

Insurgency factors in Balochistan

BY MANSOOR AKBAR KUNDI

For the last many months Balochistan has been in the media limelight due to growing threats of instability and tensions, particularly with reference to the establishment of future garrisons, insurgency and development. The nationalists' resistance to the announcement by the government of raising three garrisons and their reservations about the Gwadar mega-project, as shown by terrorist attacks against law enforcement agencies as well as gas installation, has added to the suspicion that the province may be heading towards another insurgency.

Balochistan has lagged behind the other provinces in development due to three major reasons. First, it was raised to provincial status in 1970 without any significant development made, particularly in the Brauhi and Baloch areas. The native Balochistan comprised three states of Kalat with jurisdiction over Mekran, Lasbela and Kharan states. The leased areas were those which the British took on annual lease from the Khan of Kalat. The present day Balochistan comprised 65 to 70 percent of the area actually fell under Native Balochistan. The British Balochistan comprised areas which either Robert Sandeman captured or ceded to the British Indian Empire from Afghanistan between 1877 to 1884.

The Treaty of Gandamak was very instrumental in the cession of a large number of areas from Afghanistan into British India facilitating the groundwork for Durand Line drawn in 1892 between the British and Amir Abdur Rehman Khan. Under the treaty, many areas were ceded for 100 years, a disillusion about the validity of Durand Line until 1992. The British raised garrisons and built roads and railways network for the sake of the promotion of their Forward Policy in the areas and not for general welfare, nonetheless, due to the development the areas, mostly comprising Pashtun areas, are more developed than Native Balochistan and leased areas; the leased areas were slightly developed than Native ones. Upon the merger of all Native States into one single Balochistan, the province was administratively divided into two divisions, Kalat and Quetta. The Kalat division comprised areas actually called Native Balochistan and Quetta division which fell under the British Balochistan. The leased areas merged into both, mostly Kalat division.

Unlike the rulers of Kharan and Bella, the ruler of Kalat which had enjoyed an autonomous status under the British since 1939 was not happy over the joining of Pakistan in 1948 and rather wanted an autonomous status. He declared independence on 15 August, 1947, one day after the independence of Pakistan and was vocal in continuation of his autonomous status. On April 1, 1948, the Pakistan army mobilized force against him and forced the Khan to sign an instrument of accession. Later on, it was shown that Kalat State opted for the accession with Pakistan. This led Khan's brother Prince Aga Karim, the father of present provincial minister Parveen Magsi, in retaliation against the government and moved to Afghanistan along his men. This was the first insurgency known as 1948 Insurgency led by Prince Karim which lasted for shorter period. He was supported by his armed tribesmen and vowed to

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armed struggle against the Pakistan government until his arrest by intrigues. He was sentenced to rigorous life-imprisonment and was in jail for more than ten years.

The situation in Kalat subsided after the arrest of Aga Karim and restoration of some privileges to Khan of Kalat (Ahmed Yar Khan) until 1955 when Balochistan was merged into One Unit scheme. The Khan resisted the merging and defied the federal government on the ground that Balochistan be given a separate province status with his state status being autonomous. His defiance over the next two years deteriorated into more noncooperation until October 1958 the huge troops of army raided his palace and arrested him.

The third insurgency resulted in Marri-Bugti areas in 1973-75 mostly due to the political situation after Z. A. Bhutto dissolved Balochistan coalition government under Ataullah Mengal and put all the leaders in jail under Hyderabad conspiracy. The Marri insurgency was the biggest and severe of all which also involved huge casualties on both sides. Three armed divisions were alert and involved including regular actions by the Special Groups Forces. Majority of the Marri tribesmen fled to Afghanistan and remained there until 1992. Balochistan was raised to province status in 1970 by an ordinance issued by the Yahya Khan regime but not sufficient development was made after.

The major remedy of Balochistan is the pace of development. Quaid-e-Azam in 1929 in his famous Fourteen Points raised a demand for a province status and reforms. On his death bed he requested his successors to help Balochistan in necessary reforms. In October 1950, the CAP appointed a Balochistan Reforms Committee to recommend administrative and constitutional changes in Balochistan keeping in view its political, social and economic conditions. It recommended a status of province for Balochistan, with a 32-member unicameral legislature and without disturbing the tribal sardari system. The CAP recommendations were to be implemented but they were not.

Balochistan is sparsely populated with a huge area

comprising 43% of the country. It is the sole responsibility of the government to develop the road infra-structure all over the province for the establishment of garrisons, at present the government has brought development in the area.

Nonetheless, the pace of development in Balochistan has been very slow. The influence in Baloch/Brauhi areas is very little. The infra-structure, nonetheless, governs the little incentive. Having travelled in Balochistan one can realize that the government can easily raise the socio-economic status of the province by establishing roads links under the development project, but our rulers are giving little incentive. For example, the Shikarpur port could have been developed for a natural port with 40 feet depth by the British port between 15 to 1911 century. The goods were transported to Kabul and Kandahar and Sindh, but after the British rule in Balochistan deliberately wanted to curtail the port was rather discouraged. Gadanico was a modern port or Gwadar and Balochistan's independence, but our rulers, majoring in the crisis of legitimacy, did not change their priorities. Gwadar is a port which will change the socio-economic status of the province. Many external factors, including the world economy, do not want the success of the port and free port statues.

The pace of development in Balochistan is against parochial tribalism. The population in Balochistan is divided into tribes with strong tribalism. The only province in Pakistan where tribalism prevails: Local and Dynastic. One who belongs to indigenous tribes and one who have migrated. The effect of the 1978 Revolution and counterrevolution as the holy Jihad, resulted in huge casualties mostly Pashtun and Tajiks. The sudden increase of the indigenous tribes there it caused many problems for the area. The Baloch/Brauhi felt it an infringement of their economic rights. Afghan refugees, majoring in established petty and medium trading business appear the largest compared to Baloch, Brauhi and Pashtuns. The voting bank of National groups traditionally rooted in the favour of religious ones since 1992 elections.

Balochistan is not a cockpit or a hotbed of insurgencies as it is often mis-believed. The innocent and peace-loving about the historians said that they can be expected. A change in tribal society through attraction and development force or garrisons alone. Balochistan which can attract masses through major one is the construction of

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The Treaty of Gandamak was very instrumental in the cession of a large number of areas from Afghanistan to British India facilitating the ground work for the Durand Line drawn in 1892 between the British and Abdur Rehman Khan. Under the treaty, many areas were ceded for 100 years, a disillusion about the British policy of Durand Line until 1992. The British raised roads and built roads and railways network for the promotion of their Forward Policy in Balochistan and not for general welfare, nonetheless, the development of the areas, mostly comprising Native areas, are more developed than Native Balochistan and leased areas; the leased areas were more developed than Native ones. Upon the merger of all Native States into one single province, the province was administratively divided into two divisions, Kalat and Quetta. The Kalat division comprised areas actually called Native Balochistan and Quetta division which fell under the British Balochistan. The leased areas merged into the Kalat division.

The rulers of Kharan and Bella, the ruler of which had enjoyed an autonomous status under British since 1939 was not happy over the status of Pakistan in 1948 and rather wanted an autonomous status. He declared independence on 15 March 1947, one day after the independence of Pakistan and was vocal in continuation of his autonomous status. On April 1, 1948, the Pakistan army sent force against him and forced the Khan to sign an instrument of accession. Later on, it was decided that Kalat State opted for the accession with Pakistan. This led Khan's brother Prince Aga Karim, then Minister of present provincial minister Parveen, in retaliation against the government and to Afghanistan along his men. This was the insurgency known as 1948 Insurgency led by Prince Karim which lasted for shorter period. He was killed by his armed tribesmen and vowed to

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The major remedy of Balochistan is the pace of development. Quaid-e-Azam in 1929 in his famous Fourteen Points raised a demand for a province status and reforms. On his death bed he requested his successors to help Balochistan in necessary reforms. In October 1950, the CAP appointed a Balochistan Reforms Committee to recommend administrative and constitutional changes in Balochistan keeping in view its political, social and economic conditions. It recommended a status of province for Balochistan, with a 32-member unicameral legislature and without disturbing the tribal sardari system. The CAP recommendations were to be implemented but they were not.

Balochistan is sparsely populated with a huge area

comprising 43% of the country. It should have been the sole responsibility of the government to establish road infra-structure all over the province. The establishment of garrisons, at present resisted in large, has brought development in the area.

Nonetheless, the pace of development in Balochistan has been very slow. The Sardars with influence in Baloch/Brauh areas without roads/infra-structure, nonetheless, government has shown little incentive. Having travelled in each corner of Balochistan one can realize that government could easily raise the socio-economic status of the province by establishing roads links under urgent and crash development project, but our ruling masters showed little incentive. For example, the shores of Balochistan could have been developed long ago. Gadani, a natural port with 40 feet depth had been a famous port between 15 to 1911 century from where goods were transported to Kabul and lower Balochistan and Sindh, but after the British occupation which deliberately wanted to curtail progress in the area it was rather discouraged. Gadani could easily be raised to a modern port or Gwadar and Jiwni after independence, but our rulers, majority of whom suffering from the crisis of legitimacy, have failed to identify their priorities. Gwadar is a megalomaniac project which will change the socio-economic status of the area. Many external factors, including Iran and UAE, does not want the success of the port as it will delimit their free port statuses.

The pace of development in Balochistan can uplift the trends against parochial tribalism/regionalism. The population in Balochistan is highly ethnic divided into tribes with strong tribal feeling. Balochistan is the only province in Pakistan where two kinds of citizenship prevail: Local and Domicile. Local is the one who belongs to indigenous tribes, and the domicile who have migrated. The effects of Afghan (Saur) Revolution in 1978 and counterrevolution, branded as the holy Jihad, resulted in huge influx of refugees, mostly Pashtun and Tajiks/Hazaras where have suddenly increased the indigenous population of the tribes there it caused many socio-economic problems for the area. The Baloch/Brauh tribesmen have felt it an infringement of their economic and political rights. Afghan refugees, majority of them having established petty and medium transport and restaurant business appear the largest population chunk, compared to Baloch, Brauhi and indigenous Pashtuns. The voting bank of Nationalists political groups traditionally rooted in these belts drifted in favour of religious ones since 1985, particularly in 2002 elections.

Balochistan is not a cockpit or the land of insurgencies as it is often mis-believed. The people in large are innocent and peace-loving about whom the British historians said that they can be easily won by paying respect. A change in tribal societies can better come through attraction and development and not by force or garrisons alone. Balochistan needs a change which can attract masses through development, the major one is the construction of road network.

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