

Causes and Consequences of Political Instability in Pakistan: A Case of Balochistan

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Abstract: The aim of the present study was to explore the causes and consequences of political instability in Balochistan. The Muslims all over the world are suffering from socio-political, socio-economic, internal and external threats. The present research was based on secondary sources and official websites including; the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Population Association of Pakistan, Newspapers, journals, published research papers, unpublished dissertations and some other related publications on the subject etc. The results reveal that the political instability in Balochistan is because of the long and non harmonious relationship between the federal and province, unjustified distribution of resources, federally controlled development projects and policies and incapable provincial leadership. Strong emphasis was made to introduce democratic dialogues, equality and Justice based policies for the province, to bring it at mainstream and to address the backwardness, claims of local people as well as bring the harmony for larger interest of nation.

Key words: Perception • Causes • Consequences • Instability • Resources • Justice

INTRODUCTION

Balochistan's history since the time of the foundation of the country represents an unending narrative of the incessant conflicts unfortunately. The long standing resentments dating back to its merger with Pakistan have led to the present crisis in the province and the whole country. Balochistan was divided into two parts: the British Balochistan comprising Quetta, Pishin, Zhob, Loralai and Naseerabad and the native Balochistan constituting Kalat, Kharan and Makran [1]. The power of control of some areas was transferred to the British government in the form of treaty and during the drawl of British forces from the subcontinent of India, a meeting was held under chairmanship of viceroy Lord Mountbatten about the future status of Kalat state on August 4th 1947 where, Governor General of Pakistan Mr. Jinnah, Liaqat Ali Khan, Khan of Kalat, Prime minister of Kalat state and the constitutional representatives of Pakistan and British government declared Kalat as independent state.

"The government of Pakistan accepts the princely state Kalat as sovereign and independent state, it has treaty of relationship with British Government and its status is different from the other Princely states of India" [2]. After accession to Pakistan, Khan of Kalat tried hard regarding the restoration of Kalat state. For this purpose he met with the Baloch sardars of Jacobabad and D.G

Khan in October 1958. He along with them met with Sikandar Mirza who initially gave positive response to him. But later on, he was declared as traitor and military operation was launched and Khan was sent behind the bars [3].

Political instability is organized and unorganized activities such as protests, strikes, militancy, guerrilla warfare, lootings and riots by a group of people focused against government or other groups, causing breakdown of social fabric, metamorphosing, under enabling conditions, into ethnic cleansing or civil war or changing the course of history through a revolution [4]. It is mostly initiated by economic problems, which in essence are poverty, inequality not only of income, but also of collected wealth as well as access to land, education, employment and exclusion from decision making hierarchy.

Poverty, inequality and social unrest have been the hallmark of developing countries, but after the collapse of the USSR, capitalism's unabated fury and ascendancy resulting in financial meltdown, austerity measures, joblessness and concentration of wealth and power in fewer hands, has left even the developed world vulnerable to it, evidenced by scenes from around the world: 1999 Seattle riots during WTO meeting; August 2011 UK riots, 2011 Occupy Wall Street Movement and now Chicago teachers' strike in the USA; series of Greek protests in 2010-2012; movement in Spain against welfare cuts and

unemployment and many others are the real examples. At the heart of Arab uprising is the unjust power structure, excluding masses from the decision making process. Even though social unrest has become a daily phenomenon all over Pakistan, some areas are hit harder than others, reasons are complex but a common thread runs through them all, i.e. economic injustice [2,4].

People of the Province often joined anti state movements starting from 1948 during reign of Karim Agha Khan. The conflict had taken thousands of lives from both sides and now reaches to very hard position to bring back people to mainstream [5]. There have been five insurgencies in Balochistan since the creation of Pakistan. According to the official estimates; these have resulted in more than five thousand deaths among the insurgents and almost three thousand among the Pakistan army. There cent violence which started in 2005 from Dera bugti took a serious turn at the end of year 2009 and became a potential threat to the stability of Pakistani state, as the militants spurred and inflamed and in all likelihood aided and abetted by the outsider international players in the area, gave rise to the separatist movement in the province.

The killing of Nawab Akbar Bugti in August 2006 mountains of Dera Bugti by the security forces has led to increased unrest and protests in the province. This situation caused a lot of resentment amongst the masses in Balochistan towards security forces and the former President General Pervaiz Musharraf, who is commonly blamed for the killing of the Nawab. This incident has added to another grievance of people of Balochistan towards the federal government and especially the armed forces [6]. In fact, the way in which he was killed has made him a hero and a martyr for the nationalists. Not only in Balochistan but his killing was condemned by nearly all political leaders of the country. The death of Nawab Bugti has added fuel to the already explosive law and order condition in Balochistan.

Balochistan province itself, as we know it today, came into being on July 1, 1970, with the abolition of One Unit in West Pakistan. The administrative divisions of Quetta and Kalat were merged to form this province. Balochistan is the abode of different people mainly populated by Balochis, Brahui and Pashtuns. A great number of settlers from around Pakistan, particularly Punjabis have also been settled in the province for generations [7].

Pakistan-Iran border can be defined as interdependent and co-existent. The Baloch live on both sides of the border. They are inspired by ethno-centric nationalism having socio-cultural and historic bonds.

They interact socially and economically and trade in items of household use. Iran's electricity is a boon for the people living on the Pakistani side. Besides human trafficking, there is smuggling of goods, especially of rice to Iran in return for petrol. The borderland Balochs are interdependent on each other to a great extent which underlines the need for greater integration of the economies of the two countries [8].

Significance of the Study: The beginning of 21st and later part of the 20th century has seen a remarkable growth in the level of popular concern for peace, trade, integration, solidarity and social cohesion, etc., which have come as a result of the advent of the political stabilization in Balochistan and Pakistan as well. It is becoming increasingly clear that if the present situation is not confronted immediately, we stand the risk of having serious and irreversible effects. Pakistan has an interest in its political stability. That is why the government and other concerned departments in order to develop the political stability organize festivals and seminars in the country.

Hence, a study of this nature will have results, which are beneficial in a number of ways. Some of those include;

- To address a number of problems, caused by political instability and its effects on the development of Pakistan.
- To raise awareness of the community on the significance and ways of proper management of the development political stability.
- To provide policy makers and research institutions with the basic data, this will help in designing new program that will be real and problem specific.
- To provide citizens of not only the Pakistan but other countries as well on the current effects of changes Balochistan.
- This may be open the door for discussions in academic fields and the policy makers who make policy regarding the Balochistan.

Objectives of the Study: The main objective of the present study is;

- To explore the causes of political instability in Balochistan.
- Other objectives are;
- To investigate the factors responsible for political instability in Balochistan.
- To measure the consequences and solution of political instability.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Although the writer has consulted some articles, research papers and also got awareness and knowledge about Balochistan-Pakistan. The present research is based on secondary sources and some official websites like the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Population Association of Pakistan, Newspapers, etc. Most of the research is on secondary sources. Several journals, textbooks, unpublished dissertations and some other related publications on the subject are consulted.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Political instability has been attributed to a variety of social, political, economic and environmental causes including racial and ethnic tensions, food scarcity and food price increases, variations in international, commodity prices, economic shocks, climate change and rainfall shocks and demographic changes [4,6]. Poor transport and communication infrastructure is a big hurdle in the progress of the province. Illiteracy, injustice, oppression of women, ignorance of the individual right are the socio-political evils that prevail. The Social Policy Development Centre (2005) report discovered that the percentage of the population living in a high degree of deprivation stands highest in Balochistan as compared to population of other provinces as 88percent in Balochistan, 51 percent in the KPK, 49 percent in Sindh and 25 percent in Punjab. According to poverty-related reports, the percentage of the population living below the poverty line stands at 63 percent in Balochistan. This again, is the highest among all other provinces 26 percent in Punjab, 29 percent in the KPK and 38 percent in Sindh. These factors are mutually reinforcing and continue to aggravate the situation. The province has smallest number of educational institutions [9].

A province with abundant mineral resources is beset with pressing issues such as massive unemployment and poverty. Other than various factors such as extremely poor governance and corruption, the ongoing insurgency, mutilated bodies, missing persons and sectarian violence are the biggest contributors to the economic adversity in the province. Businesses that are particularly run by non-Baloch people are on the hit-list of the separatists and religious militants. Property dealers are also reported to have been involved in increasing panic to grab prime properties from the fleeing population. Businessmen and the teachers hailing from other ethnicities are migrating from the province because of fear and insecurity [10].

Persistent poverty and inequality amongst certain population groups have been shown to increase society's propensity for engaging in forms of civil conflict. Rises in economic and social disparities between the poor and the rich, systematic social exclusion and other forms of perceived unfairness in social relations often result in the accumulation of discontent to a sufficiently high level to break social cohesion [11].

Causes of unrest and political instability are the relationship between province and federal government. Balochistan's issues with the rest of Pakistan are not qualitatively different, in principle, from those of the other provinces. These are mostly about questions of resource distribution, access to state institutions and recognition and promotion of cultural identities. Challenges have arisen more frequently than in the rest of Pakistan, however, due to a range of political and historical factors. There have been at least five insurgencies including the present one in which independence has been raised as an explicit demand by segments of the leadership. The demand for Balochistan independence from Pakistan has invariably come from Baloch nationalist leaders [12].

The cause of political instability in Balochistan is due to the regional actors, as Gawadar is gateway to central Asia and Afghanistan. The trade of Afghanistan and central Asia can be facilitated by Gawadar-Chaman route. The importance of this region also has increased due to presence of oil, copper, Gold and gas reservoirs in the region. Through this region, Pakistan can also facilitate Afghanistan, China and central Asian republics for their exports and imports [13].

People of Balochistan have serious concerns because the share of Balochistan in the profit of these mega projects is very less. They also have concerns that why government starts development from mineral rich areas not from rest of the Province. It depicts that government wants to control the mineral resources and also wants demographic change in the provinces [14]. If we take an overview then there is low representation of Baloch people in all government departments. People from other provinces are found working on the Balochistan quotas. The people of province had been ignored in federal constituted vacancies but in other hand the number of people from other provinces had been deployed in the provincial departments, therefore the majority of youngsters having high level of degrees but they are not having the jobs that lead to social instability in society [15].

Mismanagement of resources for equitable production, distribution and consumption is a main factor

for economic backwardness of Province. He further mentioned that other factors of unrest were the ongoing insurgency, mutilated bodies, missing persons and sectarian violence. These were the biggest contributors to the socio-economic adversity in the province. Property dealers were also reported to have been involved in increasing panic to grab prime properties from the fleeing population. Businessmen and the teachers hailing from other ethnicities were migrating from the province because of fear and insecurity.

Balochistan is having the large deposits of oil and gas, but unfortunately it remains poorest through period of merger with Pakistan till present. The resources had been utilized in the markets and billions of dollars have been collected but the amount haven't separated for the welfare of people due to not having any job's or market opportunity, the per capita income of province is lower than others which ultimately resulted in civil disobedience [16]. The issue of provincial autonomy is a historical fact in Pakistan's politics. Sindh and Balochistan provinces always demanded for this right, as we have the example of one unit scheme. In case of Balochistan this demand is very genuine. It is because the province got the status of province just in early 1970s. Besides this, when atomic explosions were carried out in 1998 at Chaghi, the central government did not take the Baloch nationalists in confidence. Likewise, when central government signed agreements with Singapore Port authority and Chinese company regarding Gawadar Port, Baloch nationalists were set aside that contributed to unrest in Province [4].

According to International Crisis Group report the causes of political instability, social unrest are social problems. Basically health and education facilities are not available in Balochistan's far flung areas. Concentration of health and educational facilities are limited to the Quetta city. Rest of Balochistan which constitutes 29 districts, have no adequate facilities and infrastructure [17].

Soon after this decision protests and agitations started throughout the Balochistan which resulted into an unrest situation and political instability in Balochistan. "Thus, on the night of 16 May 1948, Prince Abdul Karim, the younger brother of the Khan, decided to lead a national liberation movement." This was an important event in the history of Balochistan. However, this movement could not sustain for a long time and Prince Karim was imprisoned, though he was released after couple of years [18].

In 1963 the federal government again came in conflict with Balochistan, this was lead by Sher Mohammad Marri.

Sher Mohammad Marri started the revolt because of Noroz Khan and his sons had charged and no response from the federal government side regarding the grievances of Balochistan. Sher Mohammad Marri's revolt spared the revolt throughout Balochistan and this revolt was one of the longest and strong, intensive rebellion movement against the Federation [19].

The atrocities and humiliations by central government united local politicians and watered the seeds of Baloch Nationalism. During this decade Balochs were well aware of state policies and they also continued their political struggle, even when they were on exile. This era's important development was formation of Baloch student organization (BSO) in 1967. This student organization united the Baloch youth and gave awareness to the common masses. Consequently this organization gave a second generation leadership to Balochistan [18].

Atmosphere of fear and desperation has been created by military operations, resulting in ordinary people arming themselves. This situation could lead a widening of the conflict even in areas where there was no law and order situation before. The whole scenario seems to be building up to a full-scale civil war in Balochistan [20]. Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies (2011) declared Balochistan as the most violent place of the country in 2010. According to the Report, in 737 terrorist attacks, about 600 people were killed and 1100 were injured. These circumstances led to further trust deficit between center and province. It is because civilian government also dealt the province on same footings as was in dictatorial regime of Musharaf [8, 21].

It is easier to determine why youth have taken up arms and why their struggle has wide support among the Baloch. 'When nobody wants to hear our voice, we are forced to make them hear through violence' said young Baloch activist. They think that they cannot get their rights through political means. Unemployment, poverty, frustration and disillusionment with federal government help swell the ranks of the militants and continuous denial of economic rights and economic deprivation has compelled the people to take up arms [22].

The Article 10 of the constitution forbids the undeclared detention and arbitrary arrest of any citizen off Pakistan. But the security agencies played their extra-constitutional role in this regard which was major cause of unrest in the province. With the military take over in 1999, Balochistan again plunged into a state of violent confrontation with the federal government. The construction of military cantonments and mega projects like Gawadar port caused resentment among the

nationalist forces. Local political parties and militants have a common goal, to assert provincial control over Baluchistan's natural resources and gain a voice in shaping its political, economic and social development [23].

Nationalist and guerrilla warriors were main hindrances between the mega projects and federal government because they say that the federal government explore the resources from Balochistan and wants to feed the other province, that's why the nationalist and guerrilla warriors strongly oppose these projects, so the Balochistan will not be developed to upcoming hundreds years from the same methodology. The federal government has failed to get confidence of local people on the mega project that's why the Paramilitary forces have been deployed to forcibly construct these projects without will of local people and which results in unrest and enmity to state [24].

The responsibility for the whole condition of province also goes to the local politicians; they were more involved for bringing the backwardness in the province as compare to Central government. From beginning to till present, all have tried to cash from emerging violent situations of the time just to get the awards and well jousts from the federal and they remain in the favor of federal policies when they were in power. The federal also make happy to political leaders of time by providing the packages in the name of province, instead of permanent policies. Every new elected leader of province used the name of backwardness for getting the funds packages for province from the federal government, just to get the maximum share for own self from funds and packages and federal government remained calm because to pass the time as well as feed few persons instead of large population. Most of the prominent tribal chieftains had been examined and observed during the past period, all of them took the oath for the development as well as for betterment of people, but every upcoming leader tried to increase his property as well as to develop his family just to make more common people [25].

Several articles take the reader back and forth into discussions of terrorism and political turmoil until the reader is unsure of any fundamental differences in their impacts on tourism. Despite different characteristics, both political instability and terrorism impact tourism severely. Terrorism occurs quickly and briefly and assures immediate public attention through intense and dramatic media coverage. Political turmoil-even though it does not always command the same level of media scrutiny-has lingering effects and can effectively impede travel to

affected areas and create an enduring barrier to international tourism; fortunately, issues of tourism within the context of political turmoil or war have been receiving increased attention [26].

Despite of all mineral and natural resources Balochistan today is a politically fragmented, socially isolated and economically backward society for various reasons since the inception of Pakistan in August 1947. The resources of Balochistan support the economy of Pakistan, after the merger of Kalat state with Pakistan the Sui Natural Gas raised the economy of Pakistan to many folds. The Sui gas field located in Balochistan was the largest natural gas field in Pakistan. The name Sui gas is synonymous with natural gas in Pakistan. In total, the province of Balochistan provides the nation with between 36 and 45 percent of the national demand for natural gas. Despite this, many districts in Balochistan are still without gas transmission facilities, to include areas immediately surrounding the Sui gas field. Only eight of the thirty Balochistan districts receive natural gas. They remain the most poor and economically backward province after the first 65 years of Pakistani independence. The expropriation of natural resources is the most persistent grievance of the Baloch people [21].

The major complaint and grievance of Balochistan is that since 1974 the major criterion for the distribution of resources is based on population and threat to the local ethnic Baloch culture. Other parameters of disparity such as inverse population density, backwardness and lack of sufficient revenue collection infrastructure are not considered. Its leaders are justified in claiming that nowhere in the world under a federal form of government there is a formula where resources are divided on population basis per se. Balochistan constituting a large portion of the country's area needed development of infrastructure on war/crisis basis with the allocation of funds on area basis which unfortunately had been denied to it in the past [8].

The grievances of people of Balochistan are manifold. The martial policy of the centre in dealing with the recent insurgency has added fuel to the fire. The main complaint of the Local Nationalists has always been that the provincial autonomy promised in the 1973 constitution has not been recognized and practically nonexistent till today. The Baloch people have demanded the right of self administration to the province through a process of complete decentralization of powers.

The present government has recently initiated certain measures to address these complaints and grievances. For

past two years there is a democratic set up in the province. But the resentments still persists, as no practical steps have yet been taken to actually tackle the problems. According to the nationalist groups, the government has only provided a lip service to their problems so far. In fact, despite the promises to resolve the problems, the trust deficit between the nationalists and state has not narrowed. It is essential to understand that the crisis is grave and requires serious and urgent action by all stakeholders, at all levels in order to eradicate the root causes of the long standing conflict.

There are many factors leading responsible for deprivation of Balochistan including the local political leadership. These political leaderships includes nationalists parties, pro establishment tribal chiefs and anti state political and military organizations as well. They remained selfish, corrupt, power thirsty, misguiding the masses, used anti Punjab slogans to fool illiterate people and enjoy the power. The difference between the life standard of Baloch leaders and common Baloch is same like the developmental difference between the Islamabad and Balochistan. The child's of common Baloch have no access to good educational institutions where as the offspring's of MNA's, MPA's, Governors and ministers are studying in institutions like Acheson Lahore and in foreign countries.

The complaints and issues of the local people in Balochistan, about the situation of development or the lack of it, are absolutely genuine beyond doubt. There is no doubt that the province has been neglected for six decades and has taken a back seat in the minds of the ruling elite. The basic facilities of life including health, education, communication sources and infrastructure are in poor condition.

CONCLUSION

Muslim countries around the world face some form of political conflict that outweighs those that enjoy peace and stability. Terrorism and political instability in Muslim world turn society socially unstable. Apart from terrorism, international, regional and civil wars, ethnic cleansing, declarations the strong link between political instability and terrorism may explain the difficulty in separating the two in some of the literature. Balochistan has no stable political and social conditions although having its own strategically importance due to its coastal area and deep sea route. It has world's third largest gold and copper reserves, gas reserves and different minerals, yet it's the

poorest and least developed area in Pakistan. It provides natural gas to Pakistan since 1952 but still only eight districts of Balochistan have access to their natural gas. There is high ratio of poverty and lack of education, health facilities. People of province have no access to safe drinking water and have suffered from different natural disasters like earthquake and flood in past few years. Infant mortality rate is very high in Balochistan. Human rights violations are major problems of Balochistan. Today Balochistan lacks good social interaction, well economic, educational and political conditions. Things will not change unless the social workers, journalists, policy makers, civil and military establishment, bureaucracy tries to know fundamental factors which cause social, political and economic backwardness in Balochistan.

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