

AGHAZ-E-HUQOOQ-E-BALUCHISTAN

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PREFACE

Huqooq, in every day conversation and in legal vocabulary, means “rights, i.e., what is due to someone” and *Aghaz* means beginning. The socio-economic package termed “Aghaz-e-Huqooq-e-Balochistan” does not simply mean a beginning but is a continuous process to give what is due to Balochistan. Already, in the NFC Award, “for the first time in the history of Pakistan multiple criteria for resource distribution has been adopted which includes population, human development index, inverse population density and revenue generation” discontinuing the sole criterion of population. This has resulted in nearly doubling the share of Balochistan from the federal divisible pool of 5.11 to 9.09 per cent.

Balochistan is the largest province in area, lowest in population and the poorest in per capita income since its birth. The underlying reason for its backwardness seems to be illiteracy of its human resource. According to the first census in Pakistan held in 1951, the literacy rate in Balochistan was 3.9 per cent, which had later increased to 37 per cent in 2004.¹ It was denied the status of a province under British rule. When One Unit was established in 1955, it was merged into it along with other provinces of West Pakistan and when One Unit was done away with in 1970, its status as a province was re-established along with the other provinces.

The *Factfile* begins with the report of the Parliamentary Committee of the former government on Balochistan presented in 2005, and includes the proposals of the present government titled “Aghaz-e-Huqooq-e-Balochistan” finalized in 2009, and selected reports and articles appearing in the media up to February 10, 2010.

February 10, 2010.

Noor ul Haq

¹ Noor ul Haq, “Education in Pakistan: Historical Perspective”, Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema and others, eds., *Pakistan and Changing Scenario: Regional and Global* (Islamabad: Islamabad Policy Research Institute, 2008), 12-13.

REPORT OF THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON BALOCHISTAN: EXTRACTS

Executive Summary

The situation in Balochistan during last year evoked concern, with a deteriorating law and order situation and strident political demands that threatened the destabilization of Balochistan with a growing sense of deprivation in that province. To respond to these challenges, and in the spirit of promoting harmony and peace, the then Prime Minister Chaudhry Shujat Hussain declared in Senate on September 23, 2004 that a Committee on Balochistan shall be constituted to discuss the problems of Balochistan and seek ways to ameliorate the condition.

Accordingly a Resolution was adopted by the Senate for constitution of a Committee “to deal with Balochistan and inter-provincial harmony”. The terms of Reference were “to examine the current situation in Balochistan and make recommendations thereon and further to make recommendations to promote inter provincial harmony and protect the rights of provinces with a view to strengthen the Federation”. The Committee was mandated to submit its report within 90 days of its composition. The Committee led by Chaudhry Shujat Hussain was formed on September 29, 2004, comprising of 29 members. Later 9 more members were added, bringing total strength to 38. The Committee had 16 Senators and 12 MNAs drawn from a wide spectrum of political parties, giving adequate representation to the members from Balochistan. The Committee was later sub-divided into two sub-committees. One headed by Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed mandated to examine the current situation in Balochistan and make appropriate recommendations, the other sub-committee was led by Senator Wasim Sajjad to make recommendation “to promote inter-provincial harmony and protect rights of provinces with a view to strengthen the federation”. The Parliamentary Sub-Committee on the current situation comprised of 19 members, of which 5 were MNAs. The Sub-Committee started its work in right earnest in October, 2004 and held 7 meetings, 3 of which were held in Quetta and Gwadar. The Sub Committee held detailed and substantive discussions with all relevant federal and provincial authorities, as also with local leaders of political parties to have a better insight into the problems and suggest remedial measures. To expedite the

deliberations Chairman Chaudhry Shujat Hussain gave January 7, 2005 as the deadline for completing the report of the Sub Committee.

To facilitate the discussions and provide a specific framework a checklist of issues was drawn up to determine the scope and parameters of deliberations.

The task began with a detailed presentation on the current situation in Balochistan by Senator Sanaullah Baloch which covered political, social and economic issues confronting the province. The presentation was adopted as a working paper and copies were circulated to all concerned provincial and federal authorities and Members for comments/views and to seek official response.

To appreciate the complexity of problems and the delicate nature of the issues, it is essential that they should be put in perspective in the context of the ground realities. Balochistan has a total area of 347,190 km and its population, as per 98 census is 6.51 million. The population density is 19 persons per kilometer. It has 27 districts and a coastline of over 770 km. The province is resource starved and generates revenue of only Rs.1.6 billion just enough to pay the monthly salary of government officials. The province, therefore, is dependent on Federal Government's grant of Rs. 27 billion, and thus has a deficit of Rs.15.5 billion.

In social sectors also, Balochistan is much below the country average. Its literacy percentage is 26.6% as against national average of 47%. Only 20% have access to drinking water as against 86% of Pakistan. 47% of the population is living under poverty line. To address different issues involving security and development of the province, federal secretaries were summoned to give evidence in its meetings. The questions relating to the mineral gas and oil exploration and Balochistan share in them were covered by Secretary Petroleum and Natural Resources. He responded, supported by relevant facts and figures and the policies of the Federal Government to different demands put up by Baloch representatives. Senator Sanaullah Baloch had demanded that leasing rights of exploration and exploitation be given to provinces through amendments in the Constitution. He also demanded an increase in royalty and referring to Article 58 of the Constitution, urged that requirements of the province in which the well head is situated be given preference. It was also suggested that the agreement of exploration should be signed between the company the province and in the meantime increase in royalty be agreed to. Secretary Petroleum informed that under international practice 12.5% is charged as royalty on production. The

Committee asked for detailed record on issues relating to the exploration and distribution.

Additional Secretary Finance informed the Committee that previous NFC Award signed in 1997 shall prevail until a new award. The ratio of divisible pool between the Federation and the Provinces was 20 80, but it has now been reduced. Secretary Ports and Shipping briefed the Committee on Gwadar Port Authority, which was set up in October, 2004. Three members from Balochistan are nominated on the Board of GPA but none have attended any meeting so far. A Special Economic Zone will be established in Gwadar to bring benefits to locals.

Members suggested that a percentage of Port revenue be allocated to Gwadar District Government. Similarly 25% of revenues from Saindak Copper field should go to Balochistan. It was also demanded that ports should be a provincial subject and it should be mandatory to hire only local persons in BPS 1-15 and suitable legislation be made to protect the rights of the local people.

Managing Director Gwadar Port Authority informed that the port once operational, will be run by a private port operator, as is the case in advanced countries.

Secretary Defence briefed on three issues:-

- i) Establishment of cantonments.
- ii) Land allotted to Defence forces.
- iii) Role of Intelligence agencies in Balochistan.

He justified the proposed establishment of cantonments in Gwadar, Dera Bugti and Kohlu for logistic reasons, the province being too large for reaction time. He gave details of allotment of land to different arms of defence forces. On the role of intelligence services, he contested the claim that these agencies are performing any political role.

The Committee members expressed their reservations on acquisition of land by defence forces and asked for more details on the subject. On the role of law enforcement agencies Director General F.C. Balochistan gave a presentation explaining the mandate, which, interalia, includes:-

- a) Guarding the borders with Iran and Afghanistan.
- b) Maintenance of law and order.
- c) Anti drug-trafficking and smuggling. The security of Gwadar has also been assigned to IG FC.

FC is also involved with security of gas compression plants of PPL and OGDC in Dera Bugti and other institutions in the region. FC has also maintained peace in tribal feuds and sectarian clashes. Quetta alone has suffered 121 killed and 150 injured in activities of religious extremists. The Committee was also briefed on the history of raising of FC, organizational structure, tribal composition, deployment of border corps and internal security corps. Senator Sanaullah Baloch complained that Balochistan was not given due representation in the armed forces. DG FC however informed that in FC Balochistan representation is 24% more than population proportion. Senator Buledi stated that there are 342 check posts and people do not consider FC as a friendly force. IG FC responded that FC is considered in an adversarial light because of the anti-smuggling role. Senator Mouhim Khan suggested that FC should be manned by local people. All check posts should be abolished and powers under the Customs Act should be withdrawn. Senator Sanaullah recommended restructuring of FC on the lines of Punjab Rangers.

Director General Coast Guards briefed the Committee on the role, working and performance of his force, which was the only anti-smuggling agency to watch the entire coastline of 960 km. Under the Act the personnel of Coast Guards are vested with the powers of Police and Customs.

Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed stated that our anti-smuggling policy has failed and that forces dealing with anti-smuggling should check drug trafficking and gun running only. Senator Sanaullah Baloch stated that Coast Guards have set up 91 check posts in Balochistan, in violation of the Constitution. These check posts are in addition to the 493 of FC. Home Secretary Balochistan gave a briefing on law and order situation in the province, which has 1200 km border with Afghanistan 960 km with Iran and a coastline of 770 km. Its population comprises of 45% Baloch, 38% Pukhtoon and 17% others. Balochistan has 27 districts, 89 police stations and 286 Levies Thanas. The sanctioned strength of police is 19145 and that of Levies 13357.

The province has been divided into 'A' and 'B' areas.

- The 'A' area consists of cities and towns and is under police jurisdiction.
- The 'B' area is under the jurisdiction of the Levies.

The political parties were invited to give their comments. Pukhtoon Khwa Milli Awami Party in its demands, interalia, mentioned

that all political, legal and administrative decisions regarding Gwadar mega projects be given to the province along with all its income. It also asked that the decision of construction of new cantonments should be withdrawn.

The four Party Baloch Alliance observed that work on Gwadar Mega projects be stopped pending feasibility study, and its implications the project of establishing new cantonments be stopped. The right of province over the natural resources be accepted and all military operators in Balochistan should be stopped and all para-military forces withdrawn. MMA suggested that the criteria of the distribution of resources solely on population basis be changed to include area and level of development. Gas royalty at par with other provinces be given to Balochistan. National Party opposed induction/settlement of outsiders on Mega projects.

Jamhuri Watan Party opposed establishment of cantonments in Sui, Kohlu and Gwadar. The Committee visited Gwadar for two days. The district Nazim of Gwadar made a number of suggestions covering all areas of development. He emphasized the need for absorbing local persons for marginal positions of GPA and GDA, and more funds and autonomy be given to the Nazim. Chairman Gwadar Port Authority gave a detailed briefing on GPA and the progress of the project. He informed that on completion the Port will handle 30,000 WT truck carriers and 25,000 DWT container vessels. The project in two phases involves \$ 600 million investment. The briefing on Gwadar Development Authority was given by its chairman. The project started in March, 2002, and GDA was set up in October, 2003. An area of 19500 acres has been earmarked for residential purposes 200 acres for commercial and 210 acres for recreational purposes...

Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed clarified the issues in three categories;

- i) Confidence Building Measures (CBMs).
- ii) Doables.
- iii) Strategic issues.

Issues under CBMs have been decided and announced but not yet implemented. Under the doable category are issues like expediting NFC, determining job quotas and suggesting SOP for FC and Coast Guard check posts. Strategic issues include handling of terrorists, their training camps and establishment of cantonments. Based on these meetings, the members identified 31 issues ranging from Sui gas royalty to check posts

to development of Gwadar. A six member Drafting Committee was set up to finalize the recommendations. It held 4 meetings in January, 2005 and submitted recommendations covering all aspects. It was also emphasized that the actual test was the implementation of these recommendations and suggested that a monthly report should be submitted to the Sub-Committee regularly.

The Committee recommended that a special Task Force be constituted to ensure implementation of these recommendations...

- Brig. Salim Nawaz, DIG FC stated that FC Balochistan is a federal force, which operates under Ministry of Interior as per Section 3 of FC Ordinance 1959. The relevant clauses are as follows:-
 - i) To guard Pak-Afghan (1200 kms) and Pak-Iran (900 kms) initial borders. Total frontage 2100 kms (Section 3 FC Ordinance 1959).
 - ii) Assist Government in maintenance of law and order and any other security duties (Section 5 FC Ordinance 1959).
 - iii) FC is also empowered Vide Narcotics Act 1997 anti drug trafficking powers. Moreover anti gun running operations/tasks can be undertaken throughout the Province of Balochistan.
 - iv) Assistance to Army in case of war.
 - v) Anti smuggling powers have been delegated to FC, for carrying out anti smuggling duties under the Custom Act 1969, within a limit of 60 kms from the international border with Afghanistan and Iran. While performing these duties the focus primarily remains against narcotics traffic and gun running besides checking free flow of ammunition. All efforts are made to stop cross border move of these deadly items. This is extremely difficult task given the prevailing culture.
 - vi) Provision of security to strategic installations and development projects (MOI ltr F4/4/2003 dated 28 June, 2004.
 - vii) FC troops have also been empowered for destruction of poppy crop in various parts of

Balochistan. 5734 acres has been destroyed during 2003 and 2514 acres in 2004.

- viii) Besides undertaking such multidimensional task and despite shortage of funds and resources, FC is contributing significantly in enhancing educational standards of the locals by establishing schools in far flung areas. There are 13 such schools where 3031 students are enrolled. On the health side 50 beds hospital has been established at Quetta with all modern facilities. Medical camps were also established in far flung areas of Balochistan where poor were treated with free medicines. So far 16730 patients have been treated in these camps.
- The DIG FC further stated that there are lingering tribal feuds, which create serious law and order problems with negative ramifications for the Province as well as rest of the country. Following are some of the major inter/intra tribal feuds:-
 - a. Bugti vs Kalpars
 - b. Bugti vs Ahmedans
 - c. Bugtis vs Mazaris
 - d. Bugtis vs Raisanis
 - e. Gazinis vs Bejranis (clans of Marris)
 - f. Marris vs Loonis
 - g. Hameedzais vs Ghaibezais (Clans of Achakzais)
 - h. Rind vs Raisani.
 - i. Suleman Khels vs Lawoons.

By and large, the situation in Balochistan has mostly remained in a flux since 1970s, though it was kept under control. There are a few main trouble areas in the Province:-

- a) **Dera Bugti/Sui:** It is located on the confluence of three Provinces, i.e. Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan, and houses installments of national importance. Situation in Dera Bugti has been of serious concern over the last few years. There are 2 major gas compression plants of PPL and OGDCL, 162 wells and 367 kms of pipeline of PPL, OGDCL and SNGPL, which remain threatened due to the situation in the area. Recently there has been a serious strike at Sui Gas Fields which has just been called off as a result of very fast round of

mediation. FC has played a pivotal role in resolution of the crisis.

- b) **Kohlu:** Kohlu is a Marri dominated area. The Gazini Marris are the most militant of tribes in Balochistan. There are divisions among tribes, due to which law and order situation continues to emerge, and hence the threat to the writ of the government.
- c) **Khuzdar:** RCD highway (650 kms) passes through this area, hence the vulnerability. Attempts have been made to challenge the writ of the Government in this area. Moreover, intra tribal dispute also exist between two factions resulting into volatile situation. On 1 Aug. 2004 there has been a major incident of killing 6 individuals including 5 from the army.
- d) **Sibi:** There are natural gas resources at Uch (15 wells, 66 kms pipeline) and coal resources at Mach. The area also houses major road and railway link (Quetta to Sibi road 150 kms, rail 142 kms). These too remain under threat from miscreants.
- e) **Chamalang:** There are handsome coal reserves at Chamalang (1550 acres with best coal containing 80 % Carbon), which is in close vicinity of Loralai. Government started with exploration of resources in the area back in year 2002, but had to stop in view of dispute between two tribes. Such incidents disrupt developmental activity and deprive the local population of their due share of progress. In one of the incident, Commandant Levies (Col.) was seriously injured due to mine planted by the miscreants. He is now living a handicapped life.
- f) **Gulistan:** A serious flash point between Gaibezai vs. Hanidzais exists in the area since 1990. So far, the dispute has cost more than 400 human lives.
- g) **Gwadar:** Mekran division has by and large remained peaceful till commencement of Gwadar Deep Sea Port project and construction of coastal highway whereas on the one hand these projects have brought in new opportunities for the local population and promises of major economic benefits for Balochistan and the country as a whole. But there have been three major incidents of terrorist acts in the area since May 2004 during which (3 May 2004) 3 Chinese were killed and 9 injured. This poses serious threat to the mega projects, which

needs to be averted at all cost. President of Pakistan decided to assign the security of Gwadar to IGFC. MS Branch was instructed to post a Brigadier (Chief Security Officer Gwadar) to work under HQFC. Brig. Basit has been posted and is now working as CSO. At present 175 Chinese are working on the project.

- h) **Quetta:** The capital city has been the target of sectarian clashes in the recent past. Involvement of sectarian extremist groups in the incidents and foreign assets to the terrorists is reported. These have resulted in 121 killed and 150 injured. Here centers of economic activities are now merged with sectarian landscape and therefore the vulnerability. Due to the sectarian threat in the provincial capital, FC and Levies have to deploy fully on every Friday.
- i) **Pak-Afghan Border:** In the aftermath of 9/11, the situation along the Pak-Afghan border changed dramatically and FC had to re-posture itself for the total sealing of the border, checking of illegal immigrants/refugees and also taking up of defense all along. The border Corps were reinforced substantially. Being coalition partners, our utmost effort has been to ensure that no cross border move takes place from Pakistan territory to support undesirable elements.
- j) **Pak-Iran Border:** Pak-Iran border is being manned by FC Balochistan this side and the Iranian BSF on other side of the border, in accordance with the agreement concluded between the two countries in 1960.
- k) **Illegal Activities:** A common feature along Pak-Afghan and Pak-Iran border is the homogeneity of demography. Tribes with similar language and kinship cross over both sides of the border. There are approximately 35 truck-able and 250 unfrequented routes along the border. Remoteness of the area and inability of the government to provide efficient governance contribute to involvement of local population in smuggling of not only contra band items but also the weapons and narcotics, which is primarily perpetrated by the deep rooted mafia. Another dimension of these activities is human trafficking.
- l) **Threat to Foreigners:** Balochistan is a Golden Land. It needs to be explored. Key to the development lies in mega projects

like Gwadar, Saindak, coastal highway, coal can consider. This is not possible unless we allow foreign investments and in flow of technology.

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- Mr. Hafeez-ur-Rehman, Acting Chief Secretary, Balochistan, in his briefing informed the Committee that Balochistan has a total area of 347,190 km and it has a population (as per 1998 census) 6,511 million. The Population Density is 19 Persons/Km. It has 27 Districts and has a Coastline of over 770 Km. That the Province has remained a resource starved Province and is largely dependent on Federal Grants with a very narrow resource base of its own. Its revenue from own sources is Rs.1.622 billion. The total Federal Receipts etc. are Rs. 26.995 billion, whereas it has a deficit of Rs.15.500 billion. Its own source revenues equal to one month salary of 150,000 employees of the Government of Balochistan. He also presented the social and physical Indices of the Province which are as follows:-

Indicators	Balochistan	Pakistan
Literacy (Female)	26.6% (15%)	47% (33%)
Primary School Enrolment (Female Participation)	49% (21%)	68.3% (49.2%)
Access to Sanitation	7%	18%
Infant Mortality Rate (Per '000' LB)	108	100
Village Electrification	25%	75%
Population Below Poverty Line	32%	47%
Access to Safe Drinking Water	20%	86%

Data regarding educational institutions in Balochistan is as follows:-

Institutes	Boys	Girls	Total
Primary Schools	7,202	2,663	9,865
Middle Schools	529	181	710
High Schools	418	122	540
Colleges	48	22	70
Universities	05	01	06

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The Drafting Committee

Six-member Drafting Committee consisting of the following was constituted on January 4, 2005 to finalize the recommendations:-

1. Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed
2. Senator Syed Dilawar Abbas
3. Senator Prof. Khurshid Ahmed
4. Senator Saeed Ahmed Hashmi
5. Senator Muhammad Aslam Buledi
6. Senator Raza Muhammad Raza

The Recommendations Finalized by the Drafting Committee

- The recommendations finalized by the Drafting Committee were approved by the Parliamentary Committee on Balochistan in its meeting held on 23rd June, 2005 which met under the chairmanship of Chaudhry Shujat Hussain, MNA. These recommendations are as follows:-

1. Royalty and Gas Development Surcharge

- a. After rationalization of gas revenue receipts for Balochistan the District or Agency from which gas or oil is being produced should be given at least 15% of the revenue received by the provincial government in this regard.
- b. Maximum representation should be given to the Province, on the Boards of PPL, OGDC, Sui Southern immediately. There should also be no bar on the inclusion of public representatives on the Boards, if they qualify for this position.
- c. Five percent of the total expenditure of an exploration company awarded concession in an area shall be spent on social welfare projects whereas companies, which are successful in striking gas or oil shall be bound to spend 5 percent of their pretax profit on social sector projects, to be identified in consultation with public representatives of the District/Agency concerned. Companies, which fail to strike gas/oil, should submit audited accounts to the Ministry of Petroleum before leaving Pakistan. The above stated recommendation should form part of any agreement

between an exploration company and the Ministry of Petroleum pertaining to grant of concession in any part of the country.

- d. Distribution companies should be bound to provide gas on priority basis to the towns and villages of the District/Agency where gas is produced. Areas where gas lines pass, provision of gas to poor and low income private consumers, for household purposes, should be free of charge based on criteria to be developed by the company, in consultation with the Government, keeping in view the specifications of the area.
- e. The Committee approved a formula regarding Royalty and Gas Development Surcharge presented by Senator Syed Dilawar Abbas which should be implemented. The formula and the time frame for its implementation should be as approved by the NFC/CCI and to the satisfaction of the Provincial Assembly of Balochistan.
- f. The Committee also recommends that the arrears of Royalty due to Balochistan, as alluded to by some Senators, should be ascertained by 30th June 2005 and the disbursal of these arrears to the province should be completed by 31st December 2005.
- g. All agreements between the petroleum companies operating in Balochistan and the locals of the area should be implemented immediately.

2. Representation on Balochistan in Federal Government Employment

- i) The job quota of 5.4 percent under the Constitution for Balochistan, should be strictly implemented in all Federal Ministries, Divisions, Corporation and Departments and if there is shortfall in quota of any of these departments it should be announced and advertised so that vacancies under the quota are filled within 90 days of the advertisement through newspapers in the local media. Other special measures should also be considered to compensate for the lack of implementation of Federal quota for Balochistan including the Armed Forces and the Civil Armed Forces. It is also recommended that if persons with requisite qualification and

experience from Balochistan are not available persons from other Provinces can be hired on contract for the period that Balochistan domicile persons become available.

3. Gwadar

- i) Head Office of Gwadar Port Authority should be shifted immediately from Karachi to Gwadar and the Board of Directors of this Authority should have more than 50 percent representation of the people of Balochistan. Moreover, the Chairman should also be from Balochistan while a position of MD should be created for a professional person responsible for running the day to day affairs of the Authority.
- ii) 7 percent of gross revenue collected by Gwadar Port Authority, other than Federal levies, should be allocated to the development of the province of Balochistan.
- iii) In matters of employment at Gwadar Port the people of Gwadar should be given first preference and the second preference as far as possible should go to the people of Makran and then the people of Balochistan. All appointments from BS 1-16 should be reserved for people of Makran and the Province of Balochistan, and there should be relaxation of conditions of qualifications to ensure maximum induction of locals into employment at Gwadar.
- iv) To train local youth of Makran and Balochistan, a Fisheries Training Institute, a Vocational Technical Training Institute (starting from school level), a Research Institute and Degree Colleges for Girls and Boys should be established.
- v) Special seats be allocated to local youth of Makran and the Province of Balochistan in institutions of Medical Engineering and Management Sciences of Pakistan to enable them to participate in the future development of the area.
- vi) A special development package of at least Rs. 3 billion be announced by the Government for the Social Sector Development of District Gwadar, which should include development of health, housing, education, roads and water supply for the area.
- vii) The fishermen of Gwadar being displaced by the development of the Gwadar Port should be properly relocated either on or close to the Eastern or Western Bays

and fully compensated. Ban should be imposed on deep sea trawlers from entering into 35 nautical miles from the coast.

- viii) A judicial inquiry may be conducted by a high powered judicial commission, appointed by the Chief Justice of Balochistan High Court, to probe the settlement and allotment of Government lands in Gwadar District and to check the existing private housing schemes for any irregularity or illegality. However, legal buyers who have purchased land for legitimate housing schemes need not be disturbed.

4. Construction and Maintenance of National Highways in Balochistan

- i) Construction of highways and allocation of funds, according to the length of highways, falling in Balochistan has been demanded by all political parties. Funding for highways in the Province is recommended on top priority as per announcements of the Federal Government. Procedural bottlenecks should be removed by National Highway Authority and Ministry of Finance in this regard. Moreover, all approved highway projects, including two particular highways, which have a very strong link with the economic growth of Pakistan and the Province of Balochistan namely, Quetta Zhob D.I. Khan (N-50, 388 km) and Qilla Saifullah Loralai Dera Ghazi Khan (N-70, 285 km.) should be expedited on high priority basis as already there has been inordinate delay. Moreover, all highways linking other Provinces and Iran and Afghanistan should be taken up on priority basis. In this regard, the Government of Balochistan together with Small Industries Corporation, PIA Cargo or any other private charter company and the Ministry of Commerce should prepare special package for providing expertise and export financing for packaging, processing and storage of perishable items like fruits and vegetables for export to the Middle East. CED should not be charged on Fokker flights in Balochistan from Pakistani citizens.

5. Anti-Drought Strategy

- i) An effective anti drought strategy should be developed to alleviate water shortage in the Province as the drought of last seven to eight years has adversely affected the livelihood of nearly 60% of the population of the province. A number of dam sites have been identified by the Provincial Government and the same are at different levels of approval of GOP. These dams should be built. The committee recommends two sets of measures to alleviate the serious condition of people affected by the drought: an immediate, short term strategy and a long term strategy. The long term strategy would include prioritizing the building of new dams and water reservoirs while the short term strategy should include measures to be undertaken immediately like writing off agricultural loans of the farmers of drought affected areas and writing off electricity dues to drought affected areas from the period when the drought hit the area.

6. Distribution of Funds between Federation and Federating Units (NFC Award)

- i) The NFC Award, which has been delayed unnecessarily should be announced giving due consideration to the just view point of the people of Balochistan. Attempts should be made to achieve consensus on merit on the NFC Award without delay, purely based on welfare of the people without any political consideration. Level of development and degree of backwardness should be foremost among the criteria, alongside other factors.

7. Policy and Administrative Measures that can help in Building CBMs in Balochistan

- i) The unnecessary presence of FC & Coast Guards on the roads in the interior of the province are disliked by the people of Balochistan while also creating hatred since women and children are humiliated at check points and at times have led to ugly incidents, which resulted in law and

order situations. It is recommended that both these agencies should work in their jurisdiction and perform their primary duties of patrolling the borders and checking smuggling of arms and narcotics. It is also recommended that the anti smuggling policy of the GOP should also be reviewed to focus primarily on narcotics and weapons rather than on essential commodities or household goods usually carried by the people in small numbers, which become the target of FC and the Coast Guards. Their Operational jurisdiction, which has already been defined under the law, needs further clarification so that transgression from the law is avoided.

- ii) The political parties in Balochistan are demanding the retention of Levies Force in that Province. The statistics provided to the Committee show that not only is the expenditure on Levies much less compared to the Police but also the performance in detecting and controlling of crime by the Levies is better than that of the Police. Currently 'B' areas are controlled by the Levies which present 95% of the land mass of the Province while 'A' areas are looked after by Police. It is therefore recommended that the Levies should be trained on the pattern of Police and provided with the requisite logistics. In this regard a resolution was moved in the Provincial Assembly of Balochistan on 15th January, 2005 which was deferred on the assurance of Senior Provincial Minister on the grounds that the matter was being discussed with the Federal Government.
- iii) Two check posts, one at Uthal in District Lasbella about 130 km from Sindh border (manned by Coast Guards) and the other at Shalabagh, District Qilla Abdullah, close to Chaman, (manned by FC) are a particular source of anxiety, harassment and corruption. All members of the Committee from Balochistan including Federal Ministers and a large section of Parliamentarians and the common man feel very strongly that the removal of these two check posts would play a vital role in improving the general atmosphere in Balochistan.
- iv) Quetta Airport has no night landing facility. The people of Quetta in particular and Balochistan in general face difficulties as aircraft cannot operate due to lack of landing

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- facility during the night. On different occasions this problem was highlighted and announcements also made for provision of this facility. Immediate direction be issued to Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to take up the project on top priority basis.
- v) The Committee felt the need for effective coordination in respect of different development projects funded by the Federal government within Balochistan and recommended the establishment of the Office of DG (Projects) to coordinate on going and new projects, between the Federal Government and the Provincial Government, regarding ongoing and new projects as well as ensuring a time frame for completion of these projects.
 - vi) The cases of political workers arrested in Balochistan be reviewed and those persons implicated in minor offences should be released. Some foolproof system also needs to be established to check excesses of law enforcement agencies.
 - vii) Rs.1 billion one-time grant should be announced by GOP in FY 2005-06 to strengthen emergency wards and ensure sufficient quantities of life saving drugs in all Divisional Headquarters hospitals of Balochistan.
 - viii) A development package for the Sui area should be considered to compensate the area and the people in view of the fact that it has provided the much needed gas to the country for the past 50 years. A package of Rs. 2 billion may be announced for social sector projects to be executed by the Provincial Government in consultation with the Local Government/District Nazim.
 - ix) A special package for Quetta city may be launched to improve its infrastructure and to strengthen its social sector including steps to cleanse the City of pollution. Such a package must include funds for capacity building of the Quetta City Government in order for it to administer this project effectively. Therefore, a development package of approximately Rs. 4 billion is recommended for the uplift and revamping of Quetta city, which may be treated as a model project for other urban centers of Balochistan suffering from similar problems.

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- x) Balochistan be given a special quota of scholarships by the Higher Education Commission so that students of the Province can pursue studies leading up to local or foreign Masters and PhDs.
 - xi) The disinvestment of PPL, which is on the agenda of Privatization Commission, is a source of major concern to the people of Balochistan. It is recommended that this matter may be placed before the Council of Common Interest as natural gas comes under the purview of CCI. In case PPL is going to be privatized, the first offer should be made to the Government of Balochistan.
 - xii) The Committee is of the opinion that there is no justification, in the presence of a traditional Levy Force, to have a Special Levy in Kohlu Agency, which was recruited a few years ago. The Committee recommends that this Force should immediately come under the control of Director General Levies, Balochistan in order to be absorbed in different departments of Balochistan government within a period of one year.
 - xiii) The plans of building cantonments by GOP at Gwadar, Dera Bugti and Kohlu are being agitated by political forces of Balochistan. The Committee may consider recommending that till the conclusion of the dialogue under way for resolution of major current issues of Balochistan, the construction of cantonments be held in abeyance so that the congenial atmosphere currently created may be sustained.
 - xiv) While cognizant of genuine security needs of the Armed Forces, the Committee feels that acquisition of vast land for housing and commercial purposes is totally unjustified as well as bringing a bad name to the image of the Armed Forces.
 - xv) To promote harmony, stability and coexistence among all the communities in the Province of Balochistan, it is recommended that Baloch Pukhtun parity be maintained in all spheres of life. Till the structural problems involved are resolved by mutual dialogue and consensus, the Sub-Committee strongly feels that regional equity and balance within different parts of the province is as important as

inter provincial equity and balance. As such it is recommended that mega projects for development of water, energy and other resources should be evenly distributed and development of northern region including Quetta be given priority. It is recommended that the provincial government should take immediate steps among others, to achieve the following:

- a. To harness water resources of the northern region, all feasible dams in this part of the province be built on priority basis.
 - b. Special development programmes be prepared and implemented for the uplift of the social sector in the area, particularly quantitative and qualitative improvement of health, housing and educational services.
 - c. A quota for jobs in government employment should be strictly followed in a manner that both regions have equal representation and the unemployed youth of the districts that lag behind get their due share in job opportunities.
 - d. Government officers belonging to the districts of the northern region be posted at decision making levels in the provincial government in an equitable manner, giving them due representation on different boards, committees and commissions of the provincial government.
- xvi) The territory of Balochistan should be opened up for development, interaction and integration. The Committee urges peaceful and congenial atmosphere in Balochistan.
- xvii) A Special Task Force may be constituted by the Federal Government, in consultation with the Parliamentary Committee, to ensure implementation of these recommendations within 90 days.

Views of the Political Parties on Current Issues of Balochistan

Pukbtun Khaw Milli Awami

The views of the party on current burning issues faced by the Province are as follow:-

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- (i) The Pukhtun (Afghan), Brahvi and Baloch are separate nationalities having their own languages, socio-economic, political and constitutional history. Taking into consideration the socio-economic, linguistic and cultural characteristics of Pukhtuns it was incumbent either to revive the Chief Commissioner Province and raise it to the autonomous status of the Governors Province and to identify it with its Pukhtun inhabitants or to unite it with NWFP to form a Pukhtun Province identified as Pukhtunkhwa or Afghanistan as demanded by the Pukhtuns.
 - (ii) Delimitations of National Assembly constituencies based on irrational considerations i.e. NA-260 and NA-265, may be done away with to make way for due political representation of the Pukhtuns.
 - (iii) The authority to make all political, legal and administrative decisions regarding Gwadar Mega Project be given to the Province and all income out of it should also go to the Provincial Pool.
 - (iv) The proposals for construction of new Cantonments within the Province should be taken back.
 - (v) That the concept of Levies is based on the principles of community policing which is recognized universally as the ideal model of policing. The levy force, by all definitions, is a community police force which functions within the parameters of the customs and tradition of the tribes. Their strength is the community which assists them in the prevention and detention of crime. The system has been running with success. Crime rate in its area is very low as compared to the areas under the control of the Police. Instead of disbanding the force, it should be trained on modern lines and facilities be upgraded. Party gave following facts:-
 - a. The B areas are controlled by levies comprising 95.9% of the land mass of the Province.
 - b. The population ratio between A and B area is 41:59.
 - c. The ratio of strength of law enforcement agencies in A&B area is 59:41.

d. The ratio of budget of law enforcement agencies in A&B area is 76:24.

They made the following suggestions:-

- e. There is no provision for the storage of water for irrigation like other provinces. The Provincial Irrigation Department has proposed 18 Schemes worth Rs.2.9 billion. The funding for the said schemes may be arranged.
- f. Pasture/grazing grounds may be developed on scientific lines keeping in view the environmental conditions to support the cattle industry.
- g. Deforestation may be curtailed.
- h. Mineral resources, mineral related industries be established.
- i. The Province may be given its due from the income out of the use of Oil and Gas.
- j. Agro-based Industries and cold storages be established.
- k. Human resource of the Province may be developed by establishing technical institutions.
- l. The means of communication including rail and road be improved and extended throughout the Province.

Four Party Baloch Alliance

- i. The four Party Baloch Alliance made the following observations.
 - a. Work on Gwadar Mega Project be stopped till such time that detail feasibility reports on its political, economic, administrative implications are prepared.
 - b. The project of establishing new cantonments be stopped.
 - c. All land allotments in district Gwadar be cancelled.
 - d. The policy of amalgamating Levies into Police force be withdrawn.
 - e. The FC be confined to the Borders and Custom powers as delegated to them may be withdrawn as law and order is a Provincial subject. All the Check Points including at Uthal be removed. The right of the

- Province over its natural resources be accepted. All the sum due on the Gas royalty be given to the Province.
- f. All Military Operations in Balochistan be stopped and all Paramilitary forces be withdrawn.
 - g. People of Balochistan be given due representation in all the Federal Government Departments.
 - h. Only locals be provided employment in all Mega Projects and Gas Fields.

Mutabida Majlis-i-Amal

- ii. MMA presented the following points:-
 - a. Maulana Abdul Wasay stated that all the Mega Projects in the province are with the Federal Government therefore it is not possible for the Province to initiate development schemes out of its own resources.
 - b. He suggested that the criteria of the distribution of resources solely on population basis be changed to include area and level of development.
 - c. Gas royalty at par with other Provinces be given to Balochistan.
 - d. Water storage system be developed for irrigation of barren lands.
 - e. Special grants for exploration and development be given to the Province on regular basis.
 - f. He supported Mega Projects, provided its benefits are shared with the masses.
 - g. He supported retaining the Levies and keeping intact the status of 'B' area.

National Party

- iii. Dr. Abdul Hayee Baloch raised the following issues:-
 - a. Rationale for establishment of new cantonments and conduct of Para-military forces in the Province depict colonial approach.
 - b. He pointed towards wrong delimitations in Naseer Abad and Jafarabad districts.

- c. That no development project was ever completed in time. He referred to Hub Dam, Saindak, Patfeeder Canal and Katchi Canal.
- d. He opposed induction/settlement of outsiders on Mega Projects.

Jamboori Watan Party

Agha Shahid Bugti spoke on the importance of solving issues by going to their root causes. He emphasized that real causes for failing law and order situation be addressed. Establishing Cantonments is no solution. He opposed establishment of Cantonments in Sui, Kohlu and Gwadar, which is locally conceived as dominating local resources. Mr. Habib Jalib Baloch stated that their economy is backward. Big Port and export processing zone at Gwadar shall attract people from up-country. That shall affect local demographic structure. He cited Karachi as an example, which is facing worst kind of urbanization problems. The project shall adversely affect the fisheries sector. The Master Plan envisages a future population of 25 million where as the present population of Gwadar is 40 thousand. Land mafia has purchased 172000 acre land on throw away prices the Provincial Government has no land. He was critical about lack of control of the Province over the affairs of the Gwadar Port. Representation of the Province is two out of eleven in the Board of Directors.

Report 7, *The Parliamentary Committee report on Balochistan*, November, 2005.
www.foreignaffairscommittee.org

ROADMAP TO RESOLVE BALOCHISTAN TANGLE UNVEILED

The government on Sunday announced a roadmap for the resolution of Balochistan issue. The plan envisages convening of a jirga of Baloch intellectuals, newspaper owners and elders in Islamabad on Oct 30 or 31, seeking redistribution of natural resources through constitutional amendments and rebuilding all destroyed national institutions or infrastructure.

Announcing the roadmap at a press conference here, Senator Babar Awan, Secretary of the Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Reconciliatory Committee on Balochistan, said President Asif Ali Zardari had approved the strategy.

The committee was set up by President Asif Ali Zardari before his election to the presidency. Headed by Mr. Zardari himself, other

members of the committee included Senator Raza Rabbani, Senator Babar Awan, Balochistan PPP president Lashkar and Raeesani Ijaz Jakhriani. We want to assure the people of Balochistan that PPP-led government sincerely aims at resolution of all their issues immediately without any delay. For this, we are ready to go to any extent, he said.

Mr. Awan said that President Asif Ali Zardari would attend the jirga. Educationists, journalists, poets and writers from Balochistan would be invited.

Later, a multi-party political jirga would be convened, attended by all political forces of the province, to seek their suggestions to ensure the unity of the federation and resolution of the issues, he added.

Mr. Awan said in the light of suggestions of the jirga some legal as well as constitutional amendments would be made to ensure an equitable distribution of resources among the people of the province.

He said the vision of President Asif Ali Zardari was to resolve all issues through political consultations and not by confrontation.

The era of one-man rule is over and now the government believes in making all decisions through consultations in parliament. Mr. Awan said that during talks with leaders of different nationalist parties of the province, he saw no sign of hostility to the state.

The Balochistan issue is of political nature, and not of terrorism or separatism, the PPP leader said.

The secretary of the committee said reconciliation would be made with all political forces of Balochistan and the people displaced over the past nine years would be rehabilitated in order to remove the impression that the federal government was aloof to problems of the Baloch.

Mr. Awan said that over 7,000 military and paramilitary personnel deployed in towns of the province had been replaced with civilian personnel. Over one thousand politically-motivated cases against Baloch leaders had been withdrawn.

The report submitted to the president, he said, also mentioned the release of 830 political activists, who had been languishing in jails, including some family members of Mengal, Marri and Bugti tribes.

Inamullah Khattak, *Dawn* (Islamabad), October 27, 2008.

UNVEILING THE MYSTERY OF BALOCHISTAN INSURGENCY

Reporting by Tariq Saedi in Ashgabat, Sergi Pyatakov in Moscow, Ali Nasimzadeh in Zahidan, Qasim Jan in Kandahar and S M Kasi in Quetta.

Additional reporting by Rupa Kival in New Delhi and Mark Davidson in Washington.

An interview with two ex-KGB Operatives and veterans of the Russia-Afghan War who were tasked to foment trouble in Pakistan. They make some stunning yet unsurprising revelations on the history and extent of the involvement of foreign agencies including RAW and CIA in creating and reviving the so called 'Balochistan Insurgency', and what the Pakistanis must do to ensure their country is not torn apart.

Question: From your comments it appears that Balach and Mengal are heading the resurrected BLA and the BLA has been revived by the Americans and Russians to create trouble in Balochistan but could you give us any coherent reasons for going to such great lengths for disturbing Pakistan that is supposed to be a frontline ally of the United States on its war against terrorism?

Misha and Sasha (Ex KGB operatives and the architects of the original BLA): Frontline ally? Are you kidding? Americans are using Pakistan and Pakistanis would soon find it out if they have not already. Americans don't need that kind of allies and they have made it abundantly clear for anyone who can read their policy goals correctly. Let them deal with Iran and you would see. If there can be any desirable American ally in that region, that is Iran - Iran under a different regime, and they are working to that end. Except for Balochistan, the rest of Pakistan is useless for them.

Deception and treachery; Live and let die. The ultimate zero sum game. Repetition of bloody history: Call it what you may, something is happening in the Pakistani province of Balochistan that defies comprehension on any conventional scale.

Four correspondents and dozens of associates who collectively logged more than 5000 kilometers during the past seven weeks in pursuit of a single question - What is actually happening in Balochistan? - have only been able to uncover small parts of the entire conspiracy.

However, if the parts have any proportional resemblance to the whole, it is a frightening and mind-boggling picture.

Every story must start somewhere. This story should conveniently have started on the night of 7 January 2005 when gas installations at Sui were rocketed and much of Pakistan came to almost grinding halt for about a week. Or, we should have taken the night of 2 January 2005 as the starting point when an unfortunate female doctor was reportedly

gang-raped in Sui. However, the appropriate point to peg this story is January 2002 and we shall return to it in a minute.

Actually, the elements for the start of militancy and rebellion in Balochistan had been put in place already and the planners were waiting for a convenient catalyst to set things in motion. The gang-rape of 2 Jan, around which this sticky situation has been built, was just the missing ingredient the planners needed.

Two former KGB officers explained that the whole phenomenon has been assembled on skilful manipulation of circumstances. We shall keep returning to their comments throughout this report.

As Pakistan and India continue to mend fences, as Iran, Pakistan and India try to pool efforts to put a shared gas pipeline, as Pakistan, Afghanistan and Turkmenistan join hands to lay a natural gas pipeline of great economic and strategic importance, as the United States continues to laud the role of Pakistan as a frontline nation in war against terrorism, as Chinese contractors forge ahead with construction work in Gwadar port and on trans-Balochistan highway, as the Pakistan government makes efforts to bring Balochistan under the rule of law and eliminate safe havens for Saboteurs, arms smugglers and drug barons, as the whole region tries to develop new long-term models to curb terrorism and bring prosperity to far flung areas, there is a deadly game going on in the barren and hostile hills of Balochistan. Lines are muddy; there are no clear-cut sectors to distinguish friends from foes.

Right in the beginning we would like to clarify that when we say Indians, we mean some Indians and not the Indian government because we don't have any way of ascertaining whether the activities of some Indian nationals in Pakistan represent the official policy of their government or is it merely the adventurism of some individuals or organizations. When we say Iranians or Afghans, we mean just that: Some Iranians or Afghans. We don't even know whether the Iranian and Afghan players in Balochistan are trying to serve the interests of their countries or whether their loyalties lie elsewhere.

But - and it is a BUT with capital letters - when we say Americans or Russians, we have reasons to suspect that the American and Russian involvement in Balochistan is sanctioned, at least in part, by Pentagon (if not White House) and Kremlin.

We would also like to acknowledge that the picture we have gathered is far from complete and except for the explanatory comments

of two former KGB officials, we have no way of connecting the dots in any meaningful sequence.

For the sake of honesty, this story should better remain abrupt and incomplete.

The story we are going to tell may sound a lot like cheap whodunit but that is what we found out there. Before zooming in to January 2002, let's set the background. We consulted Sasha and Misha, two former KGB officers who are Afghans - the veterans of Russo-Afghan war - and they seem to know Balochistan better than most Pakistanis. Obviously, Sasha and Misha are not their real names.

They live on the same street in one of the quieter suburbs of Moscow. Two bonds tie them together in their retirement: While on active duty in KGB, they were both frequent travelers to Balochistan during the Russo-Afghan war where they were tasked to foment trouble in Pakistan; and they are both wary of Vodka, the mandatory nectar of Russian cloak and dagger community. They visit each other almost every day and that is why it was easy to catch them together for long chats over quantities of green tea and occasional bowls of Borsch.

We made more than a dozen visits to the single-bedroom flat of Misha, where Sasha was also found more often than not, and we picked their brains on Balochistan situation. As and when we unearthed new information on Balochistan, we returned to Sasha and Misha for comments.

As they told us, during the Russo-Afghan war, the Soviet Union was surprised by the ability and resourcefulness of Pakistan to generate a quick and effective resistance movement in Afghanistan. To punish Pakistan and to answer back in the same currency, Kremlin decided to create some organizations that would specialize in sabotage activities in Pakistan. One such organization was BLA (Balochistan Liberation Army), the brainchild of KGB that was built around the core of BSO (Baloch Students Organization). BSO was a group of assorted left-wing students in Quetta and some other cities of Balochistan. Misha and Sasha can be considered among the architects of the original BLA.

The BLA they created remained active during the Russo-Afghan war and then it disappeared from the surface, mostly because its main source of funding - the Soviet Union - disappeared from the scene.

In the wake of 9-11, when the United States came rushing to Afghanistan with little preparation and less insight, the need was felt

immediately to create sources of information and action that should be independent of the government of Pakistan.

As Bush peered into the soul of Putin and found him a good guy, Rumsfeld also did his own peering into the soul of his Russian counterpart and found him a good game. The result was extensive and generous consultation by Russian veterans who knew more about Afghanistan and Balochistan than the Americans could hope to find.

It was presumably agreed that as long as their interests did not clash with each other directly, the United States (or at least Pentagon) and Kremlin would cooperate with each other in Balochistan.

That brings us to January 2002. “Actually, most of the elements were in place, though dormant, and it was not difficult for anyone with sufficient resources to reactivate the whole thing,” said Misha about the present-day BLA that is blamed for most of the sabotage activities in Balochistan.

In January 2002, the first batch of ‘instructors’ crossed over from Afghanistan into Pakistan to set-up the first training camp. That was the seed from which the present insurgency has sprouted.

It seemed like a modest effort back then. Only two Indians, two Americans, and their Afghan driver-guide were in a faded brown Toyota Hilux double cabin SUV that crossed the border near Rashid Qila in Afghanistan and came to Muslim Bagh in Pakistani province of Balochistan on 17 January 2002. For this part of the journey, they used irregular trails. From Muslim Bagh to Kohlu they followed the regular but less-frequented roads.

In Kohlu they met with some Baloch youth and one American stayed in Kohlu while two Indians and one American went to Dera Bugti and returned after a few days. They spent the next couple of weeks in intense consultations with some Baloch activists and their mentors and then the work started for setting up a camp. “Balach was one of our good boys and even though I don’t know who the present operators are, it can be said safely that Kohlu must have been picked as the first base because of Balach,” said Misha. Balach Marri is the son of Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri and he qualified as electronic engineer from Moscow. As was customary during those times, any Baloch students in Russia were cultivated actively and lavishly by the KGB. Balach was one of their success stories. Because of intimate connections with India and Russia, it was no surprise that Balach Marri was picked as the new head of the

revived BLA. The mountains between Kohlu and Kahan belong to the Marris.

The first camp had some 30 youth and initial classes comprised mainly of indoctrination lectures. The main subjects were:

1. Baloch's right of independence.
2. The Concept of Greater Balochistan,
3. Sabotage as a tool for political struggle,
4. Tyranny of Punjab and plight of oppressed nations, and
5. Media-friendly methods of mass protest.

“Manuals, guidelines and even lecture plans were available in the Kometit [KGB] archives. Except for media interaction, they virtually followed the old plans,” told Sasha.

As was logical, the small arms and sabotage training soon entered the syllabus. First shipment of arms and ammunition was received from Afghanistan but as the number of camps grew, new supply routes were opened from India.

Kishangarh is a small Indian town, barely five kilometers from Pakistan border where the provinces of Punjab and Sindh meet. There is a supply depot and a training centre there that maintains contacts with militant training camps in Pakistan, including Balochistan.

There is also a logistics support depot near Shahgarh, about 90 kilometers from Kishangarh that serves as launching pad for the Indian supplies and experts.

These were unimportant stations in the past but they have gained increasing importance since January 2002 when Balochistan became the hub of a new wave of foreign activity.

The method of transfer from India to Balochistan is simple. Arms and equipment such as Kalashnikov, heavy machine guns, small AA guns, RPGs, mortars, landmines, ammunition and communication equipment are transferred from Kishangarh and Shahgarh to Pakistani side on camel back and then they are shifted to goods trucks, with some legitimate cargo on top and the whole load is covered by tarpaulin sheets. Arms and equipment are, as a rule, boxed in CKD or SKD form.

The trucks have to travel only 140 or 180 kilometers to reach Sui and a little more to reach Kohlu, a distance that can be covered in a few hours only. This is most convenient route because transferring anything from Afghanistan to these areas demands much sturdy vehicles that must cover longer distance over difficult terrain.

The small arms and light equipment are mostly of Russian origin because they are easily available, cheap, and difficult to trace back to any single source.

This route is also handy for sabotaging the Pakistani gas pipelines because the two main arteries of Sui pipe - Sui-Kashmore-Uch-Multan and Sui-Sukkur - are passing, at some points, less than 45 kilometers from the Indian border.

Whoever planned these camps and the subsequent insurgency, had to obtain initial help in recruitment and infrastructure from Indian RAW.

“When we first started the BLA thing, it was logical to ask for RAW assistance because they have several thousands of ground contacts in Pakistan, many of them in Balochistan,” said Sasha.

“Anyone wanting to set shop in Pakistan needs to lean on RAW,” added Misha.

The number of camps increased with time and now there is a big triangle of instability in Balochistan that has some 45 to 55 training camps, with each camp accommodating from 300 to 550 militants.

A massive amount of cash is flowing into these camps. American defence contractors - a generic term applicable to Pentagon operatives in civvies, CIA foot soldiers, instigators in double-disguise, fortune hunters, rehired ex-soldiers and free lancers - are reportedly playing a big part in shifting loads of money from Afghanistan to Balochistan. The Americans are invariably accompanied by their Afghan guides and interpreters.

Pay structure of militants is fairly defined by now. The ordinary recruits and basic insurgents get around US \$ 200 per month, a small fortune for anyone who never has a hope of landing any decent government job in their home towns. The section leaders get upward of US \$ 300 and there are special bonuses for executing a task successfully.

Although no exact amount of reward could be ascertained for specific tasks, one can assume that it must be substantial because some BLA activists have lately built new houses in Dalbandin, Naushki, Kohlu, Sibi, Khuzdar and Dera Bugti. Also, quite a few young Baloch activists have recently acquired new, flashy SUVs.

Oddly enough, there is also an unusual indicator for measuring the newfound wealth of some Baloch activists. In the marriage ceremonies the dancing troupes of eunuchs and cross-dressers are raking in much heavier shower of currency notes than before.

Based on the geographic spread of training camps, one can say that there is a triangle of extreme instability in Balochistan. This triangle can be drawn on the map by taking Barkhan, Bibi Nani (Sibi) and Kashmore as three cardinal points.

There is another, larger, triangle that affords a kind of cushion for the first triangle. It is formed by Naushki, Wana (in NWFP) and Kashmore.

Actually, landscape of Balochistan is such that it offers scores of safe havens, inaccessible to outsiders.

Starting from the coastline, there are Makran Coastal Range, Siahan Range, Ras Koh, Sultan Koh and Chagai Hills that are cutting the land in east-west direction. In the north-south direction, we find Suleiman Range, Kirthar Range, Pala Range and Central Brahvi Range to complete the task of forming deep and inaccessible pockets. Few direct routes are possible between the coastline and upper Balochistan. Only two roads connect Balochistan with the rest of the country.

Apart from the triangles of instability that we have mentioned there is an arc - a wide, slowly curving corridor - of extensive activity. It is difficult to make out as to who is doing what in that corridor.

Here is how to draw this arc-corridor on the map: Mark the little Afghan towns of Shah Ismail and Ziarat Sultan Vais Qarni on the map. Then mark the towns of Jalq and Kuhak in Iran. Now, draw a slowly arching curve to connect Shah Ismail with Kuhak and another curve to connect Ziarat Sultan Vais Qarni with Jalq. The corridor formed by these two curves is the scene of a lot of diverse activities and we have been able to gather only some superficial knowledge about it.

The towns of Dalbandin and Naushki where foreign presence has become matter of routine are located within this corridor.

Different entities are making different uses of this corridor. Despite employing some local help, we could find very little about the kind of activity that is bubbling in this corridor.

We found that the Indian consulate in Zahidan, Iran, has hired a house off Khayaban Danishgah, near Hotel Amin in Zahidan. This house is used for accommodating some people who cross over from Afghanistan to Pakistan and from Pakistan to Iran through the arched corridor we have described. But who are those people and what are they doing, we could not find.

We also found that although Pasdaran (Revolutionary Guards), the trusted force directly under the control of Khamenei, are monitoring

Zahidan-Taftan road, there is no regular check post of Pasdaran on the road between Khash and Jalq, making it easy for all kinds of elements to cross here and there easily.

We also found that the border between Afghanistan and Iran is mostly under the control of Pasdaran who come down hard on any illegal border movement and that is why the arched corridor passing through Pakistan is the favourite route for any individuals and groups including American 'defence contractors' and their Afghan collaborators who may have the need to go across or near the border of Iran.

Not surprisingly, part of this corridor is used by Iranians themselves when they feel the need to stir some excitement in Pakistan. Iranians also use the regular road of Zahidan-Quetta when they can find someone with legal documents as was the case with an Iranian who has business interests both in Pakistan and Iran and who came to Quetta just before the start of 7 Jan trouble. He has not been heard of since then.

There is a coastal connection that also provides free access for elements in Dubai and Oman to connect with militants in Balochistan. This is a loosely defined route but there are three main landing points in Balochistan:

1. Eastern lip of Gwater Bay that lies in the Iranian territory but affords easy crossover to Pakistan through unguarded land border.
2. Open space between Bomra and Khor Kalamat.
3. Easternmost shoulder of Gwadar East Bay.

Some Indians, a curious mix of businessmen and crime mafia, came in fishing boats from either Dubai or Oman and landed on the Gwater Bay in the Iranian territory before the start of 7 Jan eruptions. From there they traveled to Khuzdar and then Quetta where they met with some Baloch militants. It is rumoured in those areas that the Indians came with heavy amounts of cash but there was no way of verifying it. They were escorted both ways by some Sarawani Balochs who run their own fishing vessels.

Simultaneously, there were reports from our Washington correspondent that some 'sources' in Pentagon had been trying to 'leak' the story to the media that Americans and Israelis were carrying joint recce operations inside Iran and for that purpose they were using Pakistani soil as launching point. The lead was finally picked and disseminated by Semour Hersh of The New Yorker.

However, from our own observations in the area we could not confirm this report although there is a possibility that the curving corridor that we have identified may have been used by the Americans and Israelis to travel from Afghanistan into Pakistan and then into Iran and back for this purpose although this is mere speculation, based on the movement of foreigners in this area, and we can neither confirm nor deny the substance of this report.

Also, there was some buzz, as reported by our correspondent in New Delhi, that some high circles were questioning the wisdom of two-faced policy of engaging Islamabad in peace dialogue while at the same time supporting insurgent activity in Balochistan.

It was also not clear as to why Iran would be interested in stirring trouble in Balochistan when it was faced by an imminent war from the American side and it needed all the allies it could muster on its side and one of those allies could possibly be Pakistan. It was also difficult to reconcile Iranian involvement in Balochistan with the fact that Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline, that is a crucial project for Iran, was in the final stages of negotiation and there seemed no logical point in sending mixed signals by creating difficulties in Balochistan.

These were some of the questions that we took to Misha and Sasha and here is the explanation they gave. Their answers came in bits and pieces but we have reconstructed their replies in the form of one coherent interview:

Question: What was the purpose of Russian invasion of Afghanistan?

Misha: The Soviet Union was not in love with Afghanistan itself and by now everyone must have understood it. We, or at least our leaders, wanted a convenient corridor to the warm waters of the Indian Ocean — the idea was to first establish full control in Kabul and from there to raise the double-bogey of Pakhtunistan and Greater Balochistan and try to detach at least a part of Balochistan from Pakistan and to either merge it as a new province of Afghanistan or to create a new country that should be under the firm control of Moscow. That would have solved most of the problems facing Kremlin.

Question: When you helped create BLA back in the 1980's, what objectives did you have in mind?

Sasha and Misha: It was simply an instrument to create problems in Pakistan. There were no ideological reasons - it was merely a pragmatic solution for a strategic problem.

Question: Who could have revived BLA after so many years of inactivity?

Misha: Most likely, Pentagon. With good lot of support from Kremlin. You should keep in mind that reviving such an organization is a tricky task and it needs active support from a number of players. Pentagon and Kremlin would not be able to do much without some help from RAW that has hundreds of active contacts all over Balochistan. Russia could have helped negotiate the involvement of Balach Marri in the project.

Sasha: RAW must have jumped at the chance because last July the 'discretionary grants' budget [a euphemism for espionage fund] was increased by 700% in the Indian consulates in Kandahar, Jalalabad and Zahidan.

Misha: Yes, discretionary grants are not subject to central audit and the station chief can do what he wants with it.

Sasha: Balach possibly came to head the revived BLA through Russian facilitation but you cannot say the same for Sardar Ataullah Mengal. He returned from his self-imposed exile in London and established his headquarters in Kohlu. Was it a mere coincidence? I don't think so. In all probability, he is the American man to keep a check on Balach because Americans can never fully trust Russians.

Question: From your comments it appears that Balach and Mengal are heading the resurrected BLA and the BLA has been revived by the Americans and Russians to create trouble in Balochistan but could you give us any coherent reasons for going to such great lengths for disturbing Pakistan that is supposed to be a frontline ally of the United States on its war against terrorism?

Misha and Sasha: Frontline ally? Are you kidding? Americans are using Pakistan and Pakistanis would soon find it out if they have not already. Americans don't need that kind of allies and they have made it abundantly clear for anyone who can read their policy goals correctly. Let them deal with Iran and you would see. If there can be any desirable American ally in that region, that is Iran - Iran under a different regime, and they are working to that end. Except for Balochistan, the rest of Pakistan is useless for them.

Question: It is still not clear from your answer as to what do the Pentagon and Kremlin hope to achieve by stirring trouble in Balochistan?

Sasha: Americans have two long-term policy objectives in that region: First, create a safe and reliable route to take all the energy

resources of Central Asia to the continental United States, and second, to contain China.

Misha: Balochistan offers the shortest distance between the Indian Ocean and the Central Asia, that is to say, shortest distance outside of the Gulf. The moment the conditions are ripe, Americans would like to take all the oil and gas of Central Asia to Gwadar or Pasni and from there to the United States.

Question: If the Americans are interested in creating safe channel for shipping energy resources through Balochistan, why would they encourage trouble there?

Misha: That is for now. By inciting trouble, they would effectively discourage Trans-Afghan Pipeline or any other project that is intended for sending Central Asian resources to South Asia. They are not interested in strengthening the South Asian economies by allowing them to obtain sensibly priced oil and gas. They would be more interested in taking all they can to their own country and let everyone else starve if that is the choice.

Sasha: The Americans would also like to discourage China from entering into more development projects in Balochistan than it already has. By developing the port and roads in Balochistan, China is ultimately helping itself by creating a convenient conduit for commerce that would connect China concurrently with Central Asia, South Asia, and all-weather Balochistan ports. The space is limited - where China gains, America loses, and where America gains, China loses.

Questions: OK. This sounds plausible. But what interest could Russia have in helping Pentagon in this trouble-Balochistan project?

Sasha: Russia has its own policy goals and as far as the present phase of creating trouble in Balochistan is concerned, American and Russian goals are not in conflict with each other. Russia wants to maintain its monopoly over all the energy resources of Central Asia. At present, the Central Asian countries are dependent entirely on Russia for export of their gas to any sizeable markets. If Trans-Afghan or any other project succeeds, it would open the floodgates of exodus. Central Asian countries would understandably rush to the market that pays 100% in cash and pays better price than Russia.

It is therefore very clear that by keeping Balochistan red hot, Russia can hope to discourage Trans-Afghan pipeline or any other similar projects. Russian economy in its present form is based on the monopoly

of Gazprom and if Gazprom goes under, so will the Russian economy at some stage.

Question: So far, there is some in sense what you have said but how would explain Indian involvement in the Balochistan revolt?

Sasha: India has its own perceived or real objectives. For instance, India would go to great lengths to prevent Pakistan from developing a direct trade and transportation route with Central Asia because it would undermine the North-South corridor that goes through Iran. Also, while the acute shortage of energy may have compelled India to extend limited cooperation to Pakistan, the preferable project from Indian point of view still remains the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline.

Misha: Moreover, you cannot ignore the fact that India is preparing to use Afghanistan as its main artery system to connect with Central Asia and it would not allow Pakistan to share this sphere if it can.

Question: What about Iran? Why should Iran be a party to it?

Misha: Iran has incurred great expenses to develop Chah Bahar, the port that is supposed to be the Iranian answer to Pakistani ports of Gwadar and Pasni. Iran has also done lot of work to create excellent road link between Herat and Chah Bahar. All this would go to waste if Pakistani route comes on line because it is shorter and offers quick commuting possibilities between Central Asia and Indian Ocean.

Sasha: At the same time you need to allow certain margin of unreliability when dealing with Iran. You cannot be sure whether they mean what they are saying and you cannot be sure whether they would keep their promises. They do what suits them best and to hell with any commitments. I am sorry but that is how I judge Iran.

Question: While both of you have given some explanation of American, Russian, Iranian and Indian involvement in Balochistan, what is the role of Afghanistan?

Sasha: There are many influential circles in Afghanistan that are deadly opposed to Pakistan for one reason or the other. While Afghanistan as a country may not be harbouring any ill will against Pakistan, it is difficult to rule out the possibility that some power circles would not be inclined to damage Pakistan wherever they can. It is clear from the recent developments that as India, Iran and Afghanistan have made great strides to form some kind of economic, trade and transportation alliance; all efforts have been made to exclude Pakistan from any such deal.

Question: While BLA is being used by a number of power players for their own objectives, does it have any potential, even as a byproduct, to serve the cause of Baloch people?

Misha and Sasha: BLA is not the only fish in the pond. There is Baloch Ittehad and there is PONAM and there is lots of small fry out there. But none of them can be expected to do any good to the Balochi people because the command this time is mostly in the hands of Baloch Sardars and they have no past record of bringing any benefit to their own people. If anything, they are known to sell their own people down the river.

Sardar Mehrullah Marri sold all mineral and petroleum rights of Khatan region to the British government in 1885 for a paltry sum of Rs. 200 per month. There was no time limit to this agreement - it was, as they say, in perpetuity.

In 1861, Jam of Bela allowed the British government to put a telegraph line through his territory, thus helping substantially the British government in consolidating its control over large areas of Balochistan. He received less than Rs. 900 per month for this disservice to his own people and took the responsibility to safeguard the telegraph line.

In 1883, the Khan of Kalat sold the Quetta district and adjoining territories to the British government. This was an outright sale. The agreement that was signed in Dasht, included the provision that the heirs and successors of Khan of Kalat would also be bound by the same agreement. He received annual grant of Rs. 25000 for selling the most attractive part of Balochistan to the British government. In the same year, the British Government paid Rs. 5500 to the Bugti Sardar for his cooperation although it was not specified as to what kind of cooperation he extended to the British government.

While the Baloch Sardars were enthusiastically selling Balochistan to the British government, there was no support to the idea of Pakistan whereas the ordinary Balochs gave full approval for Pakistan. Any positive development in Balochistan would go against the interests of Sardars and only a fool would expect them to do anything for the good of their people.

Bear in mind that Marri and Mengal Sardars first stood up against the Pakistan government when the law was passed to abolish Sardari system in Balochistan to free the ordinary Balochs from the clutches of their tribal leaders.

Question: The way the things are progressing in Balochistan, what could be the likely outcome?

Misha: If no strong action is taken for another few months, the result could be bifurcation of Pakistan.

Question: Is that the only likely outcome?

Misha: No. In fact, that is the farthest possible scenario but that could eventually happen if Pakistan fails to assess, analyze and address the situation quickly. For example, I have yet to see any Pakistani effort to contact the ordinary Balochs. They are still trying to woo the same Sardars who are living on the blackmail money since the creation of Pakistan.

Sasha: I am surprised at the way Pakistan goes about tackling this problem. During my few years in Afghanistan when I was engaged with Balochistan, I found that while Baloch Sardars would sell their loyalties and anything else at the drop of a hat, ordinary Balochs are stupidly patriotic. They are hard to buy and harder to manipulate. If I were a Pakistan government functionary, I would gather enough ordinary, educated Balochs to counter the Sardar influence and deflate this whole insurgency balloon.

Question: Both of you were, let's say, among the developers of the original BLA. Do you find any differences between the original and the present BLA?

Misha and Sasha: Plenty. Original BLA was mostly led by the young people and Baloch Sardars had very little to do with it but the present BLA is concentrated in the hands of Sardars. The present movement in Balochistan, led by BLA, PONAM and Baloch Ittehad is a mismatched concoction of ancient and modern. They are trying to run a modern media campaign but there are crucial gaps in that effort. Ours were different times and we could do without media support. They have created a list of Pakistani journalists who are supposed to be sympathetic to any move against the government and they are feeding them daily a mixture of truth and lies, a practice that has been perfected by the Pentagon. They managed to bring some Baloch women in Dera Bugti but the results would be little if they cannot repeat the performance in most other areas of Balochistan. They have built their campaign around a single incident - the Sui gang-rape - and if the government is smart enough, it would hang the real culprits and ask the victim of the rape to announce publicly that she was satisfied with the justice meted out to the criminals and that would take all the wind out of the sails of the BLA

campaign. A real hard campaign needs to be built around much broader and hard to solve issues.

Question: Hypothetically speaking, if the Pakistan government asked your advice, what would you suggest?

Sasha: The options are few. They should abolish Sardari system immediately and crack down powerfully on the private armies. As far as I know, the constitution of Pakistan does not allow Sardari system and private armies and there would be no legal questions if those laws are implemented with the full help of state power.

Misha: They should involve broadest possible range of ordinary Balochs in the dialogue. They can find enough educated youth in Marri and Mengal tribes to match the influence of tribal leaders. They should also allow the fragments of Bugti tribe to return to their ancestral lands and that would be enough to calm down the ageing and eccentric Bugti who pretends to be the leader of that tribe.

Sasha: Pakistan government should hasten the development process in the province because it would open job opportunities and that would allow the escape hatch to ordinary Balochs to distance themselves from their leaders.

Misha: They should try to cut down the sources and channels of supply of arms and cash to insurgents

February 6, 2009.

<http://www.nowpublic.com/world/unveiling-mystery-balochistan-insurgency>

BALUCHISTAN PROBLEMS

The simmering province of Balochistan, which had fallen off the national radar in recent months, is at a crossroads again. On Friday, the Baloch Liberation United Front, threatened to kill UNHCR official John Solecki unless 141 Baloch women alleged to be held in captivity by the state are released by today. The demand has come in the wake of allegations that a Baloch schoolteacher, Zarina Marri, has been abused in custody. On Jan 31, Ms Marris issue echoed in the Balochistan Assembly, where four ministers and a legislator staged a walkout and demanded that Ms Marri either be released or produced before a court. On its part, the government has strongly denied the claim and Interior Adviser Rehman Malik has promised prompt action on any information provided. But the schoolteacher is only the tip of the missing persons iceberg which continues to poison relations between the Baloch and the state. It is not

known how many people have gone missing the Baloch claim several thousand are missing but have only identified several hundred but its clearly a sine qua non for bringing peace to Balochistan.

Beyond that there is a long list of Baloch grievances. The return of displaced persons, estimated by human rights organisations to run into the hundreds of thousands in Dera Bugti and Kohlu districts alone, is a key issue. Then there are the development projects in Balochistan, which the Baloch argue should benefit local people first and foremost. There is also a demand that the formula for revenue sharing to be determined by the National Finance Commission reflect the needs of Balochistan's people.

To date, the government has taken some positive measures. For one, the military operation of the Musharraf era is no more; the present violence is low-level and more of a tit-for-tat response. Secondly, the government has released several high-profile Baloch leaders and reached out to them publicly. Thirdly, the federal government has tried to ease the financial woes of the Balochistan government. Meanwhile, there is talk of the next Senate chairman being from Balochistan. While all of this is positive, the problem remains that there is an impression that the government is distracted by other issues. The Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Reconciliatory Committee on Balochistan, set up by President Zardari, laid out a roadmap for the resolution of Balochistan issues last October and some preliminary meetings were held between its members and prominent Baloch figures, but nothing has come of the consultations. Admittedly, the demands of the most militant of Baloch nationalists are hard to meet and make negotiations difficult. However, this is all the more reason to engage the political parties that are willing to talk and help lower the temperature in the province.

Editorial, *Dawn* (Islamabad), February 16, 2009.
<http://www.dawn.com/2009/text/ed.htm#top>

BALUCHISTAN ON THE BRINK

Far away from Quetta, or Khuzdar or Naushki, it is often impossible to gauge the sentiments and feelings that swirl with the dusts of Balochistan. But it is obvious that the ill-judged comments of the adviser on interior, Rehman Malik, while winding up a debate in the Senate on Balochistan, have created a storm that makes the sands fly still more fiercely. The remarks have, of course, added to the tensions that spur on the nationalist

struggle in Balochistan, and made many people within the country's largest province still more determined to break away from what they see as the oppressive hold of Pakistan. Mr. Malik could not have done a greater service to the nationalist cause had he been hired by one of the groups that has waged a struggle for autonomy in the province for decades. Let us assume, just for a few hypothetical moments, that what Mr. Malik alleged was strictly accurate: that the struggle in Balochistan is supported by India and Afghanistan and even by Russia – although there is reason to believe Russian involvement on a large scale ended by the 1990s, although till then nationalist forces had links with the former Soviets. The fact is that these nations have taken advantage of the strife that exists within the province and used it to serve their own ends.

This after all is a tactic that should not be entirely unfamiliar to Pakistan; and since it has direct experience of such involvement it should also realize that the most effective way to tackle it is to address the factors that create internal dissent. In Balochistan, these have been identified time and time again. They revolve around perceptions of grotesque injustice perpetuated by a Punjab-dominated federation.

Whether or not their belief is accurate, the people of Balochistan believe their resources have been used to benefit other provinces – notably Punjab – rather than the people of Balochistan. One website after another run by Baloch nationalist groups – accessible only through proxy servers because of the ill-advised blockage of these sites by PTCL – speaks of people cooking on wood fires in Baloch villages while pipelines take gas out of the province to other places. The underdevelopment of Balochistan and the fact that figures that depict the state of education, health and welfare within it are significantly worse than anywhere else in the country lends credence to these concerns. What is ignored in official comments attacking the, rather immature statements made by Brahamdagh Bugti, is that Baloch nationalism is not restricted to a few hired 'agents'. It exists everywhere in the province – amongst housewives, schoolgirls and professionals with no direct link to any nationalist group. Children are brought up by mothers on stories on nationalist heroes. And in the unusual social context of Balochistan, nationalism is tied in with the Sardars—who otherwise are sometimes responsible for unchecked oppression and cruelty to their own people.

The principal point here is that the prime focus of Islamabad should be to draw Balochistan back into the mainstream of the country, before it is too late to do so. This would serve 'security' interests far more

effectively than diatribes which attack leaders seen by many a Baloch as heroes. The murder of three of them earlier this month only adds to their status as martyrs. It also seems odd that the government seems to be pulling in different directions on the issue of Balochistan. President Zardari has made what we can assume to be a genuine attempt to initiate a reconciliation process.

Others appear to be just as determined to wreck it. Questioning Baloch accounts of thousands being missing or women being tortured in detention centres at this point are blatantly unwise. The statements only add to the mistrust and hatred for central authority in Balochistan.

There is another reason too why it is unwise to totally alienate the people of Balochistan at this point. The fact is that today, the main enemy of Pakistan are the militants who threaten to Talibanize the whole of the country. Most citizens oppose them, wholeheartedly and with passion. Perhaps a few of the most blind believe they can bring positive change, The Baloch groups still include many who have no sympathies with religion in the form it is put forward by the *Taliban*. Forces such as the Baloch Students Organization (BSO) still speak of secularism and a just social order. For these reasons, these forces must not be crushed. Doing so would only open up more space for the militants to move into. This is indeed what happened when former president Musharraf tried to push aside mainstream parties. By doing so he succeeded in strengthening the *Taliban*. The same mistakes must not be repeated, particularly at a time when the militants are reported already to have their eyes on Quetta. This territory must not be left to them.

Are there then any solutions to the issues we face in Balochistan? Baloch leaders, in the last few weeks since the murder of three nationalist figures in Turbat have made it clearer than ever that they seek autonomy; some suggest the parameters of this must go beyond what has been laid out in the 1973 Constitution. Sadly, some manifestations of nationalism in Balochistan have taken the form of violence against people from other provinces.

Such racism is unacceptable. It has had a tragic impact on families. But perhaps it is also inevitable given the situation that has been created in Balochistan largely as a result of the ill-advised policies pursued since the 1950s. Today, we must focus on ways to undo the effects of these and to persuade Balochistan that it may still be worth-staying within the federation. Whether accurately or not, nationalist groups argue that with a sparse population of just over ten million people, abundant natural

resources that could include oil and a coastline, an entirely independent future is possible.

They must be persuaded to change their minds. For this to happen, the centre – and other provinces – must demonstrate a wisdom and maturity that has so far been lacking. There is a need for magnanimity rather than hostility. The primary focus must be to win back the trust of the Baloch people by addressing their concerns and drawing them back into the process of determining their own destiny. Attacks such as those we have seen recently will only add to the disgruntlement and growing distance that already exists between Balochistan and the rest of the country, making it even more arduous to achieve the task of persuading Balochistan to re-enter the federation of Pakistan as a willing unit ready to play a full part in a united future.

Kamila Hyat, *News International* (Rawalpindi), April 30, 2009.

LAND OF GRIEVANCES

Confucius said, "The strength of a nation derives from the integrity of the home." The Balochistan insurgency is entering its 9th or 10th year... Whilst the country returns from the edge that was Swat, grave questions still remain regarding the Balochistan conflict, and what means are to be adopted to resolve the conflict before it reaches an impasse from where there is no return. The government simply cannot afford to take this problem lightly, or drag its feet on the issue. The PPP has a significant presence in all four provinces of the country, with a dominating role in the government in Balochistan. In such a situation, it is in a position to rally and convince all the four provinces to a modus operandi of provincial autonomy acceptable to all stakeholders.

The government should pursue a three-step programme in order to satisfactorily resolve the contentious issues between the federation and the provinces, as well as placate the anti-establishment sentiment. First and foremost, the government would be wrong-footed to talk of an all-purpose and final constitutional package to resolve the problem at the onset. Before one can reach that pivotal stage where a constitutional package is tabled, the government must redeem itself in the eyes of the people of Balochistan for all the broken promises of the past, and take confidence-building measures to convince the nationalist elements to renounce violence and come forth to the negotiating table.

In this regard, rather than repeatedly creating committees that dish out voluminous reports regurgitating much of what we already know, the government should collect all the committee reports made on Balochistan thus far, such as the Mushahid Hussain report as well as the recently submitted report by the committee headed by Raza Rabbani, and divide them into recommendations on constitutional reforms and those not requiring any such amendments.

The government should announce that the implementation of the recommendations not requiring constitutional amendments, which would include giving possession of Gwadar port to the provincial government, would be made without any pre-conditions and as confidence-building measures to display to the Baloch nationalist parties as well as the people of Balochistan the sincerity of the present government. One stellar manner in which such confidence can be generated is by the trial of General Musharraf for the murder of Akbar Bugti. This will in fact have the effect of not only convincing the insurgents that a solution can be obtained without violence, but it will also positively persuade them of the democratic government's ability to implement any negotiated settlement, irrespective of pressure from the establishment.

After implementing the recommendations of the reports along the broad guidelines mentioned above, the government should then give a call for an all-party conference on the issue of constitutional reforms with regard to provincial autonomy, with all nationalist parties in Balochistan being invited, irrespective of their earlier positions on Balochistan and its affiliation with Pakistan.

Upon successfully bringing them to the negotiating table, the government should actively try to broker a constitutional package acceptable to all provinces concerned. Although this may be easier said than done, it is a good omen that there is a general consensus on the fact that more autonomy must be given to the federating units, and that they should get control over their respective resources.

Finally, upon the finalisation of a constitutional package, a parliamentary session which succeeds in incorporating the constitutional bill into the constitution should be held in Quetta as a symbolic gesture emphatically recognising the rights of the people of Balochistan and affording their struggle within the federation the due respect it deserves.

Basil Nabi Malik, *News International* (Rawalpindi), August 18, 2009.

WHY BLEED BALOCHISTAN?

Inaction continues to define the government's conduct in regard to the many issues confronting Balochistan. It is becoming clear to an increasing number of Baloch people that while the state wants their resources, it has little empathy for them.

A year after President Pervez Musharraf — he can be blamed for many of our miseries today — stepped down, little has changed in the equation dogging Balochistan-centre relations. So far the elected government has only paid lip service to solving the restive province's problems. The apology President Zardari offered to the people of Balochistan at the inception of the PPP-led government more than a year ago has not been followed up with any action to redress Baloch grievances...

Has democracy really returned to Balochistan?... In Islamabad, the finger is being pointed at Indian interference in the province. The prime minister raised the issue with his Indian counterpart at a recent meeting in Egypt; the president says threats to Pakistan's security are internal and not from India. Could someone please step forward and clear the haze?...

Funds allocated and given to districts, town administrations and union councils did reach down to the more earthly and accessible beings from the high and mighty of the land, who are in the habit of blowing them on showcase projects or worse still, on serving multi-course gourmet meals at government houses when not globetrotting. With local governments about to be disbanded and no clear plan in sight to revamp the system, it is the economically depressed districts and even entire provinces, which will suffer most.

In Balochistan public disempowerment at the local level will further fuel the sense of alienation among the people. An average Baloch anywhere in Balochistan has perhaps never set foot in Quetta; he can be content by getting his two square meals in his small hamlet, a roof over his head and just the very basic amenities like water, sanitation and perhaps some schooling for children. Electricity for many in the hinterland is an additional blessing.

Now with the decision to scrap the local government system the little power the grassroots Baloch have had over their own finances will be concentrated in Quetta, without it trickling down to the far-off union councils.

Yet more hurting is the free run of the countryside allowed to the military and paramilitary forces in Balochistan over the preceding decade. The policy has bred much resentment amongst the average Baloch, and is part of the reason why the sardars known for their brutal customs and practices which target their own people are now emerging as people's leaders — more so than those sent to elected legislatures only last year.

The army is not known to have solved any of Pakistan's problems — at wartime or in peace — when left to its own devices. Its interference in public affairs has compounded our challenges and distorted the normal course of events. Its commercial interests pursued at the expense of the people are well documented. Ms Jahangir is right in asserting that Balochistan cannot be left to military decision-making mechanisms. The situation calls for political engagement among all concerned.

This can only be possible if the government shows the will to act first by calling to account the gross human rights violations in the province, and thus removing the stigma of being disloyal to the state from the names of Baloch nationalists. It remains to be seen if the government is up to the task.

Murtaza Razvi, *Dawn* (Islamabad), August 24, 2009.
<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/provinces/04-why-bleed-balochistan-qs-01>

TIME TO EAT HUMBLE PIE

Amidst unrelenting suicide attacks, audacious assaults on the armed forces, Operation Rah-e-Nijaat in full flow and the NRO question reaching a zenith, talking about the alarming situation in Balochistan may seem a bit trivial and off-topic.

This has always been the case, hasn't it? Something always comes along pushing the issue of Pakistan's perpetually troubled province into the fringes. If it's not the secession of East Pakistan, then its Zia's coup; if it's not the Afghan Jihad, then it's political subterfuge. Today, it's the war on terror.

Well, it has been a mistake each time.

If there's one thing that history has shown, it is that Balochistan is a problem that just will not go away despite being continuously being pushed into the background. All those supposedly 'more urgent' issues have passed and have been resolved in their own twisted ways. Yet when the dust settled, Balochistan remained. Festered, worsened...

Today that luxury of 'we'll-get-back-to-this-later' approach may no longer be available because the province is the limelight again for two fresh reasons. One involves the US' concern regarding the activities of the Quetta Shura and refuge for the *Taliban* leadership, and, more recently, Iran's concern at the activities of Jundallah, and the attacks being launched against it from Balochistan.

To accompany the already discomfoting murmurs regarding the possibility of the US expanding its targeting of *Taliban* leaders into northern Balochistan ("beyond FATA" as they would call it), there are now voices in Iran calling for the chasing of Jundallah across the border into parts of Pakistani Balochistan following a high-level suicide hit recently. This matter is serious, and will only become more serious with time.

This is over and above the now traditional spectre of Balochistan's most long-standing issue – its own indigenous nationalist movement. You now have a troika of unique, mutually exclusive problems that will give the best in the policy business nightmares. Chess with Kasparov would be an easier and potentially less humiliating task.

How does the government appease the US, whose money it needs, Iran, whose gas and regional friendship it needs, as well as the nationalists, whose antagonism will render it unable to do much about either Iran's or the US' concerns to begin with?

If you think that the military and border security is overstretched dealing with the NWFP-Afghanistan border on the west, the India-Pakistan border on the East, and along the Line of Control in Kashmir, imagine what will happen if you try to secure the rugged borders and unsympathetic heartland of your country's largest province as well – that too amidst unprecedented hostility on the part of vast majority of the local population. The NWFP situation is nothing compared to the task of Balochistan.

The pressure is on Pakistan to act now in its largest province. So what do we do? This is how it stands: Iran has beef with the Jundallah, who they say are supported by the US and Israel (some say they are supported by Saudi Arabia as well) with the help of Pakistan. The US' problem is with the *Taliban* are supported by anti-US groups, including Iran. Pakistan, meanwhile, complains that the Baloch nationalists are supported by outside forces. The three groups' agendas are not congruous with one another.

For starters, any attempt to conflate the issues of traditional nationalist angst, quasi-ethnic/religious irredentism (or what is perceived irredentism) and religious militancy will be a big mistake.

Another surefire thing is that the authorities cannot tackle each and every issue separately. They do not have the military capacity given the currently stretched resources, the political option given the Gordian Knot in terms of agendas, or the credibility/ability to do it diplomatically.

The truth is that, though the three are mutually exclusive, the policy regarding one will have to be strongly based on the policy regarding the other two. There is one sustainable way out, which can, in fact, work well for Pakistan in the long run. But this will require one thing that our administrations have historically lacked: Humility.

Pakistan now more than ever has to first come to terms with the fact that the nationalist movement that it has vilified for so long with barbs of traitor is in fact a legitimate movement born out of legitimate concerns. The sooner the government is able to abandon its age old policy regarding the Baloch movement, the better.

Whether or not it is funded by foreign organisations is not the issue. Its basic premise is and was legitimate. Foreign infiltration only came in after the brutal suppression of Baloch rights in the past.

Remember that the Pakistani state, after all, has no say in huge swaths of Balochistan thanks in no small part to the estrangement of the Baloch over the years. If the Baloch were on board in the first place, infiltrating the harsh terrain of Balochistan by foreign actors would have been a lot less possible over the years. It is with this understanding that the current situation needs to be tackled. Get back to the root cause.

How it will be done is a subject that is too vast to state in mere columns. It is a subject worth a thesis-sized discourse. It will have to involve a whole lot more than a hollow Balochistan package – that is for sure. It will require drastic concessions; a major change in rigid archetypes. It will require ditching non-representative leadership for short-term gains.

Those who argue that we will lose Balochistan in this effort should realise that at the moment, the centre does not 'have' Balochistan to begin with. In fact, keeping the province in its current political state will be only hurt the country further by allowing outside operatives to continue to infiltrate as well as marking a huge bulls-eye for neighbouring forces.

Give Balochistan to the Baloch and you secure Pakistan. As it stands, there may be no other option.

Gibran Peshimam, *News international* (Rawalpindi), October 25, 2009.

BALUCHISTAN IGNORED

Losing faith in a government is one thing. In working democracies this lack of trust is expressed through the ballot box and change can be sought through peaceful means. In short, there is nothing inherently alarming about a change in government. But losing trust in the state is a different matter altogether. Votes don't enter the equation and protests against real or perceived crimes by the centre stay peaceful only up to a point. At some stage the country's territorial boundaries come to be questioned. For many in Balochistan this threshold was crossed decades ago — shortly after the country's creation, in fact, and years before East Pakistanis began pressing for a separate homeland. It seems that those who call the shots in this country have learnt few lessons from the 1971 debacle.

Today there is a feeling in Balochistan that the province is part of the federation on paper alone, at the mercy of a state that continues to exploit its natural wealth and quell any sign of dissent with disproportionate force. Promises by the centre mean little, for the simple reason that they have rarely been honoured.

Sunday's assassination of Balochistan's education minister is a tragic reminder of the simmering tensions in the province. The full-blown insurgency witnessed in the Musharraf era may be a thing of the past but Balochistan is anything but stable. And matters could get worse if the centre persists with back-peddalling on its commitments. It was pledged early last year that the provinces would be allowed greater control over their own resources. It was said in March 2008 that abolishing the concurrent list — within a year — would ensure a level of provincial autonomy that would benefit the state as a whole. At the same time, Balochistan was promised massive uplift packages that would help the socio-economic development of the country's most resource-rich yet least privileged province. Those who 'disappeared' in Balochistan during Gen Musharraf's reign of terror would get their day in court.

But little or nothing has been delivered on the ground. For the disillusioned, the government has done exactly what they expected: nothing. True, the state has much on its plate right now. Tackling *Taliban* militancy and terrorism is a full-time job but that does not mean

Balochistan can be ignored. It is widely believed that the separatist movement in the province — at least in its current incarnation — is aided and abetted by external actors. By failing to address the genuine grievances of the Baloch people, the government and state may inadvertently be following a plot line scripted by those who desire chaos in Pakistan.

Editorial, *Dawn* (Islamabad), October 27, 2009.
<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/provinces/14-balochistan-ignored-zj-01>

THE BALOCH INSURGENCY IS NO BLUFF

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On Oct 25, Balochistan education minister Shafiq Ahmed Khan was shot dead by gunmen waiting in ambush near his house in Quetta. The killers escaped on a motorbike, but the Baloch Liberation United Front (BLUF) made sure that there was no confusion about the identity of the attackers by immediately claiming responsibility for the assassination. BLUF spokesman Shahiq Baloch said the minister was killed due to his anti-Baloch policies, and to avenge the state-sponsored murders of Baloch nationalist leaders Ghulam Muhammad, Sher Muhammad and Lala Munir in Turbat in Balochistan sometime ago.

Shafiq Ahmed was the second Balochistan minister to be killed in the last few months. In July, the minister for excise and taxation, Sardarzada Rustam Khan Jamali, was gunned down in Karachi, a city with a significant Baloch population. The motives for his murder aren't sufficiently clear, though it shocked and unnerved his colleagues in the large and unwieldy PPP-led coalition government ruling Balochistan. Subsequently, the house of Balochistan information minister Younis Mullazai in Quetta came under a grenade attack. There have been other targeted killings in the province, along with frequent acts of sabotage against government installations, infrastructure and utility services. A new trend in this campaign is the blowing up of properties of pro-government tribal elders. Frontier Corps soldiers and policemen are attacked and the settlers, the ones whose parents and grandparents came from other provinces to settle in Balochistan, are now a major target of Baloch separatists.

Shafiq was also considered a settler, even though he was born in Quetta in 1954. He studied in schools and colleges in Quetta before

getting admission and qualifying from Balochistan University. He thrice won elections as councillor of the Quetta Municipal Corporation. Twice, in 2002 and 2008, he was elected member of the Balochistan Assembly on the ticket of the Pakistan People's Party.

Senator Mir Lashkari Raisani, the PPP's Balochistan president and brother of chief minister Nawab Aslam Raisani, unwisely and carelessly referred to Shafiq Ahmed's family origins being from the NWFP, wondering aloud whether this could be a reason for his assassination. This was something farfetched as BLUF had publicly declared that he was killed for pursuing anti-Baloch policies. Shafiq Ahmed's assassination had no link with the ongoing *Taliban*-inspired militancy in the NWFP and its tribal areas. Lashkari Raisani should have refrained from categorising Shafiq Ahmed as a settler.

Lashkari Raisani also highlighted two other intriguing points. One was his belief that Shafiq Ahmed was killed for raising his voice against Indian involvement in Balochistan's affairs. This meant that the minister was eliminated for accusing India of supporting acts of terrorism in Balochistan. The other point that Lashkari Raisani made was the campaign of targeted killings of teachers in Balochistan and its culmination in the assassination of Education Minister Shafiq Ahmed. All this in his view was part of a conspiracy to deprive students of education and keep Balochistan underdeveloped. Lacking focus, Lashkari Raisani's statement tended to create confusion about the motive behind the assassination.

In comparison, Chief Minister Aslam Raisani's condolence message was sensible. He described Shafiq Ahmed as a Baloch leader. He termed his assassination as a violation of Baloch and Islamic traditions and asked the insurgents not to shed the blood of their own people for external forces seeking to destabilise Balochistan and Pakistan.

Shafiq Ahmed's family had migrated to Quetta several decades ago from the village of Maloga near Oghi town in Mansehra district. His uncle, Ali Bahadur Khan, was a judicial commissioner in Balochistan and his father, Sher Bahadur, did business in Quetta. The family belongs to the Hindko-speaking Tanoli tribe living in parts of Mansehra and Abbottabad districts. Shafiq Ahmed and his family did maintain links with relatives in Mansehra and the rest of Hazara, but it was for all practical purposes now a Balochistani family. Asked in a recent event sponsored by the BBC Urdu service in Quetta whether he was a Pakhtun or Baloch, Shafiq Ahmed remarked that he was a Balochistani.

Apart from the sizeable number of families from the NWFP's Hazara region who settled in Quetta long ago, there are also substantial groups of settlers from Punjab, Sindh and Afghanistan who call Balochistan their home. Like every urban centre, Quetta has been attracting outsiders, particularly those with some skills, and its population has been growing. Urdu-speaking families and members of minority groups such as Parsi, Hindu and Christian also have been living and working in Quetta and some other cities and towns in Balochistan. Many families decided to settle in Quetta when it was being rebuilt after the devastating 1935 earthquake.

But it seems most settlers are now unwelcome because the Baloch separatists want to settle scores with the federal government, the military and the Punjab-dominated Pakistani establishment. The victims are scapegoats in a battle in which the increasingly violent Baloch separatist groups are pitted against Pakistan's security forces, law-enforcement agencies and pro-federation political forces.

Denial of Baloch rights and the five military operations since independence have taken its toll on the population of Balochistan, but it seems no lessons have been learnt as force is still being used to resolve a conflict that is essentially political in nature and primarily concerns the socio-economic rights of the people of the province.

The BLUF appears more aggressive and violent than the Baloch Liberation Army and Baloch Liberation Front, the two armed separatist groups that have been active for some years now in Balochistan. In February the BLUF kidnapped American John Solecki who headed the UNHCR mission in Balochistan, and freed him unharmed after much efforts, and probably a deal. The kidnapping signalled the arrival of the BLUF as the most radical of the three Baloch separatist groups even though it isn't clear if these are separate or overlapping factions operating under different names. One lesson from the proliferation of splinter factions, which are far more radical militants and led by younger and emotional men, is that one must try and do business with the older and original groups headed by mature people because the leadership is passing to commanders who are mostly inflexible. This holds true for all militant groups, whether secular, nationalist or Islamic.

Young Baloch separatists forming part of the diaspora and living in Kabul, Kandahar, Dubai, London, Brussels and Geneva are now often calling the shots in Balochistan and setting the agenda. The Khan of Kalat, Mir Suleman Daud, and Herbeyar Marri are in London,

Brahmadagh Bugti could be in Afghanistan. They largely control the radical separatist groups and it isn't going to be easy doing business with them. They are presently demanding an independent Balochistan, but there are strong indications they are willing to remain part of Pakistan after grant of provincial autonomy under a deal guaranteed by international organisations and world powers. The trust deficit between them and the Pakistani establishment -- which is wary of the external, primarily Indian influence on the Baloch separatists -- is the main hurdle in making them talk to each other for a possible deal on managing Balochistan's affairs.

Though an overwhelming majority of elected representatives in Balochistan are pro-Islamabad and the pro-federation political forces outnumber the ones demanding independence, it would be wrong to dismiss the Baloch nationalists and separatists as insignificant. They have the capability to keep Balochistan unstable through political means and armed struggle. Acts of sabotage and targeted killings, like that of Shafiq Ahmed Khan, aim at keeping up the pressure on Islamabad to accede to the separatists' demands.

And this is not the only challenge confronting Balochistan. There is the issue of the Quetta Shura of the Afghan *Taliban*, which the US, without providing any evidence, is insisting operates out of the Balochistan capital to attack NATO forces across the border in Afghanistan. And, last but not least, is the issue of Jundullah, the Baloch Sunni militant group responsible for terrorist attacks in Iran's Sistan-Baluchistan province and based according to Tehran in Pakistani Balochistan. Sadly enough, the secret hand of the US also seems to be behind Jundullah.

Rahimullah Yusufzai, *News International* (Rawalpindi), November 3, 2009.

POVERTY RISING IN BALOCHISTAN: WORLD BANK

Balochistan has the weakest long-term growth performance of all provinces in the country, according to a World Bank study.

The 'Balochistan Economic Report 2009', which took into account statistics from 1972-73 to 2005-06, said the province's economy expanded by 2.7 times in Balochistan, 3.6 times in the NWFP and Sindh and four times in Punjab.

Overall, the size of the 'economic pie' rose 110 per cent in the rest of the country, except Balochistan.

With Balochistan's growth lagging behind the rest of Pakistan, its per capita income level has lagged behind other provinces, the World Bank said.

Balochistan ranked lowest on the 'horizontal axis' in 1981-82 as it was the poorest province. It also ranks lowest on the 'vertical axis' because of a weak growth performance.

While Balochistan experienced large variations in growth from one year to the next, its average rate of expansion matched the one in the rest of Pakistan reasonably close over growth periods in the past. Apart from the latest recovery, GDP growth was no more than one per cent different from the rest of the country.

Poverty in Balochistan has risen and become statistically indistinguishable from that in the NWFP, the province with traditionally the highest measured poverty.

Balochistan stands out as the province with the worst social indicators. It scores lowest in 10 key indicators for education, literacy, health, water and sanitation for 2006-07.

The province has not yet been able to exploit adequately its geological potential. Balochistan has more than half of the national prospective geology for minerals, yet it contributes just over one-fifth to national mining GDP and leads only in the production of coals.

In 1994-95, Balochistan produced 355 billion cubic feet (bcf) of gas and accounted for nearly 56 per cent of Pakistan's total output. A decade later, the province produced 336bcf and contributed only 25 per cent to national output. As Balochistan's gas supplies are exhausting, Pakistan is also running out of usable energy.

Gwadar Potential

If the country's trade volumes continue to grow at a healthy rate over the next 10 to 15 years, the capacity constraints at Karachi and Qasim ports will generate substantial business for Gwadar.

Gwadar is located near the entrance of the Straits of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf, which holds close to three-fifth of the world's crude oil reserves and almost half of the world's proven gas reserves.

The development of Gwadar port, Makran coastline and mining and petroleum sectors and facilitation of cross-border trade in energy and other goods will provide a powerful impetus for stronger linkages of Balochistan's economy with the rest of the country.

The government should focus on activities around Balochistan's economic assets, such as minerals, gas, fisheries and coastal development, trade with Afghanistan and Iran, livestock and crops,' the World Bank report says.

Water is the single most important constraint to developing rural Balochistan. While some 87 per cent of Pakistan's total available water is found in the river system of the Indus basin, only five per cent of Balochistan's landmass is connected to the Indus basin and the remaining 95 per cent rely on non-perennial sources. Since 97 per cent of province's water use is by agriculture, any strategy to deal with the water shortage has to put this sector centre stage.

Insufficient exploration has resulted in few new discoveries. Less than one-third of the reserves are left in Sui, and no more than 45 per cent of the known gas reserves in the province overall. Uch is the only field with large remaining reserves, but the gas is of lower quality than in Sui. In calorific equivalent basis, the Uch reserves are just under half of what remains in Sui.

According to the report, the reserve depletion has already an impact on production. Volumes have declined since 2001 by about 3.5 per cent annually, and Balochistan's share in national production dropped from 56 per cent in 1995 to 25 per cent only in 2005. At current rates of production, the province's present reserves will be almost depleted within the next 15 years.

Dawn (Islamabad), November 8, 2009.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/provinces/16-poverty-rising-in-balochistan-says-world-bank-05>

WHAT DOES NFC AWARD HOLD FOR BALOCHISTAN

1. For the first time in the history of Pakistan multiple criteria for resource distribution has been adopted which includes Population, Human Development Index (HDI), Inverse Population Density (IPD), and revenue generation/collection. Sole criterion of population has been discontinued which was the hallmark of previous NFC Awards.
2. Share of Balochistan from the divisible pool has been increased from 5.11% to 9.09%.

3. Balochistan will get Rs 83 billion in the next financial year (2010-11) which will not be reduced in case of shortfall of revenue collection by the Federal Government. At present Balochistan is getting Rs 44 billion.
4. Balochistan will also receive Rs 120 billion over a period of twelve years on account of Gas Development Surcharge (GDS) arrears. An additional amount of Rs 10 billion will also be released by the Federal Government on account of equalization of well head price with effect from 2002.
5. A sum of Rs 3 billion would additionally be available from the next financial year as a result of equalization of well head price throughout the country.
6. General Sales Tax (GST) on services has been shifted to the provinces which will be an additional source of revenue for Balochistan.

November 25, 2009.

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

TEXT OF BALOCHISTAN PACKAGE

The Federal Government on November 25, 2009 presented the Aghaz-e-Huqooq-e-Balochistan package to a joint sitting of the parliament. Following is the text of the package presented by Senator Raza Rabbani of the ruling Pakistan People's Party:

Preamble

"Conscious, that the provinces have a sense of deprivation, in political and economic structures of the federation;

Recalling, that the provisions of the 1973 constitution in particular relating to the federation-province relationship have been circumvented;

Stating that the financial assistance given by the present federal government in terms of Rs 4.6 billion PSDP support, Rs 2.8 billion paid as arrears of royalty for Uch - pending since 1995, Rs 17.5 billion overdraft of Balochistan written off, realising that this is not a substitute to provincial autonomy;

Acknowledging, that the question of provincial autonomy needs to be revisited and the ownership of the provinces over their resources reasserted in the constitution;

Mindful, of the tumultuous history of the province of Balochistan in the affairs of the federation;

Placing on Record that the present federal government has withdrawn cases and released political workers and helped in identifying the places of detention and release of some of the missing persons;

Determined, to correct the wrongs of history, by conferring the political, economic and cultural rights of the provinces, so that the federation may blossom, and;

Recalling, the documents made from time to time, namely The Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto Reconciliation Committee Papers, the interim reports of the Wasim Sajjad and Mushahid Hussain Sayed committees of the Parliamentary Committee on Balochistan, headed by Chaudhary Shujaat, proposals made by the Balochistan chief secretary and the proposals of Mian Raza Rabbani.

The following "proposals" are made:

A. Constitutional-related Matters

1. Constitutional Reform

In terms of the resolutions passed by parliament, the speaker has constituted a parliamentary committee. The said committee has commenced work of considering various amendments in the constitution, including on provincial autonomy, this should be immediately addressed.

2. Constitutional Reform

The quantum, form and scope of provincial autonomy will be determined by the Parliamentary Committee on Constitutional Reforms, which represents all shades of political opinion in parliament. The following provisions of the constitution on provincial autonomy are under consideration of the committee;

- (i) Deletion of the Concurrent List from the Fourth Schedule of the Constitution.
- (ii) Deletion of the Police Order, 2002 and the Balochistan Local Government.
- (iii) Effective implementation of Article 153 of the constitution, Council of Common Interests.
- (iv) Implementation of Article 160 of the constitution, NFC Award.
- (v) Implementation of articles 154, 155, 156, 157, 158 and 159 of the constitution.

3. Restructuring of the NFC Award Criteria

In the past, the formula was based on population. This has been changed and other criteria such as inverse population ratio, backwardness, poverty and resource generation need to be taken into consideration.

B. Politically-Related Matters

4. Release of Political Workers

The federal government in consultation with the provincial government should immediately release all political workers, except those charged under heinous crimes;

5. Political Dialogue

Immediate to the acceptance of all the proposals contained herein, initiation of a political dialogue with all major stakeholders in the political spectrum of the province, to bring them into the mainstream politics.

6. Return of Exiles

The political exiles who return to Pakistan will be facilitated. (Except those involved in acts of terrorism).

7. Provincial Assembly Resolutions

The unanimously passed resolutions of the assembly from 2002 until date, related to the province, be implemented within the legal framework of the constitution.

8. Local Government

The Balochistan Local Government Ordinance needs to be amended by the provincial government keeping in view the administrative needs of the province.

C. Administratively-Related Matters

9. Operations by Federal Agencies

The federal government should immediately review the role of federal agencies in the province and stop all such operations that are not related to the pursuit of fighting terrorism.

10. Construction of Cantonments

The federal government should announce that the presence of the army in Sui will be withdrawn and replaced by the FC in pursuit of peace in the present situation. Proposals should not be formulated for the construction of new cantonments except in frontier areas, wherever required.

11. Commission

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

12. Missing Persons

The names of missing persons be identified and following actions be taken immediately, after verification, in any case, if they are found to be in custody.

- (i) Those persons against whom there are no charges be released.
- (ii) Those persons against whom there are charges be brought before a court of competent jurisdiction within seven days for trial (effective from the date of promulgation of commission).
- (ii) Such persons be allowed legal consul of their choice, the government should assist them in this regard in accordance with law.
- iv) Family members of such persons be informed accordingly and allowed visiting rights.

13. Judicial Inquiry

Judicial inquiry by the superior judiciary be ordered by the federal government to inquire into: -

- a. Murder of Baloch political workers, Ghulam Muhammad, Lala Munir and Munir Ahmed.
- b. Target killing in the province.

14. Nawab Akbar Bugti Shaheed

A fact-finding commission, headed by a retired judge of the Supreme or High Court be constituted, to determine the circumstances leading to the death of Nawab Akbar Bugti Shaheed.

15. New Army Cantonments

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

16. Conversion of "B" Areas into "A" Areas

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

17. The Role of Civil Armed Forces

(i) *Frontier Corps*: The role of the FC in law enforcement shall be under the chief minister of the province. The powers conferred under the Customs Act shall be withdrawn.

(ii) *Coast Guard*: The CG should perform its primary duty of checking smuggling of arms and narcotics along the coast and the border. The check posts established beyond their territorial limits as prescribed under the law shall be dismantled. An exercise of delimitation of the border areas needs to be undertaken by the federal government, provincial government and the Frontier Corps to give effect to the aforesaid.

18. Check Posts

The various check posts established by the civil armed forces and other related agencies, other than border areas should be in accordance with the directions of the provincial government.

19. Judicial Inquiry

There should be a judicial enquiry by the superior judiciary into the allotment of land at Gwadar.

20. Flood Relief

Some monies are due on the federal government for the flood-affected people of Balochistan, these amounts should be released.

21. Education

Balochistan be given a special quota of scholarships by the Higher Education Commission so that students of the province can pursue studies leading up to local or foreign Masters and PhDs.

D. Economically-related Matters

22. *Rationalisation of the Royalty Formula*

- (i) Rationalization of the royalty formula and the Gas Development Surcharge have been done.
- (ii) The concept of public-private ownership in the areas of a district granted for exploration should be followed. Where contracts are awarded, the said district should be given 15% of revenue to be received by the provincial government.
- (iii) Due representation should be given to the province on the boards of the PPL; OGDC and Sui Southern Gas.
- (iv) Distribution companies should be obligated under contract/law to provide on priority basis gas to the district where it is explored.
- (v) In case of a successful find the federal government shall spend an amount equivalent to 10% of the net profits on development projects in the area. The ascertainment of profits shall be open to scrutiny by independent/third party auditors.
- (vi) The federal government has released the accrued Production Bonus to the districts producing oil and gas. This policy will be strictly implemented.

23. *Mega Projects*

- (i) All new mega projects to be initiated with the consent and approval of the provincial government. The share of the province in its profits/benefits to be assured in the contact/agreement.
- (ii) The concept of public-private ownership in such projects to be followed where ever possible.
- (iii) In Gwadar, there shall be a free economic zone and political activities in the said zone may be regulated by an appropriate law to be framed in consultation with all the stakeholders.
- (iv) In Gwadar, all or as far as possible, appointments in BS-1 to 16, should be from the local population.
- (v) In Gwadar, the local youth should be provided technical training and absorbed in GPA, GDA and Special Economic Zone.
- (vi) Preference should be given to the qualified local contractors while awarding contracts related to the port.

- (vii) Compensation and reallocation of all those fishermen, who are being displaced due to the Gwadar Port must be finalised immediately.
- (viii) The two jetties agreed to be constructed for the fishermen on the eastern and western bays be constructed.
- (ix) A fisheries training centre as required to be established under the 9th Five Year Plan for Balochistan be constructed.
- (x) A portion of the revenue collected by the Gwadar Port Authority be allocated for the development of the province.
- (xi) The chief minister shall be the ex-officio chairman of the Gwadar Development Authority and there shall be seven members from the province on the Board of Directors.
- (xii) The provincial government of Balochistan will nominate a person duly qualified to be the Chairman of the Gwadar Development Authority.

24. *SUI*

- (i) There should be a special development package for the area.
- (ii) The armed forces should be systematically withdrawn from the area.

25. *Employment Opportunities*

- (a) The federal government will create, with immediate effect, five thousand additional jobs for the province,
- (b): (i) The quota for the province as prescribed in the rules/law for employment in government (specially foreign service), semi-government, autonomous/semi-autonomous, corporations and bodies must be strictly complied with. Deficiency if any, needs to be met in a proactive manner,
- (ii) The Overseas Employment Foundation needs to facilitate the recruitment of skilled or unskilled labour for employment abroad,
- (iii) The local people living along the coast who meet the criteria should be given jobs in the Coast Guards,
- (iv) The monitoring of the aforesaid shall be the responsibility of the Senate Standing Committee for Establishment.

26. Gas Development Surcharge

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

27. Ownership in oil and gas companies

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

28. Sandak Project

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

29. Uniform Price of Gas

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

30. Fishing Trawlers

Fishing trawlers should be restricted to the authorised limits of 33 kilometres from the coast. This will help promote the small fishermen.

31. Kohlu District

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

32. Poverty Alleviation

In all poverty alleviation schemes, the allocation of the province should be proportional to the percentage of people living below the poverty line.

33. Profit Sharing In Existing Agreements

- (i) It is proposed that existing agreements on projects such as SANDAK, REKODIC and others where agreements have already been negotiated, the federal government may reconsider the agreements concerning the sharing of income, profits or royalty between the federal government and the provincial government.

34. Dera Bugti Internally Displaced Persons

The federal government for the rehabilitation and settlement of the IDPs shall provide a sum of Rs 1 billion.

35. Water Management

The federal government shall immediately undertake schemes, which include the construction of small dams throughout the province but particularly in the districts of Quetta, Pasheen, Qila Abdullah, Qila Saifullah, Zhob etc.

E. Monitoring Mechanism

36. Parliamentary Committee on National Security

It is proposed that the federal government, provincial government and other departments/agencies involved in the implementation of the proposals shall brief the Parliamentary Committee on National Security on the status of implementation on a monthly bases.

37. Parliament

The federal government and the provincial government shall every three months lay a report before both Houses of parliament, separately, on the state of implementation of the proposals. The two Houses shall separately allocate appropriate time for discussion on the said report.

38. The Standing Committee on Establishment of The Senate Of Pakistan:

The Standing Committee on Establishment of the Senate shall present a report every three months on Item No 25. The Senate chairman, after the report has been laid in the Senate, transmit the same to the speaker, National Assembly of Pakistan, for information of that House.

39. Certification

The federal minister for inter-provincial coordination shall at the end of each financial year certify to both the Houses of parliament separately, the amount of monies spent for the implementation of these proposals.

Daily Times (Lahore), November 25, 2009.

BALUCHISTAN PACKAGE

The much-awaited and long overdue official response and plan of action for the Baloch question was finally announced before parliament on November 24 at a special joint session. The prime minister extended a "hand of reconciliation and dialogue with our estranged brothers from Balochistan." The package contained 39 recommendations to address the various steps suggested in the package and propose constitutional changes to incorporate necessary amendments. These recommendations cover constitutional, political, administrative and economic issues "to heal the wounds of the Baloch."

The package, described by Zardari as a "grand leap forward" has been rejected by the majority of Baloch nationalist leaders and hence, the implementation of the package has become uncertain. The Baloch extreme reaction to the proposal reflects a deep sense of disappointment and frustration at the manner in which Islamabad has responded. The government, regrettably, has not reacted to any crisis situation with the speed and alacrity that the situation warrants, particularly when these proposals are a carbon-copy of those made in the 2005 Mushahid Report.

While it would be unfair to question the sincerity of the government in advancing these recommendations, it certainly reflects the ineptness of the government and insensitivity to the urgency of the burning question. The fundamental weakness that the package suffers from is that it has been presented without involving Baloch leaders and other stakeholders. It is not surprising that the package has been rejected by Baloch leaders, representing all political affiliations. It was imperative that the proposal should have been discussed with the Baloch leaders and other stakeholders taken on board to avoid the likely stalemate.

Mr Gilani on assumption of the office of prime minister had presented a 100-day plan of action and promised that the concurrent list would be abolished within one year and that the Baloch demands would be met within 100 days. Nothing of that kind has happened. Indeed, our 1973 Constitution provides for institutions and approaches aiming at stability and harmony among the provinces. The constitutional bodies to resolve any dispute or conflict provides the mechanism of the Council of Common Interest and the National Finance Commission.

Simply put the Baloch question relates to the right of ownership of resources and financial autonomy without any constraints. The Baloch want a peaceful Balochistan, ruled, governed and controlled by them. The

other issues are peripheral and directly related to the major ones indicated above.

The package is an honest effort, but lack of trust in Islamabad has made Baloch leaders wary of the establishment and the federal government and hence more imaginative and realistic options need to be explored to meet the Baloch aspirations. The time that has elapsed due to political indifference and administrative inertia has radicalised the Baloch and what could have been achieved a couple of years back may not be within our reach today.

We need to look at the broader picture and make a realistic appreciation of the crisis that we are faced with. The easiest solution would be to take guidance from the constitution, abolish the concurrent list and the emergency powers.

To create the right ambiance for meaningful negotiations, measures such as a general amnesty and cessations of military operations should be implemented forthwith. For composition of committees and commissions, referred to in the package, a definite timeline be indicated. Time is of the essence. Any further delay would only complicate and compromise national unity. Had Mujibur Rehman's six-points for East Pakistan's autonomy been given consideration and an honest national debate in the context of unified Pakistan was held, we might have been spared Pakistan's break-up. Let history not repeat itself.

Tayyab Siddiqui, *News International* (Rawalpindi), December 9, 2009
<http://thenews.jang.com.pk/print1.asp?id=212261>

GILANI INVITES SELF-EXILED BALOCH LEADERS FOR TALKS

Reiterating the offer for dialogue to self-exiled Baloch leaders and activists, Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani on Wednesday announced the withdrawal of troops from Kohlu and Sui, replacing them with the Frontier Corps (FC) and removal of seven check-posts.

In a winding up speech in the joint sitting of parliament, the prime minister also announced that the issue of the provincial autonomy was being taken up by the Parliamentary Committee on Constitutional Reforms and he would take this House into confidence soon on the issue.

The prime minister once again extended his invitation to the estranged Baloch leaders for a dialogue, saying that he was ready to go to the homes of all the veteran Baloch leaders to promote understanding and conciliation and bring the estranged people into the national mainstream.

“I hope that they, too, would adopt the path of peace and democracy in accepting this invitation. I will also ask the estranged Baloch youth to come into the mainstream,” he added. Though the MNAs irrespective of their political affiliations demanded trial of General (ret'd) Pervez Musharraf in the murder case of Nawab Akbar Bugti, the prime minister remained stuck to his earlier commitment to form a fact finding commission in this regard, saying the process had been started.

On the issue of Indian involvement in Balochistan violence, the prime minister said he raised the issue during his meeting with Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh at Sharm-el-Sheikh.

“I made it clear to the Indian prime minister that Pakistan had serious concerns over the Indian involvement and it was also mentioned by Indian PM Dr Manmohan Singh in the joint declaration that was issued after the meeting,” he added.

Gilani assured the House that the government would present the evidence of Indian involvement in Balochistan at an appropriate time and forum. “We will decide when and at which forum we will present this evidence,” he added.

The winding up speech of the prime minister focused on taking the House into confidence on the implementation of the Aghaz-e-Haqooq-e-Balochistan package and with a mind to remove the trust deficit on its implementation.

Gilani announced that the government had decided to review the role of the federal agencies in the administrative matters of Balochistan. He said the Army was being replaced with the FC in the province it had been withdrawn from Kohlu on Wednesday and replaced with the FC and a notification had been issued by the Interior Ministry in this regard.

He said instructions had also been issued for replacement of the Army with the FC in Sui area as well. He said a decision had also been taken to form three wings of the FC. The prime minister also announced abolition of seven check-posts in the province. These are Uthal, Lehri, Dera Allahyar, Sheela Bagh, Gwal Islamzai, Sheikh Wasil and Zero Point Coastal Highway.

According to the prime minister, the number of missing persons from Balochistan was 6,000 to 8,000 before the PPP government took over. “According to our investigation, this figure stands at 992, out of which 262 people are now back in their homes.

“I assure that the remaining persons would also meet their families soon,” he added. The prime minister said during the last one and a half

years, 83 political workers were released and today cases against other 89 people would be withdrawn.

He said the government was determined to going deep into the causes of death of prominent politician Nawab Muhammad Akbar Bugti, Balach Marri, Ghulam Muhammad, Lala Munir and Munir Ahmad.

He said a policy was being reviewed for conversion of 'B' areas of the province into 'A' areas and steps had been taken to bring the FC under the control of the provincial chief minister. He announced that every graduate from Balochistan would be provided with employment opportunity.

He also announced the lowering of qualification from Matric to Middle for recruitment of Baloch youth in the Coast Guard to ensure more employment opportunities for them. He said the implementation on his earlier announcement for the provision of 5,000 jobs for the Baloch youth had also begun.

"The government is also taking steps for proper training of the Baloch youth, affording them an opportunity for local and overseas employment," he added. He said 10,000 youth from Balochistan would be provided employment under the Youth Internship Programme.

He said Balochistan had been given representation on the boards of PSO and OGDC. He said a grant of one billion rupees each had been released for the flood-affected people and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) from Dera Bugti.

"The province would also get dues on accounts of Gas Development Surcharge amounting to Rs 120 billion," he added. Earlier, resuming the debate, Dr Abdul Malik asked the government to straightway declare General Pervez Musharraf as murderer of Nawab Akbar Bugti, saying there was no a need to constitute an inquiry commission to probe the killing of the Baloch leader.

He said if the government wanted to start dialogue with Baloch leaders, it should talk to Barahamdagh Bugti, Khair Bukhsh Marri, Mir Bayar and Allah Nazar. "No dialogue process without inclusion of these leaders will be fruitful," he said.

During his emotional speech, Dr Abdul Malik said those who said there was no war in Balochistan were deceiving themselves. "The war is certainly being led by Barahamdagh Bugti and being patronised by Khair Bukhsh Marri," he said.

He maintained that the Baloch people would neither compromise on their rights nor would lose their identity. He complained that Gwadar

land was distributed to favourites within 25 days. He said there was no place for Baloch diploma holders at OGDCL's installations in the province while Baloch officers were also ignored in large-scale promotions in the National Bank of Pakistan.

He also referred to a development project in Gaddani and said the Baloch people wanted that the land should be returned to the Balochistan government. Dr Abdul Malik stressed that the establishment would have to change its attitude towards Balochistan otherwise the Baloch leaders would have to organise the masses for achieving their rights.

Complaining about the attitude of the Punjab, he said the Punjab would have to give honour and dignity to the people of Balochistan, the NWFP and Sindh otherwise it would be difficult to move together.

Senator Abdul Rahim Khan Mandokhel proposed that all the provinces should get their due share from earnings of major taxes and natural resources.

As the debate was in progress, Senate Chairman Farooq H Naek who was chairing the session, had to intervene time and again to keep order in the House and maintain the interest of members in the proceedings. "Let us be serious on this vital issue. The entire nation is watching us," Naek said.

Deputy Chairman Senate Jan Muhammad Jamali praised the government for announcing the Balochistan package, saying they expected practical steps to heal the wounds of the people of the province.

"The youth of the province have become ultra nationalists and they will get out of control if they are denied their rights," Jamali warned the government. He said in order to resolve the problems of Balochistan, many executive orders were issued and mere announcements would not serve the purpose.

He invited the government to muster courage and talk to Khair Bukhsh Marri and Barahamdagh Bugti and bring them back to the national mainstream. "We may not be able to live with you if you are not ready to give us a dignified and honourable status," he said.

Expressing grave concern over the situation in Balochistan, MQM's parliamentary leader Dr Farooq Sattar said no package would succeed unless the root cause of the problem was looked into.

He said there was a need to take practical measures to end the sense of deprivation among the people of the Balochistan province. The MQM leader maintained that the country would have to move towards the

provincial autonomy and the government would require doing more than removing the Concurrent List.

“Nothing will be acceptable to the people of Balochistan less than the provincial autonomy,” he said. He advised the government to initiate dialogue with Baloch leadership inside and outside the country.

Minister of State Ayatullah Durrani warned that Balochistan would not remain part of the country if the package was not implemented during the tenure of the present government. He asked America to play its role in ending India’s interference in creating unrest in Balochistan.

He suggested that the name of Islamic Republic of Pakistan should be replaced with the United Nations of Pakistan. The remarks invited strong reaction from JUI-F Senator Hafiz Abdul Rasheed.

Hafiz Abdul Rasheed said it was a conspiracy against the country and they would not allow changing the name of the country, which came into being in the name of Islam. Senator Muhammad Khan Marri said the major problem of the Baloch was the provincial autonomy and due share in jobs.

He said he would not agree with some emotional part of speech of Dr Abdul Malik, saying that the speeches had made 20,000 Baloch people from Marri tribe to leave for Afghanistan in the past. Sher Muhammad Baloch praised the package announced by the government but stressed its effective implementation and practical measures.

News International (Rawalpindi), December 10, 2009.

THE AGHAZ-E-HUQOOQ-E-BALUCHISTAN PACKAGE AN ANALYSIS

Introduction

The Aghaz-e-Huqooq-e-Baluchistan is a set of proposals for debate in, and approval of, the joint sitting of Parliament. It is not an approved programme or approved policy of the Federal Government. It has yet to be considered by the Federal Cabinet. It is presumed that after these proposals have been debated by the joint sitting of Parliament and a consensus develops on all or most of them that a resolution will be moved for their approval. It is (also) presumed that after such approval Parliament and the Baluchistan Assembly will enact laws and the Federal and Baluchistan Governments will take appropriate administrative measures for the implementation of these proposals.

The proposals may briefly be categorized as follows:

- i. Constitutional matters
- ii. Political matters
- iii. Administrative matters
- iv. Economic matters
- v. Monitoring mechanism

Constitutional Matters

There is very little to be said about the proposals relating to constitutional matters for the reason that even a resolution by a joint sitting of Parliament will not lead to any material progress on the issues referred to in this part of the over-all package inasmuch as:

- (a) The increase in provincial autonomy through deletion of the Concurrent List in the Fourth Schedule of the Constitution has to be approved by two-third majorities in the Senate and National Assembly sitting separately and this will happen only after the Parliamentary Committee headed by Senator Raza Rabbani has completed its work and the Government moves an appropriate Constitutional Amendment Bill. The proposals submitted to the joint sitting are even otherwise silent as to whether the deletion of the entire Concurrent List is envisaged or only some part of it. There may not be unanimity or even consensus on this matter as (reportedly) the PML-N and the PML have reservations about deletion of some of the subjects in this List on the ground that this would lead to an undesirable weakening of the Federal structure. In March 2007, the sub-Committee of the Parliamentary Committee on Balochistan on Provincial Autonomy chaired by Senator Wasim Sajjad recommended deletion of only 14 of the 47 items in this List.
- (b) The NFC Award and the revision of the criteria for distribution between the Provinces of the provincial share of pooled taxes and resources has to be made by the National Finance Commission and not by Parliament. It is to be hoped, though not certain, that there is some co-ordination between the NFC and the Parliamentary Committee on Constitutional Reforms chaired by Senator Raza Rabbani as deletion of whole or part of the Concurrent List will add to

the expenditure requirements of the Provinces and thus necessitate a larger share for the Provinces as a whole in the pool of shared taxes.

- (c) The implementation of articles 154,155,157,158 and 159 of the Constitution relate to the work of the Council of Common Interests and the National Economic Council and set out policies and principles to be followed in the matter of electricity, natural gas and broadcasting and telecasting. The Council of Common Interests does need to be activated, the National Economic Council is reasonably functional and the constitutionally mandated policies do need to be followed BUT the proposals submitted to the joint sitting are bereft of any content beyond a mere reference to the need for implementation of these articles. In this matter the framers of the Aghaaz-e-Huqooq-e-Balochistan may have done much better by following the recommendations of the Parliamentary Committee on Provincial Autonomy. This Committee proposed that the Council of Common Interests and the National Economic Council should meet at least twice in each year and that Articles 153 and 156 of the Constitution should be amended accordingly. It also proposed enactment of law and rules to regulate the working of these Councils as also the requirement that annual reports of both should be placed before both Houses of Parliament.

Federal Encroachment in Provincial Subjects

The reference to deletion of the Police Order 2002 and the Balochistan Local Government Ordinance 2001 from the Sixth Schedule as being under consideration of the Parliamentary Committee on Constitutional Reforms goes indirectly to the core of the real problem in Federal Provincial relations. Law and order and local government are both provincial subjects. Why therefore should the Federation impose its views in these matters on the Provinces and then prevent them from making any changes in these laws? It shows, rather proves, that the Federation does not respect provincial autonomy even in matters that squarely fall within the powers of the Provinces. It is the mind-set of the high political and bureaucratic levels of the Federation that requires a fundamental change.

Provincial Control over Revenue Generation

There is another, and more important, aspect to the issue of provincial autonomy. Real and meaningful autonomy will not come to Balochistan, or even the other Provinces, till the Provinces have direct control of substantially more sources of revenue. A World Bank funded study, as also studies made for the 6th National Finance Commission, show that 93% of the combined revenues of the Federal, Provincial and District Governments are collected by the Federal Government whose own expenditure accounts for 72% of the whole. The Provincial and District Governments spend 28% of the combined expenditures but raise only 7% of the combined revenues. Three-fourths of all Provincial and District Governments expenditures are met through resource transfers from the Federal Government as per the NFC awards. In next-door India the States finance more than 60% of their expenditures from their own revenue collections. At present, even after being given its share from the divisible pool of taxes Balochistan has to be given outright grants to meet its deficit. Is it any wonder then that the Baloch people are resentful of being treated as a deficit Province dependant on the 'charity' of the Federation, when they have resources like gas and minerals for which, in their view at least, they are not being paid the proper price and/or being given their due share of revenues.

Political Matters

The proposals relating to political matters can at best be described as confidence building measures. These relate to the release of political workers and return of exiles other than those charged with heinous crimes or involved in acts of terrorism. There is a call for honouring all unanimously passed Provincial Assembly resolutions since 2002. It is not spelt out what these resolutions were about.

The proposal that the Provincial Government may be allowed to amend its local Government Ordinance repeats the proposal already contained in the constitutional matters list.

Initiation of Political Dialogue

The one proposal that needs emphasis and implementation above all is the call for initiation of a political dialogue with all major stakeholders to bring them into mainstream politics. There can be little doubt that

productive and result-oriented dialogue with political stakeholders in Balochistan, both inside and the outside the Parliamentary system, is the way forward and not the military operations which should be discontinued except as aid to civil power and as required to counter subversion by enemy or alien agents.

The dialogue process requires for its initiation not only the promised release of political prisoners but also compensation for their unjustified incarceration if it was not in accordance with due process of law. It would also be appropriate to announce compensation for innocent civilian victims of actions by military and paramilitary forces.

Absence of Stakeholders in Legislatures

One of the difficulties in negotiations and settlement of the various Baloch issues is the question with whom to negotiate and how and where because the real opposition is currently not a part of the democratic parliamentary system, and perhaps, not willing to participate in this system till such time as its demands have been substantially met.

Assuming that negotiations do take place with these extra parliamentary forces the further question arises as to how such agreements will be honoured and implemented given that they will and/or are to be arrived at with parties who presently do not have an electoral mandate. It will have to be written into these agreements that the non-elected parties must participate in the democratic electoral process. At some stage, if there is progress of substance in the envisaged negotiations, it may become necessary to hold early provincial elections in Balochistan. Final decision in this matter may/could perhaps be taken if District Government elections held earlier, on the basis of political parties, yield a result substantial different from the present political complexion of the present Balochistan Assembly.

Administrative Matters

The proposals relating to administrative matters are not materially different from those relating to political matters. The recommendations include setting up of a Commission of Inquiry in respect of missing persons, a judicial inquiry into the murder of Baloch political workers namely Ghulam Muhammad, Lala Munir and Munir Ahmad and target killings in the Province, a judicial commission to collect the facts leading

to the death of Nawab Akbar Bughti and a judicial inquiry into the allotment of land at Gwadar.

The 13 proposals contained in this list also include a recommendation that all operations by Federal agencies should cease except those related to the fight against terrorism, that the Frontier Corps should replace the Pakistan Army in the Sui area, that construction of Cantonments in Sui and Kohlu should be stopped for the time being, that the policy of converting 'B' areas into 'A' areas may be reviewed in line with the decision of the Provincial Government, that the Frontier Corps should perform its law and order role under the control of the Chief Minister, that check posts established by the Coast Guards beyond its territorial limits should be dismantled, that flood relief amounts promised to the Province should be released and that the Baloch people be given a special quota of scholarships by the Higher Education Commission.

Echo of Earlier Proposals

Most of these proposals are echoes of the recommendations made by the Parliamentary Committee on Balochistan in November 2005. The Parliamentary Committee on Balochistan, chaired by Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, had also recommended night landing facilities for Quetta Airport. However, the fact that one or two of the recommendations made by the Parliamentary Committee on Balochistan are not to be found in the present proposals, and vice versa, is not important. What is important is that the Baloch leaders and the Baloch people have heard all this before, the last time four years ago when the Parliamentary Committee on Balochistan's Report was published. They cannot be faulted for their scepticism whether the proposals, otherwise good and sound, will ever be implemented.

Provincial Control over the FC

The recommendation that the Chief Minister should have control over the law and order operations of the Frontier Corps is commendable. However, until and unless the Chief Minister is given the power of transfers and appointments in this Corp, as also disciplinary powers with reference to its personnel, this recommendation will not translate into anything more than an expression of good intentions. These words of caution also apply to the proposal that various check posts established by

the Civilian Armed Forces in different parts of Balochistan should be as per directions of the Provincial Government.

Construction of New Cantonments

The policy to be followed with respect to construction of new cantonments in Balochistan needs careful consideration and perhaps review. There should be no ambiguity in this matter. No promise or commitment should be held out that new cantonments will not be built in Balochistan if at some later date some cantonments are to be built. Prima facie there is no reason to give any such promise or commitment. There are any number of cantonments in Punjab, Sindh and NWFP and more are being built and will be built in these three Provinces. There is no reason therefore why this should not be so in the case of Balochistan. There was much public resistance, at one time, to the building of a new cantonment in Pannu Aqil but once it was completed the local residents who were initially resisting the construction, became the greatest beneficiaries. The security requirements of Pakistan must not be subordinated to any consideration of 'winning' the temporary good-will of some political forces in Balochistan.

Superficial Proposals

The proposals relating to release of flood relief allocations and special quota of scholarship by the Higher Education Commission for Baloch students are superficial inasmuch as neither amounts nor numbers are mentioned. Regrettably this observation in regard to superficiality applies to a number of other proposals in the various lists.

Economic Matters

The proposals relating to economic matters are one and all to be welcomed. Deserving of special mention is the proposal that there shall be a uniform price of gas throughout Pakistan for the purpose of calculating the gas development surcharge and the recommendation that allocations for poverty alleviation shall be proportional to the percentage of people living below the poverty line in each Province. The proposals that the Provincial Government and the concerned District Governments shall be given greater share of revenues and profits from gas exploration and production, that gas shall be supplied on priority basis to the

residents of the districts in which the fields are located, that Balochistan will be given due representation on the Boards of PPL, OGDCL and Sui Southern Gas and that ascertainment of profits payable to Balochistan shall be open to third party auditors are welcome through belated recognition of the mandate contained in article 158 of the Constitution.

Employment Opportunities

In regard to employment opportunities the proposals recommend that the Federal Government should create, with immediate effect, five thousand additional jobs for the Province, that the Balochistan quota as prescribed in the law and rules for employment in Government and its various agencies should be strictly complied with and the deficiencies redressed in a proactive manner, that local people living along the Coast should be given jobs in Coast Guard and that the Overseas Employment Corporation should facilitate the recruitment of skilled and unskilled Baloch labour for employment abroad. Once again these proposals are not new. They were also made by the Parliamentary Committee on Balochistan in November 2005. The one new promise is to create five thousand additional jobs with immediate effect. As with other proposals the real test will be how quickly and effectively this promise is implemented.

Mega Projects with Provincial Consent

The 14 proposals contained in the economic matters list also include the recommendation that no new mega projects should be initiated by the Federation in Balochistan except with the consent and approval of the Provincial Government, that there will be special development packages for Sui and Kohlu, that local fishermen will be protected by keeping fishing trawlers out of a 33 KM zone along the Coast, that one billion rupees shall be provided by the Federal Government for the rehabilitation and settlement of the internally displaced persons in Dera Bugti and that the Federal Government shall construct small dams throughout the Province but particularly in the districts of Quetta, Pishin, Qilla Abdullah, Qita Saifullah and Zhob. There is also a detailed sub-set of proposals relating to Gwadar Port promising a free economic zone, appointments in BS-1 to BS-16 from the local population, construction of Jetties for local fishermen, a fisheries training centre, and greater control of Gwadar by the Provincial Government including a

commitment that the Chief Minister shall be the Chairman of the Gwadar Development Authority.

Construction and Maintenance of National Highways

The Parliamentary Committee on Balochistan had made detailed recommendations with regard to construction of maintenance and national highways in Balochistan and on measures required to be taken as part of a proposed anti-drought strategy. Neither of those recommendations find mention in the Aghaaz-e-Huqooq-e-Balochistan. They deserve inclusion therein. Hopefully the omission will be made good during the course of the Parliamentary debate.

Implementation the Real Test

Much has been promised, many good commitments made, but it bears repetition that the real test will come with implementation, when the promises and commitments are translated into actual budget allocations either through a mini budget in the next few months or through the budget for the financial year 2010-11. It is only when this is done that the people of Balochistan will begin to appreciate that the Federation is serious in addressing their grievances of past and continuing neglect.

Monitoring Mechanism

In regard to monitoring the proposals provide for over-sight by the Parliamentary Committee on National Security and the Senate Standing Committee for the Establishment. The relevant National Assembly Standing Committee is conspicuous by its absence here.

Shahid Hamid, *Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency*,
December 10, 2009. www.pildat.org

THE FEDERATION AND AUTONOMY

The Balochistan package, the implementation of which the prime minister envisages finalising by December 15, has been received with views on both extremes of a spectrum. The ruling stakeholders term it as a significant milestone whereas the Baloch nationalists have rejected it outright.

A review of the package shows that the parliamentary and cabinet committee mandated with the task of developing the package has carefully gone over the various bones of contention and has made an effort to make some allowances without disturbing the current relationship between the federation and federating units. Hence, some additional space has been created for Balochistan in the administrative, economic and political realms, with commitments to pay outstanding dues on account of royalties -- a major concern in inter-provincial relationships -- and an affirmation that the parliamentary committee will review matters relating to provincial autonomy in the 18th Amendment.

If this package, as the name suggests, is the beginning of careful strategic thinking and long-term planning towards granting provinces the due share of autonomy, then it should be considered as a step in the positive direction. In isolation, however, each of its components have their limitations, as the objective intended to be achieved through the Balochistan package, deeply interlinked with the issue of provincial autonomy and the relationship of the federation with its federating units. In this equation, the federal government's mandate, the fate of the concurrent list, discussions around the National Finance Commission (NFC) award, matters relating to provincial prerogatives with regard to sharing of resources and taxation and other prerogatives assume great importance. These must be addressed in a coordinated and step-wise manner.

First, autonomy must be defined in the context of fiscal and political federalism in Pakistan. Over the years, many calls have drawn attention to the subject, most of them subscribing to an extreme notion of autonomy analogous to what was envisaged in the 1940 resolution, which defined Pakistan as "a federation comprising autonomous units, which shall be completely sovereign". Views articulated in the Declaration of Autonomy of the Federating Units signed on August 2, 1986, by the leaders of the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy, also called for an extent of autonomy in which all, except four subjects -- defence, foreign affairs, communications and currency -- were to be delegated to the provinces. Many Baloch nationalists still subscribe to this view. The question is, do these four subjects guarantee a viable federation for Pakistan? What else is needed by way of the federal government's mandate to fulfill the concept of a unified Pakistan and promote equity in development across provinces? Can the desired level of provincial autonomy be granted by implementing the five-point constitutional

changes articulated in the Balochistan package, relating to abolishing the concurrent list, the Local Government Ordinance (LGO) 2001 and Police Order 2002, and effective implementation of Articles 153-160 of the constitution? Or should we completely digress from the quantum of provincial autonomy as endorsed by the 1973 constitution? How can we achieve the dual goals of granting the people of Balochistan the right to self-rule and control while supporting national unity at the same time? These questions need careful thinking with a broad-based consensus on the directions to be pursued.

Second, the federal government's mandate must be clearly defined. Many believe that the current federal system has been designed on the legacy of centralised control -- a hallmark of the colonial period. In this arrangement, the federal government has been stretched thin with tasks that could better be taken in the provincial fold. Many also believe that there is a major disconnect between prerogatives to generate resources and expenditure responsibilities. It has been frequently cited that the federal government generates 93 per cent of the resources and has 72 per cent share in total expenditures; conversely, the provinces are left with seven per cent resources and account for 28 per cent of the expenditure. Of the five expenditure heads of the federal government, the two that are of direct relevance to the question of provincial autonomy are the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) and the cost of running the civil government. There are many subjects under the PSDP, which can better be assigned to the provinces. If there is a unanimous consensus to do so, the costs of running the civil establishment in Islamabad can be scaled down through structural institutional changes; the concurrent list can then correspondingly be pruned and the size of the National Finance Commission award for the provinces will therefore increase.

Third, the issue of the NFC Award is closely interlinked. Out of the seven NFCs since the 1973 constitution, only four have come up with additional measures. These although important in their own right, do not comprehensively address issues fundamental to the fiscal autonomy of the provinces, which center on taxation rights and mechanisms to assign permanent sources of revenue, particularly with regard to control over natural resources in line with what has been stipulated in Article 161.

Decision on the next NFC award is due later this week. Although there are inherent difficulties in balancing the varied demands of the provinces, there are ways in which provinces can be empowered to generate and retain their own revenue, whilst reducing concentration of

revenue collection at the centre through major tax-heads, albeit without jeopardising the core functions of the federation. In addition, sensible revenue collection criteria, which indicate economic activity in the province and hence revenue distribution can be devised and given weights in relation to criteria for distribution from the divisible pool. This can be supplemented by other criteria -- indeed the provinces have a long-term demand to include criteria other than the sole criterion of population as a basis of provincial allocations from the divisible pool.

Fourth, let's not forget that the core purpose of provincial autonomy is to enhance public sector effectiveness. That in turn is closely linked to how the system of local governance will be shaped -- an area in which there is pervasive uncertainty.

It is evident; therefore, that the issue meant to be addressed through the Balochistan package needs a consensus-driven long term plan, which can be implemented in a coordinated stepwise manner. As this requires many institutional changes, immediate implementation of drastic and ad hoc measures should be avoided as it can lead to disenchantment in the administration particularly at the federal level, which can be detrimental at a time when the country is undergoing many different crises.

But at the same time, the issue of provincial autonomy should not be taken lightly. In fact, the determinants of the country's split in 1971 were rooted in negligence to the subject. It is imperative to devise a long-term solution acceptable to the provinces to ensure that the provinces have more space and control, whilst at the same time strengthening the foundations of the federal structure and inter-provincial harmony. However, in order to get things going in a coordinated fashion, long-term visionary thinking, strategic planning, and consistency of policy direction is needed over time. In tandem, careful and unbiased oversight has to be ensured so that capacity development and transparency-promoting reform is pursued in the provinces in parallel with granting of autonomy and responsibility. A package of measures, no matter how well-intentioned, has inherent limitations in achieving this long-term objective.

Dr. Sania Nishtar, *News International* (Rawalpindi), December 12, 2009.

GOVT DETERMINED TO ADDRESS BALOCHISTAN ISSUES: ZARDARI

President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday [December 14, 2009] said the government was determined to address the issues of Balochistan, including that of grant of amnesty, in an institutionalised manner through parliament and with the force of the Constitution.

“This had been done with a view to giving permanence and ownership to whatever was being done for bringing Balochistan into the mainstream and resolving the outstanding issues of the province,” he said while addressing a group of elders from Balochistan, including both Baloch and Pashtun leaders, at the Presidency on Monday night.

Briefing the media, presidential spokesman Farhatullah Babar quoted the president as saying that not only the NFC formula had been changed to include in it criteria other than population, but the federal government had agreed to slash its share considerably and transfer it to the provinces in the NFC Award. “This would greatly benefit Balochistan and other smaller provinces,” he added.

The president said the federal government announced to replace the Army with the Frontier Corps in Sui and that no proposal be formulated to construct new cantonments, except in the Frontier areas where they were required. “The political exiles returning to Pakistan will be facilitated and all the new mega projects will be initiated only with the consent and approval of the provincial government,” he said.

He said under the package, the federal government would pay arrears of the gas development surcharge (GDS) from 1954 to 1991, amounting to Rs 120 billion in 12 years.

The president said the province would be able to buy up to 20 per cent of right shares offered in the open market by organisations like the PPL, the OGDCL and the Sui Southern, and special incentives would be offered to local tribes for facilitating oil/gas exploration in the Kohlu district, now closed owing to security considerations.

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News International (Rawalpindi), December 15, 2009.

STRATEGIC BALOCHISTAN BECOMES A TARGET IN WAR AGAINST TALIBAN

Look around Balochistan, and you may not see much. Pakistan's largest province is also its poorest and least inhabited – an expanse of rocky deserts and ramshackle villages where hardy tribesmen live by ancient laws. But to outside eyes, Balochistan's barren sands glisten with hidden value.

Mining companies eye its natural riches: vast and largely untapped reserves of copper, natural gas and possibly oil. Criminals see easy money: the world's heroin superhighway, a network of smuggling trails, cuts through its lonely borders. Foreign governments consider its location: wedged between Iran and Afghanistan, and covering two-fifths of Pakistan, Balochistan occupies highly strategic real estate.

But for the black-turbaned clerics commanding the Afghan *Taliban*, the desolate province offers something else: a welcoming rear base. As the *Taliban* insurgency oozes across Afghanistan, NATO generals complain that the fighting is being directed from Balochistan.

In a bleak report to President Barack Obama last September, the US commander in Afghanistan, General Stanley McChrystal, said the "Quetta Shura" – a 15-man war council based in or around the Baloch capital and led by Mullah Muhammad Omar, his deputy Mullah Baradar and his military commander Abdullah Zakir – was dictating the pace of the war. It posed the greatest threat to western troops, and was already planning for the 2010 fighting season, McChrystal said. "Afghanistan's insurgency is clearly supported from Pakistan. The Quetta Shura conducts a formal campaign review each winter, after which Mullah Omar announces his guidance and intent for the following year." Yet efforts to break up the *Taliban's* Pakistan sanctuary have so far been concentrated to the east, in Waziristan. Here, CIA-led drone strikes hit al-Qaida and *Taliban* hideouts, while the Pakistani army battles with the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan – a militant faction that strikes Pakistani cities with suicide bombs. On 17 December, drones fired 10 missiles at a house in North Waziristan, killing at least 12 people.

But in Balochistan militants broadly known as the "*Afghan Taliban*" operate without fear or hindrance. The long and largely unpatrolled border touches Kandahar, Zabul and Helmand, where almost 10,000 British troops are stationed. Commanders there complain that the Taliban are supplied in men, weapons and bomb parts from Balochistan.

But British diplomats are strangely silent, worried that criticism could jeopardise counter-terrorism co-operation with Pakistan.

The Americans, however, are taking a more direct approach. Obama's announcement of another 30,000 troops for Afghanistan has triggered a diplomatic offensive across the border in Pakistan. Officials including the CIA director Leon Panetta and the military chief, Admiral Mike Mullen, have visited, urging Pakistan to act forcefully. Specifically, they want action against Sirajuddin Haqqani, a warlord with a network of fighters in North Waziristan. They also want to extend the controversial drone campaign to include the Quetta shura in Balochistan.

It makes perfect sense to focus on Balochistan, which has been largely neglected until now," said Art Keller, a former CIA case officer who worked in Pakistan in 2006. "The question is how."

Such talk deeply irritates Pakistan's military. Pakistan officially ended its support for the Taliban in 2001, and since then has become embroiled in a dirty war against national insurgents in Balochistan. But although it denies covertly supporting the Taliban, the military has conspicuously turned a blind eye.

...

Things have tightened up: the Osama tapes are no longer sold, and holidaying fighters are more discreet. But the safe haven remains. Wounded fighters are quietly ferried across the border for treatment; commanders find recruits in decades-old refugee camps along the border. The violence is spilling into Balochistan itself: last summer NATO supply convoys heading for the border came under attack for the first time.

"The whole war in Afghanistan is being launched from here," said Abdul Rahim Mandokhel, an outspoken senator from Zhob in northern Balochistan. He accuses Pakistan's intelligence agencies of carrying out a "double" policy. "One thing is clear: the area is being used for cross-border offences," he said.

So far, the only western intervention in Balochistan has been covert. A former NATO officer said SAS commandos had raided heroin convoys along the province's unmanned border in 2002, 2003 and possibly later. "The SAS was performing a service to the rest of the coalition," he said, explaining that other western forces were not allowed to attack drug smugglers at the time.

US Special Forces have also been active along the border, in the tribal belt east of Balochistan. The source said US commando units had

conducted four cross-border raids into Pakistan since 2003. Only one, in September 2008, was reported. The first three went undetected thanks to "constant reporting about American spies" in the tribal belt.

The former NATO officer said: "There's so much bullshit out there – the militants blame everything on American soldiers or spies or helicopters. So [when we did act] it was real easy to become part of the background noise." A US embassy spokesman in Islamabad declined to comment.

The new US approach to Balochistan is driven by battlefield realities. By next summer 30,000 western soldiers – a third British, the rest mostly American – will be based across the border in Helmand. Seth Jones, a civilian adviser to the US special forces commander in Afghanistan, said this month that the US must "target *Taliban* leaders in Balochistan" through an expanded drone strike campaign. Pakistani officials trenchantly oppose the idea.

"We can't fight everyone, everywhere. We need to be pragmatic. And we will not be dictated to," said a senior official with Inter Services Intelligence (ISI), speaking on condition of anonymity. The official admitted that insurgents "do come and go" in Balochistan, but insisted the ISI was already cooperating with the CIA in the province, citing 60 joint raids over the past year.

Drone strikes in densely populated Quetta would be "disastrous", he said, both in terms of civilian casualties and anti-American hostility. "I think this is just pressure tactics, the Americans aren't stupid enough to [extend drone strikes]. But if their objective is to destabilise Pakistan, that would be a good way to do it."

Analysts say Pakistan is playing a complicated strategic game – fighting the "bad" Taliban in Waziristan, but secretly allying with the "good" militants attacking Afghanistan. "I can imagine the Pakistanis symbolically allowing the Americans to take out a few guys from the Quetta shura," said Rifaat Hussain, a defence studies professor at Islamabad's Quaid-I-Azam University. "But I can't see them entirely turning the tables. Pakistan's main concern is not to burn its boats with all shades of the Taliban."

The reason, he said, is India. Fearing Indian influence in Afghanistan, Pakistani military planners see the Taliban as their ticket to influence once western forces depart. Obama announced a US withdrawal starting mid-2011.

"They see these guys as their allies in the post-American scenario – a strategic asset to be used when power is up for grabs in Afghanistan," he said.

American officials are becoming aware of Pakistani concerns. "Increasing Indian influence in Afghanistan," McChrystal wrote, "is likely to exacerbate regional tensions and encourage Pakistani countermeasures." A former US official said the Obama administration was aware of a possible backlash, should drones start hitting Balochistan.

But, the source added, there is a growing recognition that "if we are serious about going after targets in Balochistan, particularly Quetta, then we'll have to do it ourselves". And, he added, should military casualties continue to rise across the border, drones could be sent in regardless of what Pakistan's government says.

"We've already established that precedent with the Pakistanis," he said. "We told them: 'We want you to do this.

"But if you won't, we will. So get out of our way'."

Home to 7 million people, the province of Balochistan occupies 43% of Pakistan's land area. Mostly desert and mountain, it is rich in untapped resources: natural gas, uranium and possibly oil. Since 1948 ethnic Balochs have demanded greater autonomy and more control over revenues from their gas fields, and the Pakistani government has put down four insurgencies; the fifth and current rebellion started in 2003, led by the Balochistan Liberation Army.

There are small Baloch minorities in eastern Iran and south Afghanistan. But north Balochistan, along the Afghan border, is largely inhabited by ethnic Pashtuns, who have different preoccupations. The provincial capital, Quetta, is widely assumed to be the HQ of the Taliban and al-Qaida in their war against NATO in Afghanistan – the US has flown drone aircraft from a desert strip in Balochistan.

Guardian (London), December 21, 2009
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/dec/21/us-taliban-balochistan-strategy-pakistan/print>

THE BALOCHISTAN PACKAGE

In fact, the crisis of confidence between the Baloch and Islamabad is one of the major reasons for the strong reaction from Balochistan with regard to Islamabad's unattractive and impractical 'package'.

The Baloch people believe they have been repeatedly betrayed by the establishment, and there is no way to trust Islamabad's unilateral offer without firm internal and external guarantees.

For Islamabad to make any headway in this region it needs to do a lot more than just offer unconvincing promise-oriented packages. There are two major interrelated obstacles to permanent peace in Balochistan:

- (1) The establishment in Islamabad believes that it has the sovereign right to confiscate Baloch natural wealth and
- (2) Baloch political parties are of the opinion, based on past experience, that Islamabad cannot be trusted anymore and the right of national self-determination is the only way out of the crisis.

To end this deadlock there is a need to revitalise the peace process following some basic steps:

- (a) Fast-track confidence-building measures, including an end to the oppressive regime in the province, demilitarisation, arrest and trial of 'culprits', an end to the practice of disappearances, the need to release and for heavy compensation for all missing persons, and a total halt to controversial development projects;
- (b) Involving experienced mediators and facilitators to aid the peace process and monitor implementation and
- (c) Guarantees, including international guarantees by reputable institutions. Future guarantees must include the Baloch people's right to self-determination in case of any misadventure by the central government. There have been repeated packages, even during the Musharraf era; in fact all controversial and exploitative developments were termed 'packages'. The recent package holds no concrete assurances on Balochistan's political, economic and administrative future, including the Baloch people's right to self-rule and control over natural resources, which has been the central demand of the Baloch people.

The majority of issues in the package are either 'under consideration, or will be considered, or will be inquired into, or will be taken care of at some unspecified time in the future'.

...

The PPP-initiated process of reconciliation and conflict resolution should be exclusive. The peace process must be genuine, facilitated by international mediators so that peace talks can be held in depth and in a more trusted environment.

On the constitutional amendment part there should have been a more clear vision, a road map and timetable for Balochistan's demands, rather than using old-fashioned tactical language. The talk of constitutional amendments in the proposed 'package' is not very attractive for the Baloch masses, as existing constitutional guarantees with regard to fundamental rights and economic wellbeing have been repeatedly violated by the central government.

...

It is frequently proposed as a solution to the dissatisfaction that arises when one or two constituent units feel that they have significantly different needs from the others as a result of ethnic, linguistic or cultural differences.

Fancy promises lacking the potential for action in the administrative part of the package will further complicate many issues which need quick resolution through sincere executive orders. The language, tone and implementation mechanism of administrative matters gives massive leverage to the central government and the concerned agencies to continue their ruthless policies and even justifies their actions under the cover of inquiry committees and commissions.

The PPP government — if it is powerful enough — has to come up with actions and decisions. There have been judicial inquiries, commissions and reports with regard to all the relevant issues. Even court orders exist while the provincial assembly's unanimous resolutions have been passed.

What is missing is the will to implement these orders.

The much talked about 'political amnesty' is in fact a very offensive, provocative term. Islamabad has accepted much of the blame for wrongdoing in the province and apologised for transgressions. Instead of issuing an amnesty, Islamabad needs to ask for amnesty from the oppressed Baloch masses for its unjustified actions.

...A Balochistan monitoring mission should have been set up, composed of representatives and monitors from the European Union and countries like Norway, which have vast experience in monitoring and implementing peace deals.

Monitoring is not about the implementation of certain decisions. It is a comprehensive mechanism and strategy to monitor and support the parties of the MoU with re-integration, assurance of human rights, new legislation and many other demanding political issues. Since the central government is a party to the conflict, it is impractical for it to unilaterally control the monitoring and implementation mechanism.

Sanaullah Baloch, *Dawn* (Islamabad), December 21, 2009.
<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/18-the-balochistan-package-am-03>

TEXT OF SPEECH OF PRIME MINISTER SYED YUSUF RAZA GILANI AT THE CEREMONY OF NATIONAL FINANCE COMMISSION AWARD IN GWADAR

Respected Federal Minister Finance Shaukat Tareen, Chief Minister Punjab Mian Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif, Chief Minister NWFP Amir Haider Khan Hoti, Chief Minister Sindh Syed Qaim Ali Shah, Federal and Provincial Ministers, Members of Parliament and honourable gentlemen and ladies.

I first congratulate Federal Minister for Finance, all ministers, provincial chief ministers, provincial ministers and their team on this historic occasion. There is a consensus that this is a great historic occasion for the whole nation. You are seeing in this hall that every political party is represented here. All the political forces are gathered in this hall. And my brothers from FATA are also present there I also welcome them. I think it is a win win for everybody. The federal government wanted that provinces should be fully empowered with provincial and financial autonomy and as we will move forward you will get more good news. Somebody said to me that if all the powers are transferred to the provinces, the federal government will weaken. I told him that the federal government would not be weakened by transfer of powers to the provinces. Because we are sincere and want the provinces to be strong. If the provinces are strong, Pakistan will be strong. And if we need money at some stage we could get loan from the smaller brothers.

This success is the dividend of democracy. It is fruit of democracy. You waged a struggle, the struggle that you did for principles, and in which you succeeded and the democratic forces were successful. I think it is fruit of that. What dictatorship can't do, democracy can do. We have travelled this journey because of democracy. I want to tell that we

gathered the whole nation for the war of terrorism, called an All Parties Conference and went to parliament then an operation was carried out in Malakand and the whole nation got united as a fortified concrete wall. It was fruit of democracy that all political leadership inside and outside parliament, those who contested election or not got together on a point that we have to fight with the terrorists.

I pay tribute to all the leadership who in the larger interest of the country forgot their differences to counter terrorism which is a menace for the country, economy, law and order and investment. So our coming together at one point shows political maturity. It is a democratic dividend that we are together. I also want to tell you that when the incident of Mumbai happened in India, we called an All Parties Conference and all leadership of the country stood united for the defence of Pakistan and for the nation and the country's defence. They also came to know that Pakistan is an honourable nation and it rises above personal interests and gives priority to the national interest and it is united.

I want to tell you that the constitution was given by Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and now a constitutional committee has been formed which is taking up the constitutional amendments in which rights of Balochistan and other provinces are discussed. We will expedite that constitutional committee so that it can soon bring its recommendations to the parliament. So the nation will hear another good news that this leadership, the political forces got together and turned the real constitution of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to its original form. Similarly, today's NFC award which was earlier based on population as explained by the federal minister, now its criteria has been changed and the factor of backwardness is included in it. I think that it is a big achievement and large heartedness of the provinces that on this point they catered to those brothers who were ignored for 62 years. This is a sign of political maturity and I remember what Punjab has done. When our manifesto was being made and I was part of that process, it was the desire of Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto that in future instead of only the criteria of population other factors should also be included. So when I congratulated Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif over telephone on the NFC award that Punjab has shown magnanimity, he said with simplicity you are also from Punjab. I said I have forgotten that as I always talk of federation. When I talk of Pakistaniat and federation I forget that Balochistan is mine, or Karachi is mine or other provinces are mine, as I think that unless we all get together this country cannot make progress. I

also want to request you, a lot of dictators came here and every dictator put his hand on a raw nerve that I am coming, I will come and I will end all corruption from the country, take it out from its roots.

I want to take you towards history, in 1958 the leading politicians Sir Feroze Khan Noon, Khwaja Nazimuddin, Suharwardi and from your province a lot of leading elders and leaders who took part in the Pakistan movement, they made the country and they signed on declaration of Pakistan in 1940, these leading politicians were EBD OED by Ayub Khan on the basis of corruption and disqualified. From that time the country has been destabilized. Those people who were from West Pakistan or East Pakistan. All the leading names were EBD OED and disqualified and it became difficult for the under 19 team to take control. After Bhutto Sahib came, Ziaul Haq came saying that I am here for accountability. For accountability a dictator has no political party, first he holds local bodies elections and local bodies elections are held on non-party basis and those who are elected on non-party basis, they make a king's party and everybody gets into the king's party. And overnight the biggest party is that of the dictator. And they passed ten years. Similarly Musharraf Sahib came. It was the government of Mian Sahib with a two thirds majority. Nobody has the right to disqualify those were publicly elected, who have a two thirds majority on the charges that they wanted to kidnap us, and they wanted to hijack us, we were not allowed to land and there was corruption and we will end corruption.

I want to ask you about those who had charges of corruption. Today I want to ask you, when his government was formed, all of those were with him or not. Everybody was with him. Those who left and came out of jail they became Bamusharraf and joined him. And those who did not compromise they are traitors. "Munzalain unko milian jo shareek-e-Safar na thae". Those who were not shareek-e-safar they ruled for nine, ten years. And today he has the wish to make a comeback. He is saying people of Balochistan are calling me, people of Punjab are calling me, people of Sarhad are calling me, people of Sindh are calling me. Nobody is calling, it is a misunderstanding. If somebody likes, he can see it by contesting elections. Bye elections are being held, Musharraf can come and contest elections. It will be known what is his position. Similarly I want to tell you that if we want to save this country it can be saved with two three things.

Those who talk of corruption, once I was listening that Musharraf sahib was saying that these people become members by giving money. I

want to ask chief minister Sindh whether in Sindh this time all Senators were elected unopposed or not. Now tell me where was corruption, whether these people became members by giving money. I want to ask Chief Minister Punjab whether this time in Senate all Senators were elected unopposed or not. Now tell where corruption was done. From Islamabad tell me Senators were elected unopposed or by giving money? They were elected unopposed. I want to ask Chief Minister Sarhad whether the Senators were elected unopposed or not. Now tell me, let a dictator get people unopposed. I want to ask you who made the federation. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto laid the foundation of the federation. After the fall of Dhaka, he knew the smaller brothers, smaller provinces had a sense of deprivation. And they were doubtful and had a misunderstanding that we people did not want to give them rights. There was a unicameral system, there was only a National Assembly and there was no Senate. He formed the institution of Senate. He formed Senate to end sense of deprivation so that Punjab had same votes to that of Balochistan, Sarhad and Sindh. So if an amendment is made in the constitution it is done with the two thirds majority formed by the four provinces. No amendment can be done without it. This security was given to you. Security was given to the four provinces. Until the smaller provinces agree to an amendment, no amendment can be done to the constitution.

Today I want to tell you that the committee on the constitution has at least met for forty times. There are day to day meetings and if there is any delay in consensus, as happened in the NFC it was for the smaller provinces. As the smaller provinces wanted that first there should be talk of the provincial autonomy and then other issues should be taken up. We want to take the smaller provinces along. But I want to request the smaller provinces that keep it in mind that you will get provincial autonomy, but besides this you should not accept the constitutional amendments made by the dictator. These were done by the dictator. And the dictator did this to prolong his rule but I want to request you, I belong to a political family and from my childhood I was hearing, whoever came whether he was President or Prime Minister that he wanted to see how his rule can get strengthened. Then he asks his advisers, he takes advise from his cabinet as to how he can stay longer. I said I want to say a thing away from the traditional politics. I don't want to strengthen the seat of the prime minister but I want to make the institutions strong. Because nobody could save his seat till today. How

much you make it strong, the seat will not be saved as these are musical chairs. The thing that will remain are the institutions so strengthen them. If institutions will be saved we will also be rescued. So we believe that we will strengthen the institutions. We will undo the 17th amendment. We will end 58(2)B and as in the constitution we will allow a person to become prime minister for the third time so that institutions become strong. Constitution becomes strong, then Pakistan becomes strong and an individual does not become strong. As the Chief Minister Punjab said that the problem of Balochistan is of Akbar Bugti Sahib. I agree with you. I held 21 meetings on Balochistan and out of that, all those persons who came in delegations from Balochistan represented by all parties, they all said Aghaz-e-Haqooq-e-Balochistan will be a non-starter if you do not include the point of murder of Akbar Bugti. We have included it and if you want to take Balochistan forward, you have to look at the facts as to why Nawab Akbar Bugti was martyred. At the time of creation of Pakistan, Nawab Akbar Bugti supported Quaid-e-Azam and when Gwadar was purchased he was in that cabinet. My father was in that cabinet that purchased Gwadar.

I only want to tell you that you have to see and the dictators have to see whether they committed treason against the constitution, if they murdered Akbar Bugti then they should be punished. They should get this because nobody is beyond the constitution. They should work within the limits of the constitution. I also want to request you that all the issues of Balochistan, whether constitutional, administrative, of economics and all other issues, Inshallah, will be resolved as we have started Aghaz-e-Haqooq-e-Balochistan movement. Today we are holding the meeting of the cabinet here. The federal cabinet is sitting here and we are meeting. Why we have selected Balochistan? We have selected Balochistan because it is a backward area. Balochistan is ignored and Gwadar where we are holding the cabinet meeting is a remote area. The NFC award signing ceremony is also held in a small remote area. So it becomes part of history that the federation and the four provinces are equal part of the progress of Balochistan. We want that there should be progress in Balochistan and we wanted that when we come to Gwadar port, it should get international publicity. Gwadar port can become a big milestone in the progress of Balochistan and progress of Pakistan. I think that National Finance Commission Award was a formula of division of resources which was not resolved for the last many years and the democratic governments resolved it. Here they wanted to tell those who

have a doubt and concern that the federation or Punjab does not want an increase in resources of Balochistan. So we want to prove. The federation is present here. Punjab is present here and the small provinces are present and we want to tell that for your progress we are praying. We want you to progress.

There are many problems in Balochistan. I talked of provincial autonomy. Now I talked of Nawab Akbar Bugti. The biggest problem is unemployment. For unemployment I have advertised posts. I have advertised 5000 posts. Chief Secretary will tell that 20000 people gave applications. From those 20000 applications, 3500 applications were given by women. I am announcing that we will give jobs to all of them. All the graduates will be given jobs. We started a programme, but there was a problem that as people of Balochistan lack opportunities so I relaxed the age limit to 35 years so a youth of 35 years can also give application, which is relaxation of rules. I am giving one time waiver. You should know that if I spent five years in jail, it was because of giving jobs to the people. And I am again committing this sin.

Secondly, for the coast guards we do not get people with matric so I have set the education level of middle for them so that they can also give applications. Similarly, for the youth employment we have given an incentive, 10000 youth will get employment and how it will be done? We will give them incentives, education and stipends so that they can complete their education. Similarly, we will appoint people in police. Labour Minister Khurshid Shah announced that they will set up a technical training institute so that the boys who get training from there will be given jobs abroad. NAVTEC institution works under me and I want to establish an institution of NAVTEC so that it gives technical training and education. I also announced in Gwadar that all the jobs should be given to locals. The local people should get jobs. Gwadar has its problems. I have a purpose of staying here in Gwadar for two days. Now more than locals I know problems of this place. First I took a briefing here for an airport. We have said that as the funds for it are sanctioned, these should be released properly so that the project of three years is completed in time. Similarly the biggest issue is of connectivity. Till the Gwadar port is not connected to Punjab, progress cannot take place here. 60 percent work on it has been done. For the 40 percent I will ask Shaukat Tareen to make the releases so that the road is completed immediately. Similarly another big issue is of electricity. With Iran we did an agreement on electricity. We will expedite it. I ask Minister for

Water and Power to expedite the power project of 110 megawatt so that power is given here.

Here the biggest problem is of water and for it I have already constituted a committee comprising Deputy Chairman Planning Commission and Khurshid Shah so that they can see from where water can be secured in a better, suitable and cost effective manner. Today you have identified that here already is a gas scheme which is incomplete. I will ask the Minister for Petroleum and Natural Resources to immediately examine and expedite it. Today I announce to approve a girls college. The girls college will have a hostel and girl students can take education here. They will get job opportunities. And I have also got a complaint about Benazir Income Support Programme that it has not been reaching here to a large number of people. So I will give directions to Chairman BISP Farzana Raja to visit the area immediately and resolve issues related to the programme. In the same way, more demands were made here which I have noted and I will try to resolve these issues straightaway.

In the end, above all I want to thank the Chief Minister Balochistan for the way he has hosted this event and made it historic. I commend him and we thank him for his hospitality. I also thank the media that you are with us on an occasion in which a historic achievement is made and you are a witness to it. Minister for Overseas Pakistanis also want to make announcement for a girls college and we thank him for that. I will request the federal ministers to not only come with me but also come alone and stay here.

December 31, 2009.

www.pid.gov.pk/PM's%20Gwadar%20Speech.doc

RAW INVOLVED IN BALOCHISTAN INSURGENCY, SAYS MALIK

Interior Minister Rehman Malik has reiterated that Indian intelligence agency's Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) is involved in instigating the ongoing armed insurgency in Balochistan.

He made these comments while talking to reporters in Gwadar on Wednesday [December 30,2009] before attending a federal cabinet meeting, chaired by Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani.

Malik said India was supporting the insurgency in Balochistan and was trying to turn the Baloch against their own country. The Pakistani government would frustrate all such plans by paying full attention to the

problems of Balochistan, he said. The recently announced Balochistan package and the consensus developed between the federal government and all federating units indicated that the government was making progress in bridging the gap between the Centre and the provinces, Malik added. To a question about the government's reconciliatory plans, Malik said the government would give the Baloch people all those rights that they had been denied in the past. It is the top most priority of the government to give every Baloch his genuine rights, he added.

Brother: When asked about the government's strategy to deal with those leaders who kept harping on about an independent Balochistan, Malik said he viewed the Baloch Republican Party chief Brahamdagh Bugti as "a brother".

"We will try to convince all disillusioned forces in Balochistan. Justice will be done with everyone affected in the past. All reservations of the Baloch people will be addressed through democratic means," he assured.

When asked about the sensitive issue of the Pakistan-Iran border that has been closed since the October 18 blast in the Iranian town of Pishin, Malik said the border would be reopened soon.

To a question about the recent carnage in Karachi after a suicide bomber struck a Youm-e-Ashur procession, Malik said the government was investigating the incident and would expose the elements responsible for the massacre.

When asked about the purpose of the cabinet meeting in Gwadar, he said the government wanted to develop tourism in the area.

Sans visa: Separately, Malik told a private TV channel that besides the citizens of those countries who had an agreement with Pakistan to visit the country without a visa, citizens of the Gulf countries could now visit the port city of Gwadar sans visa. Staff Report/APP

Daily Times (Lahore), December 31, 2009.

SEVEN CHECK POSTS ABOLISHED IN BALOCHISTAN: MALIK

Interior Minister Rehman Malik on Sunday [January 9, 2010] said the government had abolished seven check posts of law enforcement agencies under Aghaz-e-Huqooq-e-Balochistan package.

He said Frontier Corps personnel would be deployed in Kohlu and Sui soon after calling Army personnel back from the areas.

Addressing an inauguration ceremony of NADRA Registration Center Gwadar here, he said the federal government wanted inclusion of maximum youth from Balochistan in security forces and law enforcement agencies to retain peace in the province.

He announced to deploy an Assistant Director and two inspectors at Customs check post Gwadar and another Assistant Director at the check post of Pak-Iran border near Gwadar. He highlighted those people of Makran who had been living in Muscat; they could enter their Pakistani areas only after showing passport.

He maintained the government had given special relaxation to youths of Balochistan for their joining police and law enforcement agencies by relaxing condition of matriculation to middle class certificate.

The Interior Minister directed the recruitment process of Coast Guard should be carried out in Gwadar.

He said Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani was taking keen interest to resolve drinking water scarcity issue of Gwadar town.

Rehman Malik said Rs 230 million would be allocated for provision of natural gas to Gwadar town for which a committee had been formed to compile recommendations in this regard.

He said President Zardari was working on agenda to bring dissident people of Balochistan into mainstream politics by redressing excesses committed against them by previous governments. –APP

Dawn (Islamabad), January 10, 2010.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/provinces/06-seven-checkposts-abolished-in-balochistan-malik-rs-04>

INDIA SABOTAGING PEACE IN BALOCHISTAN: MUKHTAR

Defence Minister Ahmed Mukhtar said on Wednesday [February 2, 2010] that India is involved in sabotaging peace and creating trouble and instability in Balochistan and the tribal areas of Pakistan.

Talking to visiting British Minister of State for the Armed Forces, Bill Rammell, who called on him at the Defence Ministry, the Mukhtar said that the coalition partners and the international community needs to take note of Indian involvement in Pakistan.

The minister said that Pakistan wants India to restrict itself to the development of Afghanistan and stop supporting terrorist activities in Pakistan so that durable stability could be brought to the region.

Mukhtar said that a regional approach towards Afghanistan would be unlikely to produce fruitful results unless the sensitivities of the neighbouring countries, particularly Pakistan, are addressed.

Rammell agreed that Pakistan's concerns about India and Afghanistan need to be addressed for stability of the region.

Dawn (Rawalpindi), February 3, 2010.

<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/03-india-sabotaging-peace-in-balochistan-mukhtar-ss-06>

INDIAN HAND IN BALOCHISTAN

Interior Minister Rehman Malik is one man who in his capacity as head of police and civilian intelligence agencies receives the most intricate information on what goes on in the country. When he claims publicly that Indian hand is visible in fomenting acts of terrorism, there is substance to it. On the other hand, Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, in his address to a public meeting in Srinagar, the other day, denied what Malik and other Pakistani leaders have been saying about India's involvement. Nonetheless, ground realities speak volumes that but for a strong financial support from a foreign country with vested interest the militants waging atrocities against Pakistan's security forces could not sustain their activities for such a long period of time.

Pakistan's intelligence set-up has found irrefutable evidence to establish that the Indian spy agency Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), is working its way to the anti-state militants in Balochistan via its embassy in Kabul and the large number of her consulates located in proximity of Pak-Afghan border, particularly the Kandahar consulate.

In a period of two months Balochistan has lost two ministers and a senior bureaucrat who fell prey to target killing. Balochistan's education minister was gunned down outside his house on October 25. Earlier terrorist pursued Provincial Minister Sardar Rustam Jamali right up to Karachi and killed him in Gulshan-e-Jauhar area. On 31 October Hamid Mahmood, Secretary Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, was critically injured by motor cycle-riding terrorists in Quetta. Non-Baloch bureaucrats who have been living in Balochistan for ages and are heading educational institutions and other development projects have been the target of the militants. Responsibility for these killings has been

claimed by Baloch Liberation United Front, a rebel group known to be fully backed by New Delhi.

The modus operandi of the assailants in these three incidents, like in so many other sabotage acts in the past, suggests that the object was to target political leaders and non-Baloch bureaucrats with a view to create general unrest and despondency among the masses that would lead to destabilising Pakistan. Which country would go for destabilising Pakistan except India which has fought three wars and is encouraged by bisecting the country in 1971, after fomenting internal strife? New Delhi wishes to replay the same tactics i.e. to whip up public emotions against the government and political leadership.

Commander of US troops in Afghanistan, General Stanley McChrystal, in a report to the American Congress has stated that the burgeoning Indian influence in Afghanistan was a destabilising factor in the region.

Balochistan has a long porous border with Afghanistan. The Indian consulate in Kandahar, a border town, provides a firm base to train, arm and dispatch militants across the border to undertake sabotage activities in Balochistan. Indian companies have been awarded contracts on various projects to link Kabul with Balochistan near Iranian border; and in the bargain it makes the job of RAW easier. Brahamdagh Bugti, Pakistan's most wanted rebel leader and commander of Balochistan Liberation Army, which has taken-up arms against security forces of the country, is sitting in Kabul whence he directs his militants on the advice of Indian military consultants. His personal expenses and that of his force, the BLA, are borne by RAW, as a quid pro quo for the former accompanying the Indian objective of destabilising Pakistan. The paramilitary force, the Frontier Corps, fighting militants has seized weapons and equipment that bear Indian marking from the possession of militants killed or captured during action.

Adviser to Afghan government, Ehsanullah Aryanazai, in a recent statement disclosed that India was using Afghan soil to conduct across the border anti-Pakistan activities. Additionally, New Delhi's widely read newspaper, Indian Express, in an article published on 31 July, 2009 has revealed India's involvement in backing terrorists in Balochistan with a view to shake the elected government there.

Anti-state elements have tried to exploit the innocent Baloch people on the basis of economic under-development, and the prevalent poverty in the province for which the federal government and dwellers of Punjab

are held responsible. In actual fact, however, the shoe is on the other foot. The local tribal sardars who have exercised a no-questioned-asked sway over their tribes for years cannot withstand any measure of the government that could bring prosperity in the region and develop awakening among the masses that would lead to erosion of their draconian authority.

Insurgency in Balochistan that started in 1975 had re-emerged in 2000 when the government began exploring the province's vast hither to fore untapped oil and natural gas fields. Instead of assisting the government the sardars instigated the locals on the ground that non-Baloch were trying to rob Balochistan of its mineral wealth. This environment provided golden opportunity to RAW to exploit the emotions of Baloch people against the government of Pakistan.

Pakistan is engaged with Iran for supply of natural gas through a pipeline that would cost 7.5 billion dollars and would overcome the energy needs of the country. The pipeline running between the two countries through Baloch territory is to see Iran supplying 750 million cubic feet (cft) of gas per day to Pakistan over next 25 years. India too was a partner in the deal but backed out under pressure from the United States that does not want any of its allies to establish trade relations with Iran. Tehran has also offered to Pakistan supply of 1000 megawatts of electricity at a discounted price of 6 cents per unit. Probably the happy Pak-Iran trade relations were not to the liking of India who had to do something to sabotage the friendly overtures of the two neighbours.

On 18 October a suicide attack targeted the Revolutionary Guards in Iran's Sistan-Balochistan province. Forty-two men were killed, seven of them high-ranking members of the elite corps. Jundullah, a shadowy Baloch militant group, claimed responsibility for the attack. It may be recalled that most weapons and ammunition used by this group bear Indian marketing. They also receive financial backing from New Delhi. Large-scale Indian support to militants in Swat and tribal territory of NWFP has also been witnessed.

India is expert at diverting world's attention from its role in terrorist activities by highlighting and presenting Pakistan as exporter of terrorism. The 26/11 Mumbai attack was full exploited to convince the world that not India but Pakistan was the mother of all sabotage acts.

During the three-day tour of US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to Pakistan the leadership here brought to her attention the support New Delhi was providing to militants who are fighting Pakistan's security

forces and killing innocent citizens. Instead of encouraging extremist activities in Pakistan India must concentrate on her own domestic affairs where a quarter of its billion plus population sleep on empty stomachs on open footpaths.

Sayed GB Shah Bukhari, *New Nation* (Dhaka), February 10, 2010.
<http://nation.ittefaq.com/issues/2010/02/10/news0792.htm>