

Supported by:

Friedrich Naumann  
STIFTUNG FÜR DIE FREIHEIT

# Fard

Issue No. 3, May 2012

## Editor:

Hamza Khan

## Publisher

Individualland

## Cartoonist

Farooq Qaiser

## Coordinators

Khurram Saleem  
Syed Fahad ul Hassan

ISBN No. 978-969-958-213-4

## Contents

From the Editor's Desk...	1
The journey so far...	2
Where reporters dare!	14
Playing Russian roulette!	17
Liberal Perspective	19
U for Urdu, B for Baluchistan	20
Coming to you (a) live from Baluchistan...	22
Missing Baluchistan	24
Let's not Google it !	26
Pressing Details !	29
Individualland Poll Results	31

## Individualland

Creating space for the individual

House 12-B, Street 26, F-8/1, Islamabad

Supported by:

Friedrich Naumann  
STIFTUNG

FÜR DIE FREIHEIT

## From the Editor's Desk...

---

Dear Readers,

The year is 2012, the month is May, spring is about to end, summer has just started and temperatures are beginning to rise in every part of the country. Mercury must be rising in the finance minister's office as the country impatiently awaits the 2012-2013 fiscal budget, atmospheric pressure is already low in the prime minister's office after the 30 seconds episode at the Supreme Court while the presidency is functioning in vacuum wearing oxygen masks to breathe normally and amidst all of this the Fard magazine is back as promised.

It became quite a challenge for the team to work with this year's theme. The central idea of 'The state of media in Baluchistan' was to analyze, understand and highlight the role and the situation of some prominent elements of mass communication when it comes to province of Baluchistan. From radio to TV channels and from newspapers (national level English and Urdu) to online websites to challenges faced by the journalists working in the province of Baluchistan, we tried to focus on them all.

In this task, some veteran and renowned journalists of Baluchistan also assisted us. Their articles are found in the pages that follow. The insights and the ground realities presented by them seem to tell us the story of the people of Baluchistan from another dimension. Baluchistan is becoming a complex problem with every passing minute. The people there not only face law and order, security issues but also development and other societal issues as well. The challenges they face and the opportunities they have speak for themselves. The journalists in Baluchistan seem to be struggling in the province for their livelihood as well as for the safety and security of their lives. In spite of such challenges many journalists are adamant to report in different parts and areas of the province which are even unknown to many living in the country.

This is not at all an attempt to instruct what the media should and shouldn't do. However it is an effort to point out what media can do more given that it is sandwiched between the insurgents and the intelligence agencies.

With much enthusiasm and anticipation for receiving your feedback, we leave you with this year's Fard.

Hamza Khan

## The journey so far...

Irshad Mastoi

*“Our job is to reform the society and not to decay it. If anyone insists on running the media as per dictates, it would contribute to the decay of society.”*

Ours is the age of information explosion in which the latest media techniques are being used. Information about any event taking place in any part of the world is disseminated across the globe within minutes and seconds and at the same time, the reaction. The print media is gradually become story of the past and is being replaced with the cyber electronic media. In addition, the growing trends of the common use of social network also has its deep impact on the world's public opinion.



<http://tribune.com.pk/story/170963/pakistan-the-deadliest-country-for-the-media/>  
Today the term 'impartiality' is being blatantly used in journalism, its organizations as well as political horizon across the world. The journalistic wisdom in Baluchistan has rejected the term impartiality. Nobody in the world - either in politics or journalism or any other field can be impartial in the world. To show our impartiality, first of all we will have to reject all the prejudices and ideologies in the world. The concept of impartiality may be ensured only by completely rejecting all sorts of chauvinism, including religions, nations, countries, color, caste, creed, prejudices, caste and creed as well as sects, otherwise, today's global society itself totally negates the concept of impartiality in social and scientific

terms. On the other hand, the same concept of impartiality culminates in biasness. The concept of impartiality is considered as an approach which negates prejudices and promotes obedience. The concept of impartiality is not directed against the oppression, but it favors it.

The history of journalism in Baluchistan is not very ancient, but from the very beginning of journalism in the area, the concept of impartiality has been rejected and a communal and revolutionary movement against oppression and exploitation has been promoted through media. The media in Baluchistan has never served to be the agent of the rich and rulers. Journalism has never been a weapon of exploitative rulers and their agents, but an effort was always made to make it a tool to promote the struggle of people and the peasants. The story of journalism in Baluchistan is not so old. The role of journalism in Baluchistan is considered to be very disappointing and a general impression is that journalism has failed to play any worth mentioning and decisive role in the province. Rather, it has become just 'an advertisement journalism'. The first newspaper namely Monthly *Baluchistan Adviser* was launched in Baluchistan in 1888 - twelve years after Baluchistan had fallen in the clutches of the English in 1876. Journalism depicts a picture of any society and plays key role in promoting political, socio-economic, literary and cultural trends and values in the society, but when the first newspaper appeared in 1888, it carried just advertisements instead of news. Subsequently, several other advertisement newspapers followed suit.

In 1888, one Mr Muncherji launched a weekly newspaper *Baluchistan Gazette*. Two English ladies, Mrs Bracket and Mrs Nali also remained its editors. It was also edited by one Mr Scumb. After English period, Mr Feroz Muncherji became its editor and held this position till the disastrous earthquake of 1935. This newspaper carried news about posting and transfers of English military officers side by side

with advertisements.

In August 1889, another English weekly titled *Border Weekly News* was launched. *Weekly Baluchistan Gazette* was turned into a daily newspaper on the very next day the World War I broke out in 1914. When the fighting intensified a few days later, it used to publish two editions both in the morning and the evening carrying pictures related to war. In 1915, *Weekly Baluchistan Gazette* was taken over by Khalilur Rehman Siddiqui of Amroha. He was the first Muslim who had entered local journalism. This newspaper used to regularly publish news and propaganda about the war.

A few days after the launching of daily *Baluchistan Gazette*, the first Urdu daily *Raast Go* started its publication to report the war and propaganda. This was in typed form and the wire service of Reuters was hired from Bombay. An arrangement was made to collect news from Bombay through telegram. When the fighting ended, this spokesman of English government was closed and daily *Baluchistan Gazette* was turned first into a three-day and then a weekly newspaper.

No litho press had been set up in Baluchistan till the second half of the 20th century. Therefore, no literary and cultural activities could be promoted here. Some literary figures launched a magazine *Qandeel-e-Khayal* from Loralai in 1908. Those who edited this magazine and worked for the promotion of Urdu language included Sardar Muhammad Yousuf Khan, Khan Bahadur Nabi Bakhsh Khan Assad, Maulvi Illahi Bakhsh, Wazirzada Abdul Ahad Khan and Syed Abid Shah of Karani. The Editor of *Ihsan*, Waqar Anbalvi also contributed a lot to the promotion of Urdu language and the publication of *Qandeel-e-Khayal*. It is worth mentioning that Mr Waqar had adopted three titles i.e. Shakir, Nazim and Ghasif. However, he became popular as Waqar. *Qandeel-e-Khayal* published for about a year or so and was closed in 1909.

In 1918, the owners of Albert Press launched an English daily *Baluchistan Herald* but the experiment failed. During the same days, the *Baluchistan Gazette* became a weekly. It continued to appear till May 31, 1935 till the earthquake hit Quetta.

A few days after the launching of *Baluchistan Herald*,

the owners of Kurzon Press joined the race and brought out an English weekly named *Quetta News*, but it also met the fate of *Baluchistan Herald*.

Monthly *Nowsherwan* was launched in Urdu in 1930. It was a literary and educational magazine edited by Sehrai Sarwari whose real name was Baldev Roy Suhai. Mr Midhat Zubairi and late Ilyas had a great contribution to its publication. This monthly was also closed after the earthquake of 1935. The title page of this magazine was published in blue color and it carried a logo depicting a scale.

After 1935, Abdus Samad Achakzai, Nasim Talvi, Ainnuddin, Waqar Anbalvi, Muhammad Arshad Shad, Rashid Amrohvi, Midhat Zubairi, Ghulam Muhammad Jamil and Abdul Hakim Seemab emerged as pioneers of journalism. Earlier the English government had slapped curbs on freedom of speech and writing in Baluchistan. Therefore, publication of newspapers or provision of facilities to them was barred. No one had the courage to launch any newspaper in violation of the orders of the English government.

Around this time, citizens declared rebellion against the oppressor government. The government declared these freedom fighters as rebels. Nawab Yousuf Aziz Magsi is a prominent figure of the political, literary and journalistic history of Baluchistan. He raised his voice against the oppression of the English government. He also introduced the concept of modern politics in the province. He wrote an article titled 'Baluchistan call' in daily *Hamdard* of Lahore in 1929 in which he exposed the oppression and tyranny of the English government. In those days, criticism of the English government was considered to be an offence. Therefore, Nawab Yousuf Aziz Magsi was put on trial for writing the article. In 1930, a jirga of pro-English tribal elders awarded one year imprisonment and a fine to Nawab Yousuf Aziz Magsi, but this verdict did not break his will. He willingly accepted this punishment and during imprisonment, he joined Anjuman-e-Balochan launched by Mir Abdul Aziz Kurd. He started his political struggle from the platform of the same Anjuman-e-Balochan. After his release, Nawab Yousuf Aziz Magsi was elected president of his party. Anjuman-e-Balochan is

regarded the first political party of Baluchistan. Prime Minister Shams Shah of Kalat state had let loose a rein of terror against the people who were fed up of his exploitative policies. Shams Shah desired his son to be the ruler of the state after Khan Muhammad Khan Alam's death so as to protect the interests of the English rulers while Anjuman-e-Balochan was struggling to keep Shams Shah away from the affairs of Baluchistan. Therefore, it was decided to launch a hectic movement and in 1931 besides publishing a list based on the oppression of Shams Shah, a pamphlet named Shams Gardi was published. It highlighted the backwardness of Baluchistan and appealed to the people to raise their voice against this excess. Efforts were made day and night to organize and activate this movement which bore fruits. Prince Azam Jan was appointed Khan of Kalat. Nawab Yousuf Aziz continued his political struggle. In the meantime, he used his pen to create political awareness among the people. However, he was killed in the devastating earthquake of 1935.



<http://blogs.tribune.com.pk/story/11391/perils-of-reporting-in-balochistan/>

No press laws were promulgated in Baluchistan till 1937. When Abdus Samad Khan Achakzai intended to launch his own newspaper *Istaqlal*, he had to travel to Punjab to obtain declaration. It was due to his efforts that Press Act was promulgated in Baluchistan. A number of newspapers were launched and closed in Baluchistan between 1935 and 1947.

An English newspaper *Advertiser* was launched in 1936 which published only advertisements. It was closed after two years of publication. Then another newspaper *Quetta Times* appeared, which was later

taken over by Rustamji. This English weekly continued its publication for a long time. *Istaqlal* started its publication in early 1938, and Abdus Samad Achakzai, Quddus Sehbai, Allah Bakhsh Salim, Sher Muhammad Khan, Yaqoob Ghulzai and Muhammad Hussain remained its editors in different times. Maulvi Abdullah launched weekly *Pasban* in 1939, which later became a fortnightly. Maulana Abdul Jamil Karim launched a newspaper named *Al-Islam* in 1940.



<http://www.viewpointonline.net/baluchistan-12-journalists-killed-in-6-years.html>

#### Leading journalists of Baluchistan

Baluchistan has produced several leading figures in journalism. A few of those who will remain alive in history are:

#### ***Khan Abdus Samad Khan Achakzai:***

Khan Abdus Samad Khan Achakzai was born in a literary family at Inayatullah Kariz area of Pishin valley of former Afghan province of Kandahar on November 7, 1907. After the death of his father Nur Muhammad Khan Achakzai, he was brought up by his maternal uncle, Muhammad Usman and granted admission in a local school in 1919. In the meantime, the Afghan ruler Amanullah Khan declared independence. Therefore, the English imposed the third war on Afghanistan. The English removed Amanullah Khan under a conspiracy in 1929. The people of Afghanistan and the oppressed Pakhtunkhwa people formed a lashkar to once again



install Amanullah Khan in power. Khan Abdus Samad Khan Achakzai along with his few colleagues was also ready to join this Qaumi lashkar. After failure to prevent him from joining the lashkar, the English officials arrested him. This was the first detention of Khan Abdus Samad Khan Achakzai.

A state jirga awarded two years imprisonment to him in July 1931 on the charges of taking part in political activities. He was released when the Congress set the precondition of the release of all political prisoners for its participation in the conference held in London. Immediately after his release, Khan Abdus Samad Khan traveled to Bombay to meet the Indian leaders who were to attend the London conference. He also held a meeting with Gandhi in Bombay. He also had an opportunity to see Bacha Khan for the first time. This meeting turned into a long association later. He also met the leader of Baluch movement Aziz Ahmad Kurd. In December 1932, the Baloch nationalists held another conference in Jacobabad which was chaired by Khan Abdus Samad Achakzai. The annual meeting of Baluchistan conference was held in Hyderabad, Sindh in December 1933. Its second session was held at Khaliq Dina hall of Karachi. Khan Abdus Samad also attended this conference. He was arrested on his return to Quetta in January 1934 and was awarded three years rigorous imprisonment. In 1935, the British government promulgated a new law for India under which limited autonomy and political freedoms were granted to provinces. This act was extended to Baluchistan also. Therefore, Khan Abdus Samad Khan immediately submitted his application for the declaration of daily *Istaqlal* from Quetta. After keeping his request pending for a few months, he was allowed to bring out the daily. Later the English government arrested Khan Abdus Samad Khan along with his colleagues on the charges of treason and interference in official functions.

However, Mohammad Aslam Khan Achakzai, Nasim Talvi, Muhammad Hussain Nizami and Muhammad Hussain Anqa went to Karachi and pursued the campaign through speech and writing. Maulana Zafar Ali Khan frequently included editorials in his newspaper *Zamindar* on the arrest of Abdus Samad Achakzai bitterly criticizing it. On his release in 1935, Abdus Samad Achakzai established Aziz Electric Press

in memory of his old colleague Yousuf Magsi. This is considered to be the first litho printing press in Baluchistan. As no press act was in force in Baluchistan in those days, Abdus Samad Khan had to obtain declaration for his newspaper *Istaqlal* from Lahore. At the same time, he started efforts for the promulgation of press act in Baluchistan. When press act was promulgated, Abdus Samad Khan was behind the bars. After his release, he enthusiastically launched his political and journalistic activities and formally launched *Istaqlal*. This was a pro-Congress Urdu newspaper. In those days, liberation struggle in India was in full swing. Therefore, Abdus Samad Achakzai hectically struggled for the objectives of Congress. Editors of *Istaqlal* continued to change from time to time. Abdus Samad Khan was elected as the first president of Baluchistan Journalists Association in 1938. At the same time, he had also been working as the correspondent of United Press of India. *Istaqlal* was banned after the inception of Pakistan and Abdus Samad Khan Achakzai was once again arrested during the first martial law. Abdus Samad Khan is basically known as a political leader who used journalism for his mission, but despite that his services in the field of journalism cannot be ignored.

In January 1938, he started publishing Pushto and Urdu newspapers from Quetta and thus he is regarded as a founder of journalism in Baluchistan. The same year, he launched a political party named Anjuman-e Wattan on May 21 after consultation with his colleagues. Thereafter, the English arrested Khan Abdus Samad and his colleagues in 1943. The English bureaucrats retained their positions in Baluchistan even after the creation of Pakistan. They arrested Khan on the next day of the inception of Pakistan and he remained behind bars for six years. At last the government released him on January 10, 1954. On April 25, 1954, the Pashtun nationalists led by Khan Abdus Samad Khan established a new political party Warwar Pashtun. Khan Abdus Samad Khan was once again arrested. When the bureaucracy scrapped Bengali majority and created a new province named West Pakistan comprising four provinces i.e. Punjab, Pakhtunkhwa, Baluchistan and Sindh, Bacha Khan's elder brother Dr Khan Sahib supported this scheme

and became the chief minister of West Pakistan. Under Chief Minister Dr Khan Sahib, the bureaucracy was scared of the success of Khan Abdus Samad Khan in his parliamentary electoral campaign and as such on the orders of Dr Khan, Abdus Samad Khan was arrested on the charge of taking part in activities against the national security and hoisting foreign flag in Loralai. After Dr Khan's government lost the legal battle, Khan Abdus Samad Khan was released. On failure to control the national and democratic movement, the Pakistani bureaucracy decided to use the military institutions for their heinous designs and for this purpose, the reins of power were handed over to the military headed by General Muhammad Ayub Khan and thus martial law was imposed in the country. The military government arrested Khan Abdus Samad Khan Achakzai on October 11, 1958, and a military court awarded 14 years imprisonment to him. In the same order, Khan Abdus Samad Ahckazai was told that he would be release after three years imprisonment provided he assures to give up opposing the government. However, Khan Abdus Samad refused to accept this condition. He was released in April 1968 after the expiry of the sentence awarded by the military court. He was rearrested in view of the arousing welcome accorded to him at Quetta airport.

Khan Abdus Samad Khan Achakzai was elected Member of Baluchistan Assembly in the general elections held in December 1970. The first session of the provincial assembly in the history of Baluchistan was held on May 1, 1972 under the chairmanship of Khan Abdus Samad Khan Achakzai in which the newly elected members were sworn in and the speaker of the assembly was elected. The political situation in Baluchistan deteriorated in 1972 and 1973. Khan Abdus Samad held meetings with the Pakistani prime minister to overcome this situation. At last his efforts bore fruit and a meeting of all the parties concerned with Baluchistan was convened in Islamabad on December 6, 1973, but before this meeting could be held, Khan Abdus Samad was assassinated in an attack at his residence on December 2, 1973.

#### **Fazal Ahmad Ghazi**

Fazal Ahmad Ghazi is considered as a bold,

enthusiastic and active worker of Pakistan movement. Before the creation of Pakistan, Fazl Ahmad rendered meritorious services in the second phase of journalism in Baluchistan. He edited the Muslim League's spokesman newspaper *Al-Islam*. Fazal Ahmad Ghazi also launched a newspaper *Khurshid*. However, this could not become as popular as *Al-Islam*. These newspapers of Pakistan movement days continued their publication even after Pakistan came into being. Fazal Ahmad Ghazi's services in regard to both these newspapers cannot be ignored.

#### **Mir Atta Muhammad Mir Ghazani**

Mir Atta Muhammad Mir Ghazani joined journalism in a very difficult period and raised his voice against the English. First of all he launched a journal *Al-Haq* in 1935. The English government disliked it and sought a surety of Rs 2,000. The newspaper was closed. Then Atta Muhammad launched *Paigham* from Karachi in 1947 and weekly *Kalmatul Haq* in 1948. Both these newspapers boldly exposed the inhuman treatment meted out by the English rulers. In 1950, the Sibbi edition of *Kalmatul Haq* appeared. The objective was to create awareness and provide information to the people. He used to write his column with the byline of 'by Baluchistani' before 1952, but later, he started using the byline of just 'Marghazani'. Prominent writers and intellectuals who remained associated with his journals included Malik Muhammad Ramazan Kamil Al-Qadri, Abdur Rehman Ghaur, Attaullah Bukhari, Muhammad Usman, Gul Muhammad Aparvi and Maulvi Abdul Baqi. In his last days, Mir Atta Muhammad was faced with very difficult circumstances and after his death, Abdur Rehman Ghaur struggled hard to keep his mission alive.

#### **Ghulam Muhammad Shahwani**

Ghulam Muhammad Shahwani is another important name in the history of journalism in Baluchistan. He was the editor of *Nawa-e-Baluchistan* which started in 1949. In 1953, he brought out his own Urdu weekly *Nawa-e-Wattan*. A case was registered against him for publishing a letter and refusing to disclose his source. Therefore, he was sentenced. Later, the publication of *Nawa-e-Wattan* was suspended. Then



Malik Muhammad Panah got the declaration transferred in his name and he restarted publication of *Nawa-e-Wattan* in Balochi language. Earlier, Ghulam Muhammad Shahwani remained associated with daily *Ittehad* and weekly *Meezan*.

#### **Mir Abdur Rehman Kurd**

Mir Abdur Rehman Kurd also played a significant role in the literary, political and journalistic history of Baluchistan. He started weekly *Nawa-e-Bolan* first from Mastung and then Quetta in 1957, but the weekly was closed in 1961.

#### **Mir Muhammad Hussain Anqa**

Muhammad Hussain Anqa started his journalistic career in 1962 and he also took part in the politics for 45 successive years. He faced exile and jails during his struggle for rights. During the days of English occupation, he was strong voice for freedom and democratic rights in Baluchistan in league with Khan Abdus Samad Khan Achakzai, Yousuf Aziz Magsi, Mir Abdul Aziz and his own brother Muhammad Hassan Nizami. Muhammad Hussain Anqa gave up his job in 1932 and launched the first newspaper *Al-Baloch* from Karachi. The English rulers got annoyed. They removed his brother Hussain Nizami from service and forfeited the coal mine of Muhammad Usman. In spite of that, Anqa stuck to his mission. Through his writings, he used to highlight the repression of the English government in Baluchistan. Therefore, the government was compelled to ban his newspaper. Then he brought out *Baluchistan Jadeed* and *Young Baluchistan*. These journals were also banned. Later he launched *Nijat*. However, the government banned the circulation and distribution of his newspapers in Baluchistan. Anqa started distributing his newspapers in big envelopes in Baluchistan. Besides, he remained busy in writing articles in the newspapers of each city within and outside Baluchistan.

#### **Abdur Rehman Ghaur**

Abdur Rehman Ghaur joined Khaksar Tehreek and launched struggle against the English government. He was repeatedly arrested during the course. With the cooperation of some of his friends, he established

*Idara-e-Adab* in 1945, and started literary activities. In the meantime, he also joined journalism. To start with, he joined *Kalimatul Haq* of Sibbi in 1950 then edited by Atta Muhammad Marghzani. Afterwards he started working for *Muallam* in 1951 and later joined its editorial panel. Side by side with it, he also worked for *Tameer-e-Baluchistan*. Then he joined the editorial boards of *Esar* and daily *Ittehad*. After the closure of daily *Zamana*, Ghaur launched his newspaper *Meesaqul Haq*, he was compelled to close it within two years due to financial problems and incompleteness of the formalities of Press Ordinance. Thereafter, he joined *Akhbar-e-Subah* of Abdus Samad Zakir Batalvi. He published several books under the auspices of Balochi Academy.

#### **Kamaluddin**

The biggest journalistic achievement of late Kamaluddin in Baluchistan is his book titled *Sahafat Wad-e-Bolan Main* in which he has explained the evolution of journalism in the province till 1964. Balochi Academy published this book in 1978 after his death. Kamaluddin had started his journalistic career from weekly *Meezan* in 1948 and was appointed its Assistant Editor. On the sidelines, he was also a reporter of *Sindh Observer* in Quetta. In 1952, he launched his newspaper *Bachon Ka Shaheen*, and after resigning from *Meezan*, he joined daily *Ittehad* as Editor. Later, he quit *Bachon Ka Shaheen* and *Ittehad* and edited a few issues of weekly newspaper *Union* published from Mastung. When the national newspaper *Jang* started its Quetta edition, Kamaluddin joined it as a staff reporter.

#### **Babu Abdul Karim Shorash**

Babu joined the field of journalism, when feudal system was on its peak in the area and strict curbs were imposed on freedom of expression. He joined weekly *Istaqlal* of Abdus Samad Khan Achakzai and thus started his journalistic career. When Lala Ghulam Muhammad Shahwani launched his weekly *Nawa-e-Wattan* in 1953, Babu started contributing to it also. In October 1957, he joined weekly newspaper of Abdur Rehman Kurd and then started serving *Meesaqul Haq*. He tirelessly worked for weekly *Zamana* which has now become a daily.

In 1964, Babu Abdul Karim Shorash launched another newspaper *Naukeen Daur* to add a new chapter to the Baluch Urdu journalism. Babu had to struggle a lot to generate financial resources for the *Naukeen Daur*. As it was anti-government newspaper, it was mostly deprived of official ads. *Naukeen Daur* was closed due to financial resource constraints and Babu Abdul Karim Shorash started printing cards and distributing them which filled the vacuum created due to the closure of *Naukeen Daur* to some extent.

#### **Malik Muhammad Panah:**

Malik Muhammad Panah started writing as a student. Malik Muhammad Panah was known as a bold journalist, critic and intellectual in Baluchistan. He enjoyed the company of prominent writers like Mir Gul Khan Naseer and other such persons. He loved Urdu language and literature. He would speak and write so beautiful, neat, clean and fluent Urdu that even the Urdu speaking people appreciated him. First he started writing against oppressive system in Karachi based newspapers that is *Bolan* and *Young Baloch* as well as *Balochi* so as to create public awareness. His joining of National Kalat Party and political tirade against the feudal system culminated in his expulsion from the state. Malik Muhammad Panah went into exile in Jacobabad, but he did not give up his mission of creating political awareness. On arrival in Jacobabad, Panah joined *Naujawan*, a weekly brought out by prominent political figure Aslam Khan Achakzai and frequently contributed to it. However, his love for the soil did not let him stay in Jacobabad for long and he returned to Sibbi. Then he traveled to Mach, Bolan and got the job of Munshi in a coal mine.

Malik Muhammad Panah was held in high esteem by Khan of Kalat because of his knowledge of English language. Therefore, Khan of Kalat called Malik Muhammad Panah back and provided job to him once again, but Malik Muhammad Panah always remained active to promote revolutionary sentiments among the people. He said goodbye to his job and continued writing. He also worked in Mohammad Hussain Anqa's newspaper for some time and then wrote columns under the title of *Darogh Darogh Rast Rast*, in Abdul Karim Shorash's

newspaper *Naukeen Daur*. In 1970, he obtained the declaration of Ghulam Muhammad Shahwani's newspaper *Nawa-e-Wattan* and regularly published it till 1980. He continued to publish it even in his last days and after his death, his daughter Amna Panah reiterated the pledge to continue the mission of her father. One year after his death, she got the declaration transferred in her own name and she still brings out *Nawa-e-Wattan*.

#### **Malik Muhammad Ramazan**

Malik Muhammad Ramazan started his journalistic career in 1953 from Hassan Nizami's newspaper *Kalimatul Haq* published from Sibbi. Malik Muhammad Ramazan who belonged to Domki tribe of Baluchistan lived in Mastung near Kalat state and he launched weekly *Saarban* from there in 1960s which he continued to publish till 1990. *Saarban* was a bilingual weekly published in Urdu and Balochi languages. In 1985, Malik Muhammad Ramazan was appointed Chairman of Balochi Academy which was established for the promotion of Balochi language and literature. When Press Council was set up in 1986, Malik Muhammad Ramazan was among its founder cabinet.

#### **Nur Muhammad Parwana**

The biggest achievement of Nur Muhammad Parwana is the publication of *Elam*, a Brahvi language weekly. The weekly *Elam* played a leading role in the promotion of Brahvi language and literature in 1960s. *Elam* Mastung was the only Brahvi language newspaper in Baluchistan which was regularly published with mass circulation. Nur Muhammad Parwana had great interest in the promotion of his language, its literature and culture. In this connection, he launched several organizations and struggled to introduce Brahvi language at the official level. Besides writing articles, he would also write poems from time to time. In 1990, *Datuk* (quarterly) published a special edition comprising articles and lengthy interviews of Nur Muhammad Parwana, his personality and services in journalism. He was given the title of Baba-e-Brahvi journalism.

### Views of Baloch journalists

Anwar Sajidi, the editor of national daily *Intikhab* which is simultaneously published from Quetta and Hub, says that the scope of journalism was very limited before 1970s and there were strict curbs on it. In the English period, publication of newspapers in Baluchistan was banned but despite that, the people published newspapers from Karachi and Jacobabad. *Al-Baloch* and *Hanif* of Nasim Talvi are worth mentioning in this regard. Then *Istaqlal* was launched from Quetta, but the launching of daily *Jang* from Quetta in 1972 brought a change in local journalistic trends. Earlier, the newspapers published from Baluchistan represented some group or ideological approach and they had very limited circulation. But *Jang* devised a market mechanism, but that too was not complete. According to Anwar Sajidi, no press ordinance existed in the country till 1988. Then Registration of Press and Printing Ordinance was promulgated, and later a press council was set up to ensure self-accountability as well as true freedom of expression, but unfortunately, the Press Council has remained dormant since its very inception. Although Baluchistan has been a war and conflict zone since the very first day where journalism is not known as a profession to provide information or keep the world abreast with the situation but it is known as a profession where one's life is at risk. No protection or guarantee is provided to those who are performing the duty in Baluchistan. No one knows when and where the bullet will be fired or explosives will be detonated. The sense of insecurity is growing with every passing day. The government agencies, armed groups, security forces and political parties are mounting pressure on the journalists. The armed groups and the government agencies of Baluchistan have involved the journalists in their war, which is not correct. Instead, these organizations should play an effective role to ensure protection of journalist community and the freedom of expression in practical terms. The situation has become highly alarming throughout the country. However, the journalists in Baluchistan are faced with relatively more difficulties. We fully realize that the journalists of Baluchistan are fulfilling journalistic duties in an impartial and honest manner in highly difficult

conditions. They have not only fallen in the sense of insecurity but the government agencies and the gangs busy in armed struggle also exert pressure on them which is a wrong practice and we always appeal to them to ensure freedom of expression instead of frightening the journalist community.

Veteran journalist Rashid Baig who had started his journalistic career during Bhutto period, says that conditions were certainly difficult for journalists in the past, but the pressure now the journalists of Baluchistan are facing is unprecedented. Rashid Baig who used to contribute weekly diary and articles to national Urdu newspapers published from different parts of the country other than Baluchistan, later joined the newspaper *Intakahabat* published from Hub and is still with it. Rashid Baig played a leading role in establishing Quetta Press Club and to activate Baluchistan Union of Journalists. Earlier in 1984, journalistic activities in Quetta Press Club had no associated recognition and even the citizens were ignorant about the location of Quetta Press Club. A journalist named Abdul Karim Butt who proclaimed himself to be life president of the Press Club, used to grant membership to anyone at his own will. The doors of Press Club were closed to journalists. However, the decision to provide residence to a journalist in the Press Club building sparked a campaign against him and the court was moved. After one and a half years litigation, the Press Club was freed from his clutches and free elections were held in January 1989.

Professor Berim Ghauri of journalism department of Baluchistan University says that the role of media cannot be ignored in any sense. Ours is an age of rapid progress in which time has assumed significance in social media and the electronic media. Now the readers do not largely rely on the newspapers. There may be a few areas in far flung districts of Baluchistan where the newspapers reach, otherwise, no newspaper reaches the whole of Baluchistan. According to him, the development of media has done away with the ideological journalism. Journalism remained ideological in 1972, but today the financial institutions are coming forward while remaining under the influence of someone else. No concrete practical steps have been taken for the

promotion of journalism and to ensure protection of journalists in Baluchistan. In view of the specific political situation of Baluchistan, not only the journalists here need protection but there is also a need to give priority and promote journalism in Balochi, Brahvi, Pushto and other languages.

The President of Baluchistan Union of Journalists, Muhammad Issa Tareen bitterly criticizes the government for its failure to provide protection to journalists and the associated workers against the armed groups and the government agencies, massacre of journalists and failure to provide protection to journalists. He says that conditions for journalists in the country particularly in Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are becoming more difficult with every passing day. As many as 63 journalists were killed in the country during the last few years. Of them, 22 journalists were killed in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and 13 in Baluchistan. Neither any investigation has been conducted nor any steps taken to bring the killers of journalists to justice. Journalism is regarded as the fourth pillar of the state, but those associated with this profession are performing their duties in highly difficult conditions. The pressure of armed groups and the government agencies on media in Baluchistan is growing. These forces are making every possible attempt to dictate the journalists and to usurp their freedom of expression, but we have made it clear to all the forces that the journalists will continue to discharge their duties in a fair manner without any compromise on principles. The armed gangs and the government agencies should give up sandwiching the journalists because the journalists want to use their pen for righteousness and truth. Our job is to reform the society and not to decay it. If anyone insists on running the media as per dictates, it would contribute to the decay of society.

The journalists of Baluchistan who had countered the oppression in English period and survived every sort of pressure to step in the contemporary age, are confronted with the pressure of tribal elders, secessionists, security forces and the political parties in 2012. Reporting has become the toughest job for journalists in remote areas of the province. If one is murdered today, the tribal elders hurl threats on

phone that this murder is their personal affair and if its story is released, it would mean personal enmity with them. Till this story will run, the journalists will continue to receive threats and the gunmen will continue to display kalashnikovs in front of their homes on daily basis.



<http://pakistanblogzine.wordpress.com/2011/09/11/journalism-a-war-zone-in-balochistan/>

The Baloch secessionist movement has become the biggest menace for the journalists of Baluchistan. At times, they attack trains. Then they blow up pylons. The secessionists demand that the news story must give credit to their organization and if this is not done, they are annoyed. On the other hand, the secret security agencies exert pressure that either the story should be dropped, or if it is filed, secessionists must not be named in it. Often it happens that some defunct outfit accepts responsibility of the explosion even after more than one hour, but by that time, the news has been removed from channel. The intelligence agencies personnel use various tricks to harass the journalists. They phone the journalists to say that you run the story and the explosion takes place five minutes later. No journalist can take such a huge risk of running advance news, but the security forces make such utterances to pressurize them. One of the complaints of the defunct outfits is that why they are written terrorists. They claim themselves to be Surmachar, a term used in the Balochi language for holy warriors. In short, the journalists and local correspondents performing their duties in various districts of Baluchistan refrain from describing these as terrorists and generally, they call it "defunct group" and use the term of 'resistant' for its workers. Till the

story lands in Karachi, Islamabad and Lahore, this term is replaced with terrorists. Baluchistan has become the most dangerous zone for journalists. Sandwiched between military and the militants, the journalists of Baluchistan have become silent. The journalists have no option except to edit or kill the news.

### **Martyred journalists of Baluchistan**

When Military General Pervez Musharraf assaulted democracy in the country, the situation of Baluchistan took another turn. Veteran nationalist leader Nawab Muhammad Akbar Khan Bugti was killed along with his colleagues in a military operation in Taranai area between Dera Bugti and Kohlu on August 26, 2006. This changed the situation altogether and efforts to address it still continue. However, the situation has gone beyond the control of any one. During this journey right from the dictatorship up to controlled democracy, several journalists who had come out in search of some news, themselves became a 'news'.

#### **1) Mohammad Iqbal:**

He was working as news editor in the English daily *Baluchistan Times*, Quetta. The robbers gunned him down apparently for resisting robbery at his home in Quetta in 2006.

#### **2) Khalil Ahmad Samalani:**

He belonged to Mach, Bolan and used to report for daily *Bakhabar* published from Quetta. He was killed in a suicide attack on the procession of the Chairperson of Pakistan Peoples Party, former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in Karachi on October 18, 2007.

#### **3) Dr. Chishti Mujahid:**

Dr. Chishti Mujahid besides being an eye specialist, was associated with journalism. Some unidentified gunmen shot him dead in front of his home on February 9, 2008. He was the correspondent of weekly *Akhbar-e-Jahan* of *Jang* group in Quetta. Defunct Baloch Liberation Army had accepted the responsibility of his killing.

#### **4) Khadim Hussain Sheikh:**

This journalist hailing from Hub area of Baluchistan, was associated with daily *Khabrain*. He was also the chief editor of daily *Hub News* published locally. He was killed by some unidentified armed persons on April 14, 2008.

#### **5) Wasi Ahmad Qureshi:**

He was serving daily *Azadi* and *Baluchistan Express* in Khuzdar area of Baluchistan. He lost his life in an incident of target killing on April 10, 2009.

#### **6) Faiz Sasoli:**

Faiz Muhammad Sasoli was a resident of Khuzdar area. He was serving as correspondent of Urdu daily *Azadi* in Khuzdar. Unidentified armed persons killed him on June 27, 2009. The Baloch resistant organization Baloch Liberation Army accepted the responsibility of the killing of Faiz Sasoli.

#### **7) Lala Hamid Baloch:**

He belonged to Gwadar district of Baluchistan. He was the president of Gwadar Press Club and was serving daily *Tawar* of Mastung. The local journalists say that Hamid Baloch was taken into custody by Pakistani security forces when he was on his way from Turbat to his ancestral Gwadar town on October 25. His bullet riddled mutilated dead body was found in the outskirts of Turbat city on November 18, 2010.

#### **8) Muhammad Khan Sasoli:**

Muhammad Khan Sasoli also hailed from Khuzdar. He used to play a very active role in journalistic and social circles. He was serving different media groups in Khuzdar, including Independent News Pakistan, daily *Zamana* Quetta and *Baluchistan Times*. He was killed on December 14, 2010 when he reached the gate of his residence in Workers Colony. A pamphlet distributed by Baloch Musalla Difa organization had urged the journalists of Khuzdar to refrain from reporting proceedings of Baluchistan Student Organization and Baluchistan National Party.

**9) Malik Muhammad Arif:**

Malik Muhammad Arif, a cameraman was a resident of Quetta. After serving Pakistan Television for a long period, he had joined the Samaa News channel. When an incident of sectarian target killing took place in the city on April 16, 2010, Malik Muhammad Arif carrying his camera accompanied his colleagues to the emergency department of Civil Hospital for coverage, but he himself became a news story after he died in a suicide attack there.



**10) Muhammad Sarwar:**

Muhammad Sarwar was serving private television channel Aaj News in Quetta as a driver. Muhammad Sarwar lost his life in a suicide attack and firing during an Al-Quds Day rally in Quetta on September 3, 2010.

**11) Ijaz Raisani:**

Ijaz Ahmad Raisani was a resident of Sariab Quetta. After serving different private television channels as cameraman, he had joined Samaa News. He was busy in the coverage of Al-Quds rally on September 3, 2010 and fell victim to the suicide attack there. He succumbed to injuries in the hospital on September 6, 2010.



**12) Ilyas Nazar:**

Ilyas Nazar belonged to Keech area of Turbat district of Baluchistan. He had been working with daily *Tawar* of Karachi as a correspondent in Mastung for long. He was kidnapped and later murdered. His bullet riddled dead body was found on January 3, 2011.

**13) Wali Khan Babar:**

Wali Khan Babar hailed from Zhob district of Baluchistan and he was associated with a private television channel Geo News in Karachi. He was returning after coverage of a police operation in Pehalwan Goth area of violence-hit Karachi when unidentified gunmen shot him dead.

**14) Abdost Rind:**

He was reporting for daily *Eagle* of Baluchistan from Turbat. Some unidentified motorcyclists shot dead 37

years old Abdost Rind on February 19, 2011.

**15) Rehmatullah Shaheen:**

Rehmatullah Shaheen belonging to Bolan Mach district of Baluchistan used to report for daily *Tawar*. He went missing in Dhadar area of Baluchistan on March 18, 2011 and his bullet riddled dead body was found in Sariab area of Quetta on April 1, 2011.

**16) Zareef Faraz:**

He belonged to Turbat and used to edit quarterly magazine *Shahu*. Zareef Faraz's bullet riddled dead body was found in Marghap area of Turbat on April 25, 2011.

**17) Siddique Ido:**

He belonged to Baluchistan's coastal area of Pasni. Siddique Ido was reporting for daily *Eagle* of Hub in Mekran and was a member of Human Rights Commission in Gwadar. Siddique Ido and Yousuf Nazar were kidnapped by unidentified gunmen when they were returning to Pishin in police custody after appearing in a court in Gwadar on December 21, 2010. The mutilated dead bodies of both Siddique Ido and Yousuf Nazar were found by the local Levies personnel on April 29, 2011.

**18) Munir Ahmad Shakir:**

Munir Ahmad Shakir belonging to Chatta tribe, had been a reporter for the Online International News Network news agency in Khuzdar since long. Besides, he was serving the Balochi news channel *Sabzbat*. Unidentified gunmen on motorcycles shot dead Munir Shakir when he was returning to Press Club after the reporting and coverage of Black Day observed on the call of Baloch secessionists on the occasion of Pakistan Day on August 14, 2011. Baloch Defense Army group had threatened all the journalists of serious consequences, including the reporter of Online International News Network Munir Ahmad Shakir against participation and coverage of the programs of Baloch nationalists particularly the Baloch secessionists.

**19) Akhtar Mirza:**

Akhtar Mirza was a senior journalist of Baluchistan and resident editor of daily *Jang* Quetta. He died of

cardiac arrest on October 16, 2011. Akhtar Mirza had been under pressure after the Baluchistan High Court verdict in which media was ordered to refrain from publishing statements of defunct groups. After the High Court verdict, the defunct groups pressurized the journalists and insisted that their statements would be published and aired at all cost. The Baluchistan Union of Journalists protested throughout the province on October 1, 2011 against pressure by defunct groups on the journalists.

**20) Javed Naseer Rind:**

Javed Naseer Rind belonged to Hub, and used to contribute to daily *Tawar* of Karachi. In view of the specific situation of Baluchistan, he quit daily *Tawar* and had established an Internet Café in Hub city. According to the local journalist Niaz Shehzad, Javed Naseer was sitting in his net café on September 10, 2011 when he was kidnapped by gunmen. His bullet riddled dead body was found at Gazgi Square in Khuzdar on November 5, 2011.

This article is exclusively written for the Fard magazine for which we are very thankful to the writer. The views expressed are the writer's own and may or may not reflect Individualland's stance. For more information regarding the article, please contact [info@individualland.com](mailto:info@individualland.com)

## Where reporters dare!

Shahzada Zulfiqar

*“The forces and the militant want to get media coverage according to their wishes and if any report that they feel poses threat to their interest they start pressurizing media people”*

Like FATA, the journalists of Baluchistan are also facing the worst situation for the last one decade as around twenty journalists have so far been killed in different restive parts of the province including the provincial capital of Quetta. The journalists have to work in state of fear of being harmed while reporting events.

Although insurgency is going on in various districts of Baluchistan and resultantly they are also not declared as conflict zone, the situation of these areas is reminiscent to the conflict zones. Paramilitary forces are conducting operation against the insurgents in these districts while the armed groups are involved in attacks on security forces and installations.

There is no reporting at all from the restive districts like Dera Bugti and Kohlu while the reports from others districts are seen in the newspapers, but not against the wishes of security forces and insurgent groups. No reporter lives either in Kohlu Marri area or Dera Bugti as their district correspondents had to migrate along with other displaced persons due to military operations followed by actions of armed groups loyal to intelligence agencies against insurgents. However the correspondents do reporting of other events except on going military actions. The local reporters face tremendous pressure from intelligence agencies as well as by armed groups for their independent reporting. The forces and the militants want to get media coverage according to their wishes and if any report that they feel poses threat to their interest they start pressurizing the media people.

There is no independent reporting at all from some restive districts in particular and from Baluchistan in general as no journalist can bring the facts before public by putting his life in danger. If he does, his action may pose threat to the interests of either side

of the conflict and that is bound to cause reaction from that side. No reporter lives in restive district of Kohlu while a single reporter does his event reporting from Dera Bugti. However nothing is reported against the wishes of security forces and intelligence agencies in rest of the disturbed areas including border town of Chaman. Different methods are applied to bully the working journalists. Since more than 95% of the district correspondents do not receive any salary and allowance from the TV channels and the newspapers they work for, they are forced to seek government jobs mostly in education department. The biggest threat they receive from the intelligence and security agencies is their transfer from their home towns to remote areas and dismissal from service.



Besides that the journalists also face threats from the pressure groups like militant organizations, armed groups, land lords, tribal elders and political parties in the interior of the province.

Though the journalists working in the provincial capital of Quetta work in different environment, they face similar pressure from the same organizations and groups. Many reporters even the senior ones working for national newspapers or TV channels constantly face threats from the agencies' personnel for their reports mentioning the agencies' names for their involvement in missing persons' killings and throwing their dead bodies. These agencies even do



not like the questions, journalists ask from President, Prime Minister and federal ministers about missing persons during their visits to Baluchistan. These reporters are warned for dire consequences if they do not change their behavior in this respect.

A local reporter can not help foreign journalist regarding the local issues particularly Taliban, on going insurgency and missing persons upon their visits. If some one dares, he has to appear before the intelligence agencies officials and give explanation about the purpose of the visit of foreign journalist and his/her meetings with the political leaders, family members of missing persons and student leaders. Those journalists who receive telephone calls of Baloch militant organizations or separatist leaders regarding their statements are kept under watch and their phones are bugged.

Similarly there is no concept of investigative journalism in Baluchistan. Although the incident of burying three women alive in the name of honor in south-eastern district of Naseerabad a couple of years before was reported in the local press, whatever investigative reporting has been done was from other cities. Similar is the case with the missing persons and targeted killing as no reporter dares to write about the killers.

The journalists as well as the owners of the media houses observe self-censorship, as precautionary measures are adopted to hide the facts by making the both parties of the conflict happy. The local newspaper owners always tow the government line in order to get government advertisements. However they have to carry the press releases and the statements of separatist groups and leaders, criticizing the security forces and intelligence agencies, but without mentioning the names of the agencies.

On the other hand Baloch groups and political parties always complain about the attitude of media for not giving coverage to Baluchistan issues on their channels and in newspapers. As a protest over newspapers' attitude, Baloch Student Organization (Azad), a separatist group first time in the history of Baluchistan did not allow national and local newspapers to be distributed in Quetta and elsewhere in the province. Another group of BSO

(Mohiuddin) forcibly closed the news channels in majority districts of the province for the same reason.

A banned organization Lashker-e-Jhangvi (LJ) threatened local reporters in Quetta for not mentioning the members of a sect as infidel. The Chief Justice Baluchistan High Court justice Qazi Faez Isa in a suo moto notice of a case barred newspapers from carrying the banned organizations' statements. When the newspaper editors and reporters appeared before the honourable court to explain their position, the Chief Justice refused to give them a patient hearing. Instead he suggested to them to adopt another profession if they fear or cannot face pressure. However the media organizations decided to continue to publish the claims of LJ for their actions in order to protect the lives of their workers.

Another great challenge journalists are facing are low salaries in the local newspapers as well as in news channels. Although the federal government has fixed the minimum wage as Rs. 7000, a reporter of a news agency or a newspaper draws Rs. 2000 to 3000 per month while a photographer is paid less than that. The district correspondents/stringers are not paid by their newspapers even for their fax/phone or internet expenditure. The salary structure of news channels is better than the newspapers, but a big media house pays Rs. 25,000 to its reporters for their thirteen and fourteen hours' duty for both TV and newspaper. The local newspaper owners did not pay a single penny for the treatment of their reporters or photographer who got injured in the suicide bomb blasts in Quetta and even did not bother to send them a bouquet.

As far as the opportunities are concerned, the working journalists have very limited opportunities for their free and independent reporting due to electronic channels or active role of trade unions and press clubs. Lack of literacy and training are also hurdles for them to work freely and on professional lines. Although they feel protected to some extent in the face of active role by Baluchistan Union of Journalists and Quetta Press Club, they do feel threatened at the hands of intelligence agencies and militant groups.

In a recent case in which BBC Quetta reporter Ayub Tareen had been threatened by Baloch Liberation Army, a separatist group, if the news about its

activities is not broadcast properly, journalist trade union played a very active role and forced the militant organization to withdraw its threat. After few months the journalist community of Khuzdar stopped working after a government backed militant organization issued a hit list of reporters demanding to stop giving projection to separatist groups. However after making hue and cry by Baluchistan Union of Journalists, the said organization announced its disassociation from the hit list.

As compared to the journalists of other parts of the country, the journalists of Baluchistan have less opportunities of capacity building within or outside the province. However some organizations like Individualland, Intermedia, Internews and Pakistan Press Foundation have created opportunities by arranging training workshops and seminars for them. These trainings have been extended to the district correspondents working in the remotest areas of the province. Unfortunately, the media houses do not impart any training for their reporters or cameramen or for the new entrants particularly those working in conflict zones like Baluchistan and FATA. That is why a considerable number of journalists/cameramen have been killed. Two cameramen and one media worker in Quetta lost their lives when they were covering events ignoring the sensitivity of gatherings in which suicide bombers exploded themselves, targeting members of Shia communities. Normally media people cover the events by getting close along with their equipments including Digital Satellite News Gathering for live coverage and consequently get trapped in case of emergency.

The media organizations are required to make trainings mandatory for their reporters/cameramen and field staff besides providing protective equipments mainly helmets and life vests. The NGOs engaged in these trainings should also make it regular feature for equipping the media people with knowledge and professional skill besides persuading the media owners to arrange such trainings for their employees particularly district correspondents.

This article is exclusively written for the Fard magazine for which we are very thankful to the writer.

The views expressed are the writer's own and may or may not reflect Individualland's stance.

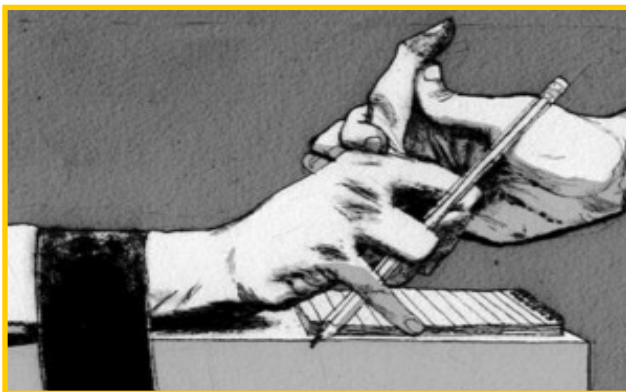
For more information regarding the article, please contact [info@individualland.com](mailto:info@individualland.com)

## Playing Russian roulette!

Saleem Shahid

*“Threats to journalists is from different directions, mainly religious fanatics, people involved in sectarian violence, Taliban supporters and sympathizers. Militants fighting the security forces in the hills too have the supporters exerting pressure on journalists occasionally.”*

Baluchistan is in the conflict zone ever since Britons invaded and occupied it. Britons never allowed newspapers and books in the occupied territories. After creation of Pakistan, the successor Pakistan Governments also continued to follow the colonial legacy of the British rulers introducing various doctrial laws to impose restrictions on press. Like Britons, Pakistani government specially headed by military generals always did not like objective reporting of the situation in any part of Baluchistan. Khan Abdul Samad Khan Achakzai was the first victim of Britons in Baluchistan. They banned his weekly newspaper “Istaqlal” and sent him to jail for several years as he was writing against the rulers. Nawabzada Yousuf Ali Magsi and many other journalists also faced the same situation under various laws imposed by British rulers.



<http://www.newspakistan.pk/2011/12/30/Journalists-plight-in-Balochistan/>

Presently, Baluchistan media is facing a serious situation. They are receiving multiple threats from different organizations as militant groups and organizations want them to follow their line for reporting and writing articles regarding their activities in Baluchistan. They are facing “Do or die”

like situation in the ongoing conflict. Balanced reporting on the basis of facts has become very difficult for the working journalist while newspapers are also facing threats, burning and snatching of newspapers in the province. Around 20 journalists were targeted and killed merely because their conduct and behavior was not acceptable or condonable to the Government functionaries or the armed people from 'pressure groups' during last four years in Baluchistan. Most of the journalists who lost their lives belonged to interior of Baluchistan, including Khuzdar, Hub, Gwadar, Pasni, Turbat and Kalat. President of Khuzdar Press Club Mohammad Khan Sasoli, Faiz Sasoli, Munir Shakir were killed in Khuzdar. The bodies of some local journalists were found in different areas of Makran division. Most of them were missing for months. Despite, strong protest rallies and demonstrations by Baluchistan Union of Journalists and Quetta Press Club, the concerned authorities have not properly investigated the killings of journalists.

No compensation was given to the families of the journalists who lost their lives in the province. At least two cameramen Malik Arif and Ejaz Raisani both belonging to Samaa lost their lives in suicide attacks while over a dozen were injured in blasts during last two years in Quetta. They were not given training for working in conflict zone or in such situation by their respective organizations. Militancy has different angles and shapes in Baluchistan. There are people involved in sectarian violence, others killing people at the behest of the state functionaries. There are clear expressions of Talibanization in some parts of Baluchistan bordering Waziristan. Finally, political parties and established leaders encourage violence to bully or intimidate the Press for their political advantage. They are extremists in political sense with zero tolerance for the political opponents. They are involved in violence or attacking newspaper offices or intimidating journalists. Threats to journalists is from different directions, mainly religious fanatics, people involved in sectarian violence, Taliban supporters and

sympathizers in different cover and garb, militant fighting the security forces in the hills too have supporters exerting pressure on journalists. There were some criminal elements in politics against whom dozens of criminal cases were in the court of law. They were made members of the supreme decision-making body. Criminals wanted prestige and politics provided them the required status ignoring his crimes against the society or the state. Thus such elements are also in politics and dealing with the Press off and on. Baluchistan is a unique place in Pakistan where people under different cover plant stories and articles with fake names to criticize their opponents using indecent language. Newspapers are under pressure to publish all without editing. Sources are not known from where the articles or Press statements are originating.

Criticism on tribal chieftains and elders is strictly forbidden considering it as an insult to the tribe and its chiefs or elders. Thus tribal chiefs or senior tribal elders in politics are above criticism and journalists are taken to task if they dared to violate 'the norms and traditions' of the tribe. Thus the whole society is barred from any form of constructive criticism. There are some exceptions. Some of the tribal leaders have strong democratic traditions and democratic values that appreciate criticism on their political conduct.

In Baluchistan is a dearth of professional journalists. One can see very few professional journalists working in the province. In any case, they enjoyed respect and regard from the society for their professional approach. With the passage of time, fewer professional journalists are left in the field to deal with the Press where complete anarchy is supreme. New comers joining journalism are not properly trained. There are no institutions to train them, neither are there enough professionals imparting training to them in the newsroom or in the field. Despite having Mass-Communication Department in Baluchistan University the quality of journalism has deteriorated to a great extent in Baluchistan as opportunists and self seekers occupied important position or they brought their own dummy newspapers to mint quick millions. Most of the journalists occupying senior positions in newspapers like Chief Editor, Editor, Managing editor, news-editor,

sub-editor and reports have no knowledge about professional journalism. Even some TV channels have also appointed people on senior posts who are not properly trained and have no professional qualification. They are incompetent to indulge in crisis reporting of the events that also brought journalism under threat in Baluchistan.

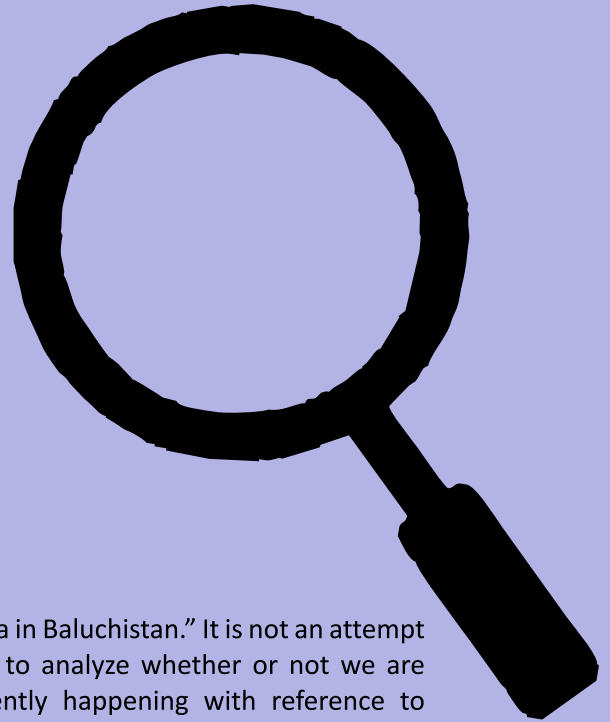
Some of the professional journalists heading the TV Channels have been sacked on the directives of State-actors as they refused to accept interference in their professional duties. Finally, there is an economic crisis in Baluchistan making newspaper unsustainable with their meager revenue. The first targets of the economic crunch are the journalists receiving a meager pay or no pay for six to eight months. Even major newspapers and TV channels are not paying salaries to their staff for many months and still asking them to continue their work. Situation in the interior of the province is worse as the local journalists working for newspapers and private news channels are getting not any salary or any other facilities. The media houses have not provided them camera or other equipment except identity cards but ask them to cover every event. Only two or three private TV channels are paying Rs. 3000 to 5000 to their district correspondents. News papers owners are also doing the same with their correspondents even in the provincial capital Quetta. The financial crunch and this attitude of the electronic and newspapers owners compel them to indulge in corrupt practices. There are complaints about accepting envelope with currency notes by media people. This practice is not only in Baluchistan but also in other parts of the country including federal and provincials capitals and other big cities that defame the name of journalism.

This article is exclusively written for the Fard magazine for which we are very thankful to the writer.

The views expressed are the writer's own and may or may not reflect Individualland's stance.

For more information regarding the article, please contact [info@individualland.com](mailto:info@individualland.com)

# Liberal Perspective



This issue of Fard magazine focuses on “The state of media in Baluchistan.” It is not an attempt to instruct media on how to perform their duties, but to analyze whether or not we are informed through the kind of reporting that is currently happening with reference to Baluchistan. It seems that limited types of news stories are flowing in from that province. Is that enough or should there be more?

Liberal views are not only limited to democracy and minimizing the state authority. We, as liberals also emphasize freedom of expression, and pluralism... all of which are at stake in the province of Baluchistan. Not only are these liberal values under physical attack in the province, the media coverage and portrayal of the province also appears to be targeted to strangle freedom of expression in and about the province. After listening to the stories emerging from the province, one struggles to answer the question: is the media aimed at informing us? Or is it minimizing our information about the province? What is the aim of the kind of reporting we see, read and listen about the province? These are some of the questions that we explore through a critical analysis of various mediums in this part of the magazine. “U for Urdu, B for Baluchistan” is a piece that analyses the coverage of Baluchistan in the National Urdu print media. “Missing Baluchistan” attempts to provide a picture of how the English print media perceives Baluchistan. Similarly, the role of online and electronic media in portrayal of Baluchistan is discussed in pieces like “Baluchistan Online” and “Baluchistan Bulletin.”

## U for Urdu, B for Baluchistan

Zulfiqar Haider

*“The only news that have made the headlines in recent times is when there is a statement released by interior minister or a suo moto notice taken by the Supreme Court in the missing persons case.”*

Baluchistan was declared “the most dangerous region of the most dangerous country for practicing journalism” in a report titled “*Press in Stress-Media under threat in Baluchistan*” by a media research organisation.

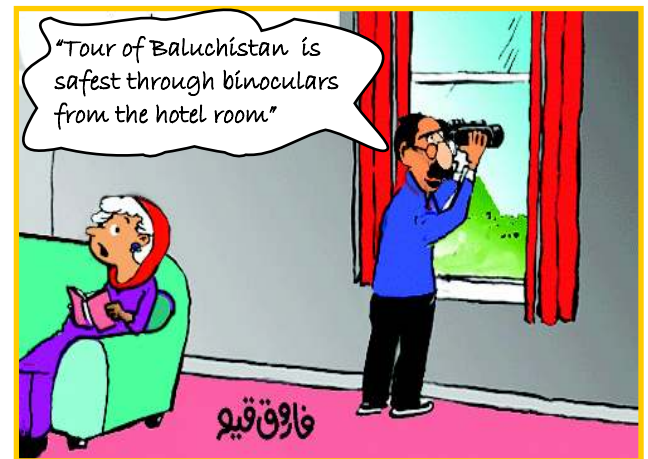
In February 2012 due to threats from Baloch nationalist organisations, the cable operators banned all the Urdu language media channels in Quetta. However, citizens, military and separatists, all have conflicting views on the current situation of Baluchistan. Some say it is the media that is to be blamed, while others accuse the overriding influence of different organisations from both sides i.e. Baloch nationalist organisations and the state agencies, for media's blackout.

According to 2012 estimates on All Pakistan Newspapers Society website, there are a total of 23 Urdu language newspapers in Baluchistan. However, little is known about their circulation figures. Without going into the reasons why electronic media does not provide coverage to Baluchistan, it is even harder to find out how much coverage the print media i.e. both national and local, provides to Baluchistan. One reason for this may be that Baluchistan has transformed into a conflict zone over the years and most journalists have security concerns over visiting the province to cover the ongoing developments. In last two years, many reporters operating in the zone have been killed while performing their duties, so the fear is justified in a way.

The journalist community of Baluchistan although admitting the fact that there is a lot to write about, says that it is the barricades that come in their way which make them hesitant. For instance, the fear from freedom fighters of Baluchistan or going into far flung areas without any protection.

For these reasons, coverage of Baluchistan has been unfortunately limited mostly to the Opinion/Editorial section of the national Urdu or English language newspapers. The only news that have made the headlines in recent times is when there is a statement released by interior minister or a *suo moto* notice taken by the Supreme Court in the missing persons case.

I have followed two prominent Urdu newspapers “*Daily Jang*” and “*Nawa-e-waqt*” in last four weeks and my findings are nothing but a disappointment. Apart from the headlines, there was at least one op-ed article on Baluchistan in above mentioned newspapers daily. However, unfortunately the article was either on the missing persons or the conflict in the province.



Is this what the coverage of Baluchistan has boiled down to?

Instead of only writing about these developments by sitting in the offices located in provinces other than Baluchistan, shouldn't the journalists acquire training on reporting from conflict ridden areas so that they can actually visit the areas themselves and write about issues other than politics and violence?

Then again, it would be harsh to only criticise the media because this is not completely their fault. Our government has neglected the province since the creation of Pakistan. There is almost no development

in the province and we all know the law and order situation there. Instead of rectifying the mistakes, the government has kept its focus on irrelevant reforms. It seems as if our government and Army have joined hands and have decided to turn the land into a conflict zone.

Even the local journalists are not spared by the government. A number of newspapers have been banned by security agencies, terming them anti-government. Recently, one of the editors closed his newspaper as a protest against continuous monitoring by FC intelligence unit. According to a local journalist, the intelligence agencies want to have control over the information disseminated across the province. This shows that the Urdu media is not independent and free to write about matters according to their own information.

To make it even worse, the miscreants have jumped into the fray and with time, have turned Baluchistan into a complete disaster.

What everyone keeps on forgetting is that there are citizens in the land who are sandwiched between the government and the freedom fighters. These are the peace loving people that are proud to be a part of this country and want to play a part in its development. Interestingly, they are the majority of the population. Urdu is the national language of this country and the most abundant language in terms of speaking and reading. If the Urdu media does not give news about the province and restricts itself to writing about the issues in opinion and editorial columns, then how does it expect to inform the people about it? The Urdu media should display more initiative regarding coverage of Baluchistan.

Although in these modern times, electronic media has taken over the print media, but the role of print, especially the Urdu print media is still very great in a country like ours. Most people start their day with a newspaper, and for them newspapers are main sources of information. Urdu print media should cover the news of violence in Baluchistan as it is a part of their job; however, it would be a pleasant change for the readers and especially those residing in Pakistan, if news or articles relating to Baluchistan are about positive developments in arts, culture, sport and education.

For more information regarding the article, please contact [info@individualland.com](mailto:info@individualland.com)

## Coming to you (a) live from Baluchistan...

Yahya Ahmed

*"The news pouring in from Baluchistan suggests that the law and order situation has deteriorated further, administration has virtually collapsed, and there remain hardly any employment opportunities for the young."*

The increasing viewership and high salaries of news anchors emphasizes the fact that Pakistan is thirsty for current affairs and news. According to a website, Najam Sethi of Geo News earns PKR 2 million and Talat Hussain of Dawn earns PKR 1.8 million per month. The once dull and PTV styled political issues have now transformed into interesting shows, attracting audiences regardless of age and gender, as they are a source of entertainment as well as a source of information about issues, especially political and economic. Multiple news channels have been launched by different groups. All of them aiming to become the source of unveiling authentic facts as well as becoming the number one news channel in the country. However despite their intra-channel race and competition for breaking the news first, we must acknowledge media's role for becoming the voice of the unheard.

Imagine if the news channels being aired were under the monitoring of the state authorities. Then no script of the news anchor and the guest speaker called onto the program could have been aired without the nod of a person sitting behind a giant mahogany desk. The programs aired on television would have had nothing more than sympathy and praises for every sitting government. Then all we could hear and see would be about the Benazir income support program or Bilawal Bhutto graduating from Oxford University or Bakhtwar Bhutto adopting two helpless kittens. But this is not the scenario any more in the country. Despite the warnings given by, and steps taken by the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority, the self-exiled Baloch leaders were taken live on talk shows and were asked to provide their stance on statements given by Rehman Malik, the incumbent interior minister. Had the media not been vocal and

vibrant, the missing persons' case would not have been taken seriously. Even after the notice taken by the supreme judiciary, the government and the intelligence authorities fail to resolve the matter fully. This was also highlighted by the electronic media. The province of Baluchistan is already passing through turbulent times. The news pouring in from Baluchistan suggests that the law and order situation has deteriorated further, administration has virtually collapsed, and there remain hardly any employment opportunities for the young. So much so there is no opposition leader present in the provincial assembly of Baluchistan. All these facts which I have come to find out about my province of Baluchistan while living in Islamabad is the result of media covering the issues of Baluchistan. In a telephonic poll conducted on the role of media in Baluchistan, 60 percent of the respondents, all from Baluchistan, were of the opinion that their issues were being addressed thanks to the intervention of the media.



However, despite this I acknowledge the sentiments of the people of Baluchistan for criticizing the electronic media for not "properly portraying the plight of the people". It further adds to the fact that some talk show anchors while discussing the issues encompassing Baluchistan are only interested in a heated debate for the sake of providing



entertainment and often seem to provoke the guest speakers by asking fiery questions. In any case, regardless of the heated talk shows and headlines concerning Baluchistan, I have failed to see any documentaries on the TV channels portraying the feelings of the local people. Apart from the visual interviews of Late Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti by Dr Shaid Masood and '*Aik Din Geo key Sath* with Sohail Warriach'. I have never seen an interview of the Balochis other than political or nationalist leaders. What about the personalities in the field of acting or directing? What about the painters and artists hailing from Baluchistan or any person in the field of sports etc. Why isn't there any show focusing on such celebrities? It cannot be that there is no person in Baluchistan who has a story to tell the camera. Yes! There was a drama serial which aired on *Geo Entertainment* depicting the lives and troubles of Baloch tribal lords. What else? There seems to be a one track approach by the electronic media when it comes to the province of Baluchistan. To me, it seems that the only coverage TV channels give to the province is to show them that they at least acknowledge their bitterness. The coverage which they provide is somewhat to accommodate their deprivations and sense of having been wronged. Electronic media in this age is not only limited to the news channels and the news bulletins repeated every hour any more. Rather it is has transgressed to entertainment channels, documentaries, morning shows and what not. The way media is going these days is commendable but at the same time since it has developed into a gigantic and all encompassing industry, it must try to capture every possible aspect surrounding the people of Baluchistan. This is because the world should know that despite the miseries and tragedies there still exists a world which comprises of innocent women, smiling children, hospitable men and rugged lands.

For more information regarding the article, please contact  
[info@individualland.com](mailto:info@individualland.com)

## Missing Baluchistan

Hamza Khan

*"It is time that we start to consider them as part of our own and stand up for their due share in the state."*

The most fascinating aspect about the past is that one can always pose 'what if' questions to untangle the knots of mind. One can always postulate what if the media was as free and independent in the year 1971 as it is now? If the media had been independent what would have happened to East Pakistan? Would the media have played a role? Indeed one can generate as many questions as one likes but the sad part about history is one can never go back.



At the same time we can always learn from history and try not to commit those mistakes again. The point which I am trying to make is that we have the separation of East Pakistan in front of us. We have now a much more vibrant and dynamic media in our society and we face similar problem as we did back in 1971. Baluchistan! A province similar to the former East Pakistan where unrest has now reached to such a level that some groups at least are not settling for anything less than independence and are ready to die or kill to achieve their objective. Will the media be able to play a part where it can help address the issues of Baluchistan? The current government, like the previous ones, has indulged in what some see as cosmetic measures to address Baluchistan's grievances but success remains elusive. Even the idea of withdrawing cases against self-exiled Baloch

leaders was a futile attempt at reconciliation and failed to pave a way for pacification.

Have we learnt from our previous mistakes? Will the media be able to make a difference while covering the issues of Baluchistan? What is the media doing there? English newspapers have been circulating in this country even before its independence; the experience and knowledge acquired over the period of time have made them veterans in their field. On many occasions they have provided the readers with insightful news, have unveiled authentic facts and even revealed the real perpetrators of injustices. However could this be said about them when the national English papers are covering events or stories from the province of Baluchistan? Are they really and actually covering the matters of the province?

It was pertinent to analyse some of the mainstream English papers for their coverage of Baluchistan. The time and editorial constraints allowed me to monitor *The Dawn* for not more than a month (February-March 2012). The highlights of the month were the issues of missing persons and target killing incidents in the province. The missing persons and the target killings incidents made the front pages but were allotted the extreme left column. Similarly other news stories concerning the workings of the Baluchistan cabinet, the statement of PML-Q leader Chaudry Shujaat asking President to contact Baloch leaders and stating amnesty for these leaders was not enough and some news regarding the traders of Baluchistan were published on the national pages of the newspapers. Apart from these there were hardly any editorials written during this period depicting the newspapers stance on Baluchistan. However articles by different authors like Cyril Almeida and I.A Rehman and few others were published during this month discussing the blowing up of the gas pipeline and analysing the peace process initiated by the government.

Thus, the analysis of one of the most widely respected newspaper all across Pakistan reflects the lack of interest of the newspapers with regard to

Baluchistan. Is this all that the province has to offer? It seems that all newspapers follow the same routine of covering statements, carrying reports from the news agencies, news conferences and legislative proceedings of the provincial assembly. Analyses and investigative features are fewer still. In my opinion there is hardly any coverage of Baluchistan in the English papers.

For more information regarding the article, please contact [info@individualland.com](mailto:info@individualland.com)



As consumer of the news and as a tax payer I would want to know the state of development in this province. How many schools are there, and if there are insufficient schools, why? What is the state of health services in the province? Why the governments have failed to build more hospitals and clinics in far flung areas of this province? Perhaps it would be interesting to see and read a whole supplement on Baluchistan on Sundays or at least once a month. A whole page devoted to the province will increase the awareness of readers and see past the tensions and violence in the province.

Baluchistan through the period of time has been neglected by the centre in the areas of development, education, culture and even sports. Mere cosmetic improvement and reforms schemes have been carried out by different regimes but hardly any sincere efforts are seen when it comes to the people and the province of Baluchistan. It is time that we start to consider them as part of our own and stand up for their due share in the state. We have already lost a part of ours rich in culture and history. Let us not embarrass ourselves once again.

## Let's not Google it !

Farhan Khalid

*“The point of this whole article is not to criticise the media, because it has been doing a fair job since last decade or so. When the Government has ignored the province of Baluchistan, how can we all expect media to do something different?”*

Google the word “Baluchistan” and the results that will come up are sure to read something like this:

- Baluchistan Crisis
- Baluchistan issue
- Baluchistan missing Persons
- Baluchistan Poverty
- Baluchistan Liberation Army

It is heartbreaking to see that a land blessed with abundant natural resources and a rugged scenic beauty is only known to the rest of the world as a “troubled territory”. Although it is a fact that the province is going through massive turmoil and has been making headlines for all the wrong reasons since last few years, is Baluchistan only about conflicts and insurgency?

Why do we not get to hear anything good about the gifted, rich in culture land that has the potential to pirouette Pakistan into the league of economic giants in the coming times? It seems as if our media has already declared Baluchistan as a lost cause. Most of us Pakistanis complain that foreign media only portrays a negative image of our country internationally, which is actually not true. Western media is not aware of the ground realities in Pakistan, so whatever they write about is justified in a way. Unfortunately, it is our own media that has also not provided holistic coverage about Baluchistan, and despite being aware of all the realities, has stuck to only one dimension.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century was the age of inventions, 20<sup>th</sup> was of medicine and this 21<sup>st</sup> is clearly that of technology. In these modern times, although print and electronic media are still the prime sources of information to the citizens of Pakistan, in this era of globalisation, we are connected to rest of the world through the internet.

As a part of my research for this article, I have been following three different online prominent news websites: *Express Tribune*, *Pakistan today* blogs and *Chowranghi* blogs. When one types the word Baluchistan a long list of blogs appears on the screen related to it. A majority of these blogs discuss the political turmoil in the province, the intervention of the military and the exploration and exploitation of the mineral resources in the province. It is refreshing to notice that people seriously read these blog posts and post comments in return. For instance on the blog post titled “*Recalling Baloch History*” posted by one Yaqub Khan Bangash on *Express Tribune* blog discussing the political history, there appears a long list of comments explaining their views regarding Baluchistan. However for the last two weeks (9 April to 23 April 2012) I have followed two blog websites, namely *Express Tribune* and *Pakistan Today*. Following were my observations:

*In the Express Tribune*, during these two weeks there were hardly any new blog posts posted on the *Express Tribune* blog. However a blog post by the title “[A \(most favoured\) friend indeed: Pakistan to import petrol from India](#)” was posted on the website, which discussed the import of petrol via India. The blog post as a whole did not discuss anything particular about Baluchistan. However, there were four replies on this post which mentioned Baluchistan in their comments. The first comment mentioned Baluchistan as one of the failures of sitting government, the second one mentioned Baluchistan in the context of availability of smuggled petrol from Iran, the third one mentioned target killings in Baluchistan whereas the last one mentioned Baluchistan in the context of the availability of crude oil.

Similarly in “Pakistan Today”, during these two weeks again there were no new blogs posted on the website. However there was a recent blog post by the title “*PTI's Quetta tsunami to bring change: Qayyum*”. The post discussed the impact of PTI's recent rally in

Quetta and the analysis by former minister now PTI leader Malik Abdul Qayyum. However there were no comments made under this post reflecting public's interest.

This coverage of Baluchistan on the blogs shows that:

- The coverage of Baluchistan is very limited as compared that of other provinces of Pakistan. On the whole news website, there are usually just two or three articles on Baluchistan on average.
- The only news, columns or blogs about Baluchistan are either about the deteriorating situation in the province, the reopening of Akbar Bugti's case or about the leaders of the main tribes, Mari and Mengal.



Regardless of the emphasis on the political dimension of the province there hardly appears any blogs related to the ordinary citizens, artists, businessmen and intellectuals, residing in the province and those people who still consider themselves proud Pakistanis. For instance, the entertainment section of the blogs is filled with stories of artists or singers hailing from provinces other than Baluchistan. Hardly any blog comments shed light on the cultural or aesthetic dimension of Baluchistan. One wonders about the reason for this one-dimensional reporting. It is not hidden from anyone that Baluchistan's land is filled with natural resources like oil, gold, coal and other valuable minerals. It is such a shame that no columns or blogs are written highlighting these aspects. What about Gwadar port, which has the potential to become one of the busiest ports in the coming times because of its strategic location? One

can hardly find anything on internet related to this massive development.

One reason for this unidirectional reporting maybe that most of the in-house reporters that cover Baluchistan are mainly from Punjab or provinces other than the Baluchistan, and are completely unaware of the ground realities of the province. The only source of their information is the news from other electronic and print media. Then again, what is the reason for lack of reporters hailing from the province, people who speak the language and know the aspirations of the local populace?

Although there are online magazines on Baluchistan using the services of local journalists such as "BalochHal", "Mahnama Balochi" and "Baluchi Duniya", but they lack substantial content and are not even updated on a regular basis. The reason being that these online magazines are often blocked by the authorities, a clear indication that authorities are trying to suppress the voices originating from the province of Baluchistan. Their promotion is also another issue as they are not given much importance and therefore the reader has to work hard to search them online. The future of these magazines does not look very bright and in all probability, they are likely to become extinct soon.

Let us now shed some light on the portrayal and coverage of Baluchistan on radio. Fortunately, it is much better than compared to that of electronic, print media and internet.

Until recently, there was only one radio channel, the state owned Pakistan Broadcast Company (PBC) in Quetta and other parts of Baluchistan. However the number of channels has increased with time. Since 2010, there are five radio channels currently in Baluchistan, including three private (FM 91 Gwadar, Sachal FM105 and Chiltan FM 88 in Quetta) and two state owned.

The private ones are sources of entertainment for the people of Baluchistan, and they also air programs related to the culture of the province. However, because of political and ethnical influence at times, they too have to deviate from their usual broadcast and often have to completely shut down their transmission as well.

The radio channels of other provinces give out little

---

information about any developments in Baluchistan, except the five minutes national news bulletin, which run on the hour, but again, that news is usually the negative developments.

The point of this whole article is not to criticise the media, because it has been doing a fair job since last decade or so. When the Government has ignored the province of Baluchistan, how can we all expect media to do something different?

It is just that Baluchistan is going through tumultuous times, so the journalists that write about it on the internet and indeed across all forms of media need to be a little more sensitive and not only write about the conflicts in the land but the positive developments as well.

For more information regarding the article, please contact  
[info@individualland.com](mailto:info@individualland.com)

## Pressing Details !

Khurram Saleem  
Research: Awais Mehmood

*“The low number of members indicate that those areas have still not opened their gates for journalists in their districts.”*

The purpose of this article is to identify various Press Clubs existing in the province of Baluchistan, how were they created, when they were created and how many members they have, among other things. Press clubs are formed so that the journalists of that particular area can have a place where they can interact with each other, discuss the different events happening and they are also places where press briefings are organised whenever an important figure visits that place. It was essential for us to determine how many Press Clubs existed across the districts of Baluchistan.

To my surprise in all the districts of Baluchistan there existed structures of Press Clubs. However except in Loralai there exists no building of the club. The Press Clubs are of various types: government sponsored Press Clubs, private sponsored Press Clubs and self initiative Press Clubs. The government sponsored Press Clubs are those buildings which are constructed and formed under the directives of the state, the private sponsored clubs are those clubs which are formulated with the collaboration of a group of individuals who have opened a Press Club in a rented shop or a building. The self initiative Press Clubs are those Press Clubs which are opened in a self-owned building like houses or guest rooms. The government sponsored Press Clubs buildings are in Quetta, Dalbundeen, Pishin, Sibi, Ziarat, Harnai, Dadar, Dhuki, Mastung, Armabel, Turbat, Gwadar, Dera Bugti, Dera Murad Jamali, Dera Allah Yar, Ustaa Muhmmad and Subat Pur. Whereas the private initiative exist in Muskhail, Kohlu, Jhal Magsi, Kalat, Washuk and Sheerani, while the self initiatives exist in Chagi, Nokundi and Taftan. The members of the Press Clubs have different members, ranging from five to thirty four. Taftan has the least number of members, i.e., five, and Dera Allah Yar has the highest number of members, i.e. thirty four. Similarly thirty one

members are registered in Pishin Press Club, six in Dhadar, ten in Dera Bugti and so on and so forth.



The division of these Press Clubs could further be done according to the years in which they were formed. Keeping this division in mind three groups can be identified which are, those created in 1980s, in 1990s and then those created in 2000s.

Press clubs created in 1980s:

- Dera Murad Jamali Press Club(1982)
- Sibi Press Club (1987)

Press clubs created in 1990s:

- Loralai Press Club (1992)
- Mastung Press Club (1992)
- Jhal Magsi Press Club (1995)
- Gwadar Press Club (1995)
- Ziarat Press Club (1996)
- Harnai Press Club (1997)
- Nokundi Press Club(1997)
- Muskhail Press Club(1998)

Press clubs created in 2000s:

- Turbat Press Club(2000)
- Kohlu Press Club (2001)
- Dhuki Press Club (2004)

- Chagi Press Club (2004-2005)
- Armabel Press Club (2005)
- Lorali Press Club (2006)
- Sanjavi Press Club (2006)
- Dera Allah Yar Press Club (2007)
- Shirani Press Club (2007)
- Dadar Press Club (2009)
- Dalbudeen Press Club (2009-2010)
- Washuk Press Club (2010)



The Quetta Press Club was formed in 1970 and so far the monetary donation to the club has reached 21 million rupees. Also different political figures have donated money for the formation of Press Clubs in different districts. For instance, Ameer ul Mulk Mengal former governor of Baluchistan and former Prime Minister Zafar ullah Jamali donated money to Quetta Press Club, similarly ex minister Asad Baloch and Haji Sarwar Khan Kakar donated money to Pishin Press Club, while Yahya Khan Nasir who was minister in a care taker government donated four bicycles and 1 fax machine to Pishin Press Club. Likewise Chief Minister Jam Yousaf Jamali donated money to Mushkhail Press Club and Minister Molana Wasi donated money to Mastung Press Club, also the Deputy Commissioner Asfand Yar Kakar also donated money to Mastung Press club. Similarly Begum Ghazala Gola of PPP donated money to Sohbat pur and Mr Zahoor Khan Kosa former Speaker Baluchistan donated money to Dera Allah Yar. The majority of the Press Clubs were formed in the era of General Prevez Musharraf. This shows that most of these clubs were formed after media

experienced exponential growth in the early 2000s. The low number of members indicates that those areas have still not opened their gates for journalists in their districts. However despite few members of the Press Clubs and weak infrastructure these Press Clubs could soon become places where journalists could network and share resources, thus strengthening the community of journalists in the province.

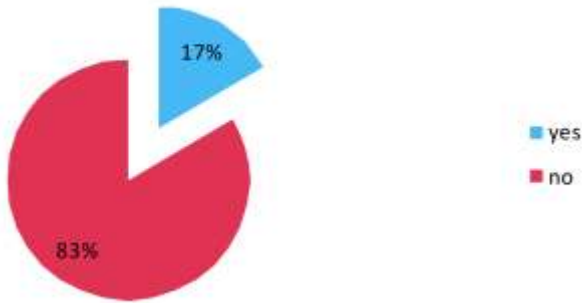
For more information regarding the article, please contact [info@individualland.com](mailto:info@individualland.com)



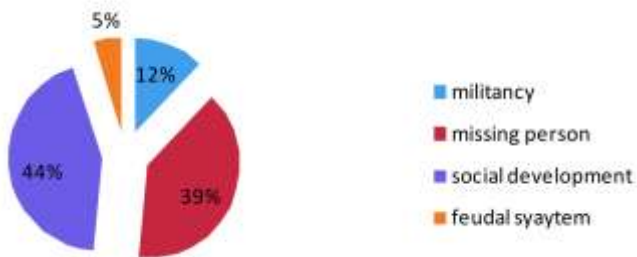
## Individualland Poll Results

Research: Sundas Syeda

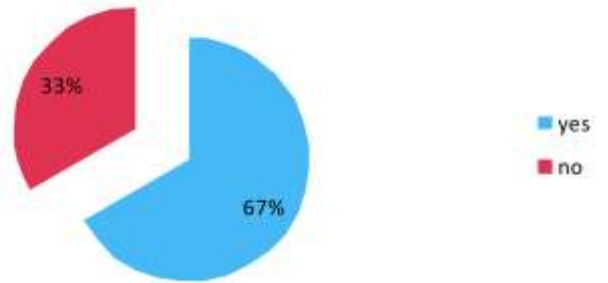
1. Do you think mainstream media gives coverage to Baluchistan?



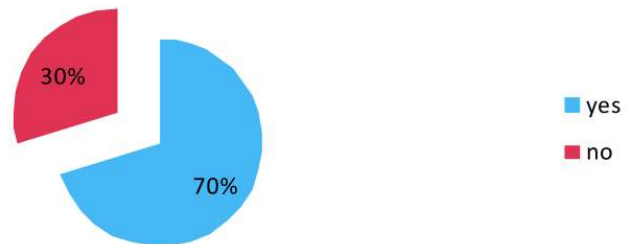
2. In your opinion, what should the focus of the media be regarding Baluchistan?



3. Do you think the media is helping in resolving the issue's of Baluchistan?



4. Is Baluchistan the most dangerous region in Pakistan for practicing journalism?



## Our documentaries



Available at  
[www.individualland.com](http://www.individualland.com)

## *Individualland*

Creating space for the individual

Individualland creates choices! As an innovative research-based consultancy and advocacy group we open up space for the individual. Our focus is the role of the media and to generate a peaceful discourse in society. We are working to increase the number of responsible journalists, media-literacy among citizens and a greater acceptance for different ways to live.

# Publications

## Media Related



## Regarding Conflict Analysis and Counter-Terrorism



## Women Police



## Economic Related



## Government and Accountability



## Our Magazine on Media



May 2011



Oct 2011

**Next Issue: October 2012**

[info@individualland.com](mailto:info@individualland.com)  
[www.individualland.com](http://www.individualland.com)

Find us on facebook:  Individualland