

## Scenario 43

### **SARDAR BUGTI ASSASSINATED (2006):**

In January 2005, scuffles between Pakistani security forces and resentful Bugti tribes in the Sui region of Balochistan again cropped up in which eight paramilitary security men were killed and four seriously wounded. The military government maintained that the tribesmen want more royalties from the gas taken from their lands. In the light of the past five years brawling history, Gen Musharraf finally opted to wipe out all rebels once for all with force and re-establish its writ through permanent army positioning. The rebels also desperately wanted to deliver a knockout blow to the rulers, both Pakistan's civil government and military.

### **DR SHAZIA RAPED BY ARMY MEN?**

Amidst this state of insurgency, an alarming rape case was quickly grabbed by many Balochi tribes to instigate a war against Pakistan's establishment; a reaction and resentment against the army.

*'During the late hours of 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2005, Pakistan Army's Captain Emad and three soldiers from the Defence Security Guards (DSG), gang-raped a lady doctor, Dr Shazia Khalid serving in the Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL) as an employee during night times. These army men had beaten her and kept her unconscious for several hours. Since an army officer was involved in the case, Major Mukhtar of the DSG hushed up the case by influencing the PPL management. They shifted the doctor to Karachi and she was not allowed to meet anybody so that nobody would know the reality.'*

*'Even the first information report (FIR) was not allowed to be registered with the police; and when after 12 days it was registered, it was a 'blind' FIR in which unknown rapists were mentioned. The case spread all over the area and the Baloch Liberation Front (Baloch Liberation Army) took things into their hands, attacked DSG camps, annihilated them and demanded that all foreign elements should leave the area immediately. The event was taken as against the Baloch culture. The lady doctor was there to serve the humanity thus taken as honourable guest.'*

When the Bloch people attacked the DSG Camps to register their protest and anger, the Pakistan army, instead of contacting Nawab Bugti, their Tribal Chief, preferred to send 36 trucks loaded with army men from nearby cantonments as show of power. At Sibi air base, six gunship helicopters, military aircrafts and 12 artillery tanks were placed to reach Sui at call; to eliminate the dissenting voices once and for all. Referring to the ***Asia Times dated 15<sup>th</sup> January 2005***, Nawab Bugti [while giving an interview to (late) Saleem Shehzad] told that:

*'They [Pakistan government] think that natural resources are national assets, and we think they are Baloch assets, and whoever wants to use them must do so through us, not by direct possession. Call for a Greater Balochistan movement is a stunt against us.'*

*'It is [attacks on DSG Camps] just a reaction and resentment shown by the Baloch nation to a heinous crime committed on our land. Dr Shazia was not Baloch but the*

*Punjabi cannot understand our culture and codes. What respect we give to women, irrespective of her caste, religion or ethnicity, no Punjabi can understand.*

*You may have read about many incidents that happened in Punjab, reported in newspapers, that on the issue of personal enmity somebody entered into the house of his enemy and brought the women of his enemy naked in public, and the Punjabi public, instead of reacting or putting clothes on the naked women, clapped. We are alien to this kind of culture, and therefore when our men learned of the heinous crime they bombed the criminals' nest [DSG] and we say: Get lost back to your Punjab and do whatever you like, but not on our lands.'*

Starting from January 2005, the surge in insurgency continued in Balochistan.

### **DETAILS OF SARDAR BUGTI'S ASSASSINATION:**

A media version of the ISPR dated 26<sup>th</sup> August 2006 claimed that in a usual counter insurgency operation in Bugti area of Balochistan, an army helicopter came under fierce attack from the rebels while over-flying the region. The army contingent retaliated and the resultant battle led to the caving in of a mud bunker where Nawab Akbar Bugti along with his men had taken shelter.

The electronic media had also released the breaking news that '*the driving force behind the anti-government rebellion in Balochistan*', was killed in a massive military operation in the Bhambore Hills, an area between the cities of Kohlu and Dera Bugti.

It was officially stated to the press that during the army operation Akbar Bugti and a number of other terrorists were killed at the spot as a result of heavy fire exchange and all were left buried in the same cave including Nawab Bugti and his top aides. An ISPR statement once more reiterated that two army helicopters, flying over the general area of Tartani in Kohlu on 23<sup>rd</sup> August were fired upon from the ground and one helicopter was damaged. Another chopper was then dispatched to investigate and was also hit, but returned safely.

Federal Information Minister Mohammad Ali Durrani later told that:

*'Gen Musharraf was told just before 12am on Sunday that Nawab Bugti had been killed. As many as 21 army commandos and 37 rebels had also been killed in the same operation, which targeted 50 to 80 of Nawab Bugti's closest family members and top commanders. Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA)'s Chief Balach Marri and Nawab Bugti's grandsons Brahamdagh Bugti and Mir Ali Bugti were also killed in the fighting. Nawab Bugti's location was discovered only three days earlier by the security forces; they had besieged the hills where he was hiding in. Nawab Bugti's whereabouts were established by monitoring satellite phone intercepts.'* [Later reports told that Brahamdagh Bugti was not there in the cave but was in Afghanistan then]

According to the foreign press; the military launched air strikes against a cave in the mountains on the border of Dera Bugti and Kohlu districts, where Nawab Bugti was said to be hiding. There was little fighting on the ground. The missile raid destroyed the entrance to the rocky hideout and Special Forces moved in [next day] to carry out a 'cordon and search operation'. Heavy fighting broke out as the insurgents returned fire, killing several soldiers including the leader of the commando team.

The foreign press continued to say that the soldiers eventually secured the area and ascertained that Nawab Akbar Bugti was among the dead. Around 24 Marri and Bugti tribesmen, including Nawab Bugti, were killed and 37 injured. The injured were taken into custody by security forces. However there was no immediate information about the custody of the dead bodies. Six officers were also among the 21 security force personnel who were killed in that operation.

After four days another official version given out by the government spelled out that Nawab Bugti was not targeted by the military and the intention was to apprehend him alive but the cave, in which he was hiding, collapsed owing to a mysterious blast, just as military personnel were entering it. However, these conflicting statements raised suspicions amongst media and the general public especially when the government consumed five days to recover the dead body of Nawab Bugti.

Some of the family members of Bugti tribe had opined that Nawab Akbar Bugti was not killed in the cave as the government claimed but in an encounter in the open, or in custody after being apprehended, but there was no evidence with them to place before the media.

A news brief dated **18<sup>th</sup> September 2011**, available at internet media under the title: **'Akbar Bugti Committed Suicide; Not killed By Army'**, however, said that:

*'A close aide of late Baloch nationalist leader Nawab Akbar Bugti, Wadera Muhammad Murad Bugti has told a private TV channel that a rocket fired by Bugti caused the explosion that led to the nationalist leader's death. When security forces entered the cave where he (Sardar Bugti) was hiding, he attempted to fend them off by firing a shell. This caused a massive explosion, which resulted in the cave-in that led to the death of Sardar Bugti, one colonel, two majors and three commandoes. The late Bugti had decided that he would rather die fighting than surrender to the security forces. When forces besieged his cave on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2006, he asked his comrades to leave the cave and let him fight them alone [but then it was too late].'*

*"Instead of a slow death in bed, I'd rather [opt for] death come to me while I'm fighting for a purpose,"* Nawab Bugti himself said before going to cave with his armed men in 2006. He was 79 years old warrior tribal chief, the biggest tribe in Balochistan.

The diverse media reports created more suspicion because the dead body of Nawab Bugti was brought to Dera Bugti on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2006 and the public was not allowed to have a look at the dead body. His remains were buried in a locked and sealed coffin, opened only briefly to allow the *Imam* leading the funeral to take a look. The security forces took the plea that due to blast in the cave Nawab Bugti's body was torn into unidentifiable pieces whereas the tribal people around kept the opinion that the security forces had used some chemical weapon while targeting the cave; again no proof surfaced.

The western media immediately released their bulletins saying that Gen Musharraf wanted to establish his writ by force in the province by eliminating that Baloch Tribal Chief who was allegedly being supported by foreign powers to threaten the integrity of Pakistan. Balochistan's Governor Owais Ghani had categorically assured the Balochi populace, just a few weeks earlier, that the government had no intention of harming Nawab Bugti as he was a respected figure for every one in politics, academics and the general populace.

After being informed that Nawab Bugti had been killed and his body was lying buried under the rubble of a stone cum mud cave, Gen Musharraf, in a shocking show of insensitivity and complete lack of tact, cheerfully congratulated the secret service chief who had carried out this operation, knowing fully well that Sardar Bugti was a much-loved leader for a considerable section of Pakistan's population. This unfortunate episode was not an occasion for cheer but a time for concern and mourning all over Pakistan. One should have pondered that how things came to such a stage that a popular leader had to be killed by the country's armed forces.

Nawab Bugti was one of Pakistan's most charismatic politicians; one of the most genuinely loved leaders of his people and one of the most awe-inspiring warlords.

One would be able to remember that most of the sub-clans of the Bugti tribe had disowned Nawab Bugti in a *jirga* on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2006, as the leader of the Bugti tribe and had announced an end to the *sardari* system but the people had the suspicion if that *jirga* was government sponsored. A plain clothed group of people had earlier made an unsuccessful attempt on Sardar Bugti's life in March 2005 by targeting his residential complex in Dera

Bugti with as many as 17 shells. Sardar Bughti's hideout was again attacked in July 2006, but he had survived both these attacks.

Many analysts and opposition leaders had portrayed Bugti's killing as a major threat to the federation and had taken as a replay of the events that led to the loss of East Pakistan in 1971. In its report dated 14<sup>th</sup> September 2006, the International Crisis Group (ICG) had appealed to the international community to urge Gen Musharraf to end military rule in Pakistan. Gen Musharraf had initially congratulated the army contingent on its success in eliminating Nawab Bugti, but later turned around. Some media reports had mentioned that satellite phone trackers were used to find the location of Nawab Bugti before the attack. As neither the military regime then in power nor the subsequent political government of the PPP ever considered to nominate a judicial commission to probe into the death of Nawab Bugti, so the matter is still going mysterious even after six years.

Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti, the chief of the largest Baloch tribe, had launched the Baloch resistance to the military regime of Gen Musharraf when the clashes around Sui village got intensified in January 2005. He was rather considered a collaborator by the mainstream Baloch nationalists for his willingness to cooperate with Islamabad during the previous phases of the Baloch insurgency.

An earlier report of '**daily times' dated 15<sup>th</sup> November 2005**, compiled by Sarfraz Ahmed says that Nawab Akbar Bugti once seriously tried to unite disgruntled Baloch Sardars to form a single Baloch nationalist party working for the Baloch people's rights in the wake of approaching army action in Sui and Dera Bugti. According to the rebel leaders their rights were continuously usurped by Islamabad or the Punjab through army actions. Hence, the Jamhoori Watan Party (JWP)'s central working committee decided at a two-day meeting in Dera Bugti on 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> November 2005 to contact Sardar Ataullah Mengal, Nawab Khair Bux Marri, Dr Abdul Hayee and Mir Ghulam Mohammad Baloch and convince them to form a single party to speak for Balochistan.

Sardar Bugti was ready to immediately dissolve its own JWP. This move was considered difficult because Sardar Bugti had been labelled as 'an agent of the Establishment' for the role he had played during the 1970s against the National Awami Party (NAP), which was banned on 10<sup>th</sup> February 1975. The Supreme Court of Pakistan, on 30<sup>th</sup> October 1975, had held that the NAP was working for an independent *Pakhtunistan* at the cost of Pakistan's territorial integrity [*a point to ponder that if the Supreme Court's all judgments are always right; think Bhutto's case also*].

Prior to the Supreme Court's verdict of 1975, the Z A Bhutto's government had set up a special tribunal popularly known as the Hyderabad Tribunal. The NAP's whole leadership including Khan Abdul Wali Khan, Ghous Bux Bizenjo, Nawab Khair Bux Marri and Sardar Ataullah Mengal were arrested and subjected to trial. The Baloch Sardars then alleged that Sardar Bugti, on 31<sup>st</sup> January 1973, had claimed at a public meeting at Mochi Gate Lahore that:

*'Wali Khan and Ataullah Mengal shared with him the **Independent Balochistan Plan**, through which Balochistan could be placed under the control of some foreign power. The foreign headquarters supporting the Greater Balochistan Plan were to be located in Baghdad'.*

The above piece of Sardar Bhugti's speech and alleged evidence obtained from the Iraq Embassy was used as a pretext for the dismissal of the then provincial government of Sardar Ataullah Mengal and the subsequent military intervention in Balochistan.

On the basis of Sardar Bughti's 'disclosures' in public, the above named Baloch Sardars were arrested and sent to face Hyderabad Tribunal, therefore, the other Baloch nationalist leaders were not having trust in his person. Some Baloch leaders had also an impression that Nawab Akbar Bugti had served as an agent of the federal government [*but Pakistan's Constitution also say so*] when he was appointed Governor Balochistan by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto at the time

of the insurgency and that he never spoke in favour of Baloch rights or more provincial autonomy.

Sardar Bugti had contended that:

*'I resigned on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1973, shortly after PM Bhutto launched the army operation in Balochistan. I am not absolving myself. I was governor. You can't change history. You can't belie history. I don't say I did something great or something fine. No great or fine things happened during that period of his governorship.'*

The fact remained that Nawab Akbar Bugti had lost a number of his sons and grandsons to the assassin's bullets but he remained an uncompromising feudal lord, who showed no mercy to his opponents, civil or military or his tribal rivals. During 1950s he was the only Baloch in the Pakistani cabinet holding the Home and then the Defence portfolios. In the 1960s he took an active part in the opposition to the Pakistani government. In the 1970 elections, having been convicted for murder, he was barred from contesting the elections but contributed immensely towards the election campaign of the National Awami Party (NAP), led by Khan Wali Khan; later developed differences with them.

He was thereafter appointed as the governor of Balochistan but during this period the guerrilla war against the government went intensified. He resigned from the governorship on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1973 having served for ten months. A plus point for Nawab Akbar Bugti remained that he had not become a separatist [*though he and one of his sons were falsely labelled with that charge by security forces*] and continued his demands for greater autonomy, parity and more resources for Balochistan within Pakistan. During the 1980s, he made a personal protest against Gen Ziaul Haq's military regime by refusing to speak Urdu, Pakistan's national language till elections of 1988.

In the 1988 elections, he led the Baloch National Alliance (BNA), won majority of seats in the provincial assembly and by joining hands with Jamiat Ulema e Islam (JUI) got the chief minister's slot in Balochistan. He held that seat till 1990. In 1990, he contested elections from his newly established Jamhoori Watan Party (JWP), got many seats and continued to dominate politics. Akbar Bugti had been attempting to get all Baloch nationalist parties under one umbrella but his efforts were resisted by other Baloch Sardars who did not trust him due to his role in 1973 as has been mentioned above and more due to Hyderabad Tribunal episode.

### **HYDERABAD TRIBUNAL (1975):**

In '*Hyderabad conspiracy case*', the **Hyderabad tribunal** (1975) was made by the then PM Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to prosecute opposition politicians of the National Awami Party (NAP) on the charges of treason and acting against the ideology of Pakistan. It was ultimately wound up after Gen Ziaul Haq overthrew Bhutto in July 1977.

A total of 52 people were arrested including Khan Abdul Wali Khan, Khan Amirzadah Khan, Syed Kaswar Gardezi, Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri, Mir Gul Khan Nasir, Sardar Atallah Mengal, Habib Jalib, Barrister Azizullah Shaikh, Aslam Baluch, Aslam Kurd, Saleem Kurd, Sher Mohammad Marri (General Sherof), Najam Sethi, Saleem Pervez, Majid Gichki, Mir Abdul Wahid Kurd, Sultan Mengal and several other patriots. In addition, several members of the Muslim League and even prominent critics of Z A Bhutto within his own PPP were also arrested.

The PM Bhutto got the 3rd Amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan passed which gave wide legal scope to the state to define anti-state activities. In Article 10(7), the definition of 'enemy' was extended to include:

*'A person who is acting or attempting to act in a manner prejudicial to the integrity, security or defence of Pakistan or any part thereof or who commits or attempt to*

*commit any act which amounts to an anti-national activity as defined in a Federal Law or is a member of any association which has for its object, or which indulges in any such anti-national activity'.*

In 1974, Z A Bhutto's close ally and Governor of the NWFP Hayat Sherpao was killed in a bomb blast at Peshawar University. PM Bhutto was made convinced that NAP and its Chief Khan Abdul Wali Khan were responsible for that murder. Within Balochistan tribes Nawab Khair Bux Mari and his son, Balaach Mari, went tilted towards Moscow and India; and Nawab Akbar Bugti had allegedly developed interests with Iran.

The Hyderabad Tribunal was headed initially by Justice Aslam Riaz Hussain and subsequently by Justice Mushtak Ali Qazi, while the government was represented by Attorney General Yahya Bakhtiar; the defence counsel consisted of noted lawyers Mahmud Ali Kasuri and Abid Hassan Minto. During trial Khan Wali Khan withdrew from any defence arguing that the tribunal included biased judges and that a decision to convict had already been made.

The trial was widely considered discredited. Khan Wali Khan was also charged for an allegation that he was paid Rs:20 million by the then Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi which was never proved nor there was any truth in that. The government used extensive means to validate the charges levelled against the NAP, but nothing was proved. The fact, however, is available on record that:

*'The Prime Minister Bhutto warned the judges that the responsibility of the consequences will be of the Supreme Court and the judges should they reject his reference against NAP'.*

'This conspiracy allegation' ultimately forced the NAP towards joining the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) which ended the Bhutto's government in 1977 at last. Some available record suggests that the then Federal Interior Minister (1973–1977) Abdul Qayyum Khan had played a key role in triggering Z A Bhutto's confrontation with the Baloch nationalists which also provided false grounds for army intervention in Balochistan.

### **SARDAR BUGTI vs ARMY IN 2000s:**

Coming back, Nawab Akbar Bugti could not develop a working relationship with the military regime of 2000s. Over the past 50 years Islamabad tried to balance their mutual conflicting interests by granting royalties, and concessions or through political bargains in the corridors of power but could not fully succeed. Bugtis continued with their anti-government resistance from their tribal territory Dera Bugti. In early 2006, Nawab Akbar left Dera Bugti, riding a camel, with his armed followers and tribesmen and saddled in the mountains to fight Gen Musharraf's army.

Unexpected for Gen Musharraf and his forces, Nawab Akbar Bugti's killing caused a spontaneous outbreak of violent demonstrations mainly in Quetta and Karachi. The protesters burnt vehicles, banks and petrol pumps and blocked roads. A curfew had to be announced in Quetta and Kalat. A total shutter down and wheel-jam strike was observed throughout Balochistan on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2006. In Karachi, riots had erupted in all Baloch dominated areas.

Nawab Akbar Bugti's assassination brought various diverse tribes at one platform. Even Raisani tribe, which had feudal clashes with the Bugtis for decades killing several members from each side, had expressed solidarity with the Bugtis. He became a martyr for Baloch nationalism like Nauroz Khan fighting for Baloch cause despite the military regime's repeated attempts to paint him as feudal tyrant. Gen Musharraf had underestimated the Baloch nationalism earning a permanent enmity and hatred for his person and the whole army.

Nawab Akbar Bugti's death helped the Baloch nationalists to unite together whereas he might have failed to achieve during his lifetime. The killing of Nawab Bugti was a case of terrible miscalculation. It had weakened Pakistan army's stand before the nation. Not a single politician, even from Gen Musharraf's allies PML(Q) & MQM, had accorded approval for that

blatant murder though the forces had done so in the name of army's security operation. Surprisingly, many retired army officers had strongly criticised the government over that serious historical mistake.

Nawab Akbar Bugti's killing had precipitated a furious reaction in Balochistan and added fuel to an already escalating unfriendliness and a sense of separation. A number of Baloch nationalist leaders had tendered their resignations from the provincial and national Assemblies. PML(Q) Secretary General Mushahid Hussain had openly condemned the killing of Nawab Bugti terming it sad and unfortunate. It was taken as a deliberate move to weaken the federation as Nawab Bugti's martyrdom continued to remain masked in mystery.

The beginning of the end for Nawab Bugti's life actually took place in early 2005; provoked by the rape of Dr Shazia Khalid by a Pakistani army officer at Sui; as has been narrated earlier. He started a violent insurrection against the authority of the army and the Pakistani government. Nawab Bugti launched successful raids against elements of the infrastructure and military installations. Frequent subversive attacks on gas pipelines caused widespread outrage throughout the country with forced closure of industrial production and blockade of commercial activities throughout Pakistan.

Gawador Port was another case point in sight. It has been Pakistani government's priority project of constructing a warm-water gateway to the coveted gas and oil destinations of Central Asia coupled with creation of enormous business opportunities and voluminous employment for all Balochis. Here Nawab Bugti erred in understanding the real acumen of Balochistan province and this Chinese-assisted grand undertaking was subjected to terrorist activities about one hundred times since its inception, because it stands nearly 100% funded by China; thus neither America nor the regional countries want its development.

Nawab Bugti had in fact looked upon this project and some more developmental projects like that, with suspicion simply because he never wanted to encourage settlement of more non-Baluchis in Balochistan. Of course, the big stake holders of Dubai and especially the Americans never wanted that Gawador port should be developed and that too with the Chinese aid; not at all. They had encouraged Bugtis and other tribal chiefs to create hindrances in smooth running of the projects when possible.

The successive Pakistani governments had record that all the family members of Bugti and Murri tribes keep British or American nationalities. Gen Musharraf's government remained successful in convincing the world media and the people of Pakistan that the mortar guns, anti-aircraft missiles, night-vision rifles and their ammunition available with the dissident people of Balochistan, including Bugtis, were actually provided by the Americans through Indian Consulates inside Afghanistan borders. It was all '*Oppose China*' game because the port would be the nearest one to the Central Asian states with the potential to attract international traffic, which previously went to Port Abbas in Iran, to Oman, or to the UAE in most cases.

Gawador project was opposed by Bugtis on two other counts also. Firstly, the Bugtis consider them the most respectable tribe in Balochistan. A Gawador project about 900 km away from Dera Bugti, when developed, would provide more importance to the nearby tribes; thus was a matter of humiliation for Bugtis. Secondly; Bugtis are financially rich in Balochistan due to royalties from government of Pakistan for Sui Gas supply. Naturally the Gawador project would bring much more money for the rival tribes of Balochistan at the cost of Bugtis.

Such distracted approaches towards Gawador project and above mentioned one rape event were the primary reasons for the bursting of the Bugti's sentiments that were simmering in rage and resentment. The army contingents deployed on developmental duties had also suffered continuously through subversive attacks on Gas, Highways and Communication projects; hundreds of lives were lost and jobs halted for months. Both sides were annoyed thus a lasting clash was there.

Nawab Bugti had loads of grudge against civil and army governments in Islamabad but he had also served as the Chief Minister and Governor of Baluchistan for various tenures. Other

Baloch tribal chiefs considered his reigns as disappointing and dull. Despite his complaints against Islamabad for ignoring his area's development, he himself failed to perform when he had the opportunities to do so.

As usual, contradictory versions of Nawab Bugti's death from government sponsored media spokesmen started pouring in immediately after the event. Thus by eliminating a political leader of Bugti's stature, the military government, might be unintentionally, had strengthened certain ranks of the nationalists cum militants in Balochistan. Consequently many innocent Punjabis residing in Balochistan were killed in the violent protests and the menace is still continuing today. The future of the federation is at stake since then and the hostilities growing day by day; but the provincial and federal governments are not bothered about it.

Pakistan army have taken over the affairs of Balochistan in their hands at countless occasions since the Pakistan came into being. Significantly, the army was sent here in 1973 during PPP's rule under Z A Bhutto and Nawab Akbar Bugti, the then Governor Balochistan had resigned in protest. The military and civil leaderships have learnt no lesson from history and the events of 1971's East Pakistan but have been continuing with the same policies of oppression and strategies of disintegration. The rulers at the helm of affairs should minutely go through the Hamood ur Rahman Commission Report before taking any untoward decision for this region.

The critics and intelligentsia keep opinion that Nawab Bugti could mean different things to different people: an opportunistic politician of nuisance value to many middle-class Pakistanis; a traitor to the Generals sitting in Islamabad; and a terrorist-like figure to CNN-watching Americans. But for Baloch people he was a hero. He was the head of the Bugtis, a warrior tribe that looked upon Islamabad with distrust and had always resented what it perceived to be the heavy-handedness of the Punjab.

In 1992, Sardar Akbar Bugti had allegedly killed more than hundred members of an enemy tribe for the revenge of his son's assassination in the city of Quetta; but no details available on record.

Like many other non-Punjabi citizens of Pakistan, he believed rightly or wrongly, that the National Government as well as Pakistan's army had always exploited the resources of other provinces to fill the coffers of Punjab. Still there prevails a widely accepted assumption that the wealth produced from Baluchistan's natural resources, such as its vast gas reserves, had never been used to invest in the development of that province. It is this grievance which Islamabad had consistently failed to address and the consequence of which could be disastrous.

Baloch people are being exploited, no doubt, but for some of the atrocities their Sardars (tribal chiefs) and Sardari System could be held responsible. In fact the Balochis are being subjugated and demoralized by both factions equally; firstly the successive military and civil governments and secondly by their own tribal chiefs. No doubt that the province is inadequately compensated for its natural resources but what meagre amounts come, they are kept by their tribal chiefs in the name of royalties. Nawab Akbar Bugti used to get the major chunk but not a single penny was spent on their tribe's local needs except ammunition, it is widely perceived.

The Baloch tribes ever remained split and mostly with daggers drawn at each other but the underlying grumbling is common against the governments. At all occasions the army believes that defeating the dissidents this time would make the things easier for ever. Here they are mistaken. Each time they manage to get arms and shelter from various stake holders of international stature. Thus every time Pakistan army's self-satisfaction and contentment brings disaster and displeasure for their political bosses. More than six brigades deployed in Balochistan only piles up the cost and expenditure; no results since 50 years at least.

One **Alok Bansal** from the neighbouring country opines at the internet pages that:

*'In fact, an independent Balochistan is being seen as a future reality by some US experts. A paper recently published [2006] in the US Armed Forces Journal not only recommends redrawing the borders of the Middle East but also speaks of an independent Balochistan. The future course would depend on whether the Pakistani Army would step back and implement the recommendations on Balochistan made by the high profile parliamentary committee in 2005, or choose confrontation and set the country on a disastrous course.'*

Much later a formal FIR [for murder of Nawab Akbar Bugti] was got registered in a police station of District Sibi on the instructions of the concerned District & Sessions Judge. Gen Musharraf and the then PM Shaukat Aziz stand nominated in that FIR and the Warrants of Arrest have also been issued as a due process. The case is under investigation with the Crime Branch Quetta of Balochistan Police.

In early October 2011, a judicial magistrate, on the request of the Crime Branch, had also issued an arrest warrant for Balochistan's former home minister, currently a member of the provincial legislature, Mir Shoaib Nausherwani in the same Nawab Bugti's murder case. Mr Nausherwani was one of the accused nominated in the FIR. The team contacted the Speaker of the Balochistan Assembly to ask the former home minister to cooperate in the investigation, but he refused. The investigating team had written to the provincial home secretary to seek his approval for obtaining arrest warrants for the others.

Besides former Home Minister Nausherwani, Gen Musharraf and former PM Shaukat Aziz; former Federal Interior Minister Aftab Sherpao, former Balochistan Governor Owais Ghani and former Balochistan's CM Jam Mir Muhammad Yousaf were also nominated in the FIR. The Balochistan government had requested Islamabad to get Gen Musharraf extradited but his arrest warrants were required by Interpol to move ahead. Gen Musharraf is in the UK with which Pakistan government holds no 'Extradition Treaty'.

Let us hope for a better perspective for our true Balochi country men, the common Balochis, too.