

**GEOSTRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS
OF ETHNIC CONFLICTS:
A CASE STUDY OF BALOCHISTAN**

*Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University in
partial fulfilment of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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28TH JULY 2008

DECLARATION AND CERTIFICATE

DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation entitled “Geostrategic Considerations of Ethnic Conflicts: A Case Study of Balochistan” submitted by me for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The Dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other University.

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We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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Supervisor



dedicated to
My Grandparents



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ABBREVIATIONS

BHT	Baluch Haq Talwar
BLA	Baluchistan Liberation Army
BLF	Baluchistan Liberation Front
BNP	Baluchistan National Party
BPLF	Baluchistan People's Liberation Front
BSO	Baluchistan Students' Organisation
CAR	Central Asian Republics
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
ISI	Inter Services Intelligence
JUI	Jamiat Ulema-E-Islam
JWP	Jamhoori Watan Party
MMA	Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal
MQM	Muhajir Quami Movement
NAP	National Awami Party
NFC	National Finance Commission
NP	National Party
NWFP	North Western Frontier Province
OGDC	Oil And Gas Development Corporation
PPL	Pakistan Petroleum Limited
PKMAP	Pashtun Khwa Milli Awami Party
PSA	Port of Singapore Authority
PSRU	Pakistan Security Research Unit
SPDC	Social Policy and Development Centre
SSGC	Sui Southern Gas Company
UNDP	United Nation Development Programme
USA	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WWF	World Wild Fund

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1

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The term ethnicity is derived from the Greek word '*ethnos*' which "originally meant a number of people living together and subsequently came to be used in the sense of a tribe, group, nation or people". Ethnicity therefore, stands for the ethnic quality or affiliation of a group bearing different meanings in varied situational contexts.

Originally, an ethnic group, distinguished by a common cultural heritage, had something to do with race and biological or genetic differentiation. It had nothing to do with nation, state, majority or minority (Ashraf 1994). Majorities and minorities in different states could both be separate ethnic groups or could as well belong to the human grouping in term of ethnicity .But the term *ethnicity* in social sciences is of more recent usage. It has come to connote somewhat different things in different contexts. Any definition therefore, that may be attempted would at best be relevant only in a given society at a particular time in its history. All kinds of societal stratification today get related to ethnicity. All kinds of 'minorities' tend to get equated with ethnic groups: religion, language, race ,tribe, nationality, or, nation or region of origin- almost anything that can distinguish a group from a larger aggregate of fellow human being-is good enough to claim separate ethnic identity. The only condition is that the group should believe in its separateness and society around should accept. In the United States, for example, the more recent immigrants who were not immediately accepted, for assimilation were given the newly designed label of 'ethnic' (Carment 1993). The fashion world purloined the word and further polluted the concept.

Ethnicity is not related to the viability of the certain state structures but to the whole question of nation and nationalism. One of the fundamental question that remains is from where does the ethnic identity comes from? Broadly speaking, there are two arguments:

- *The Primordialists*: They argue that ethnic identities had always existed. So the problem is not of ethnic identity per se but the politicisation of ethnic identity.
- *The Instrumentalists*: They suggest that fundamentally there is nothing permanent about ethnic identity. It is a political creation. They are created because they are the excellent means of political mobilisation.

Both the views however provide only a partial picture of ethnicity's sources.

Some scholars would like to differentiate between racial and ethnic groups, the former being distinguished on grounds of physical and biological characteristics and the latter on grounds of different religious, linguistic or cultural background. Other would distinguish between minority groups and the ethnic groups. All these distinctions however are as fluid as the concept of race, nation and ethnicity.

From politico-geographical view ethnicity raises the whole socio-political spectrum of national identity, that is why ethnic politics takes its most virulent form in third world where territorial boundaries of state own far more to European empire – builders than to say ethnic homogeneity. Importance of other basic politico-geographical issues related to organising a productive economy, ethnic divisions may be absolutely central to the problems of organising a working political systems.

The aim of this research work is to analyse the geostrategic dimension of ethnic conflicts especially in the context of Balochistan - the most important province of Pakistan. Exploring the geostrategic importance of states, this work will also explore the socio-economic and political factors responsible for the Baloch alienation.

1.1 BACKGROUND

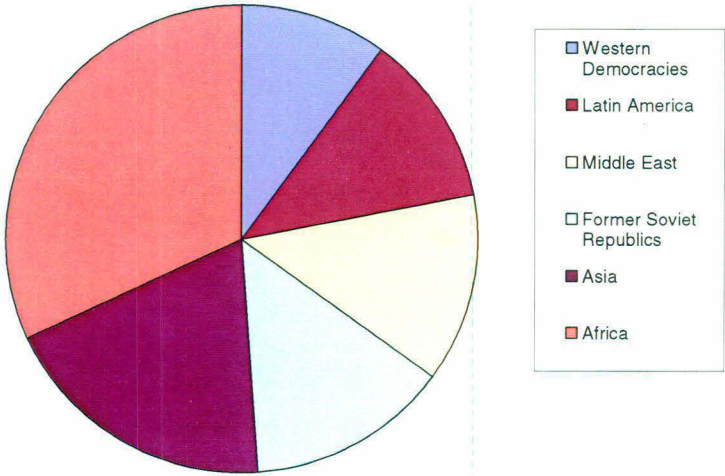
Generally speaking, the term ‘conflict’ describes a situation in which two or more actors pursue incompatible, yet from their individual perspectives entirely just, goals. Ethnic conflicts are one particular form of which the goals of at least one conflict party are defined in (exclusively) ethnic terms, and in which the primary fault line of confrontation is one of ethnic distinctions. Whatever the concrete issues over which conflict erupts, at least one of the conflict parties will explain its dissatisfaction in ethnic terms- that one party to the conflict will claim that its distinct ethnic identity is the reason why its members cannot realise their interests, why they do not have the same rights, or why their claims are not satisfied. Thus, ethnic conflicts are a form of group conflict in which at least one of the parties involved interprets the conflict, its cause and potential remedies along an actually existing or perceived discriminating ethnic divide (Iftekhharuzzaman 1998).

Ethnic conflict occurs neither wholly in nor between states. To understand ethnic conflict, factors operating within the state and beyond its borders should be taken into consideration. Increase in ethnic conflicts around the world is a reality. In about 190 nations, there are 3000 ethnic groups who are agitated and are engaged in one or other form of struggle for their identity. The number of ethnic conflicts had

continued to grow since the Cold War ended. Since then, conflict within states has become more prevalent than conflict between states; hatreds between the groups fighting in them. (Vanhanen 1999)

So let us begin with examining some of the facts about ethnic conflicts. According to data collected by researchers at International Peace Research Institute in Oslo and the Department of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University, there were approximately 50 ethnic with more than 25 people killed per year between 1946 and 2001. Of these around 60 percent, and in some cases ended, before 1990 whilst the other 40% dated in the post 1990 period.

FIGURE 1.1
POLITICALLY ACTIVE ETHNIC GROUPS BY REGION, 1990



Source: Dunaway 2003

Although this clearly means that ethnic conflicts pre-date the end of the Cold War, it also highlights that proportionally speaking more ethnic conflicts began in the last decade of the twentieth century than in any other. Figure 1.1 shows the politically active ethnic groups by region during 1990s. The 1990s also saw unprecedented atrocities committed in ethnic conflicts. The genocide in Rwanda, the siege of Sarajevo, the massacre of Srebrenica and Racak, and the endless track of refugees from Kosovo are examples of these.

By 2003, a slightly different picture had emerged. Of 16 ongoing conflicts in that year 10, had started before 1990. The longest lasting of them is the struggle between the government of Burma (Myanmar) and the Karen National Union, which began in 1949.

In 1990 and 1991, however, several new and highly visible ethnic conflicts erupted as a result of dissolution of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. The clashes between the armies of Croatia, Serbia, and Slovenia, and agonising battle that pitted Bosnia's Croats, Muslims, and Serbs against each other, occurred on Europe's fringes, within easy reach of television cameras.

In 1994 an ethnic war broke between the Konkomba and Nunumba peoples in Bimbilla, in the north east of Ghana. Within a few days hostilities had erupted across the north of the country pulling in over ten other ethnic groups; in less than weeks thousands were dead and 2000,000 homeless. The presence of around 40% traditional African beliefs, 40% Christian and 20% Muslim constitute predisposing factors for inter-group conflict.

The state formation wars that accompanied the Leninist extinction now appear to have been a onetime event - flash flood rather than a global deluge. Many of these battles have already been brought under control its decline.

The majority of the wars that survive today are ethnic conflicts - but they are mostly persistent battles that have been simmering for decades. They include the (now possibly defunct) IRA insurgency in the United Kingdom; the struggle for Kurdish autonomy in Iran, Iraq, and turkey; the Israeli Palestinian tragedy; the Sri Lankan civil war; and long standing regional insurrections in Myanmar, India, and Indonesia.

1.2 PAKISTAN: GEOSTRATEGIC AND ETHNIC PERSPECTIVE

Since the control of power became the passion for stronger countries, geopolitics emerged as a vital factor. This factor is so variable that at present, no two countries are permanent friends or enemies. Friendship between nations built on abstract principles; invariably follows the calculus of economic and mutual benefits. Geographical locations, political environments and the future interests enumerate the status of countries for each other.

Geography plays a vital role in international relations, as well. The first and foremost, basic and fundamental fact in this connection is to realise the inescapable inevitability of the geopolitical location of a state in particular region and neighbourhood. Moreover, Pakistan has a unique geography that includes, the great mountain ranges of the Himalayas, the Karakorams and the Hindukush form Pakistan's northern highlands of North West Frontier Province and the Northern Area. Punjab province is a flat, alluvial plain with five major rivers dominating the upper

region eventually joining the Indus River flowing south to the Arabian Sea. The Thar Desert and the Rann of Kutch bound the Sindh Province from east and Kirthar range from the west. The Balochistan Plateau is an arid tableland, encircled by dry mountains. Geographically, Pakistan is situated in a region of great economic, political and military importance. Besides linking various regions, Pakistan is surrounded by mighty neighbours - super and world powers, regional and local powers; military and nuclear powers. (Rahman 2007)

Pakistan is not a homogeneous state. It is composed of several nationalities. Major ethnic groups of Pakistan are: Punjabis 68%, Sindhis 13%, Pathans 8.5%, Urdu-speaking (mainly Muhajirs) 7.6% and, Balochis 2.5%. According to the census of 1981, in Pakistan the Punjab province has a population of 56.1 percent, Sindh province 22.6percent, north-east frontier province 13 per cent Balochistan province 5.1 per cent and FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Areas) 2.1 per cent:

On the basis of its ethnic divisions and because of the lack of an effective common bond, Pakistan has often been pronounced as an unnatural country; Religion, which become a basis for the creation of Pakistan, is called as a transient arrangement, a fact proved by the emergence of Bangladesh in December 1971 and constant ethnic tensions in the country, particularly in Sindh and in Balochistan. (ibid)

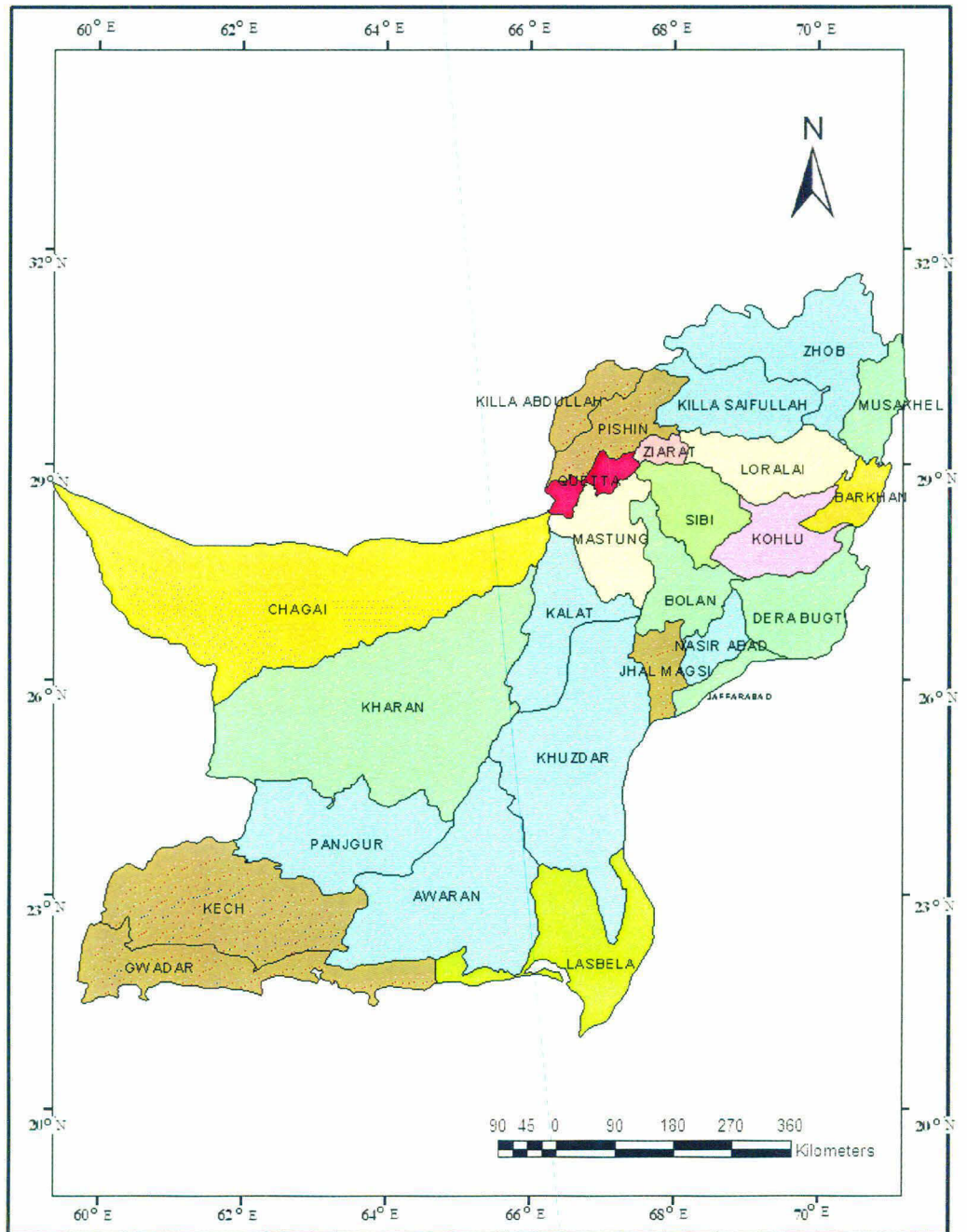
The current political trend in Pakistan shows that ethnic groups are no longer demanding minimum share in power but are focusing their struggle for maximum autonomy leading to confederal political and administrative set-up. It is the nightmare of the Punjabi dominated military and bureaucracy and their feudal, capitalist, religious and political supporters to see the relegation of central authority and the emergence of semi- sovereign provinces.

1.3 PROBLEM OF ETHNIC VIOLENCE IN BALOCHISTAN

Area wise Balochistan is Pakistan's largest province and the richest in oil, natural gas (it produces 45% of total gas in Pakistan after the discovery of Sui field in 1952 by the British) and minerals deposits.

It comprises nearly half the size of Pakistan and bordering the Arabian Sea provides virtually the entire coastline of Pakistan. Its contiguity with Iran and Afghanistan enhances its geo-strategic importance not only to Pakistan but also to the United States in execution of its regional strategies in Afghanistan and against Iran. Balochistan, significantly, is the

MAP 1.1
POLITICAL MAP OF BALOCHISTAN



region in which Pakistan carried out its nuclear weapons tests and there are good reasons to believe that a major portion of Pakistan; nuclear weapon are located here.

Being geographically and ethnically close to the West Central Asia, Balochistan inherited the trait and character of this strategic area. Islamic influence reached Balochistan in the earliest period of Islamic history; hence the people of Balochistan have inherited the qualities of Arab as well as Iranians.

Of all four provinces, Balochistan is most diverse socially economically and ethnolinguistically. Speakers of Balochi command majority only in Kharan, Makran, Sibi and Chagai districts. Pashtuns constitute a majority in Quetta-Pishin, Zhob and Loralai districts, vast tracts of which were amalgamated into British Balochistan for conveniences of the empire only; the second largest linguistic group in Quetta-Pishin and Loralai districts is Punjabi-speaking- approximately 30% of the total population in the two districts. Moreover, Balochistan also has a large Sindhi speaking population. Las Bela was of course a Sindhi majority state and continues to be so as a district now within Kalat Division. In addition, the census of 1951 showed the Sindhis as constituting 29% of the total population of what was then Kalat State. Kachchi, for example was annexed to the Kalat state as a consequence of wars between the Sardars of Sarawan-Jhalawan area and the ruling dynasty of Sindh; the latter had to surrender Kachchi as retribution but the Sindhi population of course remained.

Most of the Baloch are Sunni Muslims adhering to the Hanafi School. They are the largest ethnic groups in their province followed by Pukhtuns, Brahui, Sindhis and Punjabis. There are around two million Baloch's in Iran.

In April 1948 the central government sent the Pakistan army who forced Mir Ahmed Yar Khan to give up his state. Mir Ahmed Yar Khan signed an accession agreement ending Kalat's de facto independence. His brother, Prince Karim Khan, decided to carry on with the struggle. Basing himself in Afghanistan he conducted guerrilla warfare against the Pakistan army. Later he was killed in clashes with the army along with many of his supporters. (Sanaullah 2007)

Nawab Nowroz Khan took up arms in resistance to the One Unit policy designed and initiated by the federal government to eliminate ethnic and provincial divides and prejudices. He and his followers were charged with treason and arrested and confined in Hyderabad jail. Five of his family members (sons and nephews) were subsequently hanged. Nawab Nowroz Khan later died in captivity.

After the second conflict the Federal government sent the Army to build new garrisons in the key trouble areas of Balochistan. Sher Mohammad Bijarani Marri lead likeminded

militants to start a guerilla warfare against the establishment of these posts by creating its own posts of insurgency spreading over 45,000 miles of land from the Mengal tribal area in the south to the Marri and Bugti tribal areas in the north. The insurgents bombed railway tracks and ambushed convoys. The Army retaliated by destroying vast areas of the Marri tribe. This insurgency ended in 1969 when Yahya Khan abolished the "One Unit" policy and the Baloch's agreed to a ceasefire. This eventually led to the recognition of Balochistan as the fourth province of West Pakistan (present day Pakistan) in 1970.

In 1972, major political parties from a wide spectrum of political ideology united against the government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (the then Prime Minister) and formed the National Awami Party (NAP) and demanded more representation for the ethnic Baloch in the government. This did not sit well with Bhutto's elitist and authoritarian ways. He was seeking a way to get rid of the democratically elected provincial government of Balochistan. In February 1973 he found a way. In the presence of news media and the Iraqi ambassador to Islamabad, the police opened a consignment of Iraqi diplomatic pouches containing arms, ammunition and guerrilla warfare literature. The Pakistani intelligence agencies claimed these arms were en-route to the Baloch (Marri) insurgents of Balochistan. Citing treason Bhutto subsequently dismissed the provincial government of Balochistan and imposed governor rule. Secretly, the intelligence agencies as well as Bhutto knew the real intended parties of the arms consignment were the ethnic Baloch's of Iran. This was Iraq's response to Iran's support for the Kurds in northern Iraq. (Matheson 2002)

Dismissal of the provincial government led to armed insurgency. Khair Baksh Marri formed the Balochistan People's Liberation Front (BPLF) which led large numbers of Marri and Mengal tribesmen into guerrilla warfare against the central government. According to several authors, Pakistani military lost 3,000 - 3,300 soldiers during the conflict with the Balochi separatists while the Baloch lost 5,300 men and civilian casualties during this period is estimated at 6,000.(Ahmed 2008)

Due to government policies in 2004 Balochistan was up in arms against the federal government, with the Balochistan Liberation Army, Balochistan Liberation Front, and People's Liberation Army conducting operations. Rocket attacks and bomb blasts have been a regular feature in the provincial capital, particularly its cantonment areas of Kohlu and Sui Town, since 2000, and had claimed over 25 lives by mid-2004. In response Pakistan army demolished many houses and Marri areas and killed many

civilians as war is still going on though media is not reporting much of it because of restriction on media in Pakistan.

The Gwadar Port project employed close to 500 Chinese nationals by 2004. On 03 May 2004, the BLA killed three Chinese engineers working on the Port. Gwadar airport was attacked by rockets at midnight on 21 May 2004. On 09 October 2004, two Chinese engineers were kidnapped in South Waziristan in the northwest of Pakistan, one of whom was killed later on October 14 in a botched rescue operation (Wikipedia 2008).

Violence reached a crescendo in August of 2005 when the Pakistani government attempted and killed Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti, a seventy one year old popular Sardar (tribal leader) who had fought against the Pakistani government for decades.

1.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

During the last three decades, a great deal has been written about ethnicity and ethnic conflictual patterns and models. Ethno-national, ethno-communal or ethno-religious disputes in different countries over the globe and their incidence seem to be on the increase. No wonder, therefore, ethnicity has become an important agenda engaging the attention of social scientists. Many issues discussed earlier other heads are now dealt within the overall theme of ethnicity. The concept of ethnicity, however remains vague.

1.5 EXISTING LITERATURE

There has been a phenomenal rise in ethnicity-based assertions movements for political power all over the world during the twentieth century. Ethnicity comes as a burning issue in the present era that is why abundant literature is present in the field. The term 'ethnicity' is said to have been first used by **David Reisman** in 1953 (**Glazer and Moynihan**).

"An ethnic group is a segment of a larger society, whose members are thought, by themselves and other, to have a common origin and to share important segments of a common culture had who, in addition, participate in shared activities in which the common origin and culture are significant ingredients. It is important to distinguish a

sociologically and psychologically important ethnicity from one that is only administrative or classificatory. “(J.Milton Yinger 1978)

Milton Gordon (1964) tries to define an ethnic group simply as one that is set off by differentiation by race, religion or national origin or some combination of these categories enabling it to experience a sense of people hood. Selig Harrison's (1996) *Ethnicity and Politics in Pakistan - The Baloch case* examines the Baloch case in the light of industrialisation and globalisation.

Ishtiaq Ahmed's (1996) *State, Nation and Ethnicity in Contemporary South Asia* analyses in an historical and comparative perspective how and why such movements (ethnic) have grown and developed in India, Pakistan Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Adel Khan's (2005) *Politics of Identity-Ethnic Nationalism and the State in Pakistan*, studies both the pre-Colonial and colonial state system in India. It assesses the state in Pakistan and explains its role in giving rise to ethnic discontent and studies four ethnic movements including the Baloch ethnic national movement and finally critically examines some influential theories of nationalism including those of Gelernter, Anderson and Partha Chatterjee.

The Foreign Policy of Pakistan: Ethnic Impacts on Diplomacy by Mehtab Ali Shah (1997) is an examination of the relationship between domestic conditions and foreign policy in Pakistan. Arguing that other books on Pakistan's foreign policy have neglected such linkages, the author examines Pakistan's international posturing through a prism of provincial and ethnic conflict. Mehtab Ali Shah appears to echo the provincial leaders when he emphasises the different core identities that nurture Sindhis, Balochi, Pashtuns, and Punjabis. The Pakistan ethos, however, is truly the underlying subject of this book. It is the author's argument that Pakistan never was, is not now, and may never be a unified state.

Old Roads, New Highways edited by Victoria Schofield (1997), provides appreciative insights into the success and failure of one of the largest Muslim country in the world founded on religion. Chapter VIII of this book entitled “Tribes, Regional Pressures and Nationhood” by Akbar S Ahmed deals with problems of regionalism.

Indigenous People and Ethnic Minorities of Pakistan by Shaheen Sardar Ali and Javari Rahman (2001), book examines the issues facing indigenous people and ethnic minorities in Pakistan including their roles in the nation's constitutional and legal developments and makes a number of recommendations which would satisfy

their demands without compromising the sovereignty of the state. Chapter V of this book is exclusively devoted to Balochistan.

In *The Idea of Pakistan* by Stephen P. Cohen (2005), chapter VI entitled 'Regionalism and Separatism' is exclusively devoted to regional politics of Pakistan. In this chapter the author examines Baloch ethnic problem along with three other ethnic problem of Sindh, Mohajir and Pakhtun.

Travels in Balochistan and Sindh by Pottinger (2002), is a collection of author's personal travelling experiences through these two states and gives a fascinating and vivid picture of the problems of these two provinces.

The Tigers of Balochistan by Sylvia Matheson (2002), gives a fascinating and vivid eyewitness account of how the Bugtis are meeting the problems of sudden confrontation with twentieth century industrialisation following the discovery and development of Asia's largest natural gas field Sui inside Bugti's areas.

Contemporary Pakistan: Political Processes, Conflicts and Crises by Veena Kukreja (2003) provides a rare, reasoned analysis of the political process at work in the contemporary Pakistan. She provides insights into evolution of state structures lacking into the account the complex interplay of domestic, regional and international forces which have influenced and moulded the political developments in Pakistan since 1947.

Taj Mohammed Breseeg's *Baloch Nationalism: Its Origin and development* (2004) examines the theoretical writings on the subject and concludes that nationalism is the sense of identity shared by a group of people. It fills a gap in our knowledge of Baloch Nationalism in Pakistan and Iran and explores in detail its development in the 1920-80 period.

Selig Harrison's (1981) *Afghanistan's Shadow: - Baloch Nationalism and Soviet Temptations* focuses on Afghanistan's shadow neighbouring Balochistan: author gives a detailed history of the Baloch nationalist movement in Pakistan and Iran. The author also considers Moscow's Baloch card and concludes that the Kremlin's attitude towards Baloch separatism has been ambivalent because Soviet's still believe that there is a reasonable chance to replace the Zia regime in Pakistan and the Islamic fundamentalist govt. in Iran with more compliant regime.

Search Lights on Baloches and Balochistan (1974) by Mir Khuda Bakhsh Bijrani Marri Baloch attempts to trace the origin, customs, language and history of Baloch people from Tell Hariri and Aleppo in Northern Syria to ancient Babylonia,

Kirman, Balochistan and Delhi from earliest times to the present.

In '*The Crisis in Balochistan*' by Rashid Rahman (2005), *The South Asia Journal*, gives a detailed account of crisis in Balochistan. He gives a brief history of Balochistan. The author says that exploration of gas in 1952 by British which made Balochistan a more important province in Pakistan. He blames the centrist tendency in the Pakistani establishment to curb the regional aspirations.

Power Relations in Southern Balochistan: A Comparison of Three Ethnographic Cases by Ugo Fabietti (January 1992 *Ethnology*) compares three ethnographic case studies in southern Balochistan. It stresses the relevance of the forms of human adaptation present in the region for shaping power relations between the different components of society. It raises the problem of the means by which the political elites have imposed their control over the majority of the local population, presents hypotheses concerning the nature of political relations among the Balochis, and analysed the interpretative models which, in an explicit or implicit way, have been utilised to explain political domination among the people of this region. Of the three cases considered, one refers to the southern Pakistani Makran. The other two cases, referring to Iranian Balochistan, were described by Spooner (1969) and Salzman (1978) respectively.

In *Balochistan Shadow over India - Pakistan Ties* - Praveen Swami, *Hindu* (5th Sep 2006), assesses the current situation in Balochistan and says that escalating conflict in Balochistan could push Musharraf to adopt an aggressive anti-India position. He gives in detail the movement of several divisions of military moving closer to India's border.

The Balochistan Battle Front by Syed Shoaib Hasan (*Tehalka* 2006), gives a detailed account of rebellion after the rape of Dr., Shazia Khalid in Sui. The author also examines the role of Nawab Akbar Bugti and Balochistan Liberation Army and blames the central government for the Soddy dealing of the matter into the rape case and blames the army's role in containing the insurgency.

Balochistan Cause Gets a Martyr (2006 *Hindu*), by Nirupama Subramanian, examines the post-Bugti's political scenario and says that the killing of Bugti has angered the Balochistan. It also has sent shock waves among the political circles in Pakistan. The writer quotes the former ISI chief Assad Durrani that 'Bugti dead is more dangerous than Bugti alive'.

Battlefield Balochistan by Aditya Sinha (15 Jan 2006), the writer has given a

detailed history of insurgency in Balochistan and says that insurgency in Pakistan's troubled province threatens to reach a boiling point.

In *Dial M for Murder* by Vikram Sood (07 Sep 2006 Hindustan Times), the writer is of the opinion that from Bugti's death both India and Pakistan should take important lessons. He gives the geostrategic importance of Balochistan. He also deals with great power interest In Balochistan, the US because of Iran and China's Gwadar sea port and oil interest.

Revival of Insurgency in Balochistan' by Alok Bansal (2005 Strategic Analysis), In this article writer seeks to examine the external role in the current insurgency. Writer also blames the central government for their economic deprivation, social backwardness and political alienation.

Is Balochistan Doomed? by Subroto Roy (3 Sep, 2006 Sunday Statesman), in this article writer gives the geo- strategic importance of this province. He also analyses the Punjabi domination after independence in all spheres of life. The writer examines the Chinese presence and Punjabi military men's business in Balochistan.

Blundering in Balochistan by K. P. S. Gill (22 Jan, 2006 Sunday Pioneer), writer blames Islamabad's ignorance for the four major rebellions since 1948 and criticises Musharraf dictatorship responsible for the disorder and violence. He also blames the present military regime for the creation of new cantonments and large scale military presence.

1.6 DEFINITION RATIONALE AND SCOPE OF STUDY

Balochistan is geo-politically and geo-strategically the most important province of Pakistan: were it not for its geo-strategic location, long coastal line at the mouth of gulf and potential for discoveries of oil, gas, and other minerals, it may not have assumed the importance it currently enjoys. Besides the Chagai nuclear testing range, Balochistan is the main base for space programs and rocket experimentation facilities. The proposed Iran -Pakistan -India gas pipeline will pass through this crucial province. The Gwadar port and port Qasim are in this province. Quetta the state capital, Pakistan's strategic road heads to Kandahar in Afghanistan. The presence of two great powers China because of Gwadar Seaport and mega development projects and USA because of Iran and influence of Russia in CAR countries is quite obvious and significant: The main problems in Balochistan are: firstly, the nationalist movement acts on behalf of exploitative and vested tribal. The second problem lies with the

successive authoritarian regimes of Pakistan who do not believe in the diversity and federal system of the country. With so much of strategic, economic and geopolitical factors at stake, Pakistan, cannot afford to have a perpetually roaring insurgency in Balochistan. It is the supreme irony of fate that such a strategic province is one of the most backward and least developed provinces. Due to all round governmental neglect and economic exploitation by the centre this province is economically deprived, socially backward and politically alienated. The main focus of the proposed research work will be on the Baloch ethnic division and the geostrategic significance of Balochistan. This research study will also focus on economic exploitation by successive central governments and disassociation of the local people from the modernisation and mega development projects.

Hypotheses

This dissertation will focus on testing two hypotheses. The first hypothesis is that the strategic location of Balochistan, centrist tendency, political alienation and social backwardness of the Baloch tribes are the causes behind ethnic conflicts. The second hypothesis is that the ethnic conflicts would lead to the formation of a new country of the ethnic Baloch tribes.

1.7 METHODOLOGY

Descriptive and analytical method will be used. Relevant information and data published will be interpreted both qualitatively and quantitatively. The study will be based on primary and secondary sources. For the primary sources the government documents, reports surveys conducted by various national and international organisation will be used. Existing literature, published journals, news paper would be explored and it will form the secondary sources. To enrich the study the relevant materials from the internet and working paper by research institute will also be used.

1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN

This dissertation is divided into three main chapters. The second chapter is titled "Ethnicity in Pakistan". This chapter will historically analyse the ethnic composition of Pakistan and examine the factors responsible for ethnic violence there. The third chapter is titled "Balochistan and Ethnic Nationalism". This chapter will trace the geostrategic and geopolitical importance of Balochistan, and focus on the origin of

Baloch ethnic nationalism. It will also take a look at the history of ethnic violence in Balochistan and its impact on the Pakistani polity. The fourth chapter is titled “Resource Exploitation and Economic Development of Balochistan”. This chapter will take a look at the policies of economic development being implemented in Balochistan. It will also examine the distribution of natural resources and how they are being used by the government in a discriminatory manner. The chapter will also take a look at the problem of economic backwardness and grievances of people against the economic policies of the government. The last chapter will summarise the findings of the research and also examine the future course of Balochistan.

CONCLUSION

Balochistan because of its geostrategic location and heavy deposition of natural resources is the most important province of Pakistan. The ongoing insurgency in Balochistan constitutes a threat to the national integration of Pakistan. However, the country’s policy-makers have come to acknowledge this threat and are working towards solving the problem. The upcoming development programmes are also expected to have positive economic benefits for the region. There is also a tacit acknowledgement of the fact that it was their earlier faulty policies which brought Balochistan to such sorry state of affairs. This research work intends to take an overview of these policies and how Balochistan is finding newer ways of getting out of the current quagmire.

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**2**

**ETHNICITY IN PAKISTAN**

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **ETHNICITY IN PAKISTAN**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Ethnicity is not a new phenomenon in world politics. For a long time ethnicity was regarded as the sole domain of sociologists, whereas in the studies on International Relations and intra-regional developments it received little attention. Out of 132 countries in 1992, there were only a dozen which could be considered homogeneous; 25 had a single ethnic group accounting for 90% of the total population while another 25 countries had an ethnic majority of 75%. 31 countries had a single ethnic group accounting for 50 to 75 % of the total population whereas in 39 countries no single group exceeded half of the total population. In a few European and Latin American cases, one single case, one single ethnic group would account for 75 % of the total population (Singh 2001).

Ethnic conflicts have been on the rise in both modernising and developed countries, the task of nation-building has been rendered even more difficult in the developing world by the need to compress the process into a few decades. This is partly because in most of the developing countries, ethnic groups gained independence from colonial rule without completing the process of nation building.

The majority groups have tended to see minorities' demands for preserving a distinct way of life and claims for genuine autonomy as potential bids for secessionism and have generally suppressed these demands with brutal force. This had led to the simmering ethnic divisions and ethnic conflicts in many developing countries today.

Like most other South Asian Countries, Pakistan remains fragmented in terms of its diverse linguistic and regional identities. This chapter will first introduce Pakistan, in terms of geographic location and then analyse the different ethnic identities in Pakistan with their interference in Pakistani politics.

#### **2.2 BACKGROUND**

Pakistan's 796,095 square kilometres of territory includes a wide variety of landscapes, from arid deserts to lush, green valley's to stark mountain peaks. Geographically, Pakistan can be divided into three regions: the lowlands along the

Indus in the south and east, the arid plateau of Balochistan in the southwest, and the mountains of the north. The provinces of Punjab and Sindh, in the east and south, are well irrigated by the Indus and its tributaries. The land is fertile and produces most of Pakistan's food. This area, which includes the cities of Karachi, Islamabad (the capital), Lahore and Rawalpindi, is the most densely-populated in the country. The northern and western highlands of Pakistan contain the towering Karakoram and Pamir mountain ranges, which include some of the world's highest peaks: K2 (28,250 ft; 8,611 m) and Nanga Parbat (26,660 ft; 8,126 m). The Balochistan Plateau lies to the west, and the Thar Desert and an expanse of alluvial plains, the Punjab and Sind, lie to the east. The 1,000-mile-long (1,609-km) Indus River and its tributaries flow through the country from the Kashmir region to the Arabian Sea.

The name *Pakistan* is derived from the Urdu words *Pak* (meaning pure) and *Stan* (meaning country). Pakistan, along with parts of western India, contains the archaeological remains of an urban civilization dating back 4,500 years. Pakistan extends along either side of the historic Indus River, following its course from the mountain valleys of the Himalayas down to the Arabian Sea. Situated at the meeting point between central, South and West Asia, surrounded by India to the East, China to the North, Afghanistan and Iran to the West, and separated from the USSR, only by the narrow Wakhan corridor, Pakistan saw itself as a vulnerable state, threatened by powerful, or to say the least, vexatious neighbours. Earlier Pakistan played an important role in the disintegration of Soviet Union and now Pakistan is again a front line state and a main ally of the global coalition against terrorism, primarily due to her strategic location being closer to Afghanistan. Growing interest of America in the Central Asian oil resources and her animosity with China shall make Pakistan once again a most strategically important state in near future. Being an unconditional supporter of United States, so far, Pakistan has not been able to draw benefits out of her geostrategic location. Rather has paid heavy prices for her past alignment, in the shape of internal instability, economic decline and her trivial foreign relations with in the region.

### **2.3 DEFINITION OF ETHNICITY**

When we go through the term '*ethnicity*' it was first appeared in the 1950s in the English language. The term '*ethnicity*' is quite clearly a derivative of the much older term and more commonly used adjective '*ethnic*' which in the English language goes

back to the Middle Ages. The term 'ethnic' derived from Greek '*ethnos*' which was used as a synonym of *gentile*, that is non-Christian and non-Jewish pagan in new testament (Hutchinson and Smith, 1996).

Ethnicity denotes the group behaviour of members seeking a common ancestry with inherent individual variations. It is also a reflection of one's own perception of oneself as the member of the particular group. According to the Prof. Dawa Norbu, "an ethnic group is discrete social organisation within which mass mobilisation and social communication may be affected. And ethnicity provided the potent raw material for nationalism that makes sense only to the members of that ethnic group. Its primary function is to differentiate the group members from the generalised others". (Richard 1985)

Punekar maintains: "Ethnicity refers to the sense of *peoplehood* or *we-feeling* shared by members of the groups; the group, whose members share this feeling, is an ethnic group." Cohen, on the other hand, defines an ethnic group as, "...an informal interest group whose members are distinct from the members of the other group within the same society in that they share..." Shibusani et al. observed that "an ethnic group consist of those who conceive of themselves as being alike by virtue of their common ancestry, real or fictitious, and who are so regarded by others." When they are united by emotional bonds and are concerned with the preservation of their type, it is ethnicity."

For Harold Isaacs, ethnicity is all about 'primordial affinities and attachments; while Clifford Geertz uses the words 'activated' primordial consciousness; According to Dov Ronen there is a natural tendency to interact with human being who speak the same language, share common religion and historic memories and so forth - all of which are considered to be attributes of ethnicity (ibid).

Some scholars would like to differentiate between racial and ethnic groups, the former being distinguished on grounds of physical and biological characteristics and the latter on grounds of different religious, linguistic or cultural background. Other would distinguish between minority groups and the ethnic groups. All these distinctions however are as fluid as the concept of race, nation and ethnicity.

There are fundamental three ways of measuring ethnicity: origin or ancestry, race and identity.

(a) *Origin* or *ancestry* attempts to determine the roots or ethnic background of a person. The concept, however, is somewhat ambiguous since it does not usually specify an historical reference point. Given that new ethnic groups may arise over time, it may be difficult for a respondent to answer a question about origins. For example, if one of a respondent's great, great grandfathers was a Scottish fur trader who entered a marital union with a Cree woman then is the respondent Scottish or Cree. Or is the respondent Métis, a group that is recognised in the Canadian constitution as a distinct Aboriginal population? This also illustrates the legitimacy of the reporting of multiple origins. In as much as any individual has two parents, four grandparents, eight great-grandparents and so on, it is realised that there is a potential for those ancestors to come from a multiplicity of ethnic groups. The tabulation of the resultant data, therefore, becomes complex. This is usually handled by showing the population that has a single origin and the population that has multiple origins. The display of the combinations, such as French and English, in multiple responses is generally restricted to the dominant or most populous groups in the society. The concept may also suffer from a genuine lack of knowledge on the part of respondents. They may not know their backgrounds. In addition, public opinion may influence reporting under some circumstances. For example, it has been suggested that German origins may have been under-reported in the Census of 1941, which was taken during World War II.

(b) Conceptually, *race* may be somewhat less ambiguous than origin or ancestry, but it is not without difficulties in terms of measurement. The concept is based primarily upon genetically imparted physiognomic features among which skin colour is a dominant, but not the sole, attribute. Nevertheless, it is possible for a person to be of mixed races, some of which, such as the mestizo of Latin America, have become recognised as evolved races in their own right. Furthermore, terminology may be ambiguous. Scholars may prefer to use the term Caucasian rather than white but the former may not be well understood by many respondents. Other terminology evolves over time such as the evolution in America of Afro-Americans from black and earlier from Negro. There may also be terminology very much in usage in the common lexicon, which is actually offensive to a group in question.

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(c) *Identity* has a certain appeal because it attempts to measure how people perceive themselves rather than their ancestors. Nevertheless, it retains certain dimensions of not only origin but race as well. In addition, it may include aspects of citizenship. A typical question might be, with which ethnic group do you identify? Some respondents may associate the question with citizenship and report Canadian. Others may associate it with origin and report Italian. Others might see it as involving both citizenship and origin and report Italian-Canadian. Others might see racial dimensions and report as black or black-Canadian. Furthermore, in some contexts, ethnicity might be implied but the reference is actually to language. For example, there are frequent references to French Canadians and English Canadians which are not on the basis of ethnicity per se but on the basis of the language spoken. (Wikipedia 2008)

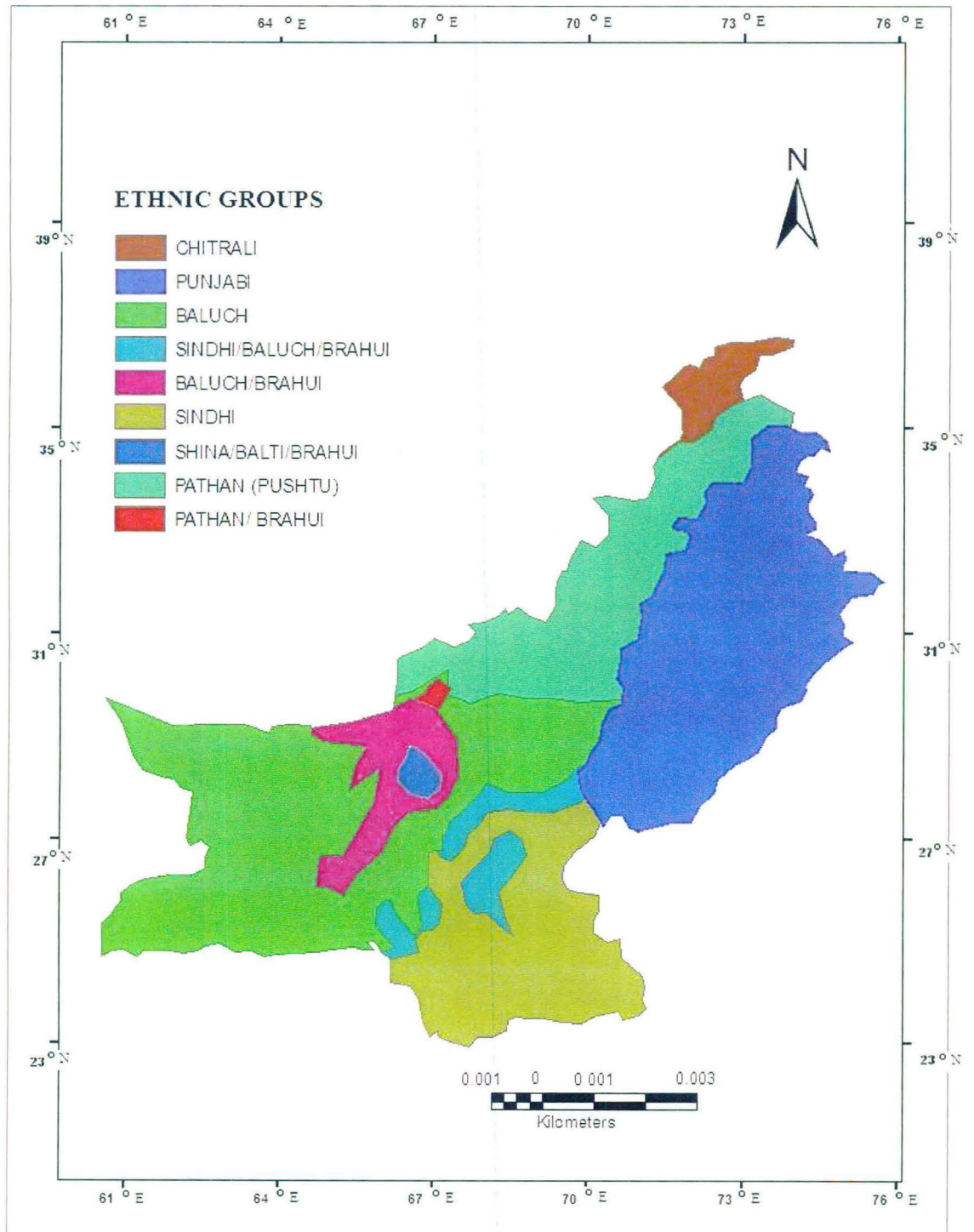
From politico-geographical view ethnicity raises the whole socio-political spectrum of national identity, that is why ethnic politics takes its most virulent form in third world where territorial boundaries of state own far more to European empire – builders than to say ethnic homogeneity importance of other basic politico-geographical issues related to organising a productive economy, ethnic divisions may be absolutely central to the problems of organising a working political systems.

#### **2.4 PAKISTAN: ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF THE NATION**

The population is a complex mixture of indigenous peoples, many racial types having been introduced by successive waves of migrations from the northwest, as well as by internal migrations across the subcontinent of India. Aryans, Persians, Greeks, Pathans (Pashtuns), and Mughals came from the northwest and spread across the Indo-Gangetic Plain, while the Arabs conquered Sindh. All left their mark on the population and culture of the land. During the long period of Muslim rule, immigrants from the Middle East were brought in and installed as members of the ruling oligarchy. It became fashionable prestigious to claim descent from them, therefore it is doubtful whether members of the Muslim landed gentry and its upper-class families in the sub-continent have actually descended from such immigrants.

Pakistan emerged as an independent Muslim state with the portion of India by separating the Muslim majority north-western and north-eastern zones/province on 14 August 1947. Pakistan is a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual country. Pakistan's population of 128 million is one of the fastest-growing in Asia. Pakistan's ethnic

**MAP 2.1**  
**ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF PAKISTAN**



Source: <http://www.prapcanada.com/Photos/Pak1.png>

diversity is obvious and yet accurate numbers have been elusive. Most believe that the large majority of Pakistanis belong to the Indo-Aryan ancestral group. Since the secession of East-Pakistan (now Bangladesh) in 1971, Pakistan comprises five major ethnic groups. The ethnic composition of Pakistan in the mid-1990s roughly corresponds to the linguistic distribution of the population, at least among the largest groups: 59.1 percent of Pakistanis identify themselves as Punjabis, 13.8 percent as Pakhtuns, 12.1 percent as Sindhis, 7.7 percent as Muhajirs, 4.3 percent as Baloch, and 3 percent as members of other ethnic groups in its four provinces. Each group is primarily concentrated in its home province, with most Muhajirs residing in urban Sindh. There are subgroups within each of these major categories, as well as a number of smaller ethnic groups not included among them. The Arains, Rajputs, and Jats—all Punjabis—regard themselves as ethnically distinct. Some groups overlap the major categories; for instance, there are Punjabi Pashtuns as well as Hazarvi Pashtuns. Some smaller groups, such as Hindkowans and Brahuis in Sind (Sindh) and the Seraikis in Punjab, are also ethnically distinct. Table 2.1 shows the major Ethnolinguistic groups of Pakistan. It is a comparison of year 1961 and 1981.

**TABLE 2.1**  
**MAJOR ETHNOLINGUISTIC GROUPS OF PAKISTAN**

| Group    | Language  | Major Religion       | Population 1961 (Millions) | Percent of total 1961 % | Population 1981 (Million) | Percent of total 1981 % | Location             |
|----------|-----------|----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Punjabis | Punjabi   | Sunni and Shia Islam | 28.53                      | 66.39                   | 40.31                     | 48.17                   | Northeast            |
| Sindhis  | Sindhi    | Sunni Islam          | 5.41                       | 12.59                   | 9.85                      | 11.75                   | Southeast            |
| Pastuns  | Pastu     | Sunni Islam          | 3.64                       | 8.47                    | 10.99                     | 13.14                   | North-West           |
| Seraikis | Seraiki   | Sunni Islam          | —                          | —                       | 8.22                      | 9.83                    | Central India valley |
| Baloch   | Balochi & | Sunni &              | 3.25                       | 7.58                    | 6.36                      | 7.60                    | All regions          |



|       |        |             |      |      |      |      |             |
|-------|--------|-------------|------|------|------|------|-------------|
|       | Brahui | Zikri Islam | 1.46 | 3.42 | 3.52 | 4.21 |             |
| Other | ---    | ----        | 0.66 | 1.55 | 4.38 | 5.24 | All regions |

**Sources:** Given in all Banuazizi and Myron Weiner (ed.) State, Religion and Ethnic Politics, Lahore, Vanguard, 1987,p. 268-69

Tribal Pashtuns are another subgroup of the Pashtun constellation. Divided into numerous tribal orders, they inhabit the mountainous region along the Afghan frontier. Christians (largely to be found in Punjab and Karachi) and Hindus (almost all to be found in Sindh province) are the main religious minorities in Pakistan.

Language is an important marker of ethnic identity. Nearly half of all Pakistanis about forty eight percent speak Punjabi. The next most commonly spoken language is Sindhi (12 percent), followed by the Punjabi variant Siraiki (10 percent), Pakhtu or Pashto (8 percent), Balochi (3 percent), Hindko (2 percent), and Brahui (1 percent). Native speakers of other languages, including English, Burushaski, and various other tongues account for 8 percent. The official language of Pakistan is Urdu (English is widely considered as one too). Urdu is the national language, although it is spoken as a first language by approximately 8% of the population (Singh 2001).

## 2.5 DESCRIPTION OF VARIOUS ETHNIC GROUPS

For the last few years the question of Pakistan's "nationalities" is being debated, propagated, supported and contested at various levels and in different quarters. The problem of national integration in Pakistan lies in-between it's provincial setup. The present-day provincial setup of Pakistan has its origins from the British era. The British rulers drew boundaries of provinces not based on ethnic demographics, but the politics of that era for their interests. As has always been the case, the ethnic demographics have also evolved since 1947. In reality, the current provincial setup of Pakistan is artificial. The large southern region of "Punjab" is Seraiki, its Southwest is Balochi, and Northwest Hindkowi. The huge North-east part of "North-Western Frontier Province" is Hindkowi, and the north is Khowari/Shina/etc.

Pakistan is inhabited by four nationalities: the largest and the dominant group- numerically the largest and politically and economically dominant - are the Punjabis.

### *Punjabi*

Constituting roughly 60 per cent of the total population, they make up 80 per cent of the armed forces, about 80 to 85 per cent of the higher bureaucracy and some 80 per cent of the business and capitalist class. Most Punjabis trace their ancestry to pre-Islamic Jat and Rajput castes. According to censuses taken in British India, Punjabis were typically divided into "functional castes" or "agricultural tribes."

An important aspect of Punjabi ethnicity is reciprocity at the village level. They are the owners of wealth, and also control the institutions of power in the country. They number about 50 million. Punjabis predominate in the upper echelons of the military and civil service and in large part run the central government. This situation is resented by many Pakhtuns, Baloch, and, particularly by Sindhis, whose numbers and wealth are comparatively small and who are proportionately underrepresented in public position (U.S. Library of Congress 2008).

### *Pashtuns (or Pakhtuns)*

After Punjabis there are the Pakhtun people along the Afghanistan frontier, about 7.25 million people. Since the creation of Pakistan, every government has invoked the possibility of a Pakhtun separatist movement threatening the integrity of Pakistan from the North Western Frontier Province. This threat has had two components to it. One, that the Pakhtun movement is supported by Afghanistan - the Pakhtun people are divided, roughly half and half, between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Its second component is that of a presumed Russian threat. The 'bogey' of Russia has always been translated by the Pakistani ruling class in terms of the Soviet Union helping the Pakhtun movement, and thus destroying the integrity of Pakistan. The fact, however, is that the least problem for Pakistan in terms of its integration is from the Pakhtun, North-western Frontier Province (NWFP). This is so because, of the three minority nationalities, the Pakhtun people are by far the most integrated in Pakistan (ibid).

Take a few pointers: the Pakhtuns constitute roughly 15 per cent of the officers' corps of the Pakistan armed forces. They are similarly represented in the federal bureaucracy, so that in the power structure of Pakistan the middle class and the upper bourgeoisie of Pakhtunistan are very well represented. Secondly, economically the province is well integrated with the rest of Pakistan. Something like 60 to 70 per cent of the volume of trade and income of the NWFP is with the Punjab

and other provinces of Pakistan, so that complementary economic patterns have developed. Thirdly, a good half of the Pakhtun male working population works outside its own province.

They are spread throughout Pakistan. There are about 300,000 Pakhtun workers in Karachi alone - which means that a very significant section of Pakhtunistan's population depends for a living on working outside Pakhtunistan itself. For all these reasons it is a much more integrated area, with much less interest in a separatist state, than the other provinces.

### *Sindhis*

The third nationality is Sindhis, the second largest nationality, about 15 to 20 million. During the British Raj, Sindh, situated south of Punjab, was the neglected hinterland of Bombay province. The society was dominated by a small number of major landholders (*waderas*). Most people were tenant farmers facing terms of contract that were a scant improvement over outright servitude; a middle-class barely existed. The social landscape consisted largely of unremitting poverty, and feudal landlords ruled with little concern for any outside interference. Reformist legislation in the 1940s that was intended to improve the lot of the poor had little success. The province approached independence with entrenched extremes of wealth and poverty. In 1994 Sindh continued to be an ethnic battlefield within Pakistan. During the 1980s, there were repeated kidnappings in the province, some with political provocation.

The Sindhis constitute roughly 25 per cent of Pakistan's population, but they do not have a representation of much more than 3 per cent in the higher bureaucracy. They have practically no representation in the armed forces, either among enlisted men or officers. Commercially, they are not a force in the country and, much worse, in their own province they have a feeling of being taken over by the Punjabis and the Urdu-speaking Muhajirs, i.e., those who came from other Indian provinces. The population of Sindh is now 49 per cent or so non-Sindhi; some believe it to be higher - 52 to 55 per cent. If the second figure is correct, then Sindh will be the second place in twentieth-century history where the indigenous people have become a minority in their own homeland - the first being Palestine. Hence the felt sense of oppression among the Sindhis is very high. Economically, they are discriminated against even in their homeland. Through irrigation developments, a lot of newly-irrigated land has

been reclaimed in Sindh. Almost all of it has gone to Punjabi settlers; some to the non-Sindhi Muhajirs; very little to the Sindhis.

### ***Balochis***

By and large, the same patterns of exclusion, discrimination and uneven development hold for the Balochis. The Balochis, who came from Iran - more precisely, from the region of Kerman at the beginning of the fifteenth century after a journey about which there are many legends, spread pastoral and agricultural communities from the oases, who had been under Persian influence for years, through all the coastal and mountain regions from the Makran to the Sulaiman Mountains, by way of Afghanistan.

The Balochi tribe made many incursions into Sindh and the Punjab, where they formed dominant communities, even princely dynasties. They were subdivided into big groups, each group named after one

These two peoples Balochis and Sindhis have a very serious problem in Pakistan, and therefore have been and are now at the forefront of the demand for the institution of democratic rule. Parliamentary government would mean a certain amount of representation, including that of their bourgeoisie. It is only through representative government that their numerical strength can be felt and their grievances seriously attended to. These minority nationalities also favour augmented provincial autonomy in a federal system of government because decentralisation of power is necessary to a measure of self-rule and responsive government.

## **2.6 ETHNICITY AND POLITICS**

First we will characterise the inherited factors that account for the crisis of the Pakistani state as

- (a) The crisis of legitimacy,
- (b) The crisis of state power,
- (c) The crisis of integration,
- (d) The crisis of economy, and
- (e) The crisis of external relations.

The most important of these is the crisis of legitimacy. Legitimacy here means title to authority that is the extent to which a state and a political class can enjoy authoritative

or hegemonic command over the majority of the population. What, then, legitimacy requires is that a set of values, ideology, ascriptions commanded by the ruling class are accepted by the majority of the populace as authoritative, and even enjoy the consensus of the majority. In Pakistan's case, the state came into being in 1947, carved out of the Indian subcontinent. The two-nation theory, or the Pakistan movement, did not invoke the support of the Muslim masses of India until after the Second World War, so that as late as 1936 and 1937, when the first general elections were held in India after the passage of the Government of India Act in 1935, the Muslim League (the party that led the Pakistan movement) polled only 2.6 percent of the total Muslim votes in India - which is to say that the overwhelming majority of Muslims had supported the Indian National Congress and the Unionist Party and not the Muslim League's politics.

This changed dramatically after the first governments had been formed by the Congress in 1937, because the Muslim people felt by and large that this party, dominated by a Hindu elite, was not giving them a fair stake in the economy or in power. When we go through the history of Pakistan movement, we will notice that what underlay the dramatic upsurge in the support for it - between 1938 and 1944 the Pakistan movement grew from being a minority interest faction to becoming the movement of the majority of Indian Muslims - was not so much the slogan of a separate state; nor was it Islam abstractly conceived. To the ordinary Muslim it meant that Muslims were demanding a state in which economic and social justice would become possible. At the heart of the Pakistan movement lay the aspiration for economic and social justice, political democracy and cultural freedom; underlying it was the fear of the Muslim community that Hindu businessmen, British corporations, colonial institutions would continue to dominate them at their expense unless they had a separate state of their own.

The second crisis of Pakistan today is that of state power. Pakistan inherited a colonial state. It bore some relationship to the pre-colonial state, particularly of Mughal India, but it was basically a colonial creation. Its backbone was made up of the British Indian armed forces and a modern bureaucracy. The stability of the state structure in Pakistan was defined by a certain balance of power, and a measure of social and ideological harmony between the armed forces and the bureaucracy. So that even when, as between 1947 and 1970, Pakistan had unstable government, there was a stable state and a stable polity. The economic and social life remained

uninterrupted by governmental instability, the bureaucracy continued to run the administration, the armed forces continued to parade and project an image of preparedness. This balance and harmony between the army and the bureaucracy blunted in many ways the cutting edge of military dictatorship in Pakistan. Ayub Khan's regime, for example, was neither as repressive nor as isolated as Zia ul Haq's because between the army and the bureaucracy there was a close and rather harmonious working relationship. In the absence of democratic institutions, the bureaucracy performed the function of civilianising the military regime under Ayub Khan. That balance between the armed forces and the bureaucracy has now almost completely broken down, but not because the army is stronger; rather, it is that the bureaucracy is much weaker. The process towards this imbalance had begun much earlier, but the responsibility for completing this process lies with Mr Bhutto. (Ahmed 2008)

The resulting crisis of state power is further augmented by the crisis of integration, which refers in Pakistan to the question of nationalities. Of the four nationalities that live in Pakistan - Punjabis, Pakhtuns, Sindhis and Balochis - the last two are for all practical purposes completely excluded from the structure of the state. The economic crisis is perhaps more fundamental in Pakistan now than before. As in other Third World countries, there has been a permanent economic crisis in this country. However, in the past when Pakistan faced a situation of extreme economic breakdown, it made a limited but fast recovery. For example, in the 1950s the boom in cotton, that the Korean War had produced, busted and the Pakistani economy entered a period of extreme crisis. It overcame that crisis very rapidly in Ayub's regime. Then, after the secession of East Pakistan in 1972, everybody predicted that because West Pakistan derived so much of its profit and production from East Pakistan the economy would fall apart once East Pakistan became independent. It didn't; in fact, it recovered rather fast. (Housepian 1980; 22)

The crisis of the economy in Pakistan is absolutely fundamental. In fact, it would have totally collapsed, resulting in mass starvation, but for two factors. There has been a succession of good crops. The Pakistani peasant is hard working and he does not depend as much on nature as peasants do elsewhere in the Third World because the irrigation system from the rivers is quite well-developed. So Pakistan is meeting only about 20 per cent of its food requirements from abroad, the rest of it is produced at home.

And the second factor is the income from the migrant workers which is now some \$2 billion a year. Still, the country is in debt; its margin of survival is narrow. And the factors which were responsible for fast recoveries in the past have been lost. (Ahmed 2008)

*Ethnic conflicts: political perspective*

Since its creation in 1947, Pakistan has been confronted with the self-assertion of one ethnic group or another. Although all of these groups are Muslim and they have never questioned the Muslim identity of the state, they have serious reservations about the state's overarching definition of Muslim- Pakistani identity at the expense of regional ethnic identities.

Most Pakistanis views ethnicity in Pakistani society and politics as a creation of Martial Law. Suspension of political vacuum into which rush ethnic forces. (Ahmed 1989:22)

From historical point of view Pakistan did not come into being as a result of an overt mass struggle but through, what the official Pakistani version calls 'constitutional means'. The party that created Pakistan, the all India Muslim league, was an elitist group of the aristocratic Muslim families predominantly from Muslim minority provinces of India with a very few members from the future Pakistan areas.

The demand for Pakistan was a secular nationalist demand of a section of Muslims who felt threatened, not religiously but economically, by the Hindu majority. 'The Pakistan movement was not a movement of Islam but Muslims'(Alavi 1986).

History underlines that ethnicity pose crucial impacts over the politics of Pakistan. Ethnicity was always the medium of deciding political ownership in the country. History also underlines the fact that Pakistanis seem to be peculiarly unable to tackle their problems of ethno-nationalism which are quite a few.

The oldest ethno-nationalism in Pakistan is Pakhtun nationalism. Pakhtuns believe that ethnically, or more accurately racially, they are from the same Aryan stock that originated in Central Asia, and some believe that a strain comes from the Army of Macedonian king, Alexander the great.

Throughout the recent years, Pakhtun nationalism has changed its domestic politics. There are now three main Pakistani parties that aspirate this nationalism. The first is the National Awami party (NAP) led by Abdul Wali Khan and senator Ajmal Khatak; the second is the Pakistan Quami Milli Party of AfrAsiab Khatak; the third is

a Pakhtunkhawa Milli Awami Party(PKMAP) led by Mehmood Khan Achakzai. A new kind of Pakhtun nationalism has now made an appearance; it masquerades under the garb of religious orthodox sometimes ultra.(ibid)

The pastoons regionalism re-emerged on the political scene during 1970 general election. For the first time a regional party the NAP had given challenge to the ruling elite of Pakistan. Bhutto's Pakistan people's party could not emerge victorious in the NWFP and Balochistan. The NAP led by Abdul Wali Khan due to its strong assertion for regional autonomy for Pastoons and Balochis got overwhelming support in the tribal regions.

For the initial three years Bhutto did not allow the functioning of democratically elected governments in the NWFP and Balochistan. After persistent pressures and massive regional unrest, Bhutto allowed the formation of democratically elected NAP- JUI governments in both the provinces in April 1972. (Singh 2003)

The demands for the creation of a separate state called "Pastunistan", which includes all Pastu-speaking areas in the NWFP, parts of Balochistan and Afghanistan emerged under the leadership of Khan Abdul Ghafar Khan, along with the creation of Pakistan. Conflict between the growing Pakhtun aspirations and the centre arose because the province had been kept in a state of underdevelopment, and mainly because of the dominance of the central government by non-Pakhtuns, and particularly by the Punjabis.

The role of Punjabis in the politics of Pakistan makes it evident that Punjabi ethno-centricity failed to structurally assimilate or politically integrate other ethnic groups but, instead, sensitised them as ethnic boundaries. The enormous concentration of executive power in the hands of civil bureaucracy which consisted largely of Punjabis and their ruling collaborators, the Muhajirs, who occupied important, positioned in the country's bureaucracy determined national policy-making at the higher levels. The dominant economic force was the capitalist class which against consisted of the Punjabis. Finally, it was the military which emerged as dominant force consisting again mainly of the Punjabis (Haq 2006).

The Pakistani rulers imposed a centralised unitary form of government and the domination of the powerful economic and political groups by perpetrating discriminatory policies. All legitimate grievances of the lesser privileged and lesser developed ethnic groups were dubbed anti-national and subversive activities. These



ethnic groups resented the imposition of Punjabi value system on the remainder of Pakistan. In the name of securing Pakistan's national unity the very bases of unity were eroded.

In his article "Balochistan Disturbances: Causes and Response" Dr Noor ul Haq argues that it is necessary to mention here that ethnic identities have great potential for groups mobilisation. The ethnic political elite who were denied political participation fully exploited this sense of deprivation due to Punjabi colonialism. This fear was based on certain structural factors also. The Punjabis constituted 57.58 percent of population compared to Pakhtuns, Balochis and Sindhis. They perceived that in any election, such minority ethnic groups could never play a nationally important role. (Haq 2006)

Like the NWFP, the tribal province- Balochistan has also posed insurmountable challenges to the ruling elite of Pakistan. The harsh geo-physical situation and the diverse tribal ethno-centric context have made the task of modernisation and development of socio-politico-econo-administrative infra-structure extremely difficult. Insecurity prevails amongst all ethnic and social groups of the Baloch society.

The Baloch-Pakhtun discord is a multi-pronged issue. The seeds of the current Baloch-Pakhtun discord were sown when Bhutto tried to play off one group against the other and strengthened the archaic tribal structure. This was further advanced by Ziaul Haq's regime which, in many ways, made the Baloch-Pakhtun political segregation complete. Zia's undemocratic regime promoted the de-politicisation of the masses and divided the entire country into *biradaris*, sects and ethnic and linguistic groups. During Zia's years, the Pakhtoon Khwa Milli Awami Party (PKMAP) got strengthened and armed itself with Afghan money.

It should be remembered that before 1970 there was no conflict of any kind between the Baloch and Pakhtuns of Balochistan and both fought courageously against the one unit. Although the demand for a re-demarcation of provinces and reamalgamation of Balochistan's Pakhtun areas into the NWFP was raised in the Gormai Commission, it never becomes a continuous public issue.

During the Bhutto period, the Centre-Balochistan confrontation, the banning of the NAP and the mass arrests of its leaders and cadre sharpened the exiting sense of deprivation amongst the Baloch population of the province. Bhutto is accused of

organising anti-Pakhtun propaganda in Baloch areas and anti-Baloch campaigns amongst the Pakhtun population.

Sindh comprises 23 per cent of Pakistan's population but contains about 60 per cent of industry, consumes 42 per cent of commercial and has a per capita income of about 40 per cent higher than in Punjab. Since Bhutto's overthrow in 1977, the Sindhis have been one of the most active ethnic groups. After having Z.A. Bhutto, a Sindhi as their Prime Minister, there was resurgence of hope among the Sindhis who began to feel for the first time they had a stake in Pakistan. There ethnic politics involves not only conflict between the Sindhis and the Punjabis but also between the old Sindhis and the new ones, the Muhajirs who migrated from India. The bulk of the migration occurred in the four months between August and November of 1947. It is estimated that in this period, some six million refugees moved into Pakistan. In Karachi, Hyderabad, Lyallpur, Sargodha, over 60 per cent of the population was made up of refugees.

The exchange of population between India and Pakistan, made Punjab and the NWFP ethnically more homogeneous and did not affect Balochistan; it affected Sindh where the percentage of the Sindhis got comparatively reduced.

Sindh is the most important province in Pakistan as far as the processes of population, migration and urban growth rates are concerned. These migrations, because of its numbers involved, have had the greatest effect on the ethnic politics of the country. Before independence, Sindh was a relatively homogeneous province linguistically. For instance, according to the 1947 Census, only 32,000 persons claimed Urdu as their mother tongue. But, by 1951, Urdu speaking Muhajirs made up about 146,000, or 12 per cent of the total population of 4,608,514. Even Punjabi-speaking population was found more frequently in Karachi (260,747 or 12.8 per cent) than the Sindhis who numbered only 174,823 or 8.6 per cent. In fact, if only the urban population was counted in Karachi district, the third largest linguistic group would be the Gujarati's with 152,471 or 7.5 per cent of the population and Sindhis would become the fourth because a substantial number of Sindhis lived in *gots* (Sindhi Villages) or the outskirts of Karachi city. Balochis (5.3 per cent) were the other important groups in Karachi. And that but because of the upcoming migration the composition of the population in Sindh contras misbalanced and that gave rise to the conflict between local and non-locals. The Sindhi elites' fear of hindrance in career advancement and other economic opportunities in similar to the threat which the

locals of Balochistan and NWFP feel form Punjabis who have continually migrated to Quetta, Peshawar and other cities. More than half of Pakistan's industry is located in Sindh, but Sindhis have practically no participation in it, whether as owners or as workers. The commercial, transportation, construction and service sector which comprises 55 per cent of the Pakistan Gross Domestic Product is also located largely in Sindh. Since state structure in Pakistan was overdeveloped, indulging in greater economic activity and employing the largest number of people, the deprivation of the Sindhis could well be judged by their minimal participation. In the central government service, there was only one Sindhi per five thousand, while in the Sindh government, the Sindhis comprised less than 40 per cent (Ahmed 1989).

As much as 40 per cent of Sindh's agricultural land has passed into the hands of non-Sindhis while three-fourth of Sindhi peasants own no land at all. The economic development of Sindh under the present social system has been characterised by Feroz Ahmed as de Sindhisation of Sindh. While the army is composed mostly of Punjabi and partly of Pakhtuns, the Sindhis have no participation in the military. In the Federal Secretariat, the personnel forms the Punjab occupy 56 per cent of the posts, equal to their percentage of population; Karachi has 25 per cent share and the Sindh. The quota system, introduced in 1950s, was based on regions rather than "ethnicity". Accordingly, apart from 10 per cent posts on "merit", 50 per cent are meant for Punjab, 7.6 per cent for urban Sindh and 11.4 per cent for rural Sindh (ibid).

The rapid deterioration of law and order in Sindh is largely symptomatic of political alienation and uneven economic development. A manifestation of this is the phenomenon of rampaging dacoits or bandits. This has assumed dangerous proportions because of free how of arms. Indeed, the easy availability of sophisticated weapons has spawned a culture of violence from Karachi to Khyber. The opposition parties accuse the government creating East Pakistan- type conditions and separatist feelings. Islamabad, hoverer has continued to treat the Sindh situation as a law and over problem.

## CONCLUSION

Since its creation in 1947, Pakistan is occupying a geopolitical and geostrategic important track of land in South Asia. Pakistan's significance is further highlighted with United States growing interest in the region. The peculiarities of her location

offer her several advantages but also carry future risks. Aftermaths of September 11, has muddled the geopolitical scene of the world and particularly the South Asia. Numerous internal and external concerns are surrounding Pakistan. But the ethno-nationalism movement in Pakistan is creating misbalances to the political scenario and national integration scenario of the country.

Since the creation of Pakistan, Balochs have shown their indifferent attitude to become a part of Pakistan, and therefore rebelled by demanding greater autonomy or an independent state, which would reunite the 5 million Balochis in Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan under one flag. The basic cause behind this problem is the conflict among the ethnic groups. Pakistan despite being an Islamic state has ethnically diverse population. Equal treatment and equal opportunities in social, political and economic life are the key for the integration of Pakistan. However this has not happened and in reality Punjabis have come to dominate. As a result, the rest of the ethnic groups like Sindhis, Balochs, Pakhtoons and Muhajirs are suffering from a persecution complex. The creation of the Pakistan Oppressed Nations Movement (PONM) by various groups and demands for separate state is the result of these feelings. Another factor behind this movement is the deprivation from economic welfare of common Balochi by feudal, capitalist society of Pakistan. The fruits of development have not reached in this backward state that's why the anger is uprising.

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**BALUCHISTAN AND ETHNIC
NATIONALISM**

CHAPTER THREE

BALUCHISTAN AND ETHNIC NATIONALISM

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The Baloch movement in Pakistan, after a dormant period of almost two decades, has been re-ignited with renewed vigour and threatens to destabilise Pakistan and potentially cause problems with regional security and economic development in South Asia. The recent attacks in Sui and bomb blasts at government buildings in the have brought the issue of Balochistan to the forefront today. The problem stems from the regional aspirations of various ethnic groups and their efforts to assert their sub-national identities. Tensions between the government and its Baloch opposition have grown because of Islamabad's heavy-handed armed response to Baloch militancy and its refusal to negotiate demands for political and economic autonomy. The killing of Baloch leader Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti in August 2006 sparked riots and caused to more confrontation. The conflict could escalate if the government insists on seeking a military solution to what is a political problem and the international community, especially the USA, fails to recognise the price that is involved for security in neighbouring Afghanistan.

Balochistan is the largest province of Pakistan with an area about 340,000 square km. It covers 43 per cent of its land area but has only around 6 per cent of its population (According to the 1998 census, Balochistan's population was 6.5 million. By some estimates it is now approximately seven million, including the Pashtuns and Punjabi settlers.) It is the least developed province but rich in energy and mineral resources, meeting more than 40 per cent of Pakistan's energy needs through its gas and coal reserves and accounting for 36 per cent of its total gas production. Large energy reserves remain untapped (Grare 2006: 4-5). However, 46.6 per cent of households have no electricity (Federal Bureau of Statistics 2005: 64). Consistent degradation of the water supply and absence of storage systems, such as small dams, have turned much of Balochistan, with its predominantly rural population, into an arid wasteland. According to the Karachi-based Social Policy and Development Centre, poverty levels are twice that of Punjab, Pakistan's most prosperous province; urban unemployment is 12.5 per cent, compared to the

countrywide average of 9.7 per cent; and half the population lives below the poverty line.

Despite being the richest province in terms of energy and mineral resources, Balochistan remains one of the most underdeveloped provinces. The Baloch therefore have long been demanding greater autonomy and a larger share of the dividend from natural resources. The denial of autonomy has been a major cause of the ongoing conflict.

3.2 BALOCHISTAN: GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING

Balochistan is located on the south eastern Iranian plateau, between the latitudes 26° to 32° and the longitudes 4° to 70° , its geographical location between India and the Mesopotamian civilization had gave it a unique position as cross roads between earlier civilizations. Some of the earliest human civilizations emerged in Balochistan; Mehrgar the earliest civilization known to mankind yet is located in eastern Balochistan, the Kech civilization in central Makuron date back to 4000 BC, Burned city near Zahidan the provincial capital in western Balochistan date back to 2000 BC. Balochistan's total Area is 340,000 sq. miles, it command more than 900 miles of Arabian coast line and Persian Gulf. (Boladai 2004)

Balochistan's location connecting Iranian plateau with South West Asia, central Asia to its long coast line in shores of Arabian Sea makes it geographically an important place. Many of these countries are land locked. Balochistan is their route to the sea and the world. Balochistan is bounded on the west by 520 miles long border with Iran and on the north by 720 miles border with Afghanistan. In the east are Pakistani provinces of Sindh, Punjab and a part of North West Frontier Province (NWFP). In the south it has 70 miles coast line along the warm waters of the Arabian Sea. Its extended sea-board running along the Seistan region of Iran ends up at the mouth of the Persian Gulf. Balochistan lies in a commanding position vis-à-vis the straits of Hormuz, one of the choke points of the Indian Ocean and the World.

Its trijunctional border in the northwest links Seistan (Iran) and Helmund (Afghanistan) with Chagai (Pakistan), overlooking the Mashad-Zahedan-Chabahar Highway. In the north east, the inland constriction likes the Khojak and Bolan

MAP 3.1

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF BALUCHISTAN



Passes (opposite Kandahar) are some of the important bottlenecks in the region from the geo-strategic point of view. They were important for the Czarist Russia and the Victorian England in the past (Jetly 2006).

The exact boundaries of Balochistan, that is, where Balochis live in sizeable majorities, to this day remain undetermined. The Encyclopaedia of Islam defines its According to Sardar Khan Baloch in his book *History of Baloch: Race and Balochistan* states that “if a Line be drawn from Sarakh on the Russian border to Gunbad, Meshed, thence straight to Bampur, Ramish and finally to Bundar Abbas, the territory to the east of this line touching the boundaries to the Baloch territories off Afghanistan and Mekran is mainly Baloch country” (Bakash 1974).

Historically Balochistan was formed part of the three distinct parts of the Greek conquered territories or Satrapo, as mentioned by historian Herodotus, which by and large, confirm to the description given by Encyclopaedia of Islam. They were:

- Aracosia comprising Kandahar and Quetta Region.
- Dragiana, including Helmund, Seistan and Chagai.
- Gedrosia comprising (Pakistan and Iranian) Makran Coast.

Large chunks of Eastern Iran, Southern Afghanistan and Pakistani Balochistan are so identical in geography and ecology that they form one natural region. Together they appear “more Central Asian than Indian”, according to Sir Denys Bray. boundaries as “comprising the south-east part of the Iranian plateau from Kirman desert east of bam and the Bashagird Mountains to the western borders of Sindh and Punjab.” (Bakash 1974)

Lord Curzon defines the boundaries of Balochistan as “the country between the Helmand and the Arabian Sea and between Kirman and Sindh. In Afghanistan, a part of Helmand basin that is Farrah, Chakansur and Germseel, besides Shorawak and Badghis in Herat and Baloch territories”.

The topography of the province offers itself as a fascinating study to military thinkers in particular. It may be divided into four distinct parts that are the Upper Highland, the Lower Highland, the Plains and the Deserts.

Locally known as Khorasan, Upper Highland occupies the north-eastern and central part of Balochistan. It is bounded by the Sulaiman range on the east, Toba Kakar in the north and, Chagai hills in the west. Some “dry hill” forests are also

located here. Apart from this the Lower Highlands have some river rain forests. It formed by the slope of the Sulaiman range on the east and the central Brahui range and the Kirthar range further in the south, running in north-south direction. Mountains forming the Lower Highland extend from Makran coast right up to the Afgan Frontier in the north. The white clay mountains on the Makran coast are distinguished by the absence of "stone". They are made up of limestone or conglomerate and look like a wall. (Bakhs 1974)

Kharan is the large desert in the North West, which is the extended part of Iranian Seistan and the Dast-i-lut. Balochistan has two raised plains; one is the Quetta Valley and other is in Kalat.

The marked variety in Balochistan's landscape also reflects itself in climate which can be hot, humid, temperate and cold. Balochistan has a large part having sub-tropical continental climate similar to the adjoining Iranian plateau. Upper Highland has cold winters with temperatures falling many degrees below freezing point. Summers are temperate. Coastal strip has hot and humid climate in Summers and moderate in Winters. Temperature variations in the valleys are affected by their altitude, direction of winds, soil structure, vegetation and proximity to lakes.

Province lies outside the Monsoon Region. It receives only two or three inches rainfall as average throughout the year. Cyclones moving eastwards from the Mediterranean Sea are the main cause of precipitation.

Besides aridity and temperature, the climate of Balochistan is noted for strong winds, which are the north westerlies blowing down unhindered by lofty mountains, such as of the Hindukush, from across the vast expanse of Siberia. These winds are both constant and strong in Seistan in Iran, and Chagai in Pakistan. "Gorich" or "Bad-i-Sad-o-Bist-Roz" is the native name of these winds.

The main watershed controlling the drainage of the area are; Zarghun on the border between the Quetta-Pishin/Sibi districts from which the drainage goes to the Nari river in the Harni valley and the high country running southeast by the Dilkhuna and the Sembhar passes from Spiraragha and Khalifat which divides the drainage between the Loralai, Anambar and Baghao rivers on the one hand and the Harnai valley on the other (Govt. of Pakistan 1984-85: 94-95).

At Babar the Beji River flows into the Nari River which has already received the drainage of the south side of the Khalifat watershed and that of the east of the Zhargun watershed.

The Nari River continues through gorges into the Sindh plain, west of Sibi where it is joined by the Talli (or Chakar) river, the Lahari and the Chattar River which flow from the watershed near the eastern boundary of the area.

In the eastern portion of the area where the hills run north and south, the rivers run from west to east. The most important of these are the Vihoa, the Sangbar and the Kaka rivers which all have perennial water and flow across the Dera Ghazi Khan district into the Indus. A good metalled highway exists linking the Central Asia and Afghanistan with the Makran coast at the port of Chabahar. Similarly in the east in Balochistan a parallel route exists from Kandahar through Quetta, Bela to Karachi. It is fairly well developed in terms of telecommunication systems, roads and railways.

The province of Balochistan is a land of great contrasts where one can experience a lot of geographical and geo-strategic difference from other part of the country. In sum, Balochistan's geo-strategic significance never dwindled; instead it continues to figure high in all eventualities. Its everlasting importance lies in its geography and in the dauntless and warlike natives the Baloch like the Spartans: the only variant which could not be altered by the British or by the other nations.

3.3 OTHER ASPECTS OF BALOCHISTAN

By the early 1990s Pakistani demographic society or population was divided into five ethnic groups. The Punjabis constituted the majority at 55 percent of the population; the Sindhis accounted for another 20 percent, the Pathans and the *Mujahirs* for about 10 percent each, and the Balochis for about 5 percent (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2008). In the context of Balochistan the Balochis have a strong sense of cultural distinctiveness with their recorded folk literature dating back to tenth century, devoted to the glories of Baloch homeland and victorious battles against the Persian, Arabs, Tartars and other invaders.

Before colonial rule, Balochistan was a high fragmented society. Prior to British occupation and the subsequent division of the region, Baloch people's way of life was organised in a federal way. In fact this way of life made it possible for people with different social realities come under the umbrella of a free, willingly accepted social and cultural code. Holdich a British officer working in Balochistan, Persia and Afghanistan in the 18th century, wrote that 'to south are the peoples of

Arab extraction intermixed with people of Dravidian and Persian stock, all lumped together under the name of Baloch (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2008).

According to some independent accounts, Balochistan was independent and sovereign region in the past. The Balochis had all the characteristic of a nation. They lived in an integral territory with its own culture, languages, history and traditions. Even under British occupation Balochistan enjoyed more sovereignty alongside Nepal, compared to other Indian princely state. (Fulcher 2006)

3.3.1 Socio-Economic conditions

In Pakistan, Balochistan ranks highest for infant and maternal mortality rate, the country has 100 deaths per 10,000 live births, whereas Balochistan has 108/10,000. Maternal mortality rate of the country is 350/100,000 and the province has a frighteningly high 600/100,000. According to the figures for poverty, Pakistan's Integrated Household Survey 2001-02 revealed that Balochistan has the highest poor population with 48 percent and the worst in rural areas with 51 percent living below the poverty line. Lack of health and educational institutions further endangers the lives of thousands of people in Balochistan. The years of military operations, ill-conceived development policies and priorities, and poor governance have resulted in Balochistan being the most backward province. In spite of being a resource-rich region, it lacks very basic facilities and infrastructure. As compared to the 75% in country only 25% population in province have access to electricity (Government of Pakistan 1980).

According to the SPDC high deprivation conditions are there in Balochistan. It contains the highest population living in a high degree of deprivation. 60 per cent of its population comes below poverty line, which in comparison to other province is very high (PSRU 2007). Table 3.1 shows the populations indicators of Balochistan during year 1998.

TABLE 3.1**POPULATION INDICATORS OF BALOCHISTAN 1998, CENSUS**

Administrative Units	Numbers
Area s.q. Km	347190
Population Census 1998 (in Millions)	65.65
Male	35.06
Female	30.59
Density per sq. Km	18.9
Sex Ratio (male per hundred female)	115
Singulate Mean Age at Marriage of Female	20.1
Person per House Hold (H.H.)	6.7
Person per Room	3.1
% of Pop. Having one Room	42.8
% of H.H. having Pipe-water	25.3
% of H.H. without Latrine	52.2
% of H.H. having Electricity	46.6
Fertility Rate	5.4
Child Women Ratio	78.2
Estimated Population in year 2004 (In Millions)	7595

Source: PCO, Islamabad & Survey of Pakistan, Quetta. 2008

3.3.2 Culture of Balochistan:

Balochi is the major language of Balochistan. It is spoken over extensive areas of the province. It is also rich in poetic and romantic literature. Besides, other languages which are spoken in Balochistan are Brahui and Makrani. Brahui is spoken in Qalat areas while Makrani is spoken in Makrani, the coastal region of Balochistan.

Wrestling, horse-racing, religious feasts are the recreational and the seasonal functions. In the Makran region, the seasonal harvest of the date palms is an occasion for the rejoicing and reunion of friends and relatives who return home for the harvest.

3.3.3 Social discrimination:

The influx of Afghan refugees has mobilised major socio-economic changes by influencing business and trade transaction in Balochistan. Another interesting feature about its population that it contains a considerable number of minority population. They are Christians, Hindus, Sikhs, Ahemidis and Parsis. They all constitute more than 5% of overall population of Balochistan. Hindus are overwhelming a business class community with shops and stores in all major cities of Balochistan.

In Pakistan, the Dalits face different issues. Since they are part of a tiny minority that is 5 per cent of country's total population, and also due to lack of education and literacy, they continue to stick to different forms of Hinduism. Caste Hindus continue their domination only in southern part of Pakistan, especially former Mirpurkhas division, where more than one million Dalits dwell as landless peasants and labourers. The Caste Hindus, though small in numbers, dominate the minority politics through support of their convert relatives and government functionaries. The incidents of atrocities and caste-based discriminations on Dalits are increasing day by day in some parts of Balochistan. (Ahmed 2008)

Dalits also suffer in many instances from de facto disenfranchisement. During elections in 2002, those unpersuaded by typical electioneering were routinely threatened and beaten by a pro-government political party strongman in order to compel them to vote for certain candidates. Already under the thumb of local landlords and police officials, Dalit villagers who do not comply had been victimised, beaten, and harassed. In Tharparkar, violence against Dalits is normally

treated as a very minor and marginal issue, even by the law-enforcement machinery, whether be it police, the prosecution, or the medico-legal fraternity or often even the judiciary. Non-registration of crimes against Dalits is one of the main problems in Tharparkar. Political influence over the police, and caste, class, religion and gender biases are rampant. It is extremely difficult for helpless Dalits to file complaints, particularly against the powerful individuals and or perpetrators. The theft of livestock of Dalits in Tharparkar is rampant as police never register any such case. These are very few examples as to how Dalits are dealt with if they display an act to show equality. Hundreds of the incidents of caste discrimination go unreported (ibid).

3.3.4 Agro- Economic aspects:

The majority of farmers grow wheat for food security. Other important crops, according to the area under cultivation are: barley, onions, potato and vegetable. Wheat, cumin and barley are the main winter crops. Onion, potato, and other vegetables are the most important summer ones. The pattern of land use in much of semi-arid upland Balochistan has a traditional emphasis on livestock, supplemented, where possible, by subsistence cropping. Rangelands are typically utilised by communal groups or extended families. Water remains the principal constraint for agricultural land use in upland Balochistan. Several systems have evolved for capturing water for agricultural use. The traditional strategy has been the construction of elaborate underground water channel systems (karez) that tap and direct sub-surface groundwater to areas of cultivation. Sailaba are lands irrigated by seasonal floodwater and ephemeral streams. Khushkaba land depends upon direct rainfall or localised run-off from a very small catchment area.

Since the 1960s, the number of power-driven pumps and tube wells has rapidly increased, combined with a change in production emphasis from food crops to high water demanding (and highly profitable) horticultural cash crops (especially apples), resulting in rapidly declining aquifers. The general trend is leading to a progressive settlement and concentration of populations in the fertile, irrigated but limited valley bottom areas of watersheds. This is leading to unsustainable high levels of ground-water extraction for irrigation and to an increasing degradation of the vegetative cover of the surrounding mountains and dry and stony rangelands,

caused by over-grazing both by local flocks and by transhumant herders (Miagostovich 1993).

3.3.5 Political Actors:

Politically, Balochistan is different too. Balochistan is divided into pockets with different political groups claiming their support on ethnic and political/ideological grounds. No political party in Balochistan has ever shown a majority in assembly, a factor responsible for no-coalition free government in Balochistan under an elected rule. Even in the heyday of National Awami Party (NAP) legitimacy of public support in 1972-75, it could form the government with the support of only Jamiat Ulema-E-Islam (JUI). In 43-member assembly today, majority of the members are Sardars/feudal and Khans. The unrest in Balochistan is the result of injustices. Balochistan's problem is political and can be solved politically. Opposition politicians also point out that the centre was responsible for perpetuating the Sardari system, relying on divide-and-rule policies and using pliable Sardars to consolidate its hold over the province. Indeed, many of the more than 70 major Baloch Sardars are beneficiaries of state patronage in return for services rendered.

There are four main Baloch nationalist parties in the province that propagate Baloch rights. First, the Balochistan National Party (BNP) was formed by Sardar Ataullah Mengal, the head of the Mengal tribe, the second largest in the province. It resulted from a merger between the Mengal's Balochistan national movement and Ghous Bakhsh Bizenjo's Pakistan National Party. The party's demand of maximum provincial autonomy, limiting the federal government's authority to four subjects defence, foreign affairs, currency and communications, resound far beyond the Mengal tribe (Baloch 2002: 16-17).

Second, the Jamhoori Watan Party, headed by Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti, it was in 1990. The JWP support base is largely limited to the Bugti tribe, and many of Nawab Bugti's supporters were fellow tribesmen who had taken up arms at their Sardars behest, Bugti's defiant stand had won him the support of many other Baloch, including those who were sceptical about his motives, given his past history of working with the centre against Baloch nationalist forces. (Asia Report 2006)

Third, the Baloch Haq Talwar (BHT), headed by Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri of the Marri tribe. Like Nawab Bugti's JWP, Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri's Baloch Haq Talwar is also largely tribal in its membership and structures. The Marri tribe is

at the forefront of the resistance to military rule. The government accuses the ageing Marri's son, Nawabzada Balaach Marri, of leading the insurgency (International Crisis Group 2006).

Fourth, the National Party (NP), headed by Dr. Abdul Hayee. It was formed out of a merger of Balochistan National Movement and Balochistan National Democratic Party. It strongly opposes the central government's projects in the Makran belt such as Gwadar port, demanding that the Baloch should have the right to control their own resources and to determine their own priorities, political and economic. The National Party also opposed to the Sardari system as most of its members are educated and belong to the non tribal cadre. It holds the military responsible for the Balochistan crises (ibid).

The other political and non-political parties are as mentioned below:

- a. **Balochistan Students Organisation:** Formed in 1967, the Balochistan Students' Organisation (BSO) represents the educated Baloch middle class and students and has emerged as an independent political force. It strongly opposes military rule and demands more jobs for the youth. It is not aligned with any political party and acts as an independent force. In the 1990's the BSO armed itself and nearly 20,000 trained militants remained in the fold of Jamait Islami, Jiye Sindh and BSO (Dikshit 2003).
- b. **Pashtun Khwa Milli Awami Party (PKMAP):** It was formed in 1987. It advocates a democratic, parliamentary federation in which all nationalities are politically and economically empowered. It believes that the present constitutional arrangements work against the Pashtuns in Balochistan. The PKMAP was formed following a dispute between Pashtun (Khan Abdul Samad Khan) and Baloch (Khair Bakhsh Marri) leadership on raising Balochistan to the status of an administrative province. In March 2006, it declared its willingness to resolve differences through a dialogue with the Baloch (Shahid 2002: 79-81).
- c. **Baloch Liberation Army (BLA):** It is comprised of the *Marris* and other non-tribal Baloch educated middle class, with Balach Marri leading the *Marri* resistance. There is speculation that two other militant groups, the Balochistan People's Liberation Front (BPLF) and the BLF might have merged into it. It is believed that the BLF operates mainly in southern Balochistan but coordinates its

activities closely with the BLA. The BLA's objectives are based largely on a pan-Baloch demand for an independent State or more powers for the province. (Chandran 2006). BLA has considerable support from the Baloch Diaspora spread across many continents. Baloch pockets in Afghanistan and Iran, which have a common border with the area, have always been vocal supporters of their brethren in Pakistan. The BLA also reportedly draws its strength from under-employed, alienated and politicised Baloch youth in Quetta, Balochistan's capital, and other towns. (Hussain 2006).

The political parties in Balochistan, despite all their divisions and differences, have played an important role in the promotion of political consciousness among masses and moved to development.

3.4 BALOCH PERSPECTIVE

Economically, the Baloch feel the central government in Pakistan is treating Balochistan as a colony, exploiting its resources without sharing the benefits. Natural gas was discovered in the Sui fields in the province in 1953 and by 1964, the gas was being piped to Multan and Rawalpindi in Punjab. Quetta, the capital of Balochistan, received none of the gas from its own land until 1986. Pakistani Government is investing into new development programmes but some Balochis mention that skilled people from other provinces are in line for the jobs in these projects and ultimately foreign influence would be threatening the indigenous culture of the region. (Jetly 2006)

Socially, most Baloch feel that they are marginalised in their own land. The federal government, dominated by Punjabis, has allowed many Punjabi civilian and military personnel posted to Balochistan to buy prime land in the province.

Politically, Baloch discontentment and feelings of relative deprivation have functioned at two levels – the federal level and the provincial level. The federal government is largely Punjabi and the Baloch feel that the Punjabis are disproportionately represented in terms of wielding power at the centre. At the provincial level, the ire was directed towards the Pashtuns who flooded the province after the Afghanistan crisis in the 1980s. The Pashtuns soon dominated the business sectors, especially construction and transport.

Apart from being socio-economically disadvantaged, the Baloch are also politically disenfranchised at the provincial and central levels, with poor

representation in the civil service and armed forces. For example, in 1972, only 5% of the provincial civil service in Balochistan itself was made up of Baloch.

3.5 ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF BALOCHISTAN

Balochistan is a sparsely populated province of Pakistan; however, its population has rapidly increased during the last decade. Interesting for demographers, the population growth rate in Balochistan is highest in Pakistan it is 8.5%. People of Balochistan consists a number of tribes. There are 18 major tribal groups and many sub-groups. Each tribe is further sub-divided into various branches.

Among the eighteen major Baloch tribes, Bugtis and Marris are the principal ones who are settled in the buttresses of the Sulemania. The Talpur of Sindh also claim their Baloch origin. Balochi speaking tribes include Rind, Lasher, Marri, Jamot, Ahmedzai, Bugti Domki, Magsi, Khosa, Rakhshani, Dashti, Umrani, Noshervani, Gichki, Buledi, Sanjarani and Khidai. The Marri tribe is a Baloch tribe on the Dera Ghazi border of Balochistan. It occupies large parts of Kohlu district. *Marri* tribe is divided into three sub tribes namely Bijrani, Gazini and Lohrani. The tribal chief is called Sardar while head of sub-tribe is known as Malik, Takari or Mir. Sardars and Maliks are members of district and other local Jirgas according to their status .The Balochis, believed to have originally come from Arabia or Asia Minor, can be divided in to two branches: the Sulemani and Mekrani as distinct from the Brahvis who mostly concentrate in central Balochistan (Weaver 2002: 104)

The tribes speaking Brahvi include Raisani, Shahwani, Sumulani, Bangulzai, Mohammad Shahi, Lehri, Bezenjo, Mohammad Hasni, Zarakzai (Zehri) , Mengal and Lango. Most of these tribes are bi-lingual and are quite fluent both in the Balochi and Brahvi Languages. The Pashtun tribes include Kakar, Ghilzai Tareen, Mandokhel, Sherani, Looni, Kasi and Achakzai (Ahmed 1998: 392).

Balochistan contains a large number of minorities. According to the census report 1981, the total numbers of Christians were 29000; Hindus 27000; Ahmadis 6000; Parsi 4,000; Sikhs 1,000; and Bhahi 700. Their population nonetheless, like the rest of population has increased during the past years. Constituting five percent of the total population, and 20 percent of Quetta population, the minorities in Balochistan have shared an important social- cultural and economic co-existence with the rest of population.

The Dominant Group: The Baloch

Finally the major ethnic group in Pakistan is the Baloch. A comparatively small group, the Baloch, like the Pakhtuns, are a tribal population whose original territory extends beyond the national borders. Over 70 percent of the Baloch live in Pakistan, with the remainder in Iran and Afghanistan (Wikipedia 2008). According to the more recent population census held in 1998, the total population of Balochistan consists of 6.511 million out of the total Pakistani population of about 130.580 million. (Government of Pakistan 1998). These figures approximate the Baloch population to around 5 per cent of the total population of the country. On the other hand there is a serious debate as to the identity and origins of a number of residents of Balochistan.

Balochis are Syrian because of their names, Arabs because of their own claim, Turco-Iranians because of their head measurements, Mongolians because of their tribal names, Sumerians because of their ancient pottery found in their country. (Sir Denys Bray)

There is controversy surrounding the origin of the Baloch, but first let us have a glance over the meaning of 'Baloch'.

Balochis are a people who inhabit the desert and plunder the caravans; and for the great part are warlike and good archers; they also styled as 'Koch' and 'Baloch'. (Dictionary: Farhangi-Sarwari) However, according to Burhan-kaith, famous Persian dictionary (1651/52 A.D.), 'Balochis' are "cock's comb, crest, or the name of certain barbarous people who inhabit the mountains on the border of Kirman. It is said that they are descended from the Arabs of Hejaz. Their employment are fighting and shedding blood."

They are related to Turkomen, and they have no affinity with the Semitic Arabs according to Sir Henry Pottinger, a historian of nineteenth century. According to Mr. M.L. Dames, the Baloches are an Iranian race and have more resemblance to Turkomen than to the Arabs.

In short the history of the Baloch people is shrouded in the mists of ignorance for lack of source material. 'The exact origin of the tract of land which came to be called 'Balochistan' is too obscure for any conclusive discussion, though certain historians and research scholars have traced it to as far back as the Mesolithic stage of the formation of the earth. Likewise authorities on the subject have not been able to state anything authentic about the exact origin of the Baloches.' (Ahmad 1992: 39)

Baloch Traditions and Customs

The Baloch group speaks Balochi, part of the Iranian group of Indo-European languages. It is indicated by the Linguistic evidences that the origin of Balochi to be in the pre-Christian Medean or Parthian civilizations. Beginning in the early nineteenth century, Baloch intellectuals used Persian and Urdu scripts to transcribe Balochi into written form. Since Pakistan's independence and with the rise of Baloch nationalism, Baloch have favoured the Nastaliq script, an adaptation of Arabic script (The Library of Congress Country Studies 1994).

Farming depends on the irrigation is concentrated near oases. Two kinds of systems regarding irrigation are first the open channels that bring water from a few riverbeds, and second the subsurface drains that channel groundwater downward to planted fields. Regarding to their pets sheep and goats are the main herd animals. Dairy products are consumed through these animals and they produce meat and wool also. Pastoralists organise themselves around water sources; wells are the property of specific camps. (ibid)

Kinship and social relations reflect the exigencies of dealing with the harsh physical environment. Like other Pakistanis, Baloch reckon descent patrilineally. Lineages, however, play a minimal role in the lives of most Baloch. They are notably flexible in arrangements with both family and friends. Ideally, a man should maintain close ties with relatives in his father's line, but in practice most relations are left to the discretion of the individual, and there is wide variation.

According to the Library of Congress Country Studies; CIA World Fact book the majority of Baloch are Hanafi Sunnis, but there is a community of an estimated 500,000 to 700,000 Zikri Baloch, who live in the coastal Makran area and in Karachi. The Zikris believe in the Messiah Nur Pak, whose teaching supersede those of the Prophet Muhammad. Their beliefs, considered heretical, have led to intermittent Sunni repression of their community since its founding in the fifteenth century.

The society of the Baloch is stratified and has been characterised as "feudal militarism." The significant social tie is that between a leader, the *hakim*, and his retinue, consisting of pastoralists, agriculturists, lower-level leaders, and lower-level tenant farmers and descendants of former slaves called as *hizmatkar*.

Baloch tribal structure concentrates power in the hands of local tribal leaders. The British played local rivals against each other in a policy of indirect rule, as they did with the Pakhtun tribes to the north--and virtually throughout the subcontinent. In essence, the British offered local autonomy and subsidies to rulers in exchange for access to the border with Afghanistan. In the early 1990s, local leaders maintained this policy to a large extent, continuing to exploit the endemic anarchy, whether local, provincial, or national. (CIA World Fact book 2008)

3.6 HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF BALOCH NATIONALISM

One of the ancient inhabitants of central Caspian region, the Baloch trace their national identity as a tribal union for the first time in connection with their military support to forces of Iranian Monarch, Cyrus (546-529 BC) against the Medes. References by Arab and Persian chroniclers to a Koch-o-Baloch and their hold on major areas of Kerman and Seistan as far as the sea signify that these tribes had a political and administrative structure with a centralised authority which forged alliances with other tribes as well as with rulers of Persia and the Indus valley (Bansal 2007).

For better understanding of Baloch nationalist, we ought to not only deal with recent politico and ethnic basis of conflict but it necessary to examine the deeply implanted memories of history. Which underlie the memories of a tempestuous struggle for survival stretching back for more than two thousand years.

In dealing with the topic of historical regionalism Baloch historian have two schools of thought. One school attempts to link this tribe ethnically with the original Cheladean rulers of Babylon and another with the early Arabs. Scholars are agreed that Kurds were preceded towards Iran and Baloch moved towards the southern shores of the Caspian Sea and later migrated to Iranian Balochistan and Pakistani Balochistan. Baloch have been successful to preserve their separate cultural identity. In the process of challenge of cultural determination from neighbouring regions they have preserved their linguistic tradition and historical memoir of greater Afghanistan and political expansion during Kalat and Nasir Khan rule. Nasir Khan's achievements remain an important symbol of historical precedent for the concept of a unified identity during eighteenth century. (ibid)

3.6.1 British Imperialism

Balochistan came under the control of British colonial rule due to its authority all over India so Balochistan was partitioned into several parts among Iranians and the British. Baloch resisted against Iranian attempts to domination up to 1928. Britisher's accepted Balochistan as a sovereign state or vassal state of Afghanistan due to their changing notions of overall interests in central Asia and Middle East.

If we divide the British imperial exploitation and revolution of Baloch against them we can divide these events into certain years.

From 1839-1929, the Baloch revolution against both the regime Britain and Iran may be observed but this revolution was not successful. The government of India Act 1935 declared Kalat was an Indian state, after independence, Kalat ruler was persuaded by the legal adviser M.A.Jinnah. a political unit of Balochistan was in 1952 segmented units of Kalat, Makran, Kharan and Lasbela, were formed as Balochistan states union.(Agati 2007)

Historical sequence of ethnic movement in Balochistan can be analyse on the basis of temporal division of struggle period.

3.6.2 The First Baloch Struggle:

Due to refusal to consider integral autonomy prince Abdul Karim Khan decided to lead a liberation movement. Baloch were angered over the violation of Sandenan System Baloch; British agreement that allowed autonomy to Sardar. Prominent political leaders like Mohammad Husain Anker, Malik Saeed Dehwar, Kadir Baksh Nizami, Afzal etc had actively participated in movement.

Baloch Liberation Army had some separate wings like Zaannisar (devotee), Janbaz (darer) and Fidayeen (Suicide), Squad. But it had not become an impressive force in first Baloch nationalism.

Karim was refused international help. Afghanistan and Soviet Union were not in to declare ruler's brother as a rebel. Army action was been taken where 65 Baloch has been died. At last khan of Kalat later persuaded Karim to return Balochistan.

3.6.3 Second Resistance Movement In1958:

In 1958, President of Pakistan Iskander Mirza directed army to control Kalat palace to arrest khan on sedition charges. Arrest of Khan led to disturbances in most parts of Balochistan that continued for about a year. Nawroz was a prominent figure of this

revolt he started armed struggle against Pakistan revolt. LT. Col. Tikka Khan had fought against Nawroz and won the fight. Nawroz and his followers were arrested and brought into Hyderabad jail. His sons and nephews were executed and he died at the age of 90 in jail. In this struggle later 1000 Baloch civilians lost lives. Taka had been famous in army as Baloch general.

3.6.4 Third Baloch Uprising: A More Serious Struggle

A serious struggle triggered by the Marri tribe in 1962 had been observed in Baloch nationalism. Marri were against the rapid incursion by Punjabis attempted curtailment of privileges of the Sardars. It was the issue of development which provoked the struggle. This struggle was supported at later stage by the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and Frontier Guard. General Bhutto imposed a facade of peace in the Baloch area. In 1965, the defeat of Pakistan and Bangladeshi movement of Mujibur Rahman frustrated the Pakistan leadership between 1965-1971.

Succession of Bangladesh as a nation inspired Baloch nationalist to demand operation autonomy but Bhutto rejected the request for better shares in Pakistan resources and more autonomy.

On first July 1970, integration of former Balochistan states and directly governed Balochistan territory into one unit of province of Balochistan also provoked nationalists of Balochistan. The civil disobedience movement initially converted into armed struggle led by the Marri, Mengal, Bugti, Zarakari etc. Tribes and Pakhtuns under the banner of Balochistan People Liberation Front (BPLF) Mir Hazar Khan Marri lead the Balochistan movement and with thousands of supporters. But this movement was cruelly suppressed by Pakistani Army, Air Force and the ISI. 15,000 people died in this suppression. Pakistan alleged Cladestine Indian and afghan assistance to the rebels, Iran was on the other hand fearful to his own Baloch uprising and supported Pakistan. Washington was also worried about India staging another Bangladesh coup in Balochistan. (Baloch 1974)

General Zia replacing Bhutto appointed General Raheemuddin Khan as Martial Law administrator and Governor of Balochistan. Zia declared a general amnesty to those willing to give up arms. Between period of 1973 to 1988 may be called a period of stability and Balochistan witnessed a large Punjabi, Muhajir and Pathan influx (ibid).

Quetta became the centre of attraction of Nine Lakh afghan refugees and the hub of US, Saudi and Pakistan. However the uprising of modern bases of struggle rooted into socio-economic backwardness of Baloch. (Bansal 2006)

3.6.5 The Current Phase of Baloch War of Independence

The present phase of Baloch war of independence was propelled by socio- economic reasons. Sui gas Project flowing from land of Punjab and Sindh and later some Baloch area also covered and other infrastructures creation did not fulfill the aspiration of Baloch. They demanded political autonomy and royalty from Sui Gas Field. Introduction of more frontier guards and regular army contingents increased the ambience of tension. Induction of pastoons of northwest frontier province to Quetta area tensed the situation. Neglecting of provincial government on various issues like Chagai hills nuclear tests and other natural royalty (Copper, silver, gold and coal) has prepared bases for conflict.

Moloy Krishna Dhar, in his article “Balochistan craves of history indicate that over three hundred percent was made in the national budget for development programmes in Balochistan.” This thing has failed to materialise from paper into concrete. We can observe the level of regional disparity which prevailed in the area Punjab and Sindh at higher level of development than Balochistan. Baloch territory is considered as only raw material resources suppliers (Ali 2001).

The current event which triggered the insurgency was the sexual assault on the female Dr. Sazia Khalid by a gang of Punjabi employees of the PPL at Sui. Angry people attacked the Sui facility. Before proceeding further on the present phase of Baloch struggle, it must be pointed out that Pakistan has been facing innumerable problems from its multiple fault line for toeing the USA line against war on terror, Taliban, Al Qaeda, MQM and the Waziri tribal unrest. The Balawaristan movement can be added to this cart. In the backdrop of the problems growing between the Chinese, US, Afghan and Indian interests in the Baloch tract have complicated the geostrategic dimension. (Bansal 2006)

There have been spates of attack on Sui gas installations, pipelines, powerhouses and several convoys of the armed force in Quetta, Dera Ismail Khan, Kohlu, Dera Bugti etc places. On some occasions Chinese workers were kidnapped

and in a few cases they suffered fatal casualties. Islamabad retaliated by deploying over 25,000 troops and bombing and strafing rebel strongholds at Kohl, Dera Bugti, Marri and Mengal tracts. It is not our intention to catalogue the incidents and count the body bags.

President Musharraf made several recent pronouncements expressing his intent to crush the movement and develop Balochistan. He impugned foreign interference; obviously direct indictment of Afghanistan, India and Russia. Speaking at Charsadda on February 12, 2006 Musharraf sternly warned the Baloch resistance forces and offered certain imaginary carrots. Again speaking at Lahore on March 24, 2006 Musharraf asserted, "These two or three Sardars who are fighting against their own people will be sorted out very soon. They are already on the run as they know they have lost support among their own people" (Bansal 2006).

The present scenario in Pakistan is that government has awakened towards the problem of Baloch in the country and taking strong actions to solve the problem.

3.7 GEOSTRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE OF BALOCHISTAN

The location of Balochistan makes it a sensitive part of Pakistan. Any politico-military development in Afghanistan, Iran and the gulf region affects the security of Balochistan. Strategically, it is in the Warm Water belt- a region of historic interest for the super power in general and the erstwhile Soviet Union in particular. Balochistan will be the future passageway to the emerging energy-hungry India, China, and Asian Pacific markets. The energy corridor from the Gulf to China and from Central Asia to the open seas presently has to go through the heart of Balochistan. Politically its geographical location with neighbouring Iran has enhanced its importance for the US. Its vast border with Afghanistan makes Balochistan a key player in "War on Terrorism".

The Chinese have been investing in various projects in Balochistan like the Saindak Project, Gas Exploration, Gwadar port, Coastal Highway linking Karachi and Gwadar, Rail Link from Dalbandin via Panjgoor to the Gwadar deep sea port. China is going to be the beneficiary of Gwadar's most accessible international trade routes to the Central Asian Republics and Xinjiang. By extending its East-West Railway from the Chinese border city of Kashi to Peshawar in Pakistan's northwest, Beijing can

receive cargo to and from Gwadar along the shortest route, from Karachi to Peshawar. The rail network could also be used to supply oil from the Persian Gulf to Xinjiang. Nationalists believe that in the long run China may utilise Gwadar port for its economic and geo strategic interests in the region (Haq 2008).

US influence in the region is aimed at using Baloch land and Sea to cement its presence in order to protect its strategic and economic interests in Central Asia, South Asia, South West Asia, China, and to have a direct access to Strait of Hormuz (Persian Gulf). The US also wants to control the geo-politics of the region particularly the regional engagements of Iran, and fight against terrorism (Sanaullah 2004)

Iranians also have their interests in the region which may be explained by the fact that Iran wants to develop its economy to meet the demands of modernisation by way of promoting higher Gas export, improve regional security, lessen US presence in the region, make inroads into Central Asia and Afghanistan, and curb Baloch, Kurd and Azeri movements within Iran (Baloch 2008)

Strategic Importance of Gwadar

Gwadar is strategically located on the south-western coast of Pakistan, close to the Strait of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf. It is at a meeting point for increasingly important regions of the world: the oil-rich Middle East; heavily populated South Asia; and resource-rich Central Asia. The Gwadar deep-sea port emerges as a place of great strategic value, enhancing Pakistan's importance in the whole region, extending from the Persian Gulf through the Indian Ocean to Southeast Asia and the Far East. Situated 725 km to the west of Karachi - currently Pakistan's only seaport and the most populous city; Gwadar port provides an alternative to Karachi port. Its significance to Pakistan is great, Pakistan will be able to have a strategic depth southwest from its naval base in Karachi that has long been vulnerable to blockade by the Indian Navy.

The construction of the Gwadar deep-sea port is just one component of a larger development plan which includes building a network of roads connecting Gwadar with the rest of Pakistan, such as the 650 km Coastal Highway to Karachi and the Gwadar-Turbat road (188 km)(Wikipedia 2008).

To develop Gwadar's strategic location as a goods transit and trade point the Pakistani Government had initiated several projects, with majority financial and

technical assistance from China. The primary project is the construction of a deep-sea port at Gwadar to enable high-volume cargo movement to and from the landlocked Central Asian states. The new port will also encompass conversion facilities to allow for the movement of natural gas as a part of plans for a termination point for the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan natural gas pipeline. Secondary project is a coastal highway connecting Gwadar to Karachi, whose \$200 million cost will be completely financed by the Chinese. Gwadar will serve as a port of entry for oil and gas to be transported by land to the western regions of China. (Iqbal 2007)

The federal government says that the Gwadar project would bring investment, which would be good for the province but Baloch insurgent groups view the construction of Gwadar port as a "conspiracy" to exploit Balochistan's resources because the project provides little in terms of employment and development to the locals. Gwadar deep-sea port project have raised fears among Baloch of an influx of economic migrants which may lead to demographic imbalance. No steps have been taken to improve the poor health facilities or to even provide access to safe drinking water to Gwadar and other parts of Makran division thus insurgents hampering the ongoing development work by carrying out attacks against security forces and infrastructure. Baloch nationalist insist that Gwadar Port must be placed under the control of the provincial government, ending the practice of allocating coastal lands on Islamabad's own choice. (Baloch 2008)

3.8 IMPLICATIONS OF THE CONFLICT AND POLITICAL RESPONSE

Undoubtedly, Balochistan is currently the centre of attention of the decision-makers in Pakistan. After a five decade long period of negligence and discrimination, the province is on the top of development agenda now. Federal government made efforts to develop the huge natural resources of Balochistan is endowed by nature. Its tremendous mineral potential, wider scope of agriculture development, its water resources, its strategic location of immense geopolitical importance, its sea-resources and the colossal potential in all sectors of economic development have endeared attention of important persons not only in Islamabad but also outside the country. But the ongoing conflict in Balochistan led Pakistan to a big economic and socio-political loss.

Pakistani policy makers can clearly view the upcoming situations those will occur because of Baloch insurgency.

- Killing of Bugti leader Nawab Khan Bugti could well intensify Baloch operations against the Pakistani government and provide a rallying point for future Baloch generations.

The killing of Bugti could also provide an opportunity for pro-democracy forces to get together and work against the military regime. Already, leaders of the main opposition parties, such as Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal (MMA) and Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy have found common cause in cooperating with each other and are pressing for the setting up of a judicial commission to probe into the death of Bugti. The MMA had differences with Bugti and his party, JWP, in the past, but Bugti's killing has brought the democratic elements together against the military establishment. This could have important implications for the forthcoming elections of 2007 which will be a litmus test for President Musharraf and the pro-democracy forces.

- If the Balochs do incline towards greater militancy, it will lead to a protracted struggle rather than a quick solution to the problem. Provoking a more intense or lasting confrontation could be disastrous to Pakistan's economic stability, as Pakistan is already spending a huge proportion of its finances on domestic and cross-border conflicts.
- The new crisis could provide Al-Qaeda with a strategic opportunity to exploit differences between the Baloch and the federal government to undermine President Musharraf. The Baloch are essentially secular in outlook and have in the past not shown an inclination to join hands with Islamic fundamentalist elements. However, with the Al-Qaeda now using Balochistan as a base for its operations, there is a risk that the Baloch will cooperate with Al-Qaeda/Taliban forces for strategic reasons, thus enhancing the internal security threat in Pakistan. President Musharraf is in a difficult position as he balances the various competing interests of Pakistan's domestic politics and the United States' strategic interests in its war on terrorism.
- A continued military confrontation in Balochistan could spill over to neighbouring Sindh which has been tense in the past, and trigger ethnic disturbances. These could have an adverse impact on the already fragile political and economic fabric of the country.

- The Pakistan army could use force and successfully quell the rebellion as it did in the past. However, this will not guarantee any permanent solution. In the 1970s, Pakistan did manage to subdue the insurgents, but as we are witnessing, the insurgency has resurfaced.
- Apart from the heavy cost to both the Baloch and the Pakistani state, this ethnic conflict may have broader implications on the region as a whole, as any instability in Pakistan will have a ripple effect on South Asian regional peace and security. Ethnicity in this region is heavily interlinked and a flare-up in Balochistan could quite easily spread across borders.
- If, as contemplated above, the Al-Qaeda-Baloch nexus develops, it could well be the tinderbox of fundamentalist terrorism that will engulf the region. Given the inter-connectedness of oil and gas pipelines, ports and trade routes, the entire South and Central Asian regions could well end up being hostage to a continued Baloch crisis.

It is pertinent to remember that insurgency in Balochistan has to be dealt with because if it is allowed to go on, it will be dangerous for the solidarity of the country. If Balochistan become independent, would Pakistan be able to withstand another dismemberment- thirty-four years

3.8.1 Political Response to Current Situation

The government had appointed a parliamentary committee on 23 September 2004 ‘to deal with Balochistan and inter-provincial harmony’. The committee was subdivided into two subcommittees – one headed by Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed to make appropriate recommendations on the situation in Balochistan and another subcommittee was led by Senator Wasim Sajjad to make recommendations ‘to promote inter-provincial harmony and protect rights of provinces, with a view to strengthen the federation.’ Since the latter committee has to work on federal-province relations, a very sensitive subject of far reaching importance, it has to take a longer period to finalise its recommendations. The former subcommittee appointed ‘to examine the current situation in Balochistan and make recommendations thereon’; heard the views of the relevant ministries, departments, authorities and main political parties of the province during October 2004 – January 2005 and has submitted its report. Its main recommendations relate to (1) the approval of a formula regarding

Royalty, Gas and Development Surcharge; (2) the job quota of 5.4 percent in the Federal Government under the Constitution for Balochistan to be strictly implemented; (3) Head Office of Gwadar Port Authority should be shifted from Karachi to Gwadar and preference for employment is to be given to local youths. (4) construction of highways linking Balochistan with other provinces of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran be expedited; (5) an effective anti-drought strategy should be developed to alleviate water shortage; and (6) distribution of Funds between Federation and Federating Units (National Finance Commission Award) should be announced giving due consideration to the just viewpoint of the people of Balochistan. The recommendations should be given serious consideration and appropriate actions taken as soon as possible. President Musharraf has already asked the Prime Minister to expedite work on the recommendations. Mushahid Hussain has expressed reservations about the non-implementation of the report and said that even if 15 percent of the recommendations had been implemented, the situation in Balochistan would have been different (Haq 2006).

It needs to be pointed out that, unlike United States of America, powers to the federating units were transferred by the central government and not vice versa. The Constitution of Pakistan, like Indian Constitution, provides for a quasi-federal structure where, although there are two sets of governments, federal government enjoys overriding authority. There is however a need that the provincial government should be excessively involved in provincial affairs. It is also necessary to increase the stake of the province of Balochistan in the Federation through various economic measures and their increased participation in the Federal Administration.

The Pakistani government views the Baloch as an insular community that is unwilling to break away from its tribal ways and integrate into the national mainstream but the government has been pumping vast amounts of money into the province to boost development and to win over the Baloch. During 1970s, when the insurgency was at its height, the government raised its grant-in-aid from Pakistan Rs12.6 million in 1971-72 to Pakistan Rs717.2 million in 1978-79. Government officials maintain that much of the money was embezzled along the way at the provincial level and did not reach the people.

Government also views that tribal chiefs have politicised development issues in order to maintain the status quo and thus preserve their power. It is always in the interest of leaders of discontented groups to ensure that conflict continues, as that guarantees their leadership positions as well as access to funds and support. As one government official put it recently, “While the tribesmen remain in primitive conditions, the leader of the Bugti tribe, Sardar Nawab Bugti and his family enjoy scores of other perks and privileges.” (ibid)

ANALYSIS

Balochistan, the strategically important and the largest province of Pakistan, is passing through a crucial phase of its history. As compared to its geological resources the level of development is very low. Ongoing conflicts have its historical roots, but the policies of Pakistani government are also responsible for the insurgencies.

The location of Balochistan is strategically beneficial to Pakistan and Gwadar also have its strategic importance. The Baloch tribes feel that their natural resources and assets are being exploited without little benefit to them. The federal government pays a lower price for Baloch gas than it does for gas produced in other provinces, particularly Sind and Punjab. The Baloch tribes fear that developmental projects in Balochistan, intended for greater economic opportunities, will solely serve the interests of the ruling elite and state institutions in the military establishment.

The Gwadar Port, which Pakistan has been projected as ‘Karachi’, is a project entirely under the control of the central government. The Baloch in Gwadar fear that they will become a minority in their own land.

4

**RESOURCE EXPLOITATION
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
OF BALUCHISTAN**

CHAPTER FOUR
RESOURCE EXPLOITATION AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF BALOCHISTAN

4.1 INTRODUCTION

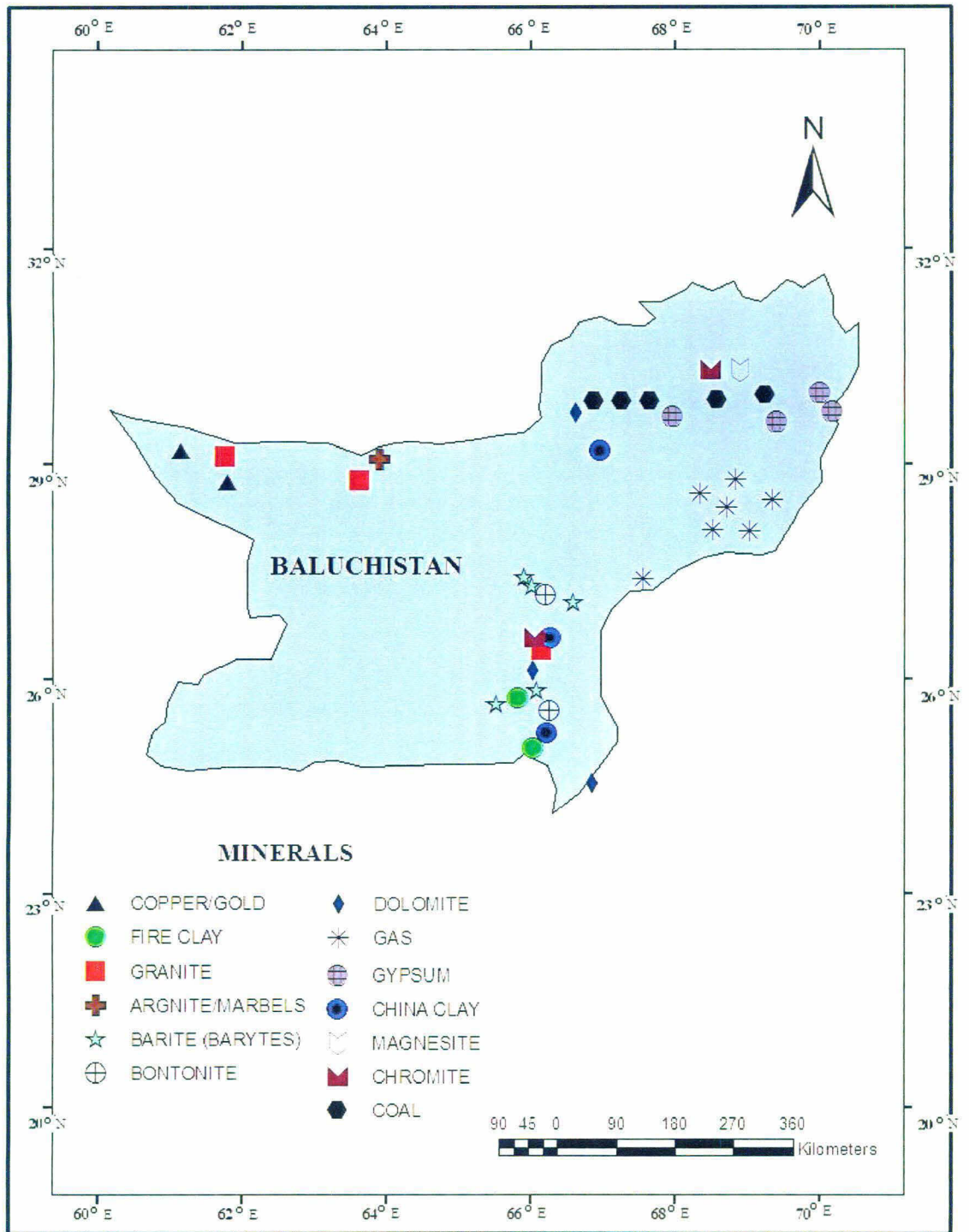
Although Balochistan is rich in Mineral resource reserves (Chromium, Copper, Iron, Natural Gas, Coal etc.) but these mineral resources are failed to provide livelihood or improve living standards within the province. Baloch natural resources provide sustenance for economic development for the rest of Pakistan. This is the most important reason of being Balochistan as a poorest province of Pakistan. Its per capita income is the lowest amongst all the four provinces of Pakistan. Among natural resources gas is found in Sui and Pirkoh in viable quantity. The region's gas reserves supply most of the Pakistan with its energy, and its sparse population makes it a viable location for nuclear test. Balochistan's long coastline with its fish wealth should have been a resource of prosperity for its people. But the Baloch people complain that they do not benefit from exploitation of the province's natural resources, especially gas.

Naturally a sense of deprivation and dismay among the people has built up. Yet, Islamabad pins it hopes on a military solution. Depicting all Baloch opposition, political or militant, constitutional or extra-constitutional, as a threat to law and order, intent on consolidating central control over the province, and anxious to exploit its economic assets, the government's policy choices are fast marginalising the very parties and forces that could help mediate the conflict. With the military targeting their leaders and sidelining their parties, the danger lies in those alienated Baloch who still support the political process coming to believe there is no other recourse than the gun.

4.2 RESOURCE PROFILE OF BALOCHISTAN

Resources are the basic tangible and intangible materials, which are in utility for economic and human development. Importance of resources increases with increase in levels of technology. Balochistan possesses a variety of natural resources

MAP 4.1
NATURAL RESOURCES OF BALUCHISTAN



**Source: Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources, Govt. Of
Pakistan(2005)**

particularly rich in mineral resources which always been a centre of exploitation by businessmen and power seekers. Presently, the minerals being exploited are:

4.2.1 Mineral Resources

Coal

There are six major coal producing fields in Balochistan. These are Khost-Shahrig-Harnai, Duki, Sor range-Daghari, Pir Ismail Ziarat and Mach. Total estimated coal reserves are 200 million tonnes. Balochistan coal can cater to the existing and future energy requirement of Pakistan to a great extent. More than 90% of coal is dispatched to other provinces for use in brick kilns. (Naureen 1994)

Chromite

Sizable deposits of this mineral are found at Muslimbagh, district Killa Saifullah. Lasbela, Khuzdar, Kharan and Chaghi districts have chromite reserves. Private sector has been engaged in mining this mineral. (ibid)

Barytes

The biggest deposit of Barytes is located near Khuzdar with a total reserve of over 2.00 million tonnes. Scientific mining as well as grinding of this mineral started in 1976. Almost the entire production of barites is consumed locally by OGDC (Oil And Gas Development Corporation) and other oil drilling companies.

Marble

Large commercially exploitable deposits are found throughout district Chaghi, starting from Dalbandin and extending to the borders of Iran. Some deposits are located close to Pak-Afghan border areas namely Zardkan, Siah-Chang, Jhulli, Patkok, Maskichah, Zeh, Chilgazi and Buttak (ibid).

Onyx, a dark green marble, found in Chaghi is of superior quality. Onyx of good quality is found in Bolan, Lasbela and Khuzdar districts.

Iron Ore

Chaghi, a mineral rich area, possesses nearly 30 million tonnes of iron ore. Geological Survey of Pakistan, in a report, states that there are 1 to 7 meters (averaging about 2 meters) thick haematitic sedimentary ironstone bed of Jurassic age (150 million years old) at the contact of Chiltan Limestone, and Sember formation of

Cretaceous age (150-65 million years old) near Johan in Dilband area of Mastung district. The reserves have been tentatively estimated at over 200 million tonnes. (Govt. of Pakistan, Economic Survey 1992-93)

Quartzite

This is a relatively newly discovered mineral. Its deposits are found in Lasbela district.

Limestone

Limestone exists in abundance in different parts of Balochistan. Several hundred meters thick layers of limestone, at places dolomitic, occur in Chiltan Formation of Jurassic age in Quetta and Kalat. Limestone of Cretaceous age, 300 to 50 meters thick, is widely found in Balochistan. Harnai, Sor Range, and Spintangi areas have reserves of limestone.

Sulphur

Sulphur deposits are available at Koh-i-Sultan in Chaghi district. Three main deposit are clustered around the southern half of the extinct volcano, Koh-i-Sultan. The deposits are of fumaralic origin and native Sulphur is found in vugs, cracks, and as impregnation in volcanic tuffs. The chief use of Sulphur is in the manufacturing of sulphuric acid and explosives. (ibid)

4.2.2 Forest's Role in Balochistan

Forests particularly help in maintaining favorable and stable conditions needed for sustained agricultural productivity. Trees prevent soil erosion, enhance soil fertility and maintain soil moisture. Deep-reaching tree roots can help mobilise nutrients far below ground level for use by food crops. The other important function which forestry plays in the context of Balochistan province is to enhance and facilitate the percolation of rain and flood water in the soil, thus playing crucial role in the ground water recharge.

Livestock rearing is an important economic activity for the rural masses of the province. Forests and rangeland throughout the province are the major source of livestock feed. Lack of proper management of the rangeland resources not only severely affected the natural resources but also have bad effects on the health and productivity of the livestock in the province. Proper management of the range

resources by improving the vegetative cover of highly nutritious and palatable species could only help in improving the productivity and health of the livestock.

Trees provide shade for livestock, important to their health and productivity in hot, dry areas. Of growing importance is the role forests play as storehouse of biodiversity, potentially very important in future crop breeding and pests and disease management programs. Moreover, role of forestry in the preservation of healthy environment and combating pollution is well researched and documented. Forestry has to play an important role in pollution control and environmental problems currently being faced by the province.

Forests also have significant links with inland and marine fisheries. Forests regulate the volume and fluctuations of stream flows and provide a shaded riparian environment, favorable for the development of smaller life forms which fish feeds on.

Forests provide wide ranging economic and employment opportunities. In irrigated areas of the province, trees are grown simultaneously with agricultural crops and contribute substantially towards household income through sale of timber and firewood. In addition to these major products, forest flora is traditionally used for number of other minor products including agricultural implements, medicines, and different kinds of fruits and nuts.

Provincial Forest Resources

Provincial forest resources, approximately 2% of the total geographical area of Balochistan, are confined to coniferous, hill plateau, Reverain Bella, irrigated plantation and plateau lands. Forest types found in Balochistan are listed below:

- i. Dry temperate forests of Blue pine, chilghoza and Juniper.
- ii. Sub tropical dry evergreen oleo forests.
- iii. Tropical thorn forests of Kandi, in Sibi, Nasirabad, Bela and Mekran areas.
- iv. Tropical desert thorn forest in Kharan and Ghagai areas.
- v. Steep slopes and grassland.

These forests are unproductive and hardly meet the local requirement of fuel wood. Only Ephedra and Mazri are income generating forests, which are being

exploited on commercial basis each year mainly by Ziarat, Loralai, and Uthal Forests Divisions (www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/Pakistan/Full.html). Different forest categories with their respective areas in hectares are as under:

TABLE 4.1
FOREST RESOURCES OF BALOCHISTAN (AREA IN HECTARES)

1. High Hill Conifer Forests	131,000
2. Riverian Forests	444,000
3. Irrigated Plantation	1,000
4. Linear Plantations.	2,000
5. Rangeland	372,000
6. Coastal Forest	2,000
7. Scrub Forests	595,000

Source: www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/Pakistan/Full.html

4.2.3 Rangelands in Balochistan

Rangelands in Balochistan are the major concern of almost 80% of rural population of the province. About 94% area in Balochistan is rangelands. Rangelands are producing 10-50% less than their potential mainly because of overgrazing, long past negligence and lack of scientific knowledge. At present, rangelands are estimated to provide 70% forage. (www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/Pakistan/Full.html).

Afghan refugees and their livestock have seriously damaged about 0.23 million acres of rangelands. Although measures under strict financial constraint have been carried out, still a lot needs to be done.

4.2.4 Watershed in Balochistan

Some range areas, as well as forests, occupy the principal watershed areas. Arid climate, scarce water resources and their inefficient use are the limiting factors

for effective watershed development. It has been estimated that watershed in Balochistan has lost 70% of its absorptive capacity due to lack of vegetative cover, overgrazing, trampling and accelerated erosion. Karezes (underground tunnels for perennial flow of water), artisan wells and springs have either dried up or are yielding decreasingly, reducing scope of watershed development.

4.2.5 Wildlife in Balochistan

Balochistan is rich in wildlife: the valuable species found are Markhor, Ibex, Oriah, Gazelle, black bear, cheetah and chinkara. Moreover, there are seesees, sand groves, black grey partridges; different species of water fowl, green turtle and dolphin. (Govt. of Pakistan, Economic Survey 1992-93)

Balochistan provides good habitat to the migratory birds like Hubara Bustard, falcons and cranes. Based on the various surveys, a number of areas have been subsequently declared as legally protected as game sanctuaries, national parks and game reserves.

Chiltan-Hazarganji National Park

Chiltan-Hazarganji National Park, an internationally recognised park, was fenced and effectively protected to preserve and propagate endangered wildlife species like Chiltan Markhor. The management plan in this regard has been prepared (not yet handed over to the Dept.) by WWF-international's consultants under sub-project of Balochistan Natural Resources Management project. This protection and enclosure from grazing has regenerated the vegetative growth of predominantly grasses and shrubs, in addition to multiplication of wild animals and birds. (ibid)

4.2.6 Gas Production

The single greatest contribution to national economy of Pakistan without contradiction is the discovery of natural gas fields in 1952, situated at Sui in the Bugti Baloch tribal area of Sibi districts. Balochistan's contribution to agriculture and industrial sectors of national economy through Sui gas is too conspicuous to need any emphasis.

TABLE 4.2
GAS PRODUCTION IN 2006

Locations	Production (mmcft)	Rate (mmbtu)
Sui	281996	22.14 (Pak Rs.)
Pir koh	32838	66.92 (Pak Rs.)
Loti	14085	63.20 (Pak Rs.)
UCH	56535	3.17 (US\$)

Source: www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/Pakistan/Full.html

4.3 ONSET OF GLOBALISATION AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN BALOCHISTAN

4.3.1 ESTEEMED PROJECTS

In recent years, the government has started a number of large scale development projects in Balochistan, which were partly designed to generate local employment. The most prestigious of these is the Gwader deep-sea port, some 470 km west of the country's main port city of Karachi. Other projects include the 675 km coastal highway linking Gwader with Karachi, and the construction of Mirani dam and Kacchi canal to develop water resources in drought-hit areas of the province (Hassan 2005).

The Baloch tribes fear that developmental projects in Balochistan, intended for greater economic opportunities, will solely serve the interests of the ruling elite and state institutions in the military establishment. Some Balochis maintain that skilled people from other provinces are in line for the jobs in these projects and ultimately foreign influence would be threatening the indigenous culture of the region.

Baloch nationalist leaders insist they are not opposed to development but are against the exploitation of natural resources that do not benefit local communities. They also insist that the province, not the sardars or the centre, should be the main

beneficiary of the income from Balochistan's natural gas and other mineral resources. If Balochistan had control over its resources, said one leader, "we ourselves can focus on social development such as education and healthcare". Another stressed, "Economic and political rights need to be achieved in tandem; one cannot be achieved without the other" (Haq 2008).

Economists like Kemal accept there are real issues to be addressed in the province. "Technical institutes should be opened there and Balochis should be trained for future needs. It requires more attention on the part of the government at the moment," he added.

But there is also a growing body of opinion that suggests the province needs to move with the times and shake off the dominance of unelected traditional leaders. The government should make efforts to break the social and tribal set up through laws and encourage the growth of civil society. The power of the civil community is so weak in Pakistan, it has never been allowed to operate openly particularly in such areas, ultimately such negligence promotes tribalism and feudalism (ibid).

Gwadar Port

The Chinese-built Gwadar port project on Balochistan's Makran coast is the largest and most controversial of the federal government's major development projects.

The Gwadar Port, which Pakistan has been propagating as another 'Karachi', is a project entirely under the control of the central government. In 1992, Nawaz Sharif government decided to build a seaport at Gwadar on Makran coast. Initially, Baloch nationalists supported the idea of a port but subsequent developments like the creation of a land market, a planned military base and the expected massive inflow of non-Balochis in a province with a total population of six-seven million, were not discussed with the Baloch Assembly leading to dissatisfaction with the government.

These schemes have aroused wide skepticism in the province. People believe that Balochistan's resources are being utilised but not for the welfare of the people of Balochistan. There is an ever-increasing demand for provincial autonomy as people wish to develop, manage and control their own resources. Many Baloch fears that, far from improving their lives, the projects will impoverish them further and reduce them

to a minority in their land. The Baloch in Gwadar fear that they will become a minority in their own land. In addition, if the port is not connected to Baloch populated areas of Turbat, Panjgur, and Khuzdar, the province will derive little benefit from the project. No major steps have been taken to improve health facilities or access to safe drinking water. Most of the locals rely on fishing for a livelihood and lost the prime fishing grounds after the port was constructed. They complain Islamabad ignores local stakeholders in planning and implementation.(Wikipedia 2008)

The government, however, insists the Gwadar project shows the government's commitment to developing Balochistan. Since they (Baloches) are not stakeholders, however, many Baloch would rather see it fail. To subvert it and deter investment, militants have attacked government installations and officials, local and foreign, at the port. Instead of dispelling opposition, Islamabad still excludes locals from decisions. In February 2007, it granted a 40-year lease for the port's administration and a twenty-year tax exemption to the PSA, reportedly without consulting even its allies in the Balochistan provincial government or parliament.

With the Gwadar controversy still unresolved, government announced construction of another port in Balochistan – at Somiani, 70km from Karachi, Sindh's capital and the country's main port city. Once again, local stakeholders have not been consulted, provoking resentment and raising concern that Somiani, too, may only benefit outsiders. The project could also provoke ethnic conflict, since many Baloch see it as part of a plan by government. (Haq 2008) "Mega-projects have created nothing but mega problems" is the general belief among Baloches.

Islamabad, which ignored an earlier unanimous resolution against the construction of new military bases, is unlikely to abandon the Somiani port project or re-think policy towards Gwadar. Indeed, the military has reportedly sought to acquire more than 11,000 acres of land in Gwadar to construct what it calls a "Combined Defense Complex". When such resolutions are ignored, it inevitably makes people lose faith in the political process and resort to violent means to bring about change.

Sui Gas Field

Natural gas is a very important source of energy in Pakistan, supplying 49 per cent of Pakistan's energy needs according to the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources. The economic development of Pakistan was not possible without the timely development of Sui gas field. The Sui natural gas field in Balochistan's Bugti tribal area produces approximately 45 percent of the country's total gas production, with Pakistan Petroleum Ltd. producing 720-750 million cubic feet of gas daily from more than 80 wells in the field (Naureen 1994, p.43)

Disputes over sharing the revenues from Sui gas field, the largest gas field in Pakistan, have long soured relations between the Baloch and the centre. PPL (Pakistan Petroleum Limited) operates Sui (PPL's largest producing field) and five other gas fields in Balochistan and Sindh, with the federal government holding 78 per cent of PPL's stake. With new gas discoveries and higher prices charged and earned for natural gas, Balochistan's natural gas fields are a major revenue earner for the federal government, but the Baloch benefit little from the natural gas or its revenues.

According to the constitution "The Province in which a well head of natural gas is situated shall have precedence over other parts of Pakistan in meeting the requirements from that well head". Balochistan is responsible for 36 per cent of Pakistan's total gas production, but it consumes only 17 per cent of its own production, with 83 per cent of its natural gas provided to the rest of the country for industrial and household use. Piped gas is available to only four of Balochistan's 28 districts. (Economic Survey 1991-92)

Balochistan receives a 12.4 per cent royalty from its natural gas revenues but that royalty is based on a well price that is far lower than that of other provinces (Energy Year book 1992-93). Obtaining their due share of the profits is particularly important for the Baloch since the province lacks arable land, and its wealth is mainly mineral-based. Despite the income it derives from Sui and other gas fields, the centre gives back little to the locals in terms of infrastructure development, hospitals, schools or technical training. Operating and senior staff of energy production and distribution facilities are employed from outside the province; the installations mainly employ Baloch as day laborers. With the centre refusing to accede to Baloch demands that the province obtain its rightful share of its natural resources and have a say in their distribution and exploitation, Baloch militants and moderates alike are adamant that this exploitation has to stop (ibid).

For the militants, the answer lies in forcibly preventing the centre's exploration and extraction in regions that are resource-rich, such as the Bugti and Marri homelands. Because the country so heavily depends on the supply of gas from Balochistan, the gas fields and Balochistan's distribution grids have become bargaining chips in the conflict.

With periodic attacks on pipelines and installations disrupting gas supplies, the Baloch are determined to increase the cost of the conflict for Islamabad. They might not be able to defeat the Pakistan army but this way they can definitely drain out Pakistani economy.

The Baloch reject Islamabad's accusations that tribal chiefs such as Nawab Bugti had resorted to militancy in an attempt to blackmail the state for their own personal gains, hoping to increase the income they obtained from the extraction of gas from their tribal lands. Although Nawab Bugti did earn rent from the use of his tribal lands, it was the centre, not the Sardars or the province that benefited most from the income. Balochistan receives \$100 million in provincial royalties on natural gas; the central government earns \$1.416 billion annually in revenue. (Haq 2008)

Because Pakistan's currently exploited gas resources will likely be depleted by 2012, the government is keen on developing Balochistan's unexplored oil and gas reserves (Hassan 2005). By some estimates, Balochistan has 19 trillion cubic feet of natural gas reserves and 6 trillion barrels of off-shore and on-shore oil reserves. But prospective deals with oil and gas companies have been negotiated by Islamabad without consulting Baloch stakeholders. Six new exploration concessions were signed with Pakistani and foreign companies, but with no input from the province. The government also plans to sell 51 per cent of shares in PPL, Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited and Sui Southern Gas Company Limited, but again without consulting Baloch stakeholders. With Nawab Bugti's death and the prospects of the conflict escalating further, more disruptions to energy supplies are inevitable and could deter investors.

4.4 DEVELOPMENT VS. EXPLOITATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Balochistan is a mineral-rich province, however, the Baloch people are not benefitting from this partly due to neglect of the government and partly due to their own chiefs.

The Baloch tribes feel that their natural resources and assets are being exploited without little benefit to them.

Some development experts maintain that the policies of successive governments have increased the grievances of Balochis. Over the years, the income from natural resources in the province has not been properly distributed and the common Balochi people have not benefited from it.

A case in point is the Sui Gas; its first deposits discovered in 1953. Gas was supplied to Multan and Rawalpindi, in Punjab in 1964 but Quetta, the capital of Balochistan, waited until 1986 for its share of gas. This too was possible only after the federal government set up a Corps Headquarters in Quetta. Dera Bugti received gas in the mid nineties when a paramilitary camp was set up there. Overall, only four of the 26 districts constituting Balochistan are supplied with Sui gas. The federal government pays a lower price for Baloch gas than it does for gas produced in other provinces, particularly Sind and Punjab.

The government plans on constructing a \$1.67 billion road network, which it says would link Balochistan to the rest of the country and make Gwadar Port the hub of regional trade with China and Central Asia. Baloch nationalists, however, believe this road-building project is aimed at easier extraction of Balochistan's natural resources and to enable the Pakistan army and security agencies to expand their control over the province. (ibid)

4.5 REGIONAL INEQUALITY IN BALOCHISTAN

4.5.1 Distribution of Resources

The NFC (National Finance Commission), the mechanism used by the centre to distribute federal grants to the provinces, is contentious because it is controlled by the federal government, and in the Balochistan context, because the main criterion for NFC awards is population. The NFC has only been constituted seven times and has only finalised its recommendations on three occasions, in 1974, 1990 and 1996. In 1979 and 1985, the NFC did not finalise its recommendations because of provincial disagreements over the allocation of funds. Under President Musharraf, too, the NFC failed to make recommendations in 2000 and 2005, thereby delaying the transfer of payments to the provinces. The award should be determined through consensus

among the provinces and on an equitable basis, so President Musharraf's decision to announce it unilaterally is resented by the Baloch and the other smaller federal units (Asia Report 2006).

The centre's failure to change the formula is as strongly opposed by the ruling party in Balochistan as it is by the Baloch opposition. They are demanding new formula for the distribution of national resources, something which takes into account multiple factors and not just population, which of course sounds quite sensible. By revising the criteria to account for backwardness, level of development, geographic size and revenue levels of the provinces, the centre would remove at least one major bone of contention (Ministry of Finance, Pakistan 2006)

4.5.2 Social Condition:

Balochistan ranks highest in Pakistan for infant and maternal mortality rate, the country have 100 deaths per 10,000 live births, whereas Balochistan has 108/10,000. The country's maternal mortality rate is 350/100,000 and the province has a frighteningly high 600/100,000 (PSRU 2007).

With disturbing figures for poverty, Pakistan's Integrated Household Survey 2001-02 revealed that Balochistan has the highest poor population with 48 percent and the worst in rural areas with 51 percent living below the poverty line (BPL). According to the Social Policy and Development Centre (SPDC) in Karachi, Balochistan has the highest levels of poverty in Pakistan; nearly double that of the Punjab i.e. Over half the population subsists below the official poverty line

Lack of health and educational institutions further endangers the lives of thousands of people in Balochistan. The years of military operations, ill-conceived development policies and priorities, and poor governance have resulted in Balochistan being the most backward province. In spite of being a resource-rich region, it lacks very basic facilities and infrastructure. As compared to the 75% in country only 25% population in province have access to electricity. Consistent degradation of the water supply and absence of storage systems, such as small dams, have turned much of Balochistan, with its predominantly rural population, into an arid wasteland. The province, which has been supplying natural gas to the rest of the Pakistan for power generation, industry, fertilizer-production and domestic consumption, has only 3.4 percent of gas consumers as compared to 51 percent from Punjab alone, which

contributes only 4.75 percent gas. The province contributes Rs 85 billion per year through gas revenues but receives only Rs 7 billion from the federal government. According to UNDP Human Development Report 2003, Dera Bugti the wealthiest district of country in term of gas production ranked last among the 91 districts of the country on the Human Development Index.

According to the Social Policy and Development Center (SPDC), “An overview of the development scene in Balochistan is discomfoting and the extent of relative deprivation in the province is appalling”. The percentage of districts that are classified as “high deprivation” are 92% in Balochistan, 62% in NWFP, 50% in Sindh and only 29% in the Punjab. The SPDC review also revealed that the percentage of the population living in a high degree of deprivation stands at 88% in Balochistan, 51% in NWFP, 49% in Sindh and 25% in Punjab. According to poverty-related reports the percentage of the population living Below Poverty Line (BPL) stands 63% in Balochistan, 26% in Punjab, 29% in NWFP, 38% in rural and 27% in urban Sindh. (PSRU 2007).

TABLE 4.3
RANKING OF PROVINCES BY URBAN/RURAL AND OVERALL
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Province(Urban)	HDI	HDI Rank	Province (Rural)	HDI	HDI Rank
Sindh	0.659	1	Punjab	0.517	1
Punjab	0.657	2	NWFP	0.489	2
NWFP	0.627	3	Balochistan	0.486	3
Balochistam	0.591	4	Sindh	0.45	4

Source: Pakistan National Human Development Report 2003

Balochistan also has the lowest literacy rate because of the “literacy control” policy of the Federal government, which believes that an educated and politically conscious Baloch population will not allow the looting of Baloch wealth. With low

participation in general education, the average literacy rate of the population aged 10 years and above is only 36 percent in Balochistan. Seventy-six percent of primary schools in the province are shelter-less, 60% of primary schools have only one untrained and unqualified teacher. However, a 30% growth of religious schools has been recorded in Balochistan during the term of office of the MMA and Musharraf-led PML coalition. Baloch youths are kept deprived of almost all forms of contemporary educational institutions and few institutions have been established even in the capital city of Quetta capable of educating an elite and dominant class. The systematic denial of basic education and education-related facilities in Balochistan clearly indicates the disrespect and apartheid policies of Islamabad.

The highest unemployment is also recorded in the province due to lack of basic infrastructure, a financial bias against Baloch entrepreneurs, and the lack of industries and agriculture in the private sector. The federal government's 2003-04 Labor Force Survey shows urban unemployment of 12.5% in Balochistan compared to 9.7% for Pakistan as a whole.

In the government sector, Baloch youths are also denied access to services and non-Baloch and recently settled populations from other parts of Pakistan have a greater say on important positions. The Baloch and local population are denied access to even the unskilled jobs in the SSGC which dominates the energy resources in Balochistan. In Dera Bugti, the heavily guarded compound of Pakistan Petroleum Limited is a no-go area for Baloch nationals.

The end result of the expropriation of Balochistan's natural resources and the marginalisation of Baloch from development projects is the province's low standard of living. It is the poorest province in Pakistan. The economic and social backwardness of the society, political observers maintain, in conjunction with a deeply entrenched sense of tribalism, has led to an escalation of tensions in the province. Although tribal groups have been protesting against the government for some time, it is only recently that the situation has deteriorated, with an increase in attacks on government installations and functionaries across the province in an attempt to have their demands for greater economic and political rights heard.

4.6 IMPACT ON BALOCHISTAN'S ETHNIC RELATIONS

“When we’re deprived of democratic governance, of our resources, and our culture, you can understand the confrontation with the state. The 1973 constitution gave some autonomy to the provinces but even that limited autonomy has not been practiced.” – Baloch Opposition Leader (Haq 2008).

If Islamabad’s exploitation of Balochistan’s resources and neglect of the province’s development are responsible for Baloch alienation, the military government’s refusal to negotiate the demands for provincial autonomy is primarily responsible for the conflict. Since Pakistan is a “multicultural, multi-regional state”, said an opposition politician, “it should be run as a federation. The powers of the federation should be decided by the federating units” and the federal government “should be subservient to parliament”. But, as mentioned, Musharraf’s devolution scheme has consolidated the centre’s control over local levels of government, and his constitutional manipulations have made the national parliament subservient to the president, the nominal head of state in Pakistan’s federal, parliamentary system.

Under Musharraf’s political dispensation, Balochistan’s provincial government is, for all practical purposes, a subsidiary arm of the centre, working at its behest and following its directives. “The provincial government”, said Dr Baloch, “is the tool of the federal establishment”. There is no “provincial purview (over) political and economic decisions. All our decisions are made for us” by Islamabad. The provincial legislature’s sessions, for instance, have been repeatedly cancelled under central pressure to prevent the opposition from discussing the directions and impact of the conflict. Even administrative appointments and transfers are made in Islamabad. Inter-provincial tensions have also contributed to Baloch alienation. Ethnically skewed military and civil bureaucracies have reinforced perceptions that the centre represents Punjabi interests at the cost of the smaller federating units, including Balochistan. “The Baloch have tried their utmost to develop friendly relations with the Punjab-dominated establishment but they have backed us against the wall”, said BNP leader and former Balochistan chief minister Ataullah Mengal, adding, “The Punjabi establishment will never back the idea of giving full autonomy to the other provinces”. Resentment is particularly high against the army. Asserting that the

military operation in Balochistan was not just against the sardars but “against all Baloch, all Balochistan”, a Baloch political activist said, “This is not a national army but an army of the Punjab” (ibid).

CONCLUSION

Balochis lead an autonomous tribal life and have long history of internecine warfare between a number of their sub-tribes and sub-sub-tribe. Generally they never had a centralised government or kingdom of their own, but remained mostly subject to one or other neighboring empire of Indian, Iran or Afghanistan. It was during mid-17th century that Pakistan was formed into a loosely knit state of Kalat. After that it remained under the suzerainty of Afghanistan till arrival of British. British occupation of now Balochistan was completed by 1903. British rulers mainly required Balochistan as a buffer zone to stave off incursion from across the borders. They were thus not interested in the social or economic uplift of the region and were satisfied to maintain the status quo (Khan 2007).

Balochistan did not lag behind any other province in struggle for Pakistan and extended moral and material support to Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Khan of Kalat aspired for a sovereign status and declared independence. This was not acceptable to people in power. This led to use of security force in 1948 and as a result Kalat acceded to Pakistan. Balochistan for the first time became a full fledged province in 1970. But no effort was made to bring the internal administration of the province in line with those of the other province.

Balochistan has always remained an underdeveloped region. It is rain deficit area, the land is arid and most people lead a nomadic life. The region, as a whole, throughout the history, was away from the center of power and thus attracted lesser attention. British during the period of their supremacy in the sub-continent were not interested in the economic development of the province. Their interest in Balochistan was restricted to the building of certain roads and railways, which were required for the movement of troops to ensure security of the region against possible advances of Russian empire for reaching their warm waters of Afghanistan and Balochistan.

Further the mineral wealth could not be exploited in the past due to lack of interest as well as absence of modern technology in the country. Whenever and wherever mineral wealth exploited such as discovery of Sui, the people of Balochistan were generally neglected, except for Sardars of areas who received certain benefits.

Pakistan's policy to continue with the British colonial system has been in the interest of the Sardars but not the masses. Tribal Sardars were receiving subsidies from the government but spending little to improve the life of the people. The resultant poor representation of the province in civil and military bureaucracy further increased economic deprivation resulting in complaints of the upcoming generations of young and educated against injustice, meted out to the province. The lack of infrastructure of roads water electricity education healthcare etc. added to their miseries.

The distribution of the national finances on the basis of population level of development etc. was minimal while Balochistan happened to be the largest in area. Since Pakistan is a developing economy and its economy has mostly remained dependent on assistance from international agencies e.g. World Bank, international monetary fund etc. there has always been complaints for the paucity of funds from several quarters including Balochistan.

There are well-to-do Sardars and their poor followers living under their patronage but there is no middle class in existence. Certain tribal Sardars instead of demanding development work jobs school hospital roads water etc exploit the illiteracy poverty and loyalty of their followers and use them against the security force of the government which are considered by them as threat to their continuation of their authority. Again yet another reason for slow pace of development in Balochistan is non-proper utilisation of government funds besides inability of government departments.

While the Baloch were deprived of the income, their province provided the federal exchequer. Baloch areas remained under-developed, lacking even the most basic amenities. And when development schemes were initiated, outsiders benefited. For instance, Punjabis were given most of the arable land created by the construction of the Pat Feeder canal. Top-downwards attempts at nation building also deliberately neglected regional languages such as Balochi in an attempt to promote Urdu, the

mother tongue of less than 10 per cent of Pakistan's population, as the national language (Ahmed 1973).

This, will be agreed, was not the attitude the Baloches, in particular the tribesman, expected from the junta who had assumed the authority to rule in the name what they termed as 'Islamic ideology' in the guise of 'Basic Democracy'.

Presently, three decades after the 1973-1977 insurrection in Balochistan, a low-level insurgency again challenges central control over the province. After almost seven years of military rule, deprived of representative participatory institutions and with their natural resources exploited by Islamabad, Baloch alienation is at an all-time high. Although regional parties and leaders are still struggling to obtain political, economic and social rights within a democratic, federal, parliamentary framework, militants have picked up the gun.

Baloch political parties and militants have a common goal – to assert provincial control over Balochistan's natural resources and gain a voice in shaping its political, economic and social development. They want equal partnership in the federation; with their democratic rights respected along with the ownership of the resources as the people of Pakistan.

By choosing confrontation, the government has to bear responsibility for the state of the conflict. This use of force, combined with the centre's denial of political and administrative autonomy, planted the seeds of the conflict that now engulfs the province, as did the centre's exploitation of Balochistan's natural resources. "The writ of the government will be established at any cost", said Interior Minister Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao. But that writ is impossible to impose unless citizens accept the legitimacy of the actions. By refusing to negotiate Baloch demands for provincial autonomy and control over their resources and opting instead to forcibly subdue dissent – political or militant – the government has upped the stakes. Islamabad might be able to retain central control through brute force but its policy directions will likely undermine the remaining vestiges of state legitimacy in the troubled province.

Instead of making a genuine effort to increase Baloch people's confidence and help them to build up a healthy and progressive society the past governments and locals administration played indulgently in the hands of a bunch of exploiters; and denied to the people their political and social rights.

Islamabad insists that a handful of Sardars in Balochistan are responsible for the conflict. These tribal chiefs are resisting state authority to protect their personal fiefdoms since the central government's development policies would undermine their hold over their tribes, and hence their control over the resources of their tribal lands.

Balochistan has, no doubt, a long list of grievances that need to be addressed. But at the moment it is the situation in the Bugti area that needs to be defused. With the area having turned into an armed camp where even a minor incident can lead to a bloodbath, it is vital that both sides exercise restraint.

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**5**

# **CONCLUSION**

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION

Ethnic conflicts seem to be common in all countries of the world where people are divided into separate ethnic groups, that may have a racial, national, linguistic, tribal, religious or caste basis. Each ethnic group has its own identity and this identity underlies the fact a group is perceived as a distinct group from other groups, and, at the same time, the group perceives itself as a distinct group from other groups.

Pakistan is a multi-ethnic state and the question of ethno-nationalism has moved to the centre stage of Pakistani polity in recent years. The major threat to the regime has been from internal violence along regional ethnic identities. Political violence consequent upon the rising ethnic consciousness has always proved to be the ultimate instrument of political change in Pakistan. The Punjabis, Sindhis, Pakhtuns and Balochis constitute important elements in Pakistan's ethnic mosaic.

Pakistan is located in a key strategic position, surrounded by Russia, China, and two emerging regional powers that is Iran and India. Growing interest of US in the Central Asian oil resources and her animosity with China has made Pakistan strategically important state. Moreover since 2001, when US launched the war on terror by launching attack on Afghanistan, Pakistan has become a frontline state in the war on terror. It is in this context, Balochistan has come to play an important role in its prosperity and development.

Balochistan is the largest of Pakistan's four provinces, covering about 44 percent of the country's total land area. Balochistan has its geo-strategic significance that never dwindled; instead, it continued to figure high in all eventualities. Its enduring importance, it seems lies in the fact that it is close to the Middle East, Central Asia, South Asia and the Indian Ocean. For example, recent idea of the Americans to pump out the Central Asian gas and oil through Afghanistan via Balochistan and using Balochi port to deliver it throughout the world is in fact a historical chance for Balochistan to get more development, investment, and improvement to quality of life of its citizens.

Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, in the first place, and its subsequent declaration of intention to withdraw, had far reaching implication for Pakistan. This is because of the location of the Balochistan in such close proximity to Afghanistan, and as most of the vital land and air routes leading to and from Soviet Central Asia to the Arabian Sea go through it.



The coast of Balochistan has numerous natural harbours namely Jiwani, Gwadar, Pasni, Ormara and some more fishing harbours. These ports especially Gwadar has the potential to kick-start economic development in a region that has remained most backward in Pakistan. The port due to its location at the entrance of the Persian Gulf, some 460 km. from Karachi, has immense geostrategic significance. The southernmost point of Gulf of Oman, Ras-al -Hadd is only 190 nautical mile from Gwadar. This enables any naval vessel at Gwadar to interdict any ship entering or leaving Persian Gulf. Besides, it provides the shortest and cost-effective access to the landlocked Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics. The continued unstable regional environment in the region after the Gulf War of 1991 and the emergence of the new Central Asian States has added to the importance of this port. It is in this background that China has built the commercial port at Gwader.

Balochistan is crucial to the survival to the Pakistani state. The province is rich in mineral resources and has large proven as well as unproven reserves of hydrocarbons. The region provides about eighty percent of the country's gas and most of its coal. The region is also home to a large number of cattle and has enormous potential for fishing. Contrary to popular belief the natural resources of Balochistan are more than sufficient to feed its population.

The most dominant factor behind the current disturbances in Balochistan is the way through which the resources of Balochistan are being used. The federal governments had successively exploited the economic resources without either a due acknowledgement of Balochistan's contribution to the national economy or its recompense in monetary or financial measures. The natural gas deposits of Balochistan cater in a very large measure to the running of industries, factories, businesses and for predominantly domestic usages in all of the provinces of Pakistan. As said by Ghualm Mustafa, a development economist at the international developmental NGO in Pakistan "Over the years, the income from natural resources in the province has not been properly distributed and the common Balochi people have not benefited from it" (Mustafa 2008). The Baloch nationalist claims that the royalties received from these projects are negligible. The benefits of these projects to Balochistan have proved to be of little significance and as the Baloch began to realise this, they started to articulate this sense of exploitation.

Another important factor which has vitiated the atmosphere in Balochistan is the division of the province on ethnic lines. The Baloch- Pakhtuns ratio in the province is reckoned at 60:40, although this is not borne out by reliable statistical figures or census records. The Pashtoons are economically better off occupying fertile lands in the north of the province, which are connected by proper roads. Balochs in contrast are backward and overwhelmed by poverty-as a result of the Sardari system.

However, Balochis now have realised the follies of their government. This is especially true of the the enlightened class of younger generation of Balochis who are engaged in a final struggle to demolish the barriers of tribalism and the remaining few pockets of vested interest.

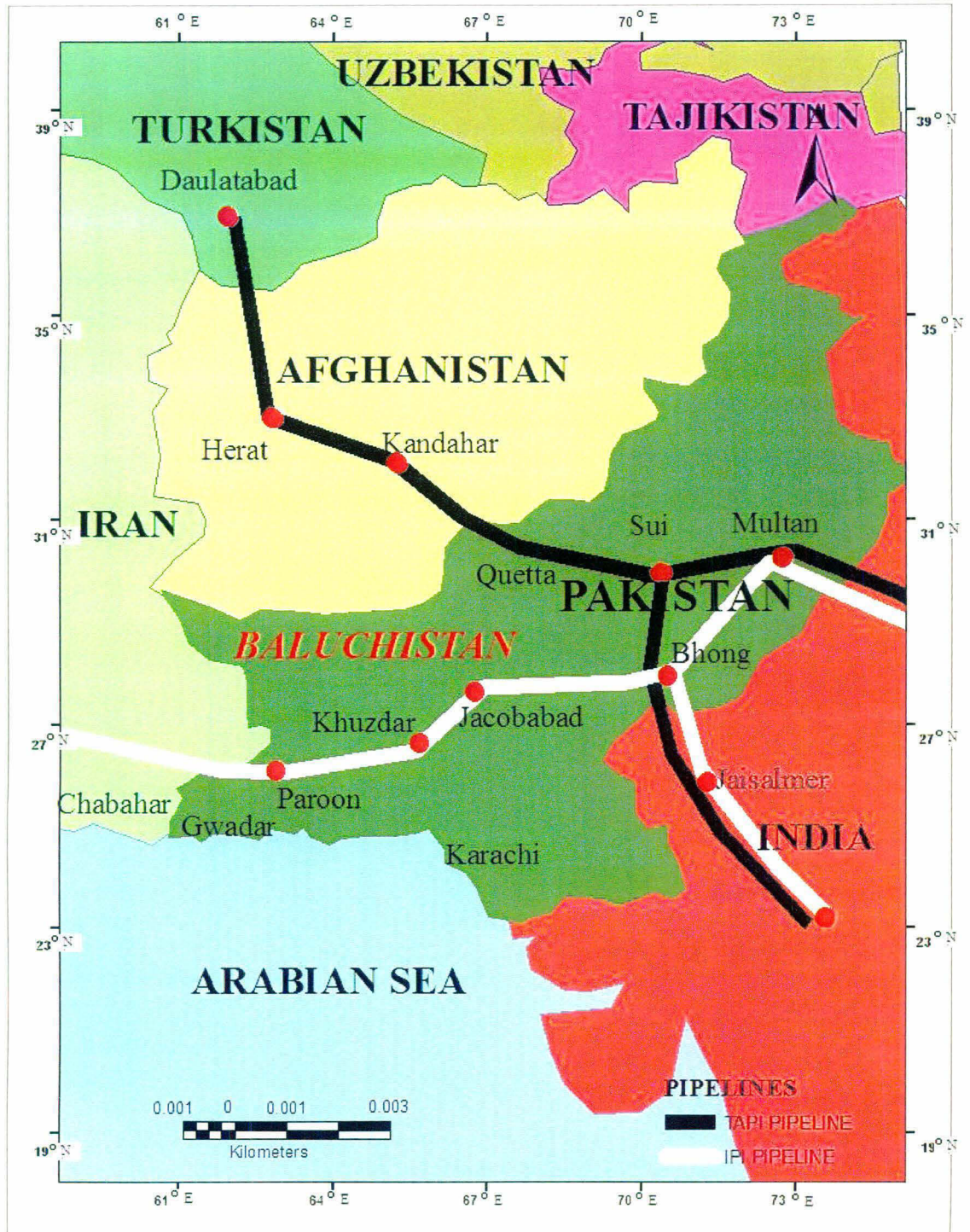
Pakistani government is fully aware of this. That's why its has recently set up a parliamentary committee to look into the problems of Balochistan. The committee submitted its recommendations after consulting all stakeholders. In recent years, the government has also started a number of large-scale development projects in Balochistan, which were partly designed to generate local employment. According to the Chief Economist of Planning commission of Pakistan the approval of nine new development projects worth Rs 33.42 billion for Balochistan by the Executive Committee of National Economic Council (ECNEC) would usher in a new era of economic progress and prosperity in the province. In addition, these projects would help create several hundred jobs for people of the area.

The most prestigious of these is the Gwadar deep-sea port, situated on the mouth of the Gulf, the Gwadar port will wait for transit of huge discovered and undiscovered estimated 2500 billion barrels of oil in Central Asian region to different destinations. According to an estimate, nearly 20 countries of the Middle East, Central Asia and South Asia will benefit from the Gwadar port. The port complex will provide facilities of warehousing, trans-shipment, transit and coastal trade, commercial and industrial openings for international export-import trade.(Haq 2008)

Other projects include the 675 km coastal highway linking Gwadar with Karachi, and the construction of Mirani dam and Karachi canal to develop water resources in drought-hit areas of the province. The work is proceeding apace on the 650-kilometre-long coastal highway from Karachi to Gwadar, which is expected to be ready by the end of this year. Balochistan can also benefit from the TAPI and IPI pipelines. The 2,600 kilometer-long Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline has the potential to transform the economic situation of Balochistan. However, the regional-

MAP 5.1

PROPOSED NATURAL GAS PIPELINE ROUTES TRANSITING THROUGH BALUCHISTAN



Source: Wirsing 2008

international political situation pertaining to Iran, domestic upheaval in Pakistan, and India's uncertain outlook on the issue, prevented any progress on the issue. But of late, there has been movement on this front. Earlier, India had asked Pakistan to resolve the transit fee issue first, to ensure the safety of the pipeline. India had offered a rate of \$ 0.15 per million British Thermal Unit (mBtu), as against the Pakistani demand of 0.493 per mBtu. Recently, both the countries agreed to resolve the issue. Technical teams from both countries met in the month of April in Islamabad to thrash out the details. Further meetings were held by the Indian Petroleum Minister Murli Deora and his Pakistani counterpart Khwaja Asif on 25 April, where both countries agreed in principle on matters such as the formation of a structure committee, transit fee and tariffs relating to the pipeline. Both the sides have also agreed to complete the project, which is expected to cost \$ 7.5 billion, by 2012. The spill-over of the goodwill from this front to other projects, has resulted in India becoming a formal partner in the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project (Patil 2008: 8). This pipeline, funded by the Asian Development Bank too has the potential to benefit the region.

### **5.1 CONSEQUENCES OF AN INDEPENDENT BALOCHISTAN**

It is in this context that the policy-makers in Islamabad have realised that an independent Balochistan could pose problems for the country as such. According to Frédéric Grare (2006), with independent Balochistan, Pakistan will lose a huge portion of its natural resources and become dependent on the Middle Eastern sources of energy. Moreover according to him, although Balochistan's resources are currently underexploited and benefit only the non-Baloch provinces, especially Punjab, these resources could undoubtedly contribute to the development of an independent Balochistan. Balochistan's independence would also dash Islamabad's hopes for the Gwadar port and other related projects. Any chance that Pakistan would become more attractive to the rest of the world would be lost. Pakistan's losses from an eventual secession would not be limited to the economic field. Although the government could still find facilities for testing its nuclear weapons and missiles, the test sites would have to be in the vicinity of more populated areas.

Neighbouring countries are also not very enthusiastic about the prospect of a Pakistan weakened by the secession of Balochistan. Iran, which in 1973 sent its

military helicopters to assist Pakistani armed forces, and Afghanistan have strong Baloch minorities in their territories. They do not want a Baloch state, with a *raison d'être* that is essentially ethnic, on their south-eastern border. The independence of Pakistani Balochistan would inevitably give rise to the fear of the revival of Baloch support for a Greater Balochistan.

As for the question of viability of an independent Balochistan, Grare (2006) says that if an independent Balochistan did not receive foreign technical assistance, it might not be able to exploit the control of its natural resources it would gain from independence. With a low level of literacy and a lack of administrative experience, Balochistan may not at the present time have the human resources required to develop its natural resources. In addition, Balochistan's ethnic composition too would prove problematic. Although the population of Balochistan in 1998 was estimated to be about six and one half million, only approximately three and one-half million are Baloch; two and one-half million are Pashtun and a little more than a half million belong to other ethnic groups. Although large Baloch minorities have settled outside the province, they are not likely to return to their homeland if it becomes independent because of the lack of adequate development there.

## **5.2 WAY FORWARD**

The government and the elders of the Balochistan should put together and find out the solution amicably. They should unite on one platform in the national interest and seek a way out to attract foreign direct investment in the country. The development programme in the province should be taken up with full force. The process of national reconciliation should be adopted and encouraged. Present situation of disturbance calls for the introduction of both short term and long term measures to bring a healthy change in the province. Some suggestions in this regards are:-

- A constitutional provision is needed to protect the rights of all ethnic minorities. It should include provisions for the protection and development of their language, culture, economy and human rights.
- The need for provincial and local government autonomy is particularly strong in Sindh outside Karachi, Hyderabad and Balochistan, where a large number of civil servants are not willing to transfer.

- The tribesmen accuse the bureaucracy that tribal Sardars are a hindrance in the way of development. The government should find new solutions to these very old problems by analysis, study and research.

Unfortunately, the pace of its growth has remained alarmingly slow. The prime reasons being its difficult terrain and its arid lands which made the establishment of the developmental infrastructure ordeal in itself. Despite all that its urban centers are swelling fast due to innumerable commercial and trading activities becoming possible day by day. The province has its own university now. An engineering college at Khuzdar and a medical college at Quetta have provided ample opportunities for its people for benefiting from the resulting educational awakening, Quotas for educational facilities and jobs which are meant to develop the backward people are used by the feudal lords and Sardars to advance their own families and a few loyal associates. The quotas are needed by backward communities but measures must be established to ensure that the facilities are well-targeted and used by the most deserving within each community. The quotas for people of Balochistan and rural Sindhis must be used by the most deserving among them rather than by nominees of the powerful.

Given the ethnic divisions in other parts of the country, and cultural and linguistic different among the two main groups, demand for division of the province can become an issue and may lead to conflict. Steps taken now to achieve integration of the various communities would prevent such conflict.

The grievances of the people have been underestimated and ignored. Their concerns and justified demands need to be fully understood and acted upon. The small provinces suffer from all of the problems that the country as a whole does. In addition, they suffer from the issues peculiar to them. The government must pay special attention to developing the small provinces which happen to be least developed. Special encouragement must be given to new industries, particularly those providing employment and future growth (e.g. electronics). Inter-provincial problems like allocation of water and financial resources must be resolved equitably. The federal government must consider special development priorities of the people of small provinces.

Pakistan has to survive in twenty-first century and follow the internationally accepted norms. If Balochistan becomes independent, Pakistan would lose a major part of its natural resources and would become more dependent on the Middle East for

its energy supplies. Although Balochistan's resources are currently underexploited and benefit only the non-Baloch provinces, especially Punjab, these resources could undoubtedly contribute to the development of an independent Balochistan.

Because of the ongoing conflict in Balochistan a question arises in front of the policymakers of Pakistan that what should be done to ensure peace and security, which is vital for Balochistan's development and welfare of its people. It requires a two-pronged strategy. First, as an immediate measure, the writ of the civil government should be established. The criminals, who are guilty of rape, murder, attacking public property and damaging government installations, must be dealt with. Second, as a permanent measure, the genuine political, economic or social grievances must be seriously addressed.

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