

CORRUPTION, DEPRIVATION AND HUMAN INSECURITY IN BALOCHISTAN: AN EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS

Mir Sadaat Baloch^{*1}, Aurangzeb Badini²

^{*1}Assistant Professor, Institute of Management Sciences, University of Balochistan, Quetta, Balochistan, Pakistan

²Edward S. Mason Fellow, Harvard Kennedy School, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA

Corresponding Author: *

Mir Sadaat Baloch

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17339223>

Received	Revised	Accepted	Published
20 August 2025	30 August, 2025	30 September 2025	13 October 2025

ABSTRACT

Recurrent policy disasters since inception of Pakistan have generated a series of deep-seated multi-dimensional problems creating a dangerous safety concern for the public in Balochistan. Regrettably, despite successive insurgencies we have not learnt from the history. Instead of implementing a practical method, the issue is always taken casually either as a political problem of few tribes or a law-and-order situation instigated by our enemy and dealt primarily with reactive measures based on the opinions of the rulers. We never tried to look at the social aspect of this problem, particularly the human security aspect. The central argument of this discussion is that all the problems in Balochistan stems from corruption and everything else is a byproduct may it be terrorism, poverty or governance issues.

Keywords

Corruption, Deprivation, Human Security, Great Games, Clientelism, Patronage.

INTRODUCTION

Balochistan with 44% of the land mass and 5% of Pakistan's population is passing through a fragile situation, where slow yet steady deterioration is taking place in all facets of social life. Recurrent policy disasters since inception of Pakistan have generated a series of deep-seated multi-dimensional problems creating a dangerous safety concern for the public¹. The prevailing crisis are not understood by the stakeholders. Minimum will of political forces have aggravated a simple social problem to the level of an unmanageable crisis. It is vital to understand the crisis at hand in a synergistic method to address the issues in totality.

Regrettably, despite successive insurgencies we have not learnt from the history of Balochistan. Instead of implementing a practical method, the issue is always taken casually either as a political problem of few tribes or a law-and-order situation instigated by our enemy and dealt primarily with reactive measures based on the opinions of the rulers. Gravity of the situation has always been half-heartedly understood, and some political or economic initiatives were taken to appease the masses, but we never tried to look at the social aspect of this problem, particularly the human security aspect. This paper discusses the influence of corruption on human security and

¹ Turk, Asim Shabir, Raziq Hussain, Zahid Umer, and Muhammad Sibte Ali. "The Enigma of Balochistan's

Socio-Economic Deprivation and The Way Forward." iRASD Journal of Economics 5, no. 2 (2023): 260-271.

deprivation in Balochistan and recommends ways for the sustainable solution. Before discussing Balochistan it is imperative to understand the basis of Pakistan's National Security.

Pakistan's National Security Paradigm

Nuclear power and geographical position put Pakistan at strategic position not only in South Asia but also in world's politics². Due to this key position the country faces a range of challenges and threats such as societal, political, monetary, armed forces and information communication³. To control the situation on ground the state of Pakistan is facing a security paradox, where it strives to capitalize on its power and considers itself as the most imperative player on schemes of things⁴. As a result, the national security place more emphasis on military security than any other factor as discussed in the "Realist School of Thought"⁵. This fragile situation is bound to affect the morals of masses and capacity of the state resulting into terrorism and insurgency⁶.

Pakistan's security mechanism is influenced by three major trends. "The shifting of power from the West to the East and North to the South promotes a multi-polar world order. Second, rapid globalization and technology advancements promote free movement of goods, finances, people, and ideas, creating both unity and isolation. Non-state actors using fear and

intimidation to gain political power pose a threat to national security"⁷. The state must focus more on its security and defence, but the National security policies should be designed with consultation and support of all stakeholders⁸. The whole security paradigm of Pakistan and particularly Balochistan is directly influenced by the regional power politics that is also referred to as the great games⁹.

Regional Power Politics and Balochistan

Historically in all the great games Central Asia has always played a pivotal role to turn the game¹⁰. In contemporary times Pakistan holds a vital strategic position in the sphere of international politics as it is sited on the foyer of the wealthy Middle Eastern countries. Out of these countries Iran envisioned to assort its resources of oil and gas through pipelines to countries like, India, Qatar, Pakistan and Turkmenistan. Other than that, Western countries are in pursue of oil and other energy resources of Central Asia. After collapse of USSR cooperation, a new great game has started those concentrates mainly on policies related to energy resources¹¹. As far as this energy creed is concerned, Pakistan is central to this policy as it is situated in the crucial region of Central Asia and positioned next to energy rich countries i.e., Iran and Afghanistan¹². Key nations of the Globe are

² Shahzad, Khuram, and Omer Farooq Zain. "Analysis the Impact of National Security Policy and Security Challenges on the Citizens of Pakistan." *ANNALS OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND PERSPECTIVE* 2, no. 2 (2021): 419-429.

³ Salik, Muhammad Samrez, and Khadija Younus. "PAKISTAN'S SECURITY COMPULSIONS: EXTERNAL & INTERNAL DIMENSIONS." *Margalla Papers* 23 (2019).

⁴ Mazhar, Muhammad Saleem, and Naheed S. Goraya. "External Challenges to Pakistan's National Security." *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan* 56, no. 1 (2019): 117.

⁵ Mazhar, . "External Challenges to Pakistan's"

⁶ Shahzad, Khuram, and Omer Farooq Zain. "Analysis the Impact of National Security Policy and Security Challenges on the Citizens of Pakistan." *ANNALS OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND PERSPECTIVE* 2, no. 2 (2021): 419-429.

⁷ Baloch, Mir Sadaat. "Evolving Security Situation of Pakistan." *BUIITEMS JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES* 3, no. 1 (2024).

⁸ Akram, Nabel, and Komal Tariq. "War on Terrorism in Pakistan: Security Challenges and Safety Prioritization." *Social Science and Humanities Journal (SSHJ)* 8, no. 04 (2024): 34765-34782.

⁹ Bashir, Omar S. "The Great Games Never Played: Explaining Variation in International Competition Over Energy." *Journal of Global Security Studies* 2, no. 4 (2017): 288-306.

¹⁰ Iqbal, Musharaf, and Manzoor Khan Afridi. "New Great Game in Central Asia: Conflicts, Interests and Strategies of Russia, China and United States." *Dialogue (Pakistan)* 12, no. 3 (2017).

¹¹ Ali, Sajid, Muhammad Naeem, and Muhammad Fahim Khan. "Great Games and Competing Interests of Regional and Extra-regional Players Competing Interests of Regional and Extra-regional Players." *EUROPEAN ACADEMIC RESEARCH* 7 (2020).

¹² Khetran, Mir Sherbaz. "Economic Connectivity." *Strategic Studies* 36, no. 4 (2016): 61-76.

drawn to Balochistan vis-à-vis Pakistan because of its strategic location.

Robert D Kaplan claims that the Indian ocean is one of the busiest routes, for catering 50% of all the containers traffic passes and particularly 70% of the globe oil tanker passes through it¹³. Implying that the port city Gwadar in Balochistan can be the nexus in new silk route. After China, Russia desires to reach the port and currently trying to develop its relations with Pakistan. As a result, USA is seeking to sabotage this route and port as it would assist China in expanding its economy by accessing the shortest route for trade, toward Middle East and African countries¹⁴. At the backdrop of this international politics Balochistan plays a vital role in domestic, regional, and international affairs.

This implication does not go unnoticed, and the province is facing the consequences. Balochistan, is deliberately plunging into anarchy due to national inactions and global actions. We are facing an assortment of biases and aversion in shape of inorganic political discourse, sub nationalist movements, ethnic and sectarian violence. Any societal organization skilled of limiting the growth of extremism are discouraged by opinion based policies. A power vacuum is evolving, building a theoretically explosive situation for days to come. Since the start of recent insurgency, the state lacked ingenuity or will to take it seriously. Primarily it was recognized as a trifling demonstration of restlessness in a region habitually uncomfortable with Pakistan and still no grounded research is conducted to understand it.

According to Frederic Grare of Carnegie Endowment for International Peace "Balochistan is a bubbling cauldron of ethnic, sectarian, secessionist and militant violence, threatening to boil over at any time"¹⁵. We cannot reinforce state power in Balochistan by destroying traditional & local structures, however in

the process we are weakening Pakistan & advancing hardliner tendencies. It is the time to find a social solution to the Baloch conflict because radicalization suicide & violence are social issues. Before resolving the conflict in Balochistan we must understand how and why we got here on the first place.

Geoffrey Kemp and Robert Kaplan discusses the increasing involvement of China in Pakistan. In their works, they argue a broader international context regarding Balochistan's significance in world affairs¹⁶. International curiosity in the region is not going to fade in coming days or years. As South Asian countries are developing their need for energy, it will only surge in days to come. With the existing recognized sites of natural gas and petroleum the Global powers are expected to face a considerably growing struggle for access to these resources. Then it may not be a surprise that resources in Pakistan and Central Asia will be centre of attention. These sources will guarantee privileged access and lower prices to the country reaching them first. Now let's discuss the power politics of different countries.

China and USA

The richness of natural resources in Balochistan and neighbouring territories draws attention of global powers. The province offers the shortest accessible path to Arabian Sea for the carriage. Gwadar lending China access to the warm waters is making United States(US) anxious. They are apprehensive that China can set up a military base in Gwadar, even though there are no such plans on the cards¹⁷. US reckons if they fail to keep their commercial supremacy in the region, China can take their place. The Gwadar development draws US interest in Balochistan due to its capability to alter the region into the central passageway for Central Asia's energy transportation to other parts in no time¹⁸.

¹³ Asif, Muhammad, and Kaleem Ullah Khan Barrech. "The Importance of Gwadar Port for Global Players." *Pakistan Study Centre* 4, no. 02 (2016): 1-16.

¹⁴ Abbas, Khawar. "Socio-economic impacts of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) at community level: case study of Gwadar Pakistan." Master's thesis, Universitetet i Agder; University of Agder, 2019.

¹⁵ Tellis, Ashley J., and SHUJA NAWAZ. "Carnegie Endowment for International Peace." *Pakistan and the War on Terror: Conflicted Goals, Compromised Performance* (2010).

¹⁶ Ismail, Muhammad. "Geostrategic Importance of Balochistan: Baloch Insurgency and the Global Politics of Energy Resources." *J. Pol. Stud.* 21 (2014): 181

¹⁷ Shah, Ali Zaman. "Geopolitical significance of Balochistan." *Strategic Studies* 37, no. 3 (2017): 126-144.

¹⁸ Khetran, "Economic Connectivity."

The US strive for maritime power globally, their ambition is not confined to Pacific or Atlantic oceans it reaches to Indian Ocean¹⁹. The development of Balochistan is a fear for them as global powers are in rivalry to get their due strategic share in the New Great Game²⁰. Balochistan's position as a doorway to resources of Central Asia makes it trenches for superpowers for projected future²¹.

After the construction of Gwadar port, Beijing can reach supplies of natural recourse and other vital commodities for development²². The port's proximity to Strait of Hormuz, a major oil-shipping lane makes it vital for major international energy companies²³. The Chinese factor in Gwadar will challenge the Indo-US domination of the Indian Ocean²⁴.

India and Iran

Gwadar port was never in favour of India or Iran as they counted it as a jeopardy to their strategic position in the Arabian Sea. To counter this perceived menace both the countries are working in partnership to promote Chabahar port as a better option. Gwadar port branded as an extension of China's policy of the "String of Pearls" by New Delhi²⁵. Interestingly, even though Gwadar and Chabahar ports are just 110 miles far from each other still Pakistan and Iran are in a rat

race to capitalize on Central Asian resources²⁶. Iran and India are tremendously fearful about the strategic magnitude of Gwadar port. For this very reason India believes that instigating insurgencies, promoting the extremist elements, and destabilizing Balochistan is always in their favour²⁷. A functional and successful Gwadar port on the doors of the Strait of Hormuz can shatter India's aim of manipulating the regional waterways. The global player and India are busy holding their stakes in Balochistan through different means²⁸. The construction of a seaport, coupled with transnational gas pipeline projects and energy projects in forms of oil refinery or oil city will turn Balochistan as a major stakeholder in the global energy game²⁹. The insurgents in geo-strategically significant Balochistan are the important performers in a New Great Game in days to come³⁰. Iran's standing interest in region has triad key elements such as : Jundallah organisation, the proposed gas pipeline, and mounting contest involving Chabahar and Gwadar³¹. Pakistan is estimated to earn US\$200-\$500 million yearly in passage fees from the pipeline which would let it to pay the price of natural gas from the pipeline it consumed³². Despite having the world's second largest reserves of natural gas Iran has failed to

¹⁹ National Intelligence Council (US), ed. *Global trends 2030: Alternative worlds: a publication of the National Intelligence Council*. US Government Printing Office, 2012.

²⁰ National Intelligence Council (US), ed. *Global trends 2030*

²¹ Shah, "Geopolitical significance of Balochistan.

²² Ferchen, Matt. "China, economic development, and global security." *Center for Global Policy*, https://carnegieendowment.org/files/CP_289_Ferchen_China_Final.pdf (2016).

²³ Fazle-Haider, Syed. "A Strategic Seaport. Is Pakistan Key to China's Energy Supremacy ." *Foreign Affairs* 5 (2015): 2015.

²⁴ Rahman, Zia Ur, Asghar Khan, Wang Lifang, and Ibrar Hussain. "The geopolitics of the CPEC and Indian Ocean: security implication for India." *Australian Journal of Maritime & Ocean Affairs* 13, no. 2 (2021): 122-145.

²⁵ Saez, Lawrence, and Crystal Chang. "China and South Asia: Strategic implications and economic

imperatives." eds) Lowell Dittmer and George T.

Yu, "China, the Developing World, and the New Global Dynamics (2010).

²⁶ Hussain, F. (2020). Geostrategic Imperatives of Gwadar Port for China. *The Korean Journal of International Studies*, 18(2), 145-167.

²⁷ National Intelligence Council (US), ed. *Global trends 2030*

²⁸ Shah, "Geopolitical significance of Balochistan."

²⁹ Shah, "Geopolitical significance of Balochistan."

³⁰ Shah, "Geopolitical significance of Balochistan."

³¹ Sial, Safdar. *An analysis of emerging Pakistani-Iranian ties*. Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre, 2015.

³² Khan, Muhammad Nouman Ashraf, and Syed Mussawar Hussain Bukhari. "THE SINO-PAK STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AND INDIA'S REGIONAL AIM IN SOUTH ASIA: AN ANALYSIS." *JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES DEVELOPMENT* 3, no. 2 (2024): 81-92.

capitalize it as a major export³³. This project would create a win-win situation for all the three countries. Regrettably, the venture has seen serious resistance. The project can only benefit Iran and Pakistan if peaceful law and order situation exists in Balochistan. Therefore, Iran's top interest in Balochistan should be in the framework of security. However, most of these counties are not ready to collaborate with Pakistan to enhance security environment in Balochistan that can benefit all the regional players. In the drop back of this it is imperative that we design Balochistan's policy through research and analysis to counter these powers.

Balochistan's Security Dynamics

Balochistan is the largest province of Pakistan which makes it hard for government to keep in check the law-and-order situation. The internal environment of the province is characterised by mismanagement and misappropriations, weak governance, lack of education, rising poverty, health problems, sectarianism, sub nationalism, ethnic fissures and extremism³⁴. These problems are producing an energetic youth and rising civil society that are compounding the problems and deteriorating national cohesion and human security³⁵. The government is putting in place a lot of efforts that goes unrecognised by the masses due to commercially motivated media that is unbridled. Considering all the factors the Balochistan's security dynamics must

be analysed with a rigour. To analyse security model of Balochistan this paper has adapted Barry Buzan's five sectors of National Security, Lenore G Martin's five interacting variables and Nils Andren Six Variable³⁶. This paper building on the debate by political scientists assert that to provide security the primary referent remains the state instead of individual as it must address human security that covers the individual³⁷. This paper will now explore different factors that influence human security in Balochistan and creating deprivation. The central argument of this discussion is that all the problems in Balochistan stems from corruption and everything else is a byproduct of it may it be terrorism, poverty or governance issues.

How Corruption is failing Balochistan.

Like many social concepts, corruption is a complex phenomenon and hard to conceptualise³⁸. Due to its elusive nature, it is hard to define and understand corruption hence, scholars are on disagreement about its implications³⁹. However, the researchers are on agreement that it poses a greater threat to transitional societies like Balochistan⁴⁰. The influences of corruption in societies like Balochistan that are lagging economically, politically and socially can be devastating⁴¹. The scholars mostly discuss its implications in political and economic terms but often ignores the human security aspect⁴². The people of Balochistan are facing problems like fear, disparity,

³³ Jalilvand, David. "Iran's gas exports: can past failure become future success?." (2013).

³⁴ NOOR, BAKHT. "STATE OF EXCEPTION- UNDERSTANDING SECURITY AND VIOLENCE IN BALOCHISTAN." PhD diss., Quaid I Azam University, 2019.

³⁵ Baloch, Sadaat. "Influence of Reification of Power on Social Change: An Analysis of Elias and Bourdieu." *Pakistan Languages and Humanities Review* 6, no. 4 (2022): 228-237.

³⁶ Mukhtar, Mudassir, Waseem Ishaque, and Muhammad Shoaib Malik. "NATIONAL SECURITY PARADIGM OF PAKISTAN- RETROSPECTIVE ANALYSIS." *NDU Journal* (2019).

³⁷ Mukhtar, "NATIONAL SECURITY PARADIGM OF PAKISTAN"

³⁸ Baloch, Sadaat, Abdul Wahid Zehri, and Safi Ullah. "Understanding Social Theory Creation: A Perspective from Pierre Bourdieu and Talcott Parsons." *Annals of Human and Social Sciences* 3, no. 3 (2022): 36-46.

³⁹ Hassan, Ahmed Mohamed. "The impact of corruption on the human security of societies in transition (Iraq case study since 2003)." *Review of Economics and Political Science* 9, no. 3 (2024): 212-232.

⁴⁰ Hassan, "The impact of corruption on"

⁴¹ Nuh, Mohammad, and Nopparathapol Sriboonark. "Anti-corruption and governance challenges in Southeast Asia: Toward the ASEAN political-security community Agenda." *Journal of Politics and Governance* 5, no. 2 (2015): 248-259.

⁴² Hassan, "The impact of corruption on"

poverty, lack of empowerment in life and lack of adequate protection. These factors are affecting their human security, and all these factors are by product of corruption. Successive government have failed to capitalize on developmental policies, strategies and plans that could be translated into human security goals. Corruption has been established structurally within the private and public domains even on community level. The alarming fact is that such ill practices have gained social recognition in forms of political clientelism and state patronage⁴³. This corruption is creating collusion, conflict and opposition as leaders are acting like brokers for jobs, contracts, services, goods and authority. As a result, the character of state is affected that in turn can create fragmented society that lacks social control and political acumen. Let's further explain how corruption is influencing different factors in Balochistan.

Political

The political dimension of Balochistan is uncertain like rest of Pakistan but it is more fragile compared to rest of the country. It is the only province that has limited participation by national political parties due to its minimal role in electoral process and is always run by a coalition government. The nationalist and religious parties mostly dominated the political domain⁴⁴. Baloch dominated areas in south are influenced by nationalist, whereas the Pashtoon dominated north is influenced by religious parties with a swinging mandate to the nationalists⁴⁵. The political environment in Balochistan is influenced by political clientelism. Powerful politicians maintain their influence by gifting development projects to their supporters to create a sense of obligation to be

reciprocated when desired⁴⁶. Some politicians are so powerful that even without a public office they have access to public resources compare to the elected member of that constituency. A nexus of administrators and politicians find ways to manipulate, bypass, or eradicate procedures to gather state resource and projects as per their desires. They replace the prescribed standards for selecting recipients of government projects with their own political standards such as party loyalty⁴⁷. This clientelism and patronage is creating a huge sense of deprivation among the masses particularly the youth. Ahemd Mohamed while discussing political security in context of Iraq highlighted seven factors such as lack of electoral representation, electoral fraud, failure to follow the governance principles, ineffective decision making, failure to follow human rights standards in fight against terrorism, violence against individuals, freedom to demonstrate and limitations on expression⁴⁸. Most of such factors are present in Balochistan that is contributing to the deprivation of masses.

Social

The society in Balochistan is crippled by elite capture and tribalism because of that nuisance value has more currency to the decision makers⁴⁹. The province is experiencing a very low social capital that resulted in mistrust and omnipresent deprivation in the masses. The poor education and health indicators in Balochistan are inflecting the youth adversely, they cannot relate to rest of Pakistan as they cannot comprehend a good future for themselves. The youth's future is further mashed by two-fold of apprehensions such as increasing incidents of insurgency and missing persons⁵⁰.

⁴³ Ulman, Simona-Roxana. "The impact of the national competitiveness on the perception of corruption." *Procedia Economics and Finance* 15 (2014): 1002-1009.

⁴⁴ Baloch, Mir Sadaat, Siraj Bashir, Hananah Zarrar, and Aftab Aslam. "Countering violent extremism in Balochistan: A case of strategic communication." *Russian Law Journal* 11, no. 8S (2023): 343-354.

⁴⁵ Baloch, "Countering violent extremism in Balochistan"

⁴⁶ Baloch, Mir Sadaat, and Nadir Khan. "Improving the Public Sector Development Programme

Allocations in the Clientelistic Environment of Balochistan." *The Pakistan Development Review* 61, no. 2 (2022): 213-230.

⁴⁷ Baloch, "Countering violent extremism in Balochistan"

⁴⁸ Hassan, "The impact of corruption on"

⁴⁹ Baloch, "Countering violent extremism in Balochistan"

⁵⁰ Fair, C. Christine, Parina Patel, and Gunjan Maheshwari. "Looking for Individual-Level Evidence for the Ethnic Security Dilemma

Food and Economic security are another factor that is tempered by ill practices in the region. The province of Balochistan has the highest poverty rate in Pakistan. The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) indicates that on average in Pakistan 37% households are classified as poor whereas, in Balochistan 71% household are poor and the incidence of poverty is goes up to 85%.⁵¹ Other research claim that people in Balochistan are twice as poor as an average Pakistani citizen and the Baloch population is worse in the lot⁵². The economy in the region has remained the worst performer for example the per capita GDP grew only 0.2% from 1973 to 2000⁵³. The GDP gap between other regions was 26% till 2000 and after 2000 till 2015 the gap had widened to an astonishing 45%⁵⁴. These indicators are resulting into serious resentment and deprivation in the people of Balochistan.

These factors are creating a complex human security concept for the youth forcing them to consider their life worthless; ultimately leading them to join forces that can give them a sense of accomplishment by offering them a way of catharsis through violence or suicide. The best argument to persuade the youth is based on resource manipulation by the elite class.

Resources

Revisited: A Study of Balochistan." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* (2024): 1-34.

⁵¹ Wani, Shakoar Ahmad. "The new baloch militancy: Drivers and dynamics." *India Quarterly* 77, no. 3 (2021): 479-500.

⁵² Wani, "The new baloch militancy"

⁵³ Bengali, Kaiser, and Mahpara Sadaqat. *Regional accounts of Pakistan: Methodology and estimates, 1973-2000*. Social Policy and Development Centre, 2005.

⁵⁴ Pasha, Hafiz A. "Growth and Inequality in Pakistan (Volume1)." Islamabad: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (2018).

⁵⁵ Malkani, M. Sadiq, Zafar Mahmood, Sohaib Iqbal Shaikh, and Syed Jawad Arif. "Mineral resources of Balochistan province, Pakistan." *Geological Survey of Pakistan, Information Release 1001* (2017): 1-43.

⁵⁶ Ahmed, Manzoor. "Political Economy of Elite Capture and Clientelism in Public Resource Distribution: Theory and Evidence from

Balochistan province is considered as the richest region for mineral resources⁵⁵. This richness in resources is considered more a curse than a blessing by the local people⁵⁶. The province has the largest reserves of copper and indigenous iron that are also assumed to contain gold and silver⁵⁷. Apart from this there are ample reserves of gypsum, chromite, limestone, coal, barite zinc, lead, ochre and silica sand. There are also random small deposits of celestite, magnesite, antimony sulphur and other minerals⁵⁸. The region has very common raw cement materials making a huge prospect for cement industry in future⁵⁹. Beside that there are huge gypsum deposits that are still untapped⁶⁰. In an investigative report in 2022 Akbar Notezai published the story that how one single family became billionaire from a copper gold project while the area still deprived of basic facilities⁶¹. It is such kind of mega corruption that create resentments among the common people and encourage insurgent to manipulate them to achieve their goals.

Counter Insurgency

To ensure a successful Counter Insurgency (CI) in Balochistan the state has employed a spectrum of interventions. Historically, CI was best achieved by employing military component only but in case of Balochistan this doesn't seems to be successful⁶². The

Balochistan, Pakistan." *India Quarterly* 79, no. 2 (2023): 223-243.

⁵⁷ Khan, Khalid, and Saima Liaqat. "Unleashing the Economic Potential of Balochistan: The Dynamic Power of District Hub." *BTTN Journal* 2, no. 1 (2023): 26-37.

⁵⁸ Malkani, M. Sadiq, Zafar Mahmood, Sohaib Iqbal Shaikh, and Syed Jawad Arif. "Mineral resources of Balochistan province, Pakistan." *Geological Survey of Pakistan, Information Release 1001* (2017): 1-43.

⁵⁹ Malkani, "Mineral resources of Balochistan".

⁶⁰ Malkani, Mineral resources of Balochistan".

⁶¹ Notezai, Akbar. "The curious case of Sanjaranis: How they benefited from the massive copper gold Saindak mine project?" *LokSujag* 11/22/2022 <https://loksujag.com/story/The-curious-case-of-the-Sanjaranis-Saindak-mine-project>

⁶² Jilani, Sheikh Ghulam, and Ghulam Mujaddid. "Theory and Practice of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency: The Case Study of Balochistan."

sub nationalist and tribal connotations gives a different nuance to Balochistan's law and order paradigm. There are substantial reports that indicates that foreign players are supporting insurgency and instability in the region because of its geostrategic position, resources and future trade routes⁶³. Due to insurgent groups activities and movement along the Iran-Pakistan and Afghanistan-Pakistan borders poses serious security threats to law enforcement agencies in Balochistan. As a result, the province is experiencing terrorist attacks, violence, attacks on security personnel and bomb blasts in covert operations that are believed to be sponsored by Afghan intelligence agency (NDS) that enjoy support from the Indian intelligence agency (RAW)⁶⁴. There are many stakeholders both internal and international who have economic and political interest that are better served with a fragile internal security⁶⁵. There is a considerable section in the polity and administration that consider the present insurgency low intensity and limited to few districts but still it poses a serious challenge to the suitability and future of the region⁶⁶. Balochistan at this point may not meet the standards of anarchy but it certainly inches towards the inclusion criteria offered by Kuafman⁶⁷. This criterion argues that when ethnic groups can effectively challenge the legitimacy of a government then it is

marching towards anarchy. This fluctuating insurgency has shifted the overall balance of power in favour of kinetic measures, but such methods have not yield sustainable results⁶⁸. One of the reasons for this failure is attributed to bad governance in Balochistan.

Governance

There is an endless and futile discussion about the governance issues in Balochistan and everyone is ready to highlight the weak performance of government. We lack understanding about governance and gauge it only in terms of policy formulation and implementation coupled with services delivery. But we never discuss that it also means how authority is exercised by the institutions⁶⁹. It also refers to practices and processes through which governments are monitored, implemented and formed. The focus of governance is to improve the quality of life and build relationships between the state, the private sector and the civil society⁷⁰. Governance issues have direct impact on the inequality that exists in a society⁷¹. The scholars believe that there is direct relationship between human security and governance if governance is good

Global Strategic & Security Studies Review 1 (2020): 1-16.

⁶³ Baloch, Muhammad Ashraf Nadeem, Ghulam Mustafa, Allauddin Kakar, and Sher Ali Kakar. "Balochistan and Fifth Generation Warfare: Role of External Powers." *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan* 58, no. 2 (2021): 140.

⁶⁴ Bugti, Mir Sarfraz, Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, Mohammad Faisal, Zhao Lijian, and Saleem Safi. "Security Dynamics of Balochistan as a Determinant of Pakistan's Foreign Policy." *Stratagem* 1, no. 1 (2018): 114-129.

⁶⁵ Akhtar, Nasreen. "Balochistan conflict: Internal and international dynamics." *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences* 37, no. 1 (2017): 190-202.

⁶⁶ Ejaz, Muhammad, Kalim Ullah, Amir Shabbir, and Waleed Ahmed. "The implications of the state's response to the violent ethnic conflicts in Balochistan." *Liberal Arts and Social Sciences International Journal (LASSIJ)* 7, no. 1 (2023): 155-171.

⁶⁷ Fair, C. Christine, Parina Patel, and Gunjan Maheshwari. "Looking for Individual-Level Evidence for the Ethnic Security Dilemma Revisited: A Study of Balochistan." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* (2024): 1-34.

⁶⁸ Bugti, Tariq Hussain. "SECURITY CHALLENGES AND INSURGENT MOVEMENTS IN BALOCHISTAN." *Pakistan Journal of Social Research* 2 (2020): 47-51.

⁶⁹ Khan, Jawad, Lubna Sheeraz, and Muhammad Anis Bajwa. "Good governance in Pakistan: prospects and challenges." *Journal of Intellectual Property and Human Rights* 1, no. 6 (2022): 34-50.

⁷⁰ Ali Khan, Muhammad Mumtaz, and Imran Alam. "Good Governance in Pakistan: Parameters, Causes and Measures." *Pakistan Vision* 21, no. 1 (2020).

⁷¹ Iqbal, Athar, and Ayub Mehar. "Governance Issues in Pakistan and their Impact on Income Inequality." *IBT Journal of Business Studies (JBS)* 2, no. 2 (2015).

so will be the human security and vice versa⁷². The empirical data clearly indicates that with high level of corruption and patronage, good governance and development can never prevail in Balochistan⁷³. Based on this analysis this paper proposes a way forward for decision makers.

Way Forward

It is necessary to understand that the situation in Balochistan is not just a question of terrorism and great games by the international powers; it has to do with a chronic disconnect between the government and the public. It has to do more with human security than development and this not possible with rampant corruption that exists in the Balochistan. This paper clearly shows that human security, governance, politics, counter insurgency all converges to corruption. The violence and deprivation in Balochistan are more a socio-political problem than a socio-economic problem. This problem is here to stay if we don't study and understand it impartially through research and analysis. Patronage and corruption coupled with a dysfunctional governmental system has led to the spreading of some extraordinary mistrust and misrepresentations in the minds of the youth (and others as well). Not all actors may share the same expectations about the future peace, and this can itself be a source of conflict, violent or otherwise. This calls for a grounded and holistic approach in the following domains:

Corruption domain

As discussed earlier in the paper the concept of corruption is complex to understand so combating it even harder. In transitional societies like Balochistan that feed and grow on clientelism and patronage, eradicating corruption is an uphill task. We need to address these issues at three different level: corruption in government, corruption in private sector and corruption in society. The government need to design different strategies for them through research and analysis. For short term the government can introduce

better transparency and information sharing mechanisms. The government need to foster public participation and engagement and encourage whistleblower protection. Most importantly we need political will and collective responsibility to fight this evil and coalition government is the biggest hurdle to crate that will.

Socio economic domain

Industrialisation is not suitable for Balochistan, we must concentrate more on trading and cottage industries. Balochistan will have to mobilize the very considerable assets that it possesses. The assets include the vast land area (almost 45 percent of the area of Pakistan). So far, a disproportionate focus has been on developing transit trade and minerals/mining with little focus on the internal market (of Pakistan) that Balochistan could cater to. Much of the province is classified as rangelands that support a large livestock sector, offering a considerable potential for downstream development, such as the production of meat, leather, wool, and dairy items. Using state-of-the-art practices makes possible the chance for Balochistan to supplement the somewhat depleting soils in the key agricultural areas of Pakistan and sustain the 'breadbasket'.

For targeting poor a better option could be considering Universal Basic Income (UBI) for a given period to support the residents of Balochistan. It will encourage the entrepreneurial spirit and development of small businesses while ensuring people's dignity. It's time to think what Gwadar should be delivering for Balochistan and Pakistan; focus on the human being before economics.

Governance domain

The debate in Pakistan is more about governance and less about service delivery. Focus should be placed on the performance measurement aspects of civil services than on policy alone. New skills on efficient implementation, performance measurement and citizen interface must be injected into the civil service,

⁷² Attuquayefio, Philip. "The Pathology of Human Security in Africa: A Pro-Governance Perspective." *The African Review: A Journal of African Politics, Development and International Affairs* (2015): 1-18.

⁷³ Kaufmann, Daniel. "Myths and realities of governance and corruption." *Available at SSRN 829244* (2005).

but this will not be sustainable without urbanization in Balochistan. Furthermore, empowering local level institutions – through stronger devolution – to undertake essential administrative and service delivery functions. Appointments, postings, and tenure security – Merit to be ensured. Finally, we need to focus more on service delivery of bottom 10 poverty index districts on priority.

Political domain

For our politics to grow we need informal non-purposive & unruly everyday civic talks to create bridges between our private self-interest & sense of reciprocity & belonging that makes civility and collective political action possible. A paradigm shift in society must be ensured with bottom-up development planning and with the greater narrative of inclusivity. We need to ensure the voices of marginalized are heard. Abandon the policy of nurturing so-called elite and to patronage at the cost of the people. To achieve effective discourse in development joint planning is vital. In Balochistan political discourse must be achieved with the help of organic politicians and intellectuals, while successfully marginalising oppositional forces with the help of people.



Perception domain

The paramount problem to perception creation is the social media. The peril of social media is that we develop our perspective based on small set of information and isolated events leading to impulsive behaviour. One must understand that perception management plays a vital role in conflicts; being aware of our biases; understanding others' perspective and managing perceptions contribute significantly to conflict resolution. Perception biases, such as stereotyping and prejudice can escalate conflicts by fuelling misunderstanding. We need perception management more than ever but first we need to assess the perceptions through grounded research to develop better tools for such management. A national narrative should urgently be developed to create value for patriotism and civic sense.

Security domain

Peace is “path dependent” not “personality dependent”. Elite capture, corruption, inorganic

politicians, patronage bureaucracy, unjust imprisonment and forced displacement has no element of violence but it is hindering peace and development in Balochistan. Sustaining peace is both ‘a goal and a process to build a common vision of a society. The government must revisit its intelligence working, prosecution and investigation to control law and order. New sustainable peace must replace what until now has been a sequential approach to conflict resolution. Inclusive society is the core of sustainable peace.