

CPEC and the Baloch Insurgency

Click \underline{here} for CPEC Part I and \underline{here} for Part II

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What is the issue?

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- The CPEC is a 15-year project between Pakistan and China, which aims to connect the ancient Chinese trading town Kashgar with Pakistan's deep-sea Gwadar port via PoK through a network of highways, railways and oil and gas pipelines and fibre optic cables.
- Gwadar is the crown jewel of CPEC and Balochistan is the home to Gwadar port.

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- Yet Balochistan stands to gain little from the massive project, despite being in desperate need of economic opportunity. \n
- The province's share in the CPEC is a mere 0.5%. $\slash n$

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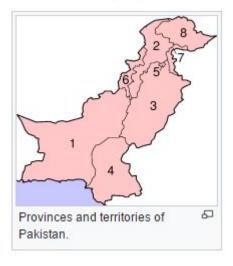
What are the administrative units of Pakistan?

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The administrative units of Pakistan consist of four provinces, one federal capital territory, two autonomous and disputed territories, and a group of federally administered tribal areas.

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# \$	Subdivision +	Capital +	Type 🗢
1	Balochistan	Quetta	Province
2	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	Peshawar	Province
3	Punjab	Lahore	Province
4	Sindh	Karachi	Province
5	Islamabad Capital Territory	Islamabad	Territory
6	Federally Administered Tribal Areas	Islamabad	Territory
7	Azad Jammu and Kashmir	Muzaffarabad	Pakistan-administered Kashmir
8	Gilgit-Baltistan	Gilgit	Province



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Who are Baloch people?

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• Baloch people are an ethno-linguistic group mainly found in Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan.

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• Balochistan region covers Balochistan Province in southwestern Pakistan, Sistan and Baluchestan Province in southeastern Iran, and the Balochistan region of southern Afghanistan.

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- Baloch nationalism is a movement that claims the Baloch people in the region form a distinct nation. \n
- The movement propagates the view that Muslims are not a nation and that ethnic loyalty must surpass religious loyalty $$\n\$
- The Insurgency in Balochistan is a guerrilla war waged by Baloch nationalists against the governments of Pakistan and Iran in the region. \n

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What is the reason for insurgency?

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• 70% of people in Balochistan live in poverty.

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- The maternal death rate in Pakistan is 278 per 100,000, whereas in Balochistan it stands at 785.
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- Natural gas was discovered at Sui in Balochistan, yet major parts of the province are still deprived of natural gas.
- It's important to understand that the violence in Balochistan is not just because of terrorism.

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• The insurgents are mostly local people longing for their constitutional rights and welfare.

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- Therefore most of the insurgent movements in Balochistan have been linked with deprivation and underdevelopment. $$\n$

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- The division of CPEC benefits repeats the same mistake, where the people of Balochistan are not allowed to benefit from the province's own advantages. \n

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What is the problem in Pakistan's approach?

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• Pakistan's government has generally regarded Brahamdagh Bugti, the alleged leader-in-exile of the Baloch Republican Army, as the sole representative of the Baloch conflict, particularly pointing to Bugti's Indiacentric policy.

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• Also Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi made remarks on Balochistan last year.

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• Therefore the Pakistani government and military officials tend to blame the

violence in Balochistan on Indian meddling in the province.

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• But to truly solve the problems in Balochistan, Pakistan's focus must be inward.

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What should be done?

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- The state needs to differentiate sub-nationalists from the terrorist outfits operating from within Balochistan. \n
- Terrorist organisations need to be dealt with accordingly as per the national counterterrorism strategies. γ_n
- But the Sub-national groups should be encouraged to come into the national fold by addressing legitimate concerns.
- If the violence still gets out of hand, then counter-insurgency (COIN) strategies can be employed. \n
- The guilty should be subject to normal court proceedings. $\slash n$
- Media coverage in the region should be increased rather than the current situation of reporters going missing from Balochistan. \n
- Pakistani authorities must ensure that CPEC doesn't repeat the earlier injustice meted out to the native Balochs. Balochistan must get its fair share of the economic corridor.

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Source: Diplomat

