

Media Landscapes with Religious and Ethnic Conflicts in Pakistan: The Case of Security Concerns for Journalists in Balochistan

Babrak Niaz* Malik Adnan† Sadaf Irtaza‡

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Headings

- [Key Words](#)
- [Introduction](#)
- [Study Design](#)
- [State of Media in Balochistan, Pakistan](#)
- [Violence against Journalists](#)
- [State of Security in Balochistan in the last few years](#)
- [Discussion](#)
- [References](#)

Abstract *This paper attempts to have insight into the media landscape of Balochistan and issues too. Balochistan is considered to be a conflict zone due to many religious and ethnic issues. The safety of journalists and media workers are a prime concern for journalistic bodies and government. The violence's against journalists leads them to self-censorship, and it has limited the topics and geographical access covered by media. National media is working as bureau offices only; Bureau Chiefs of the media outlet are working as reporters. Balochistan and issues related to Balochistan are wipeouts from national media, and it has brought a sense of deprivation among people of Balochistan. Less coverage to Balochistan is one of the threatening elements for journalists, and different pressure groups have threatened journalists and few even killed.*

Key Words: Media, Conflicts, Security Concerns, Journalists, Balochistan.

Introduction

Pakistan remained on top of the list when it comes to life threats for journalists during the last few years. The Committee to Protect Journalists ranked Pakistan as the fourth most dangerous country in 2014 for journalists, while Reporters Without Borders positioned Pakistan 158th out of 167 documented countries in its World Press Freedom Index the same year. (DeFaria, 2015) According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, two journalists killed in Pakistan in 2016. Notably, these two journalists who lost their lives in the line of duty were from Balochistan. (International, 2014) Steve Butler, CPJ's Asia program coordinator, says that "Baluchistan, mired in a protracted conflict, is a particularly dangerous place for journalists" (Ansari, 2006).

More than 190 daily newspapers, 50 weekly magazines and 150 plus monthly magazines are printed in Balochistan. The mode of the language of these publications is mostly Balochi language. The national publications and private sector channels and national and international radio services bureau offices exist in Quetta city. There are hundreds of journalists in Balochistan, but all of them are not full-time journalists. The majority of these works as part-time journalists and besides that running their own businesses. The Balochistan Union of Journalists and Quetta press club have 140 members. (Spooner, 2012)

*Assistant Professor, Department of Media Studies, University of Balochistan, Quetta, Pakistan.
Email: babrakniaz@yahoo.com

†Assistant Professor, Department of Media Studies, Islamia University Bahawalpur, Punjab, Pakistan.

‡Assistant Professor, Department of Media Studies, University of Balochistan, Quetta, Pakistan.

In some districts, threats are often related to reporting on military forces or on security agencies. The disturbed districts such as Dera Bugti and Kouhlu are no go areas for independent media since the assassination Bugti tribe head. While the Pashtun belt is surrounded by Taliban activities. The Pashtun belt districts are divided between two political elements with pro-Taliban and pro-military ideologies. Journalists of these districts are often threatened when they report on cross border movements of the militants. ([Grare, 2013](#))

The district of Gwadar, Panjgur and Avaran are Baloch concentrated and anti-government sentiments are high in these districts compared to other districts of Baloch belt. In these districts, journalists work under extreme pressure from separatist groups and administration. The local newspapers of anti-government sentiments support the militant's stance due to which they are most often faces threats or being targeted. ([Baloch, Andresen, & Communication, 2020](#))

However, the battle between insurgents and state machinery remained active in Khuzdar, and many of the journalists lost their lives in the line of duty. "The highest number of journalists killed in Balochistan is in central Khuzdar. In this area, battles between insurgents and the state are most active in Khuzdar and journalists considered pro-government or unsympathetic to the insurgents are targeted. The threat that has more recently emerged is from militant members of Lashkare-Jhangvi-outlawed organization from the Jhang district of Punjab province. The group are mostly engaged in sectarian violence and have established their presence in Balochistan by providing welfare, water facilities and food to the poor. In Nushki, Khuzdar and Kohlu, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi flags can be seen on the rooftops of the local houses." ([Ricchiardi, 2012](#))

Quetta is the center of journalistic activities in Balochistan, and it remains a garrison city because of conflict and separatist politics stalking from anger against federal government negligence. Much of the time, data is checked by security agencies, and the state utilizes bullying strategies like restraint on ads and print material to frighten media into obedience. If that doesn't work, there are vanishings, killings and closing down daily paper workplaces, a pattern that has enlisted a disturbing spike lately and years in the scenery of uprising in the province. ([Prakash, 2013](#))

The Baloch Hal was first-ever online English newspaper, which was shut down within a year of its start in the year 2010. An editorial titled state of media in Balochistan explains the situation of journalism in Balochistan: "The people of Balochistan were forced for a long time to read newspapers that were headquartered outside the province and had a friendly stance towards every government. Unwilling to carry a single editorial or op-ed page article on Balochistan for several months, these newspapers never tried to raise the voice of the people. They did not protest over the military operation or the killing of Baloch leaders. ([A. Khan, 2010](#)) They overlooked the violation of human rights. The only interest these newspapers had was to get official advertisements and supplements from the Directorate of Public Relations (DPR), an organ of the provincial government, and Press Information Department (PID), a department of the federal government. Every government discouraged the rise of an independent media in the province by bribing the so-called 'national newspapers' with official advertisements. Since Balochistan does not have any significant industries, newspapers published from the province are very unlikely to get corporate advertisements. As the only source of revenue and sustainability for the Quetta-based newspapers is official advertisements, the government uses these advertisements as a tool to discourage professionalism and patronize sycophancy. This practice continues today as it has proved to be a very effective tool to muzzle the voice of the press and make it soft towards the government." ([Samad & Politics, 2014](#))

Study Design

The study is based on qualitative research design. To know the current status of journalists in Balochistan, the descriptive research method was also followed. According to James "Descriptive research is used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena to describe "what exists" with respect to variables or conditions in a situation"([Brown, Dawaod, Iranlatab, & Naqi, 2012](#)). The newspapers published from Balochistan were analyzed, and news contents of those newspapers were made part of this

Research Study. Moreover, research-based reports of different NGO's working on Media in Balochistan are also part of this study.

State of Media in Balochistan, Pakistan

The media scene in Balochistan has developed gradually. There are hindrances, genuine or saw: radio stations can fall in the hands of ethnic groups approaching defiance, daily papers need to take after strict guidelines and advice from the government. There is danger from patriot components and partisan gatherings that creek no restriction or feedback and traditionalist, tribal traditions make it hard for females to join media. To put it plainly, every one of that upsets Balochistan likewise influences news coverage and columnists in the territory. ([Rahman & Ejaz, 2014](#))

There is a little trend of doing genuine journalism or investigative field journalism in Balochistan. Most of the times newspapers carry only press releases from military authorities or government departments or even political statements from political parties. The stories and pictures of the events are shared with each other by journalists instead of going out for coverage. The editorial meetings are not a culture of journalism in Balochistan even some of the newspapers have hardly news editors. The journalists do not have a clear job description or beats where he or she has to work. If any journalist is assigned any beat, it is very hard for him to get specialize in it because the newspaper administration pulled him back and assign any other task due to limited staff and resources. Then things get worse for the regional newspapers where organizations fail to support in terms of travelling to report news stories and journalists job security. ([Prakash, 2013](#))

The media boom in Pakistan has also created opportunities in Balochistan. People are getting aware of media role, and their perception about media is changing the way media was perceived in strict traditional society. The youth seems inspired by media and more and more students every year get admission in journalism ([Sultana, 2007](#)).

The news stations have expanded the coverage of Balochistan in national media however that coverage, say media experts and observers, is restricted to covering news reports, the voice gives an account of phone and news scrolls, what is known as "ticker" in TV dialect. Balochistan is truant from the open deliberation. The analyst believes that Baloch leaders, who have strong say on Balochistan issue are brought on national and local television for their opinion can make things better in the resettlement of the issues. ([Brown et al., 2012](#))

Maulana Abdullah and Maulana Abdul Karim were among the founding members of Quetta Press Club established in 1959. They also prepared the bond of press club's governing activities. It was called as Press Club Quetta and Kalat Division. There are few other organizations which are working for the safety of journalists in Balochistan. These organizations include Balochistan Daily Newspapers Editor Council, The provincial body of Pakistan Newspapers Employees council, The Press Council, Provincial body of Pakistan newspapers editors, Council of Magazines editors of Balochistan and Balochistan Union of journalists. (Laif & Hamza).

The environment for journalists has dependably been a long way from perfect, yet this time around they say they are travelling a thin line. In the past, if the reporting did not go for somebody (the tribal framework, the Sardars of the radicals), writers could depend on the state to protect them from any threat. In the event that they write something that troubles the radicals, the state can't secure them, and in the event that they write against the state's overabundances, the insurgents can't shield them from the state. ([Noraiee, 2020](#))

The official photographer of Governor House Balochistan Chishti Mujahid was killed in 2008. He was working with Daily Jang Quetta and for weekly Akhbar-e- Jahan. It is considered that he was killed after the mysterious killing of Baloch leader Nawab Balch Marri. The subeditor has given the strong headline to the story of Baloch leader killing entailing that "the end of the custodian of Baloch nationalism was so disastrous that he didn't even get a piece of land for burial". This headline may have caused his death at the hand of

Ban militant outfit Baloch Liberation Army. (M. K. Khan, Sana, & Kiran) Whatever could have the reason the experienced reporter who has worked for decades to highlights the issues of Balochistan became a victim of the conflict. A conflict where journalists cannot afford to be on the wrong side. ([Tarique & Shaheen, 2019](#))

The journalists receive calls from insurgents and asking them why they are portrayed critically and why they have not given enough and prominent space in the newspaper. Beside insurgents, the fabricated stories were sent to the newspaper's offices from agencies to portray the ongoing insurgency as against the development work. Such stories were common in Musharraf's reign. ([Norris, 2009](#))

The violence's in Balochistan has started boom after the assassination of Baloch Nawab, Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti in 2006. The rise in incidents of sectarian violence's made the security situation increasingly dangerous for journalists and media workers, especially for cameramen. The Pakistani military establishment planned to control the Baloch insurgency by divide and rule policy along with force. This suppression has generated support of Islamist political parties in Balochistan. ([Bansal, 2005](#))

The Afghan Taliban factor has aggravated the security situation, especially in Pashtun populated areas. Lack of security for journalists in Balochistan turned them to navigate in an environment of threat. According to senior journalist Rahimullah Yousafzai that some organizations who are working for journalists training in Pakistan have given safety training to journalists, but that is not sufficient. The journalists argued that journalists from foreign media are well trained and equipped while local journalists are deprived of safety training and equipment. ([Siddique, 2011](#)).

The journalist's unions in Pakistan made the existing Press council invalidated by not employing representatives to the monitoring council fearing that it would make state intervene in bendable media obligatory and preferred an autonomous media self-regulating system. In Pakistan, there is at least three major ethical code of practices proposed by Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists, SAFMA and by the Editors Council of Pakistan. It is important that these institutions workout for the common policy that would be the foundation for the self-regulatory system. ([Support, 2009](#)).

It is believed that the conflict in western Pakistan cannot be alienated from the conflict in neighboring country Afghanistan. Pakistani security contemplations and unclear outskirt issues hinder the two nations from framing closer collaboration and an assembled front against the radical risk. Neither Afghanistan nor Pakistan or the worldwide group can handle this risk independently. The fundamental political issues and security matters must be tended to inside a discussion of shared comprehension if long haul peace and steadiness are to go to the locale. ([Support, 2009](#)).

The media capacity in Pakistan and Afghanistan does not have a territorial stage for talk; detailing from the neighbor nation is frequently mistaken and lacking equalization. The Pakistani media does not cover how the contention with the Taliban influences the Afghan populace, and as a rule, in Pakistan, there is a feeling of foreswearing of how its arrangements have prompt to the atrocity in Afghanistan. On the other hand, the main media role in Pakistan seems very passive in establishing closer cooperation between Pakistan and Afghanistan political stakeholders to tackle the dual conflict. ([Tahir & Niaz, 2016](#)).

Beside Pashtun media in Pakistan, the rest of the media relations with Afghan media and the extent of the impacts of the conflict in Afghanistan are few. Part of the reason is just a lack of financial element; significant Pakistani media house doesn't organize positioning reporters in Afghanistan. The Pashtun Pakistani media, however, has cross-outskirt connections, and individual journalists additionally have ethnically-based contacts with partners in Afghanistan. It is imperative that the strong relations between the two countries journalists can pave the way for improved reporting of conflict tendency in the expanse and address the mutual issues and other disputes by means of further fair approach. ([Hilali, 2017](#)).

Violence against Journalists

Violence Index Province wise

| S. No | Sindh | Balochistan | Punjab | Khyber Pakhtunkhwa | FATA | Islamabad | Total |
|----------------------|------------|-------------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Killed while working | 3 | 9 | 1 | 10 | 2 | 1 | 24 |
| Murdered | 12 | 15 | 3 | 9 | 7 | 2 | 47 |
| Injured | 51 | 11 | 34 | 18 | 8 | 42 | 164 |
| Assaulted | 40 | 1 | 14 | 5 | 0 | 28 | 88 |
| Abducted | 7 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 21 |
| Detained | 15 | 5 | 10 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 40 |
| Total | 128 | 41 | 63 | 49 | 27 | 76 | 387 |

Source: Pakistan Press Foundation Media Violence index

List of Journalists Killed in Balochistan

| S. No | Name | Organization | Date of killing | Nature of killing |
|-------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Dr Chishti Mujahid | Weekly Akhbar-i- Jaha | 9th February 2008 | Firing |
| 2 | Khadim Hussain Sheikh | Daily Khabrein | 14th April 2008 | Firing |
| 3 | Wasi Ahmed Qureshi | Daily Azadi Quetta | 10 April 2009 | Firing |
| 4 | Faiz Sasoli | Daily Azadi Quetta | 27 June 2009 | Firing |
| 5 | Malik Arif | Sama News | 16 April 2010 | Bomb blast |
| 6 | Muhammad Sarwar Rind | Ajj News | 3rd September 2010 | Firing |
| 7 | Ijaz Raisani | Sama News | 3rd September 2010 | Rally Blat |
| 8 | Lala Hameed Baloch | Daily Tawaar | 28th November 2010 | Firing |
| 9 | Muhammad Khan Sasoli | Daily Zamana Quetta | 14th December 2010 | Firing |
| 10 | Sidique Eido | Shajo | 21 December 2010 | Firing |
| 11 | Ilyas Nazar | Daily Tawaar | 3rd June 2011 | Firing |
| 12 | Abd Dost Rind | Daily Eagle | 28th February 2011 | Firing |
| 13 | Rehmatullah Shaheen | Daily Tawaar | 18th March 2011 | Firing |
| 14 | Zareef Faraz | Shajo | 25th April 2011 | Firing |
| 15 | Munir Shakir | Online | 14th August 2011 | Firing |
| 16 | Javeid Naseer | Daily Tawaar | 25th November 2011 | Firing |
| 17 | Raza Gul Baloch | Express News | 28th May 2012 | Firing |
| 18 | Dilshad Dihani | Daily Azadi | 21st August 2012 | Firing |
| 19 | Abdul Haq Baloch | Daily Awaam/ARY | 29TH September 2012 | Firing |
| 20 | Khalid Musa | Daily Ummat | 23 October 2012 | Firing |

| S. No | Name | Organization | Date of killing | Nature of killing |
|-------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 21 | Siraj Nadeem | Son of Nadeem Girnari | 25th October 2012 | Firing |
| 22 | Manzoor Nadeem | Son of Nadeem Girnari | 25th October 2012 | Firing |
| 23 | Rehmatullah Abid | Daily Dunya/ APP | 18th November 2012 | Firing |
| 24 | Abdul Ahad Baloch | Ajj Kal | 25th November 2012 | Firing |
| 25 | Jamshed Khiral | Nazim News | 20 December 2012 | Firing |
| 26 | Sif Ur Rehman Baloch | Sma news | 10th January 2013 | Bomb blast |
| 27 | Imran Sheikh | Sama News | 10TH January 2013 | Bomb blast |
| 28 | Muhammad Iqbal | NNI | 10th January 2013 | Bomb blast |
| 29 | Mehmood Afridi | Daily Intikhab | 1st March 2013 | Firing |
| 30 | Haji Abdul Razzaque Sirbaazi | Daily Tawaar | 21st August 2013 | Firing |
| 31 | Muhammad Afzal Khwaja | Daily Zamana | 1st February 2014 | Firing |
| 32 | Ijaz Mengal | Brother of Riaz Mengal | 14th February 2014 | Firing |
| 33 | Irshad Mastoi | Online | 28th August 2014 | Firing |
| 34 | Abdul Rassol Arif Kooki | Online | 28th August 2014 | Firing |
| 35 | Muhammad Younas | Online | 28th August 2014 | Firing |
| 36 | Haji Abdul Qadir Hajizai | Vash News | 28th May | Firing |
| 37 | Mehmood Khan | Dawn News | 8th August 2016 | Bomb Blast |
| 38 | Shehzad Ahmed | Ajj News | 8th August 2016 | Bomb Blast |
| 39 | MMuhammad Jan Sumalani | Member Ahmed Yar Khan Press Club | 12th January 2017 | Firing |

Source: *Balochistan Union of Journalists*

State of Security in Balochistan in the last few years

In the last 14 years, some serious nature attacks were planned by the terrorists to destabilize the state machinery in the province and keep people under the shadows of fear. However, four major incidents of bomb blast and terrorist attacks have challenged the state writ in the capital city. On 10th January 2013, a suicide bomber blew himself in the snooker club and killed more than 80 people including four journalists and four social welfares workers. (Hussain & Lynch, 2015) On 15th June 2013, a female suicide bomber blew herself in the women University bus and killed more than 15 students of Sardar Bahdur Khan Women University students. The injured of the blast were shifted to the nearby Bolan Medical Complex hospital, and another suicide bomber blew himself in the hospital emergency and killed 27 more people (Bloom, 2007). On 8th August 2013 during a funeral prayer of Police Officer, the suicide bomber blew himself and killed 40 policemen and civilians including District Inspector General on the spot. The latest of all was 8th August 2016 blast where a Balochistan Bar Council president Bilal Anwar Kasi was targeted in the morning, and he was shifted to the hospital. Where the lawyers community were already gathered in large numbers.

The suicide bomber blew himself in the lawyers gathering and killed more than 80 people including a large number of lawyers, media persons, para-medics and civilians. ([Grare, 2013](#))

To understand the intensity of the conflicts and unrest, it is necessary to look into the states of different years, that how issues of conflicts triggered in those years and make the journalists job more challenging every year. These states will elaborate on how sensitive the journalist's job is in a conflict zone such as Balochistan.

| S. No | Year | Bomb Blasts | Rocket Attacks |
|-------|-------|-------------|----------------|
| 1 | 2004 | 175 | 836 |
| 2 | 2005 | 232 | 388 |
| 3 | 2006 | 422 | 624 |
| 4 | 2007 | 414 | 197 |
| 5 | 2008 | 376 | 377 |
| 6 | 2009 | 582 | 210 |
| 7 | 2010 | 221 | 144 |
| 8 | 2011 | 392 | 203 |
| 9 | 2012 | 304 | 172 |
| 10 | 2013 | 280 | 187 |
| 11 | 2014 | 196 | 118 |
| 12 | 2015 | 165 | 151 |
| | Total | 3,759 | 3,607 |

The figures in the tables clearly indicate the Balochistan remained under the extremely difficult situation when it comes to the law and order situation in the province. The job of journalists never is easy when states are fueling the fear.

The militants used different tactics to challenge state machinery. Government energy resources were also targeted to give economic loss to the government and disturbed the lives of people by hitting electricity towers, gas pipelines and railway tracks. The following table will give details on how often they hit the electricity towers, gas pipelines and railway tracks.

| S. No | Year | Electricity Towers Hit | Gas Pipelines Hit | Railways Tracks Targeted |
|-------|-------|------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | 2005 | 16 | 14 | 16 |
| 2 | 2006 | 27 | 59 | 23 |
| 3 | 2007 | 42 | 23 | 21 |
| 4 | 2008 | 32 | 20 | 52 |
| 5 | 2009 | 55 | 59 | 21 |
| 6 | 2010 | 13 | 07 | 04 |
| 7 | 2011 | 30 | 63 | 12 |
| 8 | 2012 | 35 | 48 | 17 |
| | Total | 250 | 293 | 166 |

The separatist militant groups targeted the Punjabi speaking and Urdu speaking people in Balochistan to give a message to the establishment that there is no space for these ethnic groups in Balochistan. The high government officials, journalists, Doctors, Lawyers, Judges, teachers and even Barbour's were targeted by the militants, and they claimed the responsibilities of those killings. The majority of journalists in Balochistan remained from Punjabi or Urdu background, and they were associated with national-level newspapers published from Balochistan. After witnessing the horrible time these journalists weather left the

Balochistan or continued their work under extreme pressure from militant organizations. Below is the table shows the incidents of ethnic violence in the provinces from 2008 to 2015.

List of Settlers killed in Balochistan

| S. No | Year | Incidents | Killed | Injured |
|-------|-------|-----------|--------|---------|
| 1 | 2008 | 58 | 38 | 56 |
| 2 | 2009 | 110 | 75 | 124 |
| 3 | 2010 | 150 | 113 | 132 |
| 4 | 2011 | 15 | 22 | 10 |
| 5 | 2012 | 48 | 53 | 30 |
| 6 | 2013 | 06 | 07 | 02 |
| 7 | 2014 | 17 | 40 | 35 |
| 8 | 2015 | 91 | 127 | 173 |
| | TOTAL | 495 | 475 | 562 |

The other conflicting issue Balochistan is suffering from decades is a sectarian rift in the province. According to senior journalists that this issue is more dangerous than the separatist's militancy. And every now then journalists is pressurized and threaten by the fanatic elements. These religious militants' elements are supported by the International involvement in the province, and they sponsored and supported their cause to gain their interests. The religious militancy is discussed in detail in later chapters.

Sectarian Killing

| S. No | Year | Incidents | Killing | Injured |
|-------|-------|-----------|---------|---------|
| 1 | 2008 | 46 | 56 | 05 |
| 2 | 2009 | 26 | 39 | 17 |
| 3 | 2010 | 17 | 81 | 174 |
| 4 | 2011 | 21 | 118 | 84 |
| 5 | 2012 | 67 | 46 | 194 |
| 6 | 2013 | 08 | 197 | 398 |
| 7 | 2014 | 34 | 217 | 132 |
| 8 | 2015 | 11 | 21 | 11 |
| | Total | 230 | 775 | 1,015 |

Besides the sacrifices of people of Balochistan security forces also sacrificed their lives to ensure state writ in the province. The separatist militants and religious militants killed a number of security personnel of Police, Frontier Constabulary and Levies force. Below is the table which shows a number of security personnel killed between 2008 and 2015.

| S. No | Year | Levies/Police | | | Frontier Constabulary | | |
|-------|------|---------------|--------|---------|-----------------------|--------|---------|
| | | Incidents | Killed | Injured | Incidents | Killed | Injured |
| 1 | 2008 | 59 | 42 | 68 | 88 | 62 | 56 |
| 2 | 2009 | 75 | 73 | 97 | 56 | 30 | 150 |
| 3 | 2010 | 81 | 48 | 102 | 77 | 34 | 101 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 4 | 2011 | 13 | 28 | 39 | 74 | 73 | 224 |
| 5 | 2012 | 67 | 51 | 83 | 82 | 76 | 129 |
| 6 | 2013 | 07 | 02 | 02 | 20 | 09 | 05 |
| 7 | 2014 | 29 | 62 | 54 | 42 | 58 | 76 |
| 8 | 2015 | 42 | 41 | 33 | 69 | 23 | 82 |
| | Total | 373 | 347 | 478 | 508 | 365 | 823 |

The journalism and journalist job is not easy in Balochistan. The states in the tables indicate the intensity of the conflicts prevailing in Balochistan. The conflicts in Balochistan have influenced every citizen life. Living conditions in Balochistan are very tough for journalists, and it gets even more difficult when it is practised with the zeal of freedom of expression.

Discussion

The study has shown that there are different elements due to which Balochistan is considered to be a conflicting zone. But two prominent factors are Separatist movement from Baloch militants, and the other is Sectarianism. Both of these burning issues are aggravated by foreign involvement in the province. The Chinese investment in Balochistan is not pleasing for USA and India, and they see Chinese involvement in Balochistan as a threat to their economic development in the region. Local youth are used to destabilize the province law and order situation in the name of independence. The socio-economic grievances of the people need to be addressed so that it cannot be exploited. The study has shown that state machinery also hinders the job of journalists in Balochistan. The Balochistan High Court decision of not publishing news of ban organizations has certainly put journalists under threats from ban organizations. The security agencies and even political parties pressurize the journalists in Balochistan to not perform their duties with professionalism.

The study reinforces recommendations that journalists professional approach is very important when they are reporting issues of conflicting, and they need to understand that there is a difference between views and news. The government, media organizations and journalists unions need to activate their participation in protecting journalists when they are under pressure from ban organizations. The information vacuum in Balochistan is not a new phenomenon; it is the result of long term underdevelopment in the province and access to the northern areas of Balochistan is not an easy job to do. But the media coverage on the mainstream media of Pakistan can contribute a lot in resolving the issue of Balochistan.

Findings

The international powers have kept the land of Balochistan disturbed for their personnel gains. The USA is not happy with ongoing China's project in Balochistan. The conflict issues in Balochistan are influenced by international actors, and the control of these issues are with international actors.

The Balochistan issue cannot be resolved by addressing the socio-economic grievances of people of Balochistan. The political forces of Balochistan in particular and political forces of other provinces, in general, wants to discuss hard liner inside the framework devised by Pakistani federation have been diminished that results in harden position of hardliners.

The important factor dugout during the study that most of the senior journalists in Balochistan are working without professional qualification. While young journalists in Balochistan are qualified but their competency level is still a question, especially when it comes to working in the conflict zone. There is very limited space for young journalists to grow and build their carrier in the presence of strong Media gurus.

Balochistan is a traditional society and strictly stick to the norms, and the influence of Sardars and Nawabs is still influential in the tribal landscape of Balochistan. The journalists believe that the tribal system is a barrier in the free flow of information.

Recommendations

1. The international community needs to understand that Balochistan is under brutal insurgency from the last ten years. The China Pakistan Economic Corridor will open new venues and opportunities for the deprived people of Balochistan in particular and for people of Pakistan in particular. The international power corridor wants stable Pakistan; if this is the case, then they need to understand projects like CPEC can make a difference. They should support ongoing development projects in Balochistan, and they must step back from the negative role they are playing in Balochistan. Balochistan is under the fifth insurgency, and historically it is proven that by force, the issue cannot be resolved. Pakistani establishment should cater to the situation within the local structure. The use of power generated negative sentiments in Baloch belt disturbed areas.
2. The greater provincial autonomy in Balochistan can resolve many issues. Although after the 18th amendment in the constitution, few subjects are shifted to provinces still there are areas which need to be addressed. A general sentiment prevails in the province that decisions related to Balochistan are not taken by the provincial government, but they advised from power corridors. The power center should be given to those who are elected by the people.
3. The journalism courses taught at Universities in Balochistan should be modernized up to the level of international standards. The courses of conflict and crisis reporting should be taught to the students, and a module of ethics in conflict coverage should be introduced at earliest.
4. The mainstream media needs to give proper coverage to Balochistan. By enhancing the coverage, the issue of Balochistan should be discussed with perspective. In this way, the issue Balochistan will become a national debate, and it will minimize the risk for local media and journalists.
5. The role of government in giving protection to journalists needs a revisit. The government should play an active role in giving protection to journalists and give shelter to those journalists who are under threat. There must be a handsome fixed amount for those journalists who are killed in the line of duty. The government 'as a state responsibility' follow the cases of journalists and file FIR against those who claim the responsibilities of journalists killing.

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