

**CONFLICT AND GEOPOLITICS OF BALOCHISTAN
IMPLICATIONS ON PAKISTAN'S SECURITY**

243



Master of Philosophy (M. Phil) in International Relations

By

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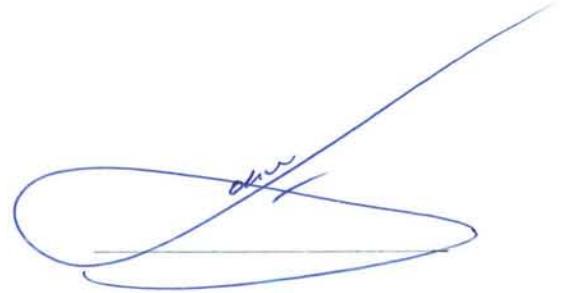
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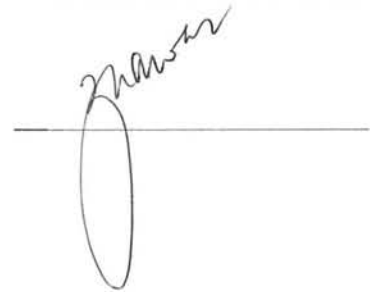
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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved father, Waja Ali Muhammad,
my loving uncles, Sayed Muhammad, Sher Jan, Amanullah and Noor Khan,
and my cousin Dr. Imam Bakhsh

ABSTARCT

The decades-old elusive conflict of Balochistan deserves considerable intellectual and academic attention owing to its promising importance and intimidating implications in the thrilling contemporary regional as well as international politics. The resilient conflict revolves around a triad syndicate of its substantial geopolitical location, abundant natural resources and their unjust exploitation by the federation. It is commonly held that the Baloch nationalists, particularly the belligerent Baloch Sardars, are exclusively responsible for all the ill-happing in the restive province but the empirical approach adopted in this thesis for the conflict analysis deemed it a prejudice proposition, as all stockholders are evenly liable for all insane-phenomena in the tumultuous province. This study has found historical and scientific collusive liaison among the important geopolitical position of the Baloch land (in the middle of South Asia, Central Asia, West Asia and Indian Ocean), the historic claims of Baloch nationalists of being a sovereign nation, the moneyed natural resources and their exploitation, geopolitical interests of the regional and extra-regional players and aggressive behaviors of both Baloch nationalists and Islamabad synchronized with the dynamic changes in the contemporary international politics. The empirical approach adopted in this study suggests that the primary nature of the conflict is purely internal rather than external but presently the external factors have enduringly penetrated in the tug of war between Islamabad and Baloch nationalists, levering up later erstwhile demand of maximum provincial autonomy to a full-fledged sovereignty. The external nexus with the long-running indigenous armed struggle for the longstanding denied but genuine politico-economic rights heralding and inflicting far-reaching repercussions to both, Baloch nationalists and Islamabad respectively. The need of the hour is to unlock the locked horns of the warring parties because the nationalist movement and the right of self-determination are still vibrant in the Machiavellian international politics.

CONTENTS

Abstract

List of Tables/Figures

Acknowledgements

INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER I	
POLITICAL LANDSCAPE OF BALOCHISTAN	25
1.1: Geography of Balochistan	
1.2: Ethno-Cultural Diversity	
1.3: Social Structure of the Baloch Society	
1.4: Baloch Warrior Tribes	
1.5: Political Parties of Balochistan	
1.6: Baloch Insurgent Organizations	
CHAPTER II	
HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE CONFLICT	53
2.1: Establishment of the Khanate	
2.2: Colonization of the Khanate	
2.3: Balochistan under British Raj	
CHAPTER III	
GEOPOLITICAL IMPORTANCE OF BALOCHISTAN	73
3.1: Geopolitics of Balochistan in the Great Game	
3.2: Balochistan in the Superpower Rivalry	
3.3: Geopolitics of Balochistan in the New Great Game	
3.4: Afghanistan's Interests in Balochistan	
CHAPTER IV	
EVOLUTION OF BALOCH NATIONALISM	104
4.1: Struggle for Reviving the lost Sovereignty	
4.2: Accession of Kalat Stat to Pakistan	
4.3: The First Baloch Revolt (1948)	
4.4: Second Baloch Revolt (1958-1969)	
4.5: Third Insurgency (1973-77)	
CHAPTER V	
RENAISSANCE OF BALOCH NATIONALISM	144
5.1: Impacts of 9/11 on Baloch Nationalism	
5.2: Fourth Insurgency and Demand for National Sovereignty	
5.3: Baloch Chronic Grievances	

CHAPTER VI	
IMPLICATIONS ON PAKISTAN'S NATIONAL SECURITY	172
6.1: Threats to National Integrity	
6.2: Economic Implications	
6.3: Rise of Separatist Movements	
6.4: Internationalization of the Conflict	
6.5: Governance Crisis	
6.6: Islamabad's Response towards the Conflict	
6.7: Recommendations for the Conflict Resolution	
CONCLUSION	211
BIBLIOGRAPHY	218

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1: Population by Mother Tongue According to the 1998 Census	29
Table 1.2: Major Political Parties in Provincial Politics	38
Table 1.3: Party Positions in Balochistan Assembly (2008 Elections)	39
Table 1.4: Three Factions of the Baloch Student Organizations (BSO)	46
Table 1.5: Baloch Insurgent Organizations: Leadership, Agenda and Locations	47
Table 2.1: The List of the Khans of the Khanate	62
Table 5.1: Terrorist Attacks in Balochistan (2007-2011)	154
Table 5.2: Metallic and Non-Metallic Minerals in Balochistan	157
Table 5.3: Minerals of Balochistan 2002-2003	157
Table 5.4: Balochistan Gas Fields and Production	158
Table 5.5: Provincial Gas Prices	159
Table 5.6: Health and Education Statistics of Balochistan	161
Table 5.7: Literacy Rate in Balochistan	163
Table 5.8: Human Development Indexes of Different Provinces in Pakistan	164
Table 5.9: Ethnic Ratio of Military Elite (1960s)	168
Table 5.10: Ethnic Ratio of the Top Civilian Bureaucrats (1970s)	168
Table 5.11: Ethnic Ratios of Top Military Elite 1970s	169
Table 5.12: Ethnic Ratio of the Top Civilian Bureaucrats (1970s)	169
Table 5.13: Provincial Seats in National Assembly	170
Table 6.1: Insurgent Attacks on Gas Pipelines in Balochistan (2005-2011)	177
Table 6.2: Prominent Exiled, Asylum-sought, Asylum-seeker Baloch leaders and Intellectuals	184
Table 6.3: Provincial Governments in Balochistan	190
Table 6.4: Estimated Costs of the Mega Projects in Balochistan	197

Table 6.5:	Recruitment of Baloch Youth in Pakistan Army	199
Table 6.6:	The Multiple Indicators under 7 th NFC Award	200
Table 6.7:	Inter-Provincial Resource Distributions	200

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig 2.1	Administration of Khanate	63
Fig 5.1	Land Grabbing Right in Gwadar	166

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INTRODUCTION

Balochistan is the largest and resource-richest but thinly populated least developed province of Pakistan. With an area of 347, 200 km², it covers roughly 44 per cent of Pakistan's entire landmass but shares about 5 per cent of Pakistan's total population. Balochistan occupies a very ambiguous geographical standing on the map of Asia as it features the problem of identity dilemma. Some geographers considered it to be a part of South Asia, whereas it is regarded as "Asian Middle East" by many geographic experts. Geographically, Balochistan is located in West Asia and is a part of Greater Middle East. To the east and west, it is sandwiched between South Asia and West Asia, while its northern and southern frontiers touch Afghanistan and the Arabian Sea respectively. It shares 1200 km border with Afghanistan and it has more or less 800 km long coast along the Arabian Sea in the strategic Indian Ocean. Initially, Balochistan was unified as a self-governing entity by Mir Naseer Khan (Khan of Kalat) in the 18th century. The most impressive demonstration of Baloch political unity came in the 18th century when several successive rulers of Baloch principality of Kalat succeeded in expanding their domain to bring most of the Baloch territories under one political domain that was ruled by Mir Naseer Khan for 44 years beginning in 1749. From 1758 until the death of Mir Naseer Khan in 1794, the Kalat confederacy for the first time perhaps in history enjoyed real autonomy.

In 1839, the British Empire partially colonized Balochistan to chain the Russian towards British India. Following their colonial policy of divide and rule, the British divided Balochistan into three territorial parts. Goldsmid Line agreement of 1871, annexed western Balochistan (Sistan-Balochistan) into Persia (Iran) while the Durand Line agreement of 1893 awarded northern Balochistan (Nimroz & Helmand) to Afghanistan. Eastern Balochistan was kept within the colonial sovereignty of the British India, however, administratively divided into Khanate (Kalat State) and British Balochistan. Britain systematically divided the Baloch area into seven parts; in the far west, the Goldsmid Line gave roughly one-fourth to Persia in 1871; in the north, the Durand Line awarded a small strip of Baloch land to Afghanistan in 1894; and in British India, the Baloch areas were divided into a centrally-administered

entity, British Balochistan, a curtailed remnant of Kalat State [Khanate] and three smaller puppet principalities [Makran, Kharan and Lasbela]. After the decolonization of India, the Khan of Kalat declared the fragile independence of Balochistan on 11th August, 1947 that lasted until it was annexed with Pakistan on 30th March, 1948. Thus Balochistan [Kalat State] remained a sovereign state for seven months under the Khan of Kalat, Mir Ahmed Yar Khan. The khanate of Balochistan became an independent state, recognized by Pakistan, until 1948, when, with the collaboration of the British Government, Pakistan managed the accession of the Khanate without the consent of Baloch people.

Since the annexation of Balochistan into Pakistan in March 1948, the political situation of the province has never been similar to those of other provinces. There has always been a situation of political uncertainty due to which complex political, economic and social problems which has resulted to a full-fledged conflict with an armed rebellion in the province. The province has faced almost four insurgencies with counter military operations since it had been incorporated into Pakistan. Three insurgencies had previously been witnessed in Balochistan, in 1948, 1958-69 and 1973-77. Now, the province is facing another insurgency being waged by separatists operating under the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA), the Baloch Republican Army (BRA) and the Baloch Liberation Front (BLF). The Baloch nationalists have been raising their voice for their denied politico-economic rights but they have always been dealt with a carrot and stick policy from Islamabad. Beside the longstanding legitimate rights of the native nationalists, the geographic factor has been one of the major contributing sources to the long-running conflict of the province. According to several political intellectuals, scholars and politicians, one of the major reasons of the sporadic conflict of Balochistan is its geostrategic location in one of the most conflicting regions of the world due to which it has always been part of international power politics in the region.

Insurgency-ravaged Balochistan has always been one of the vulnerable epicenters of international politics in the region, whether it was the Great Game, a territorial and

defensive battle to expand the territories between the Russian Empire and Great Britain, the Cold War, a proxy war of Capitalist and Communist ideologies between the United States and the former Soviet Union or the current smoldering purported New Great Game, a competition over natural resources, minds and money, between the US and China. The British strategic interests in Balochistan profoundly grew in the mid-19th century as Great Britain was solemnly apprehensive to the strategic expansion of the Czarist Russia towards the warm waters of the Indian Ocean. Consequently, Balochistan was hauled into the vortex of the global power politics, by awarding a huge chunk of its territory to Iran and Afghanistan to lure them towards Great Britain. In the immediate aftermath of the end of World War II, the war-torn Great Britain was superseded by the United States in global power politics arena thereby the pretended Great Game was replaced by the Cold War. The Soviet expansionist desires to reach the warm waters of the Indian Ocean once again fascinated a painful attention of the Cold War towards Balochistan.

According to the London-based Foreign Policy Center (2006), it was death-defying for then colonial power, Britain to countenance Balochistan to be a sovereign state, seeing that it could easily be ensnared by the Soviet Union. It was British advice that led to the forcible accession of Kalat to Pakistan in 1948. Hence, the British strategic interests kept Balochistan within Pakistan's sovereignty. The British apprehensions translated into reality when the Soviet Union revived its dormant eastern question in the early decades of the Cold War as its communist ideology profoundly attracted the Baloch nationalists towards Moscow. Owing to its immediate proximity with Afghanistan, Balochistan was one of the contributory covert military-cum-ideological headquarters of the Afghan Mujahedeen and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in the last decade of the Cold War. The stunning end of the Cold War in 1989, furthermore the precipitate collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, let-up the bipolar world which resulted to the emergence of the United States as the exclusive superpower of the world. Nonetheless, the rise of energy-hungry China and India as the fast-growing economic powers in the first decade of the 21st century have dawn the pre-WW II multi-polarity. The fast developing China has succeeded the Soviet

Union along with the renaissance of the old Great Game, simmering between the United States and China, but this time shrouded in economic competition rather than territorial or ideological relentlessness.

The calculated strategic as well as economic interests of the international actors, moreover the geopolitical fault-lines have fueled the already surviving low-intensity insurgency in the restive province. It is imperative to observe that with the conclusion of the bi-polarity in the early 1990s, the Baloch nationalism also watered down; metaphorically it was near-death experience throughout the 1990s. However, with the arrival of the US forces in Afghanistan, the coercive establishment of a new regime in Kabul and the Chinese earnest enthusiasm to construct Gwadar port in the instant after-effects of the September 11 attacks, the Baloch nationalism has resurged with a belligerent revolutionary intensity if judge against the past insurgencies. The clouds of on-going insurgency have surfaced successively with the steady revival of multipolarity and the arrival of rival international forces on this land with divergent national interests and global orders.

Historically, Pakistani military dominated establishment has focused on state-building rather than nation-building on the basis of common religious bond, ignoring the centuries old cultures and traditions of the minority ethnic communities in the security-driven country, owing to that it lost its eastern wing (now Bangladesh) that is still haunting the Pakistani state and encouraging the oppressed ethnics in the backward and neglected federating units, especially in Balochistan. The durable insurgency in the restive province is a cause of concern, posing stern threats to already fragile national security of Pakistan. So far, Pakistan's policy makers have failed to do away with the resilient insurgency, even though applying different *modus operandi*. Therefore, this dissertation rationally attempts to ponder basic reasons behind the decades-old conflict that need to be explored to move towards a long-lasting and durable peace and heal the festering wounds inflicted on the people of the province.

Statement of the Problem

The troubled history of Balochistan vis-à-vis federation begins with its contested annexation with Pakistan in early 1948. The Baloch nationalists contend that they have been denied to their legitimate politico-economic rights and for that very reason, they have fiercely confronted with the federation for several times since 1948. Unquestionably, the over and over again resurgence of the armed rebellions suggest the presence of some substantial unresolved issues which are creating and widening gulf in center-province relations. Initially, the players of the conflict were internal, the federal government and the belligerent nationalists but *dramatis personae* have multiplied subsequently owing to the multiplication of the regional and global politics. Since the 9/11, when the US troops occupied Afghanistan and China started construction of Gwadar port, and the law and order situation in Balochistan deteriorated. The exacerbating situation took a u-turn in August 2006, when Nawab Akbar Bugti was mysteriously killed in a military operation which starkly altered the nationalists' demand of greater provincial autonomy into political sovereignty. Ever since the conflict and geopolitics of Balochistan have been a severe challenge towards Pakistan's subtle national security and Pakistan's security establishment perceived the foreign hands are shouldering the nationalist's waged-insurgency to pursue their strategic interests in strategically important but alienated land. Recently, the Pakistan's Army has changed its operational priorities in its "green book" as it deemed the internal security threats more serious and alarming than the external threats due to the ongoing guerrilla wars.

Rationale of the Study

The conflict of Balochistan has *raison d'être* to be studied in a comprehensive and constructive approach as the insurgency-ravaged province has posed serious challenges and threats to the integrity of Pakistan. Threatening the national as well as the territorial integrity of Pakistan, now the conflict has surfaced as one of the most contending national issues being discussed in corridors of power, media, bureaucracy, judiciary, security establishment, political parties, and civil society. The decades-old insurgency is now entirely swallowing up the province which occupies around half of

total national landmass and protecting most of the valuable minerals and proven resources of natural resources in the country. Beside natural resources, it is situated on a significant geo-strategic location, bridging the Southwest Asia, Central Asia with South Asia and Southeast Asia along with a strategic coast of about 800km in Arabian Sea, on the fault-lines of the divergent strategic interests of the regional and far-regional powers. The Chinese presence in Gwadar and the US presence in the region have once again dragged the province in the vortex of international politics. The unending so-called war on terror has put the restive province as frontline territory due to its immediate proximity with war-torn Afghanistan. In the beginning of the fatigue-causing war on terror, Pakistan's military regime was seemed to be on the same page with the Bush administration of the USA but with the blossoming of Indian influence in the war-ravaged Afghanistan and resurgence of simmering insurgency in the conflict-prone Balochistan ominously compelled the minds of policy makers in Islamabad to pursue a realistic policy concerning the US-led war against terrorism. Since then, the Pakistani establishment has been blamed by the U.S and its allies for adopting a dual policy of appeasing them on one side and encouraging Taliban to counter the imminent Indian influence on the other side of its western border. Pakistan's security establishment solemnly perceived the Indo-Afghan unfolding nexus, probably the US also covertly supporting the estranged Baloch nationalists to counter the Chinese presence in the province, ultimately destabilizing the already fragile state of Pakistan.

Objectives of the Study

The basic aims of the study are to explore the factual nature of the conflict which has engulfed the entire province particularly the dominant ethnic population. The study will explore the historical dynamics (Great Game & Cold War) of the conflict vis-à-vis the interests of the major powers (The USA, Russia, China, India and Afghanistan) in the conflicting region and their alleged virtual nexus with the Baloch nationalists. This study endeavors to define the conflict in the context of Baloch nationalism, regional and far-regional politics with special reference to the geopolitical location of Balochistan. Currently Pakistan seems to be applying a three-

pronged strategy to deal with the six and half decades-old conflict of Balochistan but this three-dimensional strategy has not earned encouraging and fruitful results as the insurgent's violence is engulfing the breadth and width of the province, moreover the Baloch youth is passionately being indoctrinated in the belligerent nationalist dogma. A deep study of the virtual relation between the geostrategic location and the conflict of the resource-rich province would unearth those ground realities which are creating the gulf between the Baloch and Islamabad and also suggest policy options to employ certain strategies of conflict resolution to build bridges rather than barriers. An enduring acceptable resolution of the conflict will certainly allow the energy-hungry Pakistan to address its severe energy crisis, securing a prolong energy security by utilizing the abundant natural resources of the geopolitically important Baloch territory.

Literature Review

Since the emergence of Baloch nationalism, several books and research articles have surfaced to intellectually analyze the conflict and geopolitics of Balochistan. Some of these sources are very important while discussing the impact of geopolitics and conflict of Balochistan on Pakistan's national security. The geopolitical conflict of Balochistan is one of the burning issues not only in Pakistan but also in regional and international capitals. This long-running conflict has also captivated the academic and journalist attentions of some of the most eminent and distinguished scholars worldwide. Some of their intellectual works really deserve to be mention here;

The Problem of Greater Baluchistan: A Study of Baluch Nationalism (1987). This praiseworthy historical book is considered to be the bible of Baloch nationalism, authored by the German based Baloch intellectual Dr. Inayatullah Baloch, a native of Dera Ismail Khan (KPK). His book is the fundamental and very important historical discourse on Baloch nationalism in which the writer has analyzed and identified the basic issues of Balochistan conflict. He is the first Baloch historian and intellectual who has traced the idea of greater Balochistan and its implications. The author empirically investigates the case of contested Baloch nationalism through the

spectrum of theories of nationalism and nation states. The writer points out that the international frontiers of Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan were drawn by the imperialist powers (Great Britain and Czarist Russia) during the so-called Great Game and these frontiers in turn have given birth to the ethnic conflicts in the region and tension in the inner-state relations. The author suggests that the future of States like Pakistan will remain insecure because of the demands of its division.

Inside Baluchistan Autobiography: The Khan of Kalat (1975). Autobiography of the last executive Khan of Kalat Mir Ahmed Yar Khan illustrates the historical foundation of his ancestral Khanate by his dynastic predecessors, the official agreements between the British officials and the rulers of the Khanate but it mainly focuses on his personal contributions vis-à-vis Baloch nationalism and his efforts for the establishment of a Baloch sovereign state on the political map of the world. It also explains the political relationship between the Khanate and the British Empire and the post-independent chronic events which led the disintegration of the de facto Baloch State and the annexation of the Khanate of Kalat. In his intellectual memoirs, Mr. Khan thoroughly explains the strained events of the first and second Baloch insurgencies and his struggle which he rendered for the federation of Pakistan.

Back to the Future: The Khanate of Kalat and the Genesis of Baloch Nationalism 1915–1955 (2008). This valuable book on the origin of early Baloch nationalism is authored by Dr. Martin Axmann, a political scientist, has focused on ethno-nationalist movements of the Indian sub-continent. This book was published in 2008 during the third uprising of the Baloch nationalism with the analysis of decolonization of the Indian sub-continent. The book deeply looks into the birth of Baloch nationalism during the first five decades of the 20th century, with the rise of the Muslim movement in the Indian sub-continent. His thesis summaries the colonial legacy of Balochistan, depicts the turn down and collapse of the Khanate of Kalat, analyzes the failures of the integration efforts by Khan of Kalat, Kalat's annexation to Pakistan and causes of the Khan failures to unite a sovereign Baloch land.

In Search of Solutions: An Autobiography of Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo (2009). The autobiography of moderate leftist leader Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, former Governor of Balochistan, is compiled by his political secretary, B. M. Kutty. It contains valuable information about the early days of Baloch national struggle, role of the leftist parties in Pakistan and dismissal of the NAP-led government in North Western Frontier Province (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) and Balochistan, as well as the events that culminated in the emergence of Bangladesh and the PNA movement that led to the overthrow of Bhutto's government. The book makes known many veiled characteristics of Pakistan's political history with respect to Balochistan conflict and all events leading to the third Baloch uprising in 1973. Mir Bizenjo tried to find principled and pragmatic approach towards the solution of Balochistan crisis. Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo was a man of great conviction and resolve. In the early days of his political carrier, he was a staunch supporter of the independent Balochistan but after analyzing the depth and width of the ground realities, he became a firm believer of the true federation in Pakistan and worked for a strong federation in Pakistan. He firmly believed on the political dialogue and his critics called him the "Father of Dialogue."

Baloch Nationalism: Its Origin and Development (2004). The Sweden based author of this book, Taj Mohammad Bressege is one of the prominent intellectual who has deep knowledge about the Baloch nationalism. This book was published in 2004 just before the third rising of the Baloch nationalism. The central theme of this book revolves around two basic questions; is there a Baloch nationality with sufficiently developed national consciousness and distinctive characteristics shared by the members of this nationality? If so, is the national consciousness of the Baloch, their determination to maintain their national identity, and their desire for political self-government, strong enough to say that there is a Baloch national movement. This book updates the rise of Baloch nationalism in this region and explores in details its development in the 1920-80 periods. By adopting a comparative approach it contributes to better understand the sub-national movements. It describes and

analyzes the foundation, evolution, dynamics and implications of the Baloch nationalism.

In Afghanistan's Shadow: Baloch Nationalism and Soviet Temptation (1981). This most quoted book on Baloch political movement mainly focused on the events of the third Baloch rebellion movement was authored by Selig S. Harrison who is senior scholar of the Woodrow Wilson International Center and director of the Asia Centre for International Policy, Washington DC. He has dealt with the politics and security of South Asia and West Asia especially in the context of international politics including the Great Game and the Cold War. In his book on Baloch armed uprising, Harrison spotlights on the impacts of neighboring Afghanistan's political shadow on the Baloch nationalism in which he also deeply analyses the Soviet role and its strategic considerations in Balochistan and Baloch nationalism during intense periods of the Cold War.

'Balochis of Pakistan: On the Margins of History' by Foreign Policy Centre London (2006). This is a historical research article which has been published by the Foreign Policy Centre London; a think tank organization during the early stages of the fourth Baloch insurgency in 2006. This research article gives comprehensive understanding of the conflict of Balochistan with special reference to the then colonial power, Great Britain. It provides historical evidences about the volatile nature of this decades-old conflict. It offers a historical account of the struggle and argues that the Balochis have been disregarded by the British Empire during their colonial rule. After the partition of British India, they sought complete independence, but were soon overtaken by Pakistan with British support. The paper explains that while Pakistan has managed to quell Balochi rebellions, its coercive state apparatus has strengthened their resolve.

'Baloch Nationalism and the Geopolitics of Energy Resources: the Changing Context of Separatism in Pakistan' (2008). This research article is the basic theoretical framework of this thesis which analyzes the impacts of regional energy politics on the resilient Baloch nationalism was written by Robert G. Wirsing and published by the

Strategic Studies Institute (SSI), US Army War College in 2008. The writer is a faculty member of the Asia-Pacific Centre for Security Studies. As Dr. Robert G. Wirsing makes clear that Pakistan's quest for energy security has run up against a resurgent tribal pro-independence rebellion in the breadth and width of the province of Balochistan by dint of both its own energy resources and its geo-strategic location between South Asia and West Asia, and is key to Pakistan's energy future. The rebellion pits a government determined to let nothing stand in the way of its energy agenda against a Baloch nationalist movement equally determined to have a greater voice in Balochistan's future. Dr. Wirsing's comprehensive and informative theory makes a clear case that triumphant resolution of the Baloch question is indispensable to Pakistan's accomplishment of energy security. It focuses on the energy resources and security issues which have emboldened the Baloch nationalism.

Balochistan: Its Strategic Importance (1992) written by Sayed Ahmed IQbal, elaborates the significant strategic importance of Balochistan in the Indian Ocean. It critically investigates the strategic importance of the restive province vis-à-vis the Great Game between the British Empire and the Tsarist Russia in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and the Cold War between the USA and the Soviet Union in the latter half of the 20th century. The author broadly and deeply explains the Soviet and Afghan belligerent nexus against Pakistan with reference to Baloch nationalism and the third Baloch armed uprising of 1973 during the regional proxy wars of the Cold War. This book discusses the impacts of the Afghanistan syndrome on the festering turmoil of Balochistan, haunting Pakistan's national security after its dismemberment in 1971.

Baluchistan: Historical and Political Process (1985), written by former bureaucrat Ayub Bakhsh Awan, served in the Central Government of Pakistan as Director of Intelligence and as Secretary in the Ministry of the Home Affairs, gives an intellectual understanding about the historical political process leading to the post-independent political turmoil of the turbulent province. He travelled widely in Balochistan, having deep knowledge of the Baloch tribes especially the warrior tribes.

His book gives a virtual picture of chronic dealings between the British Empire and the Khanate of Kalat, ranging from British Great Game “Close Border verses the Forward Policies”, the official agreements, the indigenous struggle of independence, controversial referendum and accession of Kalat to Pakistan, early Baloch tribal mutinies and the efforts to integrate the disturbed tribal states in the mainstream federation.

Relevance of the Study

The secession movement in the geo-strategic Balochistan is touching the foreign policies of many great powers and regional powers diverting the attentions of almost all those media-glued Pakistanis. The domestic pressure from politicians and civil society as well as the international pressure from human rights organization, the USA, India, China, Afghanistan and Central Asia further obscure Pakistan’s policy options to deal with the crisis. Ultimately, the rational thinking is that no one gains from the long-lasting and bloody rebellion and a timely resolution of the exacerbating conflict is in the best interest of all covert and overt internal, regional and extra-regional players. The integration of the estranged Baloch nationalists is sensible and relevant. The strategically important resource-rich province may herald a possible way out for the economic woes of both center and the province. By utilizing the abundant untapped natural deposits, regional pipelines, and strategic Gwadar Deep Sea Port on an acceptable and agreed formula would woo the all longstanding problems of the center and province. A strong nuclear armed state (Pakistan) is in the best interest of the USA because without the unwavering shore up from Pakistan, it would be deeply difficult if not impossible for the USA to win a decade-plus war against terrorism in neighboring Afghanistan, the terrorists’ hotbed. Pakistan will continue to practice even dual policy to serve its national interests and territorial survival until and unless it’s national security apprehensions are addressed especially by the USA. At the same time a strong but true federation can serve the enduring interests of the local population rather a weak sovereign Balochistan that could lure more colonial-type stake-holders (foreign elements). A sovereign Balochistan would not be granted without a repugnant and devastating battle with Islamabad and the Rawalpindi, in due

course which would only lengthen the Baloch sufferings. Additionally, an independent Balochistan might open courses for other near death nationalist movements in Sindh and Khyber Pukhtunkhwa (KPK).

Hypothesis

International as well as regional political maneuverings since cataclysmic episode of 9/11 tacitly depict a virtually implied nexus among the significant geopolitics, abundant natural resources and conflicting regional interests of foreign actors in the conflict-stricken strategic province of Balochistan. But supposedly this nexus has shackled hand with the unrelenting decades-long “Baloch Nationalist Movement” caused by the long-running denial of the legitimate politico-economic rights to them for the last about 65 years. The interests-based nexus is starkly altering the much-talked demand of greater provincial autonomy to the contested demand of political sovereignty that is inflicting severe threats to the delicate national security of the federation.

Theoretical Framework

This study is primarily built upon the concept of ‘nationalism and geopolitics of energy resources’ derived from Robert G. Wirsing’s *Baloch Nationalism and the Geopolitics of Energy Resources: the Changing Context of Separatism in Pakistan*. Modifications in Baloch nationalism in the context of energy resources contribute the major part of Robert Wirsing’s study. As the quest for energy security stands at the top of most nations’ foreign policy. Energy resources and strategic location of Balochistan are earnestly vital for Pakistan as the country is facing severe energy crisis. The untapped natural resources of Balochistan could minimize the acute energy crisis of Pakistan while the two proposed pipelines for importing gas from Iran and Turkmenistan have to pass through the insurgency-torn province of Balochistan. Baloch nationalist Akbar Khan Bugti had said that “only the goodwill of Baloch people can allow the proposed gas pipeline from Iran and Central Asia to India to pass through their soil. The Iran Pakistan Gas Pipeline (IP) and Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India Gas Pipeline (TAPI), inevitably vulnerable to the acts of

sabotage, would have to travel about more than thousand kilometers of sensitive distance in this province (Balochistan). The author observed that the nature of contemporary insurgency differs in many significant respects from that of its 1970s predecessor. Most distinguished of these differences are 'those stemming from energy resource developments' in what some are calling the "Asian Middle East." The author manifests that the mounting energy insecurity of Pakistan has magnified the geopolitical and geo-economic significance of Balochistan, while at the same time complicating Pakistan's effort to cope with the province's resurgent tribal separatism. According to the author this change in the energy context applies a three-fold impact;

- It lifts Balochistan and Baloch nationalism to a much higher position in the governments' priorities.
- It arms the Baloch insurgents to drive the economic and political costs far higher than ever in past.
- It turns Balochistan into an important corridor for energy trafficking in the region especially from the energy-rich Middle East and the Central Asia.

Nationalism is the sentimental feelings of a group of politically united people who are genetically or territorially bonded and strongly believe that their collective national interests can be best achieved by control of their own nation-state. A united group of people that claim to be a nation must hold a shared history, common culture, tradition, language, religion and most importantly a territory. Nationalism had been the most powerful political movement in the 20th century against the colonial and imperial domination. Nationalism is the demand and struggle of a nationality or people aware of their national identity to form a state on the basis of a common culture, language, history, geography.¹ Contemporary oppressed ethnic groups around the world still consider it to be the most belligerent movement and ray of hope for their political and nationalist aspirations as nationalism is still one of the most powerful movements of the contemporary world. Three basic approaches have been identified by political scholars to study the basic nature of the nationalism. They are;

¹ Inayatullah Baloch, *The Problems of Greater Balochistan: A case study of Baloch Nationalism*, (Wiesbaden: Steiner Verlag, 1978), p.8.

primordialist, perennialist and modern approaches. The main theme of Primordialists is that a nation exists not as social construct but as a given, organic entity... Perennialists argue that nationalist ideology might be recent and modern phenomenon; nations do have pre-modern roots... Modern approaches to nationalism assume a European origin of the nation-state and imply that until around 1800 A.D. people had local, regional or religious loyalties but no idea of nation state.²

In this study of Baloch nationalism, the modern school of thought would be applied which states that the concept of nationalism is entirely modern and it is socially and politically constructed for some political reasons. Political scientists from the modern school of thought trace the origin of nationalism from the rise of industrialization. The most distinguished scholar of modernist theory of nationalism is considered to be Ernest Gellner who dates back it from the French Revolution. It should be noted that in the modernist approach of the nation, it is nationalism that creates the national identity.³ According to Gellner, nationalism is not stirring of nations from self-consciousness; it invents nations where they do not exist. It is nationalism that creates the nation. John Stuart Mill has explained nationalism as “a portion of mankind may be said to constitute a nationality, if they are united among themselves by common sympathies, which do not exist between them and any others...which make them co-operate with each other more willingly than with other people, desire to be under the same government, and desire that it should be governed by themselves.”⁴

The phenomenon of Baloch nationalism is very much controversial and complex. Some scholars strongly deny the existence of Baloch nationalism and regard it just an ethnic movement that has emerged and resurged because they have been politically and economically marginalized by the major ethnic groups of the region. Having persistently denied their rights, the Punjabi and Persian dominated states of Pakistan and Iran have always claimed that the Baloch are not a nation, but a tribal society

² Martin Axmann, *Back to the Future: the Khanate of Kalat and the Genesis of Baloch Nationalism 1915-1955*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp.2-6.

³ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), p.50.

⁴ John S. Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*, (New York: Liberal Arts, 1958) p.287.

with traditional tribal characteristics, thus lacking legitimacy for the right of self-rule and self-determination.⁵ The Baloch nationalists fiercely reject these claims and insist that Baloch is a nation with nationalistic approaches. From the 17th century until 1928 and 1948 respectively, Balochistan preserved its independent status. The Baloch state maintained diplomatic relations with its immediate neighbors Iran, Afghanistan, Mughal India and Islamic Empire of Ottoman Turkey.⁶ While some prominent writers consider it as a full-fledged national movement, “British rule in Balochistan, and its rather sudden end and replacement by Pakistani rule in [1948], brought about unprecedented change. It disrupted the traditional balance of a hitherto tribally organized society barely having a collective ethnic identity, and created a new constellation of shared interests. Baloch nationalism offered a common platform for various elites of the region through mobilization. In this context, the emergence of Baloch nationalism must be seen as an instrument for achieving political aims and as an argument for seizing and retaining political control of a Baloch national homeland.”⁷

Several scholars believe that the conflict inside Balochistan is due to its geopolitical standing between the oil rich Middle East, heavily populated South Asia and energy resource-rich Central Asia. Balochistan was brought into the vortex of global power politics during the Great Game between the Czarist Russia and the Great Britain in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Being one of the launch-pad of Mujahedeen in the Cold War, the West was severely threatened by the expansionist desires of the Soviets towards the warm waters of the Indian Ocean through Balochistan which sandwiched between the volatile landlocked Afghanistan the strategic Arabian Sea. Since Soviet forces had militarily occupied Afghanistan in late 1979, the possibility had naturally arisen that the Soviet leaders might be tempted to realize the long-

⁵ Taj Muhammad Bressege, *Baloch Nationalism: Its Origin and Development*, (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 2004), p.3.

⁶ Inayatullah Baloch, *op.cit*, p.9.

⁷ Martin Axmann, *op.cit*, p.15.

cherished goal of securing a warm-water port [Gwadar] by exploiting lingering separatist grievances in neighboring Pakistan [Balochistan.]⁸

Unfortunately, Balochistan has once again attracted the eagled-eyed military plus economic superpowers in the simmering New Great Game in the region. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces have replaced the Soviets forces in Afghanistan while Chinese expansions pursuits in the Indian Ocean have replaced the Soviet expansionist desires. The presence of the present-day competing economic-military heavyweights, the US and China, on the Pakistani territory has dragged Pakistan into a severe security dilemma. National and international media report that following the dreadful event of 9/11, the United States has established secret military bases in Pasni (Balochistan coastline) Washuk (Shamsi airbase) and Jacobabad, while China has a vigorous foothold in Gwadar. Shamsi airbase was under the US control until December 2011 but the US was forced to leave the strategic base near Iranian and Afghan borders owing to the NATO attacks on Pakistani Salala check posts near Afghan border that killed 24 Pakistani soldiers. After 9/11 and the arrival of the US forces in neighboring Afghanistan, the base [Shamsi] somehow came under the control of American personnel via and opaque trilateral deal.⁹ Geographically being sandwiched between South Asia and the West Asia, Balochistan preserves a significant geopolitical plus geo-strategic position on the map of the greater Middle East. Its newly constructed Gwadar port, a strategic military and trade base in Arabian Sea at the mouth of the Persian Gulf through which 30% of the world's daily oil supply passes, by Pakistan's ever-ally China, has become the bone of contention in the region. If it were not for the strategic location of Balochistan and the rich potential of oil, uranium, and other resources, it would be difficult to imagine anyone fighting over this bleak, desolate, and forbidding land.¹⁰

⁸ Selig S. Harrison, *In Afghanistan Shadow: Baloch Nationalism and Soviet Temptation*, (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1981), p.1.

⁹ 'Shamsi airbase' *Dawn editorial*, December 13, 2011.

¹⁰ Robert G. Wirsing, *op.cit*, p.3.

The beginning of 21st century has unlocked a new era of economic competition and political face-off between the United States and China to formulate the politico-economic world order, synonymous to their respective economic interests and political cultures. To accomplish their crucial and charted goals, they require more confident allies and natural resources in the region. The Gwadar port is situated right next to the strategic Straits of Hormuz and its busy oil shipping lanes. The surrounding region is home to around two-thirds of the world's oil reserves. It is also on the shortest route to the oil rich Central Asian states through land-locked Afghanistan.

This thesis studies the geopolitical conflict of Balochistan and Baloch nationalism in the context of geopolitical significance and energy resources. The geopolitics and energy resources have a direct and significant relationship with the contemporary resurgence of Baloch nationalism. Baloch insurgents have waged on-again off-again tribal insurgency since the arrival of British forces in Balochistan and then against Pakistani military since 1948, but the recent trends in modifications deserve profound scrutiny. Balochistan being the largest but least populated and least developed province of Pakistan is rich in energy resources. Secondly, by virtue of its strategic geographic standing in West Asia, it is transit land route for major proposed natural gas pipelines that signifies its value in the regional pipeline politics. Thirdly, it commands a coastline of around 800km in Arabian Sea. The strategic Gwadar port at the mouth of Persian Gulf further enhances its geopolitical importance in the eyes of super powers. Gwadar has secured a very strategic position in the naval doctrines of the superpowers as it lies at the mouth of the strait of the Hormuz that is the bottleneck of the Persian Gulf for a fifth of all oil traded worldwide. Roughly 90 percent of all Gulf-oil, or 20 percent of oil traded worldwide, must pass through this narrow waterway [Strait of Hormuz].¹¹ It is located at a distance of around 400 miles west of Karachi that enhance the naval-strategic depth of Pakistan's naval force which is vulnerable to naval blockade by Indian navy. The USA and its regional

¹¹ Raymond E. Karam, "The Strait of Hormuz: What's at Stake", *Foreign Policy Journal*, January 12, 2012.

confederate India perceive the Chinese presence as a titanic and austere potential intimidation to their worthy economic and security interests in this unique sphere of the world. A robust Chinese presence at Gwadar would serve to check India's own strategic ambitions, as Islamabad leverages Beijing against New Delhi.¹² Its instantaneous proximity to a nuclear suspect Iran has further enhanced its geographical standing. The construction of Gwadar port at the entrance of the Persian Gulf is considered to be a part of the Chinese grand naval expansion along the Asian and African coasts, called the "string of pearls" in the course of which it keeps a tight rein on the contiguous strategic ports of strategically and commercially important Indian Ocean. China is building or upgrading ports not only in Pakistan and Burma [Myanmar], but in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, too. The point must be emphasized that it is unclear exactly what China intends for these Indian Ocean ports, China's alleged "String of Pearls".¹³ Indian quest to find an alternative route through Iran to reach out the natural resources of the Central Asian Republics has further aggravated the regional security situation as it is already upgrading the Bandar Abbas port of Chabahar in the Iranian province of Sistan-Balochistan. One of the first items on New Delhi's list of aid in Afghanistan was the construction of a 218 kilometers Zaranj-Delaram highway link reaching from the Iranian border in southwestern Afghanistan... and thence to Tajikistan in Central Asia.¹⁴ Baloch nationalism is sandwiched between two nearby and rival energy corridors under construction. Pakistan's economy is dependent on natural gas whereas according to Pakistan's Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) there is 22 trillion cubic feet unearthed natural gas in Kohlu Agency of Balochistan. The potential insurgency in Balochistan has clouded the prospect of gas exploration in the restive gas-rich districts of Dera Bugti and Kohlu Agency that could be a better source to cope with the energy crisis in Pakistan at least for the short-term.

¹² Robert D. Kaplan, "China's Port in Pakistan?" *Foreign Policy Magazine*, May 27, 2011.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Robert G. Wirsing, *op.cit.*, p.19.

Research Questions

The presence of contending actors and conflicting interests in the restive-province influencing the longstanding Baloch demand of maximum provincial autonomy further aggravating unending conflict and hostilities between the Baloch and Islamabad. The long standing Islamabad-Baloch tension is nearly in collusion with the international rivalries in the region which has stem certain questions that are raised in this research study;

1. What are the major causes of the resilient conflict?
2. What are the internal dimensions of the conflict?
3. What are the longstanding grievances of the Baloch?
4. How strategically important Balochistan has been dragged into the clash of superpowers interests?
5. How the abundant natural resources have turned into the bone of contention between Islamabad and Baloch nationalists?
6. What are the international or regional dimensions of the conflict and how the geopolitics of Balochistan has internationalized the conflict of Balochistan?
7. What are the responses of Islamabad towards Baloch grievance and theories of foreign hands and how the tested polices have pushed the province away from mainstream?
8. What are the challenges that emerged from the conflict, their implications on the integrity of the federation and their recommended solutions?

Methodology

During the course of writing this thesis, study model follows a multi-dimensional approach where different types of sources have been studied and consulted to strongly support the hypothetical framework of the thesis. Serious efforts have been made to apply scientific methods to robustly foster all arguments which constitute the basic pillars of the exposition. This thesis focuses on both the primary and secondary sources. These include the review of the available literature and conducting interviews of various Baloch nationalists, scholars and youth. Analytical, descriptive and empirical methods have been used to answer the question related to the

geopolitical conflict. It is sought to strengthen the reliability of the study by using the secondary sources of reliable local and foreign literature. The central library of the Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad, the departmental library of the Balochistan Study Centre in the University of Balochistan, Quetta and the Archives Department, Govt. of Balochistan Quetta, have been the major sources of collection for the secondary sources. Internet is one of the major sources to collect hard-headed data as the decades-old conflict has attracted several online magazines and journals which have published priceless research papers on this internationalized issue.

The primary sources include interviews of different eminent scholars, senior political leaders from different school of thoughts and Baloch youth which are the major driving force of the contemporary insurgency in the crisis-ridden province. The sources are preferred to perk up validity and reliability of the empirical findings. Primary sources have helped to critically scrutinize the conflict through different political lens. Relevant literatures in daily newspapers, periodic or annual publications of different local and international think tanks and institutions have been incorporated in the study of this thesis. Official sources have been quoted to cross-examine the various long-standing demands of people of the province. Beside these, the autobiographies of renowned political personalities have been given particular credence since they provide some valuable knowledge to understand the true nature of the age-old conflict.

Division of the Study

This study is divided into six chapters with an introductory part which is a synopsis of the whole thesis. Chapter-I “Political Landscape of Balochistan” deals with the prevailing state of politics in Balochistan that includes polity, political parties, style of governance, policy direction and relationship between parties. It studies the political geography, ethnic diversity, the structure of Baloch society, major Baloch tribes, nationalist political parties and militant organizations in the province. The major tribes, nationalist and militant organizations are the major actors of the conflict. It explains the social, cultural and anthropological and political dimensions of different

ethnic groups and more specifically it studies Baloch political culture. The rationale behind this chapter is to explain that who is who and what is what in the restive province. The conflict-ridden federating unit has a very hodgepodge political culture where different political and cultural schools of thoughts prevail. Mishmash society, dominance of tribal elites, ethnic and sectarian imbalances have further aggravated the sub-national conflict the restive sub-state.

Chapter-II “Historical Overview of Balochistan Conflict” is related to the troubled history of the decades-old conflict which has far-reaching implications both at local and regional levels. From the critical analysis of the historical facts it became easy to understand the basic nature of the conflict that has engulfed the whole security situation of the province. It shed a spotlight in the early tribal confederations of the Baloch-Brahui tribes in western and southeastern Balochistan. The main focus of this chapter is the tumultuous political history starts from establishment of Baloch confederacy under the Khan of Kalat, Mir Naseer Khan that runs through the British colonial adventurism in Balochistan establishment of the British colonization and accession of the Khanate to Pakistan and the subsequent insurgencies. Many historians consider the arrival of British forces as the stimulator of Baloch tribal nationalism which later on transcend to middle-class driven Baloch nationalism under the leadership of Baloch Student Organization (BSO). Besides explaining the British imperial adventurism, this chapter critically evaluates the national interests of British Empire which drove the British forces on this tribal land.

Chapter-III, “Geopolitical Importance of Balochistan” is one of the most important chapters of this thesis as it explains the geopolitical and geo-strategic significance of Balochistan. Balochistan had been historically a battleground of international politics. It attracted the strategic attentions of the British forces in the Great Game. Since then it became an integral part of the Czarist Russian “expansionist strategy” and the British 19th century “close border and forward polices”. This chapter also focuses super power rivalry in the province during the Cold War. The geopolitics of energy resources is critically important as the strategic and energy interests of the regional

and extra-regional actors converge and diverge when they reach to this piece of land known as Asian Middle East. The belligerent nationalism and energy geopolitics have shaken hands at this energy resource-rich and strategically important land which has resulted to vibrant political and militant activities in the province. This chapter also studies the Afghan national interests in Balochistan.

Chapter-IV “Evolution of Baloch Nationalism” critically analyses the evolutionary birth of Baloch nationalism in the tribal society. The geneses of Baloch nationalism are often traced from the tribal struggle against the British colonial domination. The imperial Britain in India was suspicious of the Czarist Russia and to declare Afghanistan as buffer zone between the then-competing super powers, the British forces intruded Balochistan under the rule of Khan Mehrab Khan who waged a tribal guerilla war against the British forces but was killed and defeated. Since then the sentiments of Baloch nationalism surfaced which later on intensified when the Kalat state and its three principalities were allegedly annexed with the newly born Pakistan resulting to emergence of a low-intensity tribal insurgency which has now engulfed the whole provincial Baloch areas. The chronic Baloch insurgency of 1948, 1958-69, and armed quest for greater provincial autonomy in 1973-77 are the focal point of this chapter.

Chapter-V “Renaissance of Baloch Nationalism” mainly studies the contemporary Baloch politico-armed uprising (fourth insurgency) vis-à-vis the changing context of the global and regional politics especially since the 9/11 and their impacts on the indigenous long-lasting political movement for the legitimate politico-economic rights. The political upheaval and longstanding grievances of the indigenous people exacerbated with the change in the dynamics of international politics after the tragic events of 9/11 in the USA and Chinese arrival at Gwadar for the construction of an all-weather economic-military port. Chiefly, the center of attention of this chapter is impacts of 9/11 on the Baloch nationalism and their low-intensity insurgency against the federation. This chapter also rationally scrutinizes the longstanding grievances of the Baloch nationalists, one of the major causes of the durable insurgency.

Chapter-VI “Implications on Pakistan’s National Security” is the last chapter of the study which academically investigates the across-the-board unceasing repercussions of the geopolitical conflict on the insubstantial national security of Pakistan. Political and economic implications are the dominate features of this chapter as Pakistan’s national integration has been at stake due to the migration of settlers from urban areas of the province. Besides that the energy crisis in Pakistan has mounted for the last five years because the fragile security situation is the major impediment for unearthing the untapped huge energy resources of the province. Threats to national integrity, rise of separatist movements, internationalization of the conflict and governance crisis in the politically-standstill province are the main focus of this chapter. This chapter also includes the multi-dimensional counter-insurgency of Islamabad towards the decades-old conflict. Islamabad has adopted a three-pronged counterinsurgency strategy that includes psychological warfare, political and economic incentives and a military strategy to manage the conflict. It also proposes note-worthy recommendations for the policy making circles that could be applied for the peaceful conflict resolution process.

CHAPTER I

POLITICAL LANDSCAPE OF BALOCHISTAN

Political landscape defines the prevailing state of politics of a specific region that includes polity, political parties, governance system, policy direction and liaison between parties. It also explains the geography of a particular area, orientation of the people, their different codes of life and their social, political and economic relations with the state. Before proceeding further, it is imperative to make a sketch of the political landscape of Balochistan to have a better understanding of the decades-old conflict in the province.

Pakistan is considered to be a multi-ethnic nation where pluralism is still in the stage of evolution. Balochistan being the largest province has unique political landscape which is not similar to those of the other provinces of Pakistan. This priceless piece of land has capped several worthy natural resources in its earth layers. The vast land of the province has harbored different ethnic communities for centuries. The geography and the natural resources have profound impacts on the national and international politics vis-à-vis Balochistan. The different tribes and ethnic groups have been in the turf war to sway the province and its untapped natural resources. The tug of war between the mainstream Baloch nationalists and the federal government over the natural resources of the province has provoked an internationalized insurgency in the province, threatening the frail sovereignty of the country. The Chinese presence in this region, the unending War on Terror and the contested Iranian nuclear program in the contemporary international politics have fascinated the attention of the heavy-weights in the international community towards this piece of land and its native inhabitants. In the political landscape, the geography, ethnic-diversity, social landscape, influential tribes, nationalist parties and different militant organizations are the focus of the study which have deep influence on the conflict of Balochistan. The nexus among them will further explain the ground realities and the basic nature of the crisis that has been surfacing on and off since the early days of the decolonization of the Indian Sub-continent from the British Empire. The significant geographic location of the restive province has enhanced the importance of the country at the international

politics but the alienated Baloch population has become a serious concern for the Pakistan as emergence of various voices for independence have threatened the national security of the country. The long-running imbroglio has put certain question marks before the national building process of Pakistani state as Pakistan is a multi-national state trying to be a nation based on the basis of religious fraternity.

1.1: Geography of Balochistan

The conflict-ridden impoverished province of Balochistan is one of the four federating units of Pakistan consisting of six administrative divisions and thirty executive districts, is a region of geo-strategic importance and rich in oil, gas and other valuable natural resources. Balochistan is located at the most important junction of South Asia extending over 340,000 sq miles sharing international borders with Iran (west) ,Afghanistan (north), provincial borders with KPK (northeast), Sindh and Punjab (east) and the southern Arabian Sea coastline in its south. According to some archeologists and historians, the Baloch people have inhabited this land for hundreds of years with their distinct culture, identity, and languages (predominantly Balochi). The chronological evidences suggest that they have also inhabited the land that goes beyond this province, it includes lands in Iran and Afghanistan which portrays many Balochistans in this political region, a Pakistani Balochistan, an Iranian Balochistan, and an Afghani Balochistan, and then there is a historical and cultural Balochistan imagined as a nation without a state by many Baloch people living in the region and beyond. Balochistan is a nation without a state in contemporary world. According to Inayatullah Baloch, Lord Curzon had defined Balochistan as the country between the Helmand [Afghanistan] and the Arabian Sea, and between Kirman [Iran] and Sindh.

Balochistan comprises of around 44 percent of the total land mass of Pakistan, spreading over 347,190 square kilometers, but has only five-six per cent of the country's population. On the west, Balochistan shares around 500 miles long border with Iran known as Goldsmid Line, and on the north it shares more or less 745 miles of the Durand Line, the long frontier between Pakistan and Afghanistan. In the south, it has nearly 500 miles coastline along with the warm waters of the Arabian Sea in the

Indian Ocean. Balochistan commands a strategic position vis-à-vis the Strait of Hormuz which is about 350 miles away from the Gwadar Deep Sea Port. In the east and northeast, it shares intra-state border with Pakistani provinces of Sindh, Punjab and Khyber Pukhtunkhwa (North West Frontier Province). According to the Khan of Kalat [ruler of Balochistan], Mir Ahmed Yar Khan and the Baloch nationalists, Dera Ghazi Khan and Jacobabad were integral part of Balochistan but they were awarded to Punjab and Sindh respectively. Dera Ghazi Khan was absorbed in Punjab, and Jacobabad (originally Khangarh) was given over to Sind.¹⁵ The topographic boundaries of Balochistan do not match with its political frontiers. The Encyclopedia of Islam describes Balochistan that "it includes the whole country over which Baloch race is spread without regard to political boundaries."¹⁶ The Baloch population is not mainly limited in the Pakistani province of Balochistan, the Baloch inhabit in Helmand (Afghanistan), Seistan-Balochistan (Iran), Sindh, Punjab and KPK.

Balochistan viaducts the most important geo-political sub-regions of Asian continent, it bridges the South Asia, the Central Asia and the West Asia that makes it an ideal hub for inter-regional trade and communications. Over the past two millennium years, it has either hindered or facilitated, passage of large armies, Iranian, Greek, Arab, Mongol and British among them and, thereby influenced world history.¹⁷ In ancient time this land was strategic route for the military invaders who travelled towards east via this land. The prominent military invaders who navigated Balochistan were, Alexander the Great, Muhammad Bin Qasim and Chagatai, son of Chengis Khan. Alexander the Great with his army on the way back home from India passed through Balochistan. He stayed near Ormara (Gwadar District) for several days in search of water as it is scarce in Balochistan, especially in the coastal areas. The famous Muslim invader, Muhammad Bin Qasim with his army also travelled through Makran to invade Sindh. The graves of several of his soldiers are located besides Hingol River near *Hinglaj Mander*, one of the most sacred and holiest *Manders* of the

¹⁵ Ahmed Yar Khan, *Inside Balochistan Autobiography: The Khan of Kalat*, (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1975), p.124.

¹⁶ "Balochistan", *Encyclopedia of Islam*, Vol. 1, 1936, p.625.

¹⁷ Col. Sayed Iqbal Ahmed, *Balochistan: Its Strategic Importance*, (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1992), p.1.

Hindus. Bolan Pass in the northeast had been one of the important strategic tunnels for the early invaders from Afghanistan and Central Asia towards India. After the colonization of the India and Balochistan, the British India used Bolan Pass for the military movement and logistic supports against Afghans in the historic Great Game where the British Empire and the Czarist Russia were struggling to occupy the untamable Afghanistan. After the Second Afghan War (1878-80), the British finally decided to link Sindh and Balochistan through railway.¹⁸ In 1885 the railway line from Sindh was extended to Quetta through the Bolan Pass where it was further extended to Chaman near Afghan border through the Kojak Pass. In history, it had been the geography that had dragged Balochistan into the vortex of international politics that is still vibrant in the contemporary regional politics.

1.2: Ethno-Cultural Diversity

The Baloch nationalists consider themselves as a nation and they use the term nation but the word Baloch nation is officially not used. From the available official data, the word ethnic group is used and many Pakistani scholars and writers avoid the use of Baloch nationalism and apply ethno-nationalism to Baloch movement. The Punjabi and Persian dominated states of Pakistan and Iran have always claimed that Baloch are not a nation, but a tribal society with traditional tribal characteristics.¹⁹ Balochistan is a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-cultural province like the other federating units of Pakistan. From the available official and non-official data, the major ethnic nationalities of the province are;

- Baloch (Balochi and Brahui) 55 %
- Indigenous Pashtun (excluding Afghan refugees) 29%
- Other minorities (Hazara, Punjabi and Sindhi) 16%

¹⁸ "Balochistan", *The Imperial Gazetteer of India* (Calcutta, 1908, reprint Lahore: Oriental Publisher, 1976), p.311.

¹⁹ Selig S. Harrison, "Ethnicity and Politics in Pakistan: The Baloch Case", *Ethnicity*, ed., John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith, (Uppsala: University of Uppsala Sweden, 1996), p.298.

Table 1.1
Population by Mother Tongue (1998 Census)

Balochistan	Urdu	Punjabi	Sindhi	Pashto	Balochi	Seraiki	Others
Total	0.97%	2.52%	5.58%	29.64%	54.76%	2.42%	4.11%
Rural	0.21%	0.43%	5.27%	32.16%	57.55%	1.87%	2.51%
Urban	3.42%	9.16%	6.57%	21.61%	45.84%	4.16%	9.24%

Source: Population Census Organization. www.census.gov.pk/mothertongue.

The population census of 1998 illustrates that the Baloch are the dominant ethnic-nation in the province whereas Pashtun are the second largest ethnic-nation. The last census illustrates Baloch population around 55 per cent but the current available official data reveals that Baloch (Balochi and Brahui language speakers) constitutes 60 per cent of total population of Balochistan. Pashtun are 25 per cent of the population while other minor ethnic groups, Hazaras, Punjabis and Sindhis that represent 15 per cent of the province population. Ethnic Baloch (Balochi and Brahui speakers) in Balochistan represent a bare majority of 55%. The rest comprise Pushtuns (30 percent), Sindhis (6 percent), Punjabis (3 percent) and others.²⁰ According to the Pakistan Statistical Year Book of 2012, households whose primary language is Balochi represent 40 percent of Balochistan's population while 20 per cent households speak Brahui and up to 25 percent Pashtu.²¹ Two-thirds of population of Balochistan is ethnically Baloch, with a sizeable Pashtun population in the north.²² Brahui is a language which is similar to Balochi but it is considered to be a dialect of Balochi language. The Brahui speakers deem themselves Baloch and in the local language they are known as Brahui-Baloch. The Balochi speakers accept them as their blood as they are genetically Baloch but they speak a different dialect with 70% Baloch vocabularies. The Brahui-Baloch lives in central Balochistan especially in Kalat and Quetta Divisions. There is a severe conflict between the Baloch and

²⁰ Murtaza Haider, "Resolving Balochistan's grievances", *Dawn*, January 11, 2012.

²¹ Federal Bureau of Statistics - Government of Pakistan, "Percentage Distribution of Households by Language Usually Spoken and Region/Province, 1998 Census" *Pakistan Statistical Year Book 2008*.

²² Sayed Fazl-e-Haider, "Balochistan: Challenges and Opportunities", Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment For International Peace, 2011.

Pashtun over the issue of census. Pashtun consider them as half of the total population while Baloch reject their claims and consider the indigenous Pashtun as a quarter of the total population of the province. They reject the inclusion of the Afghan refugees in the Pashtun population. The Baloch nationalists have been raising their voices and concerns against the unchecked influx of Afghan refugees. According to the vice-President of National Party, Senator Mir Hasil Khan Bezinjo, there are around four million Afghan refugees in Balochistan who have migrated from Afghanistan due to the Afghan-Soviet war, civil war between the Taliban and Northern Alliance and the ongoing US-led war against terrorism. Unofficially, it is stated that up to four million refugees inhabit the province.²³ In the 1980s, the province received a large number of Afghan refugees that tilted the demographic and social balance in favor of Pakhtuns in the northern and central districts of the province.²⁴ Many of the Afghan refugees have acquired Pakistani national identity cards. "A large number of Afghan refugees in Balochistan have got Pakistani national identity cards by bribing National Database Registration Authority (NADARA) officials."²⁵ Recently the Election Commission of Pakistan removed around one million fake voters names from the computerized electoral rolls of Balochistan that are mostly deemed to be of the Afghan refugees. According to a comparative study, Balochistan is presently a representative of 3,278,164 (3.2m) registered voters against 2008's 4,365,274 (4.3m), which clearly demonstrates that its overall number had reduced by 1,987,110 (1.987m).²⁶

The Baloch nationalist parties blame that the *Pukhtunkhwa Mili Awami Party* (PMAP, Pakthun nationalist party of late Abdul Samad Achukzai) is harboring the Afghan refugees to alter the demography of Balochistan that is rejected by the Pashtun nationalists. The Pashtun nationalists claim that their population has been marginalized as they wield 50% of the province population but receive only 20-25 per cent of the provincial government's resources. They demand that this province should be declared as Baloch-Pakthun shared province. But according to the analyzed

²³ The tricky demographics of Balochistan, *Dawn*, 5 April, 2012.

²⁴ Muhammad Abdul Qadir, *Pakistan: Social and Cultural Transformation in a Muslim Nation*, (New York: Routledge, 2006), p.40.

²⁵ "Influx of Afghans in Balochistan resented" *The Express Tribune*, 23 November, 2010.

²⁶ Balochistan, Sindh have less voters, Punjab, KP have more, *The News*, 2 August, 2012.

official data of the current set-up of the Balochistan Provincial Assembly, two-thirds of the electoral constituencies in the province have a Baloch majority. As many as 12 administrative districts of the province are dominated by Pakhtuns, while in 18 districts Baloch population is in majority.²⁷ Baloch nationalists moderately support the Pashtun nationalists demand and acknowledge the rights of Pakhtuns to their lands and resources in Balochistan except their demand of Baloch-Pakhtun shared province. As Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch, the President of National Party said in an interview with the author, “the Pashtuns are settled on their own historical land while Baloch are on their own historical and cultural land, there is not any ethnic problem between them except some political issues.”²⁸ Nawabzada Jameel Bugti, son of late Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti says that if the Pakhtuns dominated districts want to integrate into the KPK or establish their own provincial set-up, it is their basic right and Baloch support their legitimate demands but it is necessary to first redraw the provincial borders of Sindh and Punjab and include Jacobabad, Dera Ghazi Khan Rajanpur districts in Balochistan.²⁹ The Balochistan National Party of Sardar Akhtar Jan Mengal also demands that above three districts should be remerged into Balochistan in case of establishment of new provinces or redrawing of the provincial boundaries. The areas of Rajanpur and Dera Ghazi Khan at the immediate proximity of Balochistan provincial border are known as the Provincially Administered Areas in Southern Punjab. The tribal areas of Punjab is mainly populated by backward and impoverished Baloch tribes, like Bozdar, Qasarani, Leghari, Khosa, Jatoi, Gurchani, Mazari etc.

1.3: Social Structure of the Baloch Society

Historically, the Baloch society had been entirely tribal in nature. The tribal system had been so strong that tribal lords and dynasties had been all in all. The Kalat State (Balochistan under Khan of Kalat) was basically a tribal state with a tribal king (Khan of Kalat) and a tribal administrative hierarchy. Before the establishment of the

²⁷ “Pushed to the Wall: A fact-finding mission report on Balochistan”, *Human Right Commission of Pakistan Islamabad*, 5-11 October, 2009, p.21.

²⁸ An interview with Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch, *President of National Party*, 12 January, 2012.

²⁹ Interview of Nawabzada Jameel Bugti on Vish News by Zar Khan Baloch (Balochi News Channel), 25 Nov, 2011.

Khanate (Kalat State), every Baloch tribe under its tribal chief was independent and sovereign. Each tribe had its own land, resources, army and administrative set-up. Tribal alliances and enmity were natural phenomena. Traditionally, there was a loose nexus among different tribes which remained vaguely active to settle tribal disputes but the Baloch tribal system became moderately institutionalized with the establishment of first de facto Baloch state.

“The history of the First Baloch Confederacy is unclear because of a sufficient historical record is lacking, so we have to rely on the Baloch traditions and the writings of Baloch nationalist writers. In the 12th century, 44 Baloch tribes were forced to migrate from Seistan and Kirman [Iran] to Makran under the leadership of Mir Jalal Han... The Baloch epic poetry refers to Mir Jalal Han as the ruler of all the Baloch. He left four sons and one daughter named Rind, Lashar, Hoat, Korai and Jato Bibi. These five are supposedly the founders of the five great tribes of the Baloch, the Rinds, Lasharis, Hoats, Korais and Jatois.”³⁰

The last constitutional Khan of Kalat, Mir Ahmed Yar Khan states in his autobiography *Inside Balochistan* that there were three major Baloch tribal divisions. One of them went to Seistan, second major division went to Makran and the third major group called Brahui settled in Kalat under the leadership of Miru who established the Kalat State later on. The Kalat State increased its cultural and tribal influence over other areas of Balochistan but the first formal Baloch state was proclaimed by Mir Naseer Khan in the 18th century. Mir Naseer Khan was the greatest and the most powerful Khan (tribal ruler) among all other Khans of the Khanate (Kalat State). He laid down the basic institutional pillars of a modern Baloch state by institutionalizing the army, bureaucracy and tribal council. He organized all autonomous tribes under the title of Khan of Kalat. The Khan of Kalat became the political as well as the tribal chief of all Baloch tribes, while the British India controlled the British Balochistan through a council of local *Sardars* known as *Shahi Jirga*, composed of the *Sardars* of several Baloch and Pashtun tribes.

³⁰ Inayatullah Baloch, *The Problems of Greater Balochistan: A case study of Baloch Nationalism*, (Wiesbaden: Steiner Verlag, 1978), p.95.

The contemporary social set-up of the Baloch society is straddled between the Sardari (tribal) system and the liberal society but Sardari system is dominant in most of the areas particularly in the north-eastern Balochistan. In south-western parts of the province, the middle-class, liberal and secular forces are dominant and Sardari system has been nearly abolished. The political movement of the Baloch Student Organization (BSO) was anti-Sardars, the prominent Baloch students under the BSO launched a stunning anti-sardar movement throughout Balochistan but it became successful in taming the tribal system in south-western parts of the provinces and in Makran they thoroughly abolished the Sardari system.

“The concerns and demands of the people of Makran Coast, where seaport of Gwadar is located, differ from those of the tribes of eastern Balochistan, home of the province’s natural gas and coal fields. The coastal region is not dominated by tribal Sardars as is the eastern quarter. It is less tribal better educated, more middle class and politically aware than the rest of province.”³¹

The basic political culture in province is the tribal and political loyalties of the tribesmen are bestowed to the relevant tribal head. The traditional form of government is Sardari system. Sardars are traditionally elected by local council of elders. Nevertheless, Sardari System has been on the decline with slow pace because the establishment has very dynamic nexus with the sardars and until now no provincial government has been established in the province without a political patronage of a Sardar or Nawab. The liberal Baloch nationalists believe that it is the establishment which encourages and maintains the tribal set-up in the province because through tribal system it can easily control the resource-rich and strategically important province. Nawab Akbar Bugti remained the Federal Interior Minister, Governor and Chief Minister of Balochistan with the consent of the establishment but he was killed when he started raising his voice for the legitimate denied rights of the Baloch people.

³¹ “2006: Who’s who in Balochistan”, *Dawn*, 28 May, 2011.

1.4: Baloch Warrior Tribes

Many political analysts and historians consider that the nature of Balochistan conflict is not a constitutional or political issue; it is just a tribal issue. Historically, different powerful Baloch tribes had waged low-intensity guerrilla warfare against the British Balochistan. After the independence of Pakistan in 1947 and the subsequent annexation of Balochistan into Pakistan, the tribal insurgents continued their low-intensity insurgency against the central government. There are around 100 major and minor tribes but only the most powerful tribes of the central and eastern Balochistan have been waging armed rebellions against the foreign invaders and the central government.

“The eastern portion of Balochistan has been dominated by three sardars (Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti, Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri and Sardar Attaullah Mengal). These sardars out of more than 60 in the province have been alternately in and out of government and in and out of jail.... There are around 46 Baloch tribes- the major ones include the Bugti, Marri, Mengal, Bizenjo, Jamali and Rind- and roughly 70 sardars in Balochistan.”³²

1.4.1: Marri Tribe: It is the most powerful and the warrior Baloch tribe which is mostly settled in Kohlu district and immediate proximity of eastern Balochistan. The total population of armed Marri tribe is around 350,000. Historically, Marri tribe had been the fighting against the foreign invaders. The Marris were the first to encounter the forces of British India. They with the Bugti tribe had controlled the strategic Bolan Pass. This tribe is deemed to be the hotbed of the Baloch national movement that has been fighting for the rights and independence of Balochistan since 1970s. Its Karachi-based chief, Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri is the founder and widely believed to be the godfather and patriarch of the modern Baloch independence movement. He is the ideological leader of the Baloch resistance movement. The Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) is supposedly run by the Marri tribe. The London-based Nawabzada Harbiyar Marri, son of Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri is widely believed to be the chief of the BLA. Harbiyar Marri of Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) and Brahamdagh

³² Ibid.

Bugti of Balochistan Republican Party (BRP), both are accused of fueling insurgency in the violence plagued province.³³

1.4.2: Bugti Tribe: With a population of roughly 300,000 people, Bugti tribe is considered to be the most powerful tribe after the Marri tribe. Bugtis are located mostly in eastern districts of Dera Bugti, Sibi and Barkhan. They are also settled in the neighboring districts of Sindh and Punjab. During the military operation of 1970s against the democratically elected Baloch leadership, Bugti tribe was not involved in militant activities as its then chief Nawab Akbar Bugti was serving as the governor of Balochistan. Nawab Bugti remained the governor from February 1973 to January 1974, who was killed in a military operation in 2006 that further fueled the long-standing grievances of Baloch people and intensified the Baloch insurgency into an independence movement. Since then, the Bugti tribe has been fighting a guerrilla insurgency against the state under the militant organization, known as Baloch Republican Army (BRA). The BRA is allegedly being run by Swiss-based grand-son of Nawab Akbar Bugti, Nawabzada Brahamdagh Bugti. Brahamdagh Bugti heads the separatist Baloch Republican Party and its militant wing, the Baloch Republican Army.³⁴ Bugti tribe is divided over the succession of its tribal chief after the assassination of its tribal chief. The three grand-sons of Nawab Bugti, Brahamdagh Bugti, Aali Bugti and Shahzain Bugti are claimants of the tribal chief but according to the most chiefs of the sub-tribes, Nawab Akbar Bugti had nominated Brahamdagh Bugti as his successor. When Nawab Bugti had decided to nominate Nawabzada Brahamdagh Bugti as his successor during his lifetime, several tribal elders had resisted the decision, saying that they would not accept any other tribal chief in the lifetime of Nawab Bugti.³⁵

1.4.3: Mengal Tribe: The Mengal tribe of Sardar Attaullah Khan is the most dominant and influential tribe after the Marri and Bugti tribes in the Baloch-Brahui

³³ 151 insurgent camps in Balochistan, Afghanistan creating unrest: IG FC, *Express Tribune*, 12 June, 2012.

³⁴ "Balochistan govt. decides to quash cases against Brahamdagh" *Dawn*, 16th March, 2012.

³⁵ Qaiser Butt, "Succession battle: the Fight for Dera Bugti" *Express Tribune*, 15th April, 2011.

belt of central Balochistan. Population of this tribe is estimated to be 200,000 who mostly inhabit in the central Balochistan. The Mengal tribe has been active in the provincial politics since 1960s. Its chief, who had served as the first democratically elected chief minister of Balochistan but his government was dismissed by then President (Martial Law Administrator), Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1973 after which the Mengal tribe with the restive Marri tribe of Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri fought a sophisticated tribal guerilla war against Pakistan Army in 1973. Khair Bakhsh 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.³⁶ According to the national media, currently the separatist militant organization, *Lashkar-e-Balochistan* is being run by the Mengal tribe under the leadership of Sardar Javed Mengal, son of Sardar Attaullah Mengal. Pakistan's intelligence agencies have blamed Akhtar Mengal's elder brother Javed Mengal for being the main sponsor of the militant outfit named *Lashkar-i-Balochistan*.³⁷ He is also the son-in-law of Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri. The second eldest son of Sardar Attaullah Mengal is Sardar Akhtar Jan Mengal, the former chief Minister of Balochistan and the president of Balochistan National Party.

1.5: Political Parties of Balochistan

Politically, Balochistan is a very divergent province as compare to other provinces of Pakistan. It is a province of multi-political parties of different natures. There are centrist, religious, ethnic, tribal and nationalist political parties, which have different political agendas. No political party has majority in the province and mostly the political parties are weak with loose central force. The political culture of the province is very weak due to the tribal nature of the province and the dynastic politics. The members of the Provincial Assembly are more powerful than the political parties and more interestingly, provincial governments are formed on the basis of personality, because the politics of the province is dominated by all-powerful Sardars. They have been ruling the province since the establishment of electoral

³⁶ "Balochistan Insurgency: Fourth conflict 1973-77" available at www.globalsecurity.com accessed on 17 January, 2012.

³⁷ Ahmar Mustikhan, "Mengal Opportunism" 24th January, 2011, available at www.examiner.com

province in 1970. Since then all chief ministers, most of the governors and most of ministers have been *Nawabs, Sardars, Nawabzadas (scions of Nawabs) and Sardarzadas (scions of Sardars)*. The chief of Mengal tribe, Sardar Attaullah Mengal was the first chief minister of the province. Other noted nawabs and sardars who served as chief minister and governor are; Jam Gulam Qadir of Las bela, Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti, Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, Mir Taj Muhammad Jamali, Mir Jan Muhammad Jamali, Sardar Akhtar Jan Mengal, Jam Muhammad Yusuf, Nawab Zulfiqar Ali Mugsy and Nawab Aslam Raisani.

Currently, in the provincial political set-up, both provincial chief executive and governors are chief of their tribes. Chief of Mugsy tribe, Nawab Zulfiqar Ali Mugsy is the governor and Nawab Aslam Raisani, chief of Raisani tribe is the chief minister of the province. The Baloch nationalists boycotted the general elections of 2008 against the military operation in the province According to Sanaullah Baloch of Balochistan National Party, military operation, extrajudicial killings of Baloch nationalists, enforced disappearance of the political workers and forced exiles prevented the Baloch nationalists to run election campaign and public mobilization.³⁸ With the beginning of parliamentary politics in 1970, the Baloch nationalists joined hands with the Pashtun nationalists of NWFP (KPK) under the platform of left-wing National Awami Party (NAP). Abdul Wali Khan, Sardar Attaullah Mengal, Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri and Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo had very vigorous political understanding but the Baloch and Pashtun nationalists tore apart with the disintegration of NAP. Subsequently, the Baloch nationalists also split up into many small political entities. Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti proposed a Baloch single party during the last days of his life but that never materialized due to the tribal and political differences of the Baloch leaders. Now the political differences are so grave that they cannot be easily bridged. There is a crisis within the crisis as the Baloch leadership is not on the same page over the issue of Balochistan. Some are demanding independence for which they are using militancy while others believe on democratic struggle and demand for

³⁸ Sanaullah Baloch, former senator and information secretary of BNP, interview with Malik Siraj Akbar, available at www.thebalochhal.com of October 11, 2011.

maximum provincial autonomy within the framework of the federation. The Mengal tribe's chief Sardar Attaullah Mengal and his son Sardar Akhtar Mengal believe in parliamentary politics, renounce violence and work within the framework of the federation, while Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri champions the cause of a separate homeland for the Baloch.³⁹ Another nationalist party of the middle class, non-tribal and educated Baloch people, the National Party of Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch also believes on the democratic struggle and parliamentary politics.

Table 1.2
Major Political Parties in Provincial Politics

Political Parties	Nature of the Political Parties	Leadership	Area of Influence
Pakistan People's Party (PPP)	Centralist party, currently ruling party in the province	Sadiq Umrani, Provincial President, dominated by Nawabs and Sardars/feudalists	Urban areas & areas adjacent to Sindh, Naseerabad
Pakistan Muslim League (PML)	Centralist party, coalition partner in the provincial government	Jam Mohd. Yusuf (PML-Q)/Sanaullah Zehri (PML-N), dominated by the electable Nawabs, Sardars and feudalists	Urban areas and tribal areas of northern and central Balochistan
Jamait Ulema-e-Islam (JUI)	Clerical centralist party, coalition partner in the provincial administration	Maulan Abdul Wasey, dominated by religious political figures of the province	vigorously active in Pashtun areas, northern Balochistan, no electoral representation in Baloch areas
National Party (NP)	Moderate Baloch nationalist party, believes on the democratic struggle	Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch, mostly dominated by middle-class educated nationalists	Major area of influence is Makran but recently gaining momentum in central & southern Balochistan.
Balochistan National Party (BNP-Mengal)	Moderate Baloch nationalist party, supports the Right of Self-determination	Sardar Akhtar Mengal, scion of Sardar Attullah Mengal. It is mainly dominated by tribal leaders.	Its major areas of influence are Kalat division and Baloch population of the urban areas.
Balochistan National Party (BNP-Awami)	Ambiguous in nature, but vaguely pursue the slogan of nationalism	Mir, Israrullah Zehri, mainly dominated by the tribal and feudalist figures	It is the major rival of the NP in Makran division, although it is active in some areas of Kalat division
Baloch National Front (BNF)	Political constellation of the belligerent Baloch nationalists, supports militants	Consist of BNM, BSO-A, BRP, Marri Ittehad etc.	It is very much active in all Baloch areas of the province

³⁹ "Conflict and Insecurity in Balochistan" A Report by Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies Islamabad, 2012, p.85.

Baloch Students Organization (BSO)	Ultra-nationalist student organization in the province, consist of three factions, BSO-Azad, BSO-Mengal (BNM-M), BSO-Pajar (NP)	BSO-A, vigorously supports the independent movement and the militants	The provincial education institutions are the safe havens of the nationalist Baloch students, also active in all Baloch areas
Pashtunkhwa Mili Awami Party (PMAP)	Pashtun nationalist, dominated by middle-class Pashtuns, wants equal representation of Pashtuns in the province	Mahmood Khan Achukzai, son of Abdu Samad Achukzai	Northern Balochistan, it has street power but its electoral power is very weak, due to the strong presence of religious parties in Pashtun areas

Source: Author

The major nationalist political parties boycotted the 2008 general elections. The current provincial assembly is dominated by the centralist parties. In 2008 elections, Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-i-Azam) got the majority of the seats (18/65) but it could not form the provincial government because of the loose political structure of the party. Pakistan People's Party won 13 seats and the collaboration of PML-Q like-minded group and JUI, it formed the provincial government under the leadership of a tribal chief Nawab Aslam Raisani.

Table 1.3

Party Positions in Balochistan Assembly (2008 Elections)

Political Parties	Number of MPAs
Pakistan People's Party	14
Like Minded Group (PML-Q)	13
Jamait Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F)	10
Independent MPAs	07
Balochistan National Party (Awami)	07
Pakistan Muslim League	PML-Q 5, PML-N 2
Awami National Party	03

Source: Provincial Assembly of Balochistan, www.pabalochistan.gov.pk

1.5.1: Baloch Nationalist Political Parties

The conflict of Balochistan revolves around the Baloch nationalist forces and the federal government including the security establishment. The role of the Baloch

nationalist forces is very important to be studied as they are the major actor of the conflict. Baloch nationalist forces are scattered and are divided into many factions. There are several Baloch nationalist political parties with the zeal of Baloch nationalism but with different political leaders and dynasties. They have different vague voices over the issue of Balochistan, straddling between the demands of provincial autonomy and independence of Balochistan from Pakistan. The liberal nationalists have opted peaceful political and democratic struggle while the ultra-nationalist forces have gone for violent struggle through waging low-insurgency and guerilla tactics against Pakistani state with the aim of the liberation of Balochistan from Pakistan. "The Baloch nationalist movement is not a unitary force. Neither in its leadership nor in its tactics and goals does it speak with one voice. Some Baloch nationalist demands complete independence."⁴⁰

1.5.1.1: National Party (N.P)

It is a moderate and progressive Baloch nationalist party which is considered to be a liberal, democratic and secular party, consist of middle-class Baloch nationalists. It is the largest Baloch nationalist party which traces its geneses from Kalat State National Party of 1940s and Balochistan National Youth Movement (BNYM) of 1988. The BNYM was a semi-political group of the senior leaders of the Baloch Student Organization (BSO) which in fact launched the first political agitation against the absolute tribal elders and dilapidated tribal system. It participated in the general elections of 1988 under the leadership of Dr. Abdul Haye Baloch and won landslide victory in Makran division after which it became Balochistan National Movement (BNM). Later on chief of Mengal tribe joined BNM but resulted to the splitting up of BNM into Hayee and Mengal groups. In 2004 the political followers of Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo from Balochistan National Democratic Party (who had split up from BNP-Awami and formed their own nascent party) joined the Balochistan National Movement and turned BNM into National Party (NP), the BNDP of Mir Hasil Khan Bizenjo (son of Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo) merged in BNM. Some of the dissidents

⁴⁰ Robert G. Wirsing, "Baloch Nationalism and the Politics of Energy Resources", the Changing Context of Separatism in Pakistan", Strategic Studies Institute, April 2008.

within the BNM retained it under the leadership of Gulam Muhammad Baloch who was allegedly assassinated by the security forces in 2009. N.P consists of those politicians who had struggled under the platform of National Awami Party (NAP) of 1970s but the party is dominated by the former leaders of Baloch Student Organization (BSO). It is a democratic party which believes on peaceful democratic struggle for the provincial autonomy. National Party mission is struggle for peace, democracy and national autonomy.⁴¹ It has not opted violent struggle and has not allied with those forces which favor violent political struggle for the liberation of Balochistan. N.P is active in south-western Balochistan.

“We believe on the peaceful democratic and parliamentary struggle for the genuine rights of Baloch people as the democratic struggle has been successful in many parts of the world. Democracy and non-violence have a vigorous say in a movement and no one can ignore the non-violent movement of Mohandas Gandhi that abolished the British Raj in Indian sub-continent.”⁴²

N.P is criticized by the ultra-nationalists as being pro-Pakistani party. The ultra-nationalist forces have renounced parliamentary politics but N.P has representation in Pakistan’s National Assembly and the Senate owing to that it is the soft target of the ultra-nationalists. Many local leaders and workers of N.P have been killed since 2010. The N.P leadership ambiguously blames the Baloch insurgents for the target killing of its leaders and workers because it believes on parliamentary politics and wants to participate in the next general elections as it boycotted the general election of 2008 against the military operation in the province. National Party has been under pressure from separatists in Balochistan to abandon using non-violent political means to achieve its goals.⁴³

1.5.1.2: Balochistan National Party (BNP)

BNP is considered to be a moderate nationalist party but with low-level zeal of ultra-nationalism. After the disintegration of the NAP and Pakistan National Party (PNP of

⁴¹ National Party, available at www.nationalparty.org.pk/accessed on 25 July, 2012.

⁴² Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch, *President of National Party*. Interview with the Researcher on 12 January, 2012.

⁴³ ‘Gunmen shoot dead National Party leader in Balochistan’ *BBC*, 12 July 2010.

Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo), the Mengal tribe joined the Balochistan National Movement (BNM) of senior Baloch students headed by middle class, Dr. Abdul Hayee Baloch but the union of the tribal elite and middle class could not survive very long and in 1994 BNM divided into Hayee Baloch group and Akhtar Mengal group. Before the general elections of 1997 the former Chief Minister of Balochistan and the tribal chief of Mengal tribe, Sardar Attaullah Mengal with the scions of Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo established Balochistan National Party (BNP). It won razor-thin victory the elections of 1997 and made provincial government under the leadership of Sardar Akhtar Mengal which lasted for one and a quarter year. In 1998 when Akhtar Mengal's provincial government collapsed, a splinter group under the patronage of former BSO-Chairman, Muheem Khan Baloch, Mir Hasil Khan Bizenjo and Sardar Israr Zehri split up from BNP and established their own faction known as BNP-Awami. Prior to the general election of 2002, the BNP-Awami went on further disintegration, a dissident group mostly followers of Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo under the leadership of Mir Hasil Khan Bizenjo formed Balochistan National Democratic Party (BNDP) that merged with the BNM in 2004, now called National Party. The remaining party was named as BNP-Mengal that is dominated by the Mengal tribe and is considered to be a family party of Mengal tribe's elites. It is active in the central Balochistan, particularly in the Brahui speaking Baloch areas. The BNP has been demanding for the right of self-determination but it has never publically called for the liberation of Balochistan. The BNP believes on national right of self-determination of the people of Balochistan through peaceful and democratic struggle.⁴⁴ Currently it is headed by Sardar Akhtar Jan Mengal, the son of Sardar Attaullah Mengal. It had resigned from the provincial and national assembly after the killing of Nawab Akbar Bugti in August 2006. It has also boycotted the general elections of 2008. "Right of self-determination is the basic right of every nation and UNO should intervene in Balochistan to stop the human rights violation by Pakistani Army. It is the time for the Baloch people to exercise their right of self-

⁴⁴ Balochistan National Party, available at www.electioncommission.pak accessed on 25 September, 2012.

determination.”⁴⁵ BNP is also the target of condemnation of the ultra-nationalist forces for being ambiguous over its policy of national cause. According to them, BNP is distracting the Baloch people by adopting the slogan of the right of self-determination to appease the establishment and the Baloch masses because it is in between the devil and the sea to save its political credibility. Many of the leaders and political workers of BNP-M have been assassinated during the last three years but the party leadership has not clearly pointed out any insurgent organization though it has metaphorically blamed the security forces. Separatist groups in the province have carried out targeted killings of their opponents and are also blamed by the authorities for killings in which they deny a role. Pakistan's shadowy security agents are also frequently accused by Baloch politicians of orchestrating targeted killings of popular leaders and then blaming insurgents.⁴⁶

1.5.1.3: Baloch National Front (BNF)

The BNF is a loose political and ideological alliance of the ultra-nationalist forces, widely believed to be the political wing of the several Baloch insurgent organizations. It is the most influential and the dominant union of the ultra-nationalist forces. When Nawab Akbar Bugti was observing some dynamic changes in the provincial politics vis-à-vis international politics, he forwarded a proposal for the establishment of a single Baloch political party but most of the moderate nationalists turned a blind eye towards his proposal. But the BNF became an alternative of the single Baloch party as it attracted all those nationalist forces having parallel political agendas. It separated the pro-independence belligerent political parties and tribal groups from the moderate nationalists who believe in parliamentary politics and democratic struggle. As a staunch supporter of the rebellious organizations, BNF vociferously calls for the liberty of Balochistan from Pakistan. Most of its activists are alleged to be the member of different anti-state combative organizations that are involved in insurgency and aggression. There are around 15 minor and major belligerent political

⁴⁵ Habib Jalib Baloch, the slain General Secretary of BNP, Interview with Malik Siraj Akbar, on December 1, 2009, available at www.gmcmissing.wordpress.com

⁴⁶ ‘Gunmen shoot dead National Party leader in Balochistan’ *BBC*, 12 July 2010.

parties and organizations in BNF but major political parties and tribal organizations of this alliance are;

- Baloch Students Organization (BSO-Azad)
- Baloch National movement (BNM)
- Baloch Republican Party (BRP)
- Marri Ittehad (Pro-Nawab Marri)

Though it is a loose ideological union but it is dominated by the BSO-Azad and the warrior Marri tribe. The supporters of BNF are scattered throughout the province and there is no any central command in this loose organization. It has vigorous street power with jingoistic political workers. It is mostly popular in the Baloch youth as the BSO-Azad is the major mass mobilizer of this alliance. Its street workers are mostly youth. Its ideological motivations come from the powerful Marri tribe and its chief, Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri. The Bugti tribe is also included in this alliance. The Baloch Republican Party represents the political wing of Brahamdagh Bugti, the grand-son of Nawab Akbar Bugti. The BNF has been the target of the security agencies and has been oppressed by the state forces. It several activists are missing. Most of the Baloch missing persons belong to BNF. Around 400 mutilated bodies of BNF political worker have been recovered from different areas of the province since July 2010. The street power of the BNF has been marginalized due to the unrestrained targeted operation of the security forces against its anti-state activists.

1.5.1.4: Baloch Student Organization (BSO)

In 1961, *Warna Wannda Gal* (Youth Educated Forum) was established in Quetta, the capital of the province to mobilize the Baloch youths for the education. Initially it was a non-political platform of the educated Baloch students but it could not sustained its apolitical nature due to the military operation of 1962 against the Marri tribe, agitation against President Ayub Khan and emerging political agitation in the East Pakistan against the Pak-Army. On 26th November 1967, the left-wing Baloch Student Organization was established that replaced the Youth Educated Forum, ever since it continues to be a critical actor at sixes and sevens sphere of Baloch nationalist

politics. It was profoundly influenced by the leftist philosophy of Marxism and Leninism. In 1970s, it played a belligerent role in the third Baloch armed struggle with the left-oriented National Awami Party (NAP) and the Baloch guerrillas fighting against government armed action. The leftist slogans of the Cold War tempted the young BSO workers who in 1970s helped to revive the Balochistan Liberation Front (BLF) which was separatist guerrilla outfit during the insurgency of 1960s.⁴⁷ By 1977, some policies of the Bhutto regime, such as his purge against the radical/Marxist group within the PPP and his decision to send in the army against Baloch insurgents had alienated the party from a majority of left-wing youth outfits that had initially supported the PPP's rise to power.⁴⁸ During the military rule of the 1980s, BSO remained an adamant critic of Zia-ul-Haq. Additionally, following the death of the Cold War, the Baloch nationalists went to in-fighting and fragmentation, resulted to split up of BSO into two factions, BSO-Sohb and BSO-Pajjar in 1987. The senior leadership of BSO-Pajjar participated in the general elections of 1988 under the banner of newest and youngest nationalist party, Balochistan National Youth Movement (BNYM) that became Balochistan National Movement (BNM) after the elections. In the several elections of 1990s, the Baloch nationalists went on rapid factionalism that divided the BNM into BNM-Hayee and BNM-Mengal in 1994, BSO-Pajjar remained affiliated to BNM-Hayee while members of BSO-Sohb supported BNM-Mengal under the auspices of Sardar Attaullah Mengal. In 2002 the BSO-Pajjar further divided into BSO-Pajjar and BSO-Muttahida which later on became BSO-Azad. In 2006, all three factions of BSO reunited but that reunion was short-lived as differences soon emerged due to lack of a single political party as every nationalist party wanted to drag it into its sphere of influence.

⁴⁷ Nadeem F. Paracha, "When the doves cry", *Dawn*, February 2, 2012.

⁴⁸ Nadeem F. Paracha, "Islamic fundamentalism an youth in Pakistan", *Dawn*, 31 May, 2012.

Table 1.4

Three Factions of the Baloch Student Organization (BSO)

BSO	Leadership	Political Affiliation	Political Agenda
BSO-Azad	Bashir Zaib Baloch but now anonymous (pseudonym Baloch Khan)	It is ultra-nationalist, extremely radical and is not affiliated with any mainstream nationalist party	Mostly underground, openly support the independent movement & advocates an open armed struggle
BSO-Mengal	Mohi-ud-din Baloch	Student-wing of BNP-Mengal, moderate with some element of ultra-nationalism	It is active in student politics and supports the BNP-M slogan of the Right of Self-determination
BSO-Pajjar	Amin Baloch	Student-wing of National Party, moderate and progressive	It mainly concentrates on educational and ideological aspects of Baloch Nationalist Movement

Source: Author

The last two factions of the Baloch Student Organization are the student wings of Balochistan National Party-Mengal and National Party. BSO-Azad has remained its independent status as it is not affiliated to any mainstream nationalist party. However, its support for Balochistan National Front, Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) and other insurgent groups is an open secret.⁴⁹ It has suffered more than any other factions as most of the missing persons and the mutilated bodies of the missing persons are of the activists of BSO-Azad. Baloch Students Organization former chairman Aleem Raz Baloch told Daily Times as many as 400 bullet-riddled bodies had been recovered from different areas of Balochistan belong to BSO.⁵⁰ BSO-Azad is very popular among the educated youth and through whom it has generated public support among the elders and especially Baloch women. It publically calls for the independence of Balochistan.

“We are united in our call for an independent Balochistan, says Khalid, an office-holder in BSO-Azad...Malik Siraj Akbar, the editor of the online newspaper, Baloch Hal, which has been banned in Pakistan, agrees. “Today’s Baloch movement is headed not solely by [...] tribal chiefs, but [by] educated middle class youth,” says Malik in the introduction to his book, “The Redefined Dimensions of the Baloch Nationalist Movement.”⁵¹

⁴⁹ Malik Siraj Akbar, “Infighting in Baloch Student Organization”, January 8, 2009, available at www.nowpublic.com

⁵⁰ Nationalists reject Malik statement on Balochistan, *Daily Times*, August 7, 2012.

⁵¹ Mahvish Ahmed, “Balochistan: middle class rebellion” *Dawn* 5 June, 2012.

1.6: Baloch Insurgent Organizations

There are several major militant organizations which are active in the different areas of the province. Most of them are anti-state outfits but some of them are allegedly deemed to be pro-state militant organization working to counter the anti-state elements. In September, 2010, the central government banned five Baloch militant organizations: the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), the Balochistan Liberation Front (BLF), the Baloch Republican Army (BRA), *Lashkar-e-Balochistan* and the *Baloch Musallah Difa*.⁵² It is said that there is not any central chain of command among the militant organizations, though ideological nexus could be virtually observed. Besides these proscribed outfits there are some pro-independence political organizations which vocally support the Baloch independence movement and the insurgent organizations. Such as Balochistan National Movement (BNM) of Gulam Muhammad, who was allegedly killed by the security forces in 2009, Balochistan National Front (BNF), Balochistan Republican Party of Nawabzada Brahamdagh Bugti and Baloch Student Organization (BSO-Azad).

Table 1.5

Baloch Insurgent Organizations: Leadership, Agenda and Locations

S.No	Insurgent Group	Alleged Leadership	Areas of Operation
1	Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), established by Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri in 1970s, revived in 2002.	London-based Nawabzada Harbiyar Marri, son of Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri.	Kohlu, Quetta, Sibi, Bolan, Mastung, Kalat, Hub, Nushki, Kalat
2	Balochistan Liberation Front (BLF), established in 2008	Dr. Allah Nazar Baloch, founder of BSO-Azad	Makran and its coast and Awaran, Kharan, Nushki
3	Balochistan Republican Army (BRA), established in 2006	Swiss-based, Nawabzada Brahamdagh Bugti, grandson of Nawab Akbar Bugti	Dera Bugti, Sibi, Naseerabad, Jafferabad, Quetta.
4	<i>Lashkar-e-Balochistan</i> , established in 2006.	Dubai-based, Sardar Javed Mengal, son of Sardar Attaullah Mengal and Son-in-law of Nawab Marri	Kuzdar district and other adjacent areas

Source: Author

⁵² "Five Baloch militant outfits banned" *Dawn*, 9 September, 2010.

6.1.1: Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA)

The BLA is the most powerful banned Baloch rebellious organization which is dominated by the armed Marri tribe. Harbiyar Marri, a son of Khair Bakhsh Marri, is a leader of Balochistan Liberation Army.⁵³ Little is known about the organizational structure and chain of command of BLA. It is widely believed that it was established by Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri with the help of former Soviet Union in 1970s. In Kohlu, the stronghold of the Marris, there are 30 to 40 militant camps with each camp having 300 to 500 recruits.⁵⁴ It came on surface during the 1973 military operation in Balochistan. BLA's origin dates back to 1973, a period of resistance against military operations in Balochistan and the discovery of secret NAP-led London Plan.⁵⁵ It water downed after the military operation of 1973 but resurfaced in 2002. Since then it has been claiming the responsibilities of the majority of violence-related activities in the province. According to the recent US secret documents which were released by Wiki leaks, "his [Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri] militia is also estimated at roughly 5,000 men and is usually considered to have the best-trained and most hardcore fighters. Many believe that the elusive Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) is actually an avatar of Marri's militia."⁵⁶

It has a clear slogan for the liberation of Balochistan from Pakistan. India, Afghanistan and the USA alleged to be funding and shouldering the BLA. It claims the responsibilities of the most of the attacks on security forces and government installations. It mainly operates in the eastern and central areas of the province, but it has established very vigorous nexus with the other anti-state insurgent groups in the other southern and western areas of the province. It works in coordination with the BRA, BLF and *Laskhar-e-Balochistan*. It is said to be violently struggling for the independence of Balochistan. It has been declared as a terrorist organization by the Pakistani and the British governments. The Musharraf regime was pursuing the BLA

⁵³ 'Cases against Baloch leaders to be withdrawn' *Dawn*, 24 February, 2012.

⁵⁴ Priyashree Andley, "Balochistan: Background" New Delhi: Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, 2006.

⁵⁵ "The Worsening Conflict in Balochistan", *International Crisis Group Asia Report No 119*, September 14, 2006.p 12.

⁵⁶ '2006: Who's who in Balochistan' *Dawn*, May 28, 2011.

leadership in the province and outside Pakistan as well. Its operational leader Nawabzada Balach Marri, son of Nawab Marri, was killed in a military encounter near Pak-Afghan border in 2007. Its alleged exiled leader Harbiyar Marri was dragged into a trial in London against his involvement in terrorist activities in Pakistan but he was released in 2008 after the Pakistan People's Party came in power. The co-chairperson and the President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari has very cordial relation with the royal family of the Marri tribe. The elder brother of Harbiyar Marri, Nawabzada Gazain Marri is a close friend of President Asif Ali Zardari. As Nawabzada Gazain Marri, son of Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri said in an interview on VSH news, "I am thankful to President Asif Ali Zardari for helping us to resolve our passport issue... Mr. Zardari is an old friend... Rehman Malik [Interior Minister] met me on the advice of President Zardari to resolve our passport issue."⁵⁷

1.6.2: Baloch Republican Army (BRA)

The outlawed BRA is the militant organization of the Bugti tribe and the grand-son of Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti, Brahamdagh Bugti is alleged to be the head of the BRA. It is considered to be the militant wing of the Baloch Republican Party. It is mainly active in Dera Bugti and its immediate proximity. According to the Wiki leaks secrets revelations, "his [Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti] militia had an estimated 5,000 fighters in 2004, but has been decimated by Pakistani security forces during recent months of fighting."⁵⁸ The BRA is mostly consisting of the insurgents of Bugti militia who escorted the assassinated chief of Bugti tribe in the mountains. After his death, the junior Bugti united the scattered militia under the name of BRA that is ideologically very much close to his Baloch Republican Party, an offshoot of the *Jamohri Watan Party (JWP)*. The JWP was founded by Nawab Akbar Bugti in 1991 but after his death, it was divided into three factions, JWP-Aali (Aali Bugti is the eldest grand-son of Nawab Akbar Bugti), JWP-Talal (Talal Bugti is the son of Nawab Bugti) and BRP. Since the death of octogenarian chief of Bugti tribe in 2006, the Pakistan's security establishment has been blaming Afghanistan for harboring the elusive head of BRA.

⁵⁷ Nawabzada Gazain Marri, Interview with Akram Baloch in Bezaan Program on *VISH News*, 10 March, 2011.

⁵⁸ '2006: Who's who in Balochistan' *Dawn*, May 28, 2011.

But according to the current media reports, Brahamdagh Bugti has got political asylum in Switzerland. He reached Switzerland in late October 2010 after going through difficult times in Afghanistan and has been living there ever since on political asylum.⁵⁹ Before moving to the scenic European state of Switzerland, junior Bugti was being harbored by the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR) in Afghanistan. Currently the contested chief of Bugti tribe, Brahamdagh Bugti has renounced his affiliation with the BRA but he is very active in the Europe to create awareness and stimulate the West to support the Baloch independent movement. Harbiyar [Marri] met Brahamdagh Bugti to present him the Balochistan Freedom Charter, which is under making. They also discussed the Freedom Charter. The Baloch leaders, while talking about the importance of the Freedom Charter, said that it would help unite Baloch people and further organize the Baloch freedom movement.⁶⁰

1.6.3: Baloch Liberation Front (BLF)

The emerging BLF is believed to be an offshoot of the BLA which is active in southwestern Balochistan under the leadership of Dr. Allah Nazar who is a middle-class ultra-nationalist and the founder of the Baloch Student Organization-Azad. It was revived from the ruins of old BLF in 1970s, and estimated to have an army of around 1500-2000 men. Members of the BLF are middle-class, ideologically driven, educated youth most of them have affiliation with the jingoistic BSO-A. It is comparatively very sophisticated than the other insurgent groups as these educated young fighters use the modern technology and telecommunication to proliferate and internationalize their struggle for sovereignty. According to Akbar Malik, middle-class dominance results in freedom fighters using more than guns to fight state dominance. The new fighter uses “Facebook, Twitter and YouTube to highlight their plight on the internet via online activism.”⁶¹ The BLF is politically and militarily active in the Makran division especially in the Turbat district and the coastal area.

⁵⁹ ‘How Brahamdagh Bugti got Swiss asylum’ *The Nation*, 11 September, 2012.

⁶⁰ ‘Hyrbyair meets Brahamdagh to discuss Balochistan freedom charter’ *Daily Times*, February 14, 2012.

⁶¹ Mahvish Ahmed, “Balochistan: middle class rebellion”, *Dawn*, 5 June, 2012.

Makran is the only tribal-less division of the province. There is no significant presence of tribal social organizations or Sardari System in Makran, the districts of Kech [Turbat], Panjgur and Gwadar.⁶² The BLF is free from the influence of the tribal chiefs as it is being commanded by the middle-class fighters. It has been sporadically attacking on the security forces but with colossal damage. Many bomb attacks on Frontier Corps (FC) and Pakistan Coast Guards in Makran areas usually claimed by BLF which have killed hundreds of security forces.⁶³ In a recent attack by the BFL on the Pakistan Coast Guards camp in Pishukan coastal area port city of Gwadar, total 8 security forces were killed and three were injured.⁶⁴ According to the local media, the BLF is said to be at odds with the liberal political forces especially with the National Party that is politically strong in the Makran belt. N.P demands for the national autonomy within the constitutional framework of the federation which starkly contrasts with the independent movement of the BLF. The N.P leaders and workers have allegedly been killed by the armed group of BLF in Turbat district.

With the passage of time different actors and sources got involved intentionally or unintentionally in the perennial conflict of Balochistan that have been the main focus of this chapter to develop a constructive understanding of the conflict. These indigenous actors and sources are the basic unit to comprehend the basic phenomenon. There are several political personalities, insurgent leaders, minor and major political parties, militant groups, different tribes, student organizations in the province but in this chapter only those actors have been focused who hold sway in the provincial politics as well as in decades-old conflict between the Baloch nationalists and the federal government. There are four spheres of political powers in the provincial politics, Baloch nationalists, Pashtun nationalists, religious parties and centralists. The Baloch nationalists can be further classified into three major categories, liberals, ultra-liberals and belligerents who are at loggerheads with each other due to the different nature of their political agendas. The tribal nexus with the Baloch nationalists is very important, as the nationalist parties with less tribal leaders

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ 'Attack on FC vehicles kills 14 officials in Turbat' *Dawn*, 11 January, 2012.

⁶⁴ 'Gunmen kill eight soldiers in Gwadar' *Daily Times*, July 22, 2012.

and more middle-class are more liberal, political parties with more tribal leaders are ultra-nationalist and political parties with several tribal chiefs and sub-chiefs are belligerents. On the other hand, the Baloch insurgent groups are enhancing their nexus as previously there has been lack of chain of command between the three major militant organizations. Still there is no vigorous chain of command among them due to lack of immediate proximity and lack of human resource. Among the insurgent groups, the fierce BLF is emerging as the most sophisticated militant group as it is mushrooming all over the province as well as in the Baloch population of Karachi. The Baloch in Karachi are distancing themselves from Peoples Party due to the target operations against them. Since 2005, ultra-nationalists parties like BNM and BRP have vibrant presence in Karachi and interestingly the two octogenarian hawkish tribal chiefs, Sardar Attaullah Mengal and Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri are residing in Karachi who are major source of ideological motivation and hold much of the Baloch tumultuous political and armed history. The trouble history of the decades-old conflict is discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE CONFLICT

The historical context of the Balochistan conflict can be divided into two different but interconnected columns of history which are the “Conflict Within or Baloch Civil Wars” and the “Conflict vis-à-vis Foreign Forces”. The Conflict Within can be traced back from the very beginning of the establishment of the first Baloch confederacy when the leading Baloch tribes were engaged in tug of war to control the pasturing and arable lands of Balochistan. According to the Baloch oral history, they have migrated from Arabistan (Land of Arabs) to this land (Balochistan). Their traditions say that they have migrated from modern Syrian city of Aleppo, but the Baloch tribes were inhabited in Balochistan in 1000 A.D that was mentioned in Firdausi’s book, *Shahnamah*.⁶⁵ According to the famous linguist, L. Dames, Baloch traces their history from Halab (modern Syrian city of Aleppo) in their oral poetic history. “We [Baloch] are the offspring of Mir Hamza, we rise from Halab and engage in Battle with Yazid in Karbala and we march to the towns of Seistan [Iran].⁶⁶ Originally, there were Hindus living in Kalat and its proximities known as Sewais, but when the Baloch tribes came from Arabistan, most of the stayed in Makran under leadership of Mir Jalal Khan but some of the nomadic Baloch tribes migrated to Kalat and its adjacent areas for farming and lucrative pastures for their live stocks. Sewa Dynasty is believed to be a pre-Islamic Hindu reign that ruled Kalat and its vicinity until the arrival of Muslim invaders.

“It is understood that a Hindu Dynasty called Sewa ruled over this part of state prior to the seventh century, as Kalat is still known as Kalat-i-Sewa. The Arabs reached the Makran belt in early eight century when Arab invader, Muhammad Bin Qasim conquered the whole region, including Sind and Balochistan whose sway lasted until the end of the Tenth century. After Arabs this region came under short-live occupation of Ghaznavids who ruled most of Iran, Afghanistan and sub-continent from 975 A.D to 1189 A.D.”⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Cultural & Geographic Research, “The Baluch and the Brahui and their Rebellions”, *Tribal Analysis Center*, September 2009, p.1.

⁶⁶ Longworth N. Dames, *Popular Poetry of the Baloches*, Vol.I, (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1907), 123.

⁶⁷ Government of Balochistan, “Kalat: District Development Profile 2011” available at www.balochistan.gov.pk retrieved on 22 July, 2012.

According to the *Imperial Gazetteer of India Provincial Series: Balochistan*, from 1556 to 1595 the country was under the Safavid dynasty after which it fell into the hands of the Mughals of Delhi until 1638, when it again transferred to Persia. Since the middle of the 17th century, Balochistan remained under the Safavids till the rise of Ghilzai powers in 1708 and later on it came under indirect control of Nadir Shah and ultimately it became de facto suzerainty of Ahmed Shah Durrani.⁶⁸ The subsequent Muslim invaders drove out most of the Hindu Sewais out of Kalat but the nomadic Baloch tribes in Kalat intermingle through marriages with the remaining Sewai Hindus which resulted to the birth of the Brahui language that is spoken by the Brahui Baloch tribes of today. The history of the Brahui language emerges from total darkness with the displacement of a shadowy Hindu dynasty in Kalat, called Sewa.⁶⁹ According to the European linguists like H. Pottinger and E. Trumpp, the Brahui is Dravidian language but due to its isolation from the rest of the languages of the Dravidian family, it has huge quantity of Balochi vocabularies. Genetically Brahui tribes considered themselves Baloch as they have the same culture, traditions and code of life as those of Baloch. If one studies the people loosely identified as Balochis [Brahuis] through history one finds that they are an amalgam of two distinct linguistics groups, i.e., Balochi and Brahui. Linguistically, Balochi belongs to the western group of the Iranian branch of the Indo-European languages while Brahui is Dravidian in origin.⁷⁰ The Last emperor of Kalat State, Mir Ahmed Yar Khan who was himself a Brahui speaking Baloch ruler, narrates this Baloch-Brahui biological history in the following words when the Baloch were migrating from Arabistan;

“One group [Baloch] under Mir Saad as their leader moved over and settled in Seistan [Persia], while the other one under Mir Jalal Khan Rind crossed over the Iranian Balochistan. The sons of Mir Saad, Mir Miroo and his younger brother, remained in Seistan form some years, and then advanced towards Chagi and Kharan where they stayed for some time before finally reaching Siyah Kumb [Kalat] after passing through Sorab and Maraap. Here they settled down permanently. This

⁶⁸ Elibron Classics series. *Imperial Gazetteer of India: Provincial Series: Baluchistan*, (Calcutta: Adamant Media Corporation, 2005), p.15.

⁶⁹ Murray B. Emeneau, *Language and Linguistic Area*, ed., Anwar S. Dil, (California: Stanford University Press, 1980), p.334.

⁷⁰ Foreign Policy Online, “Balochis of Pakistan on the Margins of History”, London: Foreign Policy Center *London*, November, 2006, p.10.

group which was originally called 'Ibrahimi Baluches' is now pronounced as Brahui Baluches."⁷¹

During the succeeding centuries the Brahuīs gained the control of Kalat. The central extensive farming lands of the eastern and central Balochistan were occupied by the Brahuīs before the arrival of Rind and Lashari tribes from Makran but after the arrival of Baloch warring tribes, they tamed the already residing Brahui tribes. The Baloch tribes from Makran defeating the Brahui tribes of Kalat under their chief, Mir Chakar Khan Rind in 1487 established their rule in Kalat, and moved towards Sibi and Kachi for more farming lands and good pastures where the Baloch kingdom collapsed in the thirty years civil war between the Rinds and Lasharis. After occupying Kalat, the Rind and Lasharis handed over the control of Kalat to Mir Mandu Rind, a relative of Mir Chakar Khan.⁷² Mir Chakar Khan Rind and Mir Guhram Khan Lashari launched tribal military expedition against Jamots [Sindhi tribe] in Sivi (now Sibi) and Gandawa (now Kachi and Naseerabad) and established two parallel power; one in Sivi headed by Mir Chakar Rind and other in Gandawa headed by Mir Guhram Lashari.⁷³ Amid the Baloch civil wars, the thirty years war between the Rind tribe of Mir Chakar Khan Rind and Lashari tribe of Mir Guhram Khan Lashari in fifteen century is considered to be the black part of the Baloch history. The bad blood between Rinds and Lasharis led to the collapse of the Baloch unity and most of Rinds migrated to Sindh, Punjab and also India. The Baloch expanded eastward into the Sindh, Southern Punjab and North-West Frontier Province [now Khyber Pashtunkhwa] before being stopped by the Mughals of India. The names of Dera Ghazi Khan and Dera Ismail Khan are reminiscence of the relics of the Baloch presence in these areas in the sixteen century.⁷⁴ After the civil war and mass migration, the remaining Baloch tribes fell under the control of the Brahui tribes whose tribal chiefs established the Kalat State and became its hereditary tribal

⁷¹ Mir Ahmed Yar Khan, *Inside Balochistan Autobiography: The Khan of Kalat*, (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1975), pp.55-56.

⁷² Mir Gul Khan Naseer, *The History of Balochistan*, (Quetta: Kalat Publishers, 1979), p.6.

⁷³ Habbib Jalib Baloch, *Balochistan Statehood and Nationalism*, (Quetta: J Perekan Academy of Social Science, 2006), p.43.

⁷⁴ M.S Asimov, Clifford Edmund Bosworth, "History of Civilizations of Central Asia" Paris: UNESCO, 1999, p.302.

monarchs with the title of the Khan of Kalat but the Brahui rulers of the Khanate called themselves as the ruler of Baloch state rather than Brahui state. They adopted the Balochi language as their official language and expanded their influence to the other Baloch areas like Kharan, Las Bela and Makran. These early internal tribal conflicts had inflicted far reaching impacts on the conflict of Balochistan as the contemporary Baloch tribes are still engaged in tug of war with each other. The inter-tribal and intra-tribal wars in Baloch tribes manifest the historical context of the troubled history of the Balochistan which still vibrate in the contemporary conflict of the province. The tribal conflicts have made the conflict of Balochistan more worst as the conflicting tribal chiefs want to maintain their status quo rather than educating and modernizing their respective tribes. The ongoing 30-year tribal war between the Rind and Raisani tribes is ringing alarm bells, which reminds us the Sixteenth century's Thirty Years Civil War between the Rinds and Lashars.

The second column of the conflict “the conflict vis-à-vis external forces” has its own dimensions as it began with the establishment of the Khanate of Kalat by the Brahui Baloch tribes of central Balochistan since then the Baloch territory has been at the crossroads of the powers of India, Afghanistan and Iran that is considered as a strategic showground of global conflicts like the Great Game, Cold War, the War on Terror and the New Great Game.

Historically, the geographic location has remained the driving element of Balochistan as a pawn in the power game of the region as it controls the strategic Bolan Pass which was the traditional gateway to the India and Gwadar deep sea port, the modern gateway to the resource-wealthy Central Asia. Beside Gwadar Deep Sea Port, Balochistan has other strategic frontier districts, like Turbat, Chagi, Noshki, and Chaman which are very much important as they connect Afghanistan and Iran with Balochistan.

2.1: Establishment of Khanate of Kalat

Balochistan had been the part of different regional empires of the times, ranging from the Achaemind Empire of Darius I (522-486 BC) to the Mongolian Empire of Gengiz Khan in the 13th century. Later on it straddled between the Persian Safavid dynasty and the Indian Mughal dynasty around 15th and 16th centuries until the establishment of Khanate of Kalat in 1666 by Ahmedzai dynasty, a sub-clan of Brahui Qambarani tribe. The ancient political history of Balochistan is ambiguous vis-à-vis the founding of the first Baloch tribal union. It appears to have established with the course of the decline of the Islamic Caliphate rule in the region and the consequent rise of Baloch in Makran in the early years of the Eleventh century.⁷⁵ With the collapse of the Islamic Caliphate rule around Tenth century, local tribal chiefs once again began to reassert their sway and influence. In 1290, the Venetian mercantile voyager, Marco Polo sailed along the Makran coast on his way back to Venice, Italy, describes, Kesmacoran [Makran and its capital Kech] is a kingdom having a king and a peculiar language.⁷⁶ The kingdom of Makran was being ruled by the Mir Chakar Khan Rind, descendants of Mir Jalal Khan but around late Fifteen century, he transferred his capital from Kech to Sivi (Sibi) by occupying and annexing central Balochistan. In 1487 Mir Chakar Annexed Kalat, Kharan and Las Bella. His Military victory over the Brahui tribes of Kalat led to a united Baloch state with its capital at Sibi.

“The conflict between the Baloch tribes of Makran and the Brahui tribes of Kalat was economic rather than personal. As the Makran confederacy became stronger and began to extend its territories, it tried to encroach upon the fertile lands of Kachhi and Sibi, resulting a war between Kalat and Makran where Kalatis [Brahuis] were defeated and Mir Chakar Khan annexed Kharan, Kalat and Las Bela to his domain.”⁷⁷

By early Sixteenth century, the Baloch tribal confederacy under Mir Chakar Khan Rind had established itself firmly in Makran, Kalat and the fertile lands of Kachhi and

⁷⁵ Mohammad Hassan Hosseinbor, *Iran and Its Nationalities: the Case of Baloch Nationalism*, (Karachi: Pakistan Adab Publication, 2000), p.45.

⁷⁶Taj Muhammad Bressege, *Baloch Nationalism Its Origin and Development*, (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 2004), p.139

⁷⁷Inayatullah Baloch, *The Problems of Greater Balochistan: a case study of Baloch Nationalism*, (Wiesbaden: Steiner Verlag, 1978), p.96.

Sibi in Eastern Balochistan.⁷⁸ The confederacy of Mir Chakar Khan Rind from the coast of Makran till the productive lands of Kachi and Sibi declined in mid Sixteenth century after the thirty years civil war between the Rind and Lashari tribes over the division of the fertile lands of eastern Balochistan. With the Rind-Lashar civil war, the Brahui tribes of Kalat reasserted themselves and they reoccupied the areas under the control of Mir Mando Khan Rind, the vice of Mir Chakar Rind in Kalat. Mando Khan was killed as a result of tug of war between Chakarian forces and Brahui tribes of Kalat led by Mir Bajar Khan, who reoccupied the territories of Kalat and tamed the Chakarian forces. During this era, the Makran state remained independent under Maliks, Buledais and Gichkies until Naseer Khan I of Kalat brought it within its power during the Eighteenth century.⁷⁹ In the succeeding years, the Indian Mughal Empire expanded towards Kalat that remained under indirect suzerainty of Mughal Empire. In 1650, in the reign of Shah Jahan, the Mughals lost Kandahar and their authority weakened in Balochistan and the tribes in Kalat under Ibrahim Kambrani and Guhram of Dehwar tribe refused to accept Mughal rule and the tribal assembly elected Mir Hassan Khan Brahui as their chief.⁸⁰

The emergence of the Khanate resulted from the inter-cum-intra-tribal conflicts over the pasturages, irrigable lands and the territorial expansion for the stabilization of the dynastic rule. In the early years of mid-seventeenth century the Persian Safavid and Indian Mughal empires tilted toward disintegration which provided a dynamic opportunity to the Ahmedzai Brahui tribe to proclaim the first ever tribal confederation in the immediate proximities of Kalat. In 1666, an iconic personality of Qambarani tribe, Mir Ahmed Khan (1666-95) occupied the Kalat town and laid down the foundations of the Khanate of Kalat. The tribal *jirga* (assembly) elected Mir Ahmed Khan as their chief after the death of their first elected chief, Mir Hassan Khan Brahui.

⁷⁸ Mir Khuda Bakhsh Marri Baloch, *Searchlight on Baloches and Balochistan*, (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1974) p.137.

⁷⁹ *Imperial Gazetteer of India, Provincial Series: Balochistan, op. cit.*, p.13.

⁸⁰ Gul Khan Naseer, *Tarikh-e-Balochistan: History of Balochistan*, Vol.I, (Quetta: Kalat Publishers, 1954), p.31.

In 1667, Mir Ahmed Khan captured Mastung, Quetta and Pishin from Agha Jaffar, the Moghul Governor of Afghanistan.⁸¹ The Brahui Ahmedzai forged an alliance with the Dehwari tribe of Sarawan to maintain their sway over the Kalat region in return of the Khan's chief minister to the Dehwar tribe. To water down the Baloch-Brahui issue, the later Khans adopted the title of Khan-e-Baloch rather than Khan-e-Brahui. The newly Khanate confederacy expanded its territory towards south-east arable plains of Kachhi by expelling the Kalhora dynasty of Sindh. Mir Abdullah Khan (1714-1734) was killed in battle fighting the Kalhoras of Sindh.⁸² He defeated the Kalhora dynasty had occupied the farming lands of Kachhi but he breathed his last in this war. Nadir Shah Afshar who ruled as Shah of Iran (1736-47) expanded his Afsharid Empire in Afghanistan as he conquered Kandahar in 1738 from where he turned to Mughal Empire of India via Balochistan as Mughals rule was already in decline. Uniting Iran, Nadir Shah captured Afghanistan from 1738 to 1740 invaded Mughal Empire of India via Balochistan. He defeated Mughal ruler, Muhammad Shah but also occupied the Khanate of Kalat. Then Khan of Kalat, Mir Muhabat Khan went to Qandahar where he appealed in the court of Nadir Shah for the restoration of his office as Khan of Kalat. Nadir Shah accepted Mir Muhabat Khan as the ruler of Kalat under his supremacy.⁸³ Following the death of Nadir Shah in 1747, his Afghan general, Ahmed Shah Durrani proclaimed the sovereignty of Afghanistan but he continued to exert Afghan influence over the Kalat State.

Initially, the Khanate was an independent chiefdom of few tribes until late 1740s when charismatic Khan, Mir Naseer Khan I (1749-95) was enthroned as the ruler of the Khanate. Mir Naseer Khan I ruled the Kalat state for forty four years and was the most popular, dynamic and the most powerful ruler of the Khanate, that was why, he was titled as Naseer Khan the Great. When Nadir Shah died, Naseer Khan accepted Afghan successor, Nadir Shah Durrani as the King of Afghanistan. Being a prince-cum-statesman-cum-soldier, he institutionalized the all pillars of the loose

⁸¹ Ahmed Yar Khan, *op. cit.*, p.78.

⁸² A.B. Awan, *Baluchistan Historical and Political Processes*, (London: New Century Publishers, 1985), p.30

⁸³ Ghulam Farooq Baloch, "Treaty of Kalat 1758 between Qandahar and Kalat and Its Impacts", *Balochistan Review Journal*, Vol.XXXIV, No.I, (Quetta: Balochistan Study Center, 2011), p.56.

confederation and developed it into a modern state with an army, administrative bureaucracy and a tribal council of different Baloch tribes. The Khanate of Kalat was a tribal political system, yet less than a state.

His half-century rule is nostalgia in the Baloch history which was the golden era of the Khanate. Within a decade of his rule, he declared himself totally independent from the paramountcy of Durrani Kingdom of Afghanistan that resulted to Afghan-Baloch war. In 1758, the Afghan forces under the command of Afghan King, Ahmed Shah Durrani invaded the Khanate of Kalat and continued the blockade of Kalat fortress for forty days but ultimately Mir Naseer Khan and Ahmed Shah Durrani came to a peaceful agreement known as the “Treaty of Kalat” in 1758.⁸⁴ The eye-catching terms of the Treaty of Kalat were;

- Kalat of Kalat will not pay any tribute to the King of Afghanistan in future.
- Khan of Kalat will provide military assistance to the Afghan king in case of external aggression.
- Afghan King will not meddle in the internal affairs of the Khanate of Kalat in future.
- The occupied areas of the Khanate will be backed to the Khan of Kalat.⁸⁵

Naseer Khan the Great also established diplomatic alliances with Afghanistan, moreover military alliance with Ahmed Shah Durrani of Afghanistan which allowed him to incorporate the Kharan, Lasbela and Makran feudatories into Khanate, thus linked the Arabian Sea of the Indian Ocean with the Khanate via two important trade routes from ports of Pasni (Makran) and Sonmiani (Las Bela). He united almost all the Baloch tribes and consolidated the Marri-Bugti areas, Las Bela, Makran, Kharan and Quetta in his dominions. Makran and Kharan had been added to it by conquest

⁸⁴ Taj Muhammad Bressege, *op. cit.*, p.155.

⁸⁵ Ghulam Farooq Baloch, *op. cit.*, p.61.

and Las Bela by treaty.⁸⁶ At the peak of his power, Mir Naseer Khan asserted Kalat's sovereignty over the Iranian Baloch areas and used to send expeditionary forces to the western borderland of Makran.⁸⁷ Mir Naseer Khan was not only the politico-tribal leader of the Khanate, but he was also revered as the supreme religious leader due to his orthodox religious believes. During his reign, he tamed the Zikri rulers of the Makran state through the military might and massacred hundreds of Zirkri believers. Zikri is a sect of Islam mostly inhabited in Makran and Karachi, they believe on the last prophet, Muhammad (PBHU) but they practice Mahdism and accept Imam Mahdi as their spiritual Imam.

In 1759, Under the Treaty of Kalat, Mir Naseer Khan joined Ahmed Shah's military campaign in against the Persians who formed a collation against Afghans. His [Mir Naseer Khan] bold and victorious steering of the Battle of Meshed against the Persian so greatly impressed the Afghan king that the latter give him the title of *Brather-e-Wafadar* (the faithful brother), and made a present of Shal region (now Quetta) to his mother, Bibi Maryam.⁸⁸ These joint military expeditions also formed firm and long-lasting friendship between the Afghan King Nadir Shah Durrani and Nasser Khan the Great. He also accompanied the Afghan King, Ahmed Shah Durrani on his expedition to India (1761-1762) and fought with the Sikhs at Lahore.

“While Mir Naseer Khan was piercing his way on his horse through the Sikh ranks in the furious outburst near Lahore, he fell off his steed; and as he fell to the ground, the turban he was wearing got loose. As a result, his long hair propped out. One of the Sikh combatants noticing the fall, rushed at him with the sword to kill him but another Sikh hastily halted his comrade and saying that the man (*i.e., Naseer Khan*) was a Sikh.”⁸⁹

Mir Naseer Khan also established diplomatic relations with the other neighboring countries. According to Inayatullah Baloch, he was the first Baloch ruler to pay heed to the foreign policy. He exchanged state representatives with Iran, Afghanistan and

⁸⁶ A.B Awan, *op. cit.*, p.31.

⁸⁷ Selig S. Harrison, *In Afghanistan Shadow: Baloch Nationalism and Soviet Temptation*, (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1981), p.17.

⁸⁸ Mir Ahmed Yar Khan, *op. cit.*, p.85.

⁸⁹ Mir Ahmed Yar Khan, *op. cit.* p.87.

Sultanate of Oman in the *Arabistan*.⁹⁰ The death of Naseer Khan in 1795 ushered in an era of political turmoil and inter-tribal upheaval. The Khanate lost its outer conquered territories to Sindh and Afghanistan. His son and successor, Mir Mahmood Khan was a man of no great qualities and could not take hold of the Khanate reins very tightly that led the decline of his predecessor Khanate from the shores of Arabian Sea till Afghan frontier in north and Sindh border in east.

Land disputes especially over the farming towns became the bone of contention among the warring tribes and the Khan dynasty. It is widely believed that the main reason for the disintegration of the Khanate was the luxurious life of Mir Mahmood Khan.⁹¹ After the death of Mir Mahmood Khan in 1821, his son and successor Mir Mehrab Khan II tried took the reins of the Khanate and he was the first ruler to encounter the British colonial power in the Khanate.

Table 2.1

The List of the Khans of the Khanate

Khan of Kalat	Ruling Era	Khan of Kalat	Ruling Era
Mir Ahmed I	1666-95	Mir Mehrab Khan II	1821-39
Mir Mehrab Khan I	1695-95 killed	Mir Naseer Khan II	1840-75
Mir Samandar Khan	1695-1714	Mir Kudadad Khan	1857-93
Mir Abdullah Khan	1714-34	Mir Mahmud Khan II	1893-31
Mir Mohabat Khan	1734-49	Mir Azam Jan	1931-33
Mir Naseer Khan I	1749-95	Mir Ahmed Yar Khan	1933-48
Mir Mahmood Khan	1795-1821	Khan office abolished	1948

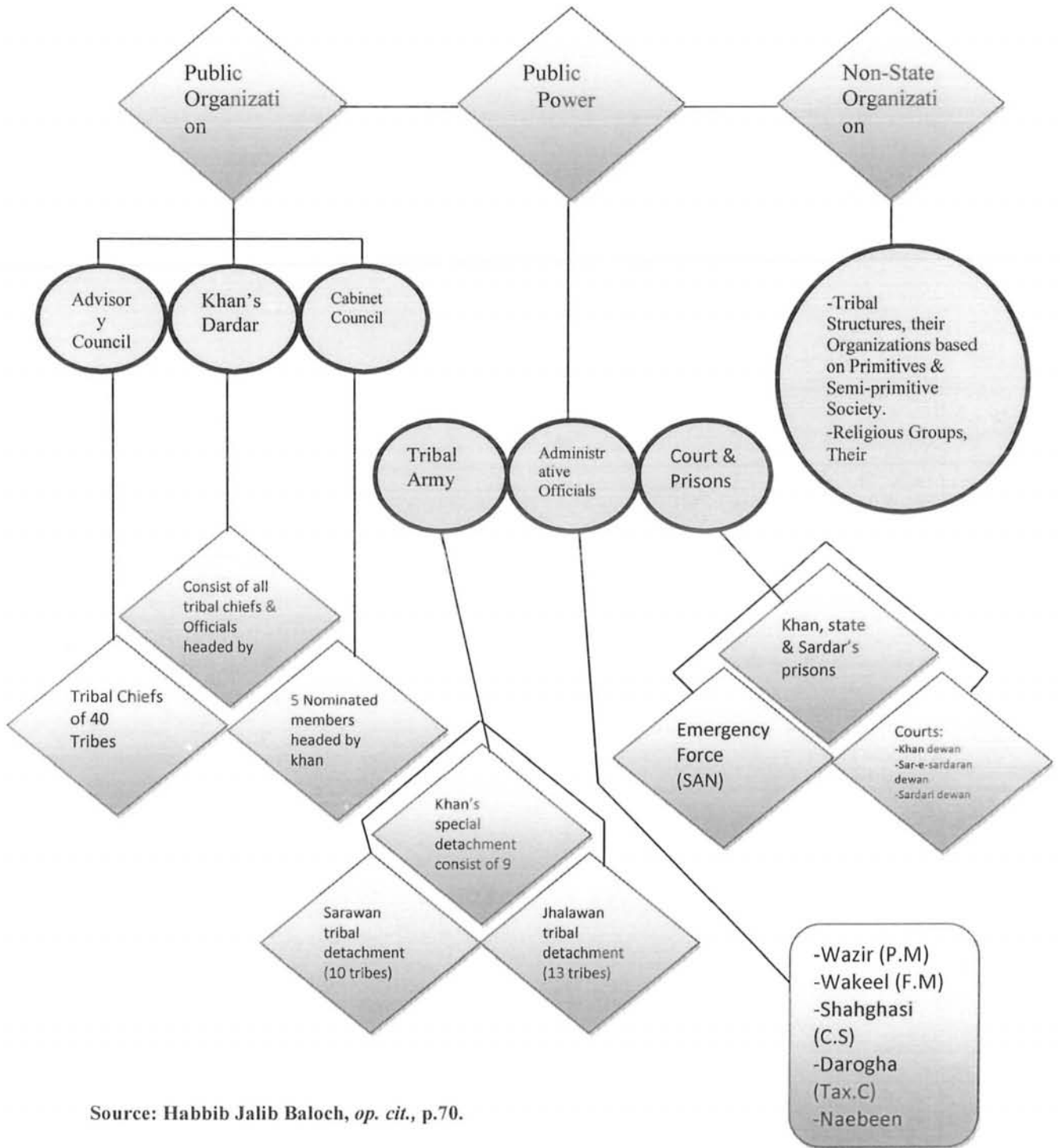
Source: Mir Ahmed Yar Khan, *op. cit.*, pp.67-111

⁹⁰ Taj Muhammad Bressege, *op. cit.*, pp-155-56.

⁹¹ Mir Khuda Bakhsh Marri Baloch, *op. cit.*, p.241.

Figure: 2.1

The Administration of the Khanate of Kalat under Mir Naseer Khan I (1749-95)



Source: Habbib Jalib Baloch, *op. cit.*, p.70.

2.2: Colonization by the British Empire

When Mir Mehrab Khan was coroneted with the title of Khan of Kalat, the Mughal Empire in India was on its last legs while the Russian intentions in the Central Asia and around the Caspian Sea were grabbing the attentions of the British in India. The Russians on the other side of the Amu Darya, or beyond the line of the Hindu Kush mountains threatened the British Indian and the British Government decided to establish their remarkable presence in Afghanistan. For the British forces in India, the route to Afghanistan lay through Balochistan, where Mehrab Khan, the grandson of Naseer Khan the Great ruled.⁹² To secure the supply routes to Afghanistan was vital for the military expedition, therefore the British decided to subjugate the Khanate of Kalat before pursuing their “forward policy”. The Khan of Kalat, Mir Mehrab Khan was not supported by his tribesmen to ink any treaty with the foreign invaders, which was why he was killed by the British forces in a military skirmish in 1839, but his successors had to surrender before the colonial empire. His son, Mir Naseer Khan II and successive Khans were recognized as the Khan of Kalat but they had to ratify the British-favored treaties of 1841, 1854 and 1876 that resulted to the establishment of British Balochistan in 1877 with its headquarters in Quetta.⁹³

To further consolidate their power in the region the British forces launched the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878-1880) that was temporarily ended with the signing of the “Treaty of Gandamak” between the Afghan King, Muhammad Yaqub Khan and British Government which ceded some frontier areas of southern Afghanistan to British Balochistan to prevent further British invasion. The British success in the Second Anglo-Afghan War secured British influence over the entire north Balochistan. Loralai, Sibi, Pishin, Chaman, Harnai and Thal-Chotiali were ceded by Emir Yaqub Khan to the British Government. In 1883, the Quetta, Bolan Pass and in 1899, Nushki and in 1903 Naseerabad were acquired from the Kalat State on a

⁹² A. B Awan, *op. cit.*, p.34.

⁹³ R. Hughes-Buller, ed. *Imperial Gazetteer of India: Provincial Series: Balochistan*, (Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, 1908), p.43.

perpetual lease.⁹⁴ Thus the Khanate of Balochistan was divided into British Balochistan, Agency territories, Native states and Tribal areas. The British Balochistan was under direct control of the British India. The Agency territories were composed of the areas of Bolan Pass, and Chagi, and Zhob on which British held legal position. Native states were the Kalat, Kharan and Las Bela states which were under the indirect control of the British India through the Khanate of Kalat. Marri-Bugti agencies were declared as Tribal areas under the British Balochistan.

The British colonial intentions in Balochistan grew during the 1860s and 70s owing to the British perception that the Russians might expand their territory southward. The “Great Game” as British imperial policy during this period which dragged Balochistan into the corridors of power politics.⁹⁵ Thus the Khanate of Balochistan was brought under explicit and implicit British sovereignty and metaphorically, it was colonized by the British Empire. After the establishment of the British hegemony on Balochistan, the British divided the northwest areas of Balochistan into Afghanistan and Iran to secure its colonial border from the Russian expansions towards the South Asia. One portion of Balochistan was given to Iran and another to Afghanistan.

2.3: Balochistan under the British Raj

Historically, the Baloch tribes had never accepted any domination, neither internal nor external. When any Baloch-Brahui tribe had tried to manifest itself more powerful comparatively to the other tribes, then it had led to inter-tribal wars that lasted for several years. The Rind-Lashar Thirty Years War is one such example. The Baloch also did not accept the first foreign intervention of the Portuguese in the 15th century. According to the Balochi nationalistic epics, the first Portuguese invasion on Makran coast under the leadership of Vasco de Gama was repelled by Mir Ismail Kalamti. But almost immediately the Portuguese attacked Makran coast again when Mir Hamal Klamati was the tribal chief. Mir Hamal fought bravely but he was arrested by the invaders through deception after signing a peace treaty. Before the

⁹⁴ The British Empire Online, “Balochistan: a brief history”, *The British Empire*, available at www.britishempire.co.uk accessed on 14 July, 2012.

⁹⁵ Foreign Policy Center, “Balochis of Pakistan on the Margins of History”, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

British occupation of Balochistan, the Baloch oral history condemns the atrocities of the Portuguese and vehemently praised the bravery of a Baloch leader, Mir Hamal Jeeyhand Kalamti.⁹⁶

When British India occupied and colonized the Khanate of Kalat, it adopted several strategies to sway the restive Baloch tribes. The British Balochistan pursued three comprehensive strategies vis-à-vis the Great Game, Afghanistan and the Khanate, known as “Policy of Divide and Rule”, “the Close Border Policy” and “the Forward Policy” from around-mid Nineteenth century to the early Twentieth century. The British first employed their famous colonial stratagem, “Policy of Divide and Rule” on the Khanate of Balochistan. Balochistan was divided into the British Balochistan and the Khanate of Kalat. Through this policy, they solely controlled the all administration of the British Balochistan but kept their indirect rule over the Khanate of Kalat by appointing their representative as the Chief Minister of the Khanate. But through this method of indirect rule, they could not rein in the restive Baloch-Brahui tribes. After their defeat in the First Anglo-Afghan War, the British adopted the “Closed Border Policy (1839-76)” in which they increased their military presence in the areas under their control and limited their presence in the areas not yet pacified for military action against the unruly tribes.⁹⁷ No any law could be maintained in tribal territory; however no attempts were made to penetrate the territory across the border. In a serious case, there was a blockade of the offending tribe, or even a military expedition. This system was called the “Closed Border Policy”.⁹⁸ The “Closed Border Policy” could not acquire the strategic intentions in the Great Game as the Russians were advancing towards the southward that led the replacement of the “Closed Border Policy” to “Forward Policy” before the Second Anglo-Afghan War. A. B Awan defines the British Forward Policy as the politico-economic-cum-military control of an independent tribe without antagonizing or going to war with it and physically conquering it.

⁹⁶ Javed Haider Sayed, “The Baloch Resistance Literature against the British Raj”, *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, Vol. XXXVIII, No. 1, (2007), p.75.

⁹⁷ Fred Scholz, *Nomadism & Colonialism: A hundred Years of Baluchistan 1872-1972*, translated by Hugh van Skyhawk, (New York: Oxford University Press. 2002), p.91.

⁹⁸ A. B Awan, *op. cit.*, p.151.

A magnetic military man, Major Robert Sandeman was sent to Balochistan to execute British new forward policy. He was appointed as Agent to Governor General in British Balochistan in February 1877. Sir Robert Sandeman devised his own strategy to deal with the powerful warrior Baloch tribes that is known as the Sandeman System or Sardari System. On his very first contact with the Baloch, he directed all his energies towards building the lost prestige of the tribal chiefs.⁹⁹ Major Robert began to develop separate relation with the most warrior tribes and clans. The so-called Sandeman System was based on the British historic strategy of divide and rule rather than crush and rule. He employed tri-pronged strategy in his famous Sandeman System. First, he provided financial privileges, administrative powers and charming titles to the influential tribes. Second, he introduced inter-tribal council of elders among the Baloch tribes to settle the disputes. Through this, the British penetrated into Khanate as an arbitrator. Thirdly, Sandeman launched tribal police system, known as levies, consisting of warriors of leading tribes. Each tribe had its own levies force.

The empowering of individual tribes through Sandeman System gradually damaged the internal power structure of the long-running tribal system of the Khanate which indicated the indirect rule of British in Balochistan. In his book, *Nomadism and Colonialism*, Fred Scholz, explains the Sandeman System as tactics of three formulae;

- Active and passive demonstration of military might.
- Equal strengthening the native authorities and their participation in local administration.
- Making the native authorities, politico-economically dependent on British colonial authorities.¹⁰⁰

It weakened the power of Khan of Khanate among the Baloch tribes. It is due to the Sandeman System which eroded the power of Khan and empowered the other tribes more than the Khan. In the contemporary tribal set-up, all other tribes are more

⁹⁹ Ibid., 119.

¹⁰⁰ Schlez, *op. cit.*, p.95.

powerful than Ahmedzai dynasty.¹⁰¹ It fragmented the basic nature of Baloch society. It reduced the Khan's position just as a ceremonial head of state. Through their Sardari System, the British converted the Baloch oral constitution that was established from the very long and continued practices for centuries among the Baloch tribes. Baloch nationalists also denounce the Sandeman System to be responsible for corrupting the Baloch tribal system as through this so-called system, the tribal succession was made hereditary, before it was based on popular selection among the most brave and talented men of the respective tribes. Sandeman also used intra-tribal tensions to build up other influential personalities in the tribe, who, he could use as instrument to exert influence.¹⁰² Through the Sandeman System the Khan of Khanate had no direct role to the affairs of the tribal Sardars under the Sandeman System which was supervised by the British political agent.¹⁰³ The Khan of the Khanate also lost his grief on its feudal principalities of Las Bela, Kharan and Makran. Robert Sandeman's successful Sardari System of taming the restive tribes through a strategy of peace and goodwill was highly praised the best method to work with the Baloch people.¹⁰⁴

Sir Robert Sandeman personally visited Las Bela and Makran states. He acted as arbitrator between the Khan of Kalat and Jam of Las Bela as well as Khan of Kalat and Gichki Chief of Makran that provided him a direct opportunity to interfere in the internal affairs of the Khanate as well as its tributary states.¹⁰⁵ However, during the British Raj, some developmental works were undertaken but just for the sake of the British strategic interests. Thus Quetta was linked with the British India in east and with Afghanistan in the west via railroads from Sindh to Chaman in 1888. The railroads were also extended to north-western Balochistan near Iran border. The

¹⁰¹ Martin Axmann, *Back to the Future: The Khanate of Kalat and the Genesis of Baloch Nationalism 1915-1955*, (Karachi: Oxford University Press), p.31.

¹⁰² Imtaiz Ali, "The Balochistan Problem", *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 58, No. 2, (Karachi: Pakistan Institute of International Affairs, April 2005), p. 45.

¹⁰³ Global Vision, "Balochistan: Problems and Solutions", available at www.thevision21.org accessed on 25 October, 2012.

¹⁰⁴ T. Hungerford Holdich, *The Indian Borderland: 1890-1900*, (London: Methenun and Company, 1996), p.186.

¹⁰⁵ A. B Awan. *op. cit.*, pp. 139-140.

British wrested the border areas of Balochistan along with Afghanistan and Persia to ensure the permanent defense of British India from German or French threats from Persia and Russian danger from Afghanistan. The establishment of British Balochistan and its subsequent link to British India minimized the politico-economic status of Khanate. The Baloch tribes from Khanate started to migrate to Quetta from economic sources. In the early 20th century, due to urbanization of British Balochistan, especially its capital Quetta, the Baloch youth started embracing the education in the school and colleges established by the British Balochistan. With this, a group of educated middle-class youth started to emerge that established founding of the political awareness in the backward and illiterate population of the Khanate. This led to the establishment of the first-ever political parties in Balochistan. During 1920s-30s, Baloch Nationalism started surfacing in the form of some political parties like *Anjuman-e-Ittehad-e Balochan wa Balochistan* of Nawab Yousuf Aziz Mugi and Kalat State National Party of Abdul Aziz Kurd. The National Party was formed after the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia that was profoundly influenced by communist ideas with anti-sardar and anti-colonial aspirations. On 10th September, 1933, Khan Ahmed Yar Khan was enthroned as the head of Khanate. The powerless Mir Ahmed Yar Khan was not happy with the indirect rule of British Balochistan in Khanate as through its Sardari System it had established a Khanate within the Khanate by controlling the Baloch tribes individually. He demanded the revival of the Khanate of Kalat on the bases of the agreed principles inked in the Treaty of 1876 between the British India and the Khan of Kalat. He demanded that the powers of the Political Agent should be transferred to him, Sandeman System should be reformed, the leased Baloch areas should be remerged into his Khanate and the Treaty of 1876 inked between his predecessor and British Government must be honored.

The demands of Mir Ahmed Yar Khan gained momentum in the Baloch tribes since then he secured tortuous backing from these tribes. The British were reluctant to yield to the inconceivable demands and were also astonished over the clannish support Khan earned from the loose-controlled tribes. The saga of Mir Ahmed Yar Khan and the British Balochistan continued until the Indian independence Act of 1947 after

which he made earnest struggle to present the Khanate's pre-British political status before the British India through which he could revive the sovereignty of the Khanate of Kalat.

Baloch history since its annexation with Pakistan is replete with instances of the bullets and gunship helicopters. Immediately after the merger of Khanate, the younger brother of the Khan of Kalat, Prince Agha Abdul Karim with some his faithful tribesmen revolted against the annexation, as he perceived it a forced annexation. The first short-lived insurgency was followed by the political turmoil of 1958 and low-intensity insurgency until the end of Ayub's Martial Law in 1969. After the restoration of so-called democracy in Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's era, the turbulent Baloch-centre relation festered in blown up into a third insurgency led by Mengal and Marri tribes from 1973 to 1977. Currently, the shadow of the fourth insurgency which was ignited in the middle of 2005 still persists in the disturbed areas of the insurgency-hit province. The current conflict started when the military regime of General Musharraf announced to establish military cantonments in Dera Bugti, Kohlu and Gwadar districts of Balochistan. The Baloch nationalist forces have been demanding for greater provincial autonomy and were opposing the mega projects like Gwadar Deep Seaport, were further infuriated and provoked a mass movement against the establishment of the military cantonments and Gwadar Deep Seaport. Some prominent Pakistani leaders tried to defuse the simmering tension between the Baloch nationalist forces and the Musharraf regime but their efforts could not materialized, resulting to a full-blown military operation against the Baloch nationalists that killed several political activists including the former chief minister and the governor of the province, Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti in August, 2006. Ever since, the province is politically strangled and the Baloch insurgents under the banner of the BLA, BRA and BFL are waging guerrilla war, a separatist movement for the liberation of Balochistan.

When the Baloch militants started targeting settlers from other provinces, the security establishment went on for a tit-for-tat strategy, implemented its so-dreadful policy of

“kill and dump” in which the Baloch political activists were abducted, killed with inhuman torture, and their bullet riddled defaced bodies were thrown away mostly on roadsides. The Asian Human Rights Commission reported that Pakistan’s military and its clandestine agencies have supra-constitutional sway to deal with the Baloch people, who are struggling for the right of self-rule in the province as the military’s kill and dump policy in querulous province has created bedlam in the daily lives of the Baloch, and left no room for a political solution of the conflict.¹⁰⁶ According to the Baloch nationalists, thousands of Baloch political activists have been disappeared by the state security agencies and hundreds have been killed. Around 400 mutilated bodies of the missing persons have been recovered in different areas of the province since April 2009. Baloch nationalists blame the security agencies behind the extra-judicial murders of the Baloch political activists. In retaliation to the military operation, hundreds of settlers from the other provinces have been killed by the Baloch militants and thousands have been forced to migrate to the other provinces. But increase in the killings [of Baloch insurgents and political workers] by the security forces has epitomized a dramatic decline in the target killings of Punjabi settlers who have been frequently on the cross-hairs of the armed nationalists as a professed emblem of federation the insurgents want to break.¹⁰⁷

The troubled history of Balochistan since early day of the establishment of the Khanate and its subsequent colonization by the British Empire had remained a legacy for the Baloch nationalists which still haunt the contemporary Baloch nationalists. When the British Indian Empire collapsed after the British withdrawal, the Baloch rulers of the princely states could not united with a single Baloch federation that mixed up the Baloch turbulent history with new troubling trends. The personal loathes and disliking forged a history to haunt and confuse the later Baloch generations. The locked horns Baloch rulers locked the horns of their coming generations with the federation of Pakistan who are still at loggerheads with Islamabad. Currently, the disturbing history of the conflict in the province has

¹⁰⁶ ‘Pak. military’s kill and dump policy mad political solution in Balochistan impossible’ *Yahoo News*, 2 February, 2012.

¹⁰⁷ Cyril Almedia, “Insurgents suffer bloody reprisals”, *Dawn*, June 26, 2011.

colluded with its significant geopolitics of especially in the strategically important Arabian Sea of the Indian Ocean, details of that are discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

GEOPOLITICAL IMPORTANCE OF BALOCHISTAN

The geopolitics or political geography is the study of chronic effects of geographical factors on politics, especially international politics. Basically, it is all about the relationship between the international politics and territory. It is defined as a study of the influence of such factors as geography, economics, and demography on the politics and especially the foreign policy of a state. The concept of geopolitics emerged in the 19th century as geographers and political thinkers sought to analyze the close connection between geography and politics and since then, the geo-politics has remained the famous term to describe the global hostilities in international relations. The term geopolitics was coined by the Swedish political scientist Rudolf Kjellén (1864-1922). Actually he extracted this term from a book titled, Political Geography that was published in 1897 by the German geographer Friedrich Ratzel. It is the dissertation about the global politics that emphasizes on state competition and the geographical aspects of power.

Balochistan lies in a central position at the cross road of two axes, east-west and north-south of three macro regions; Asia, Africa and the Mediterranean basin. It is at one and the same time (a) the hinge between the Indian sub-continent, Central Asia and Euro-Asiatic steppes and Iranian Plateau; (b) the link between those regions which gravitate towards the Indian Ocean and its two western sea routes, the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea. For this reason, it is of vital importance from a geo-strategic and geo-economic point of view. Due to its important strategic location, Balochistan has always been part of international political rivalries of the great powers. According to Naseer Brohi, for the British ruler, control over the strategically important Balochistan province was necessary because of many reasons;

- To establish a zone of influence between India, Afghanistan and Iran in order to strengthen and safeguard the frontier of India.
- To maintain Afghanistan as a buffer state between Czarist Russia and India, and keep Russians away from the Indian frontiers.

- The Bolan and Kojak (Chaman) Passes were considered strategically very important. The British ruler wanted to control militarily these passes which helped them greatly to implement their military plan in India and Afghanistan.¹⁰⁸

Before the arrival of the first-ever foreign invaders “Portuguese colonists” on the Makoran coast, the legendary Greek commander, Alexander the Great and Muslim conqueror of Sindh Muhammad bin Qasim also made inroads to Balochistan but they just passed through Baloch land. The historic voyage of Portuguese explorer Vasco Di-Gama from Cape Town (South Africa) to Goa (west India) opened the Indian Ocean for Western sailors. The Portuguese were the first European colonizers to reach their shores.¹⁰⁹ But the Portuguese colonists faced profound resistance from the daring Kalmati tribe near Kalamat, Gwadar. Kalmati is a Baloch tribe inhabited in the proximities of strategic district Gwadar.

When British India occupied Balochistan, it extended its railway line to Chaman (Afghan Border) and Tafthan (Iran border) to facilitate the movement of British troops. It also established communication system, telegraph. Balochistan had not gathered importance simply because of the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. It has always been considered one of the strategic areas of the world.¹¹⁰ The barrier can also be economic oriented. Small powers with strategic locations such as chock points on major sea routes, or on junction points of great powers may serve a single or multiple roles in the grand strategy of great powers. Such small powers play a vital role in achieving great powers objectives. On occasions they become a bone of contention among the superpowers. The great powers increasing interests in small powers create security syndromes. Balochistan strategic location has enhanced its importance and it

¹⁰⁸ Naseer Brohi, *Studies in Brahui History*, (Karachi: Pakistan Herald Press, 1977), pp.32-33.

¹⁰⁹ Sabir Badalkhan, “Portuguese encounters with Makran Baloch during the sixteen century”, Vol.19, Issue 02, *Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, (London: Cambridge University Press, September 2009), p.48.

¹¹⁰ Janmahmad, *Essays on Baloch National Struggle in Pakistan: Emergence Dimensions Repercussions*, (Quetta: Gosha-e-Adab, 1988), p.393.

may be in the economic interests of Pakistan but it also been vulnerable for Pakistan as well.

“Balochistan’s military significance has always been great. It derives its importance from its central location, its difficult terrains and warlike habits of the Baloch. In these circumstances, a great responsibility develops on Pakistan to retain the built-in initiative-cum-potential in Balochistan. It is vital to the defense of Pakistan and by implication to the defense of Iran, Afghanistan and India, indeed the entire region.”¹¹¹

Balochistan is geographically situated at the tri-junction of South Asia, West Asia and Central Asia. It shares about 800 km international border with Iranian Balochistan and around 1200 km border with Afghanistan. Balochistan has 840km long coastline which is extended nearly to the northern shores of strategically important, Strait of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf where one thirds of world oil passes. The new dimensions to the geopolitics is now complicated by the Baloch borderlands seated between the hydrocarbon-rich Central Asian states and the new markets in Asia Pacific with its new Gwadar deep seaport. Politically its geographical location neighboring Iran has enhanced its importance for the USA. Its border with Afghanistan makes Balochistan a key player in war against terrorism politics. India extends itself through Afghanistan, which have strategically come together for their national interests. China is interested in having its share in the new Silk roads as it is being kept at distant from the New Silk Route by the USA and its allies. Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) has brought together China, and the Central Asian Republics, primarily to counter the US influence in Central Asia. China has not only initiated the longest gas pipeline in the world to take Central Asian oil to its Xingjian province and the Shanghai, it has also succeeded in accessing Gwadar and warm waters to control the Indian Ocean and Middle East in future. To connect western China and the Central Asia by land routes, Pakistan is working on a network of road links to Afghanistan from its border town Chaman in Balochistan to Qandahar. In the northwest, it is building a similar road link, Peshawar-Torkham-Jalalabad road, and eventually the Gwadar port will be accessible for Chinese imports and exports

¹¹¹ Syed Iqbal Ahmed, *op. cit.*, p.250

through overland links that will stretch to and from the Karakoram Highway in Pakistan's Northern Areas that border China's Muslim majority region of Xingjian. On the other hand, Afghanistan has its own strategic and political interests in Balochistan. Being a landlocked and neighboring country of CARs, it also wants to reach the warm waters of Balochistan. It has also political interests of its long desire of greater Pashtunistan. For these interests, it has made strong nexus with India because India has its own national interests to compete China in the region. If it were not for the strategic location of the Balochistan and the rich potential of oil, uranium and other resources, it would be difficult to imagine any one fighting over this bleak, desolate and forbidding land.¹¹² The Strategic bases of Balochistan like Pasni, Ormara, Turbat, Gwadar and Dalbandin are very important for USA in case of any possible US attack on Iran due to its contested nuclear program and other political and ideological differences. The USA considers Chinese presence in Gwadar as potential threat to its economic and security interests in the region. Besides its strategic importance, Balochistan has also huge quantities of oil and gas reserves, other natural minerals like gold, coal copper, chromites etc. According to the Geological Survey of Pakistan, Balochistan has 25 trillion cubic feet gas and 6 trillion unexplored oil reserves.¹¹³

3.1: Geopolitics of Balochistan in the Great Game

The Great Game, a nineteenth century intense strategic international rivalry between the British Empire and the Czarist Russia where the Russian Empire was pursuing a forward policy to expand its influence in and beyond Central Asia to the warm waters of the Indian Ocean and the British Empire was chasing a counter forward policy to deter the Russian expansion beyond Afghanistan to protect crown jewel of its empire, the British India. The term "Great Game" is generally accredited to an officer of the British East India Company, Arthur Conolly that was later on popularized by the British novelist Rudyard Kipling in his novel Kim. The widely accepted period of the Great Game date backs to the Treaty of Gulistan or Russo-Persian Treaty of 1813 to

¹¹² Selig S. Harrison, *op. cit.*, p.7.

¹¹³ "2010 Minerals Yearbook: Pakistan", U.S. Department of the Interior: U.S. Geological Survey, November, 2011.

the Anglo-Russian Entente or Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907. The treaty of Gulistan agreed after the first Russo-Persian War which annexed Azerbaijan, Daghestan and Eastern Georgia into the Tsarist Russia. The Gulistan Treaty of 1813 was a peace treaty between imperial Russia and Iran signed on 24th October 1813 in a village of Gulestan in Karabakh.¹¹⁴ The Great Game centered on Afghanistan, Iran and Tibet which constitute buffers between Russian and British Asian colonies. The Twentieth century heralded far-reaching changes in the international politics. Rise of Germany in politics of Europe and the humiliating defeat of Russia by then emerging Asian power Japan in Russo-Japan War of 1905 compelled both the colonial superpowers to resolve their longstanding rivalries that resulted into the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907 that caused the death of the Great Game. The Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 divided Persia into a British-controlled southern zone, a Russian-controlled northern zone and an independent central zone. The Convention also clarified the border line between the two warring empires from Persian [Iran] to Afghanistan and declared Afghanistan an official protectorate of British Empire.¹¹⁵

It was actually the Great Game which brought Balochistan under the British hegemony to secure Persia and Afghanistan as buffer states to prevent Russian expansions towards British Indian Empire.¹¹⁶ According to one analyst, Balochistan was a chessboard on which the Great Game was played. In the early 19th century the Russians inroad in the Central Asia furthermore its strategic considerations towards the warm waters of the Indian Ocean via Afghanistan and consequently Balochistan lured the attentions of the British Indian towards Afghanistan-cum-Balochistan that subsequently became the chess-board on which the Great Game was played between the two superpowers of the times. Apart from military considerations, the economic factors of the commercially important Silk Route shaped the Russian expansion towards Central Asia. The Tsars of Russia pursued their expansionist policies vigorously owing to their territorial connectivity with South Asia; they had leverage

¹¹⁴CAIS-SOAS Online, "Golestan Treaty" *The Circle of Ancient Iranian Studies*, available at www.cais-soas.com accessed 12 August 2012.

¹¹⁵Kallie Szczepanski, "What is the Great Game?" *Asian History*, available at www.asianhistory.about.com accessed 12 August 2012.

¹¹⁶Inayatullah Baloch, *op. cit.*, p.200.

over the European nations. Russian Emperor, Peter the Great (1672-1725) had been eyeing the shortest and hurdle-less route to Indian Ocean via Balochistan that could connect Russia to Gwadar, Bandar Abbas, Strait of Hormuz then onward to Europe. Since the time of Peter the Great, the Russians were desperately looking for access to warm waters [Indian Ocean].¹¹⁷

However, the Russian eastward policies were exerting mounting pressure in the politico-military circles in Calcutta and London to drag Balochistan into the British spheres of influence. Initially, they wanted to create a buffer zone in Balochistan by strengthening their defence beyond the Indus River. In Balochistan, the British India just wanted a transport corridor for logistic supplies and that purpose it bargained with the Baloch tribes by drawing a Red Line between the British India and the tribal monarchs. The British India got the control of sixty miles long strategic Bolan Pass and Quetta that was part of the British Forward Policy that replaced the previous Close Border Policy. Sir Robert Sandeman was the one who gave death-blow to the Close Border System and initiated the Forward Policy.¹¹⁸

Balochistan was the gateway of India at the west. What was happening in Afghanistan was of greater importance to British while Balochistan has been an historic gateway for the Russians to India. To contain Russian expansion the British established a magnificent garrison in Quetta while it also implemented its strategy to deal the local tribes. Balochistan gained importance in the British-Indian external policies at some stage in the First Anglo-Afghan (1839-42). In 1838, the British India established tactful relations with then Khan of Kalat, Mir Mehrab Khan in order to get a transport corridor to Afghanistan via strategic Bolan Pass. The British India reached to an agreement with the Khan of Kalat Mir Mehrab Khan in 1839 which was the first-ever formal interaction of the British India and His Majesty, Khan of Kalat. The Treaty of 1839 concluded between the British Government and Mir Mehrab Khan, the chief of Kalat elucidates;

¹¹⁷ Javed Haider Sayed, *op. cit.*, p.53.

¹¹⁸ Global Security Online, "The Great Game-Russo-British Rivalry", available at www.globalsecurity.org accessed 20 August, 2012.

“As Naseer Khan [Noori Naseer Khan] and his descendants, as well as his tribes and sons held possession of the country of Kalat, Kachhi, Khorstan, Makran, Kej [Kech/Turbat], Bela [Lasbela] and the port of Soumiani [Sonmiani] in the time of the lamented Ahmed Shah Durani they will in future be masters of their country in the same manner. The British Government agrees to pay Mehrab Khan the sum of one and half lakh to protect provisions and stores going and coming from Shikarpur by route of Rozan, Dadar, the Pass of Bolan, through Shal [Quetta] to Kuchlak.”¹¹⁹

While the British forces were on their way to Afghanistan, some rouge Baloch tribal arms men attacked on them while they were passing the Bolan Pass. The British forces faced catastrophic defeat in the First Anglo-Afghan War but on their way back to British India, they asked the Khan of Kalat, Mir Mehrab Khan to step down for the reason that his tribesmen broke the treaty of understanding with British India by attacking the British forces as they were passing through Khanate. Mir Mehrab Khan did not yield to the British demand that resulted into his assassination. In the year 1839, after Khan Mehrab Khan of Kalat was killed in one such armed conflict, the British succeeded in forcing the Baluch [Baloch] for the first time to acknowledge the former's supremacy and concluded a treaty with the later.¹²⁰ Initially, the British were unwilling to enthrone the son of Mir Mehrab Khan as his successor but later on they had to bow to the demands of the tribal elders. With the enthroning of a new Khan, Mir Naseer Khan II, the Kalat state renewed its terms of engagement with the British India under a treaty negotiated in 1841. The Treaty of 1841 between the British India and Khan of Kalat says;

“Whereas Meer Nuseer [Naseer] Khan, son of Mehrab Khan is recognized as Chief of the principality of Kalat who acknowledges himself and his descendants the vassals of the King of Cabool [Kabul] in like manner as his ancestors were. Meer Nauseer Khan, his heirs and successor will always be guided by the advice of the British officer residing at his *darbar* [assembly]. Meer Nuseer Khan binds himself, his heirs and successors, not to hold any political communication or enter into any negotiation with foreign powers

¹¹⁹ Mir Ahmed Yar Khan, *op. cit.*, p. 220.

¹²⁰ B.M. Kutty, ed., *Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo: In search of Solutions: an Autobiography*, (Karachi: Pakistan Study Centre, University of Karachi & Pakistan Labour Trust Karachi, 2009), p.32.

without the consent of the British Government and His Majesty Shah Shuja-ool-moolik.”¹²¹

With the growing tension between the Tsarist Russian Empire and the British Colonial Empire, the British realized the strategic status of Kalat State and inked the comprehensive treaty with incumbent Khan of Kalat. In 1854, the British Government signed another agreement with the Khan of Kalat that basically renewed the Treaty of 1841 with additional protocols which articulates;

“There shall be perpetual friendship between the British Government and Meer Nuseer [Naseer] Khan, Chief of Kalat, his heirs and successor. Meer Nuseer Khan binds himself, his heirs and successors, to oppose to the utmost all enemies of the British Government; in all cases to act in subordinate cooperation with that Government, and to enter into no negotiation with other states without its consent. Should it be deemed necessary to station British troops in any part of the territory of Khelat [Kalat], they shall occupy such position as may be thought advisable by the British authorities. Meer binds himself and his successors to protect the merchants. To aid Meer Naseer Khan and his heirs and successors the British Government binds itself to pay him and his successor fifty thousand rupees annually.”¹²²

Amid 1870s, the “closed border policy” to declare the Indus River as the natural border of the British India and leave Afghanistan was replaced the “forward policy”. Since then the British pursued a “forward policy” and started interfering in Kalat’s internal affairs. A charismatic military man, Major Robert Sandeman was sent to Balochistan to execute British new forward policy there. Sir Robert Sandeman devised his own strategy to deal with the powerful warrior Baloch tribes that is known as the Sandeman System or Sardari System. Major Robert began to develop separate relation with the most warrior tribes and clans. The unfolding of the Great Game and the international political scenarios maximized the significance of Balochistan in the minds of the policy makers in Calcutta and London. Subsequently, the British Government undertook another but comprehensive treaty with the Khan of Kalat to establish long running bilateral relations with the Khanate. The treaty of 1876 states;

¹²¹ Mir Ahmed Yar Khan, *op. cit.*, pp.222-223.

¹²² *Ibid.*, pp.224-225.

“The Treaty concluded between the British Government and Meer Naseer Khan, Khan of Kalat in 1954 is hereby renewed and reaffirmed. The British Government on its part engage to respect the independence of Khelat [Kalat] and to aid the Khan, in case of need, in the maintenance of a just authority and the protection from external attacks. British Agents shall reside at the court of the Khan and a suitable representative of His Highness to the Government of India.”¹²³

Due to strategic location of Quetta vis-à-vis Afghanistan, the British convinced Khan of Kalat to bestow the north-eastern Balochistan in the wake of the Second Anglo-Afghan war (1878-80) in return of Rs. 800,000 annually. During the course of years, their [British] soldiers and administration saw the commanding position of Shal, later called Quetta, and concluded that Bolan without Quetta and vice versa would be unprofitable.¹²⁴ In 1877, the British Balochistan was established with Quetta as its capital and Sir Robert Sandeman was appointed as Agent to Governor General. The British Government selected Quetta in preference to Kalat for the headquarters of the British forces.

“An agreement was concluded in 1883 under which the Khan of Kalat made over and entrusted to the British Government the entire management of Quetta. A similar agreement was concluded with the Khan of Kalat in 1899 whereby the Khan of Kalat made over and entrusted to the British Government the entire management of the Nushki district and niabat. Under an agreement entered into with the British Government in 1903, the Khan of Kalat made over and ceded to the British Government the entire management of the Naseerabad.”¹²⁵

But the harsh and humiliating experiences of the First (1839-41), the Second (1879-80) Anglo-Afghan Wars and the First World War (1914-1918) severely exhausted the British Army and the British Empire concluded an agreement with the Afghans in August 1919 which declared the later as an independent nation. The Durand Line between the British India and Afghanistan was drawn on November 12, 1893 as the international border. The border treaty was signed between Sir Mortimer Durand of British India and Amir Abdul Rehman of Afghanistan, founder of modern

¹²³ Mir Ahmed Yar Khan, *op. cit.*, pp. 232-32-33.

¹²⁴ A.B. Awan, *op. cit.*, p.145.

¹²⁵ Mir Ahmed Yar Khan, *op. cit.*, pp.297-299.

Afghanistan. The Durand Line is named after foreign secretary of the colonial government of India, Sir Henry Mortimer Durand who demarcated the frontier between the British India and Afghanistan in 1893.¹²⁶

The 1200 miles Duran Line running between Afghanistan and Balochistan is about 720 miles long that met the strategic requirements of British and Russian Empires. The 500 miles border between Balochistan and Persia (Iran) was demarcated in 1876 which is known as Goldsmid Line, after the name of the Chairman of the Perso-Baloch commission, Sir Major General Frederick J. Goldsmid. The line now called Pak-Iran Border was surveyed in 1871 by Major General Frederic Goldsmid who established Makran Boundary Commission and headed it for arbitration and demarcation of the area.¹²⁷ The resolution of border issue and the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 caused the extinction of the so-called Great Game but the Cold War between the Soviet Union and the USA revived the longstanding strategic aspirations of Soviet to reach the warm waters of South Asia. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 validated the dilapidated apprehensions of the British India in the 19th century but the Soviet communist ideology was struggling to inroad into the independent states of British Empire.

3.2: Balochistan in the Superpower Rivalry

The Cold War between the USA and the Soviet Union inflicted far-reaching impacts on Balochistan. Cold War (1945-1991) was a sustained state of politico-military rivalries between the post-WWII arch-rivals, the USA and the Soviet Union and their respective allies, which involved propaganda, subversion, gunboat diplomacy, and threats of use of force, economic sanctions, proxy wars and other measures short of open warfare. The term Cold War was coined by the US financial advisor, Bernard Baruch to describe then simmering hostilities between the rising superpowers. To expand their sway and contain each other influence, the both superpowers undertook

¹²⁶ Jayshree Bajoria, "The Troubled Afghan-Pakistani Border", *The Council of Foreign Relations*, March 20, 2009.

¹²⁷ Mansoor Akbar Kundi, "Borderland Interaction: The Case of Pak-Iranian Baloch", *IPRI Journal*, Vol.IX, No.2, (Summer 2009), p.94.

worldwide economic-cum-psychological warfare which divided the world to the communist and capitalist blocs to drag strategically significant states and nations to their respective spheres of influence. The communist bloc led by the Soviet Union also known as the Eastern Bloc while the capitalist bloc was led by the USA, also known as the Western Bloc. The geopolitics of Balochistan was not immune to the international politics of the Cold War.

“Since the end of the Second World War, great changes have occurred for the Baloch throughout Balochistan but accelerating since the 1970 owing to the changed political economy of the Persian Gulf. In Afghanistan major factors affecting the Baloch have been the government’s Pashtunistan policy and the Afghan Revolution in 1978.”¹²⁸

The politico-security situation in Afghanistan has its own implications beyond the Durand Line at all times. The Afghan syndrome has remained dynamic across the region but the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 harbingered bad-omen for Balochistan. The notion of buffer state dumped under the invading Soviet tanks and Afghanistan lost its buffer status and turned into a Soviet satellite republic. The Soviet motives behind the intervention were apparently unclear but the strategic direction of the move evoked long cherished designs of soviet expansionists policy of getting access to the warm waters, the control of major portion of the world’s oil supplies, and also the protection of the Soviet Afghan faction.¹²⁹ With the arrival of the Soviet forces beyond disputed Durand Line once again put vigor in the issues of the Durand Line, Free Balochistan and Pashtunistan. The slogan of Free Balochistan and Pashtunistan emerged when Muhammad Daoud Khan penetrated into Afghan regime for the second time in July 1973 after a coup against King Zahir Shah but this time with full power. He came to power for the second time with the tacit backing of the Soviet Union. He replaced the neutral foreign policy of King Zahir Shah with pro-Soviet policy and began to receive economic aid from the Soviet Russians. Daoud Khan turned to the Soviet Union for aid to try to modernize the state structure. From

¹²⁸ Taj Mohammad Bressegh, “A glimpse of the Baloch Nationalism” in Abid Mir and Parveen Naz, ed., *The Baloch*, Vol. No.1, (Quetta: Balochistan Volunteer Foundation, June 2010), p.90.

¹²⁹ Razia Sultana and Azmatullah, “The Role of Foreign Actors in Afghanistan During 1978-1992”, *Central Asia Journal*, No.66, 2009.

1956 to 78 the Soviet Union gave a total of US\$1.25 billion in economic aid and 1.25 billion in military aid to Afghanistan, as the Soviets welded the country into their sphere of influence at the height of the Cold War.¹³⁰ When Daoud fully realized that his motherland was on the verge of being a banana republic, he got conscious to reset its ties with the neighboring countries especially Pakistan and joined the newly established regional trade bloc, the Regional Cooperation Organization (RCD) among West Asian Muslim neighbors, Pakistan, Iran and Turkey. When he tried to de-Sovietise his regime that resulted to his assassination in April 1978. Just five years, Marxist sympathizers in the army who had been trained in the Soviet Union and some who helped Daoud to power in 1973, overthrow him in a bloody military coup.¹³¹ After that a soviet protégé, Noor Muhammad Tarakai controlled the reins of the country but soon Soviets smelled the weakness of Tarakai and in September, 1979, they encouraged another hand-puppet Hafizullah Amin to take over Tarakai. Hafiz Amin made some positive moves towards Pakistan also refused to hand over Bagram and Shindad air bases to Soviets near Kabul and Herat respectively. He also turned down a Soviet offer to join the Warsaw Pact, alternative of the Western military alliance, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The Soviets hatched a clandestine plan to replace Hafiz Amin with another Soviet puppet-finger, Babrak Karmal. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and enthroning Babrak Karmal in December 1979 was in consonance with Russians Eastward Policy. The military invasion was so quick and precise that initially remained a secret. Actually the Soviet fishing into the troubled waters of Afghanistan embarked on 27th December, 1979. The Soviet inroad into Afghanistan rang the danger bell in the Islamabad as well as in Washington. Balochistan was ravaged by insurgencies long before the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan that exacerbated with the arrival of international forces in Balochistan neighborhood because the geographical position of Balochistan is so sensitive that could easily magnetize any politico-military changes in Afghanistan, Iran and the Persian Gulf.

¹³⁰ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia*, (London: I.B & Co Ltd, 2009), p.13.

¹³¹ Ibid.

Indeed tribal ruler of Kalat State had acceded to Pakistan unwillingly under the barrel of guns and there was a perception in Pakistan's security establishment that Khan of Kalat mustering his kinsmen to secede from Pakistan. In October, 1958 the Pakistani Army arrested Khan of Kalat, Mir Ahmed Yar Khan with his son. Arrest of Khan was a serious damage to the prestige of tribal norms which foment a tribal low-intensity insurgency under the leadership of Nawab Nauroz Khan, chief of Zehri tribe in the mountainous Jhalawan. The insurgents demanded the categorical release of Khan but military ruler waged an anti-insurgency operation against the tribal guerrilla outlaws. The army widened the counter-insurgency operation in the Jhalawan proximities due to the grave threats of Soviet influence in the region as well as the political activities of the left-leaning National Awami Party (NAP), a Pashtun-Baloch nationalist party. "The government of Pakistan was apprehensive of Russian [Soviet] aims in the region. It was noted that the Soviets had renounced the Tsarist claims arising out of the Eastern Question; but in practice they were pursuing them vigorously."¹³² The prominent Baloch leaders like Sardar Attaullah Mengal, Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri, Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti and Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo were serving heavy terms of imprisonment for their alleged support to the resistance movement of Nawab Nouroz Khan but their Marxist deputies like elusive Sher Muhammad Marri, Hazar Khan Marri, Ali Muhammad Mengal, Laung Khan and many more under an organized guerilla group, Balochistan Peoples Liberation Front (BPLF) were undertaking their subversive activities in southeastern Balochistan. Sher Muhammad Marri was heavily influenced by the concept of popular war as experienced in Algeria, Cuba, China and Vietnam.¹³³ At the same time politico-security situation in the waters of the Persian Gulf along with overall Middle East was constantly changing. The Suez Canal Crisis of 1956 between the Egyptian nationalists and British forces dragged the Middle East into the vortex of the Cold War politics. In 1957, a communist-motivated rebellion against the Sultan of Oman (then British Protectorate) could execute the centuries-old strategic aspirations of the Soviet-Russians. The peninsular Gwadar was under the suzerainty of Oman until 1958 and it

¹³² Sayed Iqbal Ahmed, *op. cit.*, p.170.

¹³³ Taj Muhammad Bressege, *Baloch Nationalism Its Origin and Development*, *op. cit.*, p.294.

was widely believed that Soviets wanted to depose the pro-British Sultan of Oman in a coup which could ultimately bestow the reins of strategic territory of Gwadar to them where they can fulfill their longstanding dream of controlling the warm water of the Indian Ocean. The committed Marxist-Leninists in Aden began to supply bases, training and equipment for the Dhofar rebellion.¹³⁴ In the late 1950s, the Soviets penetrated their communist roots in the Mideast more vigorously than ever. A Soviet-backed coup d'état in Iraq brought a tragic end to the Hashemite Dynasty that eventually led to the withdrawal of Iraq from the Western military alliance, the Baghdad Pact. The US alliances in Cold War led to changes and instability in the countries involved. It also led to changes in seeking Soviet arms and the military coup in Iraq that led to the US military intervention in the region.¹³⁵ According to the chronic events of 1970s in Balochistan, the Iraq was the centre of the Baloch resistance movement that resulted to a full-fledged military operation in Balochistan from 1973-77. The Baloch have had an uncomfortable relation with the central government of Pakistan since partition. Relations were poorest when they engaged three divisions of the Pakistani armed forces in a bitter and intense armed struggle. In 1973, the Pakistani security agencies discovered arms in Iraqi Embassy at Islamabad. The government alleged that these arms were for the liberation of Balochistan and a military operation was launched.¹³⁶

“During the Cold War, the Soviet Union was surprised by the ability and ingenuity of Pakistan to generate a resistance movement in Afghanistan. To punish it, Kremlin decided to create some organization that would carry out sabotage activities in Pakistan. One such organization was the Balochistan Liberation Army that was built around the core of Baloch Student Organizations (BSO).”¹³⁷

According to the Baloch nationalists, Soviets sub-machine guns and ammunition in Iraqi Embassy in Islamabad was used as a pretext to dissolve the NAP government.¹³⁸

¹³⁴ B. J. Kelly, *Arabia, the Gulf and the West*, (New York. Diane Books Publishing Company, 1997), p. 45.

¹³⁵ Marwan Bishara, “Doctoring the Middle East”, *Aljazeera*, May 28, 2010.

¹³⁶ Taj Muhammad Bressege. “A glimpse of the Baloch Nationalism”, *op. cit.*, p.93.

¹³⁷ Noor-ul-Haq and Mushir Anwer, “Balochistan: Facts and Faction”. *IPRI Factfile*, February 2012. p.73.

¹³⁸ Selig S. Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow*, *op. cit.*, p.35.

The well-known German writer Fred Scholz analysis in 1974 exactly matches the events of the Cold War politics in Balochistan.

“Even today, Baluchistan [Balochistan] appears, in an international framework, to enjoy a not uninteresting strategic position. Some indications of this are; until a few years ago, the American exhibited some brisk military activity along the Las Bela and Mekran coast, along the western section of the border with Afghanistan, numerous SEATO observations posts were maintained, team of Soviet geologists have been engaged in research in the Kharan basin over several years, and the separatist movements in Baluchistan [Balochistan], which, since 1972, have become particularly active again, were welcomed by the Soviet Side and even supported indirectly.”¹³⁹

3.3: Geopolitics of Balochistan in the Unfolding New Great Game

The New Great Game is the simmering economic-military competition of the USA and its NATO allies against the Peoples Republic of China, Russia and other Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in the resources-rich Central Asia and the strategic Indian Ocean. The New Great Game revolves around the geopolitics of the Central Eurasia where oil and gas-pipeline politics is the magnetizing the global powers. The German journalist Lutz Kleveman has elucidated and given insightful and accurate portrait of the New Great Game in his famous book, *New Great Game: Blood and Oil in Central Asia* which was published in 2004. Crude oil, once seen as a wealth-creating blessing for mankind, is fast turning into the devil’s tears. The struggle to control the world’s remaining energy reserves increasingly culminates in bloody conflicts and the killing of innocent civilians, with the war in Iraq only being the latest example.¹⁴⁰ Central Asia being at the heart of Eurasia is at the heart of the New Great Game, pitting the US against China and Russia, with other minor players such as India, Iran, Turkey and Pakistan. The New Great Game was in full swing when the Presidents of China, Russia and Central Asian Republics gathered in Beijing in early June [2012] for Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit where the presidents of Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan plus Indian foreign minister were

¹³⁹ Fred Scholz, *op. cit.*, p.32.

¹⁴⁰ Lutz Kleveman, *The New Great Game: Blood and Oil in Central Asia*, (New York: Grove Press, 2004), p.3.

also present.¹⁴¹ Selig Harrison posits that Balochistan has been a source of constant conflict and insurgency for decades due to its geo-political position, port city of Gwadar and natural resources. Further, according to him “Baloch homeland commands more than 900 miles of the Arabian Sea coastline, including the northern shore of the Strait of Hormuz, through which oil tankers bound for the West and Japan must pass on their way out of the Persian Gulf.” The port city of Gwadar is located on coastline of Arabian Sea, near Iran on the coast of Balochistan. The expectation was that Gwadar port would become a regional hub for commercial and industrial activities, and connect Central Asian Republics (CARs) to the rest of the World where the vast oil and gas reserves of the CARs would be exploited and transported to the World over via Gwadar port. It is located near an important shipping lane that was built by the ‘China Harbour Engineering Company Group’. The Chinese government has invested heavily on this project, up to \$200m some say, so that landlocked western China could benefit by getting access to the sea. The Chinese construction of Gwadar port is considered as naval outpost for China.

“In 2000, he (Musharraf) asked the Chinese to fund a deepwater port at Gwadar. A few weeks before 9/11, the Chinese agreed, and their commitment to the project intensified after the U.S invaded Afghanistan. Chinese spent \$200 million on the first phase of the port project, which was completed on schedule in 2005. In 2007, Pakistan gave PSA International Singapore a 40-year contract to run Gwadar port.”¹⁴²

Balochistan has always been one of the theatres of international rivalries in the region whether it was the Great Game between the Russian Empire and the British Empire, the Cold war between the USA and the former Soviet Union or the current simmering New Great Game between the USA and China. Balochistan is highly rich in mineral resources and has a significant geo-political and geo-strategic location in West Asia. Economic exploitation, social-economic underdevelopment, political suppression and historical grievances based on the feelings of betrayal and exploitation by the central government remains today, but the most significant factor contributing to the current conflict in Balochistan is the province’s increased strategic significance. Balochistan

¹⁴¹ Pepe Escobar, “Welcome to the New Great Game”, *Aljazeera*, 25 July, 2012.

¹⁴² Robert D. Kaplan, “Pakistan’s Fatal Shore”, *The Atlantic*, May 2009.

has always been important to Pakistan and other regional and international actors because of its geo-strategic location and its rich energy resources , but more recently the development of the Gwadar Deep Seaport, the US-led Global War on Terrorism and the ongoing regional dynamics of South Asia has enhanced the politico-military significant of the province. Following the end of the Cold War, the new players the USA and China have new agendas in the region. China is interested in reaching the blue water of the Arabian Sea in the Indian Ocean. The USA wants to contain the Chinese naval expansion in the Indian Ocean while Indian has severe apprehension to the Chinese naval expansion in the Indian Ocean and its neighboring South Asia states.

“The development in the surrounding region of Gwadar like the unrest in Balochistan, America’s virtual control of Afghanistan, the emerging role of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), big powers quest for energy security are all indicative of ‘oil politics’ brewing up in the region...china’s stake in Gwadar is causing much discomfort among regional player of geopolitics. Her involvement in Gwadar port has also caused suspicions in the mind of strategic thinkers in the Pentagon. The US strategy of advancing into the Central Asia and Gulf was mainly aimed at pre-empting China from Central Asia and Gulf.”¹⁴³

The construction of Gwadar port at the entrance of the Persian Gulf is considered to be a part of the Chinese grand naval expansion along the Asian and African coasts, called the 'string of pearls', in the course of which it keeps a tight rein on the contiguous strategic ports of strategically and commercially important Indian Ocean. The String of Pearls describes the manifestation of China’s rising geopolitical influence through efforts to increase access from South China Sea through Strait of Malacca, across the Indian Ocean, and on the Arabian Gulf.¹⁴⁴ The Chinese naval power is comparatively weak to that of the USA and to overcome the lack of naval power, China has adopted the strategy of controlling the all strategic choke points of the Indian Ocean through its strategy of String of Pearls. China can get its strategic and political desires by controlling the Indian Ocean because world’s 80% trade

¹⁴³ Syed Fazl-e-Haider, “Gwadar and oil politics”, *Dawn*, Islamabad, January 10, 2007.

¹⁴⁴ Christopher J. Pehrson, “String of Pearls: Meeting the Challenge of China's Rising Power Across the Asian Littoral”, Strategic Studies Institute, July 2006.

passes through Indian Ocean. In the beginning of 20th century, the great naval strategist, Alfred T. Mahan has said “whoever controls the Indian Ocean will dominate the Asia, the destiny of the world will be decided on its waters, are more relevant than ever before.”¹⁴⁵

The US wants to halt the Chinese steps toward warm water of Arabian Sea for which the USSR locked its horns with Afghanistan and fell to pieces. The US is afraid of the possibility that Gwadar will become a Chinese naval base in future and then U.S naval carriers will come eyeball-to-eyeball with Chinese navy. The USA has already vigorous military presence in the Indian Ocean especially in the Persian Gulf. US Navy’s Fifth Fleet is stationed in Bahrain, a tiny island nation in Persian Gulf.¹⁴⁶ The Fifth Fleet of the US Navy deals with the Persian Gulf, Red Sea, Arabian Sea and East Africa. Before the US attack on Iraq, in 2002 the US Central Command was shifted from Tampa Florida to Qatar, a small Persian Gulf state. The US Central Command (CENTCOM) is one of the 10 combatant commands in the US military, located between the European and Pacific combatants covers the central area of the globe and consist of 20 countries, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan, Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan etc.¹⁴⁷ To counter this threat, the USA and India are allegedly helping the Baloch nationalists (BLA and BRA). According to the Pakistani officials, Baloch insurgents are being funded and trained by India, which comes through the Indian consulates in Afghanistan. The New Great Game has been started between the two new blocs; the old wine is now being put in new bottle. One bloc is being led by the USA and the other is being lead by China and Russia. The USA is facing two rivals at the same time into two different regions. It is being confronted by the Russian and Iranian alliance in the Caspian region. The USA wants to control the region by bringing Turkey to confront Iran. Turkey and Iran are in competition to control the region. Iran is being backed by Russia, while Turkey is getting support from the USA. The second

¹⁴⁵ Suiv Dogra, “US knocks on Asia’s door”, *The Financial Express*, October 29, 2012.

¹⁴⁶ BBC Online, Bahrain profile, *BBC: Mid-East* available at www.bbc.co.uk accessed 15 August, 2011.

¹⁴⁷ CENTCOM Online, “United States Central Command” available at www.centcom.mil accessed 20 March, 2012.

rival is China which is challenging the USA in the Indian Ocean. China has support of Russia and Iran in the region. The China and Russia are in alliance in the platform of SCO which is not a military, but economic alliance, but it is emerging as counterpart of the NATO. Iran is the natural ally of the both, Russia and China in the region. The New Great Game between the Russia and China, and the USA is emerging over the natural resources of the Central Asia. Central Asia has huge reservoirs of the gas and oil. It has oil and gas reserves, estimated at 23 billion tons of oil and 3,000 billion cubic meters of gas.¹⁴⁸ The Caspian Sea is estimated to contain the world's largest amount of untouched hydrocarbon resources. The oil and gas of the Central Asia will pass through Balochistan and Gwadar is the gateway to the natural resource of the Central Asia. Gwadar will provide the nearest approach to the warm waters of the Arabian Sea that offers the main outlet for trade expansion to the Central Asian Republics.¹⁴⁹ The Baloch, faced with slowing population growth, have responded very aggressively over the construction of Gwadar port. They fear that they would be dispossessed of their land and resources and their distinct identity as it happened in Karachi. Three fundamental issues are fueling the crises: expropriation, marginalization and dispossession. Beside all these fears, the Baloch nationalists assume that they might preserve their previous independent status by playing in the hands of the international actors in the region. During Cold War, the USSR was supporting the Baloch separatist movement because at that time Iran and Pakistan were allies of the USA under SEATO/CENTO and the USA was against the independent of Balochistan, while Soviet was interested in reaching in the warm waters of Indian Ocean through Balochistan. Many of the most Baloch nationalists were Marxist-Leninist and willing to risk Soviet protection for an autonomous Balochistan.¹⁵⁰ On the other hand Iran was very apprehended over the rise of separatist movements in Pakistan Balochistan because such secessionist movement could ignite similar sentiments in Iranian province of Sistan-Balochistan.

“In the Iranian view, a weak and disintegrated Pakistan would seriously threaten Iran’s south-western frontier region [Sistan-

¹⁴⁸ Asma Shakir Khawaja, “Pakistan and the New Great Game”, *IPRI, Paper 5*, April 2003.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ Global security Online, “Balochistan Insurgency”, available at www.globalsecurity.org accessed 12 July, 2012.

Balochistan]. In an exclusive interview to the chief editor of *Leo Monde*, the Shah of Iran reiterated that in case of an attempt aimed at further dismemberment of Pakistan, Iran would certainly intervene.”¹⁵¹ “Shah of Iran’s Foreign Minister, Abbas Ali Khalatbary during with an interview with Selig Harrison in 1977, stated that, “in Cento, we always assumed that Baloch would attempt to create their own state some day, with Soviet support, so it was desirable to keep them politically weak, disunited and backward as possible. During the US-Iran-Pakistan alliances in CEATO (1954-1979), the Baloch nationalists were highly critical of the Pact.”¹⁵²

With the passage of time, the international politics started changing. The Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the rise of China has changed the US strategic interests in the region. Now it is widely believed that the USA is supporting the Baloch separatist movement to contain China in the region as it supported the Afghan Mujahedeen to contain the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. Not declaring the BLA as a terrorist, is seems to be a favor by the US to the Baloch nationalists. General perception in academia and policy making circles is that the USA with the help of India, Afghanistan and Israel have become the natural allies of the Balochistan separatist movements in Pakistan and Iran. They are using the Baloch insurgents in Pakistan against China and in Iran, against the Iranian clerics because Baloch in Iran are the only Sunni population. The Jondullah, an Iranian based Baloch religious militant organization is purportedly being funded by the CIA and Mossad (Israeli intelligence agency) against Iran. The policymakers in Pentagon have been giving much weight to Pakistan in their strategic planning for Asian region because it’s geo-strategic location. Pakistan owes its geopolitical importance largely to its largest province Balochistan.¹⁵³ Balochistan is again being dragged into the vortex of the global politics especially the New Great Game because the resource-rich Central Asia remains inaccessible to the contending global powers through sea. Being an economic and strategic magnet it is attracting the global arch-rivals in the region. The

¹⁵¹ Safia S. Mohammadally, “Pakistan-Iran Relations 1947-1979” in Mehrunnisa Ali, ed., *Readings in Pakistan Foreign Policy 1971-1998*, (Karachi: the Pakistan Institute of International Affairs, Oxford University Press, 2001), p.149.

¹⁵² Taj Muhammad Breseege, *Baloch Nationalism Its Origin and Development*, op.cit, pp.366-367.

¹⁵³ Sayed Fazal-e Haider, “Is Balochistan turning into an arena of geopolitics? *Dawn*, September 11, 2006.

USA has been taking much interest in the conflict of Balochistan. Recently, the Balochistan issue has taken up momentum in the US Congress where some Congressmen have been actively pursuing the conflict of Balochistan in certain Congressional hearings and seminars. The Baloch diaspora in West has been successful to internationalize the conflict of Balochistan as the US Administration has been raising concerns over the Human Rights violation in Balochistan. Baloch nationalists in the US diaspora have increasingly sought to extend their cause beyond US foreign policy in the Af-Pak region. They appear to recognize the need to latch onto larger foreign policy issues as part of their efforts to garner mainstream support for their cause.¹⁵⁴ The US first official reaction to the Balochistan crisis came in January 2012 when the US State Department issued a statement over the law and order situation in Balochistan. The State Department spokesperson Victoria Nuland expressed the US concerns in a twitter-briefing which raised stringent reactions in the power circles of Islamabad. She expressed the official statement;

“The United States is deeply concerned about the ongoing violence in Balochistan especially targeted killings, disappearances and other human rights abuses. This is a complex issue. We strongly believe that the best way forward is for all the parties to resolve their differences through peaceful dialogue.”¹⁵⁵

The Pakistani governments especially the military establishment was shuddered by these international developments over the Balochistan conflict. In February 2012, the lower house of the US Congress, the House of Representatives Sub-committee on Oversight and Investigations of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs convened a Congressional hearing to hold deliberations over the conflict of Balochistan. It was chaired by the Republican Congressman Dana Rohrabacher who vocally supports the independence of Balochistan. This hearing was attended by several scholars but most prominent was the defense analyst Ralph Peters who has already proposed the re-demarcation of the political map of the Middle East including Pakistan in his controversial article “Blood Borders”, published in the *Armed Forces Journal* of 2006.

¹⁵⁴ Eddie Walsh, “Should the US support an independent Balochistan”, *Aljazeera*, 3 March, 2012.

¹⁵⁵ “US urge Pakistan to hold dialogue on Balochistan” *Dawn*, January 15, 2012.

“U.S. Congressional Committee on Foreign Affairs on February 8 utterly centering on the troubled Balochistan province has prompted further diplomatic nervousness in already Pak-US strained relations. Five members of the U.S. Capitol Hill of both the Democratic and the Republican parties covertly or overtly called for supporting the Baloch right to self-determination. Ralph Peters, who had proposed in 2006 in an article the idea of a free Balochistan, also attended at the Congressional.”¹⁵⁶

The anti-Pakistani US Republican Congressman Dana Rohrabacher further antagonized Pakistani regime and military establishment by tabling a resolution in the US Congress which clearly demands for the independence of Balochistan. The resolution was introduced in the US House of Representatives which ask the US administration to recognize the Baloch right of self-determination. The resolution was submitted to the US Congress with the signatures of two other US congressmen, Louie Gohmert and Steve Kings. The resolution explains that Baloch people are subjected to violence and extrajudicial killings therefore the Baloch people should have the right of self-determination and their own country. US Congressman Dana Rohrabacher earned the wrath of the Pakistani establishment when he held a hearing on Balochistan and then introduced a non-binding resolution in Congress that Balochistan should be declared an independent territory.¹⁵⁷ Dana Rohrabacher explains his reasons for supporting the cause of the Baloch movement in his article “Why I support Baluchistan” that was published in the *Washington Post* April 2012.

“The Amnesty International, U.S. State Department, and other human rights groups have confirmed and deplored the disappearances, illegal detention, kidnappings, extrajudicial killings and torture being used by Pakistani authorities to repress Baloch ambitions to control their own natural resources and affairs.”¹⁵⁸

The US ambassador in the UN Human Rights Council expressed solemn apprehensions over what continued violence in the restive province of Balochistan. We have serious concerns about the human rights situation in Pakistan,” US ambassador Eileen Donahoe told the Council, referring to army operations “aimed at

¹⁵⁶ Malik Siraj Akbar, “A hearing on Balochistan that stirs up new tensions between U.S. and Pakistan”, *The Hindu*, February 15, 2012.

¹⁵⁷ Ahmed Rashid, Walking up to the war in Balochistan, *BBC*, 29 February 2012.

¹⁵⁸ Dana Rohrabacher, “Why I support Baluchistan” *The Washington Post*, 7 April, 2012.

silencing dissent” in the rebellious province of Balochistan. Pakistan should ensure that those guilty of torture, enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings must be prosecuted.¹⁵⁹ The US concerns over the human rights violations and law and order situation in Balochistan are considered to be cosmetic measures from the US administration as the US has been eyeing over the strategic importance of Balochistan especially its strategic district Gwadar with a deep sea port. The Pakistani regime blames the international actors to be responsible for the crisis in Balochistan. According to Pakistani corridor of powers, the foreign forces want to execute the ill designs in this region by using the Baloch nationalists as the huge natural resources and strategic importance of Balochistan attracts the foreign forces. Pakistan Home Minister [Rehman Malik] blames “foreign hands” for provoking turbulence in Balochistan and stimulating the pro-independence insurgency.¹⁶⁰ The review petition filed by the federal government in the Supreme Court of Pakistan to re-evaluate the superior court order over the Balochistan government for the first time admit the interests of the foreign forces. The appeal acknowledged for the first time that minerals of Balochistan had attracted the big regional and extra-regional powers.¹⁶¹

According to many scholars, the USA wants to control the strategically important Balochistan according to its political, economic and security interest in the region and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) is pursuing the calculated strategy of Washington very stealthily in the volatile region. Wajid Shamsul Hasan, Pakistan’s British High Commissioner, in his article published by *South Asian Tribune* has thoroughly analyzed the ongoing military operation in Balochistan.

“CIA had calculated Pakistan’s denouncement by the year 2015. In year 2015 Pakistan would be a failed state ripe with inter-provincial rivalries, bloodshed, civil war, struggle for control its nuclear weapons and move toward Talibanization. This interestingly matches with an intellectual observation in a book *The Twin Era of Pakistan-Democracy and Dictatorship*” (1992), authored by Abdul Malli Syed which blatantly observes that Balochistan, once the least-populated, least-developed and most impoverished province of Pakistan, would

¹⁵⁹ “Khar paints rosy picture of human rights in Pakistan”, *Dawn*, 31 October, 2012.

¹⁶⁰ “Balochistan unrest: Malik ask Mengal not to play blame game” *The Tribune Express*, 1 October, 2012.

¹⁶¹ “Review petition filed in Balochistan case” *Dawn*, November 9, 2012.

become sovereign and the third oil-producing country after Saudi Arabia and Kuwait of Persian Gulf.”¹⁶²

The contemporary volatile situation of Pakistan, from Gwadar to Khyber, clearly manifests some real interpretation of the above analysis of Wajid Shamasul Hassan. In 2006, a retired US Lt. Col. Ralph Peters published an article in the US Armed Force Journal along with a critical map, proposing to redraw the contentious frontiers of the most of West Asia states. According to him the international borders have never been just. In his article he has suggested the creation of free Balochistan consisting of the Pakistani and Iranian provinces of Balochistan.

“What Afghanistan would lose to Persia in the west, it would gain in the east, as the Pakistan’s Northwest Frontier tries would be reunited with their Afghan brethren. Pakistan, another unnatural state, would also lose its Baloch territory to Free Balochistan. The remaining “natural” Pakistan would lie entirely of the Indus, except for westward spur near Karachi.”¹⁶³

The US establishment has commercialized intellectuals and scholars. The commercialized intellectuals and scholars work for the US interests throughout the world to sustain its institutionalized hegemony in each nook and corner of the globe. The sole superpower, the USA has established an intellectual hegemony throughout the world, besides military hegemony. Before intruding any policy or strategy, the US establishment wants to judge the public sentiments in against or in favor of such policy at international, regional as well as national level. To check the public opinion and their sentiments, these scholars write articles on the issue or region in which they try to convince the world about the advantages or disadvantages in different ways with different analysis. It is said that the commercialized scholars of the Pentagon, conduct the policies of the USA through their scholarly writings. Recently it has been observed that the US intellectuals and scholars are writing about the strategic importance of Balochistan in which they analyze the conflict in Balochistan and they

¹⁶² Wajid Shamasul Hassan, “Will Pakistan Army Invade Balochistan as per the NIC-CIA Plan”, *South Asia Tribune*, Jan, 29, 2005.

¹⁶³ Ralph Peters, “Blood Borders: How a better Middle East would look”, *Arm Force Journal*, June 2006.

give different kinds of interpretations and policy options according to the geo-strategic and geo-economic interests of the USA in the region.

Pakistan is eyeing huge economic and strategic gains, with Gwadar poised to become a key shipping hub at the mouth of a strategic waterway. Gwadar provides Pakistan with strategic depth vis-à-vis India. Gwadar is 725km to the west of Karachi port, making it that much less vulnerable than Karachi to an Indian blockade. China does not have any port of hot waters, which can be used the whole year. The Shanghai port is approximately 16,000 km away from Chinese industrial area, whereas Gwadar port is only a distance of 2,500km from China. The distance from Kashgar to Chinese east coast is 3500km, whereas the distance from Kashgar to Gwadar is only 1,500km. For China, Gwadar is a key maritime outpost to monitor development in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf and keep eye on the Indian and US naval patrols, including the naval bases in western India and the large American base at Diego Garcia, coral atoll in central Indian Ocean, part of British Indian Ocean Territory.”¹⁶⁴ Former Indian Naval Chief, Admiral Sureesh Mehta expressed his apprehensions that Gwadar being only 180 nautical miles away from the exit of the straits of Hormuz would enables Pakistan and China to use it for military purposes against the Indian Ocean. The Gwadar Port provides shortest route to China to market its products to the West which are produced from the Western China. The ports of Shanghai or eastern ports are almost 4000km away from western production centers whereas Gwadar provides a route of 2000km.

Gwadar is much talked to become the future hub of a New Silk Route and a both land and maritime gateway to landlocked, oil and gas rich Central Asian Republics. The energy corridors from the Gulf to China and from CARs to the open sea have to pass through the heart of Balochistan. It will be the center of the pipeline routes in future from Central Asia and Iran to Pakistan, India and China. “Balochistan is a transit site for major proposed natural gas pipelines that would carry gas from either Iran or

¹⁶⁴ Brahma Chellaney, “Dragon’s foothold in Gwadar”, *The Asian Age*, 10 June 2009.

Turkmenistan to Pakistan and from there potentially to India.”¹⁶⁵ Iran and Pakistan are negotiating on a 1, 881 km long Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline which will facilitate the import of 700 mscfd gas daily through which Pakistan can curb the severe energy crisis in the country. Balochistan is the only potential land route for the proposed \$1.2 billion pipeline. It has to cross [781 km] through Baloch territory from Iran’s Pars gas field to Pakistan’s main distribution system in Nawabshah.¹⁶⁶ In October 2012, during the 12th Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organization in Baku, Azerbaijan, Pakistani and Iranian Presidents agreed to expedite the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline project that is yet to be agreed.¹⁶⁷ But the USA is against the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline because of the disputed Iranian nuclear program as Iran is facing crippling economic sanctions from the USA and Europe. The former US Ambassador to Pakistan [Cameron Munter] candidly expressed “Pak-Iran gas pipeline is not a good idea, however the plan to get gas from Turkmenistan is a better idea.”¹⁶⁸ Instead of Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline, the USA is encouraging the pro-USA South Asian states to pursue the already proposed 1,680km \$US 7.6 billion Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India Gas Pipeline (TAPI) that will transport Caspian sea natural gas from Turkmenistan to Pakistan and India via Afghanistan has to pass through Balochistan. Turkmenistan, holding the world’s fourth-largest natural gas reserves, is expected to start constructing a pipeline to export gas to South Asian nations in 2017.¹⁶⁹

The TAPI is the part of the New Silk Route which is being revived with the backing of the USA but bypassing Russia and China. New Silk Route starts from Turkey, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and then India and the Southeast Asia. The New Silk Route carries hydrocarbon resources from CARs and natural resources of gold and lithium of Afghanistan to the energy-hungry nations, because there are huge natural reserves, worth of 1 trillion dollar. China is being ignored in the New Silk Route but China is strengthening its bilateral relations

¹⁶⁵ Robert G. Wising, *op. cit.*, p.3.

¹⁶⁶ Sanaullah Baloch, ‘IPI: the Baloch perspective’ *Dawn*, 28 March, 2010.

¹⁶⁷ “Pakistan, Iran vow to jointly pursue major projects” *Dawn*, 17 October, 2012.

¹⁶⁸ Huzaima Bukhari & Dr. Ikramul Haq, “The New Great Game”, *Saglobalaffairs*, January 2012, available at www.saglobalaffairs.org

¹⁶⁹ “Turkmenistan to start building TAPI pipeline in 2017”, *Dawn*, 15 October, 2012.

with CARs. China overtook Europe as Central Asia's principal trading partner in 2010, doing €23 billion of trade with the CARs as compared with Europe €21 billion. China imports 10 percent of its oil and gas from Central Asia.¹⁷⁰ Russia wants to sustain its historic influence over the CARs that's why Russia and China are opposing the US-backed New Silk Route. The Obama Doctrine manifests the long running military aspirations of the USA in Asia as it smells that the South Asian subcontinent becoming the chess-board to play the unfolding New Great Game. India and Pakistan are expected to find themselves opposite side of the bipolar economic-military game.¹⁷¹ Immense treasures of natural resources of hydrocarbon, copper and gold, idiosyncratic geo-strategic and geo-economic location of Balochistan has turned into a battleground where the unfolding New Great Game is to be played.

“India has gravely suspected of the current Chinese military maneuvers in the Indian Ocean. Indian media reported in late 2011 that its giant Asian neighbor, China is set to open its first military base in Indian Ocean's island nation Seychelles that is an archipelago of several tiny islands. China recently confirmed that Seychelles would be used as a refueling port for its navy; it revitalized longstanding uncertainties in India that it is being encircled in the Indian Ocean by its larger Asian neighbor.”¹⁷²

3.4: Afghanistan's Interests in Balochistan

Due to its immediate proximity with Afghanistan, Balochistan has territorial, tribal and blood relations with Afghanistan. Historically, there had been vigorous brotherly and even biological relations between the Afghan rulers and Baloch nationalists. The founding father of the Khanate, Mir Naseer Khan I was the first Baloch leader to establish bilateral relations with the neighboring Afghanistan. Being a non-coastal country, Afghanistan has adopted two strategies toward Balochistan which can be traced back from the era of King Amanullah Khan;

- Have good and friendly relations with Balochistan.
- To incorporate Balochistan either into Afghanistan or Pashtunistan to have easy access to the warm water of the Indian Ocean.

¹⁷⁰ Francois Godement, “The New Great Game in Central Asia” *European Council on Foreign Relations*, September 2011.

¹⁷¹ Shahid Javed Burki, “Pakistan and the Great Game”, *The Tribune Express*, January 16, 2012.

¹⁷² “Chinese plans in Seychelles revive Indian fears of encirclement”, *The Guardian*, 22 March, 2012.

Since then, every successive Afghan government has been pursuing above policy and for this purpose they have established strong relations with the Baloch nationalists. Afghanistan is a landlocked country and it has no access with to the international waters where it can establish commercial and trade relations with the other countries. Even before the establishment of strong relations between the Afghan rulers and Baloch nationalists, Afghanistan and Balochistan had been part of the international great games in the region. The Afghan wars had great impacts on the politics of Balochistan. During the Cold War between the USA and the former Soviet Union, Baloch nationalists faced a major military operation in 1973 where the Pakistani leaders blamed Afghanistan and Soviet Union for instigating the Baloch nationalists to liberate Balochistan from Pakistan. Afghanistan and Pakistan share a troubled border with a troubled history. Afghanistan's rejection of the Durand Line as the international border and its territorial claims over the Pashtun and some Baloch areas of Pakistan have planted the seed of hatred and suspension between the two countries. Afghanistan has always been friendly toward Baloch nationalists. All governments in Afghanistan except the Taliban government have been pro-Indians and pro-Russian and they have never accepted Durand Line as international border. Daoud cordial support to the Baloch and Pashtun nationalists for *Azad Balochistan* and Greater Pashtunistan is an open secret in the books of history. The Afghan ruler and the Baloch nationalists have very good relations. The most of the Baloch nationalists have been in Afghanistan for years. Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri, a Baloch leading nationalist had been the guest of Afghan leader Najeebullah with his many tribesmen, for more than ten years during 1980s.

But with the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the start of the civil war in Afghanistan, the Baloch nationalists returned back to Pakistan with empty hands. They remained silent throughout the 1990s but resurfaced with violent and belligerent nationalist agenda after the disastrous incident of the 9/11 in the USA and the arrival of the US troops in Afghanistan. After the establishment of Northern Alliance backed Karzai government, the Pakistani leaders again started suspecting Afghanistan for the simmering conflict in Balochistan. Pakistan blames Afghanistan

for instigating the Baloch nationalists and harboring them. Pakistan has alleged that Afghanistan's current government has given political asylum to several Baloch nationalist including Brahamdagh Bugti.

“According to the US embassy secret cables that were released by Wiki leaks, Afghanistan's president, Hamid Karzai, has been sheltering a Pakistani rebel for several years, much to annoyance of Pakistan's generals. Brahamdagh Bugti, a leader of the nationalist insurgency in Balochistan province, emerges as a pawn in often stormy relations between.”¹⁷³

Then Afghan Home Minister, Hanif Atmar has admitted that there is a refugee camp in Kandahar that serves 400 to 500 Balochi and Sindhi separatists who fled Pakistan following former President Musharraf's crackdown on their separatist movements.¹⁷⁴ On the other side India has established vigorous bilateral relations with Afghanistan. The Karzai government is believed to be pro-Indian as India has deep-rooted presence in Afghanistan. India has been playing an active role in the development of Afghanistan. It has supplied aid of around \$2 billion to Afghanistan and has established a strong foothold in the Durand Line proximity through consulates. Indian Army is providing training to the Afghan National Army which has alerted the concerns of Pakistan which has been a traditional stake holder in Afghanistan.

After India opened consulates in Herat, Mazar-e-Sharif, Jalalabad and Kandahar, Pakistan charged these consulates provide cover for Indian intelligence to run covert operations against Pakistan, as well as foment separatism in Pakistan's Balochistan province.¹⁷⁵ India maintains 26 consulates offices along Pakistan's border with Afghanistan and Iran, 14 of these consulates are in Afghanistan while the remaining 8 are in Iran close to Balochistan province.¹⁷⁶ The Indo-Afghan vigorous nexus has posed serious security challenged to Pakistan internal and regional security. This strong bilateral relation is based on the ideology of “the enemy of my enemy is my

¹⁷³ “WikiLeaks cables reveal Afghan-Pakistani row over fugitive rebel” *The Guardian*, November 30, 2010.

¹⁷⁴ “2009: Kabul admitted having 500 Baloch, Sindhi separatists in Afghanistan”, *Dawn*, June 7, 2011.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Ameen Izzadeen, “Balochistan burning: Great Game over Gwadar Port”, *The Sunday Times*, August 23, 2009.

friend.” Afghanistan and India blames Pakistan for providing logistic and material support to the Taliban and Kashmiri militants and the Indo-Afghan nexus with the Baloch nationalist is a counter-strategy and is a tit-for-tat policy to use the Baloch nationalists as bargaining chip against Pakistan’s nexus with the Taliban and Kashmiri militants.

The Great Game term is coined for the shadowy battle for sway and control of Central Asia between the Czarist Russia and the British Empire. Like the original Great Game, the New Great Game is a battle on many fronts being waged with investment, aid, culture and politics in South Asia, Southeast Asia and Central Asia. Land-locked and resource-rich central Asia is the jewel in the crown of the New Great Game on which the USA with NATO plus India and China with SCO and Pakistan are vying. China sees the five CARs as significant sources of oil and gas and investment that could reduce its vulnerable dependence on maritime routes as it has established a bulwark, SCO to counter the influence of the USA and NATO in the CARs. The US strategic shifts towards the Asia-Pacific region and the Chinese “String of Pearls” naval strategy have again dragged the Pakistani restive hydrocarbon-rich province into the vortex of the unfolding New Great Game. The Chinese maritime power is challenging American naval power along the sea lines of communication. The String of Pearls strategy describe the strategic intentions of the Chinese emerging geopolitical influence to maximize its access to the strategic ports and airfields in South Asia and South East Asia to develop unusual diplomatic relations to extend its influence in South China Sea through the Strait of Malacca across the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf. On the other hand, the USA has adopted a containment policy to curb the growing Chinese maritime assertions forging military pacts with pro-US states in Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in Far East and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in the Southeast Asia. The USA has already established military agreements with South Korea, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines. After the annexation of all princely sates of Balochistan, it was initially ignored and neglected by the central government but it gained significance in the foreign policy circles vis-à-vis Soviet

inroads in Afghanistan. Since then Balochistan has remained more relevant to Pakistan's foreign policy rather than its domestic policy and that is why it remained backward and undeveloped. The backwardness of the local population and the undevelopment have shackled hands with the geo-political significance of Balochistan that have resulted into a secession movement which has internationalized the conflict of Balochistan. The major causes of the Baloch secessionist movement and their resilient nationalism since evolution to recent resurgence are empirically illustrated in the next chapters.

CHAPTER IV

EVOLUTION OF BALOCH NATIONALISM

How does the “Baloch Nationalist Movement” can be properly defined? Is it “Baloch Nationalism” or “Baloch Ethno-nationalism or Sub-nationalism? There is a heated debate among different scholars, politicians and academicians vis-à-vis the nature of Baloch nationalism, either is it a pure nationalism, does Baloch nationalism fulfill the basic criteria of the nation and nationalism, or it fits under the definition of ethno-nationalism.

Baloch trace their genetic and ancestral and history from ancient Mesopotamia (Syria). The establishment of the Khanate of Kalat was evolutionary from the early Baloch-Brahui tribal confederacies as it was discussed in Chapter II, but certain question marks have been put before Baloch nationalism and Baloch as a nation. Sentiments of patriotism surfaced among Baloch-Brahui tribes with the partial colonization of their Khanate by the British Empire in 1839 that intensified with inclusive colonization of their ancestral land and the emergence of political awareness especially in the educated youth in early 20th century. Baloch nationalists believe that Baloch as a nation emerged in response to the decline and disintegration of the Khanate of Kalat at the hands of British and death of Kalat State facilitated the birth of the Baloch nation.¹⁷⁷

Many writers consider the Baloch-Brahui confederacies from Mir Chakar Khan Rind to Mir Mehrab Khan II, as temporary tribal unions of different independent Baloch-Brahui tribes under some iconic tribal leaders of the times as the confederacies of Mir Chakar Khan Rind and Mir Naseer Khan I fell into ruins after the eternal rests of their kingpins, in 1556 and 1795 respectively. Pakistan and Iran have always maintained that the Baloch are not a nation but a tribal society with traditional tribal characteristics that lacks the legitimacy for the right of self-determination.¹⁷⁸ The distinguished Baloch writers like Inayatullah Baloch and Taj Bressege vehemently

¹⁷⁷ Martin Axmann, *op. cit.*, p.xvi.

¹⁷⁸ Selig Harrison, “Ethnicity and Politics in Pakistan: The Baluch Case”, in John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith, ed., *Ethnicity*, (Uppsala: University of Uppsala Sweden, 1996), p.298.

argue in the favour of Baloch nationalism. Baloch are not merely a national minority scattered here and there but constitute a nation in fullest word, occupying a well defined territory in southwest Asia, speak a common language.¹⁷⁹ Do the Baloch bear the characteristics of a nation as defined by philosophers of nationalism? A nation is a group of people from the same region of origin who share a common history, culture, tradition and language and all of this is true of the Baloch. Baloch had their state, the Khanate of Kalat until 1948.¹⁸⁰

Nevertheless, the three waves of Baloch political movement straddle between the nationalism and ethno-nationalism if it is analyzed in a triangular approach. Baloch nationalist movement revolves around a combination of politico-economic, cultural and chronological grievances. The rise of political awareness in Baloch masses and their tribal politico-armed struggle against the British Empire was a movement within the parameters of nationalism as they were struggling against a colonial power and later on applying the UN-recognized right of self-determination with regard to decolonization after the Second World War. After merging with Pakistan in 1948, the Baloch political movement was struggling for maximum provincial autonomy as it manifested in the subsequent low-intensity insurgencies. The Baloch quest for provincial autonomy was a movement of ethno-nationalism or sub-nationalism but the contemporary movement seems to be the renaissance of the Baloch nationalism of 1930s and 1940s since it is demanding for political sovereignty in the context of controlling natural resources and resisting the chronic politico-economic exploitation and the use of force by the state armed forces which has been discussed in the next chapter. A commonly held distinction between an ethnic movement and a nationalistic movement is that the goal of an ethnic politician is to gain some advantage within an existing state, whereas the nationalist seeks to establish or maintain his own state.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁹ Inayatullah Baloch, *op. cit.*, pp.59 & 200.

¹⁸⁰ Taj Muhammad Bressege, *op. cit.*, p.21.

¹⁸¹ Tahir Amin, *op. cit.*, p.2

4.1: Struggles for Reviving the Lost Sovereignty

The reins of Kalat State that was established by Mir Ahmed Khan in 1666 came into the hands of an extraordinary Khan of Kalat, Mir Naseer Khan in 1749, who instituted a modern state based on the concept of nation state. He institutionalized the state with modern army, executive and bicameral parliament. Mir Naseer Khan united the largest Baloch-Brahui tribes into an agreed system of politico-economic-military organization in a centralized administration.¹⁸² Kalat State established diplomatic relations with the neighboring states, moreover forging a military alliance with Ahmed Shah Durrani of Afghanistan bestowed Quetta along with Mastung to Kalat State as state gift to Mir Naseer Khan.

The Baloch nation-state first encounter with the British Empire occurred just before the First Anglo-Afghan War. The Czarist Russian imminent territorial expansion threat towards South Asia forced the British to ponder a strategic tunnel via Shikarpur, Jacobabad, and Quetta to Kandahar through natural gates of Bolan and Kojak Passes. In 1841, successor of Mir Mehrab Khan succeeded into the Kalat throne after signing an agreement, the Treaty of Kalat with the British India by mean of which, foreign relations of Kalat state came under the domain of British India. The diplomatic contact between the Khan of the Khanate of Kalat and British Empire was established in 1838, when the British Indian Army crossed over the Bolan Pass to have access to Afghanistan.¹⁸³ Afterwards, British continued its indirect rule in the Khanate through its so-called Sandeman System which dynamically served the strategic objectives of British Empire as Balochistan was integral part of the British military doctrine embodied in 'Close Border Policy' and the 'Forward Policy'. The British never honored the treaties inked with the Baloch rulers that caused great resentment against the British Empire.

¹⁸² Henry Pottinger, *Travels in Balochistan [Balochistan] and Sindh [Sindh]*, Michigan: Oxford University Press, 1816.

¹⁸³ Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT), "Balochistan: Civil-Military Relations" *PILDAT Issue Paper*, March, 2012, p.13.

Between 1899 and 1903, in violation of the treaties which bound them to respect and protect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Balochistan, they went about arbitrarily re-drawing the map of Balochistan under various pretexts.¹⁸⁴ After establishing their footprints in Balochistan, the British encountered tribal uprisings especially from the Baloch-Brahui hostile tribes. Highly disorganized and divided nature of Baloch society initially did not let to organized nationalist movement, though periodic resistance against colonial rule continued.¹⁸⁵ When British tried to inroad the Marri-Bugti areas in the proximities of the strategic Bolan Pass, they retaliated and rebelled against the British interference, which is remembered as Anglo-Marri War. In January, 1867, combined forces of Marris, Bugtis and their allied tribe, Khetran fought against the British forces in Chachar Valley near the border of Dera Ghazi Khan.¹⁸⁶ During the First World War, the British forces undertook a conscription campaign in Balochistan but the Marri tribe was reluctant to be conscripted. The Marris declined to be recruited as mercenaries and they fought against the British under their rebel chief, Mir Misri Khan. It is widely believed that he was the first Marri to establish political relation with the Soviets as he met Vladimir Lenin and other top leaders of the Soviet Union.¹⁸⁷

However, after the WWI, an embryonic semi-middles-class was emerging from Baloch tribes since many Baloch students got chance to get education in British India. Though this semi-tribal baby middle-class rose from the tribal families but they were vigorously inspired by the then international developments and they became the backbone of the Baloch nationalism and were the kingpins of the Baloch national movement. Global events such as the World War I, the Russian Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, rise of nationalism in Turkey and the anti-colonial movement in India embolden the blossoming Baloch nationalists.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁴ Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, *op. cit.*, p.32.

¹⁸⁵ Adeel Khan, "Baloch Ethnic Nationalism in Pakistan: From Guerrilla War to Nowhere?" *Asian Ethnicity*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (London: Rutledge Informa Ltd, June, 2003), p.285.

¹⁸⁶ Taj Muhammad Bressege, *oc. cit.*, p.164.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p.165.

¹⁸⁸ M. G. Pikulin, Baloch, *Baloch: History and Economy*, (Moscow: Nauka Publisher, 1959), translated by Shah Muhammad Marri, p.181

The genesis of Baloch nationalism dates back to the establishment of Young Baloch Movement by Mir Abdul Aziz Kurd in early 1920s. In the early 1930s, with the outstanding struggles of Nawabzada Yusuf Aziz Magsi (the first Baloch journalist and son of the chief of Magsi tribe), Mir Aziz Kurd founded the first-ever political party in Balochistan, the *Anjuman Ittehad-e Balochan wa Balochistan* (Baloch and Balochistan Unity Organization). The leading figures of the nascent semi-tribal middle class were, Nawabzada Yusuf Aziz Magsi, Mir Abdul Aziz Kurd, Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, Gull Khan Naseer and many more. Nawabzada Yusuf Magsi, educated from Lahore, was the founding father of the modern Baloch nationalism. Yusuf Ali Magsi had rightly been considered as the organizer and the moving spirit of the modern Baloch national movement.¹⁸⁹ Both youthful ambassadors of Baloch nationalism, Kurd and Magsi used the media for the propagation of Baloch nationalist movement. Yusuf Magsi was still a boy when he wrote an article for the Lahore Journal *Hamdard* in 1929 titled: "*Fariyad-e-Baloch*" (Wail of Balochistan) in which he articulated the grievances of the Baloch people, criticized the British colonial rulers, Sir Shams Shah, the British representative of the Khanate and the Prime Minister of Kalat State.¹⁹⁰ The Wail of Balochistan was the first Baloch literary document for the cause of Baloch nationalism.¹⁹¹ The manifesto of the Anjuman described the intentions of Baloch nationalists;

- structural reforms in the Khanate of Kalat,
- unification of the all divided Baloch lands,
- and establishment of a sovereign Baloch state.

The extraordinary successes of the first-ever political party in Balochistan were the holding two astonishing All India Baloch and Balochistan Conferences. The *Anjuman Ittehad* was triumphant in luring the Baloch leaders and tribal chiefs throughout India. It acted as a magnet for the Baloch nationalists, leftist Baloch tribal chiefs and moderate Pashtun nationalists. The first All India Baloch and Balochistan Conference was held in Jacobabad in 1932, presided by the Baloch ruler of Khairpur state, Mir

¹⁸⁹ Taj Bressege, p.203.

¹⁹⁰ A. B Awan, p. *op. cit.*, 164. Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, *op., cit.*, p.34.

¹⁹¹ Taj Bressege, p.205.

Ali Nawaz Talpur which was attended by the prominent Baloch tribal lords and leading political figures. The *Anjuman-e Ittehad-e Balochan wa Baloch* was the pioneer, and its two All India Baloch and Balochistan Conferences held in Jacobabad and Hyderabad in 1932 and 1933 were prelude to political organization in Balochistan.¹⁹² It passed several resolutions that vehemently asked for administrative reforms, merging of the Baloch-dominated areas of Punjab and Sindh into the Khanate and abolishment of the Sandeman System in the Khanate which were also parallel with the long running demands of the newly-enthroned Khan, Mir Ahmed Yar Khan who bridged colonial and post colonial periods. The second All India Baloch and Balochistan Conference was held in 1933 in Hyderabad that repeated its previous demands in letters and spirit. Notwithstanding, being anti-colonial/British and anti-Sardar political party, the convergence of the *Anjuman Ittehad* and the Khan of Kalat, Mir Ahmed Yar brought both on the same page of struggle. Mir Ahmed Yar Khan was sympathetic to the manifesto of the Anjuman and his support gave the movement legitimacy.¹⁹³ The logic behind Anjuman support to the Khan of Kalat was to create a united politico-tribal front against the imperialists.¹⁹⁴ But the bargained honeymoon between the Baloch nationalist party and the Khan of Kalat severely antagonized the British. The political compromise among the budding Baloch nationalists and Khan of Kalat was short-lived due to the internal rifts between the ultra and moderate Baloch nationalists. The moderate nationalists wanted to cooperate with the colonial masters in return of administrative reforms and annulment of the British-invented Sardar System but the aspirations of Communist-inspired maximalist nationalists were contrary as they wanted a communist-led armed struggle against the British for the full sovereignty of Balochistan including the British Balochistan.

“In 1934, Mir Ahmed Yar Khan sent Mir Yusuf Ali Mugsji to Britain as his personal representative to discuss the sovereignty of the Khanate of Kalat with the highest authorities and to negotiate the return of all the leased areas of the Khanate under the British Balochistan. These talks were not very productive and the British government refused to

¹⁹² Martin Axmann, p.144.

¹⁹³ Taj Bressege, p.217.

¹⁹⁴ Janmahammad, *Essays on Baloch National Struggle in Pakistan*, p.170.

introduce reforms in Balochistan. The failure of Magsi's mission resulted in radicalism. The president of the *Anjuman*, Magsi favored armed struggle with the help of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)."¹⁹⁵

But the ill-fated, ill-timed death of Nawabzada Yusuf Aziz Magsi in the devastating earthquake which hit Quetta in 1935 fiercely dented the developing Baloch nationalism. In 1937, the belligerent Baloch nationalists under the leadership of Mir Abdul Aziz Kurd split up from the *Anjuman-e Ittehad Balochan wa Balochistan* by founding the Kalat State National Party (KSNP) and entirely concentrated its political activities in Khanate of Kalat. The National Party virtually campaigned for the full independence of Balochistan for which it thrashed about to rally Baloch tribes. The KSNP was formed with the goal to achieve independent and united Balochistan after the departure of the British Empire.¹⁹⁶ It also recruited the educated Baloch youth in its cadre. The manifesto of the KSNP contained the following salient points;

- all Baloch should be united by burying their hatchets,
- the Administration of the Khanate of Kalat should form an elected and representative government, with the Khan of Kalat as a constitutional head of state,
- the Central Government should adopt a nationalistic approach and should be the custodian of the Baloch traditional heritage,
- the British should honor the treaties inked with the Kalat State and integrity of Balochistan should not be destroyed,
- and Balochistan is as much a separate land as is Iran and Afghanistan.¹⁹⁷

The Pashtun nationalists under the supervision of Abdul Samad Achakzai established a new pro-Congress political group, *Anjuman-e Watan* that was exclusively active in the British Balochistan. The Kalat State National Party further baited the incumbent Khan of the Khanate owing to its un-swinging aspirations for the complete

¹⁹⁵ Inayatullah Baloch, p.155.

¹⁹⁶ Adeel Khan, "*op. cit.*, p.285.

¹⁹⁷ Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, p.41

independence of Balochistan. Gradually, the KSNP held a significant influence not only the domestic affairs of the Khanate, but also it was so powerful that it started meddling in the Khanate affairs vis-à-vis British Balochistan. As the WWII was looming on the continent of Europe in 1939, the British wanted to build a port at Jewani near the Bay of Gwadar as an alternative seaport of Gwadar which was under the control of the Sultan of Oman but the KSNP exerted considerable pressure on the dispensation of the Khanate as the Khan succumbed to its pressure by not leasing the strategic shipping town of Jewani to the British Balochistan.¹⁹⁸ The nationalists wanted a representative government in Balochistan with constitutional monarchy which would accommodate both, the Baloch nationalists and the Khan of Kalat but the anti-sardar manifesto was constantly alienating the Khan from the National Party that resulted its banning by Khan in 1939. The kingpins of the party moved to Quetta from where they operated until the World War II began in Europe.

“In July, 1939, the Prime Minister of the Kalat State issued a decree declaring the Kalat State National Party illegal within the boundaries of the state. Its active leaders were exiled from Kalat State. The KSNP then established its headquarters in Quetta from where it continued its activities with greater vigor. In the same time, the WWII broke out and the political activities were banned in the British India by the Defence of India Act, but the KSNP continued its activities underground.”¹⁹⁹

During this complex political era, the National Party move closer to the Indian Congress party due to its natural rivalry to the All India Muslim League that was founded by a native of Pishin in British Balochistan. The foundations of the Muslim League were established by a young Patan lawyer of Balochistan, Qazi Isa in 1939.²⁰⁰

“The party [KSNP] entered an alliance with the All India States People Conference, held by Indian Congress leader, Nehru. A meeting of the Conference was held in August 1945 in which Ghaus Bakhsh Bezinjo participated as the representative of the KSNP. The delegates of meeting of the Conference expressed their deep concerns over the ban inflicted by the Kalat State government on the political struggle launched by the KSNP.”²⁰¹

¹⁹⁸ Sayed Iqbal Ahmed, p.107.

¹⁹⁹ Inayatullah Baloch, p.165, Bizenjo 46.

²⁰⁰ A. B Awan, p.212.

²⁰¹ Malik Muhammad Said Dehwar, *Contemporary History of Balochistan*, (Quetta: Third World Publication, 1994), pp.270-271, Bizenjo, p.53

Nonetheless, National Party was re-legalized in the post-WWII Indian politics where it operated with its anti-Pakistan agenda. The WWII severely smashed the power of the British Empire around the world moreover the disintegration of the worldwide colonies was looming on the horizon. The hopeful Khan of Kalat, Mir Ahmed Yar Khan was struggling to cease this moment as good omen for the restoration of the independent status of the Khanate.

For this purpose he was sincerely consulting the renowned international lawyers to present the Khanate case before the Cabinet Mission in a vibrant manner. He presented his well-built case to the Cabinet mission by citing the historic treaties of 1839, 1841, 1854 and 1876 between the British and successive Khans of Kalat. The Khan of Kalat was probably the first state ruler to approach the Cabinet Mission on its arrival in India in March, 1946 where he claimed Kalat was an independent state and no decision should be made about its future without consulting the Khan.²⁰² All bilateral notable treaties affirmed and reiterated the independent status of the Khanate of Kalat and its succeeding rulers. Then Khan of Kalat, Mir Ahmed Khan presented two comprehensive memoranda to the Cabinet Mission in 1946. In the first memorandum, he deliberated the confederacy of the Kalat State and its earliest ancestral relations with feudatories of Makran, Kharan and Las bela. The memorandum dealt with the following cases of the Kalat State;

- The strategic position of Kalat constitutes an important buffer state between India and Afghanistan and between Iran and India.
- Geographically, Kalat is not part of India and the Baloch language has no affinity with any Indian language and historically Kalat was never part of India neither it was an Indian state.
- Kalat is an independent sovereign state whose relations with the British Government are governed by the Treaty of 1876 and its Indian associations are merely due to its connection with the British Government that's why it should not be included in any form of Indian Union.

²⁰² Sayed Iqbal Ahmed, p.114.

- Las Bela has been an integral part of the Kalat State since the foundation of the Jam dynasty by Jam Ali in 1742. The Kharan state established its relations with the Kalat State in 1730; therefore on the departure of the British Empire from India, Las Bela and Kharan should be placed under the sovereignty of the Kalat State.²⁰³

In the second memorandum, the Khan asked for the revival of the leased areas of Khanate in the British Balochistan including its capital Quetta and tribal Marri-Bugti areas. The Khanate territories, Quetta, Noshki and Naseerabad were leased to British Balochistan in the late 19th and early 20th centuries on the administrative ground. British should return the leased areas of the Khanate of Kalat which were ceded to British Balochistan through the Quetta Agreement of 1883, the Noshki Agreement of 1899 and the Naseerabad Agreement of 1903.²⁰⁴

In mid-1947, the Governor General of the British India, Lord Mountbatten heralded the end of the British colonial rule over India that was slated in the Partition Plan, announced on 3rd June, 1947. It predetermined the divide of British India into two domains, India and Pakistan. The Partition Plan unequivocally sanctioned around 565 Indian princely states to accede either to India or Pakistan, or to retain their sovereignty by proclaiming their independence. A good number the Hindu-majority princely states decided to merge with newly mapped state of India but predominately Muslim princely states were initially reluctant to join newly born Muslim state, Pakistan. The status of Balochistan was entirely ambivalent as it was divided between British Balochistan and the Khanate. In addition the status of the British Balochistan was more complicated as it included some ceded areas of Afghanistan and the leased territories of Khanate of Kalat. At the time of British Indian independence, Balochistan was comprised of the following areas;

A. Khanate States (Native Balochistan);

1. Kalat [Capital of the Khanate].

²⁰³ Mir Ahmed Yar Khan, *op. cit.*, pp.255-296.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid*, pp.256-300

2. Makran [It was jointly ruled by the representative of Khan of Khanate and three major tribes of Makran].
3. Las Bela [Autonomous state of Khanate under the Jam dynasty].
4. Kharan [Autonomous state of the Khanate under the Nusharwani dynasty].

B. British Balochistan (Colonized);

1. Ceded territories from southern frontier areas of Afghanistan under the Treaty of Gandamak, signed on 26th May, 1879;
 - i. Pishin, Chaman, Duki and Shahrig [Pashtun areas]
 - ii. Sibi.[Baloch Pashtun mixed area]
2. Agency territories ceded to the British rule by the independent tribes;
 - i. Zhob district, Loralai district [Pashtun areas]
 - ii. Chagi district excluding Noshki [Baloch area]
3. Tribal Areas;
 - i. Marri area [Baloch].
 - ii. Bugti area [Baloch].
4. Leased areas from the Khanate of Kalat;
 - i. Quetta [Baloch Pashtun mixed area]
 - ii. Bolan Pass along with Kachi Railway district. [Baloch area].
 - iii. Nushki [Baloch area].
 - iv. Naseerabad [Baloch area].²⁰⁵

The British Balochistan was under direct control of the British Indian Governor through his deputy, AGG with the status of chief commissioner province. All areas under the direct control of the British India were given the choice to either join the India or Pakistan except the princely state, for which there was a special clause if they wanted to maintain their pre-British independent status. The Indian Independence Act of 1947 states, “the territories of Pakistan...at the date of the passing of this

²⁰⁵ A. B Awan, pp.213-14.

Act...also include the Chief Commissioner's Province of British Baluchistan."²⁰⁶ The Khanate of Kalat was applying different diplomatic maneuvers to get back the leased areas of the British Balochistan but on the other side there was not any authority to define the legal position of the British Balochistan, having territories of the Khanate and Afghanistan, furthermore it lacked any representative assembly to decide its integration with any of the two proclaimed states (India and Pakistan) from the British India.

The Muslim League was endeavoring to claim the territory of British Balochistan as it was a Muslim-dominated Commissioner Province and according to the Partition Plan, the successive government of Pakistan would inherit all Muslim dominated territories of the British India. The new Islamic state could not ignore the strategic importance of British Balochistan as well as the strategic significance of the Khanate subordinate states at the seashore of the Indian Ocean. Beside, Muslim League insistence, the Khan of Kalat was demanding the reintegration of its leased areas from the British Balochistan to Kalat State. The British Balochistan had already established a tribal institution known as *Shahi Jirga* (Royal Council) to integrate the local tribal elders in the Commissioner Province administration. Although it was not a true representative council because it was consist of non-elected tribal lords but British had bestowed it as a sole representative of the British Balochistan as it elected the representative of the British Balochistan in the Indian Constituent Assembly. The British had regarded the *Shahi Jirga* an ideal and fairly representative body.²⁰⁷ Being the de facto representative body, the *Shahi Jirga* was given the status of Electoral College to decide the final fate of the British Balochistan accordance to the Indian Independence Act of June 1947. It was dominated by the Baloch-Pashtun tribal chieftains and landlords. A contentious referendum was held among the members of the disputed *Shahi Jirga* to vote either in favour of Pakistan or India on 29 June, 1947 under the supervision of the British officials. Members of unelected council of tribal chiefs (*Shahi Jirga*) along with the members of the Quetta municipality obligingly

²⁰⁶UK Government, "Indian Independence Act, 1947", *The Official Home of the UK Legislation*, p.2.

²⁰⁷ Martin Axmann, p.195.

endorsed the British official plan by supporting accession of British Balochistan to Pakistan.²⁰⁸ The position of the Baloch tribal chiefs of Marri and Bugti tribes who were also members of the *Jirga* is very much ambiguous. The Baloch nationalistic scholars like Inayatullah Baloch draws a different version of Baloch tribal chiefs' vis-à-vis the writings of pro-Pakistani like A. B Awan. According to Inayatullah Baloch, Nawab Doda Khan Marri and Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti who were representing the tribal areas of Marri-Bugti in the British Balochistan, made a written representation to the British Government about their decision to join the Khanate but their requests and demands were ignored. But A. B Awan writes, "Sardar Doda Khan Marri voted in favour of Pakistan in the plebiscite held by the *Jirga*."²⁰⁹ The mainstream political parties, media, civil society and academicians of Pakistan generally hold the perception that Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti, who was killed in a military operation in 2006 under mysterious circumstances, favored the annexation of Balochistan to Pakistan. He cast his vote in favour of Pakistan in the *Shahi Jirga*, held in Quetta.²¹⁰ But under the Indian Partition Plan of 1947, the jurisdiction of the *Shahi Jirga* was limited to the British Balochistan, as the Khanate was legally exempted from it.

"Pakistan historians have tried to argue that Khan was not the legal representative of Baloch sentiments and point as evidence to the pro-Pakistani Assembly of Baloch leaders called *Shahi Jirga* which voted in favour of Pakistan. However, the participants were those who had been appointed by the British, and the Assembly's recommendations related only to the British Balochistan."²¹¹

The Baloch nationalists of KSNP and the Khan of Kalat rejected the annexation of their leased areas into Pakistan as they were of the opinion that the British and pro-Muslim League members of the *Jirga* had manipulated the referendum in favour of Pakistan as the Baloch representative did not favor the merge of their respective areas into Pakistan. This so-called referendum was just limited to the British Balochistan and did not imply the Khanate of Kalat.

²⁰⁸ Selig Harrison, *Afghanistan Shadow*, pp.24-25.

²⁰⁹ Inayatullah Baloch, p. 160 and A. B Awan, pp.185-186.

²¹⁰ "Nawab Bugti: maligned but widely respected", *Dawn*, August 28, 2006.

²¹¹ Foreign Policy Online, "Balochis of Pakistan on the Margins of History", p.19.

On the other hand, the Khan of Kalat was bracing himself for the revival of the lost sovereignty of the Khanate. The Indian Partition Plan also bestowed the third option to the princely states of retaining their individual independence other than merging either into the two successive regimes of the British India. The Indian Independence Act of 1947 states, “the suzerainty of His Majesty over the Indian states lapses...there lapse also any treaties or agreement in force at the date of passing of this Act between His Majesty and any person having authority...”²¹² It fulfilled the long running aspirations of the Khan of Kalat, Mir Ahmed Yar Khan as the British had been considering the Khanate as an Indian princely state. The government of the newly established Islamic state was negotiating with the predominately Muslim princely states of Bahawalpur, Khairpur, Swat, Chitral and Amb but the Khan of Kalat was deliberately avoiding any direct negotiation with Pakistan’s Government but before the formal announcement of the Indian Partition Plan the Khan of Kalat along with his legal team had presented two memoranda to the representative of the His Majesty in Cabinet Mission in which the Khan demanded the unconditional revival of the independence of Khanate after the British withdrawal from the British India.

“The Khan of Kalat and his legal advisor, Mr. Muhammad Ali Jinnah were of the opinion that the legal status of Nepal and Kalat was different from the rest of the Indian princely states, as the both states, maintained their treaty relations directly with the Whitehall [center of His Majesty’s Government] rather than the British India. They maintained that 1876 Treaty between the Khan of Kalat and British Government had pledged that British would respect the independence and sovereignty of the Khanate.”²¹³

The founder of Pakistan, western educated prominent lawyer, Mr. Muhammad Ali Jinnah was acting as legal advisor to Khan of Kalat over the complicated legal status of the Kalat State. After the announcement of the Partition Act, Muhammad Ali Jinnah assured the Khan, Mir Ahmed Yar Khan that the independence of the Khanate would be respected. Later on in early August 1947, the Khan of Kalat along with Muhammad Ali Jinnah held an important meeting with the last British Viceroy, Lord

²¹² UK Government, “Indian Independence Act, 1947”, *The Official Home of the UK Legislation*, p.4.

²¹³ Adeel Khan, “Baloch Ethnic Nationalism in Pakistan: From Guerrilla War to Nowhere?” *Asian Ethnicity*, Vol. 4, No. 2, (London: Rutledge Informa Ltd, June, 2003), p 285.

Mountbatten in Delhi on 4 August, 1947 which is mentioned in Mountbatten book *Time only to Look Forward*.

“Indian states had been independent states in their treaty relations with the British and they would resume their sovereign status after the lapse of the paramountcy and subsequently they would be absolutely free to choose to join one dominion’s assembly, or make some other arrangement.”²¹⁴

Furthermore, in the same meeting, Khan of Kalat and Muslim League leader, Muhammad Ali Jinnah reached to an understanding over future bilateral relations between Pakistan and Kalat State in the presence of the Viceroy which was turned into a standstill agreement to preserve the prevailing status quo. The agreement was consisting of the following provisions;

1. The Government of Pakistan agrees that Kalat is an independent state, different from the Indian princely states.
2. Over the already signed treaties between the British and Kalat, legal opinion will be sought out that whether the Government of Pakistan is legally bound to them or not.
3. Pakistan Government shall be committed to the all responsibilities and agreement signed by Kalat and British Govt. from 1839 to 1947; furthermore Pakistan shall be the constitutional and political successor of the British.
4. Further deliberations between Kalat State and Pakistan will be held in Karachi on matters of Defence, Foreign Relations and Communication.²¹⁵

Diplomatically, the standstill agreement was a win-win situation for both leaders as it represented the aspirations of the Khan of Kalat and then expected Governor General of Pakistan. The Pakistani founding leader recognized Kalat State before the proclamation of Pakistan and Kalat State virtually merged its disputed leased lands in

²¹⁴ Louis Mountbatten, *Time only to Look Forward: Speeches as Viceroy of India and Governor General of the Dominion of India, 1947-48*, (Michigan: N. Kaye Publisher, 1949), pp.39-42.

²¹⁵ Sheikh Asad Rahman, *A case Study on: Lack of Democracy and Socio-Economic Development of Balochistan*, Islamabad: Sungi Development Foundation, March 2009.

British Balochistan into Pakistan before its declaration. On the basis of this understanding, the Khan of Kalat, Mir Ahmed Yar Khan proclaimed the Kalat's Declaration of Independence on 15th August, 1947 and issued an interim constitution which introduced a formal government in the Khanate with a cabinet and a chief executive, a tribal Judiciary and a bicameral legislature of House of Lords and the House of Commons, former represented the all tribal chiefs of the Khanate where the later was to be elected by popular participation in the lower *jirgas* (councils) of districts and sub-districts.

“The Government of Kalat State Act stated that; there shall be two houses of Legislature to be called the *Darul Umra* and the *Darul Awam*, the former will represent 36 tribal chiefs and the later will be elected on popular votes with 52 members. On the basis of Kalat State Act, elections were held but on non-party basis to check the domination of the KSNP but KNSP won the majority seats in the Lower House. Balochi was adopted as the official national language.”²¹⁶

The supporters of the Kalat State National Party won a landslide victory in the first-ever elections, the only political party in the Khanate, dominated the House of Commons. The KSNP won 39 seats out of 52. The Baloch Parliament met and endorsed the declaration of the independence.²¹⁷ As the Khan, Mir Ahmed Yar Khan was undertaking an across the board reform program, the leadership of Pakistan was constantly pressurizing him to accede its Khanate into Pakistan whilst the Khan was buying time to avoid annexation but at last he referred the Pakistani accession proposal to the House of Commons. Mir Ahmed Yar Khan explains his meeting with Governor General of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah in his autobiography;

‘As an elder brother and friend, spoke the Quaid [Muhammad Ali Jinnah], I would sincerely advise you to merge your State with Pakistan. I [Ahmed Yar Khan] replied, it is my considered opinion that Kalat's merger is necessary in order to make Pakistan stronger. In this connection, I would suggest that Baluchistan [Balochistan], being a

²¹⁶ Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, pp.59-69, Inayatullah Baloch, pp.178-181, Janmahammad Dashti, *Essays on Balochistan*, p.173, Gul Khan Naseer, *Tarikh-e-Balochistan*, p.499.

²¹⁷ Muhammad Ishaque Fani, Suyyiya Shahab, et.al., “The Resurgence of Baluch Ethnicity and Nationalism in Baluchistan”, *European Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. 20, No 4, (April, 2011), p. 660.

land of numerous tribes, the people there must be duly consulted in the matter prior to any decision I take.”²¹⁸

On his return, he convened both the Houses of parliament (12th to 15th December, 1947) to seek a mandate over the matters of Kalat’s merger with Pakistan. The nationalist Kalat State National Party having numerical majority rejected the annexation tender unanimously, which was later on upheld by the tribes-dominated House of Lords. The young nationalist parliamentarian of the KSNP, Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo inks his argumentative speech of the Kalat Parliament in his autobiography;

“We have never been part of Hindustan [India]. Pakistan’s demand is unacceptable. We have a distinct culture like Afghanistan and Iran, and if the mere fact that we are Muslims requires us to amalgamate with Pakistan, the Afghanistan and Iran should also be amalgamated with Pakistan. Granted that we have no money, but we have abundant mineral resources; we have many vibrant seaports.”²¹⁹

4.2: Accession of Kalat State to Pakistan

Since the Khan of Kalat was avoiding the leadership of the newly mapped Pakistan, the Pakistani politico-military leadership adopted another stratagem by adding fuel the historic differences and hostilities between the Khan of Kalat and its professed sub-states of Kharan, Lasbela and Makran. The status of the Khanate of Kalat vis-à-vis its proclaimed ethnic-based politico-tribal relations with the subordinate states of Kharan, Makran and Lasbela was not convincing alike that of British Balochistan.

“The proclaimed feudatories of the Khanate, the states of Kharan, Makran and Lasbela were not mentioned in the tribal constitution. The Kalat Independence Act/Constitution did not define the rights and duties of the royal families and their feudatories. The so-called elections were held in Kalat only. The subordinate states of Kharan and Las Bela had no representation in the Kalat Legislature and their relations with the Kalat remained opened to discussion.”²²⁰

²¹⁸ Ahmed Yar Khan, p.153.

²¹⁹ Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, p.62, “Balochis of Pakistan on the Margins of History”, p.20, Taj Muhammad Bressege, p.235, Inayatullah Baloch, p.184.

²²⁰ Inayatullah Baloch, pp.180-81, Mir Gull Khan Naseer, *Tarikihe-e-Balochistan*, vol. 2, p.515, A.B. Awan, p.210.

The Pakistani Government in Karachi was cryptically negotiating with the rulers of Kharan, Las Bela and Makran. On 17th March, 1948, the Government of Pakistan unexpectedly announced that the rulers of the princely states of Kharan, Makran and Lasbela had annexed their respective states into Pakistan. The incorporation of above proclaimed subordinate princely states into Pakistan buried the long running aspiration of the Khan of Kalat Mir Ahmed Yar Khan to have a Baloch State on the map of the world. Before the lapse of British paramountcy, Jam [dynastic ruler] of Las Bela tried to refuse a status as a subordinate ruler [under the Khan of Kalat] and wrote of letter to the A.G.G of British Balochistan to recognize Las Bela as an independent state. In February, 1948 the feudatory chiefs of Kharan, Las Bela and Makran were invited by Pakistani Government in its capital, Karachi. The three chiefs accused the Khan of Kalat; “attempting to win over Makran and Chagi Levy Crops, inciting the people of Kharan against its chief, sending his younger brother, Prince Agha Abdul Karim to Makran to stir up people against its ruler, Nawab Bai Khan Gichki.”²²¹

These subordinate regional principalities of Las Bela, Kharan and Makran were elevated to the status of independent princely states. Neither the Jam of Las bela, the Nawab of Kharan nor the Wali of Makran acceded to Pakistan because of their love to the Islamic State of Pakistan. They opted for accession to Pakistan because of their centuries-old rivalries with the Khan of Kalat.²²² The Khan of Kalat was relentlessly infuriated over the Machiavellian absorption of its proclaimed subordinate feudatories but this left him nothing except to reconsider accession of its ancestral Khanate to Pakistan. Khan issued a statement refusing to believe that Pakistan was a champion of Muslim rights in the world.²²³ Since then the Pakistani establishment not only started a campaign against the Khan of Kalat to compel him to annex its state into Pakistan but also prepared to use gunboat diplomacy from the forced merger of his state.²²⁴ According to Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, Khan was a broken man who could not bear

²²¹ Inayatullah Baloch, pp.186-187.

²²² Ibid, p. 187, Martin Azmann, p.238.

²²³ Taj Muhammad Bressege, p.136.

²²⁴ Janmahammad, p.183.

profound pressure, therefore without any earnest deliberations, he signed the documents of accession of Kalat state to Pakistan on 30th March, 1948 bypassing his self-written constitution and self-architect bicameral parliament of the Khanate. Therefore, the short-lived independence of Kalat came to an end, and Kalat State became part of history now. Mir Ahmed Yar Khan describes his act of accession in his autobiography in following way;

“Consequently, the neighboring countries were quick to take notice of the vulnerable situation in Pakistan....armed clashes with Indian army for the liberation of Kashmir, Afghanistan started its slogan of Pakhunistan and Russia was pressing its demand of accesses to the port of Gwadar.... The very existence of Pakistan was at stake, therefore without obtaining the formal sanction from the tribal Sardars, I signed the merger documents in the capacity as the Khan of Kalat on 30th March, 1948.”²²⁵

As the last Khan of Kalat, Mir Ahmed Yar Khan mentioned some apprehensions of foreign interventions in the tug of war between Pakistan and Khanate of Balochistan, the involvement of foreign hands could not be ruled out in this annexation imbroglio and upheaval. The British Government gravely hesitated from an independent status of Kalat because as a principality, both weak and lying on the foreign frontiers, it would be vulnerable to widely perceived external aggressions and could not safeguard its own independence.²²⁶ The Foreign Policy Centre London, that was launched under the patronage of former British Premier, Tony Blair, elaborated the British official position vis-à-vis the Khanate accession in its published report, “the Balochis of Pakistan on the Margins of History” which states; “British felt that instead of a weak sovereign Balochistan, a stronger Pakistan would be more willing to accommodate the British interests in the region. Hence, it was due to the British interests that Balochistan was kept within Pakistan.”²²⁷

At the same time, the genesis of the new international conflict, the Cold War was being felt across the frontiers and capitals of the world which was a proxy war

²²⁵ Ahmed Yar Khan, pp.158-163.

²²⁶ Ahmed Iqbal, p.114.

²²⁷ Foreign Policy Center, pp.21-22.

between the Soviet Union and the newly rising superpower, the USA. The declining colonial superpower, the British Empire on which the sun never set, was dragging itself in the Western bloc in this East-West Conflict, and as a result, it gave green signal to the Pakistani government to annex the Khanate as Pakistan was not intending to ally with the communist bloc in the foreseeable future. The brother of Khan of Kalat, Agha Abdul Karim rejected the annexation of Kalat to Pakistan and resorted to armed struggle against the alleged illegal annexation but his flimsy waged insurgency was soon tamed by the Pakistani Army. Despite of his failure to wage a full-scale guerrilla war against the occupations forces, Agha Abdul Karim is revered as a bravo warrior in the Baloch nationalistic history.

4.3: The First Baloch Revolt (1948)

The sudden and unilateral annexation of Kalat State inflamed into political upheaval and armed resistance. Agha Abdul Karim, the younger brother of Khan of Kalat Mir Ahmed Yar Khan and then representative of Kalat Government in Makran was the first eminent Baloch leader who stood up to the Khan unilateral accession. He pursued armed struggle and in April, 1948, he decided to lead the tribal rebellions by stirring up the tribes by commemorating the rebellious resistance of Mir Hamal Kalmati against Portuguese and Mir Mehrab Khan's armed struggle against the British in 1839. The Khan of Kalat distanced himself from rebellions under his brother Agha Abdul Karim. The KSNP also reacted fiercely against the annexation by providing a political front to the armed struggle of Agha Karim. The KSNP which wanted a united and sovereign Greater Balochistan was behind much of the tribal agitation. Its top brace, Mir Abdul Aziz Kurd and Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo were arrested.²²⁸ Prince Karim wanted to expand the intensity of the resistance by organizing a tribal *Laskhar* (force) and along with some prominent nationalists like Muhammad Khan Raisani, M. Hussain Unqa, Malik Saeed, Abdul Wahid Kurd and Qadir Bakhsh Nizamani, he set out for neighboring country of Afghanistan for the search of international support. The Afghan authorities as well as the Soviet embassy

²²⁸ Gul Khan Nasser, p. 521.

in Kabul refused to provide any kind of political or material support.²²⁹ The irredentist prince, Agha Karim had to return with empty hands but he sought to fight rather than surrendering to the Pakistani authorities. Prince [Abdul Karim] stayed at Sur Lath [Afghan border] for about two month and fell victim to a deception hatched by Mir Baig Muhammad Sur Para.²³⁰ In July, 1948 after a restrained skirmish at Harboi, he surrendered following the assurance of his elder brother. Prince Abdul Karim who fled to mountains across the Afghan border with 800 men to liberate Balochistan came to the negotiating table at the behest of brother Mir Ahmed Yar Khan.²³¹ But his surrender showed him the route of prison with his leading followers where they were trialed and sentenced by a tribal court that ignored the promised amnesty. This was the first of many broken promises and breaches of trust between the Government of Pakistan and the Baloch.²³² The seeds of the trust deficit were sowed for the first time that has gravely widened now. The first Baloch rebellion was quickly put down by the military, rebel leaders were apprehended but this use of force planted the seed of conflict which now engulfs the whole province.²³³ Although the first armed resistance of Agha Abdul Karim and political upheaval of KSNP were short-lived but they laid the foundations of the Baloch Resistance Movement against Pakistan which still vibrates in the politico-armed struggle movements of the present-day Baloch nationalism. The first revolt and the military response set a precedent for both, Baloch nationalists and the Federation of Pakistan to devise their respective strategies for the later uprising and the counter-uprisings.

4.4: Second Baloch Revolt (1958-1969)

After the annexation and the mitigation of the first rebellious insurgency there was political chaos and administrative anarchy in the central government due to the lack of vibrant constitution and the legal status of the newly integrated princely states was

²²⁹ Taj Bressege, p.165.

²³⁰ Naudir Bakht, "Role of Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo in the Politics of Balochistan: An Analysis" (Ph.D diss., University of Balochistan Quetta, 1999) p.76.

²³¹ Jason Hogg, "Insurgency in Balochistan", *The Foreign Military Studies Office, Kansas State University*, p.9 available at www.fmso.leavenworth.army.mil accessed on 10 October, 2012.

²³² Selig Harrison, *Afghanistan Shadow.*, p.27

²³³ International Crisis Group, "Pakistan: The Worsening Conflict in Balochistan" *Asian Report No. 119*, 14 September, 2006, p.3.

still lingering without any constitutional cover. At last it was decided to unite the four vast but thinly populated principalities in a single administrative unit rather than granting them individual administrative unit. Thus in April, 1952 the Balochistan States Union (BSU) was established for the territorial and administrative integration of the four tribal states within the federation of Pakistan. The tribal rulers, Khan of Kalat, Mir Ahmed Yar Khan, Nawab of Kharan Mir Baloch Khan Nosharwani, Wali of Makran Nawab Bai Khan Gichki and Jam of Lasbela Mir Ghulam Qadir and the representative of the Minister of States and Frontiers Region signed the Balochistan States Union Covenant for integrating their respective states into the BSU within the federation of Pakistan. Practically the BSU could not function as it was aspired due to the visible tribal hostilities of the members of the Council of Rulers as they were at loggerheads and the financial crunches that led to the annihilation of the BSU in October, 1955 and the areas of the Union along with the commissioner province of Balochistan were merged into One Unit of West Pakistan. On 5th October, 1955, the Baluchistan States Union was terminated with effect from 14th October, 1955 and included in the province of West Pakistan.²³⁴ The province of West Pakistan was formed in the controversial One Unit to counter the numeric majority of the Bengali-dominated East Pakistan which later on became Bangladesh.

The Khan of Kalat undertook a near-violent political campaign against the One Unit. For this purpose, the Khan of Kalat, Mir Ahmed Yar Khan organized a *jirga* of the all leading Baloch Nawabs in 1957 but this political initiatives of the Khan of Kalat were strongly deemed as anti-state and seditious that led to a military operation against Khan and its tribesmen which foment second insurgency in Balochistan under Nawab Norouz Khan Zehri that lasted until the disintegration of the One Unit and proclamation of a full-fledged governor province of Balochistan in 1969. The concrete resistance to the One Unit was more pronounced in Balochistan any other area, and at one point it seemed as if Balochistan had seceded because of the open

²³⁴ A. B Awan, p.218.

rebelliousness to the central authority.²³⁵ The Pakistan Army moved in Kalat on 6 October, 1958, just two days before the imposition of the first “Military Martial Law” and detained the unseated Khan of Kalat with his immediate tribesmen after a brief tribal mutiny. The Khan and his tribal men were arrested on charges of fomenting a rebellion movement and secretly negotiating a rebellion with Afghanistan. The Khan arrest sparked massive sadism, stirring up a guerilla movement under Nawab Nauroz Khan.²³⁶ During this period the Baloch nationalists in the mainstream politics regrouped to revive their KSNP which was officially banned after the annexation of Kalat. On his release from the seditious charges, Prince Abdul Karim Khan met with old guards of the KSNP and the Baloch political workers in Karachi and laid down the foundations of a novel political party “*Ustaman Gall*” (Peoples Party) from the debris of the KSNP.²³⁷ But the *Ustaman Gall* could not play any significant role to entice mass mobilization in the favour of Nauroz Khan’s guerrilla movement. The demands of Nauroz Khan were very simple;

- immediate release of the Khan of Kalat and his imprisoned tribesmen,
- restoration of the Balochistan from the One Unit,
- restoration of the Baloch customary laws,
- exemption from the Land Reforms.²³⁸

The Government of Pakistan used its past diplomacy by applying cunning tribal men to convince Nauroz Khan for a truce by assuring them safe conduct under an oath of the Islamic Sacred Book, the Holy Quran. His nephew, Sardar Doda Khan Zehri [father of Sardar Sanaullah Zehri, current Nawab of Zehri tribe and President of PML-N, Balochistan chapter], carrying a Quran, assured him that the authorities had accepted all the insurgents demand.²³⁹ On 20th May, 1959 Nauroz Khan surrender before the authorities but they were arrested and trialed in a Military Court. Nauroz

²³⁵ Herbert Fekdman, *From Crisis to Crisis: Pakistan 1962-1959*, (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1972), p.203.

²³⁶ Priyasbree Andley, “Balochistan: A Backgrounder”, Special Report by Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, New Delhi, October 2006, p.4.

²³⁷ Naudir Bakht, PhD dissertation, pp.80-81.

²³⁸ A.B Awan, p.228.

²³⁹ Martin Axmaan, p.287.

Khan with his son, eight nephews and comrades were roundup violating the promised amnesty promised in an oath undertaken on the Holy Quran. His comrades, son and nephews were hanged in Hyderabad Jail in July 1960 and Nauroz Khan died in Kohlu Jail where he died in 1964.²⁴⁰ When his son, nephews and leading followers were hanged, an army officer cold-heatedly asked the aged warrior to identify his son, but he replied to the soldier that all those brave young men were his sons.²⁴¹ The octogenarian Nauroz Khan became the rallying symbol of Baloch nationalism among the Baloch leaders and youth, Baloch resistance movement commemorates him as a revolutionary leader, despite of being an elder and old man, he fought for his people, his land and gave impetus to the hardly-breathing nationalism. Although it was an ethno-nationalist movement but it survived the dormant dying Baloch nationalism.

The Second Revolt did not die down with the death of Nauroz Khan, as it bolstered the existing resentment among Baloch tribes and widened the trust deficit resulting from the broken treaties. During this period, the military ruler Field Marshal, Ayub Khan unveiled his strategy to control the warring tribes by establishing military cantonments in the restive areas of Balochistan. The Baloch tribes believed that military cantonments would infringe their tribal emancipation which stirred up another tribal insurgency from the rubbles of Nauroz Khan's guerrilla movement. The Pakistan Army began building new garrisons in the key tribal points of Balochistan, prompting another guerilla movement led by a young Marxist-Leninist of Marri tribe, Sher Muhammad Marri, alias *General Sherof*.²⁴² Inspired from the communist revolutions around the world and left-wing political parties of Pakistan were negotiating to form a signal leftist political platform. Prominent Baloch tribal leaders, Sardar Attaullah Mengal, Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri, Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo and Nawab Akbar Bugti allied with the newly established leftist party, Pakistan National Party (PNP). Later on in July, 1957 the PNP and the Maulana Bhashani's faction of *Awami league* merged into a new party renamed as *Awami National Party* (NAP) which was a political umbrella for all left-wing political figures of East and

²⁴⁰ ²⁴⁰ Muhammad Ishaque Fani, Suyiya Shahab, *European Journal of Social Science*, p.662.

²⁴¹ Sherbaz Mazari, *A journey to Disillusionment*, (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1999), p.85.

²⁴² Priyasbree Andley, "Balochistan: A Backgrounder" p.4.

West Pakistan. The NAP was established in 1957 when the left-leaning West Pakistani politicians merged their parties (the *Khudai Khidmatgars* of Ghaffar Khan from NWFP, *Ustaman Gul* of Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, *Azad Pakistan Party* of Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din of Punjab, *Sindh Mahaz* of G.M. Sayed, *Sindh Hari Party* of Hyder Jatoi and *Woror Pashtun Party* of Abdus Samad Achakzai) with a faction of *Awami League* of East Pakistan led by Maulana Abdul Hamid Bashani.²⁴³ In the coming years, the NAP became the best organized political front for the Baloch and Pashtun nationalists. It demanded the dissolution of the One Unit and non-aligned foreign policy and withdrawal from the military pacts, SEATO and Baghdad Pact (later CENTO).²⁴⁴ But Pakistani left fell to two pieces in the wake of Sino-Soviet divergence in 1967.

In March 1962, Ayub Khan promulgated a new constitution and elections were held in April of the same year on the basis of Basic Democracies introduced by the military dictator. The Baloch nationalists took part in the elections and entered into the National Assembly. The 1962 election brought several Baloch tribal leaders, Sardar Attaullah Mengal, Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri and Ahmad Nawaz Bugti [brother of Nawab Akbar Bugti] to elected office for the first time but, the central government viewed the election of these staunch Baloch nationalists as a threat and these elected tribal leaders were quickly replaced by new Sardars appointed by Islamabad.²⁴⁵ But the new *sarkari* (governmental) *sardars* were killed by the insurgents sooner than later. Nevertheless, the Baloch nationalists were not tolerated in the mainstream parliamentary politics as Sardar Attaullah Mengal and Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri were arrested and put behind the bars on charges of treasonable speeches in the National Assembly. The political activities of Attaullah Mengal, Akbar Bugti and Khair Bakhsh Marri were of particular concern for the dictator regime because these leaders were acting dual roles as tribal chiefs and nationalist

²⁴³ A. B Awan, pp.236-237.

²⁴⁴ Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, p.93.

²⁴⁵ Justin S. Dunne, "Crisis in Baluchistan: A Historical Analysis of the Baloch Nationalist Movement in Pakistan", (California: Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, June 2006), p.31.

leaders.²⁴⁶ Their arrest adds fuel to the already inflaming tribal men. The Marri and Mengal tribes retaliated violently against the apprehension of their chiefs and the both belligerent tribes formed close nexus to widen the ongoing insurgency. Sher Muhammad Marri who had already established Balochistan People's Liberation Front (BPLF) exploited the Marri-Mengal mutiny and invited Mir Muhammad Mengal, a relative of Sardar Attaullah Mengal in his ranks, fought collectively against the army. The *Pharari* guerrillas of Sher Muhammad Marri established twenty two camps throughout Balochistan to carry put their militant activities. Similarly the Bugtis under the leadership of Mewa Khan Bugti were also collaborating with Sher Muhammad Marri.²⁴⁷

“*Pharari* is a Balochi word used to describe persons whose grievances cannot be solved through talks. *Pharari* fighters ambushed convoys, conducted skirmishes, bombed trains and raided military camps. The central government retaliated with firm military reprisals with air attacks on rebel strongholds and bull-dozing the villages and vast agricultural fields of the several tribal leaders.”²⁴⁸

General (retd) Muhammad Musa, the former Army Chief and the Governor of Balochistan (1985-91) had admitted in his book *Jawan to General* that the charges against Baloch nationalists were entirely politically motivated, neither Nawab Marri, Attaullah Mengal nor Akbar Bugti had committed any crime.²⁴⁹ The chief of Bugti tribe, Nawab Akbar Bugti was also imprisoned against the charges of assassinating his uncle. The insurgents of Marri and Mengal tribes continued their subversive activities against the central government until the 1967 when the military junta redeemed to end the political victimization of the tribal chiefs. The 1967 brought happy news. The Pakistan Times of the 28th January heralded that President had accepted the mercy appeal of the Sardars of Kalat and Quetta divisions to pardon certain tribesmen of Marri, Bugti and Mengal clans.²⁵⁰ With the harbinger of the release of the bellicose tribal chiefs, the *Phararis*-insurgency mitigated and watered

²⁴⁶ Paul Titus and Nina Swindler, “Knights, not Pawns: Ethno-Nationalism and Regional Dynamics in Post-Colonial Balochistan”, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol.32, (2000), p.56.

²⁴⁷ Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, p.108.

²⁴⁸ Justine S. Dunne, *op. cit.* p.34.

²⁴⁹ Muhammad Musa, *Jawan to General* (Karachi: East & West Publishing Company, 1984), p.197.

²⁵⁰ A. B Awan, p.230.

down although it continued until it breathed its last with the disintegration of the One Unit in 1969 and granting Balochistan a full-fledged provincial status. The military ruler General Yahya Khan sued for a cease-fire with the *Phararis* and induced them to agree to a cease fire by agreeing to redraw provincial boundaries of Balochistan.²⁵¹

The Second Revolt lasted for a decade almost, but gained some praise-worthy successes like the release of Baloch leaders and establishment of Balochistan province. During this period, the nationalism also engulfed the Baloch students who became the vanguard of the Baloch nationalism in the coming years. The left-wing politics, induced Baloch students in the vortex of nationalism and the striking development in this revolt was the formation of the Baloch Student Organization (BSO) in 1967 that galvanized the Baloch students. Initially it was purely apolitical and worked just for the promotion of education among the Baloch youth but soon it was ensnared by the ongoing communist-leaning insurgency of Sher Muhammad Marri in the central and eastern Balochistan and later on it was indoctrinated in the nationalist politics by the NAP as its all demands were common with those of the NAP. The left-wing BSO was formed as a reaction to the government of Pakistan's armed action against the Second Baloch Revolt.²⁵² Since 1967 it has been an active and significant player in the chaotic sphere of the Baloch nationalistic politics.

4.5: Third Insurgency (1973-77)

In the early 1970s in the tumultuous politics of Balochistan, the Baloch political elites were divided into three but interconnected groups. The leading group was Baloch triumvirate leadership of Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, Sardar Attaullah Mengal and Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri who have entered in the mainstream national parliamentary politics under the platform of *National Awami Party* (NAP). The second group was the proletarian Baloch youth of the newly established left-leaning Baloch Student Organization (BSO) under the dynamic leadership of Medical student, Dr. Abdul Hayee Baloch. The third group of triangular Baloch politics was

²⁵¹ Muhammad Ishaque Fani, *Suyyiya Shahab*, p.663, see also Justin S. Dunne, p.35.

²⁵² Nadeem F. Paracha, "When the doves cry" *Dawn Sunday Magazine*, 2 February, 2012.

consisted of those *Phararis* (insurgents) who had been fighting against the armed forces in the mountains under their Marxist chief, Sher Muhammad Marri. The muted tribal militant wing of the Baloch political elite was dormant reserve force but it was not obsolete. The NAP, the *Phararis* and the BSO created a myth of common historical origin through which the common heroes from the Baloch history were sought, and common villains were identified.²⁵³ These all three intertwined groups of the Baloch politics were like king, rock and knight with thousands of pawns who have just started the game on the political chessboard of Balochistan and were bracing themselves for the first general elections in Pakistan.

The first-ever nationwide general elections were held on 7th December, 1970 in which the newly established Pakistan People's Party (PPP) of feudalist Zulfikar Ali Bhutto won majority seats of the West Pakistan but in East Pakistani a Bengali nationalist party, *Awami League* under Sheikh Mujeebur Rahman six-point election manifesto won with a landslide majority. The tug of war between Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Sheikh Mujeebur Rahman over forming the new government led to a civil war in East Pakistan that ultimately resulted into the dismemberment of Pakistan and its fathering Two Nation Theory. The majority leader of West Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto swayed the reins of the remaining Pakistan [what Bizenjo called it Bhutto's Pakistan as the Quaid-i-Azam Pakistan collapsed] on 20th December, 1972.

In the first popular election, the NAP won majority seats in the provincial legislatures of Balochistan and North West Frontier Province-NWFP (now KPK) but the new Machiavellian ruler, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was utilizing delaying tactics to keep away the left-oriented NAP from forming provincial governments in Balochistan and NWFP. The both federating units of NWFP and Balochistan were in the geo-strategic considerations of the Cold War superpowers due to their proximity with the Afghanistan and later propinquity with Iran and Persian Gulf. The Shah of Iran was acting as the watchdog of the US Cold War interests in the region, keeping an envious eye on the strategic coast of Balochistan in the northwestern Indian Ocean. The

²⁵³ Tahir Amin, p, 95.

victory of a nationalist party with anti-imperialist credential was unnerving the regional politics and Bhutto was fully aware of the tentative situation. Americans were also desirous of setting up military bases in Balochistan for spying on the Soviet Union and in the event of emergency, for intervening in Gulf region and Middle East and blocking the ballooning Soviet influence from flowing southward.²⁵⁴

But the drum beater of the popular democracy had to yield before the political pressure of the leftist NAP and at last on 6th March, 1972 a half-hearted accord was signed between President Z.A. Bhutto and NAP in which it was agreed that in Balochistan and NWFP, the majority parties would be entitled to form provincial regimes and the central government would be bound to consult the provincial governments before taking any decision concerning NAP-ruled provinces. In both provinces, the NAP negotiated political alliance with *Jamait Ulema-e-Islam (JUI)* and formed governments. In Balochistan, top political offices were bestowed to the troika of Baloch politics. Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo sworn-in as the Governor of Balochistan and Sardar Attaullah became the first elected Chief Minister of the newly established province of Balochistan on 1st May, 1972. The leftist parties throughout the country were jubilant over the NAP's entry into the corridors of powers. The Shah of Iran severely apprehended that the progressive Baloch nationalist party holding the reins of power just beyond Iranian border would inspire the Iranian Baloch of Seistan-Balochistan province.

The Baloch nationalists embarked on an across the board reform program in the province. On behalf of the NAP, Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri moved the first resolution in the provincial legislature to abolish the Sardari System in the province which was passed by two-third majority. The resolution was sent to the central government as the Sardari System was in the central domain since the British days but Z.A Bhutto turned a blind eye towards the provincial resolution. But After dismissing their government he announced to put an end to *Sardari System*. The Baloch nationalists established the first tertiary education institution, the University

²⁵⁴ Bizenjo, p.160.

of Balochistan, Bolan Medical College, Balochistan Secondary and Intermediate Board and Balochistan High Court within nine months of their provincial rule. During the whole year of 1972, the working relation between the nationalist-dominated provincial government and central government deteriorated to the lowest ebb as Z. A Bhutto did not accept the NAP whole-heartedly. Throughout 1972, some misfortune mishaps and miscalculated aspirations lifted the mercury between Baloch nationalists and the central regime;

- Baloch nationalists were alleged to harboring miscreants and working on their long-aspired agenda of Greater Balochistan as estranged and betrayed NAP leader, Nawab Akbar Bugti was coughing up hype against provincial administration,
- issue of non-Balochistani employees who were transferred from Balochistan to their parent provinces,
- in the incident of Pat Feeder some rouge elements of the Marri tribe attacked landlords from Punjab in which some of them were killed,
- the much-trumpeted London Plan reported in media that Baloch and Pashtun leadership of NAP was taking politico-military assistance from Sheik Mujib to dismember Pakistan as in September, 1972 Wali Khan, Sardar Attaullah Mengal and Sheik Mujeebur Rahman were in London coincidentally. In September 1972, then Information Minister Maulana Kausar Niazi broke the spicy story that NAP ringleaders Wali Khan and Sardar Attaullah Mengal met with Bangladeshi Premier Mujeeb-ur-Rahman to hatch a scheme to further dismember Pakistan,²⁵⁵
- establishment of Balochistan *Dehi* (rural) police force that was alleged to be the tribal *Lashkar* of C.M Mengal,
- the recovery of Soviet-made arms in January 1973 from the Iraqi embassy in Islamabad defamed the Baloch nationalist government as it was alleged that these Soviet arms were to be used for the liberation of Balochistan,
- the Soviet threat still looming over the province further created a yawning trust deficit,

²⁵⁵ Shaikh Aziz, "A leaf from history: the London Plan", *Dawn Inpapermagazine*, 28 October, 2012.

- the Pakistani province of Balochistan shares a long border with the Iranian Balochistan where Sunni-majority Baloch population was at loggerhead with the Shah of Iran,
- being a Machiavellian Realist, Z.A Bhutto wanted to strengthen his party in Balochistan. He was fully aware of the tribal set-up and the powers of the Sardars in the province,
- and in January 1973, the Lasbela episode was the last nail in the coffin of the interprovincial harmony that ended the saga of central-provincial tensed working relationship. The tribal skirmish between the Mengal and Jamote tribes in Lasbella (former princely state) over the arrest of Mir Jam Yusuf, son of Jam Ghulam Qadir was defused by the intervention of Pakistan Army.

These misfortune events and ground realities dented the credential of the Baloch nationalists which were used as pretexts to dissolve their first elected government in the province within 9 months, on 12 February 1973. The Baloch nationalists blamed Z.A Bhutto for covertly engineering and spicing all these events to install his party government in Balochistan that did not win a single seat in the province in 1970 elections. He candidly used the political differences among the Baloch tribes to serve his vested political interests. He played off Mengals and Marris against the Bugtis and then Bugtis against the others.²⁵⁶ The NAP was banned as anti-state party and Baloch nationalists, Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, Sardar Attaullah Mengal and Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri were arrested along with other leadership of NAP in notorious Hyderabad Conspiracy Case. After imposing central rule in the province, a political ally of Z.A Bhutto, Nawab Akbar Bugti was appointed as Governor of Balochistan to whom Baloch leadership had established political differences while the arch-rival of the deposed Attaullah Mengal, Jam Ghulam Qadir sworn-in as new provincial executive without earning a vote of confidence in the provincial assembly. Nawab Bugti blatantly conspired with Bhutto against the NAP government, in different political forums he accepted that he himself had co-conspired with NAP allies to

²⁵⁶ Lawrence Ziring, *Pakistan: the Enigma of Political Development*, (London: Wm Dawson & Sons 1980), p.164.

obtain foreign help (arms) for the independence of Balochistan.²⁵⁷ The appointment of Jam Ghuam Qadir without a vote of confidence was stark violation of the Article 131 of the Interim Constitution.²⁵⁸

It was the eventual result of the one of the major political blunder of Z.A Bhutto for the reason Jam Qadir was installed as Chief Minister with the support of just seven members in the 20-member provincial assembly whereas those in opposition were thirteen.²⁵⁹ This heralded the beginning of another insurrection and counter-insurrection in Balochistan. The third military operation against the Baloch insurgents (Marri-Mengal tribes) began with the help of Shah of Iran. Selig S. Harrison who has carried out a deep scientific study of Baloch nationalism observed that Bhutto branded the Baloch nationalists as traitor who in collusion with the Soviet Union and its proxies in Middle East, were pursuing sinister design to dismember both Pakistan and Iran.²⁶⁰ The unexpected arrival of Sardar Daoud Khan again in the corridors of powers acted as catalyst in the strained situation that further apprehended Z.A Bhutto and Shah of Iran because he was the champion of the Pakhunistan and Azad Balochistan while he was serving as premier (1953-1963) of Afghanistan.

“Both, the Shah of Iran and Bhutto were unnerved over Sardar Daoud’s covert and overt support to the Baloch nationalists in Pakistan as they feared Daoud being the chief protagonist of Pakhunistan and Azad Balochistan might be facilitating the Soviet imperialist policies towards the Arabian Sea and Persian Gulf. The Baloch land occupy more than 900 miles (from Bandar Abbas to Karachi) of the Arabian Sea coastline and the Soviet control of the Baloch coast would radically alter the military balance in the region that would make it difficult if not impossible for the US to defence the Strait of Hormuz.”²⁶¹

²⁵⁷ Janmahammad, pp.301-302.

²⁵⁸ Sardar Muhammad Ishaq Khan, *The Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan*, (Lahore: Taj Company, 1973) p.316.

²⁵⁹ Mansoor Akbar Kundi, “Insurgency Factors in Balochistan”, *Central Asian Journal*, No.64, 2009.

²⁶⁰ Selig S. Harrison, p.35.

²⁶¹ Henry Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, (London: Wiedenfeld and Nicolson, 1982), p.667, also see Mir Bezinjo *In Search of Solutions*, p.205, Selig S. Harrison, “Baloch Nationalism and Superpower Rivalry”, op., cit, pp.152-53.

These all unfolding, whether deliberated or unintentional political episodes, laid down the foundations of the Baloch ethno-nationalism that resulted into the third Baloch armed uprising from the dormant riddles of the second Baloch revolt and a sophisticated armed struggle for lost provincial autonomy instigated from the aflame Marri-Mengal tribes. The central government justified its unconstitutional act by issuing a White Paper on Balochistan in 1974 which stated that the central government had decided to rein in restive tribal chiefs who want to keep their tribes isolated, backward and free from the impacts of industries, schools, hospitals and modern communications and their resistance show their intentions to maintain lost status quo.²⁶² The first skirmish between the Marri tribe armed men and the Pakistan Army occurred on 8th May, 1973 when the armed men attacked on a patrolling party of Dir Scouts at Tandoori on Sibi Harnai Railway Line, killing and handicapping dozens. After that the *Mengal Laskhar* approached to salvage and intensify the Marri-instigated insurgency and joined the ranks of Marri tribal warriors against the Army. The rebellious organization of Sher Muhammad Marri, the Balochistan People's Liberation Front (BPLF) was revived under the leadership of Mir Hazar Khan Bijarai Marri, a trusted comrade of imprisoned Sher Muhammad Marri and Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri. The BPLF guerillas drew their strength from four major tribes, the Marris, the Mengals, the Muhammad Hasnis and the Bizenjos.²⁶³

The army led by General Tikka Khan pursued a blockade of the Marri areas in retaliation which set off alarm bells among the tribes. The saga of skirmishes, ambushes, aerial bombings, destroying the villages and standing crops continued unabated throughout the following years of 1974, 1975, 1977 till early 1977 when the Bhutto regime was dismissed by Zia-ul-Haq in a bloodless coup who announced general amnesty and closed the so-called Hyderabad Conspiracy Case. As stated by Selig S. Harrison, the central government deployed four divisions of the army (80,000) against some 55,000 Baloch tribal guerrillas (11,500 of them were organized

²⁶² Government of Pakistan, *White Paper on Balochistan*, Rawalpindi, October, 20 1974, pp.30-38.

²⁶³ Tahir Amin, p.152.

combatants) at various conflict theaters during the four-year sedition.²⁶⁴ In the course of conflict, the Shah of Iran provided military Cobra gunship helicopters as well as money to the Bhutto regime to quell the Baloch insurgency. Soon after dismissing the nationalist government in Balochistan, Bhutto paid an urgent state visit to Iran where he announced that Shah of Iran had pledged to provide US\$ 200 million financial aid to combat the tribal terrorists in Balochistan.²⁶⁵ The Shah supplied 30 US Cobra Helicopters with Iranian pilots who pounded the guerrilla dens in Marri-Bugti battle zone.²⁶⁶ Shah was also suspicious that its arch-enemy, the Baathist regime in Iraq was instigating the restive Baloch in Iranian Balochistan against the Iranian State. Juma Khan hailing from Makran undertook extensive tour in the Gulf States for the purpose of collecting the wherewithal to finance the Baloch movement from where he went to Egypt to get help from pro-Soviet President Gamal Abdel Nasser for the Greater Balochistan.

In 1969, Juma Baloch moved to Baghdad, where he was made use of against Iran and started a program from Baghdad Radio called "Voice of Balochistan".²⁶⁷ On the other hand the Baloch armed men were enjoying the patronage of Sardar Daoud regime in Afghanistan. According to one estimate, the Afghan government spent US\$ 875,000 per year for the Baloch and Pashtun guerrillas to support their activities.²⁶⁸ Pashtun leader of NAP, Ajmal Khattak was designated the NAP ambassador to Afghanistan where he channel Afghan diplomatic and material support to the rebels.²⁶⁹ In the succeeding years the Army speeded up operation against the *Phararis* that overwhelmingly diluted the strength of the Baloch fighters. In "Operation Chamalang" Pakistani Air Force was employed for shocking actions in which helicopters were also used, some flown by Iranian pilots. This was the bloodiest encounter that broke the back of the guerrillas.²⁷⁰ In such unfavorable situation, the

²⁶⁴ Selig S. Harrison, p.97, also see Selig Harrison, "Baluch Nationalism and Superpower Rivalry", *International Security*, Vol., No. 3, (Winter, 1980-1981), p.153.

²⁶⁵ Selig S. Harrison, p.36.

²⁶⁶ Foreign Policy Center, p.29.

²⁶⁷ A.B Awan, p.295.

²⁶⁸ Tahir Amin, p.156.

²⁶⁹ Paul Titus and Nina Swindler, p.62.

²⁷⁰ Sayed Iqbal Ahmed, pp.184-85.

guerrilla commander, Mir Hazar Khan Marri by and large revamped his insurrectionary strategy. With his combatant fighters, he migrated beyond the Durand Line where he was facilitated by the Daoud regime and they established several sanctuaries and refugees camps along with Balochistan border. Approximately 2700 Baloch guerrillas established their sanctuaries on the Afghan territory with the covert or overt support of Afghan government and launched guerrilla operations.²⁷¹ Throughout the war, the organizational structure of the *Phararis* was fragile and breakable, due to the lack of chain of command among the Baloch insurgents, every self-proclaimed commander was operating under his own group of guerrilla expect the Marris. Due to lack of reliable knowledge, little is known about the damages of this war but both sides inflicted heavy casualties on each other due to the intense fighting in the terrains. Estimated casualties during this little-known war ran as high as 3,300 Pakistani armed forces and 5,300 Baloch guerilla fighters killed but not to include hundreds of non-combatants killed in the crossfire.²⁷²

When Daoud recaptured power in Kabul, he pursued discriminately policies against the Islamist in the country who fled Pakistan where they were harbored by the Bhutto regime to use them as a bargaining chip against the Daoud's anti-Pakistan provocations. To counter Afghanistan's interference the Bhutto regime began to train and sponsor the 5000 Islamic guerrilla at secret camps in Pakistan.²⁷³ When the tension between Bhutto and Kabul reached to maximum level, Shah of Iran intervened and mediated through shuttle diplomacy that brought the conflicting leaders on the talking table. Daoud visited Tehran in 1975 where Shah of Iran pledged to provide US\$ 3 billion economic aid to Kabul. In 1976, Prime Minister Z.A Bhutto visited Kabul while Daoud reciprocated by a return visit to Islamabad.²⁷⁴ But despite of resetting ties between Islamabad and Kabul, Daoud continued his stealthy support to the Baloch fighters in the refugee camps throughout his rule over Kabul.

²⁷¹ Selig S. Harrison, p.84.

²⁷² Selig S. Harrison, "Baluch Nationalism and Superpower Rivalry", *International Security*, Vol.5, No.3, (Winter, 1980-1981), p.154.

²⁷³ Lawrence Lifschultz, "Afghanistan: The Not-so-new Rebellion" *Far Eastern Economic Review*, January 30, 1981.

²⁷⁴ Sayed Iqbal, p.215.

Sardar Daoud regime in Kabul provided assistance to the Baloch until he was overthrown and killed by a pro-Soviet communist coup d'état in 1978 due to his "Bitaraifi" foreign policy.²⁷⁵ The third Baloch guerrilla movement gained local, regional as well as international attention and luring the Baloch diaspora especially in Middle East as the Baloch economic migrants in the Gulf Sheikdoms were funding the Baloch guerrillas. At the local level, the best organized sprightly BSO was engaged in mass mobilization by creating political awareness among the pro-Communist youth in educational institutions utilizing propaganda tactics. It will not be wrong to say that BSO served as link between jails, mountains and the national political mainstream.²⁷⁶ The guerrilla war waged by the *Phararis* also enticed the leftist across the country. The leftist intelligentsia not only provided intellectual support but also material support by participating in the guerrilla skirmishes and ambushes. A group of young socialists from respected families of Punjab formed a Communist cell in London, know as London Group through which they established contacts with the Marxist-Leninist Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri and later on they took part in the asymmetrical warfare with the Baloch insurgents.

"A London-educated quintet of non-Baloch Punjabi elite left their luxurious life, adopted Balochi names, learned the Balochi language and terrains, faced hunger and joined Baloch guerrilla war against the Pakistani Army in the Marri hills. Founder of Sungi Foundation, Asad Rehman, his brother Rashid Rehman, high up columnist Najam Sethi, seasoned writer Ahmed Rashid, and Dilip Das were the members of the quintette "London Group."²⁷⁷

While insurgency and counterinsurgency pushed Balochistan in deep water, a united opposition, Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) was engaged in a political war with civilian totalitarian, Z.A Bhutto. The fraudulent elections of 1977 caused enormous upheaval in the country that flooded Z.A Bhutto's government on 5th July, 1977 when the Army entered in the corridors of power. The Chief Martial Law Administer, General Zia-ul-Haq pursued a pacific policy towards anti-Bhutto opposition and

²⁷⁵ Janmahammad, *Essays on Baloch National Struggle in Pakistan*, p.376.

²⁷⁶ Selig S. Harrison, "Baloch Nationalism and Superpower Rivalry", p.160, see also Bizenjo Autobiography, p.138.

²⁷⁷ Malik Siraj Akbar, "Revisiting the Che Guevara-like Days of Baloch Resistance Moment With Asad Rehman, October 19, 2009, available at www.gmcmissing.wordpress.com

disbanded the Hyderabad Tribunal, and released all political prisoners including the Baloch nationalists who were the victims of political vendetta. The armed forces were withdrawn and peace was restored after four years of consecutive agitation and insecurity. Zia adopted a “velvet glove” policy towards Baloch nationalists and refused to be baited in the war of words with them even though they continued venomous rhetoric towards his military regime that gradually faded the insurgency into history.²⁷⁸

The Baloch nationalists fought this war against the central government in the parameters of the ethno-nationalism for maximum provincial autonomy since the underlying causes of this revolt were politico-economic. They took part in the parliamentary politics, contested the general elections, formed government and took oath under the Constitution of Pakistan but they were denied their democratic right to rule their province, the unconstitutional dismissal of their constitutional provincial rule by the master of the realpolitik, Z.A Bhutto, caused relentless resentment among their supporters who joined the armed struggle maximum national autonomy. When the Baloch started their insurgency, they were not fighting for independence but rather for provincial autonomy within a radically reformed constitutional framework in Pakistan.²⁷⁹ Chief of Marri tribe, Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri expressed their dilemma in an interview;

“Mr. Bhutto, through the use of army, wants to crush our democratic struggle by isolating us from the rest of the national democratic struggle of the country. He knows the politics in Balochistan is still tribal. It is very easy to provoke the Baluch [Baloch] tribes. When you bring the army, they know how to resist. The breakup of Pakistan is as harmful for the Baluchis [Balochs] as it is for Pakistan. This country is a nucleus for the Baluches [Balochs] and it is in the interests of the Baluchs [Balochs] to preserve it and to fight for their rights within the country.”²⁸⁰

²⁷⁸ Justin S. Dunne, “Crisis in Baluchistan: A Historical Analysis of the Baloch Nationalist Movement in Pakistan” p.41.

²⁷⁹ Taj Muhammad Bressege, p.336.

²⁸⁰ Tahir Amin, p.151.

Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, whom A.B Awan considers as the only experienced politician in the Baloch troika, expressing his view point in his memories, inked in his autobiography states;

“A meeting of the detained Baloch troika in the NAP was held in the jail [Hyderabad Conspiracy Case] to decide the future course of action. Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri and Sardar Attaullah Mengal were of the opinion that the blood and sweat will squander in the futile exercise of seeking reform Pakistan should be saved for the noble cause of the liberation of Balochistan. But I have reached to a conclusion that we are situated in a region where global interests and designs of major world powers compete and collide. South Asia, particularly Pakistan is a fertile land for plots and intrigues hatched by the US imperialism to destabilize the Soviet Union and China. It will be naïve to think that western imperialists will quietly watch the disintegration of Pakistan and allow Balochistan to break free as Balochistan constitute 48 [44] per cent of Pakistan’s territory and 98 [70] per cent of its sea coast. We should unite and fight for the economic rights of different nationalities within the framework of Pakistan on the basis of 1940 Lahore Resolution. But I agree with them that no one can or will tolerate a life of slavery for all times.”²⁸¹

After the general amnesty, Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri boarded to London from where he went on self-exile in Afghanistan and he remained the state guest of President Najeebullah and opted out of parliamentary politics while Sardar Attaullah also went to London for medical therapy but returned soon. Mir Ghaus Bakhsh preferred to stay in Balochistan where he took part in the mainstream politics. Nawab Akbar Bugti who was later on at odds with Z.A Bhutto, resigned from governorship in early 1974 and remained confined to his hometown Dera Bugti where he promised not to speak Urdu until Zia-ul-Haq remained in power but politically he remained isolated from Baloch trio. Sardar Attaullah Mengal and Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo joined Abdul Wali Khan’s National Democratic Party which was the successor of the banned NAP, but soon differences developed with Wali Khan and Bizenjo instituted his own Pakistan National Party (PNP) whereas Sardar Mengal went to self exile in London.

²⁸¹ Mir Bizenjo, pp.211-214.

During the 1980s, despite of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and presence of former Czarist Russian forces there almost for a whole decade, the Baloch nationalism remained on respite mood which intellectually depicts that the Baloch nationalists were struggling for maximum national autonomy within the federal framework of Pakistan rather than national sovereignty despite of the fact that a latent Soviet-Afghan syndrome continued to hunt the Baloch youth club, the BSO. Nevertheless, the Baloch national movement weakened owing to the stark fissure among the Baloch nationalists. Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo was inclined towards federation politics, while guerillas and their leaders believing on the armed struggle to salvage the deprived Baloch refused to continue the fruitless parliamentary politics but remained quiescent in neighboring country of Afghanistan. While the BSO was bewildered between the two divided fictions of the Baloch nationalists but it vigorously shouldered the Baloch ethno-nationalism amid the turbulent Zia era. During Zia regime, the Baloch nationalists split into three assorted blocs over their stance to autonomy or secession however, the educated and vocal youth emerged as the vanguard and the driving force for the struggle of Baloch rights in the country.²⁸²

No doubt, during the 1970s, the Machiavellian politicking by Z.A Bhutto further aggravated the already strained relations of the Baloch nationalists and Islamabad. The armed rebellion of 1970s and the subsequent counterinsurgency by the Pakistan Army alienated the native representatives of the insurgency-vulnerable province, hurting reminiscence of which has still plagued the insurgency-trodden province. Despite of the unceasing hostilities, the leading Baloch nationalists attempted to settle down in the mainstream politics. In 1992, Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri with his tribesmen returned to Pakistan when civil war engulfed Afghanistan, but politically remained muted although his scions took part in parliamentary politics and became provincial ministers. Sardar Attaullah Mengal still considering the parliamentary politics as the suitable tool to achieve the political goals despite of the fact that his eldest son, Asadullah Mengal who was allegedly purged by Bhutto regime and never

²⁸² Rabia Aslam, "Greed, creed, and governance in conflicts: a case study of Balochistan", *Contemporary South Asia*, Vol. 19, No. 2, (June 2011), pp.194-95.

returned neither his dead body was handed over to the bereaved family. To coerce Attaullah Mengal, Z.A Bhutto's regime extra judicially abducted his son in 1975 who is still missing till date.²⁸³ Sardar Attaullah Mengal joined the Balochistan National Movement (BNM) which was established by the senior comrades of the BSO in 1988, while Bizenjo's PNP was breathing its last. The chief of Bugti tribe Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti ended his political fasting and launched his own tribal party, *Jamhoori Watan Party (JWP)*. Later on before the general elections of 1993, BNM broke into BNM-Hayee and BNM-Mengal but earlier than the general elections of 1997, Balochistan National Party (BNP) was established under the patronage of veteran politician, Sardar Attaullah Mengal that became the largest nationalist party winning razor-thin victory in the elections which formed the provincial government in 1997 under Sardar Akhtar Mengal. Materializing the last political wish of Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, the Baloch nationalist formed alliance with the Pashtun, Sindhi and Seraiki nationalists under a loose alliance, Pakistan Oppressed Nations Movement (PONM) but this unnatural political alliance could not stand long. Until late 2002 the Baloch nationalists were steadily endeavoring to eternally bed in the tumultuous political system of the federation but the vibrating change in the international politics in the aftermaths of the cataclysmic incident of 9/11 resuscitated the near-death Baloch nationalism. The far-reaching repercussions of 9/11 on the Baloch nationalism are discussed in the next chapter.

²⁸³ Sanauallah, "Balochistan: Epidemic of Enforced Disappearances", *Unrepresented Nations and People Organization*, August 30, 2012, available at www.unpo.org

CHAPTER V

RENAISSANCE OF BALOCH NATIONALISM

The vanguards of the Baloch ethno-nationalism, the senior leaders of BSO took part in the general elections of 1988 in which they defeated the old guards of Baloch nationalism. The kingpin of modern Baloch nationalism, Mir Ghaus Bakhsh was trounced by the young movement of the Balochistan National Youth Movement (BNYM). In 1988 elections, the energetic leader of BNYM, Manzoor Gichki outclassed the veteran nationalist Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo.²⁸⁴ The young middle-class leaders of the Balochistan National Movement (BNYM became BNM after the elections of 1988), Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch, Akram Dashti, Kachkol Ali Advocate, Ayub Buledi, Aslam Buledi, etc. controlling the provincial ministries in the coalition government of Balochistan National Alliance (1989-1990) led by assassinated chief of Bugti tribe, Nawab Akbar Bugti and the provincial government led by Nawab Zulfiqar Magsi (1993-1996) kicked off an impressive development program in Balochistan especially in the field of education. They created massive political awareness among the middle-class masses and it was the beginning of renaissance in “Baloch National Movement”, as the people were being educated about their history, natural resources and their marginalization and economic exploitation by the Punjabi-dominated central government. The nationalist-oriented provincial governments of Nawab Akbar Bugti, Nawab Zulfiqar Ali Magsi and Sardar Akhtar Mengal adopted comprehensive reform agendas to develop the neglected and backward areas of Balochistan which ultimately led to reformation and revitalization of the Baloch nationalism. Through political awareness and intellectual writings the deprived Baloch people and their leaders started a simmering movement for their decades-long denied politico-economic rights which profoundly intensified with transformation of the global politics and the arrival of international powers, immediately after mysterious 9/11 attacks on the U.S. Empire State (New York).

²⁸⁴ Profile of district Kech, *South Asia Partnership-Pakistan*, December 2009, p.20, available at www.urban.unhabitat.org.pk

In the contemporary international politics, the pursuit of energy security has topped the foreign policy considerations of the powerful and energy-dependent nation-states. Pakistan sandwiched among energy-hungry resource-poor East Asia, Southeast Asia, and energy-rich Middle East and Central Asia, has gained a considerable position in the energy strategies of all these Asian nations due to its geographically important Balochistan province. But this energy based geopolitics has overpoweringly influenced the decades-long alienated Baloch and their quest for politico-economic autonomy and most probably political sovereignty. Baloch nationalist movement remained unvoiced during the whole decade of 1990 but it got nascent wings in 2002 when the then military regime of Musharraf self-proclaimed mega projects bypassing the provincial government, awarded rigging licenses to the foreign multi-national corporations (MNCs) for exploration of copper and gold in Saindak and Reko Deq areas of mineral-rich district Chagi. He also bestowed construction of commercial deep-sea port in the strategic district of Gwadar to China. Its volcanic emergence in 2005 arrested not only the national attention but also regional and global interests too.

5.1: Impacts of 9/11 on Baloch Nationalism

Following the troubled but manageable peace lasting for two and half decades (1977-2002), volcanic resurgence of Baloch nationalism from the shadow of budding superpower rivalry in the regional politics has arrested the attentions of many local, regional and international forces. The geopolitical and security situations of Balochistan began deteriorating since the heartrending 9/11 terrorist attacks on the sole superpower of the world. The aftershocks of 9/11 were felt in every nock and corner of the world but the shockwaves were intensely felt in Pakistan due to its immediate proximity to the epicenter of the alleged perpetrators of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. It introduced radical changes in the contemporary international politics and paradigm shift in the foreign policies of almost all states over night. In vengeance, the US with its western allies attacked the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, the hotbed of Al-Qaeda and installed a pro-US regime in Kabul on 22 December 2001. The catastrophic 9/11 and subsequent War on Terror brought three-headed devil of terrorism, religious extremism and separatism in this region. Pakistan became the

frontline state in the US-led War against Terrorism while its resource-rich and strategically important province Balochistan became the frontline territory as the US leased military bases for launching military operations in Afghanistan. The war in Afghanistan involved the USA in the Balochistan pro-independence movement because of its military reliance on the Baloch territory.²⁸⁵ Balochistan being one of the epicenters of previous superpower rivalries could not remain immune to the far-reaching shifts in the dynamic global affairs. In November 2001, it was reported in the national and international media that Pakistan had handed over three important air bases in Balochistan to the US administration to support the “Operation Enduring Freedom” campaign in neighboring Taliban-ruled Afghanistan. The bases included an airfield in Dalbandin, Shamsi and Pasni. Dalbandin airstrip was built in 1935 which was also used during the Second World War.

“The airfield at Dalbandin is one of the bases used by the US and allied forces in their military campaign against Taliban regime which was operationally made alert during the WWII for a possible Russian invasion through Iran. As of early 2002, around a dozen of US military helicopters were parked in Pasni and until 2006, the US U-2 reconnaissance have been sighted on the tarmac. Pasni is one of the oldest air ports in the region which was used by the Allied forces in the WWII. Pakistan Navy provided landing facilities to the US-led ships at Pasni. The Coalition Naval Operations at Pasni were the largest amphibious operation since the US Marine had conducted in Korean War.”²⁸⁶

The Shamsi airbase in district Washuk located 300km south of Quetta remained as a launching pad for the US-Technological predator drone warfare after the fall of Taliban regime in Afghanistan. The airbase had been under the US control for a decade since October, 2001 that have been used in a covert Central Investigation Agency (CIA) drone campaign against Al-Qaeda and Taliban but it was also said that the US had used the Shamsi base for surveillance on neighboring Iran.²⁸⁷ The Shamsi airbase was vacated from the US Marines and drone facilities after the US-led forces

²⁸⁵ Jason Hegg, p.21.

²⁸⁶ Dalbandin, Pakistan, Pasni, Pakistan, available at <http://www.globalsecurity.org> accessed on 29 November, 2012, also see *World News Daily*, Information Clearing House. www.informationclearinghouse.info accessed on 29 November, 2012.

²⁸⁷ ‘Decade-long stay: Tensions nosedive as US vacates Shamsi airbase’ *The Express Tribune*, December 11, 2011.

in Afghanistan attacked bordering Pakistani Salala check posts, killing 24 Pakistani soldiers in November, 2011. The Pakistani Government's spokesperson also claimed that the government will gradually vacates Jacobabad and Pasni airbases from the Americans after ordering to leave the Shamsi airbase.²⁸⁸

Immediately, after the establishment of the US strong foothold, the Chinese government started the construction of a warm-water deep seaport at Gwadar in Balochistan on 22 March, 2002 to promote its indispensable geopolitical and geo-economic interests and assert its provocative regional diplomacy increasingly significant then ever-before. The arrival of the sole superpower, the U.S. in November, 2001 in Afghanistan at China's doorsteps to chain China in the nascent New Great Game pushed Beijing towards Gwadar port, one of the strategic checkpoints of the economically-cum-militarily important Indian Ocean.²⁸⁹ The entrance of two heavyweights in a region once psychological theatre of old superpower rivalry during the Great Game (1813-1907) heralded the instigation the much-debated New Great Game. The fast-growing economic superpower China has invested heavily in the Gwadar warm-water deep seaport in Balochistan which gives China marine accesses to the Arabian Sea and Persian Gulf to ensure its energy security while the Balochs and Pakistanis fit as pawns in the New Great Game being played out by the two rival superpowers.²⁹⁰ In the growing demand for energy security, Balochistan was also mapped out as a transit route for the future cross-border gas pipeline projects between resources-rich and resource-poor regions. Since then, an unending wave of bomb blasts and rocket attacks commenced in the provincial capital and chronologically restive tribal areas. A nascent insurgent organization, the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) surfaced in media which claimed the responsibility of the bomb blasts and rocket fires, calling it a war of liberation against the Pakistani state. It is attention-grabbing to note that since 2000, a new militant group, calling itself "Baloch Liberation Army" (BLA) has been claiming

²⁸⁸ 'Jacobabad, Pasni airbases also to be vacated: Firdous' *Pakistan Today*, 30 November, 2011.

²⁸⁹ Musarrat Jabeen, "Post 9/11 Balochistan in Peace-Conflict Spectrum and International Dimensions", *Journal of Political Studies*, Vol. No. 36, Issue XVII, (Summer 2010), p.39.

²⁹⁰ Assed Baig, "The New Colony: Balochistan", *Huff Post World*, 2 February, 2012.

the responsibilities of series of rocket-firing and bomb blasts on government gas installations in Kohlu and Quetta.²⁹¹ On May 2004, BLA rebel forces killed three Chinese engineers working on the Gwadar port projects, in the October same year, two Chinese engineers were kidnapped, one of whom was killed in a botched rescue operation.²⁹² The military regime of General Musharraf initiated some controversial mega projects for uplifting the backwardness of the province with an intention to establish three military cantonments in Gwadar, Dera Bugti and Kohlu that further strengthened the apprehensions of the deeply-divided nationalists and provided them an opportunity to manipulate the situation in their favor. In a nutshell the national and regional events leading to the fourth Baloch insurgency and renaissance of Baloch nationalism were;

- deep-sense of deprivation and economic exploitation among Balochs,
- the US-led War on Terror,
- establishment of US military bases in Balochistan,
- bedding in of a pro-Northern Alliance regime in Afghanistan,
- mineral exploration in resource-rich districts of Balochistan,
- the Chinese construction of Gwadar deep seaport,
- Balochistan's territorial significance in future's regional gas pipeline politics,
- kicking off several controversial mega projects,
- proposal for the establishment of three military cantonments,
- widespread threat of marginalization among Baloch people,
- excluding the Baloch nationalists in the corridors of power,
- alleged presence of *Taliban Shura*, the highest decision-making body of Taliban in Quetta,
- suspected presence of Jundollah (Peoples Resistance Movement of Iran) in Balochistan which is a Sunni terrorist organization fighting for the religio-ethnic rights of Baloch in Shia-dominated Iran which is alleging being backed by the US and other European States.

²⁹¹ Surat Khan Marri, "Baloch Liberation Movement, Romanticism, Fact or Fiction", *Daily Balochistan Express Quetta*, May 18, 2001.

²⁹² Amardeep Athwal, "China-India Relations: Contemporary Dynamics", *Contemporary South Asia*, Vol., 3, Series 3, (2008), p.68.

Thus the ethnic conflict resurfaced in the province with the ambition of national autonomy or ultimately possible sovereignty that was dreamed by the British-era Baloch nationalists. The initial causes of the irrepressible conflict were the same in the 1970s but this time with addition of tribal-cum-proletarian nationalist's resistance to the federally and foreign funded mega projects in the province in which the Baloch nationalists feared marginalization, exploitation and demographic alternation against their majority population. Ethnic disparity, non-Baloch economic migrants, economic exploitation and apparent internal colonization of the province were the driving force to arrest the attention of the local majority population.

5.2: Fourth Baloch Insurgency and Demand for National Sovereignty

Since 2002, the presence of regional and extra-regional powers with their hidden agendas predicted a volatile situation in the region as the national and regional developments were attracting the dispersed Baloch nationalists on a single point agenda to oppose the dictator-initiated disputed mega projects that locked the Baloch nationalists and leader of military junta, General Pervez Musharraf at loggerheads over the ongoing contentious development projects. With the steady mounting of apprehensions between the Baloch nationalists and General Musharraf for public rallying, a misfortunate incident occurred in the Dera Bugti, the stronghold of armed Bugti tribe. In January 2005, a controversy over the rape of a lady doctor by a Pakistani military officer ignited the aged chief of Bugti tribe, Nawab Akbar Bugti who demanded that the alleged culprit should be brought to justice that ultimately led to a minor skirmish between the armed forces and already armed men of Bugti tribe. Bugti tribesmen, buoyed up by their octogenarian chief, Nawab Akbar Bugti, and the clandestine BLA, attacked the country's largest Sui gas plant after the local police alleged an army captain of raping a lady doctor working in Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL) hospital in Sui, Dera Bugti. But soon the conflict was politically managed before it could blow to a full-fledged conflict.²⁹³ While reacting on the event of Dera Bugti, then President General Pervez Musharraf warned the budding Baloch nationalists, "do not push us, it is not the 1970s when you [armed tribes] can hit and

²⁹³ Ahmed Rashid, "Explosive mix in Pakistan's gas province", *BBC*, 4 February, 2005.

run and hide in the mountains [*Phararis* favorite fighting dens]. This time you will not even know what hit you.²⁹⁴

The looming insurgency in the restive province further intensified after an all-out military operation was launched on 16 December 2005 when Marri insurgents fired rockets on a public gathering in Kohlu that was being addressed by General Pervez Musharraf. The militants stroke rockets at General Musharraf and also attempted to down a helicopter carrying the Inspector General of Frontier Corp (FC), a paramilitary force.²⁹⁵ This counterinsurgency military operation against the insurgents united the trio of traditional warring tribes of Bugti, Marri and Mengal against the armed forces. President Musharraf was quoted in national media that the trio dissident tribal chiefs Khair Bakhsh Marri, Akbar Bugti and Attaullah Mengal command secretive militias of 9,000, 7,000 and 10,000 respectively.²⁹⁶ The insurgency soon attracted Baloch educated youth in the urban areas of the province. The strongest faction of the BSO vocally supported the BLA which was being led by Balach Marri, the youngest son of Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri. For the first time the present conflict has united the all educated nationalists with the tribesmen.²⁹⁷ The united Baloch nationalists fueled the insurgency through every nook and corner of the province till the coast of Gwadar where the Chinese were constructing the commercial port. The elderly Bugti moved to the mountains along with Balach Marri for full-fledged guerrilla warfare where he was assassinated in a military operation on 26 August, 2006 in mysterious circumstances that further intensified the asymmetrical warfare throughout the Balochistan.

The killing of aged baron of Bugti tribe by Pakistani army provided a rallying point to the Baloch nationalist movement for the future Baloch generations and plunged Balochistan into fighting crisis. The young Baloch scholar, Malik Siraj Akbar reckoned the murder of aged Bugti as the 9/11 of Pakistan. Killing of former Chief

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ News Analysis: Musharraf's Kohlu visit not a wise move, *Daily Times*, December 20, 2005.

²⁹⁶ B. Rahman, "Baloch Shadow Over Wen Jiabao's Visit", *Observer Research Foundation*, 18 April, 2005.

²⁹⁷ Ahmed Rashid, "Explosive mix in Pakistan's gas province" *op.cit.*

Minister, Nawab Akbar Bugti by Musharraf's regime resulted to be the 9/11 of Pakistan with the restless province.²⁹⁸ The death of Nawab Bugti is expected to be turn out to be a martyred champion for Baloch nationalism rather than reactionary tribal man as Islamabad wish to expose him. Bugti's end will lead to worsen regional instability and the tit-for-tat proxy war between Pakistan and Indo-Afghan nexus will ratchet up.²⁹⁹ Reacting to Musharraf warning, veteran Baloch nationalist Akbar Bugti once said, "they [army] might kill me, but I am sure our coming generations will continue my mission for the achievement of Baloch rights."³⁰⁰

Bugti's mysterious death in a hiding cave exacerbated the already zigzag relationship between Baloch nationalists and Pakistani establishment. At Nawab Bugti's funeral in Quetta, hundreds reactionary youth tore down portraits of Pakistan's founder and Pakistan's flag was burn. In September, 2006 a *Jirga* of Baloch tribes and nationalist politicians was held by Agha Suleiman Daoud (grandson of Mir Ahmed Yar Khan, last Khan of Kalat) for the first time in 130 years that decided for revisiting of Balochistan accession to Pakistan in the International Court of Justice (ICJ). Baloch tribal chiefs announced to appeal the ICJ against the stark violation of their territorial integrity, denial of the rights to the ownership of their natural resources and military operation in the province.³⁰¹ It also triggered a provocative wave of target killing of the non-Baloch settlers especially those hailing for Punjab. The intensity of violence worsened with the death of Balach Marri in November, 2007 who was operational leader of the BLA. Hundreds of businessmen, laborers, and teachers, doctors and students mostly from Punjab were killed in the alleged target killings of the Baloch insurgents. The continued target killings have compelled hundreds of settlers to leave Balochistan and more than 100,000 settlers from Punjab have migrated to the other provinces. According to *Balochistan Punjabi Ittehad*, during the last five years, about 1,500 settlers have been killed and over 150, 000 have migrated from Balochistan.³⁰²

²⁹⁸ Malik Siraj Akbar, *The Redefined Dimensions of Baloch Nationalism*, (Xlibris Corporation, 2011), p.51.

²⁹⁹ Ahmad Rashid, "Rebel killings raise stakes in Pakistan" *BBC*, September 1, 2006.

³⁰⁰ Malik Siraj Akbar, <http://www.ned.org/docs/Malik-Siraj-Akbar-PowerPoint-Presentation.pdf>

³⁰¹ Malik Siraj Akbar, "Baloch jirga agrees to appeal to ICJ", *Daily Times*, September 22, 2006.

³⁰² Saleem Shahid 'Caught in the middle: Balochistan, crying for attention' *Dawn*, December 16, 2012.

To tame the intensifying insurgency, the security forces allegedly started a “kill and dump” strategy in which hundreds of nationalist zealots were allegedly disappeared and killed by the state’s secretive agencies and their bullet riddled mutilated bodies were found dumped along the roadsides. The belligerent Baloch nationalists, Ghulam Muhammad Baloch of BNM, Lala Munir Baloch of BNM and Sher Muhammad Baloch of BRP were the first hunt of the so-called kill and dump policy.³⁰³ Over 400 political activists from different hawkish nationalist parties have been killed under custody of security agencies among the 14,385 abducted Balochs.³⁰⁴ With the upsurge of insurgent’s activities, a torrent of conspiracy theories flooded the Pakistani government officials and media. The Pakistani government blamed the foreign hands behind fomenting the Baloch nationalists as an insurgency of such magnitude could not be sustained without the foreign supports. Mostly quoted foreign elements in government and national media are India, Afghanistan and the USA who, according to the Pakistani nationalists do not want the Chinese presence in this region as their vital economic-military interests are at stake.

“Government officials accused India of being behind the instigated insurgency because Iranian Chah Bahar port that is being constructed by the Indians as a future gateway to CARs. Another conspiracy theory censure the USA for its covert support, paying guerilla US\$ 2 million per month as it is not comfortable with the presence of its emerging arch-rival, China and the USA wants to use the secular and liberal Baloch nationalists against the extremist forces in the region. The landlocked Afghanistan will be more comfortable with free Balochistan because the Baloch land is sandwiched between the warm-water commercial sea and non-coastal Afghanistan.”³⁰⁵

Initially, the government officials claimed that only few Sardars, their proxies and some disgruntled Baloch youth are creating disturbance in the province. An army spokesman concocted: it is not an insurgency, the Baloch militants are mercenaries, and there is no ideological or nationalist motivation, out of 70 tribal chiefs of the province only, three (Bugti, Marri, and Mengal) enjoy tribal support in their

³⁰³ Cyril Almedia, “Two extremes digging in their heels”, *Dawn*, July 24, 2010.

³⁰⁴ *Monthly Bolan Voice*, May 2012.

³⁰⁵ Alok Basnal, “Balochistan: Continuing Violence and its Implications”, *Strategic Analysis*, Vol.30, No.1, (Jan-March, 2006), pp.54-55.

respective districts while they have little support of the tribes in the rest of the districts.³⁰⁶

What is particularly concerning, this Fourth Insurgency comparatively differs than its predecessors of 1960s and 1970s. The unearthing of valuable minerals and natural gas, regional pipeline politics for regional energy resources and public awareness has strengthened the political opinion of the Baloch nationalists. According to Robert G. Wising, the author of *Baloch Nationalism and the Geopolitics of Energy Resources*, today's insurgency differs in certain essential dimensions from that of its 1970s precursor. Most deep-seated of these stark differences are those originating from energy resource development in Balochistan what he called it "the Asian Middle East" (embracing the parts of Central, South and Southwest Asia). Robert Wising believes that the geopolitics of energy resources exert a powerful threefold impact on the Baloch nationalists movement;

"Firstly, it lifts Baloch nationalism and Balochistan to a position much higher on the scale of federal government priorities; secondly, it arms the Baloch insurrectionists with far greater incentives than ever to reclaim control of Balochistan and with novel captivity to drive the political and economic costs to the government, and thirdly it turns Balochistan into an important corridor for energy transportation in the region that can spawn major prospects for addressing the longstanding demands of the Baloch nationalists in a constructive manner."³⁰⁷

It is due to geopolitics of the energy resources that a considerable portion of insurgent's bomb blasts and rocket-propelled grenades have been directed against the provincial energy installations. But sooner than later, strength of militant increased with mushrooming of the militant organizations with a wave of militant attacks throughout the province. Three militant groups (BRA, BFL and *Lashkar-e-Balochistan*) surfaced in the ballooning insurgency to secede Balochistan from Pakistan. Since then the insurgent attacks on government installations and paramilitary forces have been mounting.

³⁰⁶ Rober. Wising, p.32.

³⁰⁷ Robert G. Wising, 'The Baloch Nationalism and the Politics of Energy Resources', pp.vi-vii.

Table 5.1
Terrorist Attacks in Balochistan (2007-2011)

Year	No. of Attacks	Killed		Injured	
		Civilians	Security forces	Civilians	Security forces
2007	536	190	34	467	97
2008	682	197	99	549	258
2009	792	275	111	824	246
2010	737	438	110	903	214
2011	640	579	131	665	188

Source: *Conflict and Insecurity in Balochistan*, A report by Pakistan Institute of Peace Studies 2012.

In 1962, the doyen of realpolitik and the troubleshooter, Henry Kissinger (who served as US State Secretary from 1973-77) visiting Pakistan on an urgent mission of President John F. Kenedy, was asked by a local journalist for observation on the simmering insurgency in Balochistan “I would not recognize the Balochistan problem, if it hit me in the face, Kissinger replied.”³⁰⁸ But today USA came to salvage the reviving Baloch nationalism when its regional security interests were at stake. The voices of belligerent nationalists reverberate in the US Capitol Hill when the US Republican Congressman Dana Rohrabacher along with some other members tabled a resolution in the US Congress calling the US administration to fully support the Balochs seeking the right of self-determination for the independence of Balochistan. The moral support of the US Congressmen is seriously exploiting the lingering separatist grievances of the fractious nationalists. The US administration has also been raising concerns over the human rights violation in the volatile province.

5.3: Baloch Chronic Grievances

Traditionally, the insurgency-prone province is dominated by a quasi-tribal society where people straddled between *Sardars* (baron) and *Sarkar* (regime). Both the *Sardar* and *Sarkar* are collectively liable for the exploitation of the common people since the takeover of Balochistan by Pakistan. *Sardars* with the help of establishment

³⁰⁸ Marvin and Bernard Kalb, *Kissinger*, (Boston: Little, Brown, 1974), p.63.

rule the province but backwardness has engulfed the entire province because of the establishment has facilitated the exploitation of the common people through policy of negligence and stark discrimination. The central government has consistently remained in the traditional Baloch political system by strengthening the Baloch tribal lords.³⁰⁹ Even in this modern and sophisticated world, backwardness has painted a gloomy picture of Balochistan as if it is surviving in the medieval Age. According to Paul Collier, if greed can be seen as ‘economic opportunities’, grievance should mean the ‘motivations’ of a group to fight against injustices.³¹⁰ In this sense, the concept of identity (culture, religion, and ethnicity) plays an important role in the group formation and in the perception of its position in the society. Grievance can be a motivation based on sense of injustice in the way a social group is treated, often with a strong historical dimension or it can be the reaction of minority peoples to inequalities, discrimination and repression.

Baloch problem has historical, identity, political and economic grievances. In this sense we may argue that genuine grievances of Baloch people resulted in a conflict which is mainly related to a systematic economic exploitation and discrimination against Baloch. Baloch grievances are reasserting their ethno-nationalist identity thereby posing a challenge to the concept of Pakistani nationalism, which has failed to evolve during six and half decades of its existence. Baloch grievances started within the federation when the central government concentrated all powers in its hands, despite the claim of being a federal state. It is practicing authoritative federalism rather than cooperative federalism. The Baloch in this milieu feel the central government behavior totally exploitative to them. As a result a new wave of insurgency has erupted since 2002 once again, which is only different from the ones in 1948-52, 1958-60, 1962-69 and 1973-77 in the scale of the violence and the geographical spread of the insurgency. Baloch anger is rooted in exploitation of their natural resources by the federal government. They think despite its vast natural

³⁰⁹ *Conflict and Insecurity in Balochistan*, A Report by Pakistan Institute for Peace studies, Islamabad, 2012, p.17.

³¹⁰ Paul Collier, “Doing Well out of War: An Economic Perspective”, in M. Berdal and D.M. Malone ed., *Greed and Grievance-Economic Agenda in Civil Wars*, (Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000), pp.91-111.

wealth the people of Balochistan are so poor and constantly being robbed of their resources.

Geographically, the largest but demographically the smallest resourceful province of Balochistan is blessed with a wealth of hydrocarbon energy resources and minerals like gold, copper, zinc-lead, iron ore, sulphide, fluorites, chromates, barite, limestone, dolomite, coal, oil, uranium, and natural gas. It has also sea resources especially fisheries as it has a coast of 800km at the Arabian Sea of the Indian Ocean, constituting 70 per cent of Pakistan's total coast area. The most abundant natural resources are hydrocarbon resources hidden under the rocks of its land. Geographical surveys have estimated reserves of 19 trillion cubic feet of gas and 6 trillion barrels of oil. Balochistan has huge quantity of untapped resources of metallic and non-metallic minerals. Balochistan is known for its tremendous potential in mineral sector. The changing geopolitical realities and emerging shape of future warfare, which is likely to be fought over the control of natural resources but unfortunately, no crucial efforts, have been pursued to unearth the untapped minerals by the decision-makers in Islamabad. The resources politics is the geopolitical reality of today's world.

According to the latest data compiled by the Geological Survey of Pakistan, nearly 80 percent of all minerals produced in Pakistan come from Balochistan.³¹¹ According to the Mineral Industry of Pakistan, the mineral-rich district of Chagi has reserves of 12.3 Mt of copper and 650 metric tons of gold. The Tethyan Copper Co. Pvt. Ltd. of Australia which held a 75% interest that is jointly owned by the Canadian Barrick Gold Corp and Antofagasta Minerals of Chile while the Balochistan Development Authority holds the remaining 25% interest exploring the gold and copper \$100 billion Reko Diq project in Chagi. The Reko Diq Project is located in the proximity of the Saindak copper deposit which is leased to the Chinese Metallurgical Construction Corporation for 10 years, but the Reko Diq mineral resources are four times larger

³¹¹ Maqbool Ahmed, "Everything around here is mine", *Monthly Herald*, February 18, 2012.

than the Saindak deposit.³¹² It was estimated that Saindak Copper and Gold project will generate annual revenue of about \$65 million with an estimated reserves of 15,810 tons of copper, 1.64 tons of gold and 2.76 tons of silver. The Chinese Government which has obtained exploration rights of the Saindak copper and gold project receives 50% of any proceeds from the mine and the Pakistani government 48% while the Balochistan provincial government just receives a meager 2% of the wealth.³¹³ This unjust distribution of resources of the province has been the flashpoint that has fueled the nationalist's sentiments in the province.

Table 5.2

Metallic and Non-Metallic Minerals in Balochistan

Metallic Minerals	Resource-rich Areas	Non-Metallic Minerals	Resource-rich Areas
Copper	Chaghi, Koh-i-Dial, Dasht-e-Khain & Durbancha	Lime Stone and Dolomite	Quetta, Sibi, Kuzdar, Lasbela, and Loralai
Iron Ore	Chaghi, Pachinkoh, Chegendik & Chilghazi	Magnesite and Marble	Kuzdar, Chaghi, Lasbela, Q.Saifullah,
Lead & Zinc Ores	Lasbela and Kuzdar,	Coal & Sulphar	Bolan, Chaghi, Kuzdar, Chamalang
Manganese Ore	Lasbela and Kuzdar	Fluorite & Gypsum	Sibi, Kohlu, Loralai

Source: Syed Fazal-e-Haider, *Economic Development of Balochistan*, (Karachi: Sabbir-u-Din Publisher, 2004), pp.57-60.

Table 5.3

Minerals of Balochistan (2002-2003)

Mineral	Production (Tones)
Limestone	263515
Chromite	25735
Marble	46554
Barite	37692
Coal	1795029
Granite	2005
Shale	563595
Serpentine	2195
Fluorite	1215
Conglomerate	258
Pumice	1808

³¹²Chin S. Kuo, "The Mineral Industry of Pakistan" in *2009 Minerals Yearbook*, US Geological Survey, January 2011.

³¹³ C. Christine Fair, "Balochistan", *US House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Oversight and Investigation Sub-Committee*, February 8, 2012.

Agglomerate	386
Dolomite	377
Ordinary Stone	2100
Manganese	1491
Quartzite	352
Asbestos	40
Magnesite	850
Iron Ore	139
Clay	300
Total Minerals	2745636

Source: Mineral Directorate Government of Balochistan Quetta.

The most abundant natural resource, natural gas was first discovered in Sui area of Dera Bugti in 1952 by the state-owned corporation, Pakistan Petroleum limited (PPL) which was the seventh largest gas field in the world. Natural gas is the lifeline for the energy-hungry Pakistan as due to energy shortage, its economy is paying a high price. The discovery of natural gas emerged to be the major bone of contention between the Baloch nationalists and the central government as with the discovery of natural gas in 1952, it was pipelined through the mega cities of other province, ignoring the local population, including the provincial capital, Quetta where low temperature touches minus 10 to 15 centigrade in the freezing winter, had to wait until 1986 to get its share of gas. Balochistan receives a mere \$0.29 per thousand cubic feet for its gas while Sindh gets \$1.65 and Punjab receives \$2.35.³¹⁴

Table 5.4

Balochistan Gas Fields and Production (million cubic feet)

No	Gas Fields	Discovered	(mcg) per day
1	Sui fields	1952	500
2	Uch fields	1955	260
3	Peerkoh fields	1975	150
4	Loti fields	1985	50
5	Gundran fields	2002	20

Source: Govt. of Balochistan, *Balochistan Economic Report*, May 2008, p.52.

³¹⁴ C. Christine Fair.

Table 5.5
Provincial Gas Prices

Province	Rs per thousand cubic feet
Punjab	180
Sindh	126
Balochistan	22

Source: Sayed Fazal-e-Haider, Balochistan: Politics and Development.

Before the Eighteenth Constitutional Amendment, the federal government exclusively controlled the natural resources of the provinces as natural resources were in the federal list, but in the 18th Constitutional Amendment, the provinces have been bestowed 50% share over their respective natural resources while the federal government holds the remaining half shares. The statistic records show that out of the total discovered estimated reserves (53-59 trillion cubic feet) of natural gas in Pakistan, as much as 19.3 trillion cubic feet deposited in the bedrocks of Balochistan where as its total natural gas consumption is just 4.02 of the total domestic gas consumption of Pakistan.³¹⁵

“Balochistan is the riches province of Pakistan in interns of natural resources. It has huge reserves of natural gas, copper, coal, uranium, gold and untapped oil resources. Nearly 70% of Pakistan’s natural gas reserves, an estimated 19 trillion of the country’s total 28 trillion feet (tcf), are located in Balochistan and 45% of gas production takes place in the province.”³¹⁶

Pakistan’s most natural resources are to be found in Balochistan including gas, oil and minerals which are being usurped by Pakistani state, about 36-40% of Pakistan’s gas is produced in the province.³¹⁷ The province consumes on 17% of the gas it unearths while 83% is sent to run the industries and kitchens of the rest of the country. Pakistan annul gas consumption is 1 trillion cubic feet of which Balochistan provides

³¹⁵ *Pakistan Energy Year Book of 2008*, “Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources, Government of Pakistan”, Islamabad.

³¹⁶ Robert G. Wrising, *op.cit*, pp.6-7.

³¹⁷ Micheal Hughes, “U.S Enables Pakistan’s Oppression of Balochistan”, *The Huffington Post*, 5 May, 2011.

80% but it receives a 1/5 proportion of the royalty from the central government.³¹⁸ Balochistan produces more than \$3 billion of natural gas each year but according to Baloch nationalists, the Pakistan Civil-military bureaucracy pockets more than 90% of the revenues.³¹⁹ Gas reserves are also found in Kalat, Kohlu, Kharan, Lasbella and Panjgur. Balochistan supplies energy to run 30% of Pakistan's industries and annually supplies gas to Pakistan worth of \$1.4 billion (Rs.100billion) but it receives around Rs.10 billion in gas development surcharges from the central government. In 1979-80 gas supply from Balochistan saved \$275 million in foreign exchange but it received only \$1.23 million as gas royalties.³²⁰ Balochistan's natural gas sector is in a state of decline. From different geological sources, it has been proven that the natural resources of Balochistan especially natural gas are depleting due to over exploration. In 1994/95, Balochistan produced 335 billion cubic feet (bcf) and accounted for nearly 56% of Pakistan's total output. A decade later, the province produced 336 (bcf) and contributed only 25% to total national.³²¹

Balochistan conflict is of multiple factors, but the economic factor is the main and the root cause of the conflict because the province is not getting its rightful share from its own natural resources. The major economic problem of Balochistan is the control of its natural resources (gas and oil reserves, copper and gold reservoirs, marbles, graphite, chromites, coals, Gwadar deep seaport, Saindak project and Reko Deq Projects) by the federal government. Balochistan has natural resources but the natural resources are kept under direct control of the Federal Government, while on the other hand Punjab has agriculture resources, but taxing the agriculture income is the prerogative of the provincial government under the 1973 Constitution. Much-appreciated 1973 Constitution was not acknowledged by the majority elected representatives of the Balochistan province as it lacked the spirit of provincial autonomy (fiscal autonomy). There were only five Members of National Assembly

³¹⁸ Jason Hegg, p.21.

³¹⁹ Pakistan, "It's Getting Worse", *Asia News in Context*, March 2, 2012.

³²⁰ Rajshree Jetly, "Baloch ethnicity and nationalism (1971-1981): an assessment" *Asian Ethnicity*, Vol.5, No.1, (February 2004), p.12.

³²¹ Government of Balochistan, *Pakistan: Balochistan Economic Report, From Periphery to Core*, Vol. II, May 2008, p.52.

(MNAs) in the 1973 National Assembly. Out of five elected representatives, only two MNAs (Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo & Abdul Haq) signed the final draft of the Constitution while the remaining three MNAs (Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri, BSO-leader, Dr. Abdul Hayee Baloch and Irish wife of Qazi Isa, Mrs. Jenifer Musa) repudiated to sign the Constitution.³²² The Baloch nationalists including the current Chief Minister of Balochistan, Nawab Aslam Raisani have demanded for a new social contract base on the 1940's Resolution which gives full autonomy to the federating units of the federation.

Balochistan lacks socio-economic development due to politico-economic problems. There is lack of education, health and other basic facilities. There is only one medical college, one engineering university, and three public and private sector universities throughout the province. Out of 31 districts, 23 districts have just degree colleges while Washuk, Awaran, Gwadar and Sherani district have no degree colleges. Much-trumpeted deep-sea port district of Gwadar has only one inter-college which is being used for both males and females at morning and evening shifts. There is no even any degree college in overall district. There are just two degree colleges for 1.5 million population of Makran division, the only *nosardar land* (division) of the province. The National Education Census of 2005 illustrated that out of 245,682 educational institutions throughout the country, only 11,706 (4.7%) were in resource-rich province in Balochistan.³²³ There is a stark difference of education level between Balochistan and rest of the provinces.

Table 5.6
Health and Education Statistics of Balochistan

Educational Institutions and Hospitals	No
Public Sector General Universities	1
Women Universities in Public Sector	1
Information Technology University	1
Marine University (semi government)	1
Engineering Universities (semi-government)	2

³²² Taj Muhammad Bressege, p.312.

³²³ Ministry of Finance, Government of Balochistan, "White Paper 2011-2012"

Agriculture Colleges	2
Law Colleges	2
Primary School for Boys	7,566
Primary School for Girls	2,876
Middle School for Boys	583
Middle School for Girls	137
Secondary Schools for Boys	418
Secondary School for Girls	122
Intermediate Colleges for Boys	32
Intermediate Colleges for Girls	21
Degree Colleges for Boys	23
Degree Colleges for Girls	07
Technical Colleges for Boys	01
Technical Colleges for Girls	01
Commerce Colleges	02
Cadet Colleges/Military	6
Residential Colleges	02
College for Physical Studies	01
Medical Colleges	02 (One under Army)
Number of Hospitals, Rural Health Center and Dispensaries	1,400
Number of Doctors	3,000
Access to Electricity	25%
Access to Safe Drinking Water	20%
Access to Sanitation	7%

Source: Conflict and Security in Balochistan, p.24

The conflict-torn province has the lowest literacy rate among the all provinces with the lowest ranking in Gender Parity Index across the country. The female literacy rate in the poor province is around 10 percent. The literacy ratio has increased but with marginal ratio as compared to that of the other provinces.

Table 5.7
Literacy Rate in Balochistan

No	Year	Literacy Rate
1	1972	10.1%
2	1981	10.3%
3	1998	26.6%
4	2008	45.8%

Source: Statistics of Government of Pakistan, census report of 2008

The state of healthcare in the insurgency-ravaged federating unit is miserable with unfavorable health indicators. Due to non-availability of health services, the maternal and infant mortality rates are the highest in the violence-riddled province than those of the rest provinces. In fact Balochistan has the highest infant and maternal mortality rates in South Asia. A province-based study shows the maternal mortality ratio is radically higher than the rest of the country with 750-800 deaths reported per hundred thousand live births.³²⁴ Infant mortality rate is 130 deaths per thousand live births, highest than the other provinces as average national infant mortality rate is 70 deaths per 1000 live births.³²⁵

In term of Human Development Index (HDI), the violence-torn province is the least developed and the most backward province of the country. A survey conducted by Pakistan Integrated Household Survey According in 2001-2002 shows that 48 percent of the provincial population is poor with 51 percent below the poverty line, whereas rural poverty in the province has risen by 15 percent from 1999 to 2005. According to the Social Policy and Development in Balochistan the percentage of districts that have been classified as high deprived is 92% where as in Khyber-Pukhtunkhwa, Sindh and Punjab this percentage is 62, 50 and 29 respectively. Jhelum district of Punjab has the highest HDI level at 0.703, while the hydrocarbon-rich Dera Bugti district of Balochistan has the lowest HDI level at 0.285. Punjab occupies 59 %

³²⁴ "Conference: Caring for both mother and child", *The Express Tribune*, March 7, 2012.

³²⁵ Arvind Gupta, "The Situation in Balochistan", New Delhi: Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, October 5, 2009.

among the 31 districts with the highest HDI level while Balochistan lies far behind at 9%.³²⁶ The unemployment rate in the province has reached to a record level, as 90 percent of the provincial population, whether literate or illiterate is jobless since the unemployment rate in the province has reached to 33.40 percent as weighed against 26.80 percent in the KPK, 19.10 percent in Punjab and 14.40 percent in the Sindh.³²⁷

Table 5.8

Human Development Indices of Different Provinces in Pakistan

Name	Literacy Ratio	Primary Level Enrolment Ratio	Infant Survival Ratio	Immuni zation Ratio	Real GDP per Capital	Edu cati on	Heal th Inde x	Adjuste d Real GDP per capita	HDP
Pakistan	45	72	95.5	49	1715	0.537	0.82	0.272	0.541
Punjab	46	75	95.4	55	1770	0.557	0.83	0.281	0.557
Sindh	52	64	95.9	38	1804	0.553	0.78	0.287	0.540
KPK	37	70	96.3	54	1364	0.480	0.84	0.213	0.510
Balochistan	36	64	96.4	34	1677	0.453	0.78	0.265	0.499
Islamabad	72	58	95.9	72	1743	0.673	0.89	0.277	0.612

Source: Pakistan Human Development Report 2003, *UNDP, Pakistan*

Major Grievances of the Baloch Nationalists are;

- Successive broken treaties and promises by the federal government have created yawning trust deficits between the Baloch nationalists and the federation. The promises based on Holy Quran, were made to the rebellion leaders of 1948 and 1958 were repeatedly violated. The Accession Treaty between the first Governor General of Pakistan and the Khan of Kalat was never honour. It was ignored in the successive constitution making by the central regime. The 1948 Agreement had stipulated that all subjects except, foreign affairs, defence, currency and communication would be the domain of the State of Kalat, the predecessor of Balochistan province. The Accession Treaty was never honored after M.A.

³²⁶ Sanaullah Baloch, "The Baloch Intifada", *Dawn*, November 23, 2009.

³²⁷ "High Unemployment rate in Balochistan", *Dawn*, 26 October, 2011.

Jinnah's death. This was the first constitutional breach of trust between center and Balochistan.³²⁸

- Exploitation of their natural resources (natural gas, gold, copper, coal and oil) by the larger ethnic-nationality of the country and uneven distribution of the resources has historically remained the bone of contention between the central government and the Baloch nationalists. The unjust exploitation of their natural gas and mineral resources has been a longstanding major grievance. The natural gas which is explored from Dera Bugti and that has been pipelined to the other provinces of the country but the Baloch people have been denied access to the use of natural gas. In 2005, for example, state-owned companies earn \$1.4 billion in gas revenue for the central government from the Dera Bugti gas fields, of which the province earned only \$116 million in revenues.³²⁹ Uneven distribution of the resources among the federating units is another continuous issue, causing distance and mistrust in inter-provincial relations, although the federal government has tried to address this issue in the 7th NFC Award (four-point formula for horizontal distribution of resources was accepted) which is hailed as victory of Balochistan's stance. In the Raisman Award of 1952, Balochistan received only 0.64% of the resources share while from the execution of the 1973 Constitution, only population-based distribution of revenues among the provinces maximized the economic woes of Balochistan. In 1974 Award, Balochistan got 3.86% of the resource to develop 44% of the Pakistan's landscape compared to Punjab 60.25 percent, Sindh 22.5 percent and KPK 13.39 percent.³³⁰
- Due to its best geographical location between South Asia, and West Asia and along the coast of the Arabian Sea in the strategically significant Indian Ocean, Balochistan is a natural transit hub and route for energy resources and trade. The construction of Gwadar Deep Seaport at the mouth of the Persian Gulf of the Arabian Ocean has threatened the Baloch majority population to be marginalized by the influx of economic migrants from other provinces. There is more

³²⁸ *Conflict and Insecurity in Balochistan*, p.18.

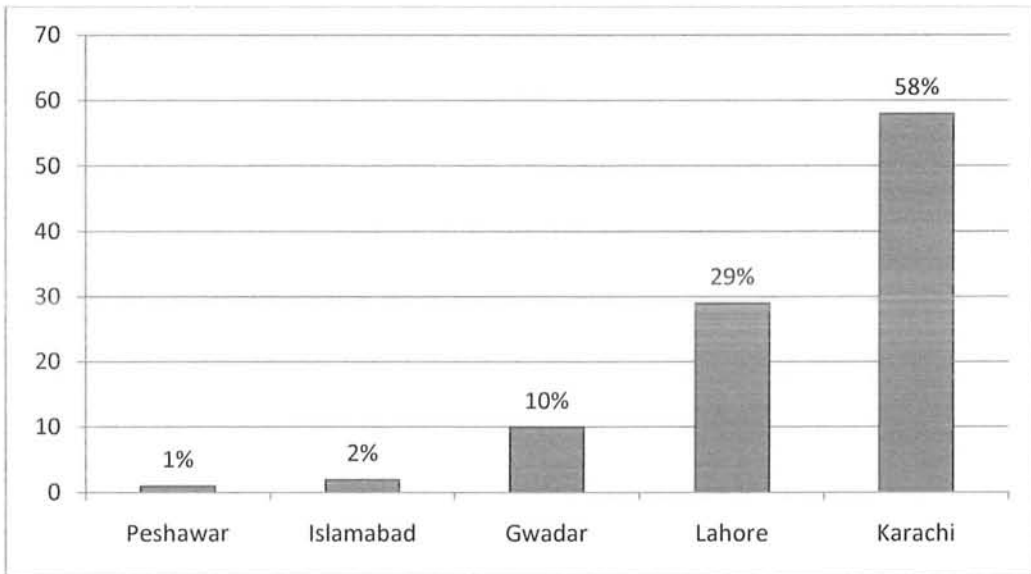
³²⁹ Ahmed Rashid, *Descent into Chaos: The United States Failure of Nation Building in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Central Asia*, (New York: Viking, 2008), p.283.

³³⁰ Mansoor Akbar Kundi, "Insurgency Factors in Balochistan"

controversial side of the much-boasted mega projects as the Baloch nationalists complain that the local majority population is being ignored in the mega projects in terms of jobs and benefits.

- According to the Gwadar Development Authority (GDA), the local developers are in minority holding only 10 percent of the land development in strategic coastal city while developers from other provinces hold remaining 90 percent of land development that translates the grave apprehensions of the Baloch nationalists into reality.

Figure 5.1
Land Grabbing Rights in Gwadar



Source: Murtaza Haider, “Resolving Balochistan’s grievances”, *Dawn Blog*. January 11, 2012.

- According to Rabia Aslam, author of the “Greed, Creed and Governance in Balochistan” land is only one of the many grievances, analyzing the cost benefit analysis of Gwadar Port, she writes, the provincial government will receive mere 2 percent of the trade profits from the Gwadar port, the federal government will pocket 50 percent of the profits while the Chinese firm in charge of operating the port will keep hold of remaining 48 percent.³³¹

³³¹ Rabia Aslam.

- Denial of unalienable political and economic rights, the nationalists are severely resented that they have no say in the politico-economic affairs of the province and they have been suppressed with force whenever they have demanded their legitimate rights. Every successive central government has pursued a persecutory policy to administer the provincial government directly. In 1973, Z.A Bhutto dismissed the provincial government of the nationalists despite enjoying landslide majority and installed the People's Party government with force and a military operation was launched against them. This coercive policy had been pursued by the every successive ruler in Islamabad. When Nawab Bugti was heading the nationalist's collation government in the province in 1989, the central regime of Benazir Bhutto utilize every fair or unfair possible strategy to destabilize their constitutional government that was ultimately dragged into high water. When Nawaz Sharif was de facto king of the country, he indirectly dissolved the nationalist government of Sardar Akhtar Mengal in 1998 by horse-trading which he accepted later on. They further complain that the state security agencies are involved in election rigging to manufacturer the leadership of their choice. All previous elections in Balochistan were engineered elections except the 1970 general election. Genuine leadership was never allowed for native-rule. Almost all elections in Balochistan were fraudulent as election officers always toe the line of mighty secret security agencies.³³² During Musharraf, the nationalists have been brushed off with military operation. Thousands of political workers have been forcefully disappeared and hundreds have been brutally killed including Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti.
- The Baloch nationalists also humbly complain that the hidden elements from Islamabad are instigating the second largest ethnic population against the them by provoking them to demand 50 percent share of the provincial resources as latter's demography has widened due to the influx of hundreds of thousands Afghan refugees.
- The Baloch are underrepresented in almost all federal institution, bureaucracy, diplomatic corps, army, central parliament, state-owned MNCs etc. Out of more

³³² "Parties slam agencies role in election", *Pakistan Today*, September, 28, 2012.

than 200 corporations in Pakistan, none is headed by any Baloch. No Baloch employee can be noticed in the President House, out of 700-strong staff at the Prime Minister's House there is only one ad hoc based employee, heading the P.M Complain Cell. With the passage of time, the other ethnic groups were moderately adjusted in army and bureaucracy but Baloch remained ignored. There is no any Baloch bureaucrat in the top post of federal bureaucracy, not signal Baloch is federal secretary. There is no any Baloch ambassador heading any foreign diplomatic missions of Pakistan in the world, and in the current military rankings, there is not any three or four star general in the Pakistan army.³³³

Table 5.9

Ethnic Ratio of Military Elite (1960s)

Ethnicity	Number	Ration
Punjabi	17	35.4%
Pakhtun	19	39.6%
Mohajir	11	23%
Sindhi	0	0%
Baloch	0	0%
Bengali	1	2%
Total	48	100%

Source: Khalid B. Sayeed, "The Role of Military in Pakistan", in *Armed Forces and Society* by Jacques Van Doorn, Hague: Paris, Mouton, 1968.

Table 5.10

Ethnic Ratio of the Top Civilian Bureaucrats (1970s)

Ethnicity	Number	Ration
Punjabi	1,727	48.89%
Pakhtun	287	8.12%
Mohajir	1,070	30.29%
Sindhi	90	2.5%
Baloch	9	0.25%
Others	349	9.95%
Total	3,532	100%

³³³ "Discrimination: No Baloch ambassador in 56 states", *The Express Tribune*, March 18, 2012.

Source: 4th Census of Central Government Employees, Islamabad: Government of Pakistan, 1973.

Table 5.11
Ethnic Ratios of Top Military Elite 1970s

Ethnicity	Number	Ration
Punjabi	20	40%
Pakhtun	17	34%
Mohajir	10	20%
Sindhi	1	2%
Baloch	0	0%
Others	2	4%
Total	50	100%

Source: Tahir Amin, p.174.

Table 5.12
Ethnic Ratio of the Top Civilian Bureaucrats (1970s)

Ethnicity	Number	Ration
Punjabi	6,590	47.94%
Pakhtun	1,638	11.91%
Mohajir	2,382	17.32%
Sindhi	601	4.37%
Baloch	103	0.74%
Others	2,438	17.72%
Total	13,752	100%

Source: Tahir Amin, p. 174.

- There are just 17 elected representatives of Balochistan in 342- member National Assembly. The indirect elected Senate with equal provincial representation is just a debating forum without any considerable power, except legislative review power. Although Pakistan is constitutionally a federation but the Lower House (National Assembly) has all legislative and fiscal power while the Upper House (Senate) is toothless debating of landlords and business tycoons.

Table 5.12
Provincial Seats in National Assembly

Number of Seats				
Province/Areas	General Seats	Seats reserved for		Total
		Minorities	Women	
Punjab	148	10	35	183
Sindh	61		14	75
KPK	35		8	43
Balochistan	14		3	17
FATA	12		--	12
Islamabad	2		--	2
Total	272		10	60

Source: General Elections 2008, IPRI

The construction of Gwadar deep-sea port was vehemently opposed by the Baloch nationalists. They fear that such mega projects are just for the colonization of their resources by the dominate ethnic-nation of the country. Baloch nationalists believe that as Gwadar is a small coastal town, the influx of large number of economic migrants can lead frightening demographic changes that will endanger the Baloch majority population.³³⁴ For instance, Port of Gwadar is handed over to the Singapore government for 40 years lease, without any involvement of Balochistan's provincial government Likewise, Reko Diq gold and copper project with millions tons of estimated deposits, is handed over to overseas consortium by the federal government of Pakistan. With similar fashion, Saindak copper and gold project, situated in northeast of Balochistan, is also run by a Chinese company, which deals directly with central government, bypassing Balochistan government. Balochistan, in spite of having an immense resource base, is tendered into poverty and backwardness. This is thought to be the prime reason in generating a sense of deprivation that pushed the Baloch to indulge into a conflict with the State of Pakistan, which the former considers as the exploiter.

In spite of being the richest province, it is the poorest province of the Pakistan. Islamabad and Sardars have been benefiting from the natural resources of Balochistan, but the provincial government and the people of Balochistan have

³³⁴ Sardar Attaullah Mengal (former C.M of Balochistan and veteran Baloch Nationalist), interview by Malik Siraj Akbar, *The Friday Times*, July 7-13, 2006.

always remained poor. The major reason for the backwardness of Balochistan is the lack of opportunities for the local people to benefit from their own natural resources. Balochistan has huge social problems due to its politico-socio-economic and political problems. All these ingredients have been mixed with the passage of time and now they have resulted to complex social problems. In the Baloch society the tribalism is still strong and it is availing the all political and economic opportunities of Balochistan. The Federal Government blames that tribalism is the main obstacle for the backwardness of Balochistan. Islamabad blames that the Nawabs and Sardars do not allow their tribesmen to be educated and developed and they want to use them for their own interests, but the middle class Baloch blame Islamabad for using the Sardars for its own interests in the province. The Balch Sardars are very good and patriotic in the eyes of Islamabad until they are working on the interests of the Federal Government, but they will be branded as traitor if they demand for the rights of Balochistan. Nawab Bugti was the most favorite Sardar of Islamabad in 1970s, but he was killed by the army, when he demanded for the legitimate rights of Balochistan.

The international developments since 9/11 have injected some heavy doses to the near-death Baloch nationalism which is inflicting far-reaching repercussion on the virtually divided federation of Pakistan. Impacts of post-9/11 regional developments on the aboriginal population are very grave as the most interesting and negative development is that, the current ongoing military operation has restored once-lost respect and dignity of the *Sardars* in the hearts and minds of the common Baloch. There have been the revival of *Sardari* system in the middle class common Baloch. The main reason of this increased reliance is that now *Sardars* are talking for the rights of the common Baloch. A strong nexus of the *Sardars* and common middle class is being established which will be more dangerous for Islamabad than ever. Islamabad has adopted different approaches and strategies to deal with the long-running conflict of Balochistan which are discussed in the next chapter, along with its implications on the federation.

CHAPTER VI

IMPLICATIONS ON PAKISTAN'S NATIONAL SECURITY

Ever since the birth of Pakistan in 1947, it had to survive on life support system for several times due to the multiple issues striking its brittle sovereignty, particularly after its dismemberment in 1971. Pakistan's national security is sandwiched between internal and external security threats and facing severe multiple challenges as both have virtually shaken hands to destabilize the already troubled, traumatized and multi-ethnic state. National security is the protection of territorial integrity and vital politico-economic interests, loss of which could threaten the fundamental pillars and vitality of a state. The relentless challenges to Pakistan's national security ramified during the military rule of General Musharraf (1999-2008) as he was the architecture of three infamous wars; Kargil (1999), Federally Administrative Tribal Areas (FATA) (2003-todate) and Balochistan (2005-todate). Lacking political magnetism and with a traditional military mindset, he provoked a violent unrest in Balochistan through military means rather than diagnosing and medicating the causes of the turbulence and mutiny, inflicting following far-reaching implications on national security.

6.1: Threats to National Integrity

Pakistan being ethnically diverse country is focusing on the national building on the basis of the Two Nations Theory, using the religion (Islam) and lingua franca (Urdu) as the common bonds to magnetize different Muslim ethnic nationalities in its federating units as well as in Azad Kashmir, FATA and Gilgit-Baltistan. But except its largest populated province of Punjab, the national integration has not attracted much attention in the other provinces particularly in Balochistan where the Baloch national sentiments have always resisted the nation-building at the coast of their national erosion. Since its inception in 1947, the issue of provincialism has been the most alarming so far as it inherited Pashtun, Baloch and Sindhi ethno-nationalisms from its predecessor, the British India. In fact, the pro-autonomy nationalist movements in KPK, Sindh and Balochistan start off from pre-partition politico-armed

movements in British India that have assumed the characteristics of ethno-nationalism with ambitions straddling amid autonomy and secession endeavors.³³⁵

The Baloch nationalists complain the Punjab-dominated establishment who want to promote national cohesion through the barrels of guns by damaging their thousands year old ancestral language, culture and traditions to bring them under their yoke and rob them of their nature's gifted natural resources. As Nawab Akbar Bugti used to say, "we have been Baloch for more than seven thousands years, Muslims some 1400 years ago and have been Pakistanis for just 60 years."³³⁶ The successive military operations and insurgencies since 1948 have dented the course of national integration; rather they have involuntarily kindled Baloch nationalism, ultimately turned into a vibrant separatist movement, calling for independence. The Baloch insurgency is threatening to tear the Pakistani nation apart as stated by Gregory Pipes. He has scrupulously explained the decades-long conflict of Balochistan from the spectrum of two interlock theories. The Islamabad theory suggests that denying the legitimate democratic rights to Balochs, the unremitting economic exploitation of their natural resources, military operations are responsible for the backwardness and separatist movements while the Baloch theory upholds that Baloch tribal chiefs along with foreign hands are to be blamed for the again on again off crisis of Balochistan.³³⁷

The Baloch are naturally sensitive to their culture and land. Their oral history is full with epics and war ballads, narrating their relentless love, loyalty and resistance for their land what they call it *Gull Zameen* (flower of the earth), *Wahe Watan O Gushkein Dar* (the motherland is worth anything even barren). The legendary Balochi poet, Atta Shad express his land trustworthiness his famed ode *Wafa* (Oath to faithfulness), "On my homeland a bowl of water worth everlasting (100 years) allegiance, let's quench our thirst and tender ourselves to the perpetual bond." In 2005 one half-truth rumor surfaced that Islamabad is planning to carve out coastal

³³⁵ Tahir Amin, pp.57-58.

³³⁶ Massoud Ansari, "Between tribe and country: The crisis of Balochistan", *Himal South Asian*, May 2007.

³³⁷ Gregory D. Pipes, "The Baloch-Islamabad Tension: Problems of National Integration", *Thesis Published by Naval Postgraduate School* Monterey, California. March 2010.

belt of Balochistan to settle the stateless Bihari refugees from Bangladesh (once East Pakistan) added firewood to the Baloch nationalists' antagonism that deemed it as a conspiracy to convert the Baloch aboriginal into Red Indians. Nawab Bugti had very solid reasons to oppose the controversial mega projects because he was Bhutto's right hand in Balochistan during 1972-73 (serving as provincial governor), he turned down Z.A Bhutto's solemn plea to inhabit 0.5 million Biharis on the deserted coast of Balochistan seeing that Ghulam Mustafa Khar was resistant to refugee them in Cholistan Desert and Bahawalpur and he was reluctant to harbor them in Sindh which could sternly dented his so-called Sindh Card.³³⁸ The dreadful political experiences of the past have taught the conscious nationalist figures to withstand all kind of pressure, resultant an eyeball to eyeball confrontation. The trauma of Bangladesh syndrome still haunts Pakistan's national integrity besides the Baloch irredentist movement as an inspiring source of achieving their centuries-old aspiration of an independent land. Practicing the East Pakistan counterinsurgency strategy, the Pakistani establishment is inadvertently pursuing state-building rather than nation-building. Although all Baloch insurgencies have been suppressed militarily, but the military operations have always watered the roots of provincial and separatist nationalism in the country.

6.2: Economic Implications

The presences of extra-national politico-economic stakeholders have exacerbated the security situation of the resourceful province that has inflicted far-reaching impacts on the already denting national economy. Pakistan's agriculture-dominated mixed economy is in constant decline and due to current global recession, its economy is at the crossroads with a static annual growth rate for the last five years. According to the Economic Survey of Pakistan in 2010-2011, due to energy crisis, floods, terrorism and oil price hike, the annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was restricted to 2.4 percent, the lowest level in South Asia. In fiscal year 2011-2012, the economic growth was 3.7 percent that is estimated to stand stock-still at 3.67 in 2012-13 as

³³⁸ Majeed Asghar, "The Fifth Baloch Insurgency", Urdu Article published in *Daily Jang*, 26 September, 2012.

stated by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) report “Outlook 2012 Update.”³³⁹ The global financial institutions have issued red signals for the worsening economic situation with double-digit inflation in Pakistan. The major reason behind the stagnant economy is poor energy sector and the widening energy deficit. Industries are getting closed due to acute energy crisis. Thermal electricity generated from oil, natural gas and coal account for around 65-66% of total electricity, hydroelectricity constitutes up to 31-32% while the nuclear making up only 2%.³⁴⁰ In the summer, the demand for electricity is roughly 15, 000-18, 000 Megawatt (MW) while the power companies struggle to supply 10, 000-13, 000 MW, the gap between supply and demand reached to 7, 500 megawatts around 40 percent of total national demand.³⁴¹ The energy shortage is relentlessly dampening the national economy, it is pulling down the GDP growth. Additionally, the gas load-shedding is denting the lingering industrial sector as the demand is increasing due to the mushrooming of compressed natural gas (CNG) stations in the country as Pakistan is the largest user of CNG in the world.³⁴² It is estimated that Pakistan will continue to face gas shortage of four billion cubic feet per day till the end of this decade.

The conflict in Balochistan is detrimental to the economic development in the country as the energy shortage is further aggravating the energy security but resolving the conflict can lead to local-national economic prosperity. Enormous geological and hydrocarbon resources of the restive province can enhance the economy of the whole country. The provincial economy is dominated by agriculture, fisheries and livestock which accounts for 52% of provincial GDP, accommodating 55-65 labor force. Fisheries contribute only 9 percent to the national fisheries sector despite of huge sea resources. Only 5% of the total land is cultivated due to the water scarcity. The industrial sector is around 11 percent of the GDP. Potentially significant, but under-developed mineral sector, contributing only 3 percent to the GDP, provides only 1.3 per cent economic opportunities to the local population, despite of having heavy

³³⁹ Government of Pakistan Finance Division, “Pakistan Economic Survey 2011-2012”.

³⁴⁰ “Energy Profile of Pakistan”, available at *The Encyclopedia of Earth*, available at www.eoearth.org accessed on 7 July, 2012.

³⁴¹ “Pakistan Energy Crisis”, *The Economist*, 21 May, 2012.

³⁴² “Pakistan largest CNG user”, *Dawn*, June 3, 2011.

mineral potential. Notwithstanding, having huge mineral deposits, mineral resources in Balochistan generate yearly revenue of about Rs.3.5 billion.³⁴³ Since the last decade (1990s), at large share of Balochistan in the overall national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has remained stand still at 4-5 percent.³⁴⁴

Gas and coal resources of the province have been widely utilized at the national level, but the limited production in the province is not satisfying the growing demands of energy needs especially in the industrial sector because of the stagnant exploration of gas resources. Although the explored gas resources of the province are depleting, but viable untapped resources can bridge the energy deficit of the energy-hungry national economy. Nonetheless, in spite of restricted exploratory survey, huge oil and gas reserves have been discovered in Dera Bugti, Kohlu and Kuzdar.³⁴⁵ But before undertaking serious exploratory efforts, the law and order situation in the severe conflict-hit areas needs to be addressed which can only be done through the peaceful resolution of the long-running conflict of Balochistan as the main target of the insurgents fighting against the armed forces are energy-related installations. A report from Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL), state-owned oil and Gas Company for exploration and production, states that the exploration of the largest gas fields in Balochistan can bank billions of dollars in foreign exchange. There are estimated reserves of 22 trillion cubic feet (ctf) (worth of more than US\$100 billion out of which Balochistan gets only \$10 billion as gas royalty) of gas over an area of 2500 square km in conflict-hit Kohlu district only, which are a slightly less than total national proven reserves of 29.0 tcf.³⁴⁶ The restive-district of Dera Bugti [having gas-producing fields of Loti, Sui and Pirkoh] has also anticipated natural gas reserves of around ten trillion cubic feet.³⁴⁷ The main reason of the suspension of the rigging installations is the relentless law and order situation in the restive Marri-Bugti area. The deteriorating security situation in the aftermath of the assassination of Nawab

³⁴³ "Balochistan Economic Report", Islamabad: Asian Development Bank, 2005.

³⁴⁴ Haris Gazdar, "Balochistan Economic Report: Background Paper on Social Structure and Migration", *Collective for Social Research*, Karachi, 28 February 2007.

³⁴⁵ "Balochistan Economic Report: Oil and Gas Aspect", Islamabad: World Bank, 2007.

³⁴⁶ "Report sought over delay in gas exploration", *Dawn Archives*, December 13, 2009.

³⁴⁷ "Iran gas pipeline and Balochistan: *Dawn*, May 16, 2012.

Akbar Bugti in August 2006 has been forcefully compelling the OGDCL to remain distant from Kohlu-Bugti area that has large potential of natural gas deposits. Since then the energy installations especially the inter and intra-provincial gas-pipelines have been the easy targets of the insurgents. In 2010, Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) endured a loss of about Rs. 100 million due to the rebels (BRA) attacks on the gas pipelines. In December, 2008 Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister informed the National Assembly that 80 attacks on national gas pipelines had rendered a loss of around Rs. 527 million to the federal government.³⁴⁸ Since January 2005, a total of one hundred sixty five attacks on the gas pipelines have been recorded.

Table 6.1

Insurgent Attacks on Gas Pipelines in Balochistan (2005-2011)

Years	Incidents	Injured	Killed
2005	05	16	08
2006	20	01	00
2007	37	01	01
2008	33	01	02
2009	30	00	00
2010	03	00	00
2011*	38	00	00
Total	165	19	11

Source: Balochistan Assessment, *South Asia Terrorism Portal*, May 22, 2011.

The proposed trans-regional gas pipelines (Iran-Pakistan and Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India) being pursued by the central government have to cross the turbulent province before reaching to their last destination. The IP and TAPI gas pipelines have to travel Balochistan that will aggravate the security concerns of their safety. A major part of the Iran-Pakistan Gas Pipeline Project (around 780km) will cross the Baloch territory in Iran and Pakistan, without earning their confidence, safety of this proposed conduit remains at stake.³⁴⁹ The Baloch nationalists have been opposing the construction of roads and railway communications in the troubling areas

³⁴⁸“Balochistan: running out of gas”, *South Asian Outlook*, Vol., 10, No. 12. June 2011, also see “Baloch insurgents intensify attacks on infrastructure”, *The Express Tribune*, 14 February 2011.

³⁴⁹ Sanaullah Baloch, “The IPI: the Baloch perspective”, *Dawn* 28 April, 2010.

which are perceived to be the major source of their resources exploitations. Musharraf government calculated to constructs a \$1.67 billion road networks to make Gwadar port the nucleus regional trade with East Asia and Central Asia however, the nationalists believe these road-building projects intend to enable the security forces to expand their control over the province and more easy access to the unexploited natural wealth.³⁵⁰ Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri of the belligerent Marri tribe strongly went up against the road construction, “the rulers will ransack our wealth of the area once we allow the construction of the roads as they had been taking away natural gas from Dera Bugti for decades but the Baloch get very little in return.”³⁵¹ The proposed M8 motorway from Gwadar-Turbat-Hoshab-Awaran-Kuzdar-Ratodero (Sindh) linking the Gwadar port to the rest of the country has remained suspended due to the increased attacks of the insurgents. Similarly, no progress has been made for the construction of the proposed railway line from Gwadar, Zahidan (Iran) and Quetta.

In addition to vast gas deposits, the largest coastal belt (770km) from Iranian border in the west and the Hub River in the east can enhance the economic viabilities of Pakistan if the stagnant Gwadar deep sea port gets operational in the fullest terms. Once claimed to be the jewel in the crown of the Pakistan’s economy, the Chinese constructed Gwadar deep sea port is extremely blemished with uncertainty due to the ongoing armed disturbance and increasing lawlessness in the province. First phase of the port that completed in 2007 was inaugurated in March of the same year is 46 feet deep which can harbor the largest cargo ships. The deep water port just located 624 nautical km to the Strait of Hormuz is envisaged to become the regional commercial hub for the former Soviet Central Asian Republics, West Asia and Far East Asia. Gwadar which means gate of wind in Balochi has not materialized to be the regional gate of commercial activities. It was put on operation from 15th March 2008 when the first cargo ship hauling wheat docked but the continuity of the commercial activities remain dormant. Despite of declaring Gwadar as a Duty-Free Port and Free Economic Zone, it has not been magnetized yet to attract the foreign investors. The strategic port

³⁵⁰“Pakistan: The Worsening Conflict in Balochistan”, p.18.

³⁵¹ Rabnawaz Gazni, “The Review” *Dawn*, February 10-16, 2005, p.6.

is in deep water due to lack of viable economic opportunities, as its leasing owner Singapore Port Authority (PSA) has backtracked from the 40-year hire contract. With the pullout of PSA, the uncertainty about the future of the port has grown deeper.³⁵² If it is not operationalised sooner than later, it would turn into a white elephant very soon. Apprehensively, it is being diverted from a commercial port to military base with extensive Chinese naval presence as China is ready to get its teeth into port by controlling the reins of the strategic port after the PSA's withdrawal.

6.3: Rise of Separatist Movements

The decades-old conflict and sporadic emergence of insurgencies have turned the province into a lawless territory where disgruntled Baloch are waging a full-blown insurgency against the state and unequivocally demanding for the independence of the province, inflicting a weighty threat to the fragile national security of Pakistan. A long time demand of political autonomy has renewed with a sophisticated manifestation of political sovereignty along with a sophisticated belligerency. The conspiracy theories of foreign elements in the chaotic province have gained momentum as the breadth of insurgency swallowing up the Baloch dominated districts and the new wave of insurgency is infiltrated into to the urban and settled areas rather than being stagnant in the mountains. The trained urban guerrillas are touching the nerve of Islamabad by attacking on security forces, government installations and non-local population. The Pakistani Interior Minister has put all the blame on BLA for the deteriorating security situation in Balochistan that has support from Afghanistan, America and other international elements.³⁵³ The separatist organizations like BLA, BLF, BRA and *Lashkar-e-Balochistan* taking refuge in the rugged mountainous landscape with small urban-based sleeping-cum-operative cells targeting the state interests. The guerrillas frequently ambush the Pakistani Army, bury anti-tank and anti-personnel land mines and fire Chinese and Russian rockets at the government and military installations. The local population contributes herds of livestock to feed the BLA fighters and also carry on espionage about the military

³⁵² "Gwadar port uncertainty", *Dawn*, 31 August 2012.

³⁵³ "BLA with foreign backing responsible for Balochistan situation: Rehman Malik", *The Daily Mail*, August 3, 2012.

positions and maneuvering in the region.³⁵⁴ The media, civil society, academicians and wary politicians compare the Balochistan conflict with East Pakistan (Bangladesh) and call it ‘another Bangladesh in making’ as the alphabet “B” seems to be uncomfortable alphabet with Pakistan. The situation in Balochistan is truly frightening and it is spiraling towards separation, said the President of the Supreme Court Bar Association.³⁵⁵ The Chief Minister of the powerful province of Punjab criticized Musharraf and the successor regime responsible for pushing Balochistan on the path of Bangladesh to create another Bangladesh for Pakistan.³⁵⁶

“Today, Islamabad [Pakistan] virtually encountered the same quagmire in Balochistan as it did in East Pakistan [Bangladesh]. The former is as progressively getting at odds from Pakistan as was Bangladesh in the midst of liberating itself. The army was the absolute then as it is today. President Asif Ali Zardar’s PPP succeeded military ruler as Bhutto controlled the reins of Pakistan from armed forces leader Yaheya Khan. Exactly, Balochistan lacks a captivating leader like S. Mujib-ur-Rahman but Bramdagh Bugti (grandson of Nawab Bugti) becoming the magnetizing leader of the independence movement.”³⁵⁷

What is happening in Balochistan today, it was experienced in Bangladesh four decades ago, an emerging belligerent nationalism within a national security-state paradigm, use of force against its own people, practicing extra judicial disappearances, inhuman torturing, extra-constitutional killings, accusing them a fifth column, traitors, foreign agents and purging their prominent political leaders.³⁵⁸ The history rises from ashes, like East Pakistan, the Pakistani Army believes that it can handle the vicious political environment in Balochistan by changing intensities of violence as they are the creator of this pain in the neck.³⁵⁹

Since the fourth nationalist intifada deepen, BSO-Azad (Independent) stood out to be the most radical youth organization that is straightforwardly involved in the

³⁵⁴ “Life with the Balochistan Liberation Army”, available at www.globalpost.com accessed on 6 November, 2012.

³⁵⁵ “Separatist movement gaining momentum in Balochistan”, *Yahoo News*, June 2, 2012.

³⁵⁶ Stated by Shebaz Shairf, CM of Punjab in “Balochistan Grievances”, *The Nation*, 18 February, 2012.

³⁵⁷ Kuldip Nayar, “Is Baluchistan becoming another East Pakistan”, *The Sunday Times*, September 13, 2009.

³⁵⁸ Akmal Hussian, “East Pakistan all over again?” *The Express Tribune*, February 27, 2012.

³⁵⁹ Saroop Ijaz, “Fires and shrinking exit doors”, *The Express Tribune*, 16 September, 2012.

configuration of novel separatist outfits such as BLF, BRA and refined BLA.³⁶⁰ Moreover, the national anthem-singing and flag hoisting are prohibited in most of the schools in Balochistan as the school administrations have succumbed to militants and students intimidating pressures. The militant-made independent flag of Balochistan is displayed on official buildings and other attention-grabbing places on 11th August each year, what militant called as “Independence Day”. The politicians in the corridors of power have been unnerved with the emergence of East Pakistan-like situation burgeoning in the twitchy province where Pakistani flag is not tolerated to fly and national anthem is not sung in educational institutions.³⁶¹

The Baloch militants are so furious that they are now targeting all those politicians who want to chase democratic and parliamentary struggle for the legitimate rights of the Baloch. The militant have targeted the political workers and leadership of centralist and moderate nationalist’s parties which they deem to be fifth column of Pakistan. In the far-off rural areas of Makran Division, the separatist are a parallel administration, controlling local traders and businessmen and intimidating the local leaders of parliamentary political parties who have left their home towns for Karachi and Quetta.³⁶² The targeted assassination of the political workers of the moderate nationalist Balochistan National Party-Mengal and National Party of Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch by the insurgents is a new phenomenon in the insurgency-hit province. Maulla Bakhsh Dashti, Dr. Lal Bakhsh Baloch and Naseem Jangiyan belonging to N.P were allegedly killed by BLF which considers the NP and BNP as traitor and black sheep among the nationalists.³⁶³

The budding of such new trends of socio-political polarization are appalling as the Baloch society is on the tight rope, moving towards collusion path due to the war within. The current wave of nationalism has proliferated to Baloch women who have traditionally remained politically unconscious in the previous uprisings. This new

³⁶⁰ Nadeem F. Paracha, “When the doves cry”

³⁶¹ Kuldeep Nayar, “Is Baluchistan becoming another East Pakistan”, S.G. Jilane, “Balochistan at the Boiling Point”, “Good news on Balochistan in a few days”, *Dawn*, July 24, 2009.

³⁶² Maqbool Ahmed, “State of intelligence”, *Herald*, October 16, 2012.

³⁶³ Cyril Almedia, “Insurgents suffer bloody reprisals”, *Dawn*, June 26, 2011.

distinctive trend translates the volcanic manifestation of the Baloch nationalist movement which is starkly sophisticated than its predecessors. Although the educated Baloch women are organized in different nationalist parties but the Baloch Women Panel is the most vibrant political platform for them. The nationalist parties have established women wings to accommodate the political struggle of the Baloch women. They participate in public demonstrations, seminars and talk shows in favour of the nationalists. Banok Karima Baloch from Turbat is currently vice-Chairperson of the BSO-Azad. Pro-independence organizations (BSO, BRP, BNF, BNM, BLF, BRA, and BLF) are the major source of inspiration for the women politics.³⁶⁴ Banuk Hooran Baloch, organizer of the BRP women wing, explains her reasons for joining the patriotic politics, “I joined the politics for the liberation of my nation and my country, as our brothers are abducted, killed and dumped.”³⁶⁵

The Baloch syndrome is also haunting irredentist nationalism among the watered down Sindhi nationalists. Inspired from the Balochistan’s separatist movement, the nationalists forces in Sindh are also simmering, as an outfit Sindhu Desh Liberation Army (SDLA) has recently surfaced in media with an aim of liberating Sindh from the federation. The shadowy SDLA has been claiming the responsibilities of several bomb attacks on railway tracks, PPP’s provincial ministers.³⁶⁶ Since the embryonic emergence of so-called SDLA, the Sindhi nationalists are bubbling with equivocal call for independence. The *Jeay Sindh Qaumi Mahaz* (JSQM) and *Jeay Sindh Tehrik* in early 2012 held huge public gatherings in the commercial capital Karachi for the independence of Sindh. On the eve of country wide celebration of Pakistan Day (23 March), hundreds of thousands people from Sindh gathered in Karachi and demanded for sovereignty of the Sindh and an independent status for Balochistan.³⁶⁷ The rise of separatist movements in Pakistan could pose intense intimidation to the national security of the country if concrete measures were not taken to redress the festering

³⁶⁴ Mahdem Baloch, “The Role of Women in Baloch National Struggle”, *Sagaar Publications*, July 21, 2012.

³⁶⁵ An Interview with Banuk Hooran Baloch, www.balochjohd.com accessed on 7 December, 2012.

³⁶⁶ ‘Six blasts at three places damage rail tracks’, *Dawn*, 28 November, 2011, ‘Houses of six PPP leaders target in bomb attacks’, *Dawn*, 10 October, 2012.

³⁶⁷ “Pakistan Day: JSQM leader demands freedom for Sindh and Balochistan”, *The Tribune Express*, 24 March, 2012.

demands of the combative nationalists as this gesticulate could commute to the KPK, still a fertile land for near death experience Pakhtun nationalism.

6.4: Internationalization of the Conflict

In Pakistan especially in the mainstream media and political parties, the conspiracy theories vis-à-vis foreign hands, third element, foreign agents are routinely quoted in reference to the persistent national issues. The conspiracy theories have hijacked the whole intelligentsia, media, political parties and government officials. In the recent years, the Balochistan conflict has occupied a significance position in the national issues that is why it is not immune to the traditional thinking which blames the foreign elements behind all national issues ranging from water crisis, dengue disease, sectarian violence, terrorist attacks, suicide bombings, high profile assassinations, ethnic-intolerance, economic crisis, political instability, Talibanization, drone attacks, liberalization, secularization, imminent collision among national institutions to the Balochistan insurgency. However, the tradition thinking vis-à-vis Balochistan conflict reflects some relevancy as the conflict is murmuring in the regional and far-regional politics. Outcome of the subsequent insurgencies has spillover beyond the national and regional territorial borders to extra-regional frontiers since the Balochistan conflict is being discussed in the capitals of the world's powerful nations. The presence of waning USA, emerging China, estranged Baloch nationalists, unrelieved economic deprivation, nationalist-instigated public uprising, breathing insurgency, counterinsurgency/military operation, human right violations and intellectual uprising have no doubt internationalized the Balochistan conflict. Out of these, the human rights violations and intellectual uprising are the leading factors behind the internalization of the issue. During the recent phase of insurgency some iconic political leaders and intellectuals have sought political asylum in the western countries, especially in the US, the UK and Switzerland have bestowed gradual intercontinental recognition to the conflict through their political activities, intellectual writings, personal relations and diplomatic bargaining. The Baloch diasporas, mainly the exiled Baloch leaders in the West (USA, Europe and Eurasia) have established thousands of websites and several organizations such as American

Friends of Balochistan, Britain-based Greater Balochistan National Conference, Baloch Society of North America, Moscow-based Baloch Unity Conference, Paris-based Baloch Voice Foundation and Council for Independent Balochistan, rallying politico-economic-military support for the Baloch cause through different diplomatic channels. These foreign based organizations of the exiled Baloch leaders are highlighting their disputes to the foreign countries.³⁶⁸ Since the rising of nationalistic insurgency, Pakistan’s telecommunication has blocked around 4,000 websites, YouTube sites and blogs related to conflict-riddled Balochistan.³⁶⁹

The presence of vibrant Baloch diaspora in the Western countries has catalyzed the Balochistan conflict at the international level. In the US and Europe, academics, human right activists, politicians and conflict-oriented media have gradually diverted their attentions to the heed-grabbing situation in Balochistan as the attempts by leading asylum seekers Baloch separatists to internationalize the issue is having an impact.³⁷⁰ Since the ongoing conflict, many Baloch nationalist leaders and intellectuals got refugee in the Western countries where most of them have franchised political shelter, invoking their natural right of political asylum under the International Law.

Table 6.2
Prominent Exiled, Asylum-sought, Asylum-seeker Baloch leaders and Intellectuals

Name	Political Affiliation	Political/ Intellectual Agenda	Sheltering Country	Asylum Status	Contributions to Baloch Cause/Allegations
Hyrbyair Marri Son of Khair Bakhsh Marri	Ex- Provincial Minister and Alleged Leader of the BLA	Vigorously back the Baloch secessionist movement & author of Freedom Charter	The UK since 2000,	Awarded Pol. Asylum in January 2011	Collecting Funds for Rebels, high lighting Baloch cause & involved in anti-state activities against Pak.

³⁶⁸ Aslam Rana, “US interests and activities if Baloch diaspora”, *The News*, February 23, 2012.

³⁶⁹ “Walking up to the war in Balochistan” available at www.bbc.co.uk accessed on 26 November, 2012.

³⁷⁰ Rahimullah Yusufzai, “Balochistan in focus”, *Pak Tribune News Service*, April 4, 2012.

Brahamdagh Bugti, Grandson of Akbar Bugti	Head of the BRP and alleged leader of the BRA	Robustly support the Baloch secessionist movement	Switzerland	Got Asylum in Switzerland in Sept. 2012	Fought against army in mountains with Nawab Bugti, Raising Baloch cause at global level, & seditious charges
Agha Suleman Daoud, grandson of Ahmed Yar Khan	35 th Khan of Kalat & Founder of Council for Independent Balochistan	Support the independence movement and wants to pursue Balochistan case in ICJ	The UK	Asylum in the UK	Organized Baloch jirga after the murder of Nawab Bugti and seeking Kalat annexation in the International Court of Justice/Instigating anti-Pakistan US Congressmen
Sardar Akhtar Mengal, son of Sardar Attaullah Mengal	Ex C.M of Balochistan & President of the BNP-Mengal	Support the Right of Self-determination for Balochistan movement	Mostly based in the UAE and the UK	Self-exiled leader	Arrested in 2007 for instigating political agitation but released in 2008
Mehran Marri Baloch, youngest son of Khair Bakhsh Marri	Founder of Baloch Human Right Council & Baloch representative in the UN	Right hand of his elder brother and works for the independence of Balochistan	The UK	British Citizen	He usually attends UN Human Rights Council's meetings and raises Human Rights abuses in Balochistan.
Sanaullah Baloch, a middle-class political intellectual from Kharan	Ex-MNA and Senator and renowned intellectual, central leader of BNP-M	Support the Right of Self-determination through his intellectual writings	Europe	Self-exiled	Attends seminars and deliver lectures, a well-know writer, highlights the Balochistan issues in media through scholarly writings
Malik Siraj Akbar, internet journalist from Panjgur (Makran)	Professional Journalist, blogger & author	Chief Editor of the Baloch Hal, Baloch online English Newspaper	The USA	He was granted asylum in October, 2011	He writes and highlights Balochistan issue through his journalists writings in powerful media organizations like Dawn, Aljazeera, The Hindu, BBC, Express Tribune etc.
Javed Mengal, eldest son of Sardar Attaullah Mengal	He is son-in-law of Nawab Marri & alleged chief of <i>Lashkar-e-Balochistan</i>	Ideologically attached with the Balochistan freedom struggle	Mostly based in the UAE and the UK	Self-exiled	Tribally active to unite the Mengal and Marri tribal leaderships for a united front of struggle.
Noordin Mengal, grandson of Sardar Mengal & Nawab Marri	Co-founder of Baloch Human Right Council & Baloch representative in the UN, also a member of BNP-M	Human Rights activist & politically very close to his uncle, Hrybiyar Marri who vocally support rebels	The UK	British Citizen	He usually attends UN Human Rights Council's meetings and raises Human Rights abuses in Balochistan.
Dr. Juma Marri, son of Mir Hazar Khan Marri rebel leader of 1973-77 guerrilla war	Founder of the Baloch Unity Conference, a trusted comrade of Hyrbyair Marri	Baloch political activist and supporter of the Balochistan independence struggle	Russia	Russian Citizen	His family participated in 1973 guerrilla war, organizes international conferences to jack up Balochistan issue.

Kachkol Ali Baloch, middle-class politician	Former provincial minister & opposition leader, member of National Party	Politically muted Mr. K Ali vaguely supports the Baloch resistance movement	Norway	Asylum seeker	When BNM leader, Ghulam Mohammad Baloch and his comrades were allegedly kidnapped by security agencies, he pursued their case in media and courts
Munir Mengal, from Kuzdar	Political activist & President of Baloch voice Foundation	Human rights activist & works for Baloch cause	France	Asylum seeker	Her was arrested in 2006 on the charges of sedition as he wanted to launch Baloch Voice Chanel, released after 22 months of detention
Dr. Wahid Baloch, hails from Dasht Makran & medial graduate from Bolan Medical College Quetta	Baloch political activist and founder of Baloch Society of North America BSO-NA	Human right activist & vocal supporter of Balochistan independent movement	The USA	US Citizen	He has been highlighting the Baloch cause in the USA and West, he is in contact with US top officials like Vice. President Joe Biden, Defence Sec. Leon Panetta & many Congressmen

Source: Author

Political victimization, enforced disappearance, extra-judicial persecutions and extra-constitutional killings of the Baloch political workers have synchronized with the materialization of the nationalist insurgency, since then the province has become a human rights free zone. The nationalists without a doubt blame the security forces for the enforced disappearance and extra-judicial killings of the Baloch political workers, which is fervently denied by the security agencies. According to the Voice for Baloch Missing Persons, an organization formed by missing persons families, and other nationalist parties (BRA, BNM, BNP-M, BNF), overall around 14,000 Baloch are missing, picked up by security agencies of Pakistan.³⁷¹ But there is widening contradiction in the statistics of the missing persons, as the government documented missing persons not more than few hundreds. The rising number of the missing persons from the restive-province and the surfacing of their bullet-riddled mutilated bodies have sent insightful shockwaves to national and international organizations. So far 400-600 mutilated bodies of Baloch political workers have surfaced.³⁷² The Baloch nationalists and reliable human rights activists and organizations have been raising

³⁷¹ Tariq Baloch, "Voice for Baloch Missing Person briefed Un team" available at www.blochvoice.com accessed on 13 November, 2012, 'UN mission arrives at ground zero of missing persons', *The Express Tribune*, September 16, 2012.

³⁷² "14,000 are missing, claims BNP", *Dawn*, 13 September, 2012. "Missing Persons: Protests rally held in Balochistan, *The Express Tribune*, 30 October, 2012.

fingers towards the paramilitary forces (FC) and security agencies for the mutilated bodies of the Baloch missing persons. Gross human rights violations in the province have vehemently grabbed worldwide attentions of the leading international human right organizations, politicians, academics and governments that have directly or indirectly catalyzed the internationalization of the conflict. While the nationalist insurgency and human rights violation in Pakistani province of Balochistan have got negligible attention in the rest of Pakistan, but they are gaining traction in the West especially in Washington D.C as the Baloch bloggers and intellectuals are sympathetic towards the Baloch nationalist movement.³⁷³ The first enthusiastic international voice over the human rights violations in Balochistan came from the State Department of the US administration in which the spokesperson of the State Department expressed its somber concerns over un-ending human rights abuses in January 2012. In social networking website Twitter based internet press interaction, the spokesperson Victoria Nuland said: “The US is deeply concerned about the ongoing violence in Balochistan, especially disappearances, target killings and other human rights abuses.”³⁷⁴ Baloch exiled leaders whole-heartedly welcomed the US State Department concerns over Balochistan in the 19th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) that was held on 23 February 2012. Baloch people and Balochistan consider the stated approach of the US President and the British Premier as long-awaited, necessary to address the Baloch issue.³⁷⁵

On 8th February, 2012 the 12th term Republican Congressman from California, Dana Rohrabacher, who heads the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, held a unusual but borderline Congressional Hearing on Balochistan in the US Capitol Hill in which pro-Baloch and anti-Pakistan intellectuals including Baloch exiled leaders were invited that sparked national wide reaction, however the Baloch nationalists expressed heartening appreciation of such extra-ordinary far-regional development and termed Dana Rohrabacher as knight in shining armor. Nonetheless, the fire of the Congressional Hearing not died yet, another inflaming act

³⁷³ Walking up to the war in Balochistan, available at www.bbc.co.uk

³⁷⁴ C. Raja Mohan, “The Baloch question”, *The Indian Express*, February 1, 2012.

³⁷⁵ “Balochs welcome US human rights intervention at UNHRC”, *Tamil Guardian*, 28 March, 2012.

of anti-Pakistan Congressmen including Dana Rohrabacher further set alight the smoldering feedback from Pakistan as they submitted a non-binding resolution in the House of Representatives of the US Congress that candidly asked the US government to espouse the Balochistan independence movement for the reason that it's secular and liberal nation could be a natural ally of the USA in the region. According to Rohrabacher, we should not remain silent partner to Pakistan that has been a co-conspirator of the terrorist attacks on the US citizenry and engaged in notorious crimes against Balochs.³⁷⁶ The Pakistani government strongly protested to the US over such provocations but the Obama Administration soon distant itself from Rohrabacher private resolution.

In addition to that, in September, 2012 the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID) visited Pakistan to investigate the dire human rights violations in Pakistan, particularly the conflict-hit areas. The WGEID is a sub-organ of the UNHRC that deals with human rights cases and act as channel of communiqué connecting the families of disappeared persons with their respective governments.³⁷⁷ The UN Working Group on human rights mistreatments also visited the strife-torn Balochistan where they interacted with the families of the missing person of Voice for Baloch Missing Persons that handed over a comprehensive list of 1,341 missing persons to UN delegation.³⁷⁸ The UN fact-finding mission pointed finger at the security agencies as the group said that there were more than 14,000 involuntary disappeared persons in Balochistan alone while the government shows the figures only in double digits.³⁷⁹ The Baloch exiled leaders called it a victory of the Baloch estranged leaders as their representatives at the Geneva-based inter-governmental body of the United Nations, the UNHRC (Balochistan's unofficial representatives at the UN, Mehran Marri Baloch and Noordin Mengal, founders of the Baloch Human Right Council) regularly participate in the proceedings of the UN

³⁷⁶ Dana Rohrabacher, "Why I support Baluchistan", *Washington Post*, April 6, 2012.

³⁷⁷ Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, United Nations Human Rights Council, available at www.ohchr.org accessed on 15 September, 2012.

³⁷⁸ "UN team spends busy day in Quetta", *Dawn*, 16 September, 2012.

³⁷⁹ "Missing persons: UN fact-finding missions points finger at agencies", *The Express Tribune*, 21 September, 2012.

body where they apprise the international community about the state-sponsored atrocities on Baloch. In October, 2012 the US representative in the UNHRC Ambassador Elieen Donahoe also expressed grave concerns over human rights ill-treatments in violence-hit Balochistan.

“As we [the US Mission in Geneva] reported in our 2011 Human Rights Reports, security forces have been reportedly involved in the extrajudicial killings of suspected militants and opposition figures in Balochistan. We also note with deep concern the ongoing cycle of violence in Balochistan, where numerous civil society actors, including Baloch activists, journalists, and student leaders have been targeted as such environment leaves limited space for moderate discourse.”³⁸⁰

Genuine or exaggerated, however the grave human rights abuses in Balochistan have further tarnished the already mottled image of Pakistan as a human rights free zone among the rights-conscious international community. Additionally, the sickening human rights violations and the inhuman treatment of the Baloch political workers and their tortured and mutilated bodies have provided the exiled Baloch leaders an opportunity to penetrate in the prestigious and authoritative international organizations to internationalize their political agendas overwhelmingly. On the account of human rights violations, the Baloch leaders are demanding foreign intervention in Balochistan to stop the alleged state-sponsored inhuman treatment of their fellow ethnics as the international intervention on human rights abuses has brainstormed a new phenomenon in the International Law during the self-styled Arab Spring in the Mideast where the international community diplomatically and militarily intervened to check the longstanding dictators’ cold-blooded atrocities on their nationals.

6.5: Governance Crisis

According to the Baloch nationalists, those who cast votes in Balochistan decide nothing but those who count the votes decide everything. The mainstream nationalist parties boycotted the general elections of 2008, complaining that they were heavy-

³⁸⁰ “U.S Statement on the UPR of Pakistan”, Mission of the United States Geneva Switzerland, October 30, 2012.

handedly pushed to wall by the ruthless regime of Musharraf and were left no choice except moving to mountains, seeking political asylums and shunning the parliamentary politics. The parliamentary nationalist parties, BNP-Mengal, National Party, *Jamori Watan Party* and *Pashtunkhwa Mili Awami Party* did not participate in the elections, leaving the electoral space open for those who have never thought to land on Balochistan Provincial Assembly, owing to that manufactured and unrepresentative leaders entered in the provincial politics which further exacerbated the political complexity of the conflict-stricken province. The politically polarized province has a very multifaceted political culture where the mainstream provincial political is very much interlinked with the federal politics. Due to deficiency of vibrant political culture in the province, political parties are formed after the elections when the mostly independent elected members go with the parties having majority mandate at the federal level because like Azad Kashmir, mostly those parties which hold the reins of Islamabad, also rule Balochistan. Hardly any provincial party had been successful to control the executive authority of the province.

Table 6.3
Provincial Governments in Balochistan

Chief Ministers	Provincial Ruling Parties	Tenures	Central Ruling Parties
Attaullah Mengal	NAP (Nationalists)	May 1972-Feb. 1973	PPP
Jam Ghulam Qadir	PPP	April. 1973-Dec. 1974	PPP
M.Khan Barozai	PPP	Dec. 1976-April 1977	PPP
Martial Law		April 1977-April 1985	
Jam Ghulam Qadir	Independent but backed by Junejo Govt.	April 1985-May 1988	Military-backed Junejo Government
Zafarullah Jamali	Islami Jamhoori Ittehad	June 1988-Dec. 1988	PPP
Nawab Akbar Bugti	Balochistan National Alliance (Nationalists)	Feb. 1989-Aug. 1990	PPP
Taj Muhamad Jamali	Islami Jamhoori Ittehad	Nov. 1990-May 1993	Islami Jamhoori Ittehad
Zulfiqar Ali Mugsi	Independent but PPP-backed	Oct. 1993-Nov. 1996	PPP
Akhtar Mengal	BNP (Nationalists)	Feb. 1997-June 1998	PML-N
Jan Muhammad	PML-N	June 1998-Oct. 1999	PML-N

Jamali			
Governor Rule		Oct.1999-Dec.2002	
Jam Mohd. Yousuf	PML-Q	Dec.2002-Nov.2007	PML-Q
Aslam Raisani	PPP	April 2008-todate	PPP

Source: Author

The highlighted provincial governments in table 6.1 were short-lived due to the reason that different political parties that were ruling in the province vis-à-vis central government. Since 1970, the Baloch nationalists ruled the province just for 43 months (Attaullah Mengal 9, Akbar Bugti 18, and Akhtar Mengal 16) while the rest were ruled by the right-wing and center-left federal parties. The nationalists complain that they were never given political space to rule their province as the establishment has pursued the traditional policy of “divide and rule” to keep the province under its control covertly. Balochistan is a confederation of tribes and Islamabad is in a better position to divide and rule the Baloch which is visible in the long-running inter & intra-tribal wars. In 2002 elections, the military regime shored up the religious parties at the expense of militant tribal chiefs and mainstream burgeoning nationalists.³⁸¹ When Sardar Akhtar Mengal formed his party government in the province, the central ruling party Pakistan Muslim League (now PML-N) orchestrated an undemocratic scheme that pulled down Mengal government. Evoking the deletion of Akhtar Mengal’s government in 1998, when Nawaz Sharif was prime minister, he [Nawaz Sharif] said he fell prey to a conspiracy shaded by his party members in the province who later on joined the Musharraf regime.³⁸² Furthermore the Baloch nationalists deplore establishment that it has always infringed the true Baloch leadership and retarded their political growth in the province owing to that there is not any well-built political party that could protect the constitutional and genuine rights of the Baloch people. In Pakistan, the People’s Party always defends the rights of Sindh, traditional

³⁸¹ Najim Sheti, “Is Balochistan another country”, *The Friday Times*, Vol. XXIII, No.49, January 21-27, 2011.

³⁸² “PML-N chief warns against inducting fake Baloch leadership”, *Dawn*, October 2, 2012.

PML advocates the rights of Punjab, Awami National Party is salvaging the Pashtun rights but no one is there to stand a political bulwark for the Balochs.³⁸³

Since last one and half decades, the mainstream nationalists were kept out of the power corridors that ultimately resulted their further estrangement from Islamabad that was why the remaining exasperated nationalists who believed on parliamentary struggle remained out of the 2008 elections and an unrepresentative provincial regime, what the nationalists call it a manufactured government, was installed by PPP with the backing of elusive MPAs. The 2008 elections in Balochistan were deemed by the nationalists as the most engineered elections in the electoral history of the province.

“Owing to the continued manipulation of the political and electoral processes the parliamentary politics has lost faith and confidence amongst Baloch nationals. Since 2002, many zenith Baloch leaders have been systematically purged in targeted assassinations, forced disappearances and the kill and dump policy of eliminating middle and nadir Baloch political workers have left no space for moderate Baloch nationalists to participate in the democratic process, including public mobilization that confirms how pro-Islamabad/Rawalpindi candidates were flooded with “money and support” by the security apparatus in 2008 elections.”³⁸⁴

After the 2008 elections, an strong tribal leader, Nawab Aslam Raisani formed coalition government of around 11 political parties including a panel of independent MPAs, in the province, the first-ever PPP government initially with the 6 elected MPAs of PPP (later on PPP MPAs became 13 when 7 elusive MPAs joined PPP). All 65-MPAs except one joined the collation government and two-third of them became cabinet members (ministers & advisors), inscribed an unprecedented record in the world of illiberal democracy. Out of 65 MPAs, 57 members are in cabinet as ministers, half-ministers, advisors and ministers without portfolios.³⁸⁵ The chief executive of the restive province, Nawab Aslam Raisani is the luckiest chief minister

³⁸³ Interview with Abdul Malik Baloch, President of the *National Party*, the largest parliamentary nationalist party, 12 January, 2012.

³⁸⁴ Sanaullah Baloch, “Balochistan – ballot or the bullet?” *The Express Tribune*, September 15, 2012.

³⁸⁵ Mumtaz Alvi, “Aslam Raisani, the luckiest chief minister!” *The News*, August 20, 2012.

who enjoys the full support of nearly entire Balochistan Provincial Assembly.³⁸⁶ It is interesting to note that the established ministries are less than the cabinet members, but the single ministries have been divided into sub-ministries to appease the coalition members. For instance, the ministry of education is divided among three provincial ministers, the education minister for colleges, minister for schools and minister for quality education. The absence of genuine leadership, the phony government is done record level corruption in the history of the province. Lack of interest among the provincial ministers including the chief executive have plunged the already rearward province into entrenched backwardness and lawlessness. Since the 7th NFC Award, the share of Balochistan in the divisible resource pool has been doubled but there is no tangible sign of development to be sighted for the last four years.

The incumbent Chief Minister of the backward province spends more time in Islamabad rather than the province due to which province is facing severe governance crisis. The Baloch nationalists reprimand that the province is virtually under the control of the security forces who have established a parallel government and the Inspector General FC is the de facto provincial executive. The extreme governance crisis has pushed the province into a lawless territory where enforced disappearances, insurgent violence, target killings, political assassinations, worsening human rights abuses, kidnappings for ransom, sectarian related violence (Shia-Sunni), ethnic tension (Baloch-Pashtun discord), economic stagnation, mass migration, conflict-hit internally displaced persons (IDPs), skyrocketing corruption, alleged death-squads and private tribal armies have turned the province into a politically-stagnant situation that seems to be impossible to take the plunge in foreseeable future.

The attention grabbing dismal situation in the politically-stagnant province has only won over the attentions of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, which is also alleged of judicial activism by the ruling party. The superior court has taken the notice of the dire law and order situation in which it has directly blamed the provincial government for constitutional and governance breakdown and to be responsible for all the ill-

³⁸⁶ Ibid.

happenings in the province. It has also pointed finger to the security agencies for their over involvement in the administrative affairs.

“According to the Supreme Court interim order on Balochistan’s law and order situation, the provincial government has lost its writ of law and lost its authority to govern the province in accordance with constitution as it has constitutionally failed to restrain terrible human rights abuses, target killings, kidnapping for ransom and other lawful responsibilities. It has also failed to rehabilitate about 1.5 million IDPs of conflict-stricken districts which is the constitutional responsibility of the provincial government.”³⁸⁷

Since the Supreme temporary order, the constitutional and governance breakdown in the volatile province has deepened severely as the constitutional experts have raised certain legal questions over the constitutional position of Raisani government and the Speaker of the Provincial Assembly has bluntly refused to preside over the proceedings of the Assembly until and unless the constitutional ambiguity over the provincial cabinet is does away with. The constitutional crisis seems to exacerbate as both Supreme Court and the provincial executive have dug their heels very deeply. The PPP government has lost this democratic chance to induct the provincial nationalists in the mainstream parliamentary politics but the new elections are around the corner, therefore upcoming opportunity should be arrested and concrete efforts should be taken to offer heartfelt olive branch to the alienated nationalists and reintegrate them in the parliamentary politics once again.

6.6: Islamabad’s Response towards the Conflict

A conflict-stricken government of a state by and large adopts a comprehensive policy or approach to manage or resolve the striking conflict by applying different peaceful or military *modus operandi*. So for the *modus operandi* espoused by Islamabad vis-à-vis Balochistan conflict, are parallel with the conflict management that necessitates executing stratagems to arrest the pessimistic facets of the conflict to maximize the optimistic aspects of the government initiatives enhancing the productive functions of the conflict. It is actually to manage the conflict for a moderate period of time that is to avoiding the conflict rather than absolutely doing away with it. Islamabad has

³⁸⁷ “SC says govt. has failed in Balochistan”, *Dawn*, 13 October, 2012.

adopted a three-pronged strategy to deal with the decades-running conflict of Balochistan that includes;

1. Counter-insurgency
2. Politico-Economic Incentives
3. Half-done Constitutional Guarantees

6.6.1: Counterinsurgency (COIN) Strategy

Historically, the use of force has been the conventional strategy and the first priority of the security establishment to deal the conflict of Balochistan. Musharraf's warning to the Baloch leaders, stop fighting otherwise you will not know what hit you, symbolize the counterinsurgency as the top strategic priority to subdue the conflict.³⁸⁸

The province has faced almost four military operations since 1948. The Baloch nationalists grieve that whenever they have raised their voices for the legitimate rights of the province, they have been heavy-handedly suppressed with the use of force. Since the Supreme Court has been pursuing the lawlessness situation of Balochistan belligerently, the COIN strategy of the establishment has dramatically changed as the nationalists blame. Nationalists believe that Islamabad friendly Sardars are running alleged death squads that are assassinating their leaders and workers, as it was mentioned in the Supreme Court-submitted six-point charter of Sardar Akhtar Mengal.

6.6.2: Politico-Economic Incentives

The politico-economic incentives have been the second top priority of Islamabad to deal with the conflict-damaged province after its top-prioritized counter-insurgency strategy. Although some comprehensive economic incentives have been initiated to heal the economic grievances but only cosmetic efforts have been made for political dialogue to heal the separatist insurgency. The first half-hearted political maneuverings took place in 2004 when then acting Prime Minister Chaudhary Shujaat Hussain initiated the first comprehensive endeavor and constituted two

³⁸⁸ "Pakistan: The Worsening Conflict in Balochistan", *Crisis Group Asia Report No 119*, 14 September, 2006.

parliamentary sub-committees for the remedial of the nascent conflict. One headed by the longest-serving parliamentarian of Pakistan, Wasim Sajjad to study the deep-seated constitutional concerns of Balochistan like provincial autonomy and provincial control on the natural resources while the second was headed by Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed to address the nationalists much-trumpeted reservations on the controversial mega projects and military garrisons but the recommendations of the two sub-committees on the thorny issues were never translated into practical changes.

When the PPP government was installed in Islamabad in 2008, after some toing and froing, Gillani regime formed Shahaheed Benazir Bhutto Reconciliatory Committee on Balochistan under Senator Babar Awan to constitute a roadmap for the comprehensive resolution but nothing came out of this superficial political imitative. In November 2009, PPP stalwart, Senator Raza Rabani brainstormed a comprehensive package “*Aghaz-e-Haqooq-e-Balochistan Package*” from the debris of the recommendations proposed by Wasim Sajjad & Muhahid Hussaiin in 2004 which was unveiled in the joint session of the Parliament, but impartially speaking it proved an old wine in new bottle. Islamabad’s politic-economic incentives are mainly based on economic incentives that have been initiated to allay the longstanding grievances and backwardness of the Baloch people. Three major economic incentives of the federal government are;

- Mega Projects
- Balochistan Package
- NFC Award

6.6.2.1 Mega Projects

The chronic ignorance and backwardness have been the volatile sources of the retrospective conflict in Balochistan. To heal the backwardness of the province, Musharraf government undertook a series of contentious mega projects of around Rs.130 billion in Balochistan that further intensified the simmering conflict when then military regime remained adamant to lend a listening ear to disgruntled nationalists. As President Musharraf said in the inaugurating ceremony of coastal city

deep sea port, “some status quo-conscious elements are opposing development in the neglected province but despite their oppositions the government would continue developing to uplift the decades-old ignored province.”³⁸⁹ The eye-catching mega projects adventured by then military regime are;

- Gwadar Deep Sea Port Project
- Merani Dam Project
- Makran Coastal Highway
- Kachhi Canal
- Sandaik Project
- Reko-Diq Copper Project
- Sabakzai Dam
- Makran University Turbat
- HEC Scholarships for the students of Balochistan
- Roads and communication network in the province
- Vocational and skilled developing institution in Balochistan

Table 6.4

Estimated Costs of the Mega Projects in Balochistan (2002-2006)

S.No	Name of Scheme	Cost in Million
1	Kachhi Canal	31,204
2	Mirani Dam	5,861
3	Sabakzai Dam	1,010
4	Balochistan effluent disposal	4,485
5	Makran Coastal Highway	15,010
6	Gwadar-Kuzdar Highway	16,640
7	Gwadar Deep Sea Water Port	16,380
8	Quetta Water Supply Projects & Environment Project	7,965
9	National Program for improvement of water courses in Pakistan Balochistan Share	5,060
10	Access to Justice Program	1,000

³⁸⁹ Gwadar port inaugurated: Plan for second port in Balochistan at Sonmiani, *Asia Views*, March 8, 2007.

Total	104,615
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Sources: Balochistan: an overview of development, Govt: of Balochistan P&DD 2005

The Baloch nationalists have rejected the mega projects and have called these mega projects as conspiracies against the indigenous Baloch people. They are of the opinion that in the name of these mega projects, the larger ethnic-nationality of the country will further adventure the economic exploitation of their natural resources that further widened the persisting federal-province trust-deficit.

6.6.2.2: Aghaz-e-Haqooq-e-Balochistan Package

Balochistan Package was an honest olive branch for the estrange Baloch nationalists which was one of the major initiative by the PPP-led central government which was unveiled in the joint sitting of the parliament on 24 November, 2009. The motives behind the announcement of package were to bridge the outstanding trust-deficit between Islamabad and the Baloch nationalists. In the package it was indicated that longstanding constitution issue of Balochistan would be addressed in the 18th Constitutional Amendment which was under process at the time of unveiling this package. The release of all political workers was announced expect those who were involved in heinous crimes. Political dialogue was promised to be held with all stake holders. The resolutions of the provincial assembly would be respected. In package it was announced that a judicial commission would be formed to investigate the circumstances that led to the assassination of Nawab Akbar Bugti in 2006. The Frontier Corp will be under the jurisdiction of the provincial government but all these remained empty promises. The students of Balochistan would be awarded special scholarship by the Higher Education Commission. 5000 posts were offered to the disgruntled educated youth. It was promised that the major economic issues of the province especially the issue of gas royalty, adjustment of gas price and Gwadar port issue, would be addressed according to the construction. The conflict-smacked province was also promised Rs. 120 billion at per annum on account of its assertions for the gas development surcharges, royalty and excise duty on gas wells. Balochistan package was a comprehensive soft-power counter-insurgency strategy but it was not

accepted by the majority of the Baloch nationalists though some liberal Baloch forces half-heartedly accepted this as a step forward and a ray of hope for the people of Balochistan. Some concrete efforts have been made to merge the disgruntled youth of the province in the Army by relaxing the recruitment rules to pacify their longstanding antagonism against state institutions. However, these recruitments are mostly Balochistani, a term invented by Nawab Akbar Bugti for those settlers and non-Baloch ethnic groups living in the province for centuries.

Table 6.5

Recruitment of Baloch Youth in Pakistan Army (2005-2009)

Years	Numbers
2005	502
2006	1,052
2007	1,374
2008	1,841
2009	3,570
Total	8,3339

Source: Conflict and Insecurity in Balochistan by PIPS, 2012, p.217.

6.6.2.3: Seventh National Finance Commission (NFC) Award

Since the territorial disintegration and lose of East Pakistan, densely populated province remained unyielding over population as the sole criterion of horizontal resources distribution through NFC award. The NFC award is the distribution of financial resources between the central government and the provinces and among the provinces. The issue of Balochistan is constructional. Its major sources of revenue generation and collection are its constitutionally-occupied abundant natural resources. Balochistan has been demanding for a larger share in the federal divisible pool of the horizontal distribution of the resources among the provinces. Before the 7th NFC award, the population was the sole criterion for the distribution of the financial resources among the provinces which was benefiting to Punjab only and Balochistan was severely suffering because its share in Pakistan’s total population is just 5 per

cent. In the 7th NFC award, the three edgy federating units unanimously agreed to force a change of mind in Lahore and Islamabad and the provincial share (vertical distribution of resources) of the divisible pool has been increased from 17.5 per cent to 56 per cent in the first year of NFC (2010-11) and 67.7 per cent in the remaining years of the award and addition to that a four-point distribution formula of the resources was also agreed among the horn-locked provinces. The hardly-won 7th NFC award was a step forward towards fiscal federalism that was faded by the concept of security state for the last six and half decades.

Table 6.6
The Multiple Indicators under 7th NFC Award

S. No	Multiple Indicators	Percentage
1	Population	82.0%
2	Poverty/Backwardness	10.3%
3	Revenue Collection & Generation	5.0%
4	Inverse Population Density	2.7%

Source: Fiscal Federalism in Pakistan: the 7th NFC Award and Its Implications”, Working Paper 73, Islamabad: PIDE, 2011.

Out of 57.7 per cent of provincial share of total divisible pool, the financial resources though horizontal distribution among the provinces was agreed to be divided in the following ration, Punjab 51.75 percent, Sindh 24.55 percent, KPK 14.62 percent and Balochistan 9.09 percent.

Table 6.7
Inter-Provincial Resource Distributions in the Federal Divisible Pool

Provinces	1970-74	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th
		Award 1974-79	Award 1979-85	Award 1985-90	Award 1990-96	Award 1996-06	Award 2006-10	Award 2010-15
Punjab	56.50%	60.25%	57.97%	60.25%	57.88%	57.88%	57.36%	51.75%
Sindh	23.50%	22.50%	23.34%	22.50%	23.28%	23.28%	23.71%	24.55%
KPK	14.50%	13.39%	13.39%	13.39%	13.54%	13.54%	13.82%	14.62%
Balochistan	4.50%	3.86%	5.30%	3.86%	5.30%	5.30%	5.11%	9.09%

Source: Ifthiqar Ahmed, Usman Mustafa et.al., "NFC Awards in Pakistan: A Historical Perspective", Working Paper 2007:33, "Fiscal Federalism in Pakistan: the 7th NFC Award and Its Implications", Working Paper 2011:73, PIDE Islamabad.

In the 7th NFC award the major financial demands of Balochistan were accepted and its share in the horizontal distribution of financial resources has been increased to 9.09 per cent from 5.3 per cent which doubled the annual budget of Balochistan. Prior to the promulgation of the 7th NFC award, 2009-10 annual budget of Balochistan was around Rs.72 billion but volume of its annual budget of 2010-11 was Rs.152 billion and Rs.164.45 billion in 2011-12 budget with a development programmed of Rs.31.24 billion.³⁹⁰ The provincial budget for the current fiscal year (2012-2013) was worth of Rs.179.93 billion which includes Rs.144.11 billion of non-development expenditures and Rs.35.81 billion of annual development program. Undoubtedly the 7th NFC award has minimized the economic woes of the province as the provincial exchequer is being paid its longstanding arrears but due to substantial corruption and structural loopholes, the benefits are not entertaining the gross root level, as it is well said by a university fellow that, in April 2008 a Unidentified Flying Object (UFO/Raisani Government) dramatically landed on Balochistan Assembly with 65-alien who have looted Rs. 400 billion from the provincial exchequer so far out of around Rs. 600 billion federal awarded budgets.

6.6.3: Half-done Constitutional Guarantees

When Balochistan was merged into Pakistan, it was promised to be awarded maximum whole-hearted political autonomy but unfortunately Pakistan's Constitution could not be written until 1973 due to the complex and uncertain political situation of Pakistan. In the 1973's Constitution, limited provincial autonomy was given to the federating units but the federal government was given dominance over the provincial governments in the controversial Concurrent Legislative List of the Constitution. The Concurrent List was to be repealed after a decade of the execution of the 1973 Constitution but regrettably that could not turn up until the 18th Constitutional Amendment in 2010. Judiciously, the issue of Balochistan has been historically constitutional. Major sources of its revenue

³⁹⁰ 'Rs164.45bn budget for Balochistan', *Dawn*, June 22, 2011.

collection and generation are its abundant natural resources which have been exclusively under the federal government prior to the 18th Constitutional Amendment. The 18th Constitutional Amendment has taken revolutionary steps towards devolution of the authority and enhancing the provincial autonomy. It has scrapped the Concurrent Legislative List of subjects and empowered the provinces, particularly the smaller provinces. In the line with the changes made to the constitution via 18th Amendment, 17 ministries in the concurrent list have been transferred to the provinces. Only five major ministers (finance, revenue, communication, defence and foreign affairs) are now under the legislative dominion of the federal government. In the 18th Constitutional Amendment to the 1973 Constitution, longstanding grievances of Balochistan was half-heartedly recognized as the provinces have been given 50 per cent ownership over their natural resources, before that all natural resources were under the federal government and central regime was exercising full control over the natural resources of the provinces, especially those of resources-rich Balochistan. The Clause 3 of the amended Article 172 of the 1973 Constitution (clause 65 of the 18th Amendment) says “subject to the existing commitments and obligations, mineral oil and natural gas within the province or the territorial waters adjacent thereto shall vest jointly and equally in the Province and Federal Government.”³⁹¹ The hardly-negotiated 18th Amendment also protects the provincial shares in the federation. According to the clause 10 of the 18th Amendment (Article 27 of the 1973 Constitution), under-representation of any class or area in the services of Pakistan may be redressed in such manner as may be determined by an Act of Parliament. The amended Article 38 of the Constitution (clause 12 of the 18th Amendment) says that the shares of the Provinces in all federal services, including autonomous bodies and corporations established by, or under the control of, the Federal Government, shall be secured and any omission in the allocation of shares of the Provinces in the past shall be rectified.

It has been hailed and accepted by the moderate Baloch nationalists, but the ultra-Baloch nationalists have rejected this constitutional amendment. Ex-senator and

³⁹¹ 18th Constitutional Amendment, *the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan 1973*.

President of N.P, Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch, who is also a member of the Implementation Commission on 18th Amendment, expressed appreciation that 18th Amendment had put Pakistan on the track of true federation. “However, there are still some challenges in the implementation of 18th Amendment. The federal government is willing to give rights to the provinces but there is a pressing need to change the reluctant mindset of federal bureaucracy and security establishment.³⁹² The 18th Amendment has expanded the role of the Council of Common Interests (CCI). The CCI has become more powerful constitutional body comprised of representatives of centre and provincial governments to decide key matters especially enlisted in Federal list-II. The Council has become an effective forum of the federal government and provinces to resolve disputes, undertake economic planning and development ventures with a sense of joint responsibility. Actually, it is half-done constitutional protection as the federal government still constitutionally holds 50 percent of the natural resources of the resource-abundant provinces, which may herald another insurgency in the far-future.

Beside the politic-economic diagnostic incentives and unenthusiastic political dialogue the federal government has also seriously taken the notice of the regional and extra-regional diplomatic maneuverings which are critically denting the international prestige of Pakistan. The central regime wants to restrain the conflict within the national borders, as its strategically located coastal district of Gwadar has emerged as magnetic sources for regional and far-regional powers. Literally, Pakistan yearns for localization of the conflict, so for it has blamed the unfriendly regional power and its arch-enemy India and double standard Karzai regime in neighboring Afghanistan for the ill-occurrences in the conflict-blown province. Pakistan’s first formal diplomatic protest to India surfaced in Sharm el-Sheikh (Egypt) during the 15th Summit of Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in July 2009, regarding Indian covert involvement in its restive province of Balochistan, but the Indian government has turned a blind eye towards Pakistan’s accusations so far and yet oblivious towards Pakistan’s apprehensive concerns. On the other hand Pakistan has also been

³⁹² 18th Amendment, NFC award to strengthen federation, *Daily Times*, August 20, 2010.

diplomatically unsuccessful to compel the sheltering countries of the exiled and asylum seeker Baloch nationalists, even though solemn efforts have been made for the extradition of alleged Baloch rebels leaders in the European capitals.

6.7: Recommendations for Conflict Resolution

Geographically located at the confluence of the divergent interests of the regional and extra-regional powers, Balochistan conflict has to be settled within the parameters of the federation like the Pashtun, Sindhi and Muhajir intra-state conflicts were amicably resolved and died out by politically and economically integrating them into national mainstream. Keeping the Pashtun, Sindhi and Muhajir ethno-nationalisms as triumphant case studies, the Baloch conundrum should be passed through the modus operandi of the conflict resolution by unconditionally eschewing the dilapidated conflict management strategy. The federal government has taken some concrete but half-done efforts to redress the venerable grievances of Baloch people that deserve appreciation which have narrow down some standstill tensions between the former and later. Undoubtedly, it is a step in the right direction nevertheless it has no far-reaching results for the resolution of the 65-year old conflict of Balochistan. The people of Balochistan want full control over their natural resources as the people of Punjab and Sindh have on their agricultural resources. The Sardars are blamed for backwardness and unending problems of Balochistan but the disgruntled rationale youth aspire to a modern sophisticated world rather than a Stone Age tribal system. They are not against any development or mega projects but they oppose unjust and unfair development which does not benefit the local people. The new NFC award, Balochistan Rights Package and 18th Constitutional Amendment are rays of hope to defuse the province-center strained relations but there are still a lot to be done to bridge the gaping trust-deficits and bring back the distracted province into national mainstream. The need of the hour is to shun the conventional strategy of conflict management through whimsical promises to deal with the conflict of Balochistan for the time being and adopt a constructive and cohesive strategy of conflict resolution. For conflict resolution the political correctness must be give a chance to induce the repeatedly betrayed estranged Baloch nationalists towards negotiating table by

initiating certain Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) to generate a productive environment and mend the fences. The short term policy goal should be to create a conducive atmosphere, and for this purpose the six-point charter of self-exiled Baloch nationalist, Sardar Akhtar Mengal could be the minimum set of conditions for the bridging the unbolted trust deficit and establishing CBMs. Sardar Akhtar Mengal submitted his gripping six-point conditional charter to the Supreme Court of Pakistan in October, 2012, as model to begin the perpetual end of the conflict and establishing sustainable peace by resetting of the federal-provincial stalled relations. The six-point charter says;

1. All covert and overt military operations against the Baloch should immediately be suspended.
2. All missing persons should be produced before a court of law.
3. All proxy death squads operating under the supervision of Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) and Military Intelligence (MI) should be disbanded.
4. Baloch political parties should be allowed to function and resume their political activities without any interference from intelligence agencies.
5. Persons responsible for human torture, killing and dumping the dead bodies of the Baloch political worker and activists should be brought to justice.
6. Measures should be taken for the rehabilitation of thousands of displaced Baloch living in appalling conditions.³⁹³

Objectively speaking, Mengal's six-point prescription within the parameters of the federation were endorsed and backed by the mainstream political parties including right wing Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf of cricketer-turned-politician Imran Khan, Jamaat Islami, intelligentsia and civil society but the ruling PPP remained tighten lip over quite-genuine six-point demands of Baloch leader, while it got mix reactions, some in favour and some in against from the other Baloch nationalists. For long term policy,

³⁹³ Najam Sheti, "Mengal's six point agenda", *The News*, October 1, 2012.

the federal government should opt for never-implemented recommendations of the Parliamentary Committee on Balochistan (PCB) as preliminary roadmap for the solution of the long-lasting conflict of Balochistan. The recommendations of the PCB were brainstormed by Senator Chudhary Shujaat Hussain, Senator Mushid Hussain and ex-Senator Waseem Sajad in 2005. The federal government should constitute a heavy mandated national commission, consisting of government representatives and all mainstream political parties including army that should review the old recommendations vis-à-vis the conflict, formulate novel recommendations acceptable to all Baloch nationalists and implement all those recommendations in letters and in spirit to medicate the decades-old wounds of the Baloch people, inflicted upon them for the last 65 years. Army as a party should be included in the political negotiation as it is an open secret that Pakistan Army sway considerable influence in the security affairs of the province. Following are some recommendations to be considered by the policy makers as policy options for restoring the central-provincial harmony;

1. Federal government should end its reliance on military and use of force to deal with the conflict of Balochistan. For the last eight years military has been trying to subdue insurgency by its counterproductive counterinsurgency strategy but it has been failed as the insurgency has spread in the breadth and width of the province. The federal government should cease ongoing military operation, if there is any foreign intervention, it must be dealt with diplomatic engagement with the alleged states and the federal government should adopt an appeasement policy towards the estrange Baloch nationalists to dismantle their nexus with the foreign forces.
2. Political dialogue should be the top priority of the federal government to redress the reservations and grievances of the natives. Political dialogue should be initiated and the federal government should take initiatives, being the stronger party. Recommendations of several All Parties Conferences should be implemented and for credible assurance to get the lost trust of the disgruntled Baloch nationalists, the central government should establish a highly mandated sovereign fence-mending “Reconciliatory Committee” consisting of revered and saner politicians as go-between to meet and

negotiate with all genuine stakeholders including exiled Baloch leadership, Baloch elders and discontented youth to bring them back to national mainstream to start political activities in the politically-entrenched province. The dialogue between the centre and periphery must prevail which is the only silver lining.

3. As Awami National Party, earlier Sindhi nationalist movement and *Muttahida Qaumi Movement* (MQM) which were blamed to be anti-state political parties have been integrated in the national mainstream, may be the template for army-dominated security establishment and the central government along with security establishment should adopt such strategy to incorporate the Baloch nationalists into the national mainstream.
4. The carrot and stick policy must come to an end and the Baloch nationalists should be reintegrated in the parliamentary politics in the next general elections and should be given maximum space to contest elections to fill the political vacuum by projecting the genuine provincial leadership rather than cosmetic hand-made, fake leadership. The moderate and progressive middle class politicians must be given breathing space for political activities.
5. The issue of missing persons and the recovery of the mutilated bullet-riddled bodies of the missing persons is a very serious issue and it is instigating further violence. According to Baloch nationalists there are roughly 14000 missing persons. All the arrested and disappeared political workers should be released, and if anyone has committed any crime, he must be produced before the courts of justice.
6. Responsible persons of the enforced disappearances and architectures of the notorious kill and dump policy should be brought to justice through a high-level judicial commission with constitutional mandate.
7. A long-term roadmap should be pursued for uninterrupted and uninterruptable step-by-step peace process as required for sustainable termination of a long-lasting conflict
8. To enhance the parliamentary voice of the province in the federal politics, the government must grant some extra-constitutional concession and initiate

delimitation by raising the National Assembly constituencies from 14 to 30, providing each district with a MNA.

9. The role of the security agencies and army should be minimized and the civil administration should be encouraged to run the affairs of the provincial government. Efforts should be made to be indigenized the paramilitary forces, as ethnic Baloch constitutes only 10 percent of the total 50,000 F.C. personnel installed in the province.
10. Judicial inquiry of the assassinations of Nawab Akbar Bugti and other political leaders like Ghulam Muhammad Baloch, Lala Munir Baloch and Sher Muhammad Baloch should be carried out without any delay in letters and spirit as promised in the Balochistan Rights Package of late 2009.
11. The targeted assassination of the political workers must be curbed along with the target killings of the non-locals especially settlers from Punjab.
12. According to the South Asian Terrorism Portal, the province has absorbed around 3,272 fatalities, including 2,092 non-combatants, 708 armed forces personnel and 472 insurgents. The non-combatants should be economically compensated by the central government to win their hearts and minds.
13. Balochistan has become human rights free zone due to deteriorating lawlessness in the problematic province, steps should be taken to stop the alarming human rights violation as such violation fuel conflicts.
14. The province should be given full sovereignty over their natural resources as the provinces have on their agricultural resources.
15. Tangible steps should be taken to appease the disgruntled youth by providing the jobs, especially in bureaucracy and army.
16. The demands and reservations of the nationalists which have been submitted to the previous government should be taken under consideration while resolving the problems of Balochistan.
17. The Senate, upper chamber of the parliament, should be given more power especially it should be given more financial power, because it is the sign of federation where all four provinces have equal representations.

18. The proportionality of the representation in Senate has been disturbed in 2002 due to the representation of Islamabad and FATA. The representation of Islamabad and FATA should be canceled.
19. The conflict-hit Internal Displaced Persons (IDPs) of Dera Bugti and Kohlu in different parts of Balochistan, Sindh and Punjab should be rehabilitated in their respective regions including their tribal chiefs.
20. As the federal government has stopped the construction of cantonments for the time being but it should permanently stop considering the construction of military bases (cantonments) in Dera Bugti, Gwadar and Kohlu and the resolution of Balochistan Assembly passed against the construction of the military cantonments on 23 September, 2003 should be honored along with the other resolutions.
21. Federal government should handover the control of Gwadar Deep Sea Port to the provincial government.
22. The apprehensions of the Baloch nationalists about the demographic change and economic migrants should be addressed with legal guarantees. The economic migrants should not be awarded domiciles until 20 years.
23. Bona fide endeavor should be taken to reform the worse for wear tribal system and promote ethnic concord in the multi-ethnic province to lower the ethnic tension and all Afghan refugees should be repatriated to Afghanistan who have threatened the genuine demography of the province. The policy of ad hocism and divide and rule must be abolished to promote inter and intra tribal harmony.
24. Provincial government should be given political and economic authority over the mega projects in the province. Saindak and Reko Diq should be brought under the provincial jurisdiction. All the future master plans should be executed with the approval of the provincial administration as it is laid down in 18th Amendment.
25. The issue of gas royalty should be resolved permanently and the gas price of Balochistan should be raised to those of the other provinces. This can further improve the fiscal position of the province.

26. The 7th NFC formula should be maintained for the future NFC awards and the future NFC awards should not decrease the shares of the provinces, rather they should increase it.
27. The federal quota of Balochistan has verbally been increased to 6 per cent but it has not been implanted yet. It should be implemented in all federal services and educational institutions.
28. The educational sector of Balochistan is in worse condition, since its inception in 1971, the University of Balochistan has produced only 50 PhDs. The lake of universities and professional and technical institutions has aggravated the worsening situation. More universities and professional institution should be established throughout the province to generate native human resources. Lake of local human resource has given the chance to the non-locals to enjoy the jobs and economic opportunities.
29. The government should focus on soft-development by smart power, establishing schools, colleges, universities, hospitals, roads that fulfill the immediate needs of the local people.
30. Roads and other modern communications should be built to link the intra-provincial urban cities. It is interesting to know that there is not any direct route from the provincial capital Quetta to coastal city of Gwadar.
31. Due to the establishment of the port in Gwadar, the fishing industry of Gwadar has been seriously affected which is the only source of income of the local. They should be given the rights of fishing like past.
32. Health facilities in the province are equal to zero. Eighty per cent native people have to go to Karachi for treatment. Government should take earnest steps to provide health facilities.
33. There is not any disaster management cell in the province due to which the periodic cyclone, torrential rains and Mirani Dam flood in June 2007 and June 2010 seriously affected the people of the province. A disaster management cell should be established in the province.
34. In case of redrawing the provincial borders as being trumpeted in the electoral politicking, the concerns and suggestions of the Baloch nationalists over

Baloch dominated district of Punjab should be considered. The Baloch nationalists want the Baloch areas of Southern Punjab should be merged to Balochistan and the Pashtun population of their province should be included in KPK.

CONCLUSION

The unique terrestrial standing of Balochistan on the global political map itself defines its political weight in the foreign policies of regional and extra-regional powers. Throughout the Great Game of late 19th and early 20th centuries, Balochistan was widely deemed the gateway towards Indian Empire. In the Cold War, it was mistakenly or unmistakably believed to be the trouble-free access to the warm waters of the Indian Ocean for the Soviet “Eastern Question” and in the current unfolding New Great Game it is widely expected to be the doorway to the resource-rich Central Asia. Neither politically, nor economically exclusive geographic location of Balochistan along its rich natural resources had ever been advantageous for the indigenous inhabitants (Baloch). Clearly, the history delineates that the native residents remained sandwiched among the conflictive national, regional and international interests that have narrowly exacerbated since the calculated fall down of the colonial rule in the region in 1947.

To restrain Russian territorial extension, the British nearly colonized the Khanate in 1839 and established a huge military cantonment in Quetta while it also implemented its smart power strategy to deal with the local Baloch and Pashtun tribes. The Lawrence of Balochistan, Sir Robert Sandeman, was the engineer of notorious Sardari System in Balochistan through which the British penetrated into Baloch land peacefully, applying hard and soft power. He was the real man controlling the reins of the warrior Baloch tribes. He managed the tribal lords rather than the tribesmen by giving them certain incentives in returns of their devotion. On the other hand, the British feigned tribal system in British Balochistan, known as *Shahi Jirga* to politically legitimize their presence. British Balochistan was Chief Commissioner Province, governed by the Agent of the Governor General to India. The successive Khan of Kalat signed bilateral agreements with British India in return of de facto rule in Khanate. Later on during WW I and WW II, then Khan of Kalat endeavored to re-assert his power over the Khanate but could not foment political resistance until the Baloch nationalism started surfacing in the form of some political parties like *Anjuman-e-Ittehad Balochan wa Balochistan* of Abdul Aziz Kurd and Kalat State

National Party of Nawab Yousuf Aziz Mugsli. The National Party was formed after the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia that was profoundly influenced by communist ideas with anti-sardar and anti-colonial aspirations. From 1920s to 1940s, the emerging Baloch nationalists observed many thick and thin in the confused colonial politics but they failed to carve out a sovereign Baloch land on the map of the world. Nevertheless, they stalled a short-lived independent state in the immediate withdrawal of the colonial power from the Indian sub-continent but they could not sustain their baby state.

The Kalat Khanate with its feudatory states like Makran, Kharan and Lasbela were ultimately annexed to Pakistan on 30th March, 1948 that sparked an unrelenting saga of violently-strained relations between central government and Baloch nationalists that still soundly vibrate and reflects in the ears and eyes of the successive generations. After the annexation, the already backward and embryonic Baloch princely states were entirely ignored by the central government and were left on their own, leaving those politically-retarded which dug them in a political chaos. The politically-sterilized Baloch nationalists were not accommodated in the national mainstream that dragged them towards militancy, the last option left for them. The zero-tolerance policy against the nationalists resulted to political agitation, tribal mutiny, insurgencies by nationalists and counter-insurgency operations by army in 1958-69, 1973-77 and 2005-todate, synchronized with the major international happenings like the Cold War, War on Terror and the much-trumpeted New Great Game. The arbitrary denial of the politico-economic rights to the Balochs has added fuel to the inflaming antagonism of the Baloch nationalists for the last six-plus decades. The longstanding complaints of the Baloch nationalists that they are being robbed of their natural resources truly justified their anger but the use of violence hardly translates into calculated aspiration because two wrongs never do a right.

Pakistan's political system is complicated to describe. Is it democratic or autocratic, closed or open, participatory or controlled by the feudal lords and tribal elites? It is not clear if the system is free of the influence of military rulers that have ruled

Pakistan for more than half of its existence, such as the first two military rulers, Ayub Khan (1958-1969), Yahya Khan (1969-71), abrogated the constitution of 1956, while the following pair, Zia ul Haq (1977-1988) and Pervez Musharraf (1999-2008) introduced provisions into the 1973 Constitution of the country. Pakistan was disintegrated at the time when it was under military rule and fought two wars in 1965, 1971 during their period. Similarly, the military operations were launched in Balochistan mostly during the military rules. The most recent phase was in 2005, when Musharraf started operation in Balochistan and killed a Baloch politician Nawab Bugti. While the failure of democratic institutions in Pakistan is typically attributed to constitutional and judicial weaknesses, the poor quality of political leadership and the lack of socio-economic development, the structural constraints imposed on democratic institutionalization by the “political militarism” of the Pakistani army failed to intact Baloch alienation within Pakistan. Subsequently, appealing slogans of the alienated Baloch nationalists for independent Balochistan are clutching the provocative attentions of the deprived Baloch people and the disgruntled Baloch youth, ultimately, harbingering bizarre threats to the heterogeneous nature of national security.

Applying the paradigm of three level of conflict analysis (individual, state and international system) on the conflict of Balochistan, the local Sardars fit in the individual level of analysis, followed by the federation in the state level of analysis and foreign actors in the framework of international system, obviously outline the current status of the decades-running conflict. As a matter of fact, all the three, local sardars, federation and regional or extra-regional manipulate each other in subjective approach and their slanted interactions mark out the contemporary cataclysm in the grief-gripped province.

A share of blame for the elusive conflict is being charged on the orthodox tribal system for holding the conflict-hit province impoverished and backward which is a known secret. The local opportunist Sardars usually team up with the establishment to sustain their old-time tribal hegemony over their tribal fellows. Actually, it was the

last Khan of Kalat who played off his tribal loyalties. His shortsightedness and double standard nature had done more harm than good to the later Baloch generations. Politically a confused ruler, he could not immediately decide the future of his backward tribal people, straddling between Islamic State and Baloch State. From one side he was provoking Baloch nationalism under the patronage of his ancestral Khanate but behind the scenes he was closing his head with that of the kingpin of the newly carved out Islamic State (Pakistan). He merged his Khanate with Pakistan alike his immediate princely states of Makran, Kharan and Lasbela, even without taking the trust of his own established tribal state institutions, claiming to be the ultimate savior of Pakistan in his autobiography, *Inside Balochistan*. After having acceded Khanate, he tried to manifest himself as salvager of Baloch nationalism by instigating a tribal mutiny against the central government but later he accepted the Governorship of Balochistan in mid-1970s. His twin character set a precedent for other powerful Baloch tribal leaders of the coming generations who have been adopting the dual character deceitfully architected by the Khan of Kalat, Mir Ahmed Yar Khan. Take the present example of the incumbent provincial executive and governor, Nawab Aslam Raisani and Nawab Zulfiqar Ali Mugsi respectively, both were the members of the Baloch Supreme Council constituted to pursue Kalat case in the ICJ against the violation of the autonomy agreement under which accession treaty was signed between the Khan of Kalat and Quaid-i-Azam, (other members of the council were Suleman Daoud, Sanaullah Zehri, a provincial minister, Nawab M. Khan Shahwani and Sardar Akhtar Mengal). They vehemently instigated their tribal fellows before availing the provincial administrative powers but once they grasped the top public offices in the province, they have forgotten once they were the instigator of Baloch masses against the central government. Same tactics were employed by Nawab Bugti when he was alienated by his NAP-fellows during 1970s.

The state-level analysis involves the overall political structure (federation) that emphasizes the characteristics of federation while formulating and executing policies vis-à-vis the conflict. The central government behavior with respect to Balochistan and its longstanding issues has been aggressive rather than cooperative. During the

absolute authoritative regimes (Ayub, Bhutto and Musharraf) Islamabad's attitude had been extremely hostile. All the same, the federal government has adopted an exploitative policy to extract the rich natural resources of the province, robbed the aboriginals of their natural wealth since the early 1950s. Blatantly, it has wittingly continued to be negligent towards the colonial-era backward province. Knowingly or unwittingly, Islamabad continued the colonial-era policy of the 19th century in the province even in the 21st century. The continued negligence and chronic unjust economic exploitation have stemmed a provocative separatist movement in nearly half of its territorial depth. The resilient insurgencies clearly delineate the failures of all central governments to salvage its major chunk of land from seditious activities which are festering per diem. Despite making efforts for integrating the insurgency-monger in the mainstream federation, they have been frequently betrayed with fanciful promises. The long history of betraying, use of force and persecution by the center are the driving force in widening the gulf in the center-province relations. Unquestionably, the delineated-reasons mentioned national, regional or far-off regional, but Pakistan as a state itself is responsible for this quagmire in Balochistan. The raised voices for their legitimate politico-economic rights have been brutally suppressed with force. For the last 65 years it has never taken honest efforts to abolish the sardar system, rather it has been bolstered by the successive regimes in Islamabad that serves its exploitative policies.

The system-level of conflict analysis focus on a top to bottom approach which examines the anarchic nature of the global system inflicting far-reaching implications on the festering nationalistic conflict of the province. The foreign actors are blamed to be instigating and shouldering the insurgency in Balochistan since the 1960s and 1970s. In the realistic and anarchic nature of international politics, every state pursues foreign policies parallel to its national interests whether sane or insane. Balochistan has come under the shadow of the regional power politics as the powerful nations are dangerously vying in the region as Balochistan bridges the Gulf States with depleting energy resources and the Central Asian Republics with rich energy resources. Since the invasion of Afghanistan in the immediate aftermaths of the disastrous event of the

9/11, the USA has attained an extra-ordinary military position in the region in general and in Afghanistan in particular which is followed by China with its much-contested “String of Pearls” naval strategy that has intensified the global competition for the vast energy resources of landlocked Central Asia. For the quest of the untapped energy resources of the CARs, the great players are busy to ponder for the natural allies either state or non-state actors as without their honest support no player of the game can bolster its strategic interests and geopolitical concerns.

In the geopolitical vision of the multipolar world, Balochistan is envisaged to be one of the chessboards on which the un-wrapping New Great Game would be played in bursting economic-cum-military powers in the changing dynamics of the unipolar world between China, the emerging economic superpower and the USA, the sole superpower of the unipolar world. To play the political game on the chessboard of the global power politics, the pawns (Pakistan and Baloch nationalists) should be braced with appropriate strategies, otherwise the old chessboard (war-torn Afghanistan) on which the Great Game and the Cold War were played could be an exemplary lesson for the both, security establishment and the Baloch nationalists. “Fight, fight if you [Baloch youth] rationally believe that you can achieve your desired goals, but if you cannot, then do not render your parents with tear-escaping eyes”, said Sardar Attaullah while being interviewed by the *BBC Urdu Service*. So far the immediate solution of the conflict looks more elusive than what it actually appears but not impossible. Honest intentions could prevail if both sides unequivocally put their heads together and unearth an eternal solution to the sprawling prolonged Baloch-Islamabad conflict that has cost millions of treasury from the national exchequers and lives of thousands of innocent people. A meaningful dialogue can permanently does away with the prevailing myopia. The central government should pin its hopes to the new general elections on the horizon, ballot should speak rather than bullet in the politically-near paralysis province as every day sun dawns over the horizon with new hopes.

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