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**Balochistan  
A Backgrounder**

*Priyashree Andley*



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Address:  
B 7/3 Lower Ground Floor  
Safdarjung Enclave  
New Delhi 110029  
INDIA

Tel: 91-11-4100 1900, 4165 2556, 4165 2557,  
4165 2558, 4165 2559

Fax: (91-11) 4165 2560  
Email: [officemail@ipcs.org](mailto:officemail@ipcs.org)  
Web: [www.ipcs.org](http://www.ipcs.org)

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## BALUCHISTAN: A BACKGROUNDER

**Priyashree Andley**

Research Officer, IPCS

Balochistan forms 44 percent of Pakistan's geographical territory with a 770 km long coastline and straddles three countries (Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan).<sup>1</sup> It is sparsely populated; according to the 1998 census, the ethnic make-up of the province include 54.7 percent Baloch tribes and 29 percent Pashtun tribes. Economically, its vast rangelands, large numbers of livestock, rich mineral and gas deposits, and good quality deciduous fruits are of significant value. However, there is relatively less industrialization in the province, it remains poverty stricken, underdeveloped and receives a small share of the revenue it generates.

### **I BALUCH INSURGENCIES**

The Baloch has a strong sense of cultural distinctiveness with their recorded folk literature dating back to tenth century, devoted to glories of Baloch homeland and victorious battles against the Persians, Arabs, Tartars and other invaders.<sup>2</sup> Baloch nationalism is based on secular principles, with tribal and clan loyalties playing a crucial role in determining identities. Islamabad's attempt to impose a 'national identity' upon the Balochis and, the long-standing resentment towards federal policies, were the main reasons for the four major insurgencies in 1948, 1958, 1963 and 1973.

Before colonial rule, Balochistan was a highly fragmented society. It was in the eighteenth century that Nasir Khan, the sixth Khan of Kalat, established a unified Baloch army of 25,000 men and organized the Baloch tribes under an agreed military and administrative system.

Kalat was the largest of the four princely states in Balochistan; the other three include Makran, Kharan and Las Bela. Under British rule a part of Balochistan was named 'British Balochistan', was centrally administered by British India.<sup>3</sup> The Khan's powers were reduced and he was forced to accept a contractual notion of sovereignty, according to which tribal chiefs were to accept his authority but could legally refute it in certain circumstances.

#### **1948**

When the British left the subcontinent, Mir Ahmed Yar Khan declared Kalat as an independent state, and both the houses of parliament in Kalat unanimously refused to merge with Pakistan. Subsequently, the Pakistan army's garrison in Balochistan was ordered to march on Kalat and arrest the Khan, following which Kalat was annexed. Nationalists rejected Khan's capitulation and Prince Karim, his brother, launched the first armed insurgency in 1948.<sup>4</sup> Jinnah decided to introduce a governor-general's council in Balochistan for governance and administration thereby laying the foundations for direct federal authority over the province. The insurgency continued till 1950 until the arrest of Prince Karim.

#### **1958**

In 1955, the "One Unit" scheme was introduced by the federal government. Under this scheme the four western provinces of Balochistan, Sindh, NWFP and Punjab were amalgamated into one. This attempt to strengthen national unity and end Baloch antagonisms was strongly condemned by the nationalist leaders.<sup>5</sup> By 1955,

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<sup>1</sup> Frédéric Grare, "The Resurgence of Baluch Nationalism", *South Asia Project, Pakistan Paper*, Number 65, January 2006, [http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/CP65\\_Grare.FINAL.pdf](http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/CP65_Grare.FINAL.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Selig S Harrison, "Nightmare in Baluchistan," *Foreign Policy*, Vol.32, Fall 1978, p.140

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<sup>3</sup> Selig S Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow: Baluch Nationalism and Soviet temptations* (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1981) p.16

<sup>4</sup> Owen Bennett Jones, *Pakistan: Eye of the storm* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002) p.133

<sup>5</sup> Lawrence Ziring, *Pakistan: At the crosscurrent of History* (Lahore: Vanguard Press, 2004) p.71

Prince Karim had completed his prison term and mobilized widespread demonstrations through tribal chiefs. He launched the People's Party, representing a new Baloch nationalism that cut across tribal and linguistic lines.

The Pakistan army moved in during October 1958, and arrested the Khan and his retainers, accusing them of secretly negotiating a rebellion with Afghanistan. The arrest sparked massive violence. The unrest continued when tribesmen refused to comply with the army's demand that weapons be handed over. A guerilla movement was organized under Nauroz Khan but died when he was arrested, and five of his men were hanged in July 1960, on charges of treason.<sup>6</sup>

### 1963

After 1959, the Pakistan army started building new garrisons at key points in Balochistan, triggering another guerilla movement. The armed Baloch revolt comprised of left leaning militants led by Sher Mohammad Marri. He set up a network of base camps spread from the *Mengal* tribal areas of Jhalawan in the south to the *Marri* and *Bugti* areas in the north. By July 1963, the guerrillas had established numerous base camps of varying size spreading over 45,000 square miles. The guerillas ambushed convoys and bombed trains; in retaliation, the army damaged acres of land owned by the *Marri* tribesmen. The sporadic fighting ended in 1969, when General Yahya Khan withdrew the "One Unit" plan and the Baloch agreed to a ceasefire.<sup>7</sup> In 1970, Balochistan was granted the status of a 'province'.

### 1973

In 1972, the People's Party and the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) based National Awami Party (NAP) allied with the Islamist Jamait-Ulema-i-Islam to oppose President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Having won the elections, the alliance sought to increase the representation of the ethnic Baloch in government, and demanded greater control over development and industrialization. Bhutto, representing the national ruling elite of Pakistan, resisted this regional elite. In 1973, Bhutto dismissed the Balochistan government on charges of treason

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<sup>6</sup> Selig S Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow*, pp.27-28

<sup>7</sup> "Pakistan: The Worsening Conflict in Balochistan," *International Crisis Group, Asia Report* No. 119, p.4

and Governor's rule was imposed in the province.

The dismissal of an elected provincial government led to the fourth insurgency.<sup>8</sup> Large numbers of *Marri* tribesmen and Baloch students fought against the government and attacked the Pakistani and American oil companies leading to the halting of drilling and survey operations. The Pakistani army deployed 80,000 soldiers, used helicopter gun ships provided by Iran and \$ 200 million as financial and emergency aid, to put down the insurgency that continued until 1977 in which more than 5,000 insurgents and 3,300 army men lost their lives.<sup>9</sup>

The rebels formed the Balochistan People's Liberation Front (BPLF), under Khair Bakhsh Marri, and raised the level of guerrilla warfare.<sup>10</sup> The BPLF manifesto stressed that it was 'not fighting a secessionist war for the Baloch alone, but a war of national liberation for all the nationalities of Pakistan'. For its members secession was unrealistic and greater autonomy was a better option. Mir Hazar Khan Marri led the Baloch liberation movement under the BPLF.

## II

### BALUCH GRIEVANCES

Baloch grievances are rooted in their denial to political rights, the exploitation of natural resources by the federal government and the fear of being swamped by the Punjabis and the army. They also resent their land being parceled out to outsiders and the impact of development projects in the province.

### Democracy

During his eleven years of military rule, General Zia-ul Haq intensified efforts to bribe and co-opt the Baloch elite. He succeeded in buying loyalties of the former Baloch Students Organization president, Khair Jan Baloch. His decision to turn Pakistan into a frontline state to help the US, to topple the regime in Afghanistan and eject the Soviet Army, created a corrupt

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<sup>8</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, *Pakistan: In the shadow of Jihad and Afghanistan* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux Press, 2002) p.111

<sup>9</sup> Selig S. Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow*, pp. 36 & 46-47.

<sup>10</sup> Hassan Abbas, *Pakistan's Drift into Extremism* (New Delhi: Pentagon Press, 2005) p.79

political culture in Balochistan.<sup>11</sup> Billions of dollars worth war material entered Pakistan and the NWFP and Balochistan became the Pakistani base for Afghan *Mujahids*. In the post 1988 democratic phase, the Baloch tribes were represented in the governments of Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, and ethnic tensions subsided. Baloch nationalist parties were given an opportunity to articulate their grievances through national and provincial legislatures. In the 1988 elections, Akbar Bugti led the Baloch National Alliance (BNA) - a coalition of tribal leaders and left-wing nationalists that won number of seats in the provincial assembly.<sup>12</sup> However, the October 1999 coup and follow up efforts to undermine the real democratic and political forces reignited the Baloch issue. Baloch representation in the armed forces is minimal and makes up only 1.3 percent of the armed forces with Punjabis dominating senior positions in civil and military service.<sup>13</sup>

### Exploitation of natural resources

The Baloch tribes feel that their natural resources and assets are being exploited without little benefit to them. A case in point is the Sui Gas; its first deposits discovered in 1953. Gas was supplied to Multan and Rawalpindi, in Punjab in 1964 but Quetta, the capital of Balochistan, waited until 1986 for its share of gas. This too was possible only after the federal government set up a Corps Headquarters in Quetta. Dera Bugti received gas in the mid-nineties when a para military camp was set up there. Overall, only four of the 26 districts constituting Balochistan are supplied with Sui gas.<sup>14</sup> The federal government pays a lower price for Baloch gas than it does for gas produced in other provinces, particularly Sind and Punjab.

### Development Projects

The Baloch tribes fear that developmental projects in Balochistan, intended for greater economic opportunities, will solely serve the interests of the ruling elite and state institutions

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<sup>11</sup> Feroz Ahmed, *Ethnicity and Politics in Pakistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1998) p. 177

<sup>12</sup> Paul Titus, "Introduction," in Sylvia A.

Matheson, *The Tigers of Balochistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1997) pp. 18-19

<sup>13</sup> Hasan-Askari Rizvi, *Military State and Society in Pakistan* (London: Macmillan Press, 2000) pp.240-241.

<sup>14</sup> Frédéric Grare, "The Resurgence of Baluch Nationalism," *South Asia Project, Pakistan Paper*, Number 65, January 2006.

in the military establishment. The Gwadar Port, which Pakistan has been propagating as another 'Karachi', is a project entirely under the control of the central government. In 1992, Nawaz Sharif government decided to build a seaport at Gwadar on Makran coast. Initially, Baloch nationalists supported the idea of a port but subsequent developments like the creation of a land market, a planned military base and the expected massive inflow of non-Balochs in a province with a total population of six-seven million, were not discussed with the Baloch Assembly leading to dissatisfaction with the government. The Baloch in Gwadar fear that they will become a minority in their own land.<sup>15</sup> In addition, if the port is not connected to Baloch populated areas of Turbat, Panjgur, and Khuzdar, the province will derive little benefit from the project. Gwadar has only one intermediate college and no technical school. No major steps have been taken to improve health facilities or access to safe drinking water. Most of the locals rely on fishing for a livelihood and lost the prime fishing grounds after the port was constructed.<sup>16</sup>

The Saindak copper and precious minerals project was supposed to provide training and employment to local youth. The project halted for ten years because of the unwillingness of the federal authorities to provide Rs. 1.5 billion for it to proceed. It was revived however, with assistance from the Chinese who receive 50 per cent of the profits. Of the remaining 50 per cent, only two per cent accrues to Balochistan, while central government of Pakistan receives 48 per cent.<sup>17</sup>

### Security concerns

The Baloch tribes also distrust the security agencies in their province. The Frontier Corps, a para-military force operates under the federal government. Complaints of abuse by the locals at many FC check posts include extortion, humiliation, threats and the use of lethal force. The security presence is overwhelming and most personnel are not locals.<sup>18</sup> The Baloch opposition demands the removal of FC check

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<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> "Pakistan: The Worsening Conflict in Balochistan," *International Crisis Group*, p.14

<sup>17</sup> Rashed Rahman, "The Balochistan Issue", *Daily Times*, 11 August 2004.

<sup>18</sup> Zahid Hussain, "Gathering storm," *Newslines*, February 2005.

posts, the return of the army to the barracks, and the release of political prisoners for the restoration of peace.

### III MAIN ACTORS

In Balochistan, there are three main tribes headed by nationalist Sardars; the *Marris* (led by Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri), the *Bugtis* (led by Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti), and the *Mengals* (led by Sardar Ataullah Mengal). There exist serious differences amongst these tribal leaders, but the cause they have espoused and the issues they have raised strike a chord amongst Baloch people. According to Yusufzai, Sardars with a political and popular following - like those mentioned above - follow an independent line, which the State finds difficult to handle.<sup>19</sup>

The ***Mari tribe*** is a Baloch tribe on the Dera Ghazi border of Balochistan. It occupies large parts of Kohlu district. The *Marri* tribe is divided into three sub tribes namely Bijrani, Gazini and Lohrani. Khair Bakhsh Marri, the Nawab of this tribe, became a Marxist politician in 1958. He was responsible for victory by the nationalists in the 1970 poll. In 1981, he moved to Afghanistan where he mobilized a well-trained and well-armed guerilla force of five thousand men.<sup>20</sup>

The ***Bugti tribe*** led by Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti (killed recently) has many sub tribes : Rejai or Raheja, Masuri, Kalpar, Mondrani, Shambani, Mothani and Pirozani. Akbar Bugti assumed governorship of Balochistan after Zulfikar Ali Bhutto dismissed the Ataullah Mengal's NAP led government. He also became the chief minister of Balochistan's first provincial government after the restoration of Democracy in 1988.<sup>21</sup>

The ***Mengal tribe***, headed by Ataullah Mengal, was engaged in an armed struggle with the Pakistani Army, during the rule of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. During Mengal's self exile in 1980, he said that, it was impossible to live in a federation

since Punjabi dominance would continue over the Baloch.<sup>22</sup>

There are four main Baloch nationalist parties in the province that propagate Baloch rights.

- The ***Balochistan National Party*** (BNP) was formed by Sardar Ataullah Mengal. It resulted from a merger between the Mengal's Balochistan National Movement and Ghous Bakhsh Bizenjo's Pakistan National Party. The BNP demands maximum provincial autonomy, limiting federal government authority to four subjects namely, defence, foreign affairs, currency and communications. The BNP won 12 seats in the general elections in 1997 and three seats in the National Assembly and formed the provincial government.<sup>23</sup>
- The ***Jamhoori Watan Party*** (JWP) was formed in 1990 and headed by (late) Akbar Bugti. The JWP support base is largely limited to the *Bugti* tribe. Bugti's defiant stand, however, won him the support of many other Baloch who were initially skeptical about his motives, given his past history of working with the centre against the Baloch nationalist forces.<sup>24</sup>
- The ***Baloch Haq Talwar*** (BHT) is largely tribal in its structure and membership. It is headed by Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri of the *Marri* tribe. The *Marris'* are at the forefront of the resistance to military rule. The government accused Nawab Marri's son, Balach Marri of leading the insurgency in 2005.
- The ***National Party*** (NP) is headed by Dr. Abdul Hayee. It was formed out of a merger of Balochistan National Movement and Balochistan National Democratic Party. It strongly opposes central government projects like Gwadar port, and demands Baloch rights to control their own resources and their own political and economic priorities.<sup>25</sup> The NP is opposed to the

<sup>19</sup> Rahimullah Yusufzai, "At boiling point," *Newsline*, October 2004, p.36.

<sup>20</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, *Pakistan: In the Shadow of Jihad and Afghanistan* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux Press, 2002) p. 104

<sup>21</sup> Feroz Ahmed, *Ethnicity and Politics in Pakistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1998) p. 392

<sup>22</sup> Selig S. Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow*, p.66

<sup>23</sup> Siddiq Baluch, "Balochistan National Party," in ABS Jafri's, *The Political Parties of Pakistan*.(Karachi: Royal Book Company, 2002) pp. 16-17

<sup>24</sup> "Pakistan: The Worsening Conflict in Balochistan," International Crisis Group, Asia Report No. 119, p.10

<sup>25</sup> *ibid.*



Sardari system as most of its members are educated and belong to the non tribal cadre. It holds the military responsible for the Balochistan crises.

- The **Balochistan Students Organisation** (BSO) formed in 1967 represents the Baloch middle class and students. It strongly opposes military rule and demands more jobs for the youth. It is not aligned with any political party and acts as an independent force. In the 1990's the BSO armed itself and nearly 20,000 trained militants remained in the fold of Jamait Islami, Jiye Sindh and BSO.<sup>26</sup>
- The **Pashtun Khwa Milli Awami Party** (PKMAP) formed in 1987 believes that the *Pashtuns* should form a separate province or be merged with Pashtun majority in NWFP; until then it advocates a democratic, parliamentary federation in which all nationalities are empowered. The PKMAP was formed following a dispute between Pashtun (Khan Abdul Samad Khan) and Baloch (Khair Bakhsh Marri) leadership on raising Balochistan to the status of an administrative province. In the 1988 general election, the party got two seats in the Balochistan Assembly.<sup>27</sup> In March 2006, it declared its willingness to resolve differences through a dialogue with the Baloch.
- The **Baloch Liberation Army (BLA)** is comprised of the *Marris* and other non tribal Baloch educated middle class, with Balach Marri leading the *Marri* resistance. In Kohlu, the stronghold of the *Marris*, there are 30 to 40 militant camps, with each camp having 300 to 500 recruits.<sup>28</sup>

The BLA's objectives are based largely on a pan-Baloch demand for an independent State or more powers for the province. For the BLA, mega projects such as Gwadar are

a means for the Punjabis to overwhelm the Baloch. What remains unexplored is the link between the BLA and the tribal leaders. According to Chandran, the relation operates at two levels: first, at political level where the Sardars and the *Ittehad* (an alliance of four political parties) fight for the same cause and second, at the operational level where the latter seems to take its own decisions. The *Ittehad* justifies BLA's attacks.<sup>29</sup> BLA has considerable support from the Baloch Diaspora spread across many continents. Baloch pockets in Afghanistan and Iran, which have a common border with the area, have always been vocal supporters of their brethren in Pakistan. On 9 April 2006, Musharraf banned the BLA as a terror organization and ordered arrests of anyone linked with it.

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#### IV SUI GAS AND ITS ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

Although it accounts for 36 per cent of Pakistan's total gas production, Sui province receives only 17 per cent of the gas produced in the region. The remaining 83 per cent is sent to the rest of the country. Moreover, Balochistan receives no more than 12.4 per cent of the royalties due to it for supplying gas. Balochistan supplies more than 40 per cent of Pakistan's primary energy needs (natural gas, coal and electricity). The government has announced that the gas deposits being exploited at present will be depleted by 2012, leading to the need to drill deeper and undertake fresh exploration. Reports by geological experts indicate the presence of 19 trillion cubic feet of gas and 6 trillion barrels of oil reserves in Balochistan. The Baloch, however, are determined to prevent further exploration and development without their consent. They want an agreement for the equitable sharing of resources.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> See Prashant Dikshit, "Threats to security," in Sreedhar ed. *Pakistan after 9/11* (New Delhi: Manas, 2003)

<sup>27</sup> Saleem Shahid, "Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party," in ABS Jafri's, *The political parties of Pakistan*, (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 2002) pp. 79-81

<sup>28</sup> Shahzada Zulfiqar, "Edging towards Anarchy," *Newsline*, September 2004, p.35.

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<sup>29</sup> D. Suba Chandran, "Pakistan: Tribal Troubles in Waziristan and Balochistan," in Suba Chandran ed. *Armed Conflicts and Peace Proces in South Asia* (forthcoming)

<sup>30</sup> "BLA declared terrorist organization," *Nation*, 10 April 2006

<sup>31</sup> Frédéric Grare, "The Resurgence of Baluch Nationalism", *South Asia Project, Pakistan paper*, Number 65, January 2006.

Apart from the state's economic exploitation, there is an intra-tribal economic conflict over Sui royalties. According to Chandran, the *Kalpars* claim that the Sui gas fields are located in their area; hence, they should be the primary beneficiaries of its royalties, which further infuriated Akbar Bugti. Jalal Khan, nephew of Amir Hamza, claimed that Sui belongs to the Kalpars; hence, its royalty is their right. According to reports, Akbar Bugti received 120 million rupees annually as royalty in addition to the two million he is paid monthly for providing security to the Pakistan Petroleum Ltd (PPL) installations and pipelines. Bugti claimed that the royalty had to be revised and accused the government for not settling its dues.<sup>32</sup>

On 27 August 2006 Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti was killed in Pakistan followed by rioting in many parts of the Balochistan province. In spite of the pro-Bugti and anti-Bugti factions in the province, his demise coupled with the aggressive policies of the government, have the potential to create a cohesive opposition and pose a serious security challenge on Pakistan's border provinces.

## **V RECENT DEVELOPMENTS**

In 2003, the latest round of armed conflict ensued with a series of bombings through the year. Dr. Chandran asserts that the BLA led these acts with one main objective: to force Islamabad to withdraw the federal garrisons in Balochistan as well as the federally sponsored mega projects. The insurgents mainly targeted developmental activities and infrastructure such as Gas pipelines, railway tracks, bridges, power transmission lines, telephone exchanges, military and government installations.

The Jamhoori Watan Party (JWP), the Balochistan National Party (BNP) and National Party (NP) led by the merger of factions of Hasil Bizenjo and Abdul Hayee, and Baloch Haq Tawar (BHT) led by Nawab Khair Marri, joined to form the *Ittehad* in 2003. The *Ittehad* favors more power and autonomy for smaller

provinces, hence drafted proposals for constitutional amendments.<sup>33</sup> A new development took place in May 2005, as Akbar Bugti suggested the formation of a joint political platform, while offering to dissolve his own party provided the other members of the *Ittehad* do the same to have a common Baloch forum, but there was no serious response during the last year.

S. Zulfiqar asserts that most of the demands made were against developmental activities seen as efforts to exploit Baloch resources; and against the military cantonments, a symbol of Punjabi military domination.<sup>34</sup>

In 2004, there were series of attacks all over Balochistan, the most important being the BLA attack in Gwadar on 3 May 2004, when three Chinese Engineers were killed. Also, in Khuzdar on 1 August 2004 in Khuzdar, five military personnel were killed.

Later in the year, Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, (then interim Prime Minister), constituted a Parliamentary Committee on Balochistan. There were two sub committees to look into current issues and Constitutional issues. The Current issues committee (led by Mushahid Hussain) dealt with building of military cantonments, mega developmental projects and violence, whereas the constitutional committee (led by Wasim Sajjad) dealt with issues related to provincial autonomy. The sub-committees recommended a 15 to 20 per cent increase in gas royalty, 20 to 30 per cent resource allocation for local development, and 5.4 per cent quota for Baloch workers in federal ministry divisions. Moreover, they recommended social sector development and constitutional changes for providing greater provincial autonomy to the province.<sup>35</sup> Sajjad Committee also recommended a complete revision of the concurrent list and distribution of federal resources on the basis of poverty, backwardness, unemployment and development level of provinces, instead of using the criterion of population. For Akbar Bugti the Pakistani constitution did not apply to the Baloch, as the majority of their leadership

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<sup>32</sup> D. Suba Chandran, "Balochistan: Kalpars, Masuris and the Intra Bugti Clashes in Dera Bugti," *IPCS* Article no. 2052, 28 June 2006  
<http://www.ipcs.org/Pakistan.jsp>

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<sup>33</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> Shahzada Zulfiqar, "We have launched a struggle for our freedom from the yoke of Punjab's slavery," *Newsline*, Sept 2004, p.38.

<sup>35</sup> "Pakistan: The Worsening Conflict in Balochistan," p. 20



refrained from endorsing it when the Parliament approved the constitution in 1973. According to Chandran, "one of the major problems with these initiatives was the failure to follow them up when faced with armed resistance at the ground level - especially after the January 2005 attacks."<sup>36</sup> As a consequence, state coercion and military action continued and Mengal, Marri and Bugti leaders gradually lost trust in the Parliamentary committees.

Musharraf's visit to the area was followed by another round of military operations against the BLA and armed Bugti tribes. On 17 March 2005, when the personnel of a convoy stopped a Bugti tribesman outside Dera Bugti and tried to disarm him, tensions regained momentum.<sup>37</sup> This led the Frontier Corps (FC) and tribesmen to start firing rockets and shelling mortars at each other and at civilians. May 2005 witnessed a positive development in the Parliamentary Committee on Balochistan, as it was agreed to delete 30 items from the concurrent list that would be devolved on the provinces after the constitutional amendments.<sup>38</sup>

In October 2006, Salim Saifullah Khan, Inter-provincial Coordination Minister, stated that a number of subjects in the concurrent list would be transferred to provinces to enhance the quantum of autonomy, and the government will get a constitutional amendment passed from the parliament before the next budget.<sup>39</sup> However, he did not explain whether Wasim Sajjid's constitutional committee had prepared a suitable report and if it would be made public.

## CONCLUSIONS

Political developments in the state after the death of Bugti are not indicative of an emerging anarchy or an end to Musharraf's rule in the near future. The King's party in the Parliament remains undivided and other political parties have not made any strong comments on the killing of Bugti. Hence, there is only a slim

possibility that Bugti's death could be used to form a united political front against Musharraf.

Moreover, Bugti's death is unlikely to bridge the apparent divide between Punjab and Balochistan. Most parts of Punjab and rural Sindh remained unaffected by the protests and strikes in Balochistan and Karachi.<sup>40</sup>

General Musharraf's position has not weakened after Bugti's killing. Rather, he has become even more determined to reemphasize the supremacy of the writ of the state. However, he needs to be cautious of the hardened Baloch stance after the incident as this can play a significant role in the forthcoming national election.

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<sup>36</sup> D. Suba Chandran, "Pakistan: Tribal Troubles in Waziristan and Balochistan."

<sup>37</sup> "Miscreants' camp targeted in Kohlu," *The News*, 22 December 2005; "Kohlu operation continues," *The Nation*, 24 December 2005

<sup>38</sup> D. Suba Chandran, "Pakistan: Tribal Troubles in Waziristan and Balochistan."

<sup>39</sup> Editorial, "Defining Autonomy," *The Nation*, 18 October 2006

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<sup>40</sup> D. Suba Chandran, "Akbar Bugti and After: Implications for Balochistan and Pakistan," IPCS Issue Brief No. 38 September 2006, <http://ipcs.org/38IB-AfterBugti-Suba2.pdf>

### **About the Author**

Priyashree Andley is a Research Officer at the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies. Her primary research interests include Pakistan and Jammu and Kashmir. Currently she is working on a paper titled *Gujjars: The Forgotten Community in Kashmir*. Her recent publications include "J&K Sex Scandal: Justice Hidden Behind Veil," *Mainstream*, September 9 2006, pp4-6. She can be contacted at [priya@ipcs.org](mailto:priya@ipcs.org).

