

## BALUCH NATIONALISM AND CENTRALIZED POLITICAL STRUCTURE OF PAKISTAN: A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS SINCE INDEPENDENCE 1947

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### ABSTRACT

This research is a historical analysis of the Baluch nationalism and its interaction with the centralized political structure of Pakistan since its independence in 1947. Under the theory of primordialism this article explains the origin of Baluch ethnic nationalism and the reason for ethnic conflicts between its in-group and out group. The central argument develops around the fact that the seed of ethnic nationalism in Baluchistan was sown by the British colonialist, which grown into Baluch nationalist movement after the independence of Pakistan in 1947. All the local political parties in Baluchistan i.e. *Anjuman-e-Ittehad-e-Baluchan-o-Baluchistan*, Kalat State National Party, Baluchistan National Party (Mengal Group), the *Jamhuri Watan* Party (Bugti Tribe), and Baluch *Haq Talwar* (Nawab Khair Bakhsh Murri Group) etc. emerged around the populist slogan of Baluch ethnicity. The centralized political structure in Pakistan, with unfortunate intervals of military rule couldn't handle the ever-increasing grievances of Baluch people. The mishandling on the behalf of Pakistani governments, whether civilian or military i.e. through military operations, abducting the political leadership, and suppressing the voices of regional leadership have worsened the crisis. This is a qualitative research, based on historical analysis of the emergence and expansion of Baluch nationalism under the centralized political structure of Pakistan.

**Keywords:** Agitation, Baluch nationalism, Centralized political structure, Ethnicity, Primordialism.

### INTRODUCTION

The Baluch nation is composed of approximately 500 tribes and clans that assert shared identity markers such as language, culture, traditions, religion, and forefathers that have been cultivated and evolved over ages (Marri 1974). Since ancient times, Baluchistan has been home to brave and resilient people. It has never been subject to foreign domination and has always enjoyed autonomy within all previous governmental systems. Baluchistan has historically drawn foreign invaders such as Greeks, Afghans, Persians, and Sikhs because of its historical significance. However, none of these invasions were successful, and the region was linked to either India or Iran from 1506 to 1747 (Axmann 2008). The tribal structure of Baluch society saw revolutionary changes brought about by the three leaders of the region: Mir Chakar Khan Rind, Abdullah Khan, and Nasir Khan. These tribal elders' primary concerns

were the preservation of Baluch culture and the creation of a single state structure (Khan 2003). These leaders' efforts enabled the Baluch principality of Kalat to successfully unite the majority of the Baluch tribes under a single political entity (Binder 1987). Unfortunately, the Baluch tribal organization was unable to adequately incorporate these measures, and a power struggle between the bureaucracy and the tribal chiefs resulted. The tribal Sardars perceived a lack of privilege and dignity from the administration (Hewitt 1996).

The new political system fell apart after Nasir Khan passed away, exposing the revised political structure's fundamental flaws. In addition to the dissolution of the new government, Nasir Khan's death also reduced the Khanate's authority and ushered in British colonial rule in Baluchistan. Baluchistan experienced two distinct periods of

colonial rule: the first, from 1839 to 1876, and the second, from 1876 to 1947. The three contentious relationships that existed between Afghanistan, Russia, and Britain raised the importance of Balochistan in the area. Due to the Anglo-Afghan war (1839–1842), which was caused by Britain's tense relations with Russia and the Afghans' proclivity towards Russia, Balochistan gained greater significance due to its close proximity to the region, which in turn signaled the start of relations between the British and the Khan of Kalat (Scholz 2002). The British gave the Khanate their whole assistance in order to win their allegiance, but the death of Mir Mehrab Khan, the Khan of Kalat, rapidly tarnished these ties (Baloch 1959). The British and Kalat state conflict remained unresolved even after Mir Nasir II came to power.

After the Balochis were made to pay a large sum of money, both parties came to an agreement in 1854. These treaties allowed the British to trade widely and move their forces freely around the region. The cost of these amenities was set at 50,000 rupees as a grant. Stated differently, this arrangement legitimized British meddling in the region and the Khanate betrayed its allegiance. After fighting the Balochis for more than 40 years, the British ultimately negotiated a deal in 1876 because it was vital for them to control the route directly in order to prevent Russia from accessing the warm waters. This agreement gave them power over Kalat, Kharan, Makran, and Lasbella and allowed them to set up military camps in Balochistan and appoint Robert Sandman as the first political agent of the Governor-General in the area (Khan 2003). Subsequently, Balochistan was designated as an agency under the Governor-General's indirect administration through the political agent. "Sandemanization" was the name given to this system (Awan 1985). The formation of a Council of Chiefs and Shahi Jirga was done to guarantee the involvement of tribal Sardar in the regional political process. In order to maintain effective control over the province, the British divided the land of Balochistan into four categories.

1. Dera Ghazi Khan was annexed together with Punjab and Khengarh; the places it was related with were known as Jacobabad and were under the territorial jurisdiction of Sindh.
2. Marri, Bugti, Khetran, and Chaghi territories were designated as tribal areas. Along with the tribal regions and the cities of Nasirabad, Bolan, Quetta, and Noshki, the British Balochistan was established.

3. In addition to this split, political agents nominated by the Kalat state to serve as its administrators placed Lasbella and Kharan under a separate political system.

4. The regions of Makran, Sarawan, Jhalawan, and Kachi were placed under Khan-e-Kalat's jurisdiction.

Pakistani Balochistan is the same region (Rehman 2005). Balochistan's advantageous position drew the attention of colonial powers. The cost of being Balochis residing in a region that was strategically important to the British was simply borne by the people of Balochistan. Balochistan has to be divided as a buffer zone to contain the Russian push towards its south (Bizenjo 1999). This sense of foreign dominance, along with the ongoing conflict between the British and the Khan of Kalat and other tribal lords, gave rise to modern Baloch ethnic nationalism. The Balochis were never able to accept the construction of roads, railroads, post offices, rest areas, and cantonments for the British soldiers as legal attempts to impose British control, despite the fact that substantial infrastructure development efforts were made in this regard. The rigid social structure of the region was unaffected by the British since they were always perceived as alien invaders. Due to a combination of these factors, Baloch nationalism began to grow and eventually took the form of a movement that was supported by several political factions.

This research is an effort to understand the Baloch sentiment of deprivation and being underprivileged from its historical context. Through an analysis of the emergence of multiple Baloch nationalist parties and the steps taken by the central government to control Baloch agitation, this research argues that to resolve the Baloch crisis based on nationalist and ethnic resistance, it is necessary to transfer the power and development to the common Baloch people instead of running the province with the help of Baloch Khans and Sardars.

### **Literature Review**

Political upheaval, social disintegration, foreign interference, surgical procedures, separatist movements, and intense bouts of terrorism have all occurred since Balochistan became part of Pakistan in 1948. Regretfully, the province has not produced any stable political parties or mature leadership since then that might eradicate extremism, terrorism, illiteracy, and tribal and Sardari setup. Although

Baloch regional political parties are naturally nationalist, their narrow and ambiguous platforms have cost them the favor of the people (Subhan and Kasi 2018). Undoubtedly, the unpopularity of regional political parties in Balochistan has left a political void that nationalist parties in Pakistan have filled by enlisting the help of local Sardars and tribesmen. Ethnicity combined with a feeling of economic and political marginalization is a powerful motivator for Baloch rebellion in Pakistan, according to Bansal's (2008) analysis of Baloch concerns. Balochistan's political and socio-cultural landscape is defined by the Sardari and tribal setup, which has hindered the growth of well-established and sophisticated political parties (Mirza 2013).

Owing to inadequate leadership and a deficiency of legal authority, the tribal system remains the most practical means of governing the province. One cannot dispute that the sense of deprivation and discontent among common Baloch would persist in creating an environment of resistance in Balochistan until the actual representatives of the Baloch people are permitted on the ground in politics. Mishandling Balochistan's democratic system is another significant contributing element to the agitation of the Baloch people; that is, the Baloch resistance movement gained more traction under Z.A. Bhutto's leadership than it did under Gen. Ayub Khan's military authority (Hanif 2012). The political leadership of Balochistan was dissatisfied with Z. A. Bhutto's administration since the National Awami Party was prohibited from engaging in Baloch politics. If members of the middle class and grassroots participate in national politics, Balochistani politics can be improved (Ali 2012; Bukhari 2015).

We cannot dispute that, despite numerous sociopolitical issues and realignments in Balochistan, the Baloch resistance movement has remained intense since its founding in 1948 (Siddiqi 2012); however, political unrest and social disturbance have been exacerbated by the central governments of Pakistan's past transgressions (Hashmi 2015). The Baloch people's concerns were exacerbated by the overthrow of political governments and the US's establishment of military bases in Pasni, Gwadar, Dalbadin, and Jacobabad. The main reasons behind Balochistan's resistance movement include bad governance, an unfair distribution of the country's natural riches, political marginalization, and a failure to include the Baloch

leadership in the process of making decisions regarding major projects (Aslam 2011).

After identifying the key issues behind the Baloch agitation and resistance through this brief literature review, this research is aimed at filling the gap of understanding Baloch resistance from its historical context. The Baloch sentiments of insecurity and uncertainty are not just the product of some agitational political parties but have its deep roots in the history.

### **Theoretical Framework: Baloch Nationalism and Ethnic Primordialism**

Primordialists believe that ethnic identities are shaped by people from the distant past or by nature itself and are inherited by current generations from their predecessors. In addition, an ethnic group's language, culture, history, and customs foster a collective consciousness among its members, which is further reinforced over time by symbols and myths handed down from older generations. The arguments of historical intellectuals can be linked to the primordialist viewpoint. For example, because an ethnic group's distinct identities and living conditions were ingrained in their spoken language, German primordialist philosophers of the past held that ethnicities were constant across time (Dawisha 2002). As a result, the ethnic spirit of the group was transmitted to the younger generations together with the ethnic language. Ethnic conflicts, according to primordialists, are natural occurrences brought on by cultural differences. Stated differently, it is only natural for two distinct ethnic groups to fight one another in order to accomplish their opposing objectives because ethnicity is a relational notion, meaning that belonging to an in-group also entails belonging to an out-group (Jesse and Williams 2016). Primordialists further assert that ethnic conflicts stem from recollections of past crimes, which make it difficult to prevent violence (Sambanis 2013).

This theory of ethnic primordialism makes Baloch nationalism easy to understand and explains the constant conflict and agitation between the Baloch nationalists (in-group) and the Pakistani state (out-group).

### **Emergence of Baloch Nationalist Parties**

Balochistani citizens are classified into 27 primary tribes and three significant ethnic groups. The Baloch, Brahui, and Pashtoons are these three ethnic

groupings. According to the Pakistan Statistical Book (2008), over 40% of people are Baloch speakers. Twenty percent of people speak Brahui, while over forty percent speak Pashto. These ethnic groups also speak two languages: Siraiki and Urdu. The Baloch were mostly located in the sparsely populated regions of the West, East, South, and South-Eastern regions. People who speak Brahui predominate in the province's center. In the north, Pashtoons make up the majority. Both the nomadic and sedentary tribal system groups exist in Balochistan (Shah 1994). The nomadic way of life has somewhat evolved into a modern, urbanized way of life within the past 25 years. Nowadays, moving to urban regions is the preferred option for those from rural areas. Two main system types form the foundation of the tribal organization. The Pashtun tribe uses the Khan system of governance, whereas the Brahui and Balochi tribes use the Sardari system (Kundi 2009).

The educated, middle-class youth of the region began the Baloch nationalism movement against the British in order to assert their Baloch identity. The national political dynamics in India also had an impact on this movement (Shah 1994). In 1920, "The Young Baloch" became the driving force behind the first nationalism movement. The movement published articles and columns in many newspapers and periodicals to disseminate its message. Balochistan's unity was the publications' central focus. Under the motto "united and independent Balochistan," *Anjuman-e-Ittehad-e-Balochan-o-Balochistan* (henceforth abbreviated as AIBB) was founded as the region's first political party in 1931. Not only was the AIBB fighting British rule, but it was also fighting Shams Shah's Khanate of Kalat (Naseer 1979). Since the new Khan, Mir Ahmad Yar, was friendly to AIBB, the movement slowed down.

The Kalat State National Party (KSNP) was founded in 1937 with the support of the Khan of Kalat, and the middle class, and especially the educated youth, eagerly welcomed this development (Naseer 1979). After first criticizing the foreign occupiers in Balochistan, the KNSP later incorporated calls for the creation of an independent state of Kalat in their platform. The party presented a threat to the tribal Sardari structure because of the way the KNSP's program was often changing and because it included the call for socio-political reforms. Sensing impending danger, Mir Ahmad Yar Khan banned the KNSP from operating and put its entire political

leadership into exile. The only option available to the party was to cease all activities and hide until the necessary circumstances were satisfied. In the years that followed, the All India Muslim League (AIML) and the Indian National Congress formed as the new political parties representing their respective nations. Since Muhammad Ali Jinnah served as the legal advisor of the Khan of Kalat, the two men had a close relationship. Thus, with the assistance and backing of Khan of Kalat, AIML was able to establish themselves in Balochistan with ease (Khan 2003).

When it became clear that the British were leaving India in the 1940s, Baloch nationalists attempted to rekindle their earlier impetus for an independent and reformed Kalat. Under the June 3rd plan, the princely states that AIML had stated in its official policy would be respected were given autonomous status (Afzal 1973). During the period of independence, in August, an agreement was reached between the British administration and the Kalat state, which was represented by Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan. Under this accord, the Kalat state was restored to its former autonomous status from 1838. On the same day, the newly established state of Pakistan and the Kalat state signed a second agreement designating Pakistan as the state's rightful heir after British rule. The Kalat state was granted independence by the first agreement; however, article four delegated all of the responsibilities of the British administration from 1893 to 1947 to the state of Pakistan, which was acknowledged as the political and constitutional successor of the British government (Khan 2003).

The Khan of Kalat proclaimed the creation of the independent state of Kalat on August 12, 1947; however, the British-nominated Shahi Jirga and Quetta Municipality announced their decision to become part of Pakistan. The Khan of Kalat convened elections shortly after independence, and the KSNP won 29 seats (Baloch 2009). Soon after, the princely kingdoms of Frontier, Sindh, and Punjab all expressed their determination to become part of Pakistan, but the Khan of Kalat gave them special consideration when it came to defense, foreign policy, and communication. The agreement's article five specified that Karachi will eventually handle other annexation-related matters. However, the talks were unsuccessful because Pakistan wanted Kalat to integrate with her after all other princely states merged. The dispute lasted until the Khan of Kalat agreed to unconditionally annex Pakistan on March 27, 1948. The KSNP and other local political leaders

disapproved of the decision. The Governor-General of Pakistan designated a political agent to oversee and manage the state's government as his representative (Dehwar and Saeed 1994).

### **Mishandling of the Baloch Issue by the Pakistani Government**

The historical context of the Baloch separatist movement in Balochistan makes it abundantly evident that the issues of Baloch ethnic identity and provincial autonomy are inextricably linked and cannot be resolved separately. These complaints originated with the split of East Pakistan, which is why we witness a new wave of separatist activity in Balochistan following 1971. The tragedy of 1971 gave rise to demands for maximum provincial autonomy, a confederation rather than a federation within Pakistan, and boundary adjustments that would assist Balochistan become more homogeneous. Aside from the fact that Balochistan was granted the designation of a distinct province, the country's centralized power structure prevented it from ever functioning as an active federal unit. Ethno-political movements are the result of a protracted struggle over the balance of power between the provinces and the center. With the passage of the 18th amendment to the constitution in 2010, the PPP government made a substantial move, but it was insufficient to alleviate the province of Balochistan's long-standing sense of deprivation (Fair 2012).

The Baloch nation disputes being reduced to the status of an ethnic group because they are dispersed among three neighboring countries: Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan (Khan 2005). Although the majority of Baloch are Pakistani, they regard themselves as a country alongside their Irani and Afghani brethren, based on their distinct location, culture, and language (Amin 1988). The Baloch population residing in Iran and Afghanistan is also influenced by this Baloch claim to be a distinct country. The rebel activities in these three bordering countries are also a reflection of the idea of creating a bigger Balochistan out of the Baloch tribes. Tribal chiefs have created their own political parties in response to shifting contemporary political trends in an effort to influence the nation's provincial and national political structures. For instance, the *Jamhuri Watan* Party (Bugti Tribe), the *Baloch Haq Talwar* (Nawab Khair Bakhsh Murri Group), and the Balochistan National Party (Mengal Group) are fighting for Baloch identity and

provincial autonomy, yet they are not in agreement or solidarity with one another. The problem is being made more complicated by the disputes among these tribes on their tactics and courses of action. The establishment has meddled in tribal matters by taking advantage of these internal divisions among the tribes. For instance, in the 1970s, Prime Minister Z. A. Bhutto appointed Sardar Nawab Akbar Bugti, the leader of a different Baloch tribe, as the governor of Balochistan after approving the overthrow of the Mengal government. This is a reflection of the center exploiting the disputes between the various tribes in Balochistan.

Pakistan's complex center-province relations stem from uneven population and territory distribution. Balochistan is the country's largest province in terms of territory, yet it has the lowest population. This fosters a sense of comparison among the provinces, particularly when measured against Punjab, the largest province by population. Punjab's population supremacy translates into automatic dominance in the country's bureaucracy, military establishment, and other national institutions. For instance, just four cabinet ministers throughout the first thirty years of independence, from 1947 to 1977, were of Baloch ethnicity. Similarly, Pashtun, Sindhi, Mohajir, and Baloch ethnic groups make for 30% of the Pakistani military, with Punjabi ethnicity accounting for 70% of the total. According to Kurkreeja (2003), there are very few high-ranking Baloch officers in the army. Just 3.9% of Baloch people worked in civil administration, which includes the police. In 2002, there were just 30 Baloch academic members at Balochistan University and 4 Baloch secretaries in all of Balochistan (Weaver 2002). A few measures were implemented to lessen the disparity across the provinces, such as lowering the educational and recruitment requirements and raising the recruitment quota to 15% in 1991. Despite the fact that the PPP and PMLN governments made great advancements in the fields of education and military and civil recruiting following the campaign against Baloch militants during the Gen. Musharraf rule, they still feel outside of the system due to Punjab's domination.

The significance of Balochistan's energy resources has increased over time, despite the fact that its geostrategic significance has been understood since colonial times. The current phase of Pakistan's energy crisis, coupled with contemporary trends and changes in the energy industry, has given the subject

a more delicate rise in prominence. The Pakistani central government has been forced to assert its authority in the region by the establishment of a seaport in Gawadar, Saudi Arabia; the US-Iran dispute; Pakistan's active participation in the fight against terrorism; the proposed Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline; and power projects such as Reckodeck. The establishment is employing both tactics: first, they are making significant attempts to improve the province's infrastructure in order to address the socioeconomic complaints of the populace; second, they are stepping up their efforts to strengthen establishment control by increasing the military's presence in the region. Baloch nationalists, however, also interpret these efforts as an attempt by the central government to exploit Baloch resources for its own benefit as opposed to the welfare of the Baloch people (Amin 1988).

### **Baloch Nationalist Movement**

The political structure of today is not the cause of the decades-long grievances from the Baloch people against the central government. Their battle has become an agitated guerilla war due to their anti-centre position and inter-tribal tensions. The following sections have discussed the agitation that the separatist movement in Balochistan has been carrying out.

#### **1. The Revolt against Accession with Pakistan**

Balochistan was annexed by the Khanate on the document of accession, bringing it under the direct authority of the center on April 15, 1948. Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the governor general at the time, formed a council to oversee local government. Following the takeover, a number of well-known leaders were detained or banished (Baloch 2009). This marked the beginning of the end for the cordial center-province relations in Balochistan. The first uprising was organized by Prince Karim, the younger brother of the previous Baloch monarch Khan Ahmadyar Khan, and the annexation was seen as an expression of anti-Baloch nationalist feeling (Jonnes 2002). After making his way to Afghanistan, Prince Karim organized a campaign to declare Balochistan's independence from Pakistan. Baloch Mujahideen was the name of the movement. In Pakistan, they initiated a guerilla conflict. Prince Karim and his 126 followers were taken into custody when the Pakistani authorities coerced them into surrendering. A ban

was placed on the KSNP (Titus and Swidler 2000). This caused the Baloch nationalists to split into two factions: those who supported guerrilla warfare against Pakistan's central authority and those who preferred diplomatic means of resolving the dispute (Kundi 2009).

#### **2. The Resistance against One Unit Scheme**

The Baloch people felt even more deprived when the One Unit scheme was implemented in 1955 since they could no longer identify as a separate region because they were now a part of West Pakistan. The recently released Baloch nationalist leader Prince Karim vehemently denounced the One Unit plan (Ziring 2004). Prince Karim and the other Baloch leaders who opposed the union of Balochistan with West Pakistan were all taken into custody. Nauroz Khan, the tribal leader of the Zarakzai tribe, took the lead in the movement following Prince Karim's arrest. He made the Pakistani authorities aware of three requests (Axmann 2009);

1. To remove Balochistan from the one-unit system.
2. To free the Khan of Kalat and grant his adherents an extensive amnesty.
3. To spare his region from land reform measures.

When the government failed to respond favorably to these demands, the movement spearheaded by ninety-year-old Sardar Nauroz grew more agitated. The government sought to quell the guerilla agitation for nearly two years, but eventually gave up and began to talk with the agitators. The Baloch nationalists were compelled to submit after protracted talks. Following their apprehension, Sardar Nauroz and his men were put on trial by special military courts (Janmahmad 1982). Sardar Nauroz received a life sentence in prison. The Pakistani army established new garrisons in strategic locations of Balochistan following this agitational campaign (Rehman 2005). Even if the establishment was able to temporarily put an end to the movement, failing to address the underlying problems was what always served as the catalyst for subsequent uprisings.

#### **3. The Parari Resistance (1962)**

General Ayub Khan, the second martial law administrator, put an end to the second Baloch insurrection. In an attempt to decentralize power, he instituted the Basic Democracies system, but this

ultimately led to a greater concentration of power in the hands of President Gen. Ayub. A number of Baloch Sardars, including Sardar Khair Bakhsh Murri, Attaullah Mengal, and Ahmad Nawaz Bugti, were elected and admitted as members of the parliament under the Basic Democracies framework. Soon, several of Gen. Ayub's own personally nominated Sardars took the place of these elected Sardars. The Baloch tribes were uneasy about this once again, and they started the "Parari Resistance," a new campaign against the government. The word "parari" in Balochi refers to a person or people whose suffering is un-addressable by means of talks. This time, the movement reached several Baloch tribes, including the Mengal, Murri, Bugti, and others. By using guerilla warfare and attacking trains and army barracks, they attempted to eliminate official resources. The government was greatly angered by this and once more treated harshly. When the One Unit idea was halted by the third martial law administrator, Gen. Yahya Khan, in 1969, the uprising came to a stop. Balochistan's National Awami Party (henceforth referred to as NAP) won a majority in the 1970 election. The election's most significant result was Balochistan's promotion to become a province. Attaullah Mengal assumed the position of Chief Minister and Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo the position of Province Governor under the NAP administration.

#### **4. The 1973 Uprising**

Regretfully, Pakistan's democratic regimes were likewise unable to handle the Baloch issue with caution, and Balochistan's elected regime under Z. A. Bhutto was the scene of the subsequent rebellion against the federal government. In addition to forcibly toppling the elected provincial administration, Bhutto also outlawed the NAP and imprisoned numerous significant Baloch leaders, including Attaullah Mengal, Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, and Khair Bakhsh Murri. These actions laid the groundwork for the subsequent Baloch insurrection (Weaver 2002). The provincial government's decision to swap out non-Balochi bureaucrats for Baloch officials was seen as an attempt to indigenize the administration, while there were other factors at play as well.

Similar to this, the provincial government sought a larger portion of the natural resources and industrial allocation, which made the federal government fearful of a Baloch uprising (Jetly 2004). The episode

was linked to the threat of a Baloch uprising against the center, and the finding of modern weaponry from the Iraqi embassy in Islamabad fueled the controversy (Janmahmad 1982). Despite the Iraqi government's best efforts, the central government remained uneasy following the events of 1971, despite the claim that the weapons belonged to Iranian Baloch guerrillas. The federal government claimed that the Murri tribe members were given firearms to use against the Punjabi occupants of the Pat Feeder Canal area, in district Kalachi (Weaver 2002). The federal government was dubious of the provincial government's decision to launch a new police system, Balochistan Dehi Mohafiz (henceforth referred to as BDM), since the majority of BDM recruits were chosen based on their NAP affiliation.

While the PPP had no foundation in Balochistan, the reformist NAP government was growing in favor day by day. As a result, Prime Minister Z. A. Bhutto dismissed the provincial administration since all of its actions were seen as a danger to the integrity of the country. However, this action stoked the wrath of the Baloch tribal people, and a guerilla war was once again sparked.

The Baloch students established the Balochistan People's Liberation Front (also known as the BPLF) under the leadership of Khair Bakhsh Murri. The guerrillas from Parari, who had been hidden underground since the truce in 1969, provided them with instruction and support. The first time these guerilla militants ambushed a Pakistani army convoy was in April 1973. Scouts who were constantly patrolling at Tandoori were the target of the most serious attack on May 18, perpetrated by some Murri tribesmen. These scouts were killed after robbing them of their weapons. On behalf of foreign organizations, the provincial government was tasked with arming and training the guerilla war. As a result, prominent Baloch leaders, including Ghaus Bakhsh Bizanjo, Khair Bakhsh Murri, and Sardar Attaullah Mengal, were arrested on suspicion of attempting to topple the government. Reports of a very high death toll from the 1973 Baloch unrest place the death toll at about 3300 army soldiers and 53000 Baloch insurgents (Siddiqi 2011). Of the approximately 80,000 soldiers of Pakistan's armed forces, it is estimated that 55,000 Baloch terrorists fought against the army (Harrison 1978). In addition to other military instruments, the Pakistani government used the F-86 and Mirage fighter jets to

attack the Murri and Parari rebels in an effort to stop the insurrection. Pakistan was also given a Huey Cobra Helicopter, by the Iranian government, who felt threatened by the Baloch nationalists (Harrison 1981).

The majority of the Baloch insurgents were apparently put down, but the guerilla fighters' covert operations allowed the struggle to persist for many years afterward. Mir Hazar Khan said in an interview that they would fight until they have access to sophisticated weaponry since the central government has consistently suppressed them with force rather than paying attention to and comprehending their justifiable complaints. They have no choice but to rebel against the oppressive actions of the federal government, much like Bengalis do (Harrison 1978). This is the view of the average Baloch who prefer not to fight but are compelled to do so by the inflexible policies of the Pakistani administration. When the PPP administration was overthrown and third martial law was imposed in 1977, the movement came to an end (Hewitt 1998). While Allah Nazar Baloch's Baloch Students Organization (henceforth referred to as BSO) carried on with its operations, the leaders of the 1973 uprising were freed, and all but Khuda Bakhsh Bizanjo fled to Europe in self-exile, with Bizanjo beginning to pursue reconciliation politics.

### **Conclusion**

Regretfully, unresolved ethnic grievances in Balochistan always made room for new grievances to be raised by the next insurgency. Similar to how complaints over Punjabi colonization and Baloch resource exploitation served as the basis for the fifth insurgency against the federal government. As mentioned before, most of the leaders of the Baloch nationalist movement left the country, and those that remained started participating in mainstream politics (Harrison 1981). Another result of the country's precarious democratic system was unresolved ethnic tensions. The JWP was created by Nawab Akbar Bugti, while the Balochistan National Party (BNP) was formed by Attaullah Mengal and Khuda Bakhsh Bizanjo. In the democratic regimes that were transitioning in the 1990s, both parties established coalition administrations. There was mistrust among the Baloch leadership again in 1999, when the country was under martial law for the fourth time. During the 2002 elections, the Baloch leadership asserted that the military had deliberately established the religio-political group *Mutahidda Majlis-e-Amal*

(MMA) in order to counterbalance the BNP and JWP in Baloch politics (Swami 2006). Balach Murri, Akhtar Mengal, and Mir Hasil Bizanjo led this new wave of unrest in Balochistan. With complete authority over the most vulnerable districts, these leaders presented a serious threat to the central administration.

When General Musharraf's military government planned large-scale development projects like the construction of Gawadar Port, Punjabis started migrating to Balochistan (Siddiqi 2011). Even though these projects were meant to support the social and economic development of Balochistan, the influx of Pashtuns and Punjabis was seen as an attempt to isolate the Baloch ethnic group within their own nation. Even inside their own countries, they felt alienated. Sardar Akhtar Mengal stated in an interview that as Gawadar port expands, job opportunities would entice people from all over the nation to migrate there. Eventually, they will also be granted permanent residency and the ability to vote. We cannot afford to have a Karachi in Balochistan because it would turn us into the minority in our own nation and seriously jeopardize our identity, culture, and language. Consequently, we are unable to approve any of these massive development projects for Balochistan (Bakhtiar 2004).

The region's level of military intrusion escalated after the 9/11 attacks and after Pakistan permitted the US to create military bases in Pasni, Gawadar, Dalbadin, and Jacobabad. Military security was given to foreign workers on massive projects in order to protect them and the US military base, which infuriated the local nationalist leaders. A new guerrilla agitational war began in 2000, with attacks on citizens, military checkpoints, foreigners, gas pipelines, and military camps. The Baloch Liberation Army, often known as the BLA, was founded in 2000 and mounted a massive campaign of resistance against the gang rape of a thirty-two-year-old Baloch doctor. JWP chief Nawab Akbar Bugti spearheaded the resistance, calling it an act of betrayal. Over half of the country's population lives in areas where the Sui gas pipeline is blocked as a result of rebel attacks. The agitators later took control of the Sui gas field in January 2005. For four days, Pakistani military forces and the BLA, who were backed by the Bugti tribe, engaged in intense gunfire. While visiting the cornerstone of a new military base in Kohlu town, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, the chief of army staff, and the head of paramilitary forces came under attack



(Ahmad 2005). As a result, the situation became increasingly dire, and Gen. Musharraf vowed to deal with the rebels sternly (Weaver 2002). When Gen. Musharraf visited Kohlu town in December 2005 to engage with some tribal chiefs, he was again attacked. Sardar Mengal had initially responded to the threat by saying that they would also inflict additional harm to the state installations (Siddiqua 2011).

The military forces then began a significant offensive against the Murri and Bugti tribes. However, the BLA's actions became more intense as a result of this incident, and they launched more attacks on gas plants and government buildings. Negotiations were out of the question in this situation, thus the Pakistani army attacked the terrorist camps utilizing six army brigades and paramilitary weapons such as combat planes, gunship helicopters, and artillery (Swami 2006). When the Pakistani army murdered Nawab Akbar Bugti on August 26, 2006, the situation deteriorated. He became a hero and a symbol of the Baloch struggle for liberation after his death. Up to 2012, insurgent activity persisted under the PPP and Musharraf administrations. However, following the 2013 elections, the Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party, the Nationalist Party, and the PMLN formed a coalition provincial administration. This was particularly helpful in quelling the militancy in the area following the 2014 APS incident with "operation Zarb-e-Azab" and "operation Radd-ul-Fasad," which suppressed the agitation against the center.

The separatist movement in Balochistan must be handled carefully and compassionately since there is a significant degree of mistrust on both sides. As a result, things continue to spiral out of control and pose challenges to the country's integration. The research's conclusions show that there are two different schools of thought in Balochistan: those who advocate for constitutional measures and negotiation as a means of resolving conflicts and those who participate in violent behavior and have connections to terrorist groups. Nonetheless, the state must put strong measures in place to maximize provincial autonomy, put an end to another uprising, and diligently address the ethnic grievances of the Baloch people. The opening of the Pak-China economic corridor will contribute to the region's economic growth and ease their resentment of the center's exploitation of Balochistan's natural resources.

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