

Balochistan Think Tank Network



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About BTTN

Balochistan Think Tank Network (BTTN) was established at Quetta, on March 1, 2021. It is an autonomous, non-profit, non-partisan, and multidisciplinary Research Center with a focus not limited to Balochistan only, but includes the regional and global dynamics which can influence Pakistan. Broadly, BTTN endeavors to undertake in-depth research of provincial issues with a view to developing the socio, political, and economic status of the province. Its interests also include issues of Energy, Regional Stability, Strategic Stability, Peace and Security, Arms Control and Disarmament, Non-Proliferation, Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Technology, Conflict Resolution, Regional Connectivity, and Socioeconomic development at the national level. Geopolitically, besides South Asia, BTTN's research areas also include regions of Europe and Africa.

BTTN OP-EDs

Balochistan Think Tank Network (BTTN) Faculty of Research has been writing op-eds on a regular basis on different contemporary issues that are published on various international and national platforms. The opinions expressed in this edition are the authors' individual views and do not reflect the official policy of BTTN or any governmental organization. This electronic review is compiled on a monthly basis.

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Haram Money and Noah's Age: The Crippling Judicial System of Pakistan

Asad Ullah Raisani

May 20, 2024

I recently had an interaction with an elderly man in his 60s who had just had a dispute settled through the Jirga System. When I asked him why he chose to resolve the issue through the Muchhi or Jirga and not the judiciary, he said, "I do not have haram (illegitimate) money to waste in courts and kechehries, nor do I have Noah's age to wait for the verdict to come." A joyful laughter followed the statement, and everyone sitting in the room laughed to his loudest. That laughter seemed to reflect on the worsening condition of the judiciary of the country, where a great number of people rely on the traditional justice system (TJS), known as Jirga in Pashto, and Muchhi / Dewan in Balochi, to settle or resolve their disputes in Balochistan. This paper delves into the reasons for such reliance and recommends a feasible course of action for the future.

As per the World Justice Project's Rule of Law Index 2021 Report, Pakistan ranks 130th out of 139 nations in its adherence to the rule of law. The report states that Pakistan's Judiciary lacks accountability and just law. The accessibility and impartiality of justice are other major reasons that Pakistan is ranked so low in the report. These are fundamental causes that parallel judicial systems, despite their discouragement, function in Pakistan. In Balochistan, a great number of the residents of rural areas of the country rely on TJS to settle their disputes rather than going to the courts. The system is more active in the Suleimani tribes of the southeastern Balochistan, and rural areas of the Pashtun majority areas of the province. It is praised for assuring quick justice and being less expensive than the judiciary.

However, it cannot be ignored that Jirgas are dominated by the tribal elite, with no participation from women, and are known to render verdicts that often violate basic human rights. Despite this, tribal people continue to trust and consider Jirga system more efficient for its speedy and cost-effective provision of justice. In an interaction, a Malak (a Pashtun elder of local Jirgas) told me that he had settled three disputes in a day, and the longest duration he took to reach a verdict was two and a half months. In contrast, he added,

“One of our friends went to settle a property dispute in court, and it has been over four years, but the verdict is still pending.”

Another man in his late twenties said that he wanted to correct his date of birth in his documents, and it took him more than three years until he asked an influential person to intervene and fast-track the process. Similarly, a government employee said that his name was Muhammad Zahoor (name withheld) on his Computerized National Identity Card (CNIC) but Zahoor Ahmed on his certificates and other documents. “It took the court over a year and a half to order NADRA to change my name [in the CNIC],” he contended. An advocate, filled with anger, stated that the killing of a policeman by a relative of a famous politician some time ago was the final nail in the coffin of the country’s judiciary. “If people prefer Jirgas over courts, they are doing the right thing,” he argued, “and we have no reason to expect them to trust us, the judges, or even the entire judicial system of Pakistan.”

In short, despite being discouraged at certain levels, the TJS is perceived as more reliable by a great number of people in Balochistan, particularly in rural areas, where people lack trust in the country’s judicial system. Even the last Caretaker Prime Minister of Pakistan, Anwaar UI Haq Kakar, justified enforced disappearances in the country sharing similar views in the media that the Criminal Justice System of the country is weak. Moreover, reliance on the parallel justice systems is evident in the province, as even those who get elected and become Members of the National or Provincial Assemblies also participate as elders in Jirgas, rather than encouraging people to trust the country’s judicial system.

Therefore, there is a need to make the judicial system of the country more reliable by providing quick and cost-effective justice. In this digital age, people should not waste their time in coming to court or kachehri for every nitty-gritty thing; instead, the judicial system should be virtualized, and every sort of form, application, letter, or stamp paper should be available online to them. They should not pay Rs. 200 for a stamp paper that is of Rs. 30. Sub-branches of the court should be made in different areas of the province so that people should not need to think of coming to Quetta every time for a verdict. Transparency in the judicial system is the backbone of the system, which is clearly missing. Thana Culture

adds more burden on ordinary citizens which needs to be taken into consideration by the competitive authorities.

Even after implementing these recommendations, people will take time to trust the judicial system. But if indifference in this regard continues, parallel justice systems will maintain their lead, and different parts of the province, akin to France and German states pre-Napoleonic Era in Europe, will have varying laws. A Jirga sitting in Sibi will have a different yardstick to measure justice from the one sitting in Zhob, and the one sitting in Kalat will have different than the one sitting in Pishin. For these reasons, a fair and consistent justice system is the need of the hour.

[Haram Money and Noah's Age: The Crippling Judicial System of Pakistan – Modern Diplomacy](#)

Iran – Israel Conflict: Weighing a painful response**Ali Abbas****May 22, 2024**

During the Israeli war cabinet meeting, Benny Gantz reiterated that “We will build a regional coalition and collect the price from Iran, in the way and at the time that suits us.”

This sparks speculations that Israel will indeed respond to the unprecedented Iranian drone and missile attacks. If that happens to be the case, it will not affect the security of the region but will endanger global security as a whole.

Iran’s missile strikes indicated three elements. First, it showed Iranian resolve to defend their territory against aggression of all sorts. Second, it showed an existing commitment to controlled escalation. Three, it highlighted Iran’s long-range capabilities whereby it can strike targets with precision at the time and placing of its choosing. All these three elements put together compose Iran’s missile deterrent capability, and with a rich pool of targets within the range of its diverse set of missiles, it is not difficult to deduce that a massive barrage of ballistics, unlike the attacks last weekend, would certainly obliterate a majority portion of the US, Israeli, and the Western assets in the region.

On the other hand, Israel seems to be further bolstered by repeated verbal support by its main ally, the United States. Secretary of State, Antony Blinken pledged continued support to Israel’s defense especially if attacked by Tehran. In addition to this, some Western countries have protested diplomatically against Iran for its recent attacks. The US and its allies, nonetheless, helped Israel intercept a large number of missiles launched from Iranian territory, Lebanon, and Yemen. The military and diplomatic support received by Israel will not help de-escalate the situation, rather grant Israel a false invincibility aura whereby it might be forced to assess the situation to its advantage, even though it might not be at all.

In order to assess the Iranian response to an Israeli counter retaliation, one must know the political dynamics within Iran, especially in context with Israel. The current theocratic set up in Iran, to be taken in congruence with Iran’s establishment or its deep state, hinges on the singular premise that the US and Israel are the enemies of the Iranian people and the Muslim world in general. Most of Iran’s foreign military interventions, through its

proxies, are justified as axes of resistance against the aforementioned. Iran's Quds force is named after the holy sites in Jerusalem indicating an implicit desire to liberate those lands from Israeli occupation. Iran's 40 years long streak of being under sanctions is entirely attributed to the US and Israeli enmity of the Iranian nation. Thus, another direct Israeli attack on Iran may be met with an even swifter and more severe response that has the probability of melting the entire escalation ladder itself.

To grasp the gravity, one must recall a war game conducted by Nonproliferation Policy Education Center, where Iran-Israel conventional conflict quickly turned nuclear with both Israel and Iran launching nuclear weapons on each other. What is meant here is that neither the Israelis, nor the Iranians will back down in face of further attacks. Both consider each to be an existential threat for one another. This is especially true for Iran, whose post revolution policies have entirely been centered around isolating and surrounding Israel, and undermining American influence in the region.

However, General David Petraeus, a former US Army General and CIA Chief, believes otherwise. Stating that Israel would formulate a response showcasing its deterrent capabilities while also avoiding "ratcheting up the escalation any further".

Yet the top-level executives both in Iran and Israel can be safely classified as hawkish towards one another. In addition to that, both possess fatalist elements within their governments who have a rather insatiable desire to go to war. With Iran acquiring 85% enrichment in late 2023, it may not be a far-fetched assumption that Iran may have developed nuclear weapons covertly. They also possess the requisite delivery systems i.e. Ballistic and Cruise missiles that can be tipped with nuclear warheads. However, there is no strong evidence to this assumption.

What is left, therefore, is a spark that will set the entire region and possibly the world in flames – not conventional but nuclear. With Iran's response last weekend, both countries can now claim victory. Iran has done enough to save face whereas Israel can claim how it intercepted 99% of Iranian air-borne weapons.

It is up to the Israelis now to maintain the fragile peace in the region and decide against any counter retaliation which has the capacity to escalate to a point where the escalation ladder itself might disintegrate in a nuclear inferno.

[Iran-Israel Conflict Weighing a Painful Response - StrafAsia](#)

Deterrence Value of Nuclear Weapons

Dr. Zafar Khan

May 24, 2024

Since the very onset when the US became the first country to develop and use nuclear weapons, the deadly effects including that of the deterrence value of these weapons were realized, not only by the US itself, but many then aspired to acquire such technology. The US responded to the Soviet Union to break the US nuclear monopoly followed by the UK, France, and China which acquired nuclear weapons. Later, India, Pakistan, and North Korea also successfully tested their nuclear capability. Israel which practices opaque nuclear deterrence has already possessed nuclear weapons since the 1960s.

Considering the deterrence value of nuclear weapons, other countries such as Japan and South Korea also tried to acquire nuclear weapons during the Cold War, but the US under its nuclear umbrella and security guarantee prevented them from developing these weapons. It can be argued that in the absence of an unambiguous US security guarantee both to its European and Asian allies, these countries could opt for acquiring nuclear weapons. Germany, for example, has recently indicated its aspiration to acquire nuclear weapons since the Russia-Ukraine war.

Elsewhere, Iran has been a nuclear aspirant state as well. Few American Professors such as Kenneth Waltz and John Mearsheimer have already argued that Iran's acquisition of nuclear weapons will stabilize the Middle Eastern region. However, Iran is still part of the Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), and it hopes for the revival of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) that was created in 2015. Later, it was unilaterally abrogated by the Trump administration in 2018.

Many may argue that it remains functional technically until October 2025 when the so-called agreement will expire. Like North Korea, Iran may also withdraw from the NPT if Iran feels that there is an acute security threat to its sovereignty by invoking Article X of the NPT.

The April 2024 tussle between Iran and Israel may become one of the security reasons for Iran to speed up its road for weaponization.

Although it is considered in the existing literature that nuclear weapons may not be the panacea to all the issues a country may face, nuclear weapons played a significant role in maintaining deterrence stability thereby regional stability between the US and the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Neither of the Cold War nuclear rivals fought directly against each other despite coming close to waging a direct nuclear war, especially during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962.

In addition to many factors, nuclear weapons played their part creating the fear in the mind of adversaries and preventing them from waging a direct war against each other because of the devastating consequences played out of Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD). MAD is linked up with nuclear rivals deterring each other, and the conceptual framework based on the essentials of MAD informs us that two nuclear weapon states do not directly fight. In other words, since nuclear war cannot be won therefore it must never be fought. This statement, which was first made by the US and the Soviet Union leadership in 1985 reflects the deterrence value of nuclear weapons for stabilizing the situation between the nuclear rivals.

MAD existed during the Cold War, and this continues to exist between the US and Russia despite the danger of the use of nuclear weapons in the NATO-led Ukraine-Russia war when Russia has deployed its tactical nuclear weapons (TNWs) in Belarus while NATO is considering placing these weapons in Poland in addition to 100 US TNWs deployment at six air bases in five European countries (i.e., Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Italy and Turkey).

Because of the existence of nuclear weapons between the US-led NATO expansion and Russia, both sides are cautious by crossing each other's redlines, which otherwise could quickly spiral out of control. The consequences of nuclear escalation could be too high than the benefits one may perceive. Considering this discussion, it is important to understand the dangerous and complex South Asian region as well where both India and Pakistan because of the complex issue of Kashmir have fought many times before the development of nuclear weapons.

However, since the possession of credible nuclear forces bolstered with the sophisticated delivery systems by the South Asian rivals, both sides have not fought a large-scale war

that could involve a large movement of infantry with tanks and missiles, air, and naval forces.

Because of the existence of credible nuclear forces, deterrence remained intact cautioning both sides on the risk of escalation to a bigger military conflict leading to the use of nuclear weapons. Many may argue that if there were no nuclear weapons in South Asia, both India and Pakistan might have fought more than ever because of the growing conventional asymmetry between the two rivals.

In any case, we have strong empirical evidence in the existing literature that conventional deterrence often fails. In other words, India with its larger conventional force capability could have attacked Pakistan if Pakistan did not possess nuclear weapons to offset the growing imbalances in South Asia.

We now know what happened to Iraq, Libya, Syria and Ukraine without nuclear weapons. North Korea could have been attacked if it did not have nuclear weapons. In the perceived dangerous and complex world where Finland and Sweden may not be allowed to develop their nuclear weapon capability, both Finland and Sweden have finally broken their centuries-old neutrality by joining the US-led NATO for nuclear security guarantee under Article 5 of NATO.

It can also be argued that India despite being tempted to preemptive strikes because of its increasing conventional and nuclear forces supported with sophisticated delivery and defensive systems remains cautious before undertaking any military action against its nuclear rival. The Balakot incident in 2019 was India's flawed preemptive strike strategy risking a large-scale military conflict spiraling out of control, had Pakistan not demonstrated strategic restraint in South Asia.

As part of its full-spectrum deterrence within the ambit of credible minimum deterrence, Pakistan has not only produced an equalizer to India's increasing conventional and nuclear forces, but it also has produced effective countermeasures to retain deterrence balance vis-à-vis India. In doing so, this helps contribute towards broader strategic stability in South Asia.

In the growing body of literature, there also exists an argument if emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, lethal autonomous and semi-autonomous swarms of drones and cyber would change the dynamics of the military battlefield in general and the relevance of nuclear weapons in particular.

It would be too ambitious to believe that emerging technologies will make the traditional tactical and operational methods on the battlefield irrelevant.

Although the newer technologies may become important and they may play some role, the deployment of infantry with tanks and missiles will continue to play a decisive role in the battlefield. Emerging technologies without human-in-the-loop and the application of classic warfighting tactics for both offensive and defensive purposes could become unproductive and irrelevant in the battlefield.

Similarly, nuclear weapon states still practice tactics for dispersal, hardening, sheltering, and concealing for their deterrent forces despite the arrival of emerging technologies. The induction of new technologies for both conventional and nuclear forces may become important, but it is flawed to argue that such technologies may make nuclear weapons and their deterrence value irrelevant. There is always a counter-emerging technology for the arrival of every new technology and the arms race goes on.

If nuclear weapons were not relevant as stabilizing forces and did not have any deterrence value, nuclear weapon states would already have gotten rid of these weapons. But we can see for sure that no nuclear weapon states are willing to get away from their nuclear weapons. There is no sign of arms control and nuclear disarmament taking place despite the existence and the life extension of the NPT and despite the promises made by the established nuclear weapon states in the NPT. All the NPT-recognized nuclear weapon states are not only retaining but also modernizing their nuclear forces.

Only the US has planned to spend from 1.2 to 1.7 trillion USD over the next three decades on newer nuclear forces. The bilateral arms control that occurred between the Soviet Union and the US is overshadowed by the Great Power Competition and the US-led NATO war in Ukraine against Russia. We now know that both the US and Russia have

withdrawn from the ABM and INF treaties. The New Start treaty remains suspended, and the Russians have de-ratified the CTBT.

All these episodes indicate how relevant nuclear forces have become in the 21st century of international politics. Nuclear weapons have prevented major wars between rivals, and they will continue to play a decisive role in preventing the aggressors from waging preemptive strikes. The risk of accidental use of nuclear weapons existed during the Cold War and such risk may continue to exist today between nuclear rivals, but there can be multiple safety and security measures including nuclear confidence-building measures to prevent this from happening.

[Deterrence Value of Nuclear Weapons – Stratheia](#)

Pakistan's Nuclear Deterrence

Sher Ali Kakar

May 27, 2024

In Pakistan's national calendar of important events that we celebrate 28 May is a day in Pakistan's history that holds a special place of pride and greatness. We commemorate May 28 as Youm-e-Takbeer because it was on this day that Pakistan's nuclear journey reached a crucial stage. After a challenging course with numerous obstacles along the way, Pakistan became a nuclear-armed state on May 28, 1998, by responding directly to the second nuclear test conducted by India on May 11 and 13, 1998. The day represents Pakistan's scientific capability, and national will to ensure the security of the nation against hostile India. To better understand the significance of Youme-Takbeer, it is important to look into the historical factors that led to the development of Pakistan's nuclear program and the critical role of Pakistan's nuclear capability in today's volatile and complex security environment at the global and regional levels.

The concept of national survival in an anarchic world is the rationale for understanding a state's pursuance of nuclear capability. Acquiring nuclear capability for deterrence and security is thus manifested in a state's fight for its national survival as it helps deter adversary state aggressions and avert wars, though some states have followed the prestige model as presented by Scott D. Sagan. When the sovereignty and territorial integrity of a state come under threat due to the aggression of a rival state, nuclear weapons defend against such episodes by threatening unacceptable retaliation to any such attack and by this means deterring rivals from attack. We have already witnessed the dire consequences of military invasions and attacks that have violated the sovereignty of many countries, causing the killing of innocent citizens, and worst economic crisis. Given these scenarios, the relevance and importance of nuclear weapons for national security have become more evident and pronounced. As a case in point, international efforts to denuclearize the DPRK have failed so far, as the Kim regime deems nuclear capability as the ultimate means to prevent invasion.

In the case of Pakistan, it is in a difficult neighboured and faced with a much larger adversary that has from the very beginning of the independence threatened our national survival. A few months after the partition, India occupied Kashmir and created an

environment of fear and insecurity with alarming intentions of further aggression which Pakistan confronted in 1965 and 1971. Concisely, in 1965 India waged an undeclared war against Pakistan, crossing the international border. In 1971, it launched an attack in East Pakistan exploiting the political crisis between East and West Pakistan. The war resulted in the traumatic event of the separation of East Pakistan and the emergence of Bangladesh in December 1971. India, as the powerful adversary, had not only used its military superiority in the conventional domain to break up Pakistan but was also pursuing nuclear capability. The environment of insecurity grew further when India carried out its first nuclear tests on May 18, 1974. After these events, Pakistan embarked on an arduous nuclear journey with serious international opposition and formidable economic constraints along the way. It could be argued that Pakistan had very reasonable grounds to develop nuclear weapons due to wars with India in the past and India's offensive course after achieving nuclear capability.

These events created far-reaching strategic implications for Pakistan. The most important lesson for Pakistan was that reliance on external support for the security of the country through alliances, particularly with the US could not be relied upon in the future and Pakistan had to ensure its security through its capabilities. Ultimately, despite significant international pressure and sanctions, Pakistan conducted a successful nuclear test as a direct response to the Indian second nuclear tests and achieved strategic equilibrium which was inevitable for the security of the country. Pakistan's nuclear capability also helped the country maintain strategic autonomy and follow an independent foreign policy, rather than relying on external support concerning matters of national security.

Today, while the situation across Pakistan's western frontiers remains hostile and India still has ambitions to dominate the region and provocative and threatening doctrines and postures are being employed by India, Pakistan's credible nuclear deterrence plays a critical role in this hostile and complex security environment. Pakistan is committed to meeting its vital security interests by countering potential threats.

[Pakistan's Nuclear Deterrence – The Nations](#)

The US nuclear forces in 2024

Dr. Zafar Khan

May 28, 2024

Bulletin of Atomic Scientists produces papers yearly as part of its Nuclear Notebook describing the estimated nuclear weapons and the related delivery systems of all nine nuclear weapon states. More recently, it has produced papers on the US, Russia and China nuclear weapons — 2024. With the domino effect, all these three nuclear weapon states including France and the UK are modernising their nuclear forces. The paper on the United States nuclear weapons 2024 describes that “the US has embarked on a wide-ranging nuclear modernization program which will ultimately see every nuclear delivery system replaced with newer versions over the coming decades.” In doing so, the US has already planned to spend from \$1.2 trillion to \$1.7 trillion in the coming three decades. The paper elaborates that the US has “an estimated stockpile of approximately 3,708 nuclear warheads for delivery by ballistic missiles and aircraft.” Out of this estimated stockpile, “1,770 warheads are deployed while 1,938 are kept in the storage as a so-called ‘hedge’ against technical or geopolitical surprises.” The report also reads that out of an estimated 200 tactical nuclear weapons (TNWs), “100 TNWs are deployed at six bases in five European countries: Aviano and Ghedi in Italy; Büchel in Germany; Incirlik in Turkey; Kleine Brogel in Belgium; and Volkel in the Netherlands.”

When it comes to delivery systems, the US continues to upgrade its nuclear-powered submarines, bombers, aircraft and different variants of missiles for delivering nuclear weapons against the proposed adversarial targets. First, the US currently has 14 Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) each of which can carry up to 280 nuclear capable ballistic missiles. Second, the US Air Force currently operates a fleet of 20 B-2A bombers (all of which are nuclear capable) and 76 B-52 H bombers (46 of which are nuclear capable). Third, the US has 450 silo-based Minuteman III ICBMs. Since 1970, the US has continued to turn most of them into Multiple Independently Targetable Reentry Vehicles (MIRVs) capability to deliver as many as 14 nuclear warheads in one shot. MIRVs can become one of the most sophisticated delivery systems especially when states are turning them into hypersonic glide vehicles. There is no strong evidence for the

making of defensive systems against the incoming multiple nuclear capable warheads loaded on MIRVs.

Given the return of great power competition between the leading powers when there is a resurgence of Russia and the potential rise of China, the world does not remain unipolar any longer. Nevertheless, the US continues to be the leading power in the multipolar world. It has the largest economic strength with \$28.78 trillion in GDP. It has documented 750 military bases in 80 countries around the world. It leads by both conventional and nuclear forces modernisation with an unmatched technological advancement. Both the US and Russia possess 90% of the total world nuclear forces. It has an alliance system both in Europe and Asia that remains one of the strongest pillars of the US grand strategy to prevail upon and become the predominant player both in Europe and Asia. Geographically, the US remains protected by oceans in its east and west. In the North, it borders Canada while in the South, it borders Mexico. Neither of the countries have the economic and technological wherewithal to challenge US power.

Given these realities while in possession of modernised conventional and military forces, the US could remain the leading power in the so-called multipolar world for the foreseeable future. It will continue to possess modernised nuclear forces. It may not rescind its first use nuclear option because of its security guarantee to its European and Asian allies against both Russia and China, though ambiguous such a policy could be. Many security analysts in the West argue that the US may not become part of the arms control and disarmament deals unless it takes others on board. The withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM), the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF), and the recent suspension of the New Start Treaty and the de-ratification of the CTBT by Russia are some of evidence reflecting the grim realities of the perceived global arms control regimes.

In sum, nuclear forces and their related delivery systems possessed by the US reflect that nuclear weapons will continue to stay and play a decisive deterring role in the evolving global nuclear order. In the existing world order, the US desires to remain a predominant player with its strong alliance system intact for containing and defeating its peer competitor. However, it will affect the policies of other countries which, in turn,

increases arms race, crisis instability and risk of war. At the same time, this increases a security dilemma for other leading players in the system that may continue producing effective countermeasures to retain balance of power by preventing adversarial aggressive preemptive strikes.

[The US nuclear forces in 2024 – The Nations](#)

Curtailing Sub-Campuses in Balochistan

Ajmal Khan

May 29, 2024

The two major universities in Balochistan are once again in turmoil as the academic and non-academic staff are on the streets protesting not being paid salaries for the last few months. Their grievances are clear as the government is unable to address their plight. Looking at the province's financial situation in general and universities in particular, the provincial government is in a hurry to create sub-campuses in almost every district without considering the province's economic woes. Looking at a university; it is not just project worth millions, but billions. It requires more than clerks to run; it needs a significant number of faculty, population, resources, and means of production. Three universities are in one division and two divisions are deprived of a university. One may question this flawed policy for opening so many sub-campuses. The expansion of universities into districts lacking basic education infrastructure, low literacy rates, and high multidimensional poverty, raises significant policy concerns and has implications for the strategic development of the provincial education system.

Articles 25A and 37B of the Constitution of Pakistan give citizens the right to access primary education. The Constitution of Pakistan does not provide higher education to every citizen as a basic right. Even in developed countries, higher education is not considered a universal right of every citizen. Students are required to pay fees, which helps universities sustain themselves. Higher education is not automatically accessible to every young person; typically, only those with strong academic records gain entry. However, in Balochistan, higher education is provided to all students regardless of their academic performance, with the majority of costs covered by the province. Students often choose courses that may not have strong job prospects. Additionally, some students pursue multiple degrees at the province's expense, often for political purposes. The HEC Act of 2002 allows universities to open sub-campuses in remote areas of the country, keeping in view the population, literacy rate, colleges, and enrollment on those campuses. Regarding the opening of sub-campuses in Balochistan, political considerations and local vested interests drive the legislators to open sub-campuses in their constituencies. It

leads to a tug-of-war between the northern and the southern parts of Balochistan. If a politician from the southern part wants to open a sub-campus in his constituency, a demand from the Northern side comes simultaneously without knowing the cost. For instance, Pishin is just 55 km from Quetta and has two sub-campuses. Two sub-campuses operate in Qilla Saifullah district, just 70 km from Loralai. Sinjavi is only 28 km away, and yet the legislator from that area was demanding a sub-campus for Sinjavi, despite having a fully operational university in Loralai.

Baloch nationalist writers and social media activists have been mournful recently that the Balochi department is being closed at Makran University in Panjgur. But no one has questioned whether there was a real need for a university in Panjgur with Turbat University on one side and Gwadar University on the other. Meanwhile, the Degree College in Panjgur is offering all those subjects at a significantly lower cost. In Kharaan, the Balochistan University campus has been admitting students into LLB for many years. One wonders how many lawyers it will produce.

Sub-campuses have been established without considering per capita expenses or cost-effectiveness, often driven more by political motives than genuine necessity. For instance, the enrollment ratio in various sub-campuses is very low and is not cost-effective. The existence of these sub-campuses needs to be critically assessed. In cases where student numbers are minimal, closure should be considered, with students and faculty integrated into the main university. At the very least, departments lacking market demand should be phased out soon to minimize costs. These sub-campuses will take almost twenty to thirty years to take the seat in the education sector. Until then, they are nothing but a burden on the provincial resources.

The government of Balochistan has initiated BS and BA (Hons) programs in the province's postgraduate colleges. Given the launch of these programs, establishing sub-campuses in areas with low higher education enrollment is considered unnecessary. Instead of investing in these sub-campuses, strengthening the local colleges would be more beneficial. These colleges offer the same courses at significantly lower fees. For example, if a semester at a university costs fifteen to twenty thousand, colleges charge only two to three thousand. The universities are already facing financial constraints and

are unable to pay salaries, reflecting the financial deficit, so investing substantial funds in sub-campuses is not justifiable. Balochistan does not need more universities and their sub-campuses. Rather, there is a need to merge some sub-campuses into technical and vocational centers.

The current pace of establishing sub-campuses has led to significant financial strain, inadequate infrastructure, and undermining the quality of education in universities. By curtailing the creation of new sub-campuses and instead focusing on strengthening existing institutions, we can ensure a more efficient allocation of resources and a higher standard of education. Considering the social and national interests, we must have the courage to discuss and listen to such tough matters. These discussions may be bitter and tough, but one needs to consider them compassionately because they are concerned with our social interests. One needs to remind oneself that the downfall of nations occurs when individuals and temporary interests prevail upon social and long-term interests.

[Curtailing Sub-Campuses in Balochistan – The Nations](#)

Pakistan: The Current Generation Is Also Failing

Asad Ullah Raisani

May 30, 2024

It was urged in that written piece that this generation should not repeat their mistakes and get the country on track before it is too late. However, it seems an elusive idea and a distant dream with present credentials and low ethics of the generation to mention a couple of reasons. Therefore, this article highlights a few common trends among youth that are deadly for any nation on Earth and recommends a future course of action to amend that.

As per the most recent data, a great number of the American population is bookworms, a reason, that nation is the superpower on Earth. In Asia, India tops, on average each Indian citizen spends 10 hours and 42 minutes per week reading books. Thailand ranks second with each citizen spending 9 hours and 24 minutes on average every week in reading in the country, China stands at number three with each Chinese spending an average of nine hours in book reading every week. When you notice their progress, India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the last fiscal year neared \$4 Trillion, Thailand's over \$ 500 billion and China's nears the GDP of the US at \$19.4 Trillion. All these three nations are counted as economic giants, even China and India are making efforts to make an impact on the global political landscape.

On comparing Pakistan with these countries, one finds disappointment. Pakistan's GDP despite being a country that has all the ingredients to be a political as well as economic giant is hardly \$350 billion. It, every now and then, depends on the IMF bailout packages to survive and escape from bankruptcy. With many other reasons, one clear reason is that readership in the country is one of the lowest in the world. One out of every three Pakistanis aged 10 and above lacks the ability to read and write a paragraph in any language with understanding, let alone book reading.

In one of the recent Gallup Surveys, it came out that 75 percent of the population of Pakistan, 3 out of 4 Pakistanis, have never read any book. Less than 2 percent spend 4 hours reading every day, some 16 percent Pakistanis spend an hour or less on reading books each day. Youth in particular is disinterested in reading books and so lacks wisdom, emotional intelligence, patience and is easily vulnerable to false propaganda, extremist

ideologies and lack of understanding of political ideas and religious scholarship and philosophies. Hence, redundant habits of the nation have quite visibly contributed to the lack of progress of the country.

Overall, the youth of the country are more concerned about opportunities abroad. Though they are less to be blamed in this regard, it is not solely the ruling elite that is responsible for the poor conditions of Pakistan. Most of the country's youth wish to seek government jobs, primarily because they offer old-age benefits and a less challenging working environment. As the saying goes, "Sarkari Naukri mein kuch kaam nahi karna hota" (There is nothing to do in a government job). Even the passionate ones often become part of the corrupt structure or prefer to stay away from anything effective as they cannot challenge the corrupt culture in the system.

A great number of young people only have grievances about the country. They can do much to improve things at the individual level, but either they are lethargic or too shy to start something of their own. You can easily find people in their late 20s or even 30s who roam around all day, wasting time and doing nothing, literally nothing productive to improve their or their family's lives. Of course, some young people are doing jobs and engaging in other productive activities, but unfortunately, the number is far less than the former ones.

As already mentioned, the reading culture in the country is virtually nonexistent on a domestic scale. A great majority of young people rely solely on their matriculation, intermediate, or graduation degrees for job opportunities. However, in this technologically advanced age, depending solely on jobs that mostly require clerical skills is not wise. The internet offers a plethora of resources for free, ranging from learning new skills to finding employment. All one needs to do is dedicate some time each day to acquire a new skill. With options such as pursuing a career in blogging, YouTubing, securing remote jobs, learning skills online, making effective use of chatbots like ChatGPT and CoPilot, or starting a small business using social media applications, there are thousands of ways to channel one's energy and earn income for their family.

There is also a lack of proper understanding of religion among this youth. One can easily find mosques almost empty during prayer times, except for Friday prayers, but almost

every second person in the street is ready to issue decrees of blasphemy against someone. There are hardly any graduates who know their subjects well, yet they seek jobs regardless. A great number of young people, like the previous lot, are more concerned about their stakes and interests, which is detrimental to the country. In short, this lot is also failing, and this is not a good sign for the nation.

Therefore, it is time to realize that these habits cannot make any nation great on the face of the Earth. Reading habits need to be cultivated, as Quetta serves as a remarkable example where people have a great craze for reading books. Instead of wasting time on futile activities, young people should invest their time and energy to make the most of it. They should utilize all available resources to create a positive impact.

The government is also to be blamed for not providing proper facilities in many areas, such as electronic and gas load shedding, and banning social media sites will only add more burden to this already burdened nation. For this reason, the youth should take more interest in politics and engage in it no matter how much time they can spare.

Politics does not mean borrowing grace from someone and being a slave to them for life. Politics is about service; serve people in any way and capacity you can, educate whom you can, respect people's rights, and if possible, join politics and contest elections. If you cannot, at least do not abstain from voting, no matter how common political engineering is in the country; you must do your part, because winners are not the quitters.

[Pakistan: The Current Generation Is Also Failing – World Geostrategic Insights](#)

Beyond Poverty Porn: Ethical Representation of Balochistan
Mehmood Ali**May 31, 2024**

According to a widely accepted definition of the term proposed by journalist Matt Collins in 2009, poverty porn is “any type of media, be it written, photographed or filmed, which exploits the poor’s condition to generate the necessary sympathy for selling newspapers, increasing charitable donations, or support for a given cause.” Overall, it misrepresents the poor and denies them their dignity, and it deceives both the helper and the helped.

Even though Balochistan in Pakistan is as large as some countries in the world, the media tends to portray it as a poor and neglected area. While these depictions contain some truth, their portrayal blurs the line between menace and sentimentality, presenting problematic examples of “poverty porn,” which exploits the plight of the poor to garner sympathy, money, or web traffic. This article focuses on the impact of poverty porn in Balochistan, calling for better treatment of the people of Balochistan and a better portrayal of their plight.

Furthermore, media houses, NGOs, and social media activists tend to convey the difficult situation of Balochistan and its people to create empathy. Even so, it is crucial and highly urgent to analyze the intent and methodology of these representations. Usually, poverty porn distorts conditions to revive people’s interests, provides little context, and uses people’s images and narrations without their permission; it reproduces the detrimental stigma of powerlessness and reliance. What effect would such a depiction have?

The impact of these descriptions is very negative. Such portrayals of hopelessness impact people’s self-esteem accompanying decisions and autonomy, encouraging a culture of begging while stagnating local development initiatives. Moreover, long-term negative portrayal influences the understanding of Balochistan and thus hinders investment, tourism, and development opportunities. Hence, after some time, the audience is likely to become fatigued and lose the ability to sympathise and donate.

In this case, we can see ethical representation as the key to reducing the negative effects highlighted above. The media and organizations need to provide examples of how people

can emerge stronger from adversity and achieve new developments and progress. This response makes contextual reporting, which relates to the act of detailed reporting of the causes of poverty, help in teaching concerned stakeholders the policy issues instead of attributing the difficulty in its eradication to personal shortcomings. Thus, the fact that all the portrayed people were willing and their cases were presented with proper concern for their identities as victims is quite important. Collaborating with local communities can lead to more accurate and empowering representations. Lastly, the focus should shift from merely highlighting problems to showcasing solutions and initiatives making a positive impact.

Therefore, it is pertinent to draw attention to the issues facing Balochistan, while also emphasizing the importance of eradicating the concept of poverty porn. Ethical representation also pays homage to the agency of the people of Balochistan and improves the dialogue about their prospects. In this way of focusing on the human side of the stories, giving context, and focusing on solutions, it is possible to bring about a more balanced and empowering representation of Balochistan, along with a framework for bringing about constructive change.

Focusing on the fact that media and NGOs operating and functioning in Balochistan should change their method of projecting the people of Balochistan and start projecting Balochistan in a more ethical way beyond the lens of poverty porn. In this way, it is possible to shift from focusing on the negative aspects of Balochistan to a focus on its positive aspects and potential and look at the people of Balochistan not as helpless but as a strong and aspiring population that can successfully manage the difficulties facing it. What Balochistan lacks is not coverage of the poor, the downtrodden, and the misery they have to go through daily; rather, it is an elaborate depiction of the change they want, the change they aspire for and want to bring about for the country.

[Beyond Poverty Porn: Ethical Representation of Balochistan - The Balochistan Diaries](#)