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National Dialogue Series

Security and Development of Balochistan: Existing Dynamics and Way Ahead

Under its National Dialogue Series, the Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) organized a webinar on *Security and Development of Balochistan: Existing Dynamics and Way Ahead* on 25 June 2020. Speakers included **Lt. Gen. (R) Nasser Khan Janjua**, former National Security Advisor; **Mr Jan Jamali**, Member Provincial Assembly of Balochistan, and former Chief Minister Balochistan; **Mr Rafiullah Kakar**, a development and policy expert from Balochistan; **Mr Sanaullah Baloch**, Member Provincial Assembly of Balochistan; and **Dr Farhan Hanif Siddiqi**, Director School of Politics and International Relations, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad.



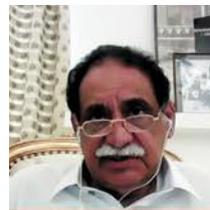
In his Opening Remarks, **Brig. (R) Raashid Wali Janjua**, SI(M), Acting President and Director Research, IPRI, shed light on the tremendous strategic and resource potential of Balochistan and highlighted that there has been less focus on human security while framing parameters of the security debate on the Balochistan issue in the past. "The human security concept that espouses the safety of humans from hunger, disease, joblessness and poverty should form the basis of any political discourse on Balochistan. Without a healthy symbiosis between the state's security efforts and the province's development needs with a people-centric focus, peace and development would remain an elusive goal," he said.

Delivering his Keynote Address titled 'Reflections on Balochistan Issue', **Lt. Gen. (R) Nasser Khan Janjua**



highlighted that Pakistan is the bridge that connects 85.9% of the world and all the global roads pass through this region. The future of the world will be Afro-Eurasia as old economic powers are receding. For Pakistan to take advantage of these global changes, it needs to position itself as a massive trade corridor.

While talking about the internal security dynamics of Balochistan, he explained that the root cause of the security challenges was the inability of the state to integrate the province and its people into the national polity. This, he felt, has resulted in a sense of deprivation within the Baloch people that has led to retaliation, negative sub-nationalism and separatist tendencies.



Discussing 'The Security Situation of Balochistan: External Front', **Mr Jan Jamali** stated that Balochistan is a key component of the Great Game of the 21st Century between the US and China. International powers have different interests within this Great Game, i.e. the US is against the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC); India is trying to foment problems for Pakistan via Afghanistan; Iran is tentative due to Jundullah-related activities in Kermanhah; and the Gulf countries look on anxiously as the Gwadar Port becomes operational.

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CPEC could integrate Balochistan economically into Pakistan, and reduce regional disparities and promote peace through economic development.

Proving a review of CPEC and its impact on Balochistan, **Mr Rafiullah Kakar** stated that Gwadar as a regional hub of business and commerce can promote trade and economic activities in the province. CPEC could improve Gwadar's connectivity with the rest of the country; address Pakistan's energy shortfall by improving grid connectivity and energy supply in Balochistan; and create jobs and foster economic growth in the province. Mr Kakar opined that although CPEC is a game changer for Pakistan as far as potential is concerned, the actual situation on ground called for cautious optimism.

Discussing Balochistan's 'Law and Order and Security Challenges', **Mr Sanaullah Baloch** argued that in the last two years, the province has seen a visible rise in law and order incidents, largely evident in sustained civilian casualties. He stressed that lasting stability must be conditioned on addressing two critical challenges, i.e. physical and human security. Mr Baloch was of the view that the focus of the state should be on bolstering human security across the province, including pathways for development, health and education access, as well as equal employment opportunities and sufficient indigenous representation within civilian and military institutions.

Tendency to overlook human security imperatives cedes space to complacency, which ultimately promotes hostile sentiment, often in the form of insurgencies.

Discussing the need for governance reforms and political empowerment, **Dr Farhan Hanif Siddiqi** highlighted that elite-level choices at the provincial stage do not reflect the on-ground preferences of the Baloch people. He was of the view that the politics of this area have always been dominated by tribal lords and chiefs who use funds from the federation to consolidate their power and wealth. With no real devolution of power and efficient local government structure, the Baloch are yet to taste the true meaning of democracy, he lamented.



Recommendations

1. Balochistan should be declared the 'industrial province of Asia'. Eight common border markets could be created along Iranian and Afghan borders in Balochistan at Zhob, Chaman, Nushki, Barab Chah, Taftan, Mashakhel, Chedgi and Gabd.
2. No mega development project can succeed without political reconciliation since low-scale insurgency remains a challenge in Balochistan and can offset any development plans. All political parties should prioritise Balochistan in their development agendas.
3. Need-based development should be adopted as the instrument for addressing Balochistan's recurring grievances. Balochistan is almost half the size of Karachi in terms of population. However, on geographical grounds, it is about 44% of Pakistan. These two considerations alone merit an institutional design, uniquely tailored towards this province.
4. The state must first understand how Balochistan's local elite and non-elites interact with one another, and what the nature of their relationship is. The goal should be to determine whether synchrony has existed between local politics and the brand of politics exercised at the top, especially when the dynamic of politics has transitioned frequently from appeasement to resentment.
5. Caution has to be taken against greater polarization of the 18th Amendment discourse as the world has already witnessed democratic referendums that have swept Scotland, Iraqi Kurdistan and Catalonia, which constitute a trend in autonomous voting that could also impact Balochistan.
6. Prospective gains from CPEC must be aligned with the expectations of the Baloch people, who deserve to be on the receiving end of future dividends.

Panel Discussion

Afghan Peace Process: The Way Forward

The peace process in Afghanistan should not be seen as a zero sum game, but as a much needed attempt to restore peace as well as prosperity in the country and the region.

IPRI organized a panel discussion titled *Afghan Peace Process: The Way Forward* on 17 June 2020.

In his Opening Remarks, **Brig. (R) Raashid Wali Janjua**, SI (M), Acting President and Director Research, IPRI, highlighted that there is consensus on the withdrawal of troops which is contingent on the outcome of the intra-Afghan dialogue. All regional stakeholders need to be on board for withdrawal to happen in an orderly fashion. He was of the view that one of the most important challenges is chalking out a power-sharing deal with the Taliban and acceptability of that deal by all factions. Brig. Janjua stressed that the future of Afghanistan is dependent on the outcome of the peace process which needs to be inclusive and participatory with full support of regional countries.

Discussing 'Intra Afghan Peace Negotiations: Prospects and Challenges', **Ambassador (R) Riaz Muhammad Khan** outlined that there are hopeful signs emerging in Afghanistan, such as the 29th February agreement; and reduction in violence with the Taliban avoiding targeting Americans and other NATO forces. He pointed out that reduction in violence has decreased uncertainty and increased confidence on all sides to work towards further reconciliation. He remarked that while the 'Taliban have toned down their ideological rhetoric, especially on gender issues, there is question of Shariah, as it is yet to be seen whether they implement it or not. The fear of external spoilers muddying the waters remains a reality, but, presently they are preoccupied with COVID-19.' Ambassador Khan's forecast of future challenges included release of prisoners; constitutional issues; the Taliban's interpretation of Islam and their political skills; likely government structure; and sustaining the Afghan economy once international assistance dwindles.

Discussing 'Post Withdrawal Engagement with Afghanistan: Likely Scenarios', **Ambassador (R) Ashraf Jehangir Qazi** highlighted that US' role in Afghanistan would be crucial and it would want to retain its presence in the region because of its emerging 'Cold War' with China. The US' foreign policy objectives towards Afghanistan and Pakistan are means to that very end. Ambassador Qazi emphasized that given the US' waning soft power, it will need to depend on 'politically and financially dependent elites' to do its bidding against China. In such a scenario, the best bet for the US in

sustaining a pro-US security order in Afghanistan and the region, hurting China's economic ambitions in the process, is India. 'Should a conflict between the US and China become imminent, which is highly likely, Washington will look towards New Delhi to deter Beijing's rising influence, while pressuring Pakistan to 'distance' itself from China,' he opined. Ambassador Qazi saw the situation in Afghanistan playing out rather precariously. In his opinion, continued US presence in Afghanistan would embolden India to keep its diplomatic and developmental ventures in the country active, much to Pakistan's chagrin. However, were Pakistan and India to broker an agreement on Kashmir and improve their relationship to a considerable degree, Afghanistan would benefit from peace between the two countries that have stakes in the Afghan peace process.

Discussing the role of regional players, **Ambassador (R) Rustum Shah Mohmand**, shared that Russia and China believe that the Taliban can ensure stability in Afghanistan and would back the group in government since they have the ability to crush uprisings by the Fidayi Mahaz, Daesh and the Turkistan Islamic Movement, which pose a threat to stability in Xinjiang and Central Asian States, bearing Chinese and Russian concerns. He was of the view that the role of regional powers has been instrumental in the once considered elusive peace process in Afghanistan. The joint statement of representatives of Pakistan, China, Iran and Russia on 18 May 2020, shows the intent for an Afghan-led peace and reconciliation process. All regional players will be beneficiaries of peace deal. However, he warned that given the huge financial investments (USD 3 billion) made by India in various Afghan sectors, it will continue to meddle in the country's affairs, especially to destabilize Pakistan. He cautioned that the fencing of the Pak-Afghan border has hurt Pakistan economically as trade is rerouted through Chabahar. 'Such measures hurt cultural as well as financial integration,' he remarked.

If peace is restored in Afghanistan, it can become a conduit for important regional projects including CASA-1000, as well as facilitate bilateral agreements such as CPEC and trade between South and Central Asia.

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IPRI Scholars' Opinion Articles

Brig. (R) Raashid Wali Janjua
Acting President/Director
Research

1. "Himalayan Hegemon"
Pakistan Observer
2. "The Violence of Hindutva"
The News

Ambassador (R) Asif Durrani
Senior Research Fellow
"Indo-China Military Standoff
and Pakistan's Concerns"
Daily Times

Khurram Abbas
Research Officer
"Why Does Trump Want to
Expand the G7 into a G11?"
Global Village Space

Muhammad Nawaz Khan
Research Officer

1. "Evolving Pak-Russia Relations"
2. "Pak-Central Asia Relations"
3. "Deradicalization Drive is
Giving Spoilers a Chance"
Balochistan Times

Hamzah Rifaat Hussain
Assistant Research Officer

1. "Another Cog in a Trend of
Provocations from the
Republicans"
China Daily
2. "Caesar Syrian Civilian
Protection Act: Another Attempt
at Regime Change"
Daily Times
3. "EU Proposal Shows That Trump
Does Not Have a Monopoly on
Travel Bans"
4. "Another Blow to America's
Human Rights Image as Nobel
Peace Prize Winner Withdraws
from Minority Rights Forum"
5. "Brexit Trade Agreement
Still a Long Shot Ahead of
June Summit"
6. "Al Shabaab, ISIL Resurgence
Puts Spotlight on
Anti-terrorism Challenge"
*China Global Television
Network (CGTN)*

Gulshan Rafiq
Assistant Research Officer
"Thinking Machines &
Humanity: Magic or Menace?"
Geopolitica

Adeel Mukhtar Mirza
Assistant Research Officer

1. "Fuel for Food"
2. "Thorny Mediation"
3. "Indian Revisionist
Behaviour"
Global News Pakistan
4. "India's Khalistan Limbo"
Geopolitica

Hannan R. Hussain
Assistant Research Officer
"Decoding the Sino-Australia
Cyber Attack Saga"
China Focus

Latest Publication



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IPRI on Television



Ambassador (R) Asif Durrani, Senior Research Fellow at IPRI, appeared on 6 talk shows on various local news channels including **PTV World** (*Nukta-e-Imtiaz, Dialogue, Politics Today, and Newsroom*), and **Such TV** (*News Hour*). He shared his views on the Afghan political process, India's foreign policies jeopardizing peace in South Asia, as well as the *Black Lives Matter* movement in the US.

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Recommendations

1. A serious diplomatic effort to improve the political, economic and social contours of Pakistan's relationship with Afghanistan will require mutually agreed frameworks for border management, resumption of trade, water sharing and cultural exchange.
2. Pakistan needs to create conditions for enhancement of trade and economic activity with Afghanistan and also provide avenues for investment for the Afghans. This would help economic integration between the two countries.
3. Pakistan should put an end to its policy of playing favourites with various Afghan factions.