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BALUCHISTAN'S IMPORTANCE IN TERMS OF CONNECTIVITY AND RESOURCES

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the significance of Baluchistan in terms of regional and resource connectivity. Baluchistan is the south-western province of Pakistan and important in regional affairs. With the discovery of a large number of gas fields and other valuable minerals, the region has become increasingly valued by foreign investors and developers. At the same time, Baluchistan's topography makes it an ideal place for the development of railways, roads, and pipelines connecting South Asia, the Middle East, and Central Asia. To facilitate this progress, the construction of a port in Gwadar has the capability to bring globalization into the region. This development facing different problems such as Baloch, whose continued armed struggle has created destabilizing factors? As Baluchistan develops, the threats of international politics and the agenda also clash in violence. Therefore, Baluchistan's strategic importance stays in its potential to be at the head of South Asian development or to become the centre of the next large-scale multinational conflict.

KEYWORDS

Baluchistan, Connectivity, Resources, South Asia, Gwadar port, and Security.

1. INTRODUCTION

Baluchistan has at the crossroads of conquerors, settlers, explorers, and merchants in Pakistan. Its geographic place is best for coastal travel from the nations of Middle East to India and beyond; it is also an important center for cargo from and to Pakistan, nations of Central Asia and the North. As such an important area, it is truly uninhabited, a mysterious and unknown desert. Before the British keep it as a buffer place, which meant that they managed this place through tribal chiefs, a practice that persisted after Pakistan's founding despite several rebellions (Stanley Wolpert, 2000, 2-5). Presently, the government of Pakistan intends to control it to uphold territorial sovereignty and newly discovered minerals and other resources. However, due to changes in the economic and political situation of the world, its importance has received more attention. Because, as Kaplan points out, as the number of emerging markets decreases, competition becomes more intense

(Robert D. Kaplan, 2010: 4-5). The current conflict in Afghanistan also illustrates the importance of the Baluchistan, as it operates as an entry point for logistics and military. As battle operations increase, the Baluchistan province is gradually shifting a safe haven for the enemies of NATO, which could bring the war to Baluchistan borders (Pepe Escobar, May 9, 2009). Many global security issues are related to Pakistan's armed conflict. The havens of drug/gun smugglers, extremists, terrorists on their western borders have drawn pressure from America and its partners. The region's energy issues have attracted attention of South Asia nations, China, Russia and Europe.

As pipelines are planned for the transportation of gas or oil from Pakistan or specifically Baluchistan, the stability of Baluchistan and region become more important (UNPO, March 23, 2010). The east is a lasting security dilemma with India because both countries have nuclear weapons. Internally, groups are fighting for control at the national, and regional levels, requiring the government to continue army intervention on its own people. For example, the army's presence in the Tribal Area of Pakistan over the years has been backed by unwarranted efforts and changing priorities (Ahmed Rashid, June 25, 2010). The shortage of natural resources and strategic locations is a major factor for governments under international pressure. Ironically, these resources are responsible for Pakistan's central government's inability to respond to the demands of the insurgents. Given the absolute necessity of resources and the safety of mining and distribution in the area, Baloch has more fighting momentum, and the central government has more reasons to "ruthlessly suppress the rebellion (Dr Robert J. Wirsing, April 2008)."

In this case, although Baluchistan has been a national concern for many years, the importance of Baluchistan to the forces of the region is obvious. Baluchistan's instability mainly connected with the Baloch separatist movement, which is another unsuccessful rebellion for the Pakistani government that deals with various separatist factions. This was an endemic issue before the discovery of natural resources and was rarely noticed by other countries until the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. For example, Harrison first predicted "worst-case scenarios," including the USSR war in Afghanistan, and the strategic importance of Baluchistan (Selig S. Harrison, 1978: 136-160).

2. METHODS AND SOURCES

The infrastructure background information mainly comes from journal and books from social and historical research sources. In addition, historical examination of the region's various main and print media and data from the United States, Russia, and China is needed to better understand the region, not only from its own perspective but also from the perspective of some of its major competitors.

3. CENTRE OF TRADE (PIPELINES)

Baluchistan gained international attention mainly because of a large reserve of gas fields (Punjabics, 2010). Although the government began to control natural gas fields, the rapid development of South Asia's industry and the subsequent increase in natural gas extraction led to the large-scale establishment of different pipeline ventures (Gal Luft, January 12, 2005). The importance of the pipeline in the region can be seen from a study in 2005 that showed the Indian gas market is assessed at 105 million standard cubic meters per day (MSCMPD). In addition,

research shows that India's demand will increase up to 400 MSCMPD by the end of 2020, with less than half of them being self-sufficient (Hari Sud, April 3, 2005). In addition to energy reasons, Iran also hopes to increase friendly relations with India in order to gain political support and thereby enhance its international status (Luft, Gal, January 12, 2005).

According to India's agreement with Turkmenistan and Iran, the pipeline will fill the gap, and therefore the secure and stable Baluchistan province is needed; but from the ongoing terrorist attacks, it can be seen that this issue has not yet been resolved (Ordons News Team, February 13, 2011). Due to the current turmoil in Baluchistan, nations such as India have been forced to replace natural gas transportation by sea transportation, which is more costly and less efficient, but more secure. The project is also related to the India-Iranian association in the port of Chabahar, and the M-6 highway project. As globalized markets expand into Central Asia and surrounding areas, natural gas demand for the entire region will increase substantially. The Indian example shows the importance of pipeline transportation to enter these markets.

4. ROAD NETWORKS

Baluchistan is lacking in infrastructure, especially the road network. In order to make freight more efficient, a more developed road and rail network is needed. As a result, the Pakistani government has begun to transform most rural dirt roads into modern roads capable of high-speed transportation (Asian Development Bank, 2008). As can be seen from some of the existing and planned major road projects, the implementation of Gwadar's road links with other major urban centres in Pakistan has many shortcomings. Corruption by the government has also resulted in the failure of some projects and continued terrorist activity. The matter of international border crossings and the real control of cross-border transportation also need to be addressed.

There are two other problems related to Baluchistan. The first is Iran's construction of a wall in Taftan (near to the Afghanistan border) to Mande (about 100 kilometers north of Gwadar) along the Iran-Pakistan border. Although the establishment of Baluchistan was carried out under the basis of prohibiting unlawful cross-border and drug trafficking, Baloch was still worried about its impact on ethnic or family relationships (PTI, March 2, 2007). Moreover, the wall has triggered a large wave of opposition from malicious men in Iran's Baluchistan, making the Baluchistan issue concern of many countries, and additionally destabilizing the region (Chris Zambelis, January 11, 2008).

The second is the apparent absence of any road network linking Baluchistan and Afghanistan. This has a double problem, as there are many loopholes in the borders between the two countries, and in many cases not controlled, which is easy to transport illegal things (weapons, people and drugs); and it also prevents Central Asia and Afghanistan to use Gwadar port for cargos. If this route is not followed, then transportation must depend on Quetta and towards Karachi; the time and distance will increase significantly. Therefore, Chabahar port is a more reasonable choice. The most recent discussion between Islamabad, Kabul and Tehran is the building of road networks that connect Gwadar to Seindak which near the border of Iran and Afghanistan (Syed Fazl-e-Haider, 2009, 1-17). If this road is built, Baloch will lose their political advantage and will provoke strong government opposition. Now Baloch's opposition forces are attacking road construction workers to make the problem more difficult because many of the workers are foreign nationals, which may allow foreign intervention.

5. RAIL NETWORKS

The previously identified railway construction between Gwadar and China was completed by 2007 (Daily Baluchistan Express, February 17, 2004). Recently, the China-Pakistan meeting reiterated the desire of both sides to jointly complete the railway network (Khurram Anis and James Rupert, December 17, 2010). However, in a similar infrastructure development project in Baluchistan province, malicious elements tried to hinder the project by harassing construction workers and blowing up road sections and trains (Huma Aamir Malik, January 28, 2005). Commercial routes from neighboring nations and the capital of Baluchistan (Quetta) made it much easier to ship things to Karachi than to Gwadar, which further slowed the development of Baloch and the lack of economic capacity and employment opportunities. Therefore, the construction of the land transportation network of the port of Gwadar is very important to Baluchistan.

6. SIGNIFICANCE OF GWADAR PORT

As per Robert Looney, the economy of Pakistan has suffered from underdevelopment and an absence of dynamic investment in the worldwide market (Robert E. Looney, June 1, 1997: 79-98). The present task of the Gwadar port in the southwestern territory of Baluchistan is intended to fortify the economy of Pakistan. The port, situated close to the passage to the Straits of Hormuz, is relied upon to turn into a significant center point for global exchange and around the Indian Ocean just as a significant entryway to Central Asia, particularly for the export of oil and gas from nations of Central Asia. The port is likewise strategically situated to fill in as a shipping site for natural gas of Pakistan, which is generally situated in Baluchistan. With the arranged inflow of FDI in the area, Pakistan could turn into a significant world conductor for petro-compound exchange and extraordinarily animate its financial development. Specifically, interest is the means by which access to world markets and could turn into balancing out factor in an area of Pakistan that has encountered far-reaching contradiction and viciousness since their establishment in 1947.

The modern economy of the world is commanded by the requirement for energy, particularly petroleum products, which control everything from transport to farming. The port of Gwadar gives access to tremendous reserves of oil and natural gas of Central Asia, whose "market spoiled by geographic and political conditions, including with Russian impact, and constrained export framework (Ariel Cohen, November 15, 2006)." Current assessments are that these assets will equal to the joined oil assets of Kuwait and Iraq and the gas assets of Saudi Arabia. Nations, for example, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan, have these assets however are landlocked and have restricted access to outside markets. Additional, they are as yet enduring the impacts of their incorporation in the former USSR economy that never built up a productive export framework for their vitality assets, rather than concentrating on residential utilization. The deal between the legislatures of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Turkmenistan to build a pipeline that would transport oil from Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan to Gwadar gives an example of the significance of Gwadar Port.

Gazprom and a couple of other Russian organizations have built up a virtual imposing business model on the sale, transportation and purchase of Central Asian oil and natural gas to outside markets. These organizations of Russia exploit their situation through practices, for example, purchasing Central Asian gas up to 33% of market costs in Europe and afterwards exchanging that gas at market rates (Cohen, Ariel November 15, 2006)." These exercises have made solid

motivators in Europe to sidestep Russian by building other pipelines that transport gas and oil of Central Asia to the world market. These pipelines would take into consideration the serious offer of these assets on the world market, significantly profiting the producers just as those pipelines nations, because of the generous travel expenses they would gather. The relating increment in the cost of hydrocarbons of Central Asia would drive extra FDI in the extraction, production, advancement, and exploration of these largely undiscovered assets.

This circumstance has prompted extraordinary rivalry among regional nations, especially have ports. Because of their location, Pakistan and Iran present the best answers for getting these assets to the ocean with the shortest potential pipelines, with Gwadar being the nearest and most advantageous port to the Caspian. The two nations are seeking after significant port advancement projects with going a transportation framework to connect them to the nations of Central Asia so as to go after the rewarding industry of exporting their oil and gas.

The significance of Gwadar Port additionally reaches out beyond vitality assets since Russia likewise rules all of the different parts of the business to and from the nations of Central Asia. Although less beneficial than the export business and vitality extraction, trade-in different items, for example, cotton, to and from the markets of Central Asia additionally represents a generous amount of possible benefit for any nation that can secure course for that business which is generally less expensive than existing courses through Russia. The government of Pakistan would like to catch this trade and even imagine Gwadar Port as the future essential travel point for trade merchandise of Russia moving to and from the Middle East, East and South Asia. The potential benefits from this trade fill in as an extra motivator for the contending Pakistani and Iranian port projects.

7. REGIONAL RIVALRY

The advantages of Gwadar Port are obvious, and Baloch can take full advantage of its importance without competition. However, it is important to note that another port project started in Chabahar (Iran). The project is mainly funded by the companies of India and does not have many obstacles like Gwadar port. With the benefit of linking the port to Afghanistan's ring roads, Chabahar's importance as a maritime transport hub will greatly increase.

Gwadar and its Iranian rival, Chabahar, are only 110 miles apart, and they will compete to enter the same market. The construction and improvement of the transportation network from the two ports to Afghanistan prove this. Afghanistan is the direct way to enter the nations of Central Asia from the south. The Pakistani government is very concerned about this issue: "If the construction of the Chabahar port is successful, it will cause huge economic losses to Pakistan (Haider, Ziad, 2005: 95-103)." Iran tries to increase its competitive advantage through measures such as reducing Afghanistan's use of Chabahar's port fees; Pakistan's by granting Afghanistan preferential trade status.

However, the situation is not so simple. The actual competition is not only between Pakistan and Iran, as each port project is largely driven by foreign direct investment by two emerging economic giants, India and China. The investment of China accounts for more than 80 percent of the funds in the Gwadar project, with a cost assessed around \$ 850 million, and more than 500 Chinese workers and engineers provide expertise to finish most of the construction work. Beijing is an important

business partner of Islamabad, and increased business between the two nations is the main expected benefit of established ports. The yearly business volume between the two nations has steadily increased and has exceeded the U.S. \$ 2.5 billion, which is equal to about half of the business volume between India and China. The business interests of Pakistan are supporting by Chinese firms which operating in Gwadar to promote business between the two nations. The government of Pakistan also encourage China to operate in Gwadar to promote business with Xinjiang (the western area of China). Xinjiang's yearly foreign business volume reaches up to 4.8 billion U.S. dollars, and its gross domestic product reaches 22.7 billion U.S. dollars.

The China-Pakistan partnership is particularly troubled by India. The long-standing geopolitical and military confrontation between India and Pakistan can be traced back to Pakistan in 1947. The confrontation includes three wars and is now caught in the cold war among two nuclear-weapon states that still strongly oppose Jammu and Kashmir provinces in the north. The competition explains why India chose to invest in Chabahar port and its related transport infrastructure rather than investing in Pakistani and Chinese to invest in Gwadar, which is more efficient and convenient. In terms of revenue, it makes more sense for India to support Gwadar, but India is skeptical of the project because of security issues related to using the port of Gwadar as a naval base. In addition, the ongoing economic, military and geopolitical competition between China and India have exacerbated this tension, in part due to the contest between India and China's interests in Central Asia.

The other key factor in the competition that China has established important military forces in the port of Gwadar and other cooperating ports in Indian Ocean. This is known as the "Pearl Strand" policy and directly challenges position and influence of India in the region (Kaplan, Robert D 2009). With continuous efforts, China has made great progress, and projects around India have gained direct contact to the untapped South, Central, and Southeast Asian markets. Both China and India import large quantities of fuels through the Hormuz Straits, which is near to Gwadar. This has made a huge naval base of China and Gwadar monitoring station to ensuring China's transportation. Transport threatening Indian military operations. An additional sign of the increasing tension between the two nations is that China wants to use the Gwadar port as a starting location for a pipeline that will transport oil of Middle Eastern to western China through an overland transport system and reducing China's military over India's closure of the Malacca Strait Dependence.

In this scenario, India is providing funding and professional support to build and upgrade Chabahar port and its related transport infrastructure into the nations of Central Asia. Iran and India have signed a deal with Afghanistan to improve transport infrastructure from Chabahar to Afghanistan.

8. GWADAR'S ADVANTAGES

The improvement of Gwadar Port and its related transport infrastructure has brought many advantages to the entire Pakistani people, especially the Baluchistan people. After the repeated successful experience, countries that integrate with the world market have faster economic growth and lower poverty rates than nations that pursue protectionist or isolationist policies. For example, in the 1990s, countries with a lower degree of globalization had an average negative growth rate, while countries with a higher degree of globalization had an average growth rate of 5%. Pakistani companies have always advocated the development of port of Gwadar as a free trade area, which

will greatly promote the growth of business, thereby enabling Pakistan to do its best in the trade (Mike Cox and Richard Alm, 2002)." With the expansion of international competition, there will be some local difficulties in Pakistan, but the long-period benefits to the economy of Pakistan and the entire people will exceed the short-period costs of a small part of the population. However, this behavior is unacceptable for Baluchistan autonomy. And these malicious elements have called on the United States to stop providing support to Pakistan because they believe that the support or fund is used to backing Baluchistan's business.

Experience has shown that "competition stimulates innovation and provides an impetus for efficiency", which will ultimately make the economy of Pakistan stronger and competitive (Francois Melese, 2009). Trade with the fast-growing economy of China will bring many benefits, the most important of which is the decrease in business with America. The United States represents almost 80% of Pakistan's textile exports and also the largest exporter. But when recent U.S. purchases of Pakistani textiles have been reduced, leading to the loss of 48,000 Pakistani workers, it can be seen that heavy dependence on the single market is disastrous. The opening of new markets in a fast-growing economy like China is critical to protecting Pakistan from over-reliance on the single market of the United States. Perhaps most importantly, Gwadar promises to significantly increase foreign direct investment in Pakistan. There are many reasons; first is that "the globalization of production has now greatly surpassed trade, which is the organizational characteristic of the international economy (Stephen G. Brooks, 2005). Therefore, the only way to integrate into the worldwide economy is to attract multinational firms and their foreign direct investment.

Multinational corporations promote technological progress through inter-company alliances, thereby spreading research and development costs. Attempts to compete with multinational corporations and obtain transnational resources while keeping an isolationist stand are doomed to failure. Foreign direct investment has enabled developing countries to obtain the technological and economic potential of multinational corporations while maintaining national autonomy, which exactly Pakistan needs to develop and participate in the international market. The port of Gwadar has great capability for the future improvement of Pakistan, but only if the Baluchistan people understand its advantages and interests.

9. IMPACT OF INTERNAL VIOLENCE

Obviously, the violent activities that destroy energy-transportation resources have a very bad impact on foreign direct investment. To date, the Pakistani government has adopted strong crackdowns on the insurgency, including widespread arrests and even disappearance.

Due to the incoherent and unstable nature of the violence, the strategy has been relatively successful, well below the organizational level of the 1973 insurgency (Akhtar, Sajjad, 2007: 1-10). However, the government can also take other more effective measures to crush the riots and bring long-period stability to Baluchistan. It is important to explore these measures because chaotic insurgency or its own coercive means cannot always be used to prevent catastrophic damage to the development of Baluchistan.

The central government must satisfy the Baloch people that building the Gwadar port will have long-term benefits. And the Baloch people are trained in technology which will be provided in the

developing economic zone in Gwadar and ensuring that they are given priority over non-local workers and that they are no longer resisting. The last step will pay to the people displaced by the enlargement of port facilities, which should be achieved by using a large amount of income expected to flow through the port.

9. FUTURE OF BALUCHISTAN

The political scene today has all the elements of offering hope to the individuals of Baluchistan. With an authority which shows the aims of a typical Baloch no well seated in the halls of intensity, if suitably use the lexis of intensity, state and common institutions, with any inclinations, the country can stick all their expectations. It tends to be an impetus for positive change. The time has again allowed the chance to switch things around.

The characteristics of the ethnic, tribe composition, rich natural assets, turbulent history and grave governance matters require special strengths at the provincial and national levels. Policies and strategies for dealing with Baluchistan Province should have the following four priorities:

1. Political initiatives are focusing on reconciliation, in which all stakeholders negotiate with each other. Selective applications should be avoided. Priority must be given to the establishment of a powered body with balanced powers and formal approval by the provincial and federal governments for all consultations. Because historical issues make Baloch very sensitive, he doubts the authenticity of different political initiatives.
2. Aghaz-e-Haqooq Baluchistan, the 18th Amendment and the NFC Award were not redeemed at all, mainly due to serious governance matters. Reliable machinery needs to be established to tackle issues related to governance in Baluchistan.
3. The problem of Baluchistan is even more serious due to the lack of good governance. Without federal and provincial government policies to appoint competent, efficient, and honest officials decoupled from the political power of provincial agencies, any initiative will never succeed.
4. The root of the struggle of some Baloch elements is that the trust in the federation has been lost and the government cannot solve their problems. The restoration of hope is vital to progress. Restoring Baloch's trust requires resolving it through a credible and imaginative policy, which should be developed in good faith and credibility (Zahid Latif Mirza, 2013).

10. CONCLUSION

The peoples of the world are more united due to the development of technology and science. It can be said that the issue of regional importance will have a ripple effect on a global scale. Current politics is no longer restricted to local dissatisfaction or cultural differences. The increasing global trading environment and intensified global competition for assets have promoted the development of cheap production and new markets. Give priority to global political and economic interests over local politics.

With this in mind, Baluchistan's significance is obvious, and with its favorable geographical location and resources, it can quickly and easily enter emerging markets in the nations of Central Asia. As a channel connecting South Asia and the Middle East, it has attracted great international interest. As mentioned earlier, the major planned pipeline, road and rail development projects have

already begun. In addition, the construction of the Gwadar deep-water port is extremely important because it increases the competitiveness of the global market in coastal areas and can accommodate a large number of import and export trades. The Baluchistan's topography and its convenient commercial crossroads, huge natural resources also attract global attention. In addition, with the increasing impact of globalization in developing countries, trade in these resources will bring innumerable economic benefits in the future. And many East and Southeast Asian countries have also begun to pay attention to the port of Gwadar because it provides these countries with opportunities to cooperate with each other and enter the global market. These countries can not only benefit economically but also gain influence by building strength and reputation in the region.

The geographical location and abundant resources of Baluchistan Province have led to growing interest from the Pakistani government to calm the area. In addition, the significance of Baluchistan in accomplishing stability, national growth and strengthening worldwide ties makes the region strategically vital to Pakistan. However, Baluchistan rebel groups continue to carry out violent activities. They claim to have the geography and resources of the Baluchistan Province and insist on maintaining their cultural identity. Their pursuit of autonomy has increased insecurity. This malicious behavior easily leads to government brutality, with the military of Pakistan entering and reinstalling strict martial law.

The government of Pakistan has made it clear that independence is not the right choice, and large-scale insurgency will only increase military operations. In addition, attacks on foreign citizens, elites, or seniors can cause international incidents, and foreign troops will retaliate. This situation may then worsen, attracting enemies and allies pursuing their own interests. We have seen attacks against Chinese port workers, and a warning from Baloch insurgents that all foreigners should leave the area immediately to avoid being attacked.

All in all, the strategic importance of Baluchistan Province lies in how Baloch and Pakistani leaders will respond to growing worldwide pressures in chase of status and wealth. The geography is unlikely to change and is essential for land transportation and connectivity to Russia, Central Asia and Afghanistan, and as a land bridge between South Asia and the Middle East. All nations in the region will continue to look for gas fields as well as oil and mineral resources until economically producing alternative fuels and entering large-scale production and dissemination. At the core of Baluchistan's strategic importance is how the world's powerful nations invest in Baluchistan, and how Baloch responds to these developments.

In summation, the key significance of Baluchistan stays in how the obscure of the Baloch and the authority of Pakistan will respond to the realized expanding global weights in the quest for riches and status. The physical geology isn't probably going to change and will keep on being essential for overland vehicle and entrance to Russia, Central Asia and Afghanistan alongside filling in as a land-connect between South Asia and the Middle East. Until interchange fuel sources are delivered in a practical manner and enter large scale manufacturing and dispersal, the petroleum gas fields, alongside mineral riches and the oil will keep on being looked for by the entirety of the nations in the area.

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