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A ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION ON BALOCHISTAN ISSUE: QUEST FOR SOLUTION

On 9th July 2013, research think-tank [MUSLIM Institute](#) organized a round table discussion **“Balochistan Issue: Quest for Solution”** in Islamabad on prevailing Baluchistan situation. The event was attended by analysts, professors, researchers, students from various universities and representatives of different think-tanks.



SAHIBZADA SULTAN AHMAD ALI

Chairman MUSLIM Institute



Baluchistan has become center of attention at international level due to its geo-strategic location and rich natural resources. Its Gwadar Port has significance for the entire region. He further stated that civilian government needs to improve governance and strengthen infrastructure in the province. A civilian helicopter even uses helipads of armed forces that speak of inadequacy of civilian infrastructure in Baluchistan. He maintained that political parties must have some agenda to handle situation in Baluchistan but lack short and long term plans that have consensus approval and would be practicable according to local conditions. America has two major stakes in Baluchistan: to control China and Central Asia from here and to occupy its resources.



USMAN HAASAN

Research Associate MUSLIM Institute



Making presentation on Overview of Balochistan said that entire Baluchistan, particularly Gwadar Port, has importance for trade of Russia, Central Asia and China. If hostile external elements succeed in further worsening situation in Baluchistan, it will have serious adverse bearings for our neighboring countries. America and Israel also have eyes on Baluchistan in case of any escalation with Iran. People of Baluchistan should be given benefits of local resources. He stressed that steps taken by Army for welfare of people of Baluchistan also need to be highlighted.



RANA ABDUL BAQI

Renowned Analyst



Gwadar Port has significance not only from trade point of view but also from defense perspective as it would reinforce capabilities of our Navy. Formation of government in Baluchistan by nationalists makes it clear that people can assert their will through ballot. External elements are involved in deteriorating situation in Baluchistan and it needs to be figured out who are sponsoring miscreants. Besides CIA and RAW, Black Water also appears to be engaged in the same. There were large scale protests in Ziarat and Quetta against attack on Ziarat Residency, which shows love of people of those areas for Quaid e Azam and Pakistan.



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LT GEN ABDUL QAYYUM

Renowned Defense Analyst



Due to failures of governments in the past, situation in Baluchistan worsened. Baloch Sardars also did not allow spread of education to keep their grip firm on people. Another reason for aggravation of situation in Baluchistan is ineffectiveness of law enforcement apparatus. Common Baluchs do not talk of freedom; they simply demand their constitutional rights. The current government's decision to bring forward a common Baloch and not a Sardar as Chief Minister is a laudable step. Similarly, Pak Army's decision to open cadet colleges in Loralai and Sui is also a praiseworthy initiative.

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GEN MIRZA ASLAM BEG

Former Chief of Army Staff, Pakistan



No serious efforts have been made in the past to handle Baluchistan situation politically and civilian administration also did not fulfill its responsibilities in letter and spirit. Army established peace in the area but civilian governments ignored the region and never took its control in effective way. Our enemies took advantage of the same. Results of recent elections are a very positive sign as people being dubbed as traitors are now sitting in assemblies. Indian missions in Afghanistan are working against Pakistan. They are training people and providing them resources to spread anarchy in Pakistan. Foreign hostile agencies are involved in 90 % terrorism and sabotage incidents in Pakistan. He hoped that soon Baluchistan situation would improve but maintained that political process for the same will have to be expedited and Baluchs will also have to be engaged in it. USSR suffered defeat in Afghanistan. America has also been defeated but not accepting the same out of arrogance and busy in more intrigues. America has allocated 1.4 billion \$ to NGOs in Pakistan to subvert minds of people.



SENATOR RAJA ZAFAR UL HAQ

Chairman PML (N) /Leader of the House in Senate



During previous regime, Punjab government took many initiatives for people of Baluchistan, particularly for students. His party then also tried to bring a presidential candidate from Baluchistan and following its failure to find anyone, it nominated another candidate from a smaller province. Similarly, after formation of its government at federal level after recent elections, PML (N) gave full opportunity to local parties of Baluchistan to form their government in the province. Its decision to give Chief Ministership to Baluchs and Governorship to Pashtoons - both hailing from Baluchistan – may be seen in this backdrop. Due to such steps of the federal government, a goodwill between it and provincial government has been established which is likely to bring positive change in the province.



RECOMMENDATIONS

On the occasion honorable speakers made following recommendations:-

01. The government should formulate a committee of all stakeholders to take stock of the situation objectively and recommend short, mid and long term measures for handling situation in Baluchistan.
02. An institute should be made which can identify the problems, give solutions and make sure of their implementation independently.
03. Capacity of law enforcement apparatus should be bolstered to effectively respond to challenges prevailing in Baluchistan.
04. There is need for improving agriculture system in the province. Old "karaiz" system should be revived and also new water distribution projects be undertaken.

05. Education and health sectors should be accorded priority.

06. Overall infrastructure development initiatives should also be taken by civil government throughout the province, with extra focus on under-developed areas.

07. Locals should be taken into confidence that they will get due benefits from mineral exploration process in the province. Similarly, they should also be taken into confidence on the issue of Gwadar Port and given assurance that outsiders coming for commercial activity would never be allowed to undermine their rights.

08. Indian intrigues from Afghanistan should be neutralized diplomatically and Afghan border should be observed carefully.

09. Diplomatic measures should be taken to stop the internationalization of Balochistan issue.

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