developmental projects throughout the country especially in Balochistan. Prime amongst these projects was the Gwadar port project. When the Baloch elite opposed these projects, the centre under Musharraf adopted an aggressive policy towards the Baloch and Balochistan.

The current insurgency in Balochistan in a number of ways is much more serious than the previous insurgencies. Baloch Insurgents have learned lessons from a number of recent insurgencies around the world. These lessons are discussed in the relevant section of this chapter. In the current insurgency, two new trends have emerged: the target killings of ethnic Punjabi and Urdu-speaking settlers and abductions of Baloch nationalists, pro federation Baloch leaders and activists (the issue of missing persons).

The most plausible explanation for the return of insurgent violence in Balochistan is that the Baloch elite which were till the arrival of General Musharraf enjoying their share in the pie felt totally bypassed and ignored by General Musharraf and his policies towards Balochistan especially in the mega projects such as the Gwadar port. This resulted in the use of a narrative of historical injustice against them linking the current situation with the historical injustices towards the Baloch by the centre. This narrative failed to provide an explanation why most of the Baloch elite always sided with the centre or why the Baloch elite were silent on the historical injustices against the Baloch during the Zia regime and the decade of democracy. General Musharraf’s regime, in response, used centre’s standard narrative in which the Baloch sardars, in particular, Nawab Khair Baskhsh Marri and Sardar Attaullah Mengal were the villains. This time, Nawab Akbar Bugti’s name was included in this list as he was asking for a new agreement on gas royalty and increase in land rent rate in the Bugti area. This narrative argued that the Baloch tribal system has always been the biggest impediment to the development of Balochistan. This narrative ignored the fact that other than these two or three so-called trouble-making sardars, more than 90 per cent of Baloch sardars always supported the centre, why no development work had taken place in their areas or why this has not provided the centre enough space to move ahead with their policy of development in Balochistan. Also, why the centre did not develop Balochistan during the peace interval?
As a tribal society, the biggest problem which the Baloch society is suffering is that it lacks a single or unified voice. There are a number of tribal feuds in Balochistan: Bugti vs Kalpars, Bugti vs Ahmedans, Bugtis vs Mazaris, Bugtis vs Raisanis, Gazinis vs Bejranis, Marris vs Loonis, Hameedzais vs Ghaibezaís, Rind vs Raisani and Suleman Khels vs Lawoons.

At present, a number of insurgent groups are active in Balochistan: BLA (Baloch Liberation Army), BLF (Baloch Liberation Front), BMDT (Baloch Musalla Defai Tanzeem), BRA (Baloch Republic Army), BLT (Baloch Liberation Tiger), and BSO (Baloch Student Organization). These groups not only differ in their objectives, approach but at times act in cross purpose. However, Balochistan is facing more than just nationalist violence. Apart from the nationalist violence, Balochistan is also facing different types of violence. Sectarian violence is on the rise in Balochistan. A number of organized criminal groups committing abductions for ransom, car-jacking, attacks on cargo trucks, particularly on the US-NATO cargo destined for Afghanistan, many of whom enjoy political patronage are also present in Balochistan.

MUSHARRAF TAKES OVER AND CONSOLIDATES HIS POWER

On 12 October 1999, Pakistan Army under the command of the COAS, General Pervez Musharraf took over the government by arresting Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on the charge of hijacking the commercial flight on which the COAS was returning from a trip to Sri Lanka and forbidding it to land in Pakistan. After the military take over of Pakistan, General Musharraf in his address to the nation on 17 October 1999, said: “Quite clearly, what Pakistan has experienced in the recent years has been hardly a label of democracy not the essence of it. Our people were never emancipated from the yoke of despotism. I shall not allow the people to be taken back to the era of the sham democracy.” He also announced a seven-point agenda: *rebuild national confidence and morale; strengthen the federation, remove inter-provincial disharmony and restore national cohesion; revive the economy and restore investor speedy justice; ensure law and order and dispense speedy justice; depoliticize state institutions; devolve of power to the grass roots level and ensure swift and across the board accountability.*
Musharraf launched a devolution plan throughout the country that bypassed the provincial assemblies to create local governments entirely dependent on the central government for their survival. Although presented as a form of decentralization, all provinces except Punjab perceived the scheme to be an imposition of a centralized form of government and a negation of provincial autonomy.

For the 2002 elections, General Musharraf revised the eligibility criteria to contest elections. According to the new eligibility criteria, graduation was made compulsory for the candidates. This put a number of leading Pakistani politicians even those who have held ministerial positions in the past at disadvantage. Politicians like Akbar Bugti who has served as the defence minister, governor and chief minister of Balochistan, were not eligible to contest elections according to the new eligibility criteria.

This gave the religious parties especially the recently established Mutahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) a huge advantage as the new eligibility criteria accepted the degrees awarded by various religious seminaries as equivalent to a university degree. MMA managed to get maximum seats in the Balochistan and Khybar Pakhtun Khawa provincial assemblies.

In Balochistan, although, Jam Yousaf was appointed as the chief minister of Balochistan but he had almost no powers. The Baloch nationalist viewed this as a deliberate attempt to keep them out of the provincial decision making and a tool to be used to legitimize General Musharraf’s rule.

BALOCHISTAN’S STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

The previous chapter detailed how Balochistan’s strategic significance was recognized by the Americans and Pakistan’s other western allies. A number of experts pointed out that the Makran coastal area and especially Gwadar was ideal for not only a naval base but for a port which would play a very important role in the maritime trade and commercial activity in and around the Indian Ocean. With the independence of the central Asian states, Pakistan embarked upon projecting itself as
an outlet for these states and an energy corridor but for several reasons the construction of the Gwadar port was delayed.

When General Musharraf took over, one of the first decisions he took was to move ahead on the construction of the Gwadar port. With the Chinese assistance, the construction of Gwadar started. Gwadar and related developmental projects resulted in the influx of Chinese engineers and experts into Balochistan and also of workers and laborers from various parts of the country.

The tragic events of 9/11 and the American response also impacted Balochistan. When General Musharraf decided to side with the Americans in the war against terror, he provided the American forces a number of facilities including the air fields in Pasni and Dalbadin in Balochistan. These developments reinforced the strategic significance of Balochistan and resulted in General Musharraf sending in more troops to ensure the safety and security of the infrastructure as well as of the Chinese engineers and other workers. This also reinforced the Baloch nationalist’s view that Pakistan is only interested in exploiting Balochistan’s natural wealth.

MUSHARRAF REGIME’S VIEW AND POLICY TOWARDS BALOCHISTAN

General Musharraf’s policy towards Balochistan was based on three main points: development, counter-insurgency and collaborating with and facilitating moderate Baloch politicians.

General Musharraf in particular and the centre in general held the view that the tribal culture of the Baloch and their foreign-gained capabilities are the prime reasons for the failure of the Baloch to integrate into Pakistan and that the sardars and their hierarchical tribal structure are a prime reason why the tribes of the Pakistani Baloch have rejected the government of Pakistan. General Musharraf declared the Baloch tribal system especially the sardari system as an impediment to the construction of mega-projects in particular and to development in Balochistan. The Baloch sardars especially Khair Bakhsh Marri, Attaullah Mengal and Akbar Bugti, according to General Musharraf, fear that their traditional hold on their areas would be weakened by modernization. Hence, the actual problem in Balochistan
was the perseverance of the regressive and archaic sardari or tumandari system. Musharraf believed that apart from these trouble-making sardars, majority of the Baloch people were patriotic Pakistanis who want to see their province progress and prosper.

Echoing almost every ruler of Pakistan, General Musharraf claimed that the central government has allocated unprecedented funds and resources for projects in Balochistan. He claimed that he allocated these huge resources to eliminate the Baloch sense of deprivation. He rightly claimed that he has worked out a policy to have a greater number of Baloch selected in the Pakistan Army and the civil services of Pakistan. President Musharraf also stated that he does not understand why certain people were opposing the mega projects and what exactly these people want. He also emphasized that his government wanted to end the sense of deprivation in Balochistan. According to Musharraf, his government had increased development funds for Balochistan from 3 per cent to 7 per cent and added that work on Gwadar Port, Mirani Dam, Kachhi Canal, Coastal Highway, Subakzai Dam, Greater Quetta Water Scheme, Zhob-Dera Ismail Khan Road and many other projects launched by the federal government were in progress and these projects, once completed would transform Balochistan.

General Musharraf also decided to disband the levy forces and integrate them into the police. In March 2004, President Musharraf announced a plan to convert the 'B' areas in Balochistan into 'A' areas. According to the plan, this conversion from B to A area would take five years to complete and every year a select group of towns would be converted. According to media reports, in the first phase, Quetta,

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Lasbela, Nasirabad, Gwadar, Pishin and Kila Abdullah, in the second phase, Sibi, Bolan, Zhob, Kila Saifullah and Kech, in the third phase, Loralai, Musa Khel, Jhal Magsi, Mustung and Ziarat, in the fourth phase Awaran, Kalat, Chaghai, Barkhan and Dera Bugti, and in the fifth and final phase, Khuzdar, Panjgur, Kharan and Kohlu would be converted into A areas.545

General Musharraf government decided to build three new cantonments in Gwadar, Kohlu and Sui mainly to ensure security of the installations and national assets. On the issue of the construction of new military cantonments in Balochistan at Gwadar, Sui and Kohlu, then Director General, Inter services Public relations (ISPR) explained the Musharraf regime’s position. He stated that these cantonments were important in ensuring the security of the installations and national assets in these areas. Highlighting the positive impact of the cantonments at Zhob, Khuzdar and Loralai on the lives of common Baloch, he stated that medical and educational facilities in these cantonments have benefited a large number of people in the area.546

Declaring cantonments, drivers of economic activity, he further added that a cantonment would bring modernization to the area in the shape of road, electricity and modern communication facilities to the area and new economic opportunities for the people of the area.

RETURN OF VIOLENCE IN BALOCHISTAN: FROM BUGTI'S ROYALTY WAR TO FOURTH INSURGENCY IN BALOCHISTAN

This section covers the developments from 2002 when the armed clashes between the Bugtis and Mazaris intensified. During these clashes, a number of rockets targeted gas pipelines in the area. The central and provincial governments claimed that the damage to gas infrastructure was a collateral damage due to the ongoing tribal clash, it soon became clear that it was not. After the lapse of the agreement on the royalty payment between the Sui gas administration and the Bugti tribe and apparent reluctance or delay in renewing it, the pipelines were attacked as a pressure tactic. An attempt to reach a mutually acceptable solution to the problem was initiated and it seemed that all parties would be able to work out a new

546“New garrisons in Balochistan to ensure safety of key installations: ISPR,” The News, September 26, 2004
agreement when Dr. Shazia, an employee at the Sui hospital was allegedly raped by an army captain. As the event took place in the Bugti tribal area and the action against the rapist was almost non-existence, the Bugtis felt that their tribal honor was violated. This intensified the violence. Around that time, a number of other violent attacks took place in other areas of Balochistan and it seemed that the violence in Balochistan was spreading beyond the Bugti area. The complete failure of Prime Minister Zafarullah Khan Jamali, a Baloch sardar’s government, in resolving the problem in the beginning also contributed in its expansion. However, the Shujaat-Mushahid committee made significant developments in resolving the problem between the center and Nawab Akbar Bugti. Despite these developments, the heavy-handed policy of the Musharraf regime resulted in the death of Nawab Akbar Bugti. His death, instead of solving the problem, resulted in him being used as a martyr to the cause of the Baloch. The insurgent violence continued and intensified and at the time of this writing is still going on.

**Bugti-Mazari Clash**

Bugti-Mazari tribal feud started in 1993 between the Mazari and Bugti sub-tribes of Esani and Phank (Mondrani) during the construction of the Kashmore-Rajanpur Indus highway. Since then both tribes, despite having close family ties between the Bugti and Mazari sardars, were at logger heads. A fresh wave of tribal violence started when Mazari tribesmen attacked a caravan of Bugti tribesmen passing through their area under FC escort.

In the subsequent clashes between the Bugtis and Mazaris, the gas pipelines in the Dera Bugti area were targeted. In one of such attacks, the pipeline was damaged and the gas supply was halted.

The Sui Northern Gas Pipeline Limited (SNGPL) stopped supply to all CNG stations and industrial areas in Punjab and the NWFP after two of its four main supply lines on the Punjab-Balochistan border were damaged.

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The Issue of Gas Royalty

The situation in Sui turned out to be more than just tit-for-tat clashes between the two rival Baloch tribes on the borders of Punjab and Balochistan.\textsuperscript{551} According to media reports, the Bugti camp made it quite clear that it was the royalty and other related matters that were the cause of unrest in the Sui area, and not the Mazari-Bugti clashes. According to one Bugti elder, the royalty of Sui gas was determined on a well-head price of Rs. 9 per 1,000 square feet in the early 1950s. In Sindh it was Rs. 160 and up to Rs. 240 in Punjab. He said of the total amount received as well-head price only 12.5 per cent came to Balochistan and the remaining 87.5 per cent went to the federal government, PPL and OGDC. He said jobs for the people of Bugti area in particular and Balochistan in general in gas companies and poverty in the province were issues discussed with the company heads in the presence of the corps commander in 2002.\textsuperscript{552}

Akbar Bugti while giving an interview to the BBC stated that there are a number of reasons behind the attacks on the gas pipelines. He also stated that gas is the property of the Baloch which is used by others without our consent or permission. If such things happen for long, people rise up for their right. He emphasized that “There are many reasons of attack on the gas pipelines and the problems further multiply if they are not resolved.”\textsuperscript{553} Responding to a question about his demands, he said “When someone comes and sits with us, we will discuss the problem with him. However Akbar Bugti was very clear on the fact that the matter should be resolved through negotiations as he stated in his interview that “the problem can only be solved when talks are held with us.” Responding to the question that whether these attacks on the gas pipelines are a method of signaling? Bugti replied “I cannot say so.”\textsuperscript{554}

Putting the blame of the delay in working out a new agreement on the issue of royalty on Akbar Bugti, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources officials were of the view that a new agreement (the previous agreement lapsed on December

\textsuperscript{552}“Gas crisis to help bring royalty issue into focus,” \textit{Dawn}, January 24, 2003.
\textsuperscript{553}“Many reasons behind attack, says Bugti Many reasons behind attack, says Bugti,” \textit{The Nation}, January 23, 2003.
\textsuperscript{554}“Many reasons behind attack, says Bugti Many reasons behind attack, says Bugti,” \textit{The Nation}, January 23, 2003.
According to them, two main issues of difference between the parties are the measurement of land under use and the land rate. For instance, for its Uch field, OGDCL was utilizing 1,100 acres of land but Nawab Akbar Bugti, according to governmental sources was demanding rent for 4,300 acres. The ministry sources claimed that the gas companies at the rate of Rs. 12,600 per acre of land as compared to Rs. 10,000 per acre in the Potohar and Hyderabad region, were already paying rent for much larger area than they were utilizing, yet now, Akbar Bugti wanted that the rate should be increased to Rs. 17000 per acre or Rs.17,600.

The media later reported that amidst continuing attacks on the gas pipelines, Sui gas companies and chief of Bugti tribe Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti reached an agreement at Dera Bugti settling various contentious issues concerning Sui and Pirkoh gas fields. Chief Secretary Balochistan, Managing Director PPL, General Manager OGDC took part in the negotiations. According to the agreement, the children of retired and deceased employees of the gas fields would be given jobs. It was also agreed that free gas would be provided to people living in the radius of three kilometers of gas fields. In future, the Bugti tribe would be given jobs at the gas fields according to 70 per cent quota fixed for them.

Initial Government Response

On February 4, 2003, Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali chaired a high-level meeting on law and order situation in Balochistan with reference to the gas pipelines crisis. This was the first meeting the prime minister presided ever

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556 Ibid.
since the eruption of violence in Balochistan. According to the media reports, the participants of the meeting were against the revision of the agreement with the Bugtis that expired on December 31. It was also decided in the meeting that the Bugtis would not be given any big concession and would only be offered to accept the old agreement with the companies.

Petroleum and Natural Resources Minister Chaudhry Naurez Shakoor said in a statement the government was open to negotiate on any unsettled issues rather than allowing damage to oil and gas installations.

It was also decided in the meeting that to ensure the security of the gas field and pipeline, a 500 strong force of Rangers, headed by a colonel would be deployed. It was also in February 2003 that President General Pervez Musharraf sought a comprehensive report on all kinds of petroleum-related payments made to Balochistan government and Baloch Sardars, including royalties, rentals and illegal gratifications. Sensing the tough attitude of the federal government, the Balochistan government asked the Centre not to launch any operation in the troubled areas unless cleared by the provincial government.

**Dr. Shazia’s Rape and intensification of violence in the Bugti Area**

In January 2005, Shazia Khalid, a medical doctor working for Pakistan Petroleum Limited in Sui was allegedly raped by an army captain. Government’s inaction in comprehending the culprits was taken as an insult and violation of the Baloch honor. This resulted in intensification of violence in the Bugti area in which a number of FC personnel lost their lives. In such two attacks which took place between January 7 and 11, almost fifteen FC and Defence Security Guard (DSG) personnel lost their lives. The government responded by registering an FIR

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against 37 alleged culprits including Nawab Akbar Bugti’s son Jamil Bugti and grandson Burhamdagh Bugti.569

The Emergence of Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA)

In 2003 and 2004, the BLA made a series of attacks on provincial infrastructure, targeting military and economic sites, such as military outposts and gas pipelines. The climax of BLA violence came in May 2004 when the group murdered three Chinese engineers working on the Gwardar port. Since then the BLA continued its attacks against government convoys, railway tracks, pipelines, and electricity pylons and other government infrastructure.

The Balochistan government registered cases of murder against 12 people including a former chief minister of the province, Sardar Akhtar Mengal son of Sardar Ataullah Mengal (also a former chief minister), and the secretary general of his Baloch Nationalist Party. The same day, the federal interior minister, Mr Faisal Saleh Hayat, warned that the government would soon launch an operation to get rid of the subversive elements in Balochistan.570

The Shujaat-Mushahid Committee

The parliamentary committee on Balochistan was set up by Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain in September 2004. It undertook the task of looking into the Baloch grievances. It sent a sub-committee, headed by Mushahid Hussain, to Balochistan to discuss the grievances of the Baloch nationalists.

Baloch nationalist leader Sardar Ataullah Mengal after his meeting with Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain and Mushahid Hussain Syed, stated that he made it clear to Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain and Syed Mushahid Hussain that the talks cannot be held with the government under ‘the shadow of gun’.571 Sardar Ataullah Mengal said he told the official delegation that he was not concerned with the Sui crisis, but wanted Islamabad to take serious notice of real demands of the Baloch for greater rights. He suggested to Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain to contact Nawab Akbar Bugti if

570 “Careful in Balochistan!,” Daily Times, August 5, 2004
571 “No talks under shadow of gun, says Mengal,” The Nation, January 26, 2005.
he was only interested in defusing the situation in Sui. While Sardar Attaullah Mengal was right and honest in his view that he could not be of any help in resolving the problem in the Bugti area, this statement in itself is significant for understanding the Baloch tribal and political culture. The problem in the Bugti area was a problem between the Bugti tribe and the government and not a problem of other Baloch tribes. Second, Baloch tribal and political culture does not allow one sardar to interfere in the business of another sardar even when it involves the Baloch honor.

He further stated that he asked the government representatives to improve the situation in Sui and Dera Bugti, adding that he advised the government representatives to contact Nawab Akbar Bugti as the situation was deteriorated in Dera Bugti and he might be able to help them. “I proposed them that it is better to first solve the problems which have ignited the prevailing situation and then contact Bugti.”

Apparently, in the beginning there was some deadlock on the issue of a meeting between Akbar Bugti and the committee delegation. When asked if he had refused to meet the team till the withdrawal of security forces from Sui, Bugti said: "We have not demanded their withdrawal, but made it clear that talks cannot be held in such a situation." Responding to a question under what circumstances talks would be possible, Bugti said: "It is their task to make the atmosphere free of intimidation and fear. It is up to them to do the needful.”

**Bugti-Mushahid Meeting**

Senator Mushahid Hussain, a key figure in the Senate committee on Balochistan during a meeting with Akbar Bugti told him that for the first time in the history of Pakistan a high-powered committee had been formed to look into the

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Nawab Akbar Bugti presented a memorandum to the committee. The memorandum had Akbar Bugti’s suggestion about how to resolve the crisis in Balochistan. The memorandum contained Akbar Bugti’s views on issues such as the construction of cantonments, Gwadar and other mega projects, presence of the security and paramilitary forces and provincial autonomy.

Mushahid Hussain and Akbar Bugti met again. This was an indication that both sides were able to break the ice. It was agreed that a three member committee would be set up to discuss and recommend ways to resolve all matters. It was agreed that one member each would be representing the centre and Akbar Bugti, while the third will be a neutral member agreeable to both sides.

**Bugti Formula**

By the time the Parliamentary committee on Balochistan started functioning; another dialogue process was under way with the Baloch nationalists including Akbar Bugti and the Nation Security Advisor to the President of Pakistan, Tariq Aziz that continued to operate parallel to the parliamentary committee’s efforts. While it is not clear why the Musharraf regime opted for two separate and uncoordinated channels for talks with Nawab Bugti and the Baloch nationalists instead of focusing their energies on one. Bugti’s willingness to talk and interact with both clearly illustrated the fact that Akbar Bugti never shunned from dialogue and was looking for a way out. Akbar Bugti in a media statement stated that he handed over a 15-point formula to Tariq Aziz that could be used to resolve the Balochistan issue. The

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575 *Mushahid optimistic about outcome of talks with Baloch nationalists,* The News, November 7, 2004; Saleem Shahid, “Committee meeting with Bugti 'fruitful'”, Dawn, November 8, 2004

576 Four federal ministers: Minister for Ports and Shipping Babar Khan Ghauri, Minister for Safron Sardar Yar Muhammad Rind, Minister for Social Welfare and Special Education Zobaida Jalal and Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Resources Naseer Mengal-as well as senators Prof Khursheed Ahmed, Maulana Muhmmad Khan Sherani, Sanaullah Baloch, Dilawar Abbas, Saeed Hashmi, Iismail Buledi, Aslam Buledi, Raza Muhammad Raza, Mohim Khan Baloch and MNA Abdul Rauf Mengal also accompanied Senator Mushahid.


15 points formula for the resolution of the Balochistan problem that Akbar Bugti shared with the media was as follows: 579

1. Provincial autonomy should be granted to the satisfaction of the people.
2. The ownership of the Baloch people of Balochistan’s natural resources should be recognized.
3. The reservations of the Baloch regarding the mega projects, including the Gwadar port and coastal-belt, should be redressed.
4. All the revenues generated through all the mega projects should be given to Balochistan and all employment in the mega projects should be given to the people of Gwadar, Mekran and Balochistan.
5. Outsiders should be removed from mega projects and gas fields and they should be replaced with locals.
6. The right of the Baloch and others to run their own affairs should be recognized.
7. Planned new cantonments should be cancelled and the land so taken by force, should be returned to their owners, and for this purpose necessary changes should be made in the land revenue record.
8. There are four federating units in Pakistan, with equal representation in the Senate. General Zia distorted this by giving Fata and Islamabad seats in Senate, thereby upsetting the whole structure. We want that the original agreed constitutional position be restored.
9. In Marri area sometime back about 1,000 hostile tribals were raised as a coercive measure by the ISI and the MI as a special Levies Force to suppress and overawe the rest of the Marri tribe and to bring them to heel. But its outcome has been the opposite. This body should be disbanded forthwith and the policy of divide and rule be abandoned.
10. All prisoners kept under various pretexts (political reasons) should be released.
11. All armed forces personnel from the interior of Balochistan should be withdrawn.
12. All civil armed forces should be placed under the provinces.

13. All law making authority for Balochistan be given to the Balochistan Assembly.
14. Within the federating units no federal law should override the provincial laws.
15. Problems with gas companies old (unresolved), and fresh (running) should be resolved.

**Bugti’s Joint Baloch Platform proposal**

It seemed that Akbar Bugti finally accepted the reality that the biggest impediment to the Baloch was their lack of unity and a unified approach and agenda. This realization led Akbar Bugti to offer to dissolve his party to form a joint political platform for the Baloch people. "If National Party, Baloch Haq Tawar, Balochistan National Party and other groups and personalities dissolve their political and individual entities for the formation of a single joint platform that would be highly appreciated," he stated. Bugti wished that the proposed greater Baloch platform would make concrete planning and adopt a strategy to ensure the identity of Baloch nation and survival of the homeland besides acquiring their right to rule, protection of coasts and their resources. He said it is high time to play a historic role by converting deprivations of the Baloch nation into a bright future by putting behind our ego for a greater cause. However, the proposal failed to attract any positive response from other Baloch political leaders and sardars as they were not willing to let go their hold on their areas of influence.

**Attack on General Musharraf and IG FC in Kholu**

In the midst of increasing political unrest and violence in Balochistan, General Musharraf visited Kholu. A number of observers thought that this was not a correct move. Obviously, General Musharraf’s government wanted to signal its resolve to the Baloch nationalists that the government’s writ would be established and ensured. Choosing Kholu, the center of ultra-nationalist Khair Bakhsh Marri’s tribal power and widely considered to be the hotbed of insurgent activity for this

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signaling was an indication of this resolve. Those observers, who considered it a bad move, were of the opinion that at this moment, Balochistan required a reconciliatory touch, not an aggressive posture. General Musharraf and his advisors definitely knew/understood that Khair Bakhsh Marri’s son and a sitting member of the Balochistan provincial assembly from the area, Balach Marri would boycott the meeting but they got much more than they expected. The Baloch militants conducted a rocket attack during General Musharraf’s speech.

Another event that had significant implications on how Islamabad reacted to the current insurgency was the firing on the helicopter in which Frontier Corps (FC) Balochistan’s Inspector-General (IG), Major General Shujaat Zamir Dar and Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Frontier Force (FC) Brig Saleem Nawaz were wounded. The operation was then expanded into an operation to search and destroy the Parari camps in the area. According to security officials they had reports of the existence of 53 Parari camps. Thirteen camps were in the Marri area, 15 in Bugti area where as the remaining were scattered in different areas.

With an influx of forces into Bugti area, Akbar Bugti questioned the rationale of sending troops to Bugti area. In a statement, he stated that 15000 regular army troops, FC, DSG and Rangers were already positioned in the Bugti area. On the official position that that these forces were stationed to target the miscreants, Akbar

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582 Sarfaraz Ahmed, “Musharraf’s Kohlu visit not a wise move,” Daily Times, December 20, 2005
583 Sarfaraz Ahmed, “Musharraf’s Kohlu visit not a wise move,” Daily Times, December 20, 2005
584 Muhammad Ejaz Khan, “Rockets fired at FC camp prior to president’s visit; BLA claims responsibility for attack Saboteurs cannot hamper progress: Musharraf Announces Rs 1.5bn package for Kohlu,” The News, December 15, 2005
586 “The message from Balochistan,” Daily Times, December 17, 2005
588 Muhammad Ejaz Khan, “Crackdown on militants launched in Kohlu,” The News, December 19, 2005
592 “Army deployed for mass killing of Bugti tribe: Nawab Bugti,” The News, December 20, 2005
Bugti, in a rare demonstration of emotion retorted that the centre had always declared its opponents, miscreants. Baloch, stated Akbar Bugti, were declared miscreants soon after the independence of Pakistan. Despite the fact that the Baloch are Pakistanis, “the government does not recognize us as Pakistanis and declared us as enemies of the country.”

Despite the fact that Nawab Akbar Bugti and the Bugti tribe had nothing to do with the attack on General Musharraf, Akbar Bugti remained the main opponent of the Musharraf regime.

**Musharraf Regime’s steps to weaken Akbar Bugti’s hold**

General Musharraf was convinced that the three sardars; Nawab Akbar Bugti, Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri and Sardar Attaullah Mengal were the main trouble makers in Balochistan. Out of these three, according to General Musharraf, Akbar Bugti was the biggest villain. He followed a step by step policy of weakening Akbar Bugti’s hold on the Bugti tribe and his position as the sardar of the Bugti tribe.

**Return of Masoori and Kalpars to Bugti Area**

Musharraf regime decided, encouraged and fully supported the return of the Masoori and Kalpars to the Bugti area. These clans were expelled from the Bugti area after the murder of Salal Bugti. Regardless of who and what was right and wrong, this policy could have resulted in nothing else but disaster. Both Masoori and Kalpars fully supported the centre’s approach towards Balochistan. Leader of the Masooris said that the government should continue the ongoing military operation in Balochistan against the terrorists in order to bring peace and prosperity in the areas.

Speaking at a news conference, Ghulam Qadir Masoori Bugti, responding to a question about who was supporting the terrorists, said that Akbar Bugti was providing every kind of support to these anti-Pakistani people. He claimed that a
number of political leaders including Makdoom Amin Fahim Chairman PPP, Maulan Fazal-ur-Rahman and Qazi Hussain Ahmad had information about the real situation yet they were opposing the ongoing operation.  

Echoing General Musharraf’s stated position on the Balochistan issue, Tariq Masooori Bugti in an interview on Geo TV claimed that only two to three sardars were vitiating the atmosphere of Balochistan. He further claimed that the Baloch want to free themselves from the clutches of these so-called sardars. Claiming that Akbar Bugti annually received Rs. 370 million as gas royalty, he questioned that how much of this amount was spent for the development of the Bugti tribe. Even as the governor and chief minister of Balochistan, Akbar Bugti did nothing for the development of his home constituency and the welfare of its people, he said.

As part of a well-worked out plan, more than 4,000 Kalpars and Masooris were brought back to the Bugti tribal area under the protection of security forces. According to media reports, despite the military escort, the returning tribesmen were “armed to the teeth” to avoid any mishap or clash.

This further complicated the situation for Akbar Bugti. He realized that he was left with no other option but to leave his fiefdom which he ruled as an authoritative and almost tyrannical ruler and go to the mountains and take up arms. According to a few media report, about 200 Baloch militants belonging to the Marri tribe came to Dera Bugti and escorted him out of the area.

**The surrender game**

In the next phase, government claimed that a number of Bugti militant leaders have surrendered their arms and requested pardon. According to details, four top commanders of Brahmndagh Bugti, the second-in-command of armed Bugti tribesmen, surrendered to the government on 13 July, 2006 along with 40 armed men. Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz said that the government would not consider

594 “Risky tactics,” The Post, March 26, 2006
any proposal to accord general amnesty to those involved in subversion, insurgency or any other criminal activities in Balochistan.\footnote{596}

The Balochistan government claimed that after the Bugti militiamen, miscreants from the Marri tribe had begun surrendering to the government. According to Government officials, 38 guerrillas led by Wadera Jumma Khan, a prominent elder from the Marri tribe had surrendered to the Kohlu administration and surrendered a large number of weapons including rocket launchers, Kalashnikovs and ammunition.\footnote{597}

This development resulted in Balochistan governor’s declaration of victory against militant tribesmen, saying that the revolt led by Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti had been quelled. According to the government, with more and more Bugti and Marri tribesmen laying down arms and surrendering to the government forces in the troubled tribal belt of Dera Bugti and Kohlu, the problem was heading towards a resolution.\footnote{598}

\textit{Anti-Akbar Bugti Jirga}

A pro Musharraf and anti Akbar Bugti jirga of the Bugti tribe was held on August 24, 2006 in which tribal elders of sub-clans of Bugti tribe participated.\footnote{599} Wadera Jalalur Rahman, Wadera Ali Mohammad Masoori, Wadera Mewa Khan Notkani, Wadera Mir Ahmadan, Wadera Mohammad Hussain Mundrani, Sardar Sobdar Kiazai and Wadera Nabi Bakhsh Perozani attended the Jirga.\footnote{600} The Jirga adopted 15 resolutions. The Jirga participants pledged their loyalty to Pakistan and announced that from this day onwards, the laws of the state of Pakistan would be

\begin{footnotes}
\item[598] 98pc of Bugti tribesmen surrendered,” \textit{The Post}, August 3, 2006.
\end{footnotes}
implemented and followed in the Bugti area. The Jirga demanded that the Marris should hand Akbar Bugti over to them so that he could be tried according to the Baloch tradition. The Jirga also called for the confiscation of Akbar Bugti and his family’s assets and property and its distribution to the victims of his tyranny.601

**Akbar Bugti’s Death**

Despite all these developments, neither the violence in Balochistan stopped nor did Akbar Bugti become an insignificant threat or irritant in Musharraf regime’s eye.602 The security forces continued their operation against the Baloch militants. On August 26, 2006, Akbar Bugti was killed in a military operation. The account of how exactly this happened vary. According to initial media reports, security forces faced stiff resistance from a location when they were conducting routine search and destroy operations against the Parari camps on August 24 and 25. In keeping with the intense resistance the security forces faced, it was presumed that there is a high value target in the area. Security forces called for reinforcement. During the heavy exchange of fire, the cave collapsed, killing all the militants inside the cave. It was assumed, later confirmed that Akbar Bugti was among the dead.603

Bugti’s death and the way he was buried resulted in a strong wave of anguish throughout Balochistan. The death of a prominent sardar and his burial under tight security net was taken as a huge dishonor to all Baloch. Violent protests started soon after.

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after the news of Bugti’s death broke. A question which was repeatedly asked was if Islamabad was capable of doing this to one of its long-term ally and supporter, what would it do to others? Akbar Bugti’s death was condemned by almost all political parties in Pakistan.\footnote{Muhammad Ejaz Khan, “Body politic Is political outrage over Bugti's killing an opportunistic venting of anti-government ire?,” The News September 3, 2006.} Musharraf regime projected Akbar Bugti as an anti-Pakistan Baloch sardar. It was argued that Akbar Bugti was extremely stubborn, uncompromising, tyrannical and a ruthless Baloch sardar.

Was Akbar Bugti anti-Pakistan or was just struggling for what he believed was the right of the Bugtis? The views are extremely divided on this but the fact of the matter is that despite adopting a tough posture, Nawab Bugti was open to any possibility of a respectable solution of the problem. About chances/possibilities of his meeting with President Pervez Musharraf, publically, he stated he would not beg for a meeting as he (Bugti) was not weak.\footnote{“Opposition can resolve crisis: Bugti Refuses to talk to govt representatives; FC commander warns of brewing danger,” The News, March 23, 2005. ; Muhammad Ejaz Khan, “Dera Bugti tense as tribesmen besiege FC compound,” The News, March 21, 2005.}

Publically, he maintained a tough posture and stated that he would not set any conditions or demands to resolve the crisis and that demands or conditions are like making requests, and we do not make requests. Yet, he not only agreed to meet General Musharraf but also to travel to Islamabad for this meeting. Had the meeting between the two taken place, the situation might have been different today. According to a media report, a private aircraft was sent to fly Bugti from Sui to Islamabad. However at the last moment, according to an Express Tribune report, “some hawkish elements within the military establishment apparently scuttled the entire scheme by delaying the aircraft on the pretext of a technical failure.”\footnote{Umer Nangiana, “CRSS report: Hawks prevented a planned Bugti-Musharraf rendezvous,” Express Tribune, May 28, 2011.} After waiting for two hours for the repair to finish, Akbar Bugti decided to go back to Dera Bugti. He would be still in the vicinity of the Sui airport when the airplane took off.\footnote{Umer Nangiana, “CRSS report: Hawks prevented a planned Bugti-Musharraf rendezvous,” Express Tribune, May 28, 2011.}
Akbar Bugti’s death in a military operation made him a martyr for the Baloch nationalists, despite the fact that Akbar Bugti was never in the forefront of Baloch nationalism, when compared to other Baloch leaders like Khair Bakhsh Marri or Attaullah Mengal. He remained primarily a Bugti, fighting for his own tribe and in particular his sub tribe. His death, however, seemed to have changed the position of Akbar Bugti. Attaullah Mengal made an important observation: Bugti's death had drawn a line between Balochistan and Pakistan. Even during the on-going insurgency, the Bugtis fought primarily for their own rights, and not for any pan-Baloch cause. More jobs and increased royalties for the Sui gas to the Bugtis were his main demands. As late as three years before his death, the Bugtis were fighting the other tribes in Balochistan.

**Baloch insurgency: Post Bugti death**

Bugti’s death might have divided and weakened the Bugti tribe’s armed resistance but the problem of insurgent violence in other areas not only continued but it has over the years intensified.

In November 2006, Akhtar Mengal was arrested and tried in the Karachi Anti-Terrorism Court for treason, a fabricated charge in the view of many observers.

Another important development was the death of Balach Marri. Nawabzada Balach Marri, the top leader of Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) was killed on November 21 in Afghanistan in reportedly a drone strike.

A BLA spokesman told The News on Sunday that Balach Marri was killed by security forces but refused to disclose the location where the killing had taken place. "Balach Marri was killed inside Afghanistan and there is no involvement of the Pakistani security forces in his killing," said Balochistan Governor, Owais Ahmed Ghani. A fresh wave of violence erupted in Quetta and some other Baloch dominated areas of Balochistan following the killing of Balach Marri. Railway tracks were blown up at various places, including tracks in main Sibi and Quetta.

**Recommendations of the Senate Committee on Balochistan**

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By the time in 2004, then Prime Minister Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain announced that a Senate Committee would be established to study and holistically analyze the Balochistan problem and recommend measures for resolution, then President of Pakistan General Musharraf’s right hand man and national security advisor Tariq Aziz was already negotiating with the Baloch leaders. The Committee final report was indeed a holistic and detailed analysis of the problem and contained workable and acceptable recommendation for resolving the issues between the centre and the province. The committee submitted its report in 2005. The Senate committee on Balochistan recommended increase in the share of gas revenues of Balochistan, increase in job quota for the Baloch, greater role and representation of the provincial government of Balochistan in Gwadar and other mega projects. Another important recommendation was to make Council of Common Interests more effective. It also recommended deletion of 30 items from the concurrent list and bringing the number of items on the concurrent list to 17. Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain informed the house that General Musharraf had already seen the report and had accepted 27 (31 in total) recommendations of the committee.

The reaction of the opposition in the parliament was in line with the political culture of Pakistan. Totally ignoring the fact that the committee comprised members from all political parties including the opposition. The opposition insisted that the debates which took place in the committee meetings especially while finalizing the recommendations should be repeated in the house.

Baloch Nationalist’s rejection of the report

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609 “What will Balochistan Committee discuss?,” Daily Times, August 26, 2004.
610 Shakil Shaikh, “Deletion of 30 items from concurrent list proposed CCI to be made effective to ensure autonomy; subcommittee report presented to PM,” The News, May 4, 2005.
611 The meeting was attended besides Shujaat Hussain and Wasim Sajjad by Senators Maulana Samiul Haq, Saeed Ahmed Hashmi, Mushahid Hussain, Raza Muhammad Raza, Muhammad Sarwar Khan Kakar, Mir Wali Muhammad Badini, Mrs Kalsoom Parveen, Ms Agha Pari Gul, Dr Muhammad Ismail Buledi, Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Prof Khursheed Ahmed, Rehmatullah Kakar, Muhammad Ali Durrani, Syed Dilawar Abbas, MNAs Maulana Muhammad Khan Sherani, Al-Syed Abdul Qadir Jamaluddin Al-Gillani, Dr Noor Jehan Panezai, Sardar Yar Muhammad Rind, Ms Bilqis Saif and Sardar Muhammad Yaqoob Khan Nasir. Chief Minister Balochistan Jam Muhammad Yousaf and Senators Mrs Roshan Khursheed Bharucha, Dr Khalid Ranjha, S M Zafar attended the meeting on special invitation.
The four-party Baloch Alliance rejected the parliamentary committee’s recommendations on Balochistan and vowed to continue the struggle for the national rights of Baloch people.613

Speaking at a joint news conference, Dr. Hayee Baloch read out a four-page statement alleging that the parliamentary committee at the behest of the centre, intelligence agencies, bureaucracy and the anti-Baloch elements had prepared the recommendations.

JWP Senator Amanullah Kasrani and BNP-Mengal’s secretary-general Habib Jalib Baloch, Opposition Leader in the Balochistan Assembly Kachkol Baloch, Senator Sana Baloch, MPAs Saleem Khoso and Akhtar Hussain, Mir Hasil Bizenjo, Sajid Tareen and Malik Wali Kakar were present on the occasion.

Dr. Abdul Hayee stated that the Baloch demands were ignored in the report. According to him the Baloch wanted that the construction of the Gwadar port should be stopped. Their other demands were: no more cantonments; end of military operation; release of political prisoners, representation in federal institutions; and recognition of the ownership of the Baloch on its resources.614

Despite this press conference and rejection of the report of the committee and its recommendations, the Committee especially Shujaat Hussain and Mushahid Hussain enjoyed widespread support from all sides. Even Sardar Attaullah Mengal and Nawab Akbar Bugti declared them honest and sincere in their effort. Unfortunately, a golden opportunity was lost. With the passage of time and increased violence in Balochistan, no further progress could be made and it still remains unclear, how much of the committee’s recommendations were implemented.

Revival of Shujaat Committee and the Nationalists Reaction

The deteriorating security situation in Balochistan led the then prime minister of Pakistan, Shaukat Aziz to reactivate the dysfunctional parliamentary committee on Balochistan. He called the meeting of the committee on July 15, 2005. The main agenda item of the meeting was to review the progress on recommendations of the

parliamentary committee on Balochistan.\textsuperscript{615} The meeting also explored ways in which parliamentarians especially from Balochistan could play an active and greater role in resolving the crisis in Balochistan. \textsuperscript{616}

Baloch nationalists rejected the so-called revival of the parliamentary committee on Balochistan and claimed it to be another political gimmick of the centre. They argued that this step would not satisfy the Baloch who were increasingly getting fed up with such moves. If the centre was sincere and really wants to resolve the problem of Balochistan, it needed to take solid reconciliatory steps towards the Baloch.

As a first step, Baloch nationalists argued that the Prime Minister Aziz should let the people of Balochistan and Pakistan know how many of the recommendations of the parliamentary committee have been implemented so far. However, one thing which was stated by almost all Baloch nationalist leaders was that if Islamabad was sincere in resolving the Balochistan crisis, it needed to change its approach and policy. Military operation and dialogue for resolution could not go on side by side. Sardar Akhtar Mengal aptly conveyed this Baloch position when he stated that no self-respecting Baloch leader would talk to Islamabad at gun point.

2008 NATIONAL ELECTIONS IN PAKISTAN

Although initially Baloch political leadership started planning on how to conduct their election campaigns and win maximum seats in provincial assembly and national assembly yet the situation on the ground was increasingly getting unfavorable for such a political activity. Militant groups such as Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) considered participating in elections as a betrayal of the Baloch. A significant number of Baloch youth influenced by this view considered parliamentary politics as insufficient to address Baloch grievances hence a waste of time. \textsuperscript{617} The


political actors and parties in Balochistan were also divided and lack coherence. Khair Bakhsh Marri declared that he would not be participating in the elections. His sons were facing a number of cases hence could not have participated in the elections anyways. The only exception was his son, Jangez Marri who was with PML (Q).

Balochistan National Party (Mengal) decided that it would participate in the elections. Attaullah Mengal argued that although he is convinced that the Baloch would never get their rights through the parliament yet he would not proscribe the elections and give Islamabad the opportunity to get its own agents elected.

Akbar Bugti’s Jamhoori Watan Party (JWP) was a significant political party of Balochistan and could have, following the political culture of Pakistan, capitalized on Akbar Bugti’s death to win a considerable number of seats from Balochistan. But a number of factors made it impossible: After the death of Akbar Bugti, his family developed bitter differences on the question of who would replace him as the sardar of the Bugti tribe. Jamhoori Watan Party was also splintered into two groups: one led by the grandson of Akbar Bugti, Brahmdagh Bugti. Brahmdagh Bugti was now leading a militant group. He rejected the idea of participation in the elections. Second faction was led by Akbar Bugti’s son Talal Bugti. Talal faction believed in political struggle within the constitutional framework of Pakistan and declared that it would participate in the elections. However with the arrival of the Kalpars, Masooris and other anti-Akbar Bugti sub-tribes in Dera Bugti and the large scale migration of the Bugti tribesmen from Dera Bugti, made it almost impossible for JWP-Talal to win from Dera Bugti. The Baloch militant groups also started an active campaign against the elections in Balochistan.618 Baloch militant groups cautioned the Baloch from visiting polling stations on February 18.

Talking to the BBC, Baloch Republican Army spokesman Sarbaz Baloch said that people had been directed not to participate in the polls as it was not offering any solution to their issues. Due to all these factors, Baloch nationalist political parties decided to boycott the elections. This decision resulted in PML-Q’s candidates winning most of the seats. Other parties that managed to reach the Balochistan provincial assembly were PPP, JUI-F and a number of independent candidates. The

decision to boycott the elections turned out to be an error of judgment on the part of the Baloch nationalists as it served no purpose for them in their struggle and made others who these nationalists blamed for their troubles, the decision-makers in Balochistan for the next five years.\textsuperscript{619}

PPP GOVERNMENT

Pakistan People’s Party once again emerged as the majority party in Pakistan in 2008 elections except in Balochistan. The signals coming from the top leadership of the party including its new president Asif Ali Zardari indicated that the coming PPP government would follow a policy of reconciliation and accommodation. This took an unprecedented shape when Asif Ali Zardari apologized to the Baloch people for the injustices against them. During a meeting of the parliamentary committee of PPP a resolution was passed that read: “The PPP, on behalf of the people of Pakistan, apologizes to the people of the province of Balochistan for the atrocities and injustices committed against them and pledges to embark on a new highway of healing and mutual respect.”\textsuperscript{620}

Most observers of Pakistani politics viewed this apology as an intelligent move to win hearts and minds in Balochistan where the PPP was numerically struggling in the Balochistan assembly. The general view was that the apology was a right move and would have positive implications for Pakistan.\textsuperscript{621} The response of the Baloch nationalist leadership on the apology was mixed. Attaullah Mengal considered it a positive yet an insufficient step. Attaullah Mengal also claimed that PPP would not be able to achieve much as the country was run by a military-bureaucratic nexus and not by the politicians.\textsuperscript{622}

After some traditional political wrangling, the center appointed a Baloch political heavyweight Nawab Zulfiqar Ali Magsi as the governor of Balochistan.

\textsuperscript{620} Latif Baloch, “Baloch leaders unimpressed by PPP apology,” \textit{Dawn}, February 27, 2008.
\textsuperscript{622} Latif Baloch, “Baloch leaders unimpressed by PPP apology,” \textit{Dawn}, February 27, 2008.
This move indicated that the centre intended to initiate a reconciliation process to pacify the disenchanted people of the province.623

PPP nominated Nawab Muhammad Aslam Raisani as the chief minister. The new government in Balochistan offered dialogue to the Baloch militants. The Baloch insurgents rejected the offer. BLA spokesman Beebarg Baloch said: “We regard the government’s offer for talks as its defeat because previously it was not ready even to recognize the existence of the BLA.”624 The BLA also issued a hit-list.625 The hit-list included former Balochistan governors Amirul Mulk Mengal and Owais Ahmed Ghani, former Balochistan chief minister Jam Muhammad Yousaf and former federal minister Sardar Yar Muhammad Rind.

Bramdagh Bugti also rejected the offer. Bramdagh Bugti said the Baloch resistance movement was aimed at protecting the land and resources of the Baloch people.626 Bramdagh Bugti said: “We are owners of our land and resources and there is no need to talk with others on our resources. Talks will be held only with those who accept our right on Balochistan’s resources.”

PPP GOVERNMENT’S ALL PARTIES CONFERENCE ON BALOCHISTAN

As a next step, Pakistan People’s Party co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari set up a committee to convene an all-party conference (APC) on Balochistan for addressing the grievances of its people and bringing them into the national mainstream.627 The committee headed by Mr Zardari, comprised PPP secretary-general Jehangir Badar, PPP’s Balochistan chapter president Mir Lashkari Raisani, MNA Ijaz Jhakrani, Senator Dr Babar Awan and deputy general secretary of the PPP Balochistan, Saadullah.

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The committee was tasked to contact leaders of all political parties and other groups and people concerned to attend the conference to launch a concerted effort for bringing normality to the province.

AGHAZ-E-HUQOOQ-E-BALOCHISTAN PACKAGE, THE NFC AWARD AND THE 18TH AMENDMENT

On November 24, 2009 PPP government presented its Aghaz-e-Haqooq-e-Balochistan package to a special joint session of the parliament. This was considered an historic document by government members of the parliament. This document had 39 recommendations and most of these had the echoes of the Parliamentary committee on Balochistan’s report. The package recommended the deletion of the concurrent list, Police order 2002 and Balochistan local government act. It recommended the restructuring of the NFC award criteria, effective implementation of article 153 of the constitution, withdrawal of army from Sui, postponement of the construction of cantonments at Sui and Kohlu, construction of a judicial commission on the issue of missing persons, revision of the royalty formula and greater representation in the mega projects.

A positive development which took place during the PPP government was the signing of the 7th National Finance Commission Award in December 2009. In the award, Balochistan’s share was increased in the divisible pool from 5.11% to 9.09%. It was decided that Balochistan will also receive Rs. 120 billion over a period of twelve years on account of Gas Development Surcharge (GDS) arrears. An additional amount of Rs 10 billion will also be released by the Federal Government on account of equalization of well head price with effect from 2002. According to Zafarullah Khan, “The 7th NFC award finalized at Gwadar on December 31, 2009 could be described as a step forward for the Pakistani federalism. It redefined the

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630 *Daily Times*, November 25, 2009.
632 *What Does NFC Award Holds for Balochistan*, November 25, 2009,
Federal-Provincial share 44:56 respectively and opted for a mutli-indicator formula for horizontal distribution i.e. population 82 percent, poverty/ backwardness 10.30 percent, revenue collecting/ generation 5 percent and inverse population density 2.70 percent. The provinces were also allowed to levy and collect general sales tax on services.  

Another important development was the passing of the 18th amendment to the constitution of Pakistan on 8 April 2010. The President of Pakistan approved it on 19 April 2010. The 18th amendment changed about 100 articles of the constitution. According to a report: “Part V and VI of the Constitution especially Articles 141-174 specifically deal with relations between federation and provinces. Out of these thirty four (34) articles, seventeen (17) were amended in April 2010... The major amendments included; redefining legislative competence of the parliament and provincial assemblies after the abolition of the concurrent list, inclusion of a provincial legislative ratification clause if the provincial government entrusted any function to the federation. It also included reforms in the Council of common interests, National Economic Council, National Finance Commission and a constitutional obligation to submit annual/bi-annual performance reports to both houses. Mandatory consultation with the concerned provincial government prior to a decision to conduct hydro-electric power stations, protection to current provincial share and possibilities of increase only in future awards of the National Finance Commission, and provincial power to raise domestic or international loans and a fifty percent share in natural resources.”

2013 ELECTIONS AND THE APPOINTMENT OF DR. MALIK BALOCH AS THE CHIEF MINISTER OF BALOCHISTAN

Just before the 2013 elections, Akhtar Mengal agreed to come back to Pakistan. During his brief stay in Islamabad in September 2012, Balochistan National Party President Akhtar Mengal met the leaders of two mainstream parties, Nawaz Sharif of PML-N and Imran Khan of the Tehreek-e-Insaf. This indicated that Mengal was ready for a political dialogue. It was reported that the PML-N offered to propose

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his name as the caretaker prime minister, which he declined. On the military side, the
then chief of army staff, General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani responded to that proposal
by stating that the army would extend its support “to a political solution to the
Balochistan problem provided that the solution be in accordance with the constitution
of Pakistan” adding that “any steps taken in violation of the constitution would be
unacceptable.”

Mengal’s Six Points

Mengal also presented his six point solution to the problem of Balochistan.
Sardar Mengal’s six points were:

1. All overt and covert military operations against the Baloch should end.
2. All missing persons should be produced before the court of Law.
3. All proxy death squads created by the ISI and MI should be disbanded.
4. Baloch nationalist parties should be allowed free political play without
   interference from ISI and MI.
5. Those responsible for the killings and disappearances should be brought to
   the book.
6. Thousands of Baloch displaced by the conflict should be rehabilitated.

In 2013 elections, Nawaz Sharif led Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N)
emerged as the majority party in the centre as well as in the province of the Punjab. It
also managed to gather enough seats to form a government in the province of
Balochistan. However, in an unprecedented move, Nawaz Sharif decided to appoint
Dr. Malik Baloch, a moderate Baloch leader from Hazil Bizenjo’s party as the chief
minister of Balochistan. Incidentally, Dr. Malik is the first CM of Balochistan who is
not a tribal sardar and represented the Baloch middle class. The decision to appoint
him as the CM was widely hailed as a positive and mature political gesture towards
the Baloch and Balochistan.

However, by the end of 2013, it became clear that Dr. Abdul Malik’s government could not perform according to the expectation of the Baloch nationalists. This fact was acknowledged by Hazil Bizenjo, the party chairman. According to Mr. Bizenjo, the provincial government has no powers when it comes to issues regarding Balochistan. Mailk Siraj Akbar, a Baloch journalist and editor of online Baloch Hal commented:

While Mr. Bizenjo’s ultimatum to quit the provincial government seems like a mere political gimmick, the cost of failure for Dr. Malik’s government to recover the missing persons will, however, be very high. Balochistan will once again be plunged into a deep crisis if the government fails to change the policies of those whom Mr. Bizenjo described as the “bosses of the bosses.”

An important development that took place during this period was the induction of 10,082 Baloch youth in to the Pakistan Army. This brought the number of Baloch to 18700 (700 Officers and 18000 soldiers). This was part of the plan to induct Baloch youth in the army by then army Chief General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani. As part of this plan, a number of educational institutes were established: a college in Sui, Balochistan Public School in Sui, Quetta Institute of Medical Sciences (QIMS), GIT (Gwadar Institute of Technology), Chamalang Beneficiary Education Programme (CBEP), BITE (Balochistan Institute of Technical Education) and Army Institute of Mineralogy (AIM). According to media reports, 400 cadets were studying at the Sui Military College. Army is also providing free of cost education and boarding/lodging to 4300 local children in Army Public Schools/Colleges across the country. A Medical College has also been established in Quetta by Army where 100 local students are undergoing training. Pakistan Navy also established a recruiting center at Gwadar. Navy also introduced an N-cadet scheme in Balochistan. According to this scheme youth from Balochistan would be selected and educated at cadet colleges for five year. After this, they would be given a choice to join Pakistan Navy. According to media reports, “officers from the province will be inducted into the Short Service Commission without undergoing ISSB tests and they will be given special relaxation in the standard academic and age criteria.”

HOW THE CURRENT INSURGENCY IS DIFFERENT FROM THE PREVIOUS INSURGENCIES

The current violence/insurgency in Balochistan is quite different from the earlier insurgent violence which took place in Balochistan in the past. This time the movement has a new leadership which has no interest or exposure in the politics of Pakistan. Unlike the previous insurgencies in which the Brahuis (Mengals and Marris) were involved, this time, the Bugti tribe is also actively involved in the insurgency. As it has been demonstrated in this thesis, Bugtis were never a part of the Baloch nationalist movement and were only interested in safeguarding their own rights. The inclusion of Bugti tribe in the insurgency has added a new element to the situation.

As compared to the previous insurgencies, this time the insurgents have latest weapons and equipment. Another important aspect of the enhanced capabilities of the insurgents is the use of media. Apart from print and electronic media, the Baloch nationalists are actively using the social media to send their message across.

Another important aspect of current insurgency that differentiates it from the previous one is the presence of comparatively free news media in Pakistan which regularly reports developments in Balochistan to the people of Pakistan. This has resulted in greater awareness among the people of other three provinces about the situation in Balochistan.

Target killings and Missing Persons

One of the most unique features of the ongoing crisis in Baluchistan is the target killings of Punjabi settlers in Baluchistan.638 Associated with the target killings is another phenomenon of atrocities committed against the Baloch people that pertains to the abduction and dumping of dead bodies by the unidentified

perpetrators. The data available on these crimes is not highly reliable and most of it begins from 2010 onwards. Coupled with this is the lack of reliable sources from where authentic data can be obtained on the issue.

On 25 October 2009, minister for education Shafiq Ahmed Khan was killed in an incident of target killing. Three days later, the secretary of education was killed. Previously, in April 2009, pro-vice chancellor of the University of Baluchistan was shot dead in front of the university. Although the resentment against the Punjabi settlers has always been there in certain quarters. In the past, they have often been equated with Islamabad and declared establishment’s supporters and agents of the rulers. There have been demands for their expulsion from the province in the past yet mostly they were able to live in peace. During the current insurgency, the Baloch insurgents started targeting University teachers, doctors, government officers, laborers and barbers. There are cases in which a person was killed only because his identity card had a residential address in Punjab. Several teachers have asked the education department to transfer them from the Baloch-majority areas of the province to Quetta or the Pashtun-populated areas. Shafiq Ahmed Khan, provincial minister for education, who later himself became a victim of target killing, told the media that 14 college lecturers and 22 school teachers have been transferred from the Baloch-majority areas to other parts of the province. In fact, a BLA spokesman, who had claimed responsibility for the killing of a senior teacher in Kalat, maintained that the slain teacher was not allowing Baloch students to sing the Baloch national anthem in the Government High School in Kalat.

The target killings of the Punjabi settlers began with the day laborers, barbers and tailors who the BLA and other such groups accused of spying for the security forces, then came the more well-off Punjabi businessmen and then they started targeting teachers. As a result the property rates in Punjabi-dominated localities of Quetta have fallen remarkably as Punjabis hastily sell their homes to try and escape the insurgency-hit province. As per the records, in 2009 alone, 83 Punjabis and

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Sindhis were killed in Balochistan. BLA accepted responsibility for most of these killings. Bramdagh Bugti, in an interview has justified these and such killings. According to details, the Baloch Republican Party (BRP) chief said he agreed with a recent article he had read that encouraged the Baloch to conduct more target killings. He said the same article had also advocated extending the practice into Punjab. To questions on the killing of 20 Baloch policemen in Naseerabad district and the target killing of Punjabi teachers, the BRP chief said he supported the actions of the separatists. Azad Baloch, a spokesman of Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), has accepted the responsibility for the killings of Punjabis and said that they were spying for the intelligence agencies against the ongoing Baloch struggle and that was why they were attacked. Around 100,000 settlers in Balochistan from other parts of Pakistan have left the troubled province so far because of violence involving Baloch separatist militants, the then Interior Minister Rahman Malik told the Senate. In 2010 alone, at least 250 people from other provinces who had settled in Balochistan had been killed in attacks, Malik said. According to Najam Sethi, the target killing of the settlers in Balochistan is part of a well thought of strategy by the separatists. It didn’t exist in any of the earlier movements for independence, not even in the 1970s when state repression was at its height. This is the first time that Baloch insurgents have tried to eliminate Punjabis from Balochistan as part of a political framework.

Nothing explains the resentment against the Punjabis and Punjab more than what Nawab Marri once opined: “I can co-exist with a pig but not with a Punjabi.”

**Missing Persons**

Majority of the missing persons belong to the local tribes while a few are coal miners, professors, traders, and security officials. A majority of them were allegedly kidnapped by the security forces and the Baloch nationalists. The data from HRCP

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642 [http://www.thefreelibrary.com/83+Punjabi+and+Sindhis+killed+in+Balochistan+during+last+year-a0219107597>]


confirms that the incidents of “missing and dead persons” had been occurring since 2000 though the number was very minimal. It is not known how many people have gone missing. The Baloch nationalists claim several thousand are missing but have only identified several hundred. The Human Rights Watch stated that soldiers, police and intelligence agencies in Pakistan torture and kill abducted activists in a campaign to quash the separatist movement in Balochistan, and hundreds of so-called "enforced disappearances" have been committed since 2005". Brad Adams (Asia Director HRW) said, "Pakistan's security forces are engaging in an abusive free-for-all in Balochistan as Baloch nationalists and suspected militants 'disappear,' and in many cases are executed.\textsuperscript{647} Human rights groups and Baloch nationalist political parties had claimed that 13,000 people are missing in the province, while the provincial government acknowledges that fewer than 1,000 Baloch have been taken into custody. Government and the security forces also deny any role in target killings. Former COAS, General Ashfaq Kayani, for instance, made it clear that the army had no role in the murders of political activists. The independent Lahore-based Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) reports: “In some cases it is not known where they are being detained, and furthermore the government has also not disclosed the identities of persons arrested during these operations.” The HRCP also noted that the government gave contradictory accounts of the number of persons arrested in Balochistan. While no official statistics are available, human rights groups have attempted to document cases of missing persons. But reliable data is difficult to compile, and the range of estimates is very wide. The HRCP, in its report for 2006, says that of the total 99 abductions that took place in the country, 73 were from Balochistan. The former Pakistani interior minister, Aftab Ahmed Khan Sherpao, stated in December 2005 in the National Assembly that over 4000 persons had been detained in Balochistan since 2002. Of this number, Sherpao stated less than 200 people have been presented before the courts.

The exact number of enforced disappearances perpetrated in Balochistan is unknown. Baloch nationalists claim “thousands” of cases. In 2008, the then Interior Minister Rehman Malik mentioned at least 1,100 victims, but in January 2011, Balochistan Home Minister Zafarullah Zehri said that only 55 persons were

\textsuperscript{647} “Pakistan accused over separatists who disappear,” <http://tribune.com.pk/story/219317/pakistan-accused-over-separatists-who-disappear/>,
An editorial dated September 11, 2012, in the Express Tribune, indicated that the bodies of 57 missing persons had been found since January 2012. However, other papers mention figures over 100 during the same period. In its August 2012 report, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan indicates that it has verified 198 cases of enforced disappearances in Balochistan between January 2000 and May 12, 2012, and that 57 bodies of missing persons had been found in Balochistan in 2012 alone. The Pakistani press, as well as international and Pakistani nongovernmental organizations, have documented a number of cases. According to Human Rights Watch, which concurs on this point with the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, there seems to be little doubt about the fact that most of these disappearances have been perpetrated by Pakistan’s “intelligence agencies and the Frontier Corps, often acting in conjunction with the local police.” In most of the cases documented, the perpetrators acted openly in broad daylight, sometimes in busy public areas, and with apparently little concern for the presence of multiple witnesses.

**External Hand**

Islamabad is of the view that the Baloch sardars and militants are supported by external actors who want to destroy Pakistan and make Balochistan an independent country to achieve their objectives. This view considers the insurgency in Balochistan as a part of a larger conspiracy against the very existence of the state of Pakistan. Those who hold this view consider India, Afghanistan, USA, Russia, Gulf States and Iran a party to this conspiracy in one way or the other because all of these states would be adversely affected if the true potential of Balochistan is realized. For instance, Gwadar port would be a serious challenger to the monopoly of the Gulf States in the maritime sector. Iran would be perturbed because it wanted its Chabhar port to be the outlet for the central Asian energy rich states.

Those who hold this view, question the source of the latest weapons and equipment used by the Baloch insurgents. What is often ignored in this line of reasoning is that Balochistan is also a significant corridor for drug and small arms.
smuggling. The arms and heroine from Afghanistan is smuggled to the outside world via Balochistan. Haji Juma Khan, based at Baramcha in Chagai was a well-known member of this smuggling net.652

Islamabad claims that it has ample proof of Indian involvement in Balochistan and its support for the Baloch insurgents. Khalid Khokhar described the Indian consulates in Afghanistan as “centers of terrorism” and the primary conduits by which the Indians are “planning, commissioning and preparing acts of terrorism in Balochistan.” Pakistani Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed asserted that these consulates “serve as launching pads for undertaking covert operations against Pakistan from the Afghan soil.”653 In February 2006, it was reported that President Musharraf presented Afghan president Hamid Karzai with evidence that India was using bases within Afghanistan to create problem in Balochistan. Pakistani Senator Mushahid Hussain in an interview with the Pakistani paper The News accused India’s Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW) of establishing training camps near the Pakistan-Afghanistan border in order to train Baloch dissidents in the use of explosives and sophisticated weapons. At the conference of nonaligned states in Egypt, both Prime Ministers Gilani of Pakistan and Singh of India agreed to look at the Baloch issue.654 Georgetown University Professor and expert of South Asian affairs, C. Christine Fair indirectly implied that the Indian consulate in Iranian Balochistan has been a supporter of Baloch separatists there. She later clarified that her statement was misunderstood.

Most of the outside world disagrees with Pakistan’s view on Indian involvement in Balochistan. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton asserted that there is no evidence of India’s involvement in Balochistan despite Pakistani allegations.655 One of the most perceptive analysts of Pakistan, Dr. Farrukh Saleem discussing external hand in the Baloch insurgency wrote:

Which foreign hand has an interest in destabilizing Balochistan? Is Iran arming Baloch insurgents?... Will Iran prop up Baloch nationalism in Pakistan at the risk of encouraging nationalist fervour in Iranian Balochistan? ... Is Afghanistan arming Baloch insurgents? The US has the Bagram Air Base (Parvan, Charikar), Kandahar Air Base, Khost Airbase (Paktia) and Mazar-e-Sharif Airbase. ... Can the state of Afghanistan arm Baloch separatists without the explicit authorisation of the USA? ... Is America arming Baloch insurgents? Right now, a stable Pakistan is in America's best strategic interest. Is India arming Baloch insurgents? The only way that India can arm Baloch insurgents is either through Iran or through Afghanistan. Clearly, India cannot support Baloch insurgents through Iran without the explicit permission of the supreme leader Sayyid Ali Khamenei. Again, India cannot arm Baloch insurgents through Afghanistan without the explicit permission of the Americans. Additionally, an instable Balochistan jeopardises India's pipeline dreams and is not in India's long-term economic interests. There is little doubt that arms are flowing into Pakistan's Balochistan both through Iran and Afghanistan. That, however, in no way means that the states of Iran or Afghanistan are directly involved. 656

However the view that India is playing a role in Balochistan can not be totally ruled out. According to the the Wikki leaks, a number of diplomatic dispatches from western embassies in Islamabad to their capitals expressed such concerns. According to media reports, a former chief of the Indian army, V. K. Singh, sanctioned the Tactical Support Division (TSD), an Indian army unit raised after Mumbai attacks on the directives of the Defence Minister and National Security Adviser Shev Shankar Menon to conduct clandestine operations on both sides of the contentious Line of

Control (LOC) between Pakistan and India.\textsuperscript{657} According to a report published in influential Indian weekly, the \textit{India Today}, between October and November 2011, TSD had claimed money “to try enrolling the secessionist chief in the province of a neighbouring country” and “Rs1.27 crore (Indian currency) to prevent transportation of weapons between neighbouring countries”. In early 2011, TSD claimed an unspecified amount for carrying out “eight low-intensity bomb blasts in a neighboring country.”\textsuperscript{658} According to the news report published in the News, quoting Indian sources, “India’s Director General of Military Operations (DGMO) Lt Gen Vinod Bhatia, who headed a Board of Officers’ inquiry under the direct orders of Gen Bikram Singh, current army chief, to review the functioning of the TSD submitted the report in March this year to the Indian government. While report is not being publicised, however, TSD was closed in December 2012.”\textsuperscript{659} Chuck Hagel also pointed to New Delhi’s support and finance to terrorist elements to create problems for Pakistan.\textsuperscript{660}

**CONCLUSION**

Balochistan is burning once again. The issues that have resulted in this resurgence of violence are not new. Although a number of new factors have been introduced and have further complicated the issue.


\textsuperscript{660} For a YouTube clip see; \url{https://www.youtube.com/watch?V=J5f87LF-YY}
It started when the center chose to ignore the Baloch leadership and went ahead with a number of projects in Balochistan. The Baloch elite felt ignored and sidelined. This led to another phase of center-province clash which turned violent. The problem in Dera Bugti area and between Akbar Bugti and the oil and gas companies as well as the government could have been settled locally, had better sense prevailed and if the decision makers in Islamabad had a better understanding of the Baloch political culture and negotiating style. Akbar Bugti was only struggling for what he believed was his and his tribe’s birthright. One could not ignore the manipulative aspect of pressure tactics that he was using in terms of asking for more money yet this is what Islamabad failed to understand that this is not an end itself but a mean to an end. When Islamabad failed to respond according to his wishes, he started using the standard narrative of actual and/or perceived historical and enduring injustice in Balochistan.

General Musharraf’s take over was not supported by the Baloch political leadership in general as they were comfortably settled in the previous system of governance. The steps that General Musharraf took to consolidate his power and hold in Pakistan as well as his vision for developing Pakistan had no role for the Baloch political elites. This sidelined the Baloch elite. Post 9/11 developments in Afghanistan, just like during the 1980s, resulted in an increase of Pakistan armed forces movement in Balochistan and influx of investors and workers from outside (other parts of Pakistan) in Gwadar and elsewhere. All these factors reinforced the historical Baloch fear that they would become a minority in Balochistan and that Balochistan was colonized by the Punjabi colonizers.

The Baloch insurgency became stronger with the death of Akbar Bugti. Akbar Bugti, who was never in the forefront of the Baloch nationalist politics, became a martyr for the Baloch cause.661 In 1970s, he was equated with Tikka Khan and Bhutto. The wall chalking in Quetta and elsewhere read: amriat key teen nihsan, Bhutto, Tikka aur Akbar Khan (Bhutto, General Tikka Khan and Akbar Bugti are three symbols of dictatorship). The Baloch insurgents once again claimed that the current crisis in Balochistan is a violent reaction to the neglect of the Baloch populace and the exploitation of their natural resources by the Punjabi “colonialists”

from Islamabad. Much like the Baloch revolts of the past, one of the central issues of dispute in today’s crisis in Balochistan is the allocation of natural resources. The Sui gas field located in Balochistan was the largest natural gas field in Pakistan.\footnote{Harrison, In Afghanistan’s Shadow, 7; Pakistan Petroleum Limited, "Rahman Visits Sui Gas Field,” Pakistan Petroleum Limited, November 23, 2008, http://www.ppl.com.pk/media/Lists/PressReleases/PressReleaseDispForm.aspx?List=09342a8a-823a-4104-9845-d250608835c&ID=24, accessed February 3, 2010; Fazl-e-Haider, "Higher Poverty in Balochistan,” Dawn, February 6, 2006; Grare, “Pakistan,” 5; Niazi, “Democracy, Development and Terrorism,” 286; Wirsing, Baloch Nationalism and the Geopolitics of Energy Resources, 4.} In total, the province of Balochistan provides the nation with between 36 and 45 percent of the national demand for natural gas. Despite this, many districts in Balochistan are still without gas transmission facilities. This includes areas immediately surrounding the Sui gas field.\footnote{Fazl-e-Haider, "Higher Poverty in Balochistan,” Dawn, February 6, 2006; Harrison, In Afghanistan’s Shadow, 7; Grare, “Pakistan,” 5; Niazi, “Democracy, Development and Terrorism,” 286; Wirsing, Baloch Nationalism and the Geopolitics of Energy Resources, 4.} Only four of the twenty-six Balochistan districts receive natural gas.

The province remains the poorest province of Pakistan. The Baloch leadership is of the view that Balochistan is poor not because of lack of resources and wealth but due to the neglect of the center as it is not interested in developing Balochistan and provide basic human needs to the Baloch people. Instead it treats Balochistan as a colony and plunders its resources for its own use, depriving the Baloch of their right.

Another important aspect of the problem is that whenever the center offered Balochistan, be it economic aid or packages such as Aghaz-e-Haqooq-e-Balochistan, Islamabad projects it as an out of the way favor to the Baloch, which the Baloch should acknowledge. The Baloch consider it as an overdue step that needs to be substantiated with action. Zafarullah khan has aptly pointed that “the federal government emphasizes its contributions in quantitative terms, where as the Baloch hope for impact on the ground in qualitative terms. The qualitative improvements in reality will require a well thought out strategy to bring elected and non-elected (who boycotted elections-2008) political leaders into a dialogue and initiate a meaningful discussion with those annoyed forces that are moving towards militancy.”\footnote{Zafarullah Khan, Solace for Balochistan?, p.5.} The PPP government also failed to engage the provincial leadership and the provincial assembly in the process. The elected provincial leadership was neither included nor
provided a role in the decision making regarding the package, its implementation and accountability.

Center in the past presented two such packages or recommendations, the Senate committee on Balochistan, which was widely respected and acknowledged even by top Baloch nationalists and Aghaz-e-Haqooq-e-Balochistan package offered by the PPP government. The committee’s recommendation could have been the beginning of a solid start towards reconciliation and integration of Balochistan with Pakistan yet the implementation was halted due to the lack of interest or enthusiasm of the Shakuat Aziz government. PPP government opted to reinvent the wheel and after taking a long time to prepare its package, presented its package in the joint session of the parliament. The package was never truly implemented. A lot of money was provided to the Baloch politicians and members of assembly but due to the lack of accountability and focus, it failed to have any desired impact.

The complicated divisions within the Baloch leadership further complicate the prospects of a resolution of the Baloch problem. At present the Baloch are convinced that the state of Pakistan is only interested in its energy and mineral wealth and it does not care about the Baloch people. Baloch anger is directed towards the Army and the province of Punjab because they believe that the country is run by them and that they have never allowed the Baloch to have their rights within the state of Pakistan as they, either still don’t consider the Baloch true Pakistanis as the Baloch do not follow their policies or at least consider them third rate or lower level Pakistanis that cannot have equal rights. These are the issues and grievances that need to be addressed and resolved. Unless this is done, offering packages, incentives and/ or appointing a nationalist Baloch leader would not solve the problem.

This chapter demonstrated that the during this phase the Baloch elite including but not limited to Akbar Bugti, Attaullah Mengal and Khair Bakhsh Marri started to link the developments that were taking place in the province with the developments that took place in the past and established a link between the two. The narrative that was developed and used claimed that General Musharraf’s régime’s treatment of the Baloch and policy towards Balochistan is nothing new. This has happened in the past. The centre has always treated the Baloch this way. Starting from Kalat’s forcible accession to brutal military action against the Baloch and
deprivation of its resources and mineral wealth. In this narrative, the Baloch elite conveniently ignored the role played by the fellow Baloch elite (sardars) and the developments that took place during the almost three decade long peace interval. The timing and selective use of the historical memory is important in understanding the Baloch narrative.

The developments that took place during this phase and the use of a narrative based on a selective historical memory by the elite clearly indicates that for the employment of a narrative to politicize an ethnicity and mobilize the masses, there has to be a sparking event or an injustice happening at the time when the elite would use it to politicize and mobilize the ethnic group.
CONCLUSION

The ongoing insurgency in Balochistan is different from previous insurgencies in a number of ways: firstly, the current leadership of the insurgency, unlike the past leadership has no stake in the constitutionalism and politics in Pakistan. Secondly, the issue of missing persons, thirdly, the target killing of the settlers mostly Punjabis as a strategic tool by the insurgents, fourthly, the level of training, sophistication of attacks and better weaponry and equipment and fifthly, use of media especially social media by the Baloch insurgents.

A closer look at the current insurgency clearly proves the point made in chapter one that for an ethnic conflict to get violent, certain contributing factors are required such as a regime or government in transition, this could be a transition in the type of the regime, from democratic to authoritative and/or transiting from one policy to another. The timing of the beginning of the Baloch insurgency coincides with General Musharraf’s consolidating its position and hold on power in Pakistan and also changing its Afghanistan policy. The changed geostrategic landscape in the region especially in Afghanistan, Musharraf’s pushing for the construction of mega projects in Balochistan, construction of new cantonments mainly to address the changing situation in Afghanistan and Balochistan, sidelining of the Baloch leadership as they did not share Musharraf’s view on Pakistani politics contributed to the increase in the political unrest in Balochistan.

Geography also played an important role in the instigation of the insurgency and its sustenance. This happened in two ways, one, Balochistan was right next to Afghanistan where since 2002, a war was going on and the American troops were using the Pakistani air bases to conduct air raids and military operations in Afghanistan. This made Balochistan strategically and militarily significant. Second, once the insurgency began, it soon became obvious that the Baloch insurgent were at advantage due to the topography of the area and their knowledge of the terrain.

The policy followed by General Musharraf in Balochistan was taken as an insult to the Baloch honor by most of the Baloch elite. The Baloch, under the tribal
code were duty bound to take every possible step to restore the Baloch honor, hence the beginning of the insurgent violence in different parts of Balochistan.

On the contrary to almost all of the observers of the insurgency in Balochistan, this thesis argued that Nawab Akbar Bugti was not part of this insurgent violence in Balochistan. Nawab Akbar Bugti was fighting for what he believed was his and Bugti tribe’s right. The attacks on gas pipelines were a part of the pressure tactics to push the government to accept the demands. He was struggling for the Bugtis. He lived a Bugti and died a Bugti.

Nothing illustrates the fact that tribal divisions still are the key to understanding the Baloch politics than Attaullah Mengal’s advise to Mushahid Hussain and Chaudhrhy Shujahat Hussain that if they want to solve the problem in Sui, they need to discuss it with Nawab Akbar Bugti as it is the Bugti area. In other words, he signaled his inability to do anything as it was not his tribal jurisdiction. The death of Nawab Akbar Bugti has been beneficial to a number of actors in Baloch politics for two main reasons: One, the biggest, egoistic and perhaps the most towering Baloch politician was dead which opened up the way for a number of other people, second, although loved by many and hated by many, a dead Nawab Bugti became the rallying point for any one claiming to be struggling for the Baloch rights. He became the symbol of the Baloch resistance. In other words, a martyr that would make the insurgency even more popular and wide spread.

The sidelining of the Baloch political leadership, construction of mega projects, death of Nawab Akbar Bugti and Centre’s inability to come up with a solid plan to address the Baloch problem are the factors or the triggers of the current insurgency. These factors or triggers are linked with the historical narrative of constant injustices aimed at the Baloch to deny them their rights.

The narrative begins with the arrival of the British. According to this narrative, Balochistan was an independent state before the British occupied it. This thesis argued that this is factually incorrect. Balochistan was neither a state nor independent before the arrival of the British. The British occupy such a position in this Baloch narrative because for the first time in history, the Baloch had to deal with
an invader, who was not crossing through their land but wanted to stay and establish military posts and camps.

This thesis argued that the only reason the British got involved and eventually occupied Balochistan was the geostrategic competition in the region especially the threat of a possible Russian invasion of India via central Asia and Afghanistan and through Balochistan. British policy makers were divided on the issue of Balochistan. Throughout their engagement in Balochistan, the British officials remained confused and never were able to work out a clear policy towards Balochistan.

British hold on Balochistan solidified with the emergence of Robert Sandeman on the scene. However, as the British involvement in Balochistan was purely for geostrategic reasons, they made no attempt to inculcate any administrative and social development program in Balochistan. This is the only reason why almost all of British construction and the development of railway and other such projects were aimed at consolidating their military position and not the improvement of the Baloch masses per se. This, according to the British officials in India, was one of the main reasons why Balochistan was not incorporated into the British India. According to the British, Kalat and the larger Balochistan was economically and socially backward and geographically too huge with minimal population, hence it was financially and administratively not viable to incorporate Kalat into British India. However, British officials, at more than one point made it clear to Ahmed Yar Khan, the last Khan of Kalat, that the British consider Kalat a normal princely state of India.

The Baloch narrative however claims that the British treated Kalat as an independent, non-Indian state. They claim that the British treatment of Kalat was similar to its treatment of Nepal. British policy and position, however is different. British policy makers in India considered Kalat as an Indian state but could not incorporate it into the British India due to administrative and political reasons. A number of British documents and statements point to this paradox in the British
policy. This failure in bringing clarity to its position on Balochistan created problems for Pakistan after 1947.

The last Khan of Kalat, Mir Ahmad Yar Khan after becoming the Khan, tried hard to convince the British to accept the independent status of the Kalat state and him as the undisputed ruler of Balochistan. Now with the British decision to leave the Indian subcontinent in 1947 and grant India and Pakistan independence, Khan of Kalat made one last attempt to achieve his goal.

He got partial success when Jinnah agreed to accept Kalat’s status as different from the rest of the princely states of the subcontinent during the negotiation between him and the Khan for a possible merger of Kalat with Pakistan. Jinnah as his policy and statements regarding princely states that would join Pakistan indicated, was more than willing to provide Kalat maximum autonomy, with Pakistan taking responsibility of defence, foreign and economic affairs only. In keeping with his personal relations with Ahmed Yar Khan, Jinnah hoped that he would accede to Pakistan. Jinnah underestimated Ahmed Yar Khan’s intentions, who dreamed of becoming the ruler of an independent country. He gave different and totally contradictory signals to Pakistan especially Jinnah and the Baloch sardars and people of Kalat and Balochistan.

On the one hand, he kept ensuring Jinnah and the Pakistani government that everything would be sorted out which would be mutually acceptable, on the other hand, to Baloch sardars and so-called elected representatives, he discussed Kalat’s historical place and destiny. His decision to not take the decision to accede to Pakistan alone and ask his rather hastily and dubiously elected House of Lords and Commons was nothing but delaying tactics.

However, despite all this, Ahmad Yar Khan had to sign Kalat’s accession agreement with Pakistan, although, seeds of discontent and misperception between Pakistan and the Baloch were sown deep by then.
The use of different narratives and tone by him in his communication with Jinnah and with Baloch sardars not only resulted in confusion between the Baloch opinion-makers and the centre but also developed the perception that Pakistan wanted to occupy Kalat. It was this role played by Mir Ahmad Yar Khan that resulted in Prince Karim’s localized armed struggle against Pakistan. The letter which he wrote to Ahmad Yar Khan is a clear indication of the fact that Baloch perception about Jinnah and Pakistan became extremely negative as early as 1948. Once Pakistan managed to get the accession of Kalat and British Balochistan voting in its favour, it started working on administrated reforms in the province. Pakistani policy makers failed in moving beyond the British model and policy of ruling Balochistan.

A number of steps and measures were taken with mixed results. The one unit policy, the ill-conceived arrest of Ahmed Yar Khan in 1958 on dubious charges, the mishandling and disrespectful treatment of Nauroz Khan added to Baloch grievances towards the centre which, according to Baloch nationalist narrative was strongly anti-Baloch and consisted of the Punjabi ruling elites.

For the first decade of Pakistan’s history, the centre’s only worry was how to address the Bengali problem. This one point agenda and the policies which were made due to this, created further problems for the centre and its relations with the smaller provinces and ethnic groups of Pakistan. Pakistan’s policy makers pursued the same policy towards Balochistan which was followed by the British and the policy debates about how to or not introduce reforms in Balochistan which took place among the Pakistani policy circles were not very different from how the British administration viewed this issue. British policy makers viewed Balochistan’s tiny population, huge geography and lack of education as few of the reasons why it is not financially viable to introduce large scale reforms in the area. Same arguments were made by Pakistani policy makers in the deliberations of the reform committee on Balochistan.

In the 1970s, when the Baloch leadership got the opportunity to establish their government and run the provincial administration of Balochistan, they could not perform. This thesis argued that the lack of political acumen of the Baloch
leadership, Bugti and Mengal-Marri rivalry, tribal feuds in Balochistan, Bhutto’s unwillingness to share power and accept the existence and the mandate of NAP, state’s security perception in the wake of the 1971 war and separation of east Pakistan were the main reasons for the political instability in Balochistan during the 1970s.

In the Baloch narrative, this decade (1970s) is the decade of bloodshed and centre or Islamabad’s so-called brutal military action against Baloch masses and whatever they held dear. The fact of the matter is that this was also the decade where the Baloch leadership failed to perform. Baloch nationalist narrative claims that NAP or Baloch elected leadership was not successful because the Punjabi establishment, Pakistan Army and the federal government created problems for them. In this narrative, there is no mention of the infighting, tribal feuds, miscalculated and impractical decisions made by the Baloch/ NAP leadership.

The differences between Attaullah Mengal and Akbar Bugti and how Bugti sided with Bhutto against his own fellow Baloch sardars played an important role in the events which followed. The tribal feuds and the clashes between the Jamotes and Mengals, the role of the Zehri brothers and the tribal way Mengal as CM reacted to all these problems by mobilizing a Mengal lashkar against them are cases in point.

There is no denying the fact that Bhutto also contributed to the problems NAP-Balochistan faced. He wanted PPP to be the single political power in the country and Pakistan to be a single party country; however most of his partners in all what he did, were Baloch sardars: Raisani, Akbar Bugti and no other than the Khan of Kalat Ahmed Yar Khan.

General Zia, a strong believer in making Pakistan an Islamic state and a strong opponent of a multiethnic and multicultural Pakistan, followed a policy of reconciliation in Balochistan even prior to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. He withdrew the army from various parts of Balochistan, dissolved the Hyderabad tribunal, declared amnesty for Baloch insurgents and provided them compensation money. However, after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the emergence of an American-Pakistani-Saudi-Chinese alliance to support the Afghan
resistance, Balochistan gained a strategic position for the Pakistani and American
decision-makers as it was Balochistan which provided the USSR, its shortest and
most viable outlet to the warm waters of the Indian ocean. Zia poured in a lot of
money to build roads, airports, gas supply and other developmental projects which
other than being visible development projects, were also strategically important in
case of a Soviet invasion of the area. General Zia-ul-Haq channeled in a lot of money
into Balochistan in the shape of developmental projects yet his main concern was
strategic as he could not afford any trouble in Balochistan in the wake of the Soviet
presence in Afghanistan.

During the peace interval in Balochistan (1977-1999), hardly anything
changed for the common Baloch and the province of Balochistan yet it remained
peaceful. There are a number of reasons for this: divisions in the political and
militant leadership of the Baloch nationalist movement, two of the three Baloch
nationalist leaders left Balochistan and settled in London, the Soviet invasion of
Afghanistan and the Afghan war as a result of which, Pakistan army concentrated
more on Balochistan. Balochistan was considered a possible target of the Red Army.
During the second phase of the peace interval, Pakistan went through its decade of
democracy (1988-1999). Baloch leaders participated in the political activities in the
country, and a number of Baloch sardars and politicians such as Akbar Bugti,
Bizenjo and Zafarullah Khan Jamali emerged as national level politicians and played
significant role in Pakistani politics.

During the decade of democracy, Balochistan was never a major issue for the
central government and / or for the Balochistan provincial governments which
continued to conduct business as usual. During this phase, a number of elections took
place in which the Baloch leaders fully participated. Nationalist leaders and their
sons actively participated and supported their candidates in the elections and became
chief minister of the province (Akhtar Mengal is a case in point). A number of
Baloch politicians for the first time in Pakistani history participated in the politics at
the national level. This all happened without any major change in the lives of the
Baloch people and they continued to follow the same system of governance. The
only reason which explains the absence of violence and Baloch participation in
politics is that during this period the Centre decided not to follow a policy of
confrontation and pursued a policy of engagement. As a result of this policy of engagement, there was no sparking or triggering event using which the Baloch leaders could continue or start a new wave of violent conflict. Another factor which proves this point is that a number of projects and developments which later became contributing reasons for the return of insurgency in Balochistan actually started during this period but no major violence took place.

During the decade of democracy, Baloch politicians participated in Pakistani politics. Akbar Bugti, Zafar Jamali and Bizenjo played important role in national politics. Akbar Bugti was projecting his Jamhuri Watan Party as the third political force in the country. A new generation of Baloch politicians emerged and actively participated in politics. This group included people like Akhtar Mengal, Abdul Hayee Baloch, Abdul Malik (the current Chief Minister of Balochistan) and a number of others.

Throughout this period, it became clear that Baloch politics is still conducted on tribal lines and that the sardars play the key role in the Baloch politics. This was despite the emergence of a number of political parties in Balochistan as every Baloch political party sought the patronage of a sardar. Baloch National Movement which is led by Dr. Abdul Haye Baloch, representing the Baloch middle class, only became a significant political player in Baloch politics when it got the support of Akbar Bugti and Attaullah Mengal. These were positive signs for Balochistan, Pakistan and Centre-province relations. This however changed and insurgent violence returned to Balochistan in early 2000s.

Since the return of violence in Balochistan a number of attempts have been made to address the Baloch grievances. However, an important point in this regard is that the center, whenever it presents a special package or program for Balochistan, it is presented as a special favor for the Baloch people whereas the Baloch nationalist leadership takes it as an insult due to the fact that it considers such packages or programs, even if they reject it as an acknowledgement of their long overdue right. In the ongoing phase of violence / insurgency of Balochistan, the center presented two
special packages to Balochistan: the Recommendations of the Senate sub-committee on Balochistan led by Senator Mushahid Hussain which had national level support including in Balochistan (Bugti accepted it and even Sardar Mengal considered it a sincere effort). However, it was never implemented. When PPP took over the helm of affairs at the center, instead of trying to implement the committee’s recommendation, it tried to reinvent the wheel and prepared and presented its own Aghaz-e-Huqooq-Balochistan package. It was claimed that it is a historical step towards national reconciliation. This thesis argued that the main reason that it failed was one, there was hardly anything new in it for the Baloch leadership, they had heard all that before and second, it lacked a clear focus, priority and strategy for implementation.

Professor Akbar S. Ahmed has pointed that Pakistan must address the concern of the people living in the periphery (Balochistan). According to Professor Ahmed, “Right now we are in a state of civil war in Pakistan,” … “People in the periphery think they have been neglected, humiliated and culturally looked down upon by the Centre. This is absolutely the same thing we did with the Bengalis. Pakistan is in a very fragile condition. Both civil and military leadership must urgently show wisdom and vision to come out of this situation.”665 According to him, Balochistan is the key to the survival of Pakistan. He argued, “We can’t afford to make the Baloch feel like second class citizens. Their demands are valid and some of these demands have been overlooked for several decades. Islamabad should make urgent accommodation with the Baloch. You can’t fool around with them. One day you offer them talks and the next day you kill their leaders. They should be treated as equal partners in the federation.”666

Future research on ethnic conflicts and Balochistan

As this thesis demonstrated ethnic differences between two or more ethnic groups are inadequate for instigating ethnic violence. There are a number of contributing factors that come into play to make an ethnic conflict violent. This is something which needs to be further explored. For instance, a similar situation to Balochistan exists in Pakistani province of Sindh yet there is no active ethnic conflict there. Is it due to the fact that: firstly, the local elite and the Central elite have an understanding and share a similar view of the situation; secondly, even if the local elite want to instigate a new wave of violence, there is no sparking or triggering event which can be used as a rallying point to start a fresh round of violence or because it has a political party, the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP). This link between the sense of an enduring injustice (actual or perceived) and a narrative based on historical memory (actual or perceived) and its manipulation by the ethnic elite in an ethnic conflict is something which needs to be further explored and researched using different case studies.

The role of geography in ethnic conflict especially violent ethnic conflict is not a totally unexplored area yet it is something which would benefit from a fresh and broader perspective.

As regard the Baloch and Balochistan, there are too many areas that deserve further research and study. There is an urgent need for a comprehensive historical account of the Baloch people, tribes and Baloch politics. Kalat’s position in British strategic calculus and its policy towards Kalat and Balochistan is an area which definitely requires serious academic work. William Dalrymple’s recent book, Return of the King The Battle for Afghanistan, has solid but limited information on British colonial administration in India’s earlier contact with the Khan of Kalat and the Baloch sardars but as the book is about Afghanistan, this information is very limited. The British colonial administration archives especially Lord Mountbatten archives need to be explored and researched and published as they have ample information which is not available so far to researchers working on Balochistan and its relationship with the British colonial administration and the partition of the Indian subcontinent. There is nothing available on Center (Islamabad)-Periphery (Balochistan) relations that comprehensively covers the subject. This thesis is just
one of such works, if not the work. There is an urgent need to do more comprehensive research on subject with interviews with key personalities, most of them still alive and also with the use of official records and documents. A lot of documents have been destroyed due to several reasons in the past number of years. Martin Axmann, in his book, *Back to the Future* has pointed to several files which Ricardo Redaelli was able to access and see when he was writing his book, *The Father’s Bow The khanate of Kalat and British India* as now being destroyed or lost.

The biggest source of Baloch history especially from a Baloch perspective and indeed for others working on Baloch history is the Baloch poetry especially daptar shaar (chronicle of genealogies). It needs to be located, preserved and further researched on. The biggest and one of the oldest collections of the Baloch poetry was reportedly in Nawab Akbar Bugti’s possession. If it had not already been lost due to the relocation of his family, this should be persevered before it disappears. If that happens, a very important source of Baloch history would be lost forever.
SELECT

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### Baloch Grievances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Accession of Kalat</strong></td>
<td>At the time of the partition of the Indian subcontinent, Kalat declared independence. Khan of Kalat was forced to join Pakistan using military coercion.</td>
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<td><strong>Provincial autonomy</strong></td>
<td>Center never gave Balochistan the provincial autonomy ensured to the provinces in the constitution of Pakistan.</td>
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<td><strong>Energy and mineral wealth exploitation</strong></td>
<td>The Center always exploiates energy and mineral wealth of Balochistan and uses it for other areas and people especially the development of Punjab. This not only deprives the Baloch of their wealth, but also keeps Balochistan under developed. According to the Baloch nationalists, the Baloch have the first right on their resources.</td>
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<td><strong>Military operations</strong></td>
<td>The Punjab dominated center has stationed a huge number of Punjabi dominated army in Balochistan. The center treats Balochistan like a coloney and conducts military operations against the Baloch. Since 1947, Center has employed the army to crush the Baloch opposition a number of times especially during 1948, 1960s, and 1970s. The current, ongoing military operation is a continuation of this policy.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lack of Baloch representation in armed</strong></td>
<td>Due to a lack of educational</td>
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<tr>
<td>forces and government services</td>
<td>opportunities, a tiny population and center’s discriminantary policy, the Baloch representation in the armed forces and the civil services are almost non-existence. Most of these jobs go to Punjab as it is the most populated province of Pakistan. The people from Baloch who get jobs in such government services, according to the Baloch are mostly the settlers. They hold the domicile of Balochistan and but they are not ethnically Baloch. The case of former chief justice of Pakistan, Ifikahar M. Chaudry is a case in point.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Missing persons and target killings</td>
<td>The security forces arrest or abduct the Baloch youth overstepping the legal procedures. Baloch nationalist leaders and activists are target killed.</td>
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<td>Making Baloch a minority in Balochistan</td>
<td>Through the influx of workers, labourers and skilled professionals, the center is systematically converting the Baloch into a minority in their own province. The influx of the Afghan refugees has further compounded this problem.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tribal feuds</td>
<td>The center often supports and encourages tribal feuds through its proxies in the province.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of basic human needs</td>
<td>The Center not only loots and plunders the natural wealth of Balochistan, it is keeping the Baloch deprived of the basic human needs. The center has never constructed schools, hospitals or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land grabbing, construction of cantonments and mega projects</td>
<td>The center is systematically grabbing the land in Balochistan. Quetta is already a non-Baloch majority city. The center focuses on the construction of cantonments and roads for the movement and mobility of the security forces. The construction of mega projects such as Gwadar port is yet another attempt to take over the territory of Balochistan.</td>
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</tbody>
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