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# PAKISTAN

## **Tales & Tragedy of the oppressed people of *Balochistan***

**Balochistan Rights Movement**

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# BALUCHISTAN

Balochistan is situated in the Southwest of Pakistan, bordering the provinces of Sindh and Pukhtoonistan, formerly NWFP (the Northwest Frontier Province). Today, it is a colony of Pakistan's Punjab. Balochistan is an extremely rich area with natural reserves and mineral resources. Its land base is the largest in Pakistan.

Historically, the people of the plains, valleys and mountains of Balochistan have been the victims of invaders from the West and other exploitative forces. In 1947, the imperialists and colonialist forces belonging to Pakistan's Punjab province engineered and implemented their expansionist conspiracies, under the leadership of Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, to forcibly annex the land of the Baloch.

Pakistan's expansionist forces finally succeeded in forcibly annexing the state of "Kalat", the heart of Balochistan, through machinations and with its army, intelligence agencies and civil bureaucracy. The Upper and Lower Houses of the legislatures of Balochistan along with the majority of the population fully opposed the annexation of "Kalat" to Pakistan.

In protest against the forcible occupation of "Kalat", the Baloch nation waged a peaceful struggle under the leadership of Prince Khan Abdul Karim Baloch. However, the tyrant Punjabi expansionists backed by their Army, oppressed the peaceful movement killing thousands of Baloch, and unlawfully incarcerated Prince Khan Abdul Karim Baloch and his compatriots for several years.

Later, the tyrant and expansionist rulers of Pakistani Punjab resorted to intrigues and deception for occupying the rest of Balochistan under the rubric of religion and Islam. They declared it a province of Pakistan, once again using their military and its guns and cannons.

Having annexed Balochistan to Pakistan and declaring it a province, the tyrannical and expansionist rulers of Pakistani Punjab dissolved the provincial system. They declared all of Pakistan as "One Unit". Under the "One Unit" system, all rights and powers were transferred to Punjab. Balochistan and the rest of the provinces came under the occupation of Pakistani Punjab, since the power centre of the Federation of Pakistan was and has always been Punjab. Ever since, the governance of Pakistan has been in the hands of Pakistani Punjab. All the "Institutions" governing the state of Pakistan have been in the hands of Pakistani Army dominated by Punjab. Hence all other "Institutions", have been, and continue to be, subservient to Pakistani Punjab.

After the forcible occupation, the Baloch have been reduced to the status of slaves in their own land, which has become a colony of Pakistan. As a result of the usurpation of their rights, the Baloch have become oppressed and deprived, and forced to live in destitution.

Balochistan, because of its natural and mineral wealth, is a very important, strategic region. It has vast underground and coastal reserves of petroleum, gas, coal and minerals. Its long and wide coastal areas are a treasure-trove of innumerable types of wealth and natural resources.

Balochistan has one the largest uranium reserves in the world. It is also rich in agriculture and has a vast agricultural base, enough to make it self-sufficient if permitted by the imperialist Punjabi rulers of Pakistan.

Ever since its annexation under Pakistan's colonialist and expansionist policies, the wealth and the resources of the Baloch nation has been ruthlessly and systematically plundered. The Baloch nation has been deprived of its basic rights, and marginalized from all departments and spheres of life. The Federation of Pakistan, and all its central and provincial institutions like the Army, Parliaments, Judiciary and Presidency, is under the control of the dominant and powerful Punjabis.

In Pakistan, democracy and democratic institutions have become a mockery. Governments rule or are dissolved according to the whims of the army from Punjab. Pakistan has always had dictatorial or martial rule instead of democracy.

The majority of the Baloch participated in the electoral process in the General Elections of 1973, and facilitated the Nationalist Parties to form the Government in Balochistan. The upholders and the champions of democracy in Islamabad dissolved the elected Government of the Nationalist Parties after nine month without any justification.

Thereafter, when the Nationalist Baloch waged a Movement in protest against this injustice, the then Punjabi rulers sent their Army to launch an operation against the Baloch nation. This Movement was most ruthlessly suppressed by the Punjabi military. The Punjabi military martyred thousands of Baloch. Air Force fighters and bombers strafed and bombed innocent and unarmed Baloch civilians killing women and children besides men-folk.

Thousands of Baloch civilians, political workers and leaders were unlawfully arrested, brutally tortured by the state, rendering them maimed for life. There were killings in custody as well. Many were kept in unlawful detention for years without any charges or trial. Observers claim that over fifteen thousand Baloch were brutally massacred and killed during the Army Operation in 1973.

In the aftermath of the suppression and massacre, the brave sons of the Baloch nation launched guerrilla warfare in Balochistan. An open declaration and demand was made for an independent Balochistan. Sons and daughters of the Baloch nation demonstrated valour and bravery sacrificing their lives. The Punjabi Army of Pakistan was forced to retreat.

The military dictator, the late General Zia-ul-Huq, sensed that the Baloch Movement was leading towards Independence Movement. He cunningly announced an amnesty for all the Baloch leaders and political workers, quickly releasing all of them from unlawful detention.

The ruling colonialists of Punjab have continually conspired ever since against the genuine aspirations of the Baloch nation through coercion and bribery of corrupt and co-opted leaders. These expansionist and colonialist forces have reduced our rich land and people to great impoverishment and deprivation. Many people lose their lives due to non-availability of even ordinary medicines and medical facilities. Unemployment, poverty and starvation have become common and widespread amongst the Baloch population.

The Natural Gas that was discovered in Sui, Dera Bugti in Balochistan has not been made available to the people of Balochistan, with the exception of the capital, Quetta City. It is however being made available to Punjab and the rest of the country. The people of Balochistan are not simply deprived of gas, but their basic rights and resources.

In Balochistan, basic fundamental rights of the people have been totally usurped. The demand for basic amenities is responded to with bullets. Glaring examples were the massacres of Jevani, Awaran, Sorab and Quetta, where innocent and unarmed children, women and men were brutally massacred during their peaceful protests demanding basic amenities like water, electricity and other necessities. These massacres are documented in the history of contemporary Balochistan.

The Federal "Quota System" is yet another blow to the people of Balochistan. It is an instrument of exploitation, devised by the colonialist and imperialist Punjabi rulers of Pakistan. The "Quota" between 3.5 per cent to 5.00 per cent for Balochistan, as its share in the national wealth and resources, has compounded its misery and deprivation. The Baloch are deprived of employment and education, as well as opportunities in other walks of life due this exploitative "Quota System".

The 1973 Constitution of Pakistan provides for royalty for Balochistan for exploitation of the natural gas reserves in Sui. But the tyrannical, colonialist Punjabi rulers have not implemented that provision of the Constitution. They have deprived Balochistan of its meagre share of wealth. The flight of the natural and mineral resources of Balochistan for the benefit of Punjab is continuing unabated, depriving the people of Balochistan of their right to ownership of their own wealth.

The recent nuclear test carried out in Chagi, Balochistan by the imperialist and expansionist rulers of Punjab, without consulting the people of Balochistan, has further devastated our beloved land and people. The little water that we have has been contaminated by the radioactive radiation from the nuclear test. Balochistan suffers from water shortage and the further contamination will create a dearth of water resulting in drought and famine.

Physical and mental disorders and ailments have been recorded in Chagi and other surrounding areas. All of Balochistan has been affected. The colonialist Punjabi rulers have neither bothered to monitor the radiation, nor have they even considered any compensation or redressal for the affected population. The expansionist Punjabi rulers do not consider the people of Balochistan as human being.

### Current Situation

On 11th January 2000, the army of the colonialist Punjab raided the house of the Head of the Marri Tribe, Nawab Khair Buksh Marri, and arrested him unlawfully. The I S I (Inter-Services Intelligence Agency) conspired and murdered Justice Nawaz Marri to falsely implicate Nawab Khair Buksh Marri and his sons. This conspiracy was hatched to blackmail Nawab Khair Buksh Marri to allow the Punjabi expansionist forces to exploit petroleum and gas from Marri lands for the benefit of Punjab.

Nawab Khair Buksh Marri refused to accept the offer made by the Punjabi rulers and was consequently arrested for the murder of Justice Marri. Since, 11th. January 2000, the government has issued three "Challan"(charge sheets) each containing different versions of the event. The Punjabi government of Pakistan has not managed to produce a single witness against Nawab Khair Buksh Marri before the Anti-Terrorists Court in Quetta, where he is being tried.

Nawab Khair Buksh Marri suffers from various ailments, he is frail and is seventy-three years old. Yet he has been kept incommunicado in detention, and is not allowed to meet his relatives and friends. He is being denied medical facilities despite strong recommendations from doctors.

The Special Rapporteur on Extra-judicial and Arbitrary Executions of the Commission on Human Rights, Ms. Asma Jahangir, faced acute difficulties in persuading the Authorities to let her meet Nawab Khair Buksh Marri in Jail. All his sons have been falsely charged for the murder of Justice Nawaz Marri and various false F I R s (First Information Report) have been registered against them.

Hundreds of Marri tribesmen and followers of Nawab Khair Buksh Marri have been unlawfully arrested by the colonialist Punjabi army, and are being tortured by the state in custody. Scores of his followers and tribesmen have "disappeared" since their arrest.

According to eye-witness reports, the expansionist and colonialist army of Punjab is setting up camps and bases in Balochistan, especially in Marri areas like Seaah-gari, 15 kilometres from Kahan. We believe this is to launch a full-blown army operation against Balochistan, of a similar dimension witnessed in 1973 in Balochistan, and in June 1992 in urban areas of Sindh including Karachi and Hyderabad. Eye-witness accounts claim that the notorious I S I (Inter-Services Intelligence Agency) is mobilising those on its payroll from Marri tribe to form terrorist groups to kill, terrorise and traumatise the local population and the followers of the Nationalist Movements and Parties.

Recently, the colonialist army and para-military of Punjab also launched an operation in the areas of Baloch leaders like Sardar Ataullah Khan Mengal and Mahmood Khan Achakzai. They resorted to indiscriminate firing killing innocent civilians, and undertook search operations. There were unlawful and arbitrary arrests, and torture in custody.

A glaring example is the operation in Pushtoonabad during which the army and the para-military killed scores of supporters of Mahmood Khan Achakzai. The Special Rapporteur on Disappearances and Summary Executions, Ms. Asma Jahangir, reported the killings in Pushtoonabad in her Report E/CN.4/2001/9/Add.1.

In Hazarganji, approximately 15 kilometres from Quetta, the colonialist army and police of Punjab opened indiscriminate fire on people participating in a peaceful march to the Governor's House in Quetta. They were protesting against the electricity cut off in Hazarganji. Several people were killed and injured as a result of the indiscriminate firing.

Let us make one thing crystal clear. No one in Balochistan is against any exploration whatsoever provided the dividends, and the right of ownership of the people of Balochistan,

are guaranteed for the people of Balochistan. This must be accepted first before Sui-Gas like plunder is repeated.

The Punjabi army, intelligence agencies and civil bureaucracy has always resorted to military solutions to achieve their goals in Balochistan and Sindh. What they do not realise is that there is no military solution against people struggling for their rights and freedom from oppression and injustice.

Under the circumstances the people of Balochistan, both its Baloch and Pashtun segments, will have no alternative but to wage a peaceful struggle to free Balochistan from the hegemony and occupation of Punjab. The people of Balochistan have to choose their own fate and destiny.

*Balochistan will be grateful for all the moral support the world community of nations can demonstrate, in its quest for liberty and freedom from bondage and enslavement of the Punjabi rulers of Pakistan.*