

Centre-Province Relations in Pakistan: A Case Study of Balochistan 1947-2008

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ABSTRACT

Pakistan, since its inception, experienced a political system with massive challenges, and among them the foremost was the Centre's response to the federating units, particularly in the case of Balochistan. Despite being the largest one geographically, it is least developed keeping in view the human resources. It remained under disturbance and discontentment by the nationalist and federal forces in the name of autonomy, national rights, identity, federation etc. The region has witnessed many insurgencies from 1947 till date resulting in chaos, anarchy, killings, political assassinations, disturbances; a massive loss to the property and human population. Major of these insurgencies was led in the name of nationalism by Prince Abdul Karim, Nauroz Khan, Nawab Khair Bux Marri (1973-75) Nawab Akbar Bugti (2005-2006). One of the astonishing facts is that these leaders were of national stature and remained part of the participatory process i.e. Both Nawab Khair Bux and Nawab Bugti remained the elected members of the parliament and Nawab Bugti even remained Governor (a representative of the Centre) and Chief Minister. Even then they were dealt

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with an iron hand by the Centre. Considering these realities, there is a dire need to build trust and understanding between the Centre and the province to promote peace, tranquility and development in the region.

Introduction

Pakistan was established as a federal democratic state in August 1947 and the federal model, as envisaged in the Government of India Act, 1935 was adopted with certain changes.¹ The adoption of federal system in Pakistan was the outcome of the decision on the part of its leadership. The Muslim League (the founder political party of Pakistan) supported provincial autonomy and federalism in the pre-independence period as a vehicle for the protection and advancement of the Muslim interest in the British India. Later, when the Muslim League demanded the establishment of a separate homeland for the Muslims of India, it envisaged the federal system for the new State.² Thus, the existence of a highly centralized federal system was the product of its colonial history which continued in the post-independence period.

Unlike India, which became a Republic in the early years of its independence, Pakistan was hardly able to frame the constitution within eight years of its existence; thus creating a political vacuum which resulted in political instability. After the sad demise of Jinnah, the country went to the leaders who made mockery of democracy. Factionalism, regionalism and opportunism characterised the politics of Pakistan.³ Ian Talbot remarks that in Pakistan personalities count more than ideologies or party institutionalization.⁴

1 Hamid Khan, *Constitutional and Political History of Pakistan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 50.

2 Khan, *Constitutional and Political History of Pakistan*, 49-55.

3 Hassan Askari Rizvi, *The Military & Politics in Pakistan: 1947-86* (Lahore: Progressive Publishers, 1986), 2.

4 Ian Talbot, *Pakistan: A Modern History* (Lahore: Vanguard Books, 1999), 2.

As the people of Balochistan remained busy in their struggle for identity since independence, the Baloch leaders also became conscious about their survival. They were not willing to lose their identity, rather wanted to identify themselves with the Baloch confederacy of Kalat.⁵ Consequently, they faced reaction from the Center and in this tussle, it badly affected the amelioration and socio-economic development of the province.

Annexation of Kalat State to Pakistan

The Kalat State enjoyed an independent status before and after the creation.⁶ Kalat was one of the princely states administered by the British. There is no point in discussing extensively about the merger of Kalat state to Pakistan because the main concern of this paper is to bring into focus the center-province relations keeping in view all these political developments over the years. In 1947, when the independence struggle was at its peak, and the prospect of the British withdrawal was drawing closer, the National Party and other nationalist organisations joined the Khan of Kalat to demand independence for Balochistan.⁷

The Khan of Kalat made a strong legal case for the independence. He argued that Kalat, like Nepal, enjoyed a legal status based on direct treaty relations with Whitehall and was not bound to deal with the British Raj Government at Delhi as was the case with other princely and native states of subcontinent.⁸ He also invoked the treaty of 1876, according to which the British were committed to respect the independence of Kalat and protect the territory from external aggression. The Khan of Kalat was compelled to annex

5 Jan Mahmad, *Essays on Baloch National struggle in Pakistan Emergence Dimensions, Repercussions* (Quetta: Gosha-e-Adab, 1989), 170.

6 Inayatullah, *The Problem of Greater Balochistan: A Study of Baloch Nationalism* (Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden, 1987), 352.

7 Selig S. Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow: Balouch Nationalism and Soviet Temptations* (New York: USA, 1981), 24-25. See also, Riccardo Redaelli, *The Father's Bow: The Khanate of Kalat and British India (19th-20th Century)* (Firenze: Il Maestrato, 1997), 137-174.

8 Inayatullah, *The Problem of Greater Blochistan*, 174-175.

Kalat with Pakistan, and without obtaining the formal sanction from the tribal Sardar, the Khan signed the merger document as the 'Khan-e-Azam' on March 30, 1948.⁹ This act has been defined by the Khan himself in the following words:

The matter of signing the merger documents was also one of those dictates of history which a ruler must always respect for the good of futurity. Had I not taken the immediate step of signing Kalat's merger, the position of Pakistan would definitely have gone worse. The British Agent to the Governor-General could have played havoc by leading Pakistan into a fratricide war against the Baluches. The army of Afghanistan could have easily entered into Balochistan. India, too, could have aggravated the situation by sending her naval warships to the Makran sea-coast, obviously to help the Baluches, but in reality, this would have provided the best pretext for Russia to advance through Afghanistan and capture the ports of Makran sea-coast.¹⁰

It is to mention here that the Baloch nationalists were against this idea. This can be visualized from the speech of Mir Ghous Bakhsh Bizenjo, then an assembly member from the majority party in the Diwan meeting of December 1947 that:

We have distinct culture like Afghanistan and Iran, and if the mere fact that we are Muslims require us to amalgamate with Pakistan, then Afghanistan and Iran should also be amalgamated with Pakistan. They say we Baloch cannot defend ourselves in the atomic age. Well, are Afghanistan, Iran and even Pakistan capable of defending themselves against the superpowers? If we cannot defend ourselves, a lot of other cannot do so either.¹¹

While rejecting the merger proposal, Bizenjo continues, "This mean signing the death-warrant for 15 million Baloch in Asia. We cannot be guilty of this major crime to humiliate the Baloch nation to merger with a non-Baloch nation."¹²

9 Mir Ahmad Yar Khan Baluch, *Inside Balochistan* (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1975), 158.

10 Baluch, *Inside Balochistan*, 162.

11 Malik Allah Bakhsh, *Baluch Quam ke Tarikh ke Chand Pareshan Daftar Auraq* [Urdu: A Few Disturbing Pages of the History of Baloch Nation] (Quetta: Islamiyah Press 1957), 43.

12 Bakhsh, *Baluch Quam ke Tarikh ke Chand Pareshan Daftar Auraq*, 43.

Lawrence Ziring is of the opinion that the Baloch leaders did not enter into the arrangement to join Pakistan willingly. The government of Pakistan was threatening to use force to achieve the accession of the country. The Baloch nationalists were ill-prepared to ignore this fact.¹³

A fortnight after the merger, on April 15, 1948, a political Agent, an officer subordinate to the Agent to the Governor General was appointed to look after the administration of the state, and with this the legal authority of the Khan as 'Khan-e-Azam' came to an end.¹⁴ About the Khans of Kalat, the Baloch author Sardar Khan wrote, "Nasir I united all. Nasir II endeavored to maintain it. Khudadad Khan fought for the whole of his life to organize a government. Mahmud Khan II prepared the coffin for the state and Ahmad Yar, the present Khan, buried all, and the glory and vanity of his line."¹⁵

The First Resistance Movement in Balochistan

Immediately after Kalat's merger, the resistance started in Balochistan. It resulted into unrest and discontentment.¹⁶ The National Party rejected accession and started a mass agitation. Its leaders, Mir Ghous Bakhsh Bizenjo, Mir Abdul Aziz Kurd and others were arrested.¹⁷ Under these circumstances, on April 15 1948, Agha Abdul Karim, brother of the Khan of Kalat, Mir Ahmad Yar Khan started an armed movement in the Jhalawan area backed by some nationalist leaders and with the secret approval of the Khan.¹⁸ Agha Abdul Karim, who served as the Governor of Markran province, invited the leading members of the nationalist

13 Lawrence Ziring, *Pakistan: The Enigma of Political development* (Kent: Dawson & Sons Ltd, 1980), 160.

14 Baluch, *Inside Balochistan*, 164.

15 Muhammad Sardar Khan Baluch, *History of Baluch Race and Baluchistan* (Karachi: Printed at Process Pakistan, 1958), 125-26.

16 Gul Khan Nasir, *Tarikh-e-Balochistan* [Urdu: History of Balochistan], Vol II (Quetta: Rubi Publishers 1986), 525-26.

17 Nasir, *Tarikh-e-Balochistan*, 522.

18 Ahmad Saleem, "Balochistan: In the Grips of the Army," *Frontier Post* (Peshawar), April 26, 1991. For further details see, Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow*, 26.

parties form the Kalat State National Party and the Baloch League to join him in the struggle against Pakistan. Harrison narrates, "The showdown between Kalat and Pakistan came in April 1948, when the Pakistan army ordered its Garrison Commander in Baluchistan to march on Kalat and arrest the Khan unless he signed the agreement of accession."¹⁹

The nationalist leaders' opinion was divided over the issue. Some of them like Muhammad Hussain Anka a prominent journalist, Malik Saeed Dehwar, the secretary general of the National Party, Abdul Wahid Kurd, Qadir Bakhsh Nizamani and some other activists wanted an armed struggle in the form of guerilla war while Abdul Aziz Kurd, Ghous Bakhsh Bizenjo and Gul Khan Nasir along with some other leaders did not support the idea due to lack of preparation and internal and external support.²⁰

After brief skirmishes with Pakistan Army, on May 16, 1948, Agha Abdul Karim and Baloch warriors crossed the border into Afghanistan and erected their camp at Karez Nazar Mohammad Khan situated at no man's land known as Sarlat in search of help. Some of the National Party members along with a few Baloch individuals from Sindh and Derajat (the combination of many Deras means dwellings and places) also joined the Prince.²¹

In Afghanistan, the Baloch focused on the following objectives:

1. To invite the Baloch chiefs of eastern and western Balochistan to join the struggle.
2. To launch a propaganda campaign in Balochistan to create unrest, disturbances, and revolt as well as the enlistment of a national liberation force.

19 Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow*, 25.

20 M. M. S. Dehwar, *Contemporary History of Balochistan* (Quetta: Third World Publication, 1994), 323.

21 Shah Mohammad Marri, *Baloch Quam, Qadim Ahad se Asar-e-Haazir tak* [Urdu: Baloch Nation: From Ancient Times to the Contemporary World] (Lahore: takhliqat, 2000), 307.

3. To seek international support particularly from Afghanistan and the Soviet Union.²²

Both religious and the cultural fronts carried out the propaganda campaign. On the one hand, the party distributed a series of pamphlets all over Balochistan, and on the other the Baloch nationalist Maulvis including Maulavi Nazeer Hussain, Maulvi Arz Muhammad, Maulvi Muhammad Umar, Maulvi Muhammad Afzal and a few others issued the fatwa of Jihad against Pakistan and demanded that the Baloch people should join national movement.²³ In fatwa, they also demanded that the government servants and military personnel of Pakistan particularly the soldiers should engage in Jihad against the non-Islamic government of Pakistan.²⁴

The Prince, who was serving as the supreme commander of the Baloch Mujahideen, issued an appeal for a major recruitment. A person recruiting 100 men was offered the rank of a Major and a person recruiting 50 men was offered the rank of Captain. There was also a secret unit Janbaz (volunteers to kill all traitors) and the headquarters of the agency known as Bab-i-Aali was headed by the Prince himself.²⁵

It must also be noted that the Kabul-Karachi relations had been strained over Pakhtunistan issue. Afghanistan was a vassal state until the Baloch-Afghan war in 1758, when an agreement of noninterference was signed between the parties after the rise of Ahmed Shah. In the 19th Century, the Afghan rulers including Shah Shuja and Amir Abdur Rehman desired to occupy Balochistan. Kabul was historically claiming the area which formed the Balochistan province but Prince Karim did not appreciate it. Therefore, the idea of an

22 Baloch, *The Problem of Greater Balochistan*, 193.

23 K. B. Nizamani, *Kaumi Azadi Ki Council Ka Qeyam* [Urdu: The Establishment of Council for National Freedom] (London: in People's Front, 1980), 4.

24 Nizamani, *Kaumi Azadi Ki Council Ka Qeyam*.

25 Nizamani, *Kaumi Azadi Ki Council Ka Qeyam*.

independent Balochistan was contradictory to the Afghans because they considered Balochistan as the part of Afghanistan.²⁶ Before the annexation of Kalat State of Pakistan, the All India Radio also announced that the Baloch Khanate had offered and requested accession to India.²⁷ The purpose of Indian propaganda was to widen the gulf of hatred between Balochistan and Pakistan.²⁸

The Afghans did not prove to be good hosts for the Baloch nationalist. Prince Karim was asked by the Afghan government to leave. The disappointed Prince Karim returned back to Balochistan on July, 8, 1948. After a minor clash with Pakistan army near Harboi, the Prince along with his 100 men was arrested. On November 27, 1948, he was tried by the special Jirga at Mach Jail and was given 10 years imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 5000. Muhammad Hussain Anka, a poet, intellectual and a colleague of Prince, was also put behind the bars for 10 years.²⁹

The State of Kalat with its weak socio-economic and political structure could not stand the test of time. In April 1952, the Pakistan government appointed a civil servant, Agha Abdul Hamid as its Prime Minister. In April 1953, Governor General Ghulam Muhammad dismissed Nazim-ud-Din's ministry immediately after the few days when the budget was passed in the National Assembly. Muhammad Ali (Bogra) who was serving as the Ambassador of Pakistan in the United States was called back to join the office of the Prime Minister. Thus, in the early June 1954, the Pakistan States Ministry dismissed the Balochistan State Union's Assembly and a year later the Union was also dissolved and then merged into West Pakistan in 1955 by the One Unit Scheme.

26 Inayatullah Balcoh, *The Baluch Question in Pakistan and the Right of Self Determination* (London: Hamburg Publishers, 1983), 200.

27 Baluch, *Inside Balochistan*, 159.

28 Baluch, *Inside Balochistan*.

29 Nasir, *Tarikh-e-Balochistan*, 526.

One Unit and Balochistan

On September 30, 1955, the Government of Pakistan decided to amalgamate the four ethnically distinct regions of Balochistan, Punjab, Sindh and NWFP into a single political unit known as One Unit.³⁰ The One Unit bill was intended to enable the whole of West Pakistan to develop and progress on a uniform pattern.³¹ The purpose of this plan was to counter the numerical majority of the Eastern Wing in order to ensure Punjabi's control of the government as well as to prevent the growing political alliance and cooperation between the non-Punjabi nationalities of West Pakistan with the East Bengalis.³²

The One Unit scheme brought a sense of unity among the nationalist parties of West Pakistan. They became more sensitive to their own culture and identity. Just like Muslim League mobilized the people and demanded a separate homeland for the Muslim of the subcontinent, Sindhi, Balochis and Pathans considered their identity and culture in jeopardy.³³

As discussed earlier, Agha Abdul Karim and Muhammad Hussain Anka were behind the bars since 1948. They were released after completing their term of imprisonment in 1955. They called a meeting of their followers at Karachi which resulted into the establishment of a political party named as Ustaman Gall (People's Party). Prince Abdul Karim became the president while Muhammad Hussain Anka was its general secretary. The party was similar to Kalat State National Party (KSNP), but under the changing circumstances its goal was to create a separate province for

30 Ishtiaq Ahmad, *State, Nation and Ethnicity in Contemporary South Asia* (London: Pinter, 1996), 192.

31 Ayub Khan, *Friends not Masters* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1967), 54.

32 Harrison, *In Afghanistan, Shadow*, 27. See also, Inayatullah Baloch, "Afghanistan, Pashtunistan-Balochistan," *Auseen Politic*, no 3 (1980): 295.

33 Lawrence Ziring, *The Sub-Continent in World Politics* (New York & London: Praeger Publishers, 1978), 89.

the Baloch people on the basis of ethnicity, geography, culture and language.³⁴

The end of Balochistan states union created confusions among the Baloch people. They raised their voice against the decision. Though the protests were on legal grounds but the government presented a "New Instrument of Accession". The Khan of Kalat was again pressurised by the Center and had to express his support for the merger plan that was announced by November, 1954. But officially the Khan's support for the merger plan was announced by the Government on January 3, 1955.³⁵

On November 30, 1956, six nationalist political parties joined hands, in a meeting at Lahore and formed a new political party, named as Pakistan National Party. It included Ustaman Gall (People's Party) from Balochistan, the Azad Pakistan Party of Punjab, Khudai Khidmatgar (Red Shirts) of Abdul Ghaffar Khan from NWFP, G. M. Syed's Awami Party from Sindh, Sindh Hari Committee of Haydar Bakhsh Khan Jatoi and the Wror Pashtun of Abdul Samad Khan Achakzai. The main objective of the party was to oppose the One Unit plan because in party's view the plan denied the constitutional, national and economic rights of the smaller provinces. The Pakistan National Party demanded the dissolution of West Pakistan province and grant provincial autonomy to the smaller provinces. In 1957, Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani of the East Pakistan Awami League also joined the new party and the it was renamed as National Awami Party (NAP).³⁶

The NAP discussed the following points in its manifesto:

1. Defense of the sovereignty, integrity and independence of Pakistan.

34 Gul Khan Nasir, *Balochistan: Kadim aur Jadid Tarikh ke Roshani men* [Urdu: Balochistan: In the light of Ancient and Modern History] (Quetta: Nisa Traders.1982), 337-38.

35 Zering' *The Subcontinent in World Politics*, 338.

36 Nasir, *Balochistan Kadim aur Jadid Tarikh ki Roshani men*, 339.

2. Non-aligned independent foreign policy.
3. Ending of exploitation of Pakistan externally and its people internally.
4. Abolition of One Unit and reorganization of provinces on linguistic basis.
5. Right of vote to every adult citizen.³⁷

The NAP's demand of provincial autonomy influenced the Baloch nationalists and the opposition grew stronger to seek their rights. The political conditions in Pakistan were not satisfactory. After the sad and untimely death of the founder of Pakistan and the assassination of Liaqat Ali Khan the leaders wrestled over power. The example of political instability can be witnessed from the fact that Pakistan had seven prime ministers during 1947-58 (six during 1951-58), but one C-in-C, General Ayub Khan, who got two extensions. The leadership of the government looked towards the military for support.³⁸

In 1957, when the opposition of One Unit was at its peak, the Khan of Kalat went abroad for medical treatment. He went to USA and London where he met Lord Macnair, and discussed Kalat's absorption in One Unit. Lord Macnair considered it an illegal act. On his return to Pakistan, Khan brought the report of Lord Macnair and informed the Sardars about his legal opinion. The Sardars decided to oppose the government³⁹

In the first week of October 1958, the Muslim League threatened to launch a civil disobedience movement.⁴⁰ On October 6, 1958, two events took place: On the one hand the Muslim League organised such a big demonstration in Karachi on the arrival of its president that the police had to

37 Nasir, *Balochistan Kadim aur Jadid Tarikh ki Roshani men*, 339.

38 Hasan Askari Rizvi, *The Military & Politics in Pakistan 1947-86* (Lahore: Progressive Publishers, 1986), 61-62.

39 Baluch, *Inside Balochistan*, 179-180.

40 *Dawn*, October 5, 1958.

use tear gas to disperse the crowd; while on the other, the Khan of Kalat announced the secession of Kalat from Pakistan keeping in view the political confusion in the country and refused to visit Karachi on the invitation of the president to discuss the constitutional position of Kalat. He removed the Pakistan Flag from the Mirri Fort (Kalat) and hoisted his old Kalat State Flag. The army moved to Kalat and arrested the Khan of Kalat.⁴¹

The First Military Rule in Pakistan

On the night of October 7, 1958, President Iskandar Mirza abrogated the constitution, the central and provincial assemblies were dissolved, the cabinets were dismissed, political parties were banned and Ayub Khan was appointed Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and Martial Law was declared throughout Pakistan. He addressed the nation and said:

You should have heard by now the declaration by the president abrogating the constitution and imposing Martial Law throughout Pakistan. He has appointed me as the Chief Martial Law administrator and all the armed forces of Pakistan including the civil armed forces have been put under my command. This is a drastic and extreme step taken with great reluctance, but with the fullest conviction that there was no alternative to it except the disintegration and complete ruination of the country. History would never have forgiven us if the present chaotic conditions were allowed to go any further.⁴²

Twenty days later, on October 27, 1958, President Iskandar Mirza was forced to resign. He was flown to London. Ayub Khan took over as the President and Chief Martial Law Administrator.

Centre's Response to the Resistance Movement in Balochistan

The One Unit scheme and the arrest of Khan gave rise to the resistance movement in Balochistan. The tribal chief of Jhalawan, Nawab Nauroz Khan along with his companions

41 *The Pakistan Times*, 5th and 7th October 1958. See also, Baluch, *Inside Balochistan*, 179-183.

42 *General Ayub's Message to the Nation*, October 8, 1958.

decided to challenge the authority of the Government.⁴³ While patrolling in the Jhalawan district, the army instructed the tribesmen to turn in their weapons which enraged the tribesmen. The Baloch regard the possession of guns as their birthright. This resulted in numerous skirmishes and the army deployed tanks and artillery throughout the district blocking the passes leading from Jhalawan to neighboring Sarawan. The serious battle started on October 10, 1958 near Wadh.⁴⁴ The 90 years old Nawab retired to the interior of the Mir Ghat Mountains. He placed his demands before the Government which included:

1. To release the Khan with due honor and respect.
2. To abandon One Unit plan.

He threatened the government that if these demands were not fulfilled, they were ready for all kind of sacrifice.⁴⁵ Representatives of the army and the guerillas met in early 1960 to discuss peace terms but no agreement was reached. Nauroz Khan and his men agreed to lay down their arms in return for the withdrawal of One Unit plan and promise of safe conduct and amnesty. The Nawab's house was bombarded and razed to the ground, his property was confiscated but he possessed a rock like determination.⁴⁶

Due to his old age, the Nawab Nauroz Khan was given life imprisonment while his sons and others were tried and hanged to death in July 1960. When they went to the gallows they cried "Long Live Balochistan". One of them had tied the copy of the Holy Quran around his neck and shouted that if was hanged, the Quran must also be hanged. Nauroz Khan later died in Kohlu prison in 1964. They all were considered as the martyrs of Baloch cause.⁴⁷

43 Baluch, *Inside Balochistan*, 186.

44 Baluch, *Inside Balochistan*, 186.

45 Baluch, *Inside Balochistan*, 186. See also, Sherbaz Khan Mazari, *A Journey to Disillusionment* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1999), 85.

46 Baluch, *Inside Balochistan*, 186.

47 Selig Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow*, 29.

Ayub Khan's Treatment with the Baloch Leaders

The nationalist leaders continued their struggle; demanding the withdrawal of One Unit. Nawab Akbar Bugti had been the Minister of State for Defense in the short-lived Feroz Khan Cabinet. After the 1958 *coup*, his ministerial days came to end. Now he was the first tribal chief to be tried under Martial Law. He was accused of murdering Sardar Haibat Khan Bugti, Ahmad Nawaz Bugti's father-in-law, uncle to Nawab Akbar Khan's own wife and the brother of Mir Ghulam Haider.⁴⁸

After stepping down from office, while on his way from Karachi to Quetta he was stopped at a military check post near Quetta. This enraged the Nawab and was informed that Haibat Khan is accosting the government against him. A few days later in October 1959, Haibat Khan's dead body was found in Karez at Quetta. The government accused Nawab Bugti of murder. Nawab and his servant Arshoo were tried by military court. In late December, Akber Bugti was sentenced to death and Arshoo Khan life imprisonment. With Bhutto's help, Nawab Bugti was released but he continued to agitate the Ayub Khan government.⁴⁹

Hours after Bugti's arrest, in the afternoon of the same day Ataullah Mengal delivered a strong speech against the government at Kakri Ground in the Lyari area of Karachi. A week later, Mengal was arrested for making Kakri ground speech. He was also deposed as Sardar and was replaced by his aged relative Karam Khan Mengal. In November 1962, the government's newly appointed Sardar of Mengal tribe was found assassinated. Ataullah Mengal and his aged father were arrested on the murder charges.⁵⁰

48 Sylvia A. Matheson, *The Tigers of Balochistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1967), 184.

49 Mazari, *A Journey to Disillusionment*, 87.

50 Mazari, *A Journey to Disillusionment*, 102-03.

In July 1963, Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri was arrested and charged for promoting violence. In 1965, he was deprived of ruling powers. The government appointed his uncle Doda Khan in Khair Bux's place. While driving in a jeep, the firing broke up on the convoy. Doda was in the leading jeep. The officials in the rear jeeps took a rapid turn and escaped, but Doda Khan ordered his drivers to stop; he stood up on the jeep and was riddled with bullets by the tribesmen.⁵¹

These events posed a serious picture and left a message for Ayub Khan that the new men are not acceptable to the people of the tribes. The resistance continued till Yahya Khan's decision to break up One Unit and by declaring elections in Pakistan. Bhutto came into power and his policies also resulted in a strong opposition. The country witnessed huge demonstration by the opposition parties in order to pressurise the government. The dismissal of the elected government in Balochistan created a sense of confusion, discontentment and restlessness in the country.

The Democratic Era and Balochistan

The tragic death of General Zia-ul-Haq brought back the era of participatory politics. On August 17, the same afternoon Zia died, Ghulam Ishaq Khan, the Chairman of the Senate, was sworn in as the President of Pakistan. The general elections were held on the schedule announced by General Zia-ul-Haq. The Pakistan People's Party formed the government despite the opposition of IJI.⁵² The Benazir Bhutto's government was dismissed within two years and the country witnessed the period of musical chairs till 1999.

As far the Balochistan issue is concerned, throughout the 1990s, ethnic tensions had greatly diminished. The nationalist forces appeared stronger, and in the 1990 elections, their turnout was reached to more than 51 percent

51 Matheson, *The Tigers of Balochistan*, 195-196.

52 Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, "Pakistan People's Party: The Twin Legacies of Socialism and Dynastic Rule" in *Political Parties of South Asia*, ed., Subrata K. Mitra, Mike Euskat Clemens Spies (London: Praeger, 2004), 165.

and the Baloch nationalist parties dominated the elections again in 1997 and formed the government. The Baloch leaders were also represented in the mainstream Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N).⁵³ During this time, the Centre's relations with the province of Balochistan remained tense occasionally but on a whole, the situation was peaceful. With the changing political circumstances, General Pervez Musharraf announced elections in 2002, and helped the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) coalition of religious Islamic parties to gain power in Balochistan. The eligibility criteria for candidates were changed; requiring university degree to contest polls. Some prominent nationalist leaders, who enjoyed high political offices without university degrees (including Akbar Bugti) were prevented from running, giving significant advantage to the MMA.⁵⁴

The Baloch and Pashtun nationalist parties found themselves fundamentally affected. A Baloch, Jam Muhammad Yousaf from Lasbela, was appointed Chief Minister who had little control over his own cabinet, which was dominated by the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Islam. Lacking a voice in their own province, Baloch nationalists rejected the military's electoral, political and constitutional manipulation, and thus another spell of conflict ensued.⁵⁵

Military Operation and the Assassination of Nawab Akbar Bugti

Relations between the military government and the province had been tense for months due to grievances related to provincial sovereignty, the allocation of resources, interprovincial migrations and the protection of local language and culture. These claims were not new. The tension was, however, particularly intense in the Bugti area due to its rich natural gas resources and the determination of

53 Talbot, *Pakistan: A Modern History*, 356-358.

54 *Dawn*, October 10-11, 2002.

55 *Express Tribune*, September 22, 2011.

Akbar Bugti to get for his tribe a greater share of the royalties generated by their exploitation. The federal government was not willing to meet these demands, and the situation went to a point of no return. The army intervened in Dera Bugti, the epicenter of the rebellion, leading to significant population displacements. Extra-judicial killings, torture, and illegal arrests by the security forces became the norm. Nawab Bugti along with his tribesmen went to the mountains to fight the forces which resulted in his assassination on August 26, 2006.⁵⁶ As Musharraf declared Bugti's death as a decisive victory, it only intensified the conflict. With his death, the province remained in trouble with lawlessness on the rise, and in protest, the nationalist parties decided to boycott the elections of 2008. After the elections, Nawab Aslam Raisani became the Chief Minister. The parties in assembly close to the establishment were able to be the part of government. All members of the provincial assembly except one were made ministers; dismantling the efforts by federal government to end the crisis. The PPP-led government made certain efforts to calm tensions within the region by announcing various reforms. These reforms included Balochistan Package i.e., "the return of political exiles, the liberation of jailed Baloch political activists, the army's withdrawal from some key areas, a reform of the federal resources' allocation and greater provincial control of Balochistan's resources."⁵⁷ Despite all these efforts on the part of federal government, still there was a need to do more for the province to further cement the environment of peace and harmony in the region. The political dialogue and negotiations with the exiled Baloch leadership was imperative to build up trust to put the province on road to peace, development and prosperity.

56 Anwar Sajdi, *Dawn*, August 27, 2006. See also, Nawab Akbar Bugti, Qattal Kiyun Kiya Gia!

57 For a detailed analysis of the package, see the Aghaz-e-Huqooq-e-Balochistan Package: An Analysis, Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency, December 2009.

Conclusion

Since creation, Pakistan's political history remained in turmoil, tragedies, pain and agony. After the death of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the country faced many internal and external challenges. The menace of factionalism, regionalism and parochialism marred the political culture and stability of the country. The relations between the Centre and the provinces also required lot of introspection, particularly Balochistan, in order to eliminate the sense of alienation among the Baloch. After decades of broken promises, the trust deficit between the two is vast. It can only be bridged with concerted efforts on the part of all stakeholders; showing political acumen and rising above vested interests.

Balochistan has been Pakistan's energy basket for years, yet it is deprived of its fair share of resources. The political and economic stability cannot be ensured unless the province is treated with respect and dignity; considering it as an equal member of federation. Without granting political autonomy and economic freedom, the objective of harmony and goodwill cannot be achieved. Weapons will only add to miseries and breed hatred. The people of Balochistan have witnessed enough apologies, enough promises, enough excuses and enough sufferings. They now want a peaceful Balochistan – prospering and thriving with justice and fairplay.