

Strategic Human Resource Development: Investing in Balochistan's Blue Economy

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Abstract

Human resource development falls under a state's primary responsibilities. Educated and skilled human resources are not only an asset but also a prerequisite to the progress of the state. Pakistan, with a vast coastline, has immense potential to boost its economy through exploring its maritime resources as base of the Blue Economy. Balochistan, the largest province of Pakistan while being rich in natural and maritime resources, makes a strong candidate for investing in the Blue Economy. Unfortunately, the province, despite its natural riches, has not flourished because of insufficient and inefficient faulty policies at all levels. The purpose of this paper is to analyse the maritime potential of Pakistan in general, and Balochistan in particular, while linking it with viable policies in relation to Strategic Human Resource Development (SHRD). By adopting the SHRD and formulating effective policies, Pakistan can bring its largest yet most backward province into the national mainstream by investing in the Blue Economy.

Keywords: Blue Economy, Strategic Human Resource Development (SHRD), Maritime Economic Base Off-Shore Resources, On-Shore Resources.

Introduction

The concept of developing human capital involves several which are inevitable for sustainable growth: communication skills in one or more languages including some foreign language, numeracy, intra-and inter-personal skills, and other attributes which may include use of technology, crisis management, resourcefulness, personality traits, appearance, and

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charisma of individuals.¹ For Balochistan, more imaginative and result-oriented policies are needed to improve the socio-economic markers; especially investing into health, education, skill development and social services that will change the lives being the key areas which need to be focused on particularly. The stark differences in the level of development of the province have eroded the basis of national cohesion.

It is all the more important to treat the people of Balochistan as equal citizens so that they do not lose faith in the state. Since the concept of Blue Economy has been given due importance, the remedy to recover from past mistakes and their shortcomings will be more focused policies, and to make local population a stakeholder in the provincial and national progress and development. It is possible through applying approach of Strategic Human Resource Development (SHRD) which is aimed at empowering not only the elites, but the individuals, too.

SHRD focuses on knowledge and skill development of the individuals through planned activities to prepare them for future challenges. According to Garavan, SHRD involves the “management of employee learning for the long-term regarding explicit corporate and business strategies.”² The concept of SHRD can be defined as “the planned learning and development of people as individuals and as groups to the benefit of the business as well as themselves.”³ This approach, when applied, would eventually fill the gap in two ways: between the state and local population, and between Balochistan and the rest of the country in terms of levels of prosperity.

With this background, this paper seeks a plausible answer to how could utilisation of the maritime economic base of Balochistan bring the province up to par with the rest of Pakistan? There might be several answers, but the most relevant and focused response is through working on the concept of developing all aspects of the Blue Economy and by

¹ “The Well-being of Nations: The Role of Human and Social Capital, Education and Skills,” *Centre for Educational Research and Innovation*, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2001), 19, <http://www.oecd.org/site/worldforum/33703702.pdf>.

² Thomas N. Garavan, “Strategic Human Resource Development,” *Journal of European Industrial Training* 15, no. 1 (1991): 17.

³ Thomas N. Garavan, Pat Costine, and Noreen Heraty, “The Emergence of Strategic Human Resource Development,” *Journal of European Industrial Training* 19, no. 10 (1995): 4-6.

enhancing the SHRD. The concept of Blue Economy has caught the imagination of the world after it was discussed in the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held in Brazil in 2012.⁴ It is a spatial concept which is based on oceans and blue waters. According to a World Bank report, the working definition of the concept states: “Blue Economy is a marine-based economic development that leads to improved human well-being and social equity while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities.”⁵

This concept hinges upon economic activities linked with the seas and oceans, involving both off-shore and on-shore living and non-living resources with special focus on environmental factor and without disrupting natural ecological balance of blue waters. According to the clause 158 of “The Future We Want,” at RIO +20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Blue Economy is about “the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and seas and of their resources for sustainable development, including through the contribution to poverty eradication, sustained economic growth, and food security, creation of sustainable livelihoods and decent work, while at the same time protecting biodiversity and the marine environment and addressing the impacts of climate change.”⁶

Pakistan’s coastline is around 990 km to 1046 km long. According to two different sources, Balochistan has at least 730 to 770 km of the coastline.⁷ It is a region with diverse, yet largely untapped resources vital

⁴ “Blue Economy Concept Paper,” RIO +20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), June 20-22, 2012, Rio De Janeiro, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2978BEconcept.pdf>.

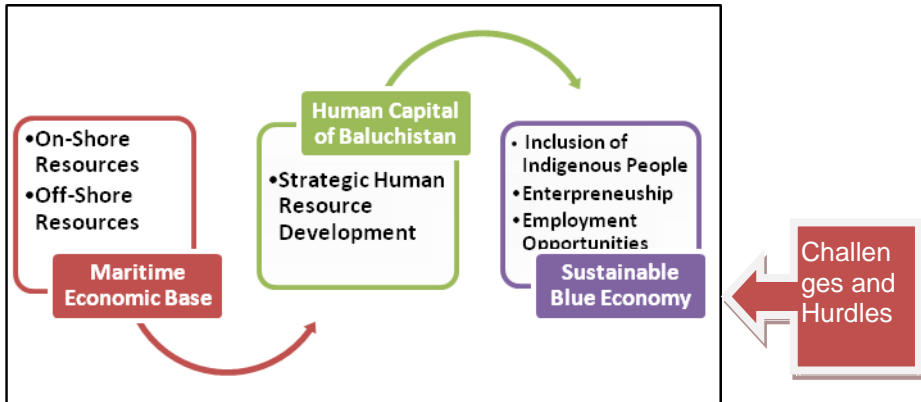
⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Agenda Item 10, RIO +20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, 2012, https://www.minambiente.it/sites/default/files/archivio/allegati/rio_20/the_future_we_want_english.pdf.

⁷ According to the National Institute of Oceanography, total Pakistani coast is 1001 km to be precise, in which 734.5 km is Balochistan coast, while 266.5 km is Sindh coast. It does not mean that given figures are contradictory but the difference of the measuring principle varies in both figures. The coastline is measured from the middle of the Sir Creek in the East to the middle of the Gwadar Bay in the West. Some follow the natural bends, bays and openings of estuaries; and others follow the straight line principle. That is why one finds two figures which are not wrong in anyway.

for the Blue Economy. The purpose of this paper is to study the maritime potential of Pakistan in general and Balochistan in particular, and finding the right approaches, in this case the SHRD, for effective policies. The conceptual basis of this paper is given in the diagram below.

Figure No. 1
A Strategic Conceptual Framework



Balochistan’s Maritime Resources: Prospects of Thriving Blue Economy

Balochistan is the largest province of Pakistan as it makes up 43.6 per cent of land mass of the country. It is rich in natural resources ranging from minerals such as oil and natural gas. The population of Balochistan is nearly 12.34 million according to the national census of 2017.⁸ It has a vast coastline with a number of bays i.e., Gwadar, Pasni, and Sonmiani. There is also a backwater lagoon known as Miani Hor.⁹ Pakistan has vast maritime zones in the Arabian Sea. According to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the national maritime frontier of Pakistan includes the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and the Continental Shelf which makes this whole area larger than total area of the province of Punjab or a little less than Balochistan.¹⁰ The 200 nmi

⁸ Press Release on “Provisional Summary Result of 6th Population & Housing Census-2017,” Ministry of Statistics, Statistics Division, Government of Pakistan, http://www.statistics.gov.pk/assets/publications/Population_Results.pdf.

⁹ GOP, “A Handbook of Pakistan,” 08.

¹⁰ The total area of Balochistan is 347,190 km.²

of the EEZ makes its off-shore area the size of 240,000 km². Since 2015, Pakistan has been awarded an additional 150 nmi of the Continental Shelf by the United Nations Commission on Limits of Continental Shelf (CLCS),¹¹ which has extended Pakistan's maritime reach in terms of special rights up to 290,000 km² by adding 50,000 km² to the previous limits of the EEZ.¹²

In Balochistan, the maritime base on which a sustainable Blue Economy can be established is enormous and could prove key to prosperity of the province. This economic base can be divided into two major sections with an overall distinction of living and non-living resources: the off-shore economic base, and on-shore economic base.

a) Off-Shore Economic Resources

Balochistan has a significant profile of non-living marine resources, including hydrocarbons, shale gas and crude oil reserves, minerals, sand and gravel. These maritime resources attract major economic global flows. Among the non-living off-shore resources, the foremost is the Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs) which generate immense economic opportunities to a large proportion of the population. Another important non-living off-shore resource is the islands, especially Charna and Astola near Pasni which are mainly used for hydrographical research and strategic purposes, whereas limited tourism and marine sports also take place in these islands. The prospects would become brighter if these islands are developed for major maritime tourism, cruises, and maritime sports such as scuba diving.

The living marine resources in Pakistan's off-shore maritime zones especially off the coast of Balochistan are plentiful. The species found in the Arabian Sea include fish, cetaceans, which include dolphins, porpoises, whales, and sea turtles. Seaweeds and corals are other major marine resources which have significance for consumption by the people and other marine life, medicinal purposes, and as part of the ecological habitat of several species.

¹¹ "The Continental Shelf Extension," *News*, March 28, 2015.

¹² GOP, "A Handbook of Pakistan," 43.

b) On-Shore Economic Resources

The on-shore economic resources of Pakistan are highly diversified and comprise of living and non-living resources. The on-shore living resources include human beings, mangroves, shrimps, crabs, lobsters, and corals whereas the non-living resources include harbours and ports, cliffs and beaches, bays and lagoons, maritime tourist destinations, and national parks, estuaries, and wetlands. Cottage as well as bigger industries like ship building and ship-breaking industries, mechanical workshops, fishing and seafood-related businesses, wind and tidal energy production, and vocational institutes round out the list. The on-shore economic base has potential for unlimited economic activities linked with it on the coastline and even in the hinterland.

The potential economic base in Balochistan is quite extensive which can further be developed and utilised to embrace the concept of Blue Economy in Pakistan. Yet, there is one element which cannot be ignored and that is the native population. The people of Balochistan need to be focused on primarily as the human capital is prerequisite to sustainable development.

SHRD and Prospects of Development in Balochistan

Human capital is the most valuable of all resources existing in any country. Organisations employ the tools of Human Resource Development (HRD) to make their employees more productive and convert them into an asset. The same tools can be applied by the states. The conventional HRD is meant to utilise human capital. SHRD can be more effective to address the chronic issues faced by Balochistan, especially the tendencies of separatism which are funded by hostile countries and agencies.

HRD works on long-term and long-range objectives in accordance with the current challenges and future issues. It focuses on the strategies to address emerging situations, and could help the state deal with future problems. As economic activity is performed by the organisations, and for this paper, the state is considered as an alternative to an organisation to perform research, SHRD works systematically in addressing following mentioned five areas:

- a) Improving the strategies to seek and groom talented people.
- b) Establishing well-directed and well-connected training programmes.
- c) Expanding the reform process even at the state level.
- d) Encouraging and engaging individuals in the process of development through incentives, motivation, and encouragement.
- e) Establishing an environment where an individual is groomed for developing and effectively utilising their leadership skills.¹³

The above-mentioned approach should be used by the state to increase the pace of development in Balochistan. Since the province's human capital is in dire need to be developed as a valuable part of the nation, it is needed to induce interest at individual level by augmenting their stakes and gains as well. Strategically, SHRD approach for Balochistan should not be one dimensional, but part of a multi-pronged strategy to boost benefits for people and government.

Investing in the Blue Economy

Investing in basic education, health, and offering the equitable provision of social services like water, electricity, gas, and infrastructure is a fundamental pre-requisite to create a conducive environment for human development. Similarly, vocational training is important to make people self-sufficient and to engage in entrepreneurial approach. In the wake of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), there would be prospective investments by international actors enabling SHRD to accrue maximum gains. The international stakeholders could also be engaged in the process of developing human capital in specific aspects such as language training and developing vocational skills. The development of these backward areas should be brought into foreign policy considerations of the state so that the developmental opportunities like construction of schools and hospitals can be employed well. In this context, three eminent organisations — the federal government, the Army, and the Navy — are the pivotal actors that can play an effective role in developing human capital through SHRD.

¹³ This theoretical model has been structured on Hu's systemic process of SHRD. For details, see Po Hu, "*Theorising Strategic Human Resource Development: Linking Financial Performance and Sustainable Competitive Advantage*," University of Minnesota, 2007, <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED504405.pdf>

Role of the Government

After 2008, the successive governments have been taking measures to reduce Balochistan's political unrest and home-grown insurgency, especially after the 7th NFC Award, the 18th Constitutional Amendments and Aghaz-e-Huqooq-e-Balochistan Package. These steps were meant to bring peace and stability to the province.¹⁴ The formal inauguration of the CPEC in September 2016, initiated the process and the government also started taking effective SHRD measures such as establishing schools, colleges, and universities in the peripheral areas; elimination of ghost institutes; developing vocational centers and encouragement of communication and other skill-development programmes. These developments led to creating 5,000 employment opportunities,¹⁵ making sure that the local population gets benefits of such endeavours. All these measures played an effective role in bringing positive change and partially addressed grievances of the people.

CPEC is believed to be a game changer in terms of economic development and connectivity. Both the federal and provincial governments agreed to provide maximum benefits to developing Gwadar port by giving grade 1 to 16 jobs to people of Gwadar and its surrounding areas. Moreover, since the Gwadar Development Authority and the Gwadar Port Authority were established, the local people are preferred to be appointed at administrative and other posts. As Balochistan has long been suffering from a security crisis, both the provincial and federal governments under premiership of Imran Khan since 2018, worked on improving the political situation by providing people with better and equitable opportunities. Similarly, the provincial government has improved the system of governance through better educational, health and social services as well as through developing new facilities especially in remote areas which had been deprived in the past.

¹⁴ Khalid Aziz, "Important Features of 7th NFC Award and 18th Amendment," *The Pakistan Development Review* 49, no. 4 (Winter 2010): 539-41.

¹⁵ Muhammad Nawaz Khan, "Security and Development in Balochistan," *IPRI Review* (May 05, 2014), <https://ipripak.org/security-and-development-in-balochistan/>

Role of the Pakistan Army

The Pakistan Army can help increase the pace of development of the province by participating in philanthropic activities like contributing in welfare projects, reconstructing schools, installing solar systems for electricity and water purification, providing books and uniforms to school children, and even teaching in classes after their duty hours in extremely remote areas particularly closer to borders where teachers hesitate to come and perform their duties. Such initiatives have proved helpful in increasing number of students attending schools. This sort of investment is part of applying SHRD approach for ensuring the long-range benefits.

The one approach adopted by the Army and para-military forces has been to encourage students from peripheral areas of the province for coming to the closest urban centers for their education for which hostels have been established. For example, a hostel at Quetta Cantonment for 100 students of the Marri and Luni tribes from Loralai and Kohlu areas under the Chamalang Beneficiaries Education Programme is fully functional free-of-cost. This is not limited only to Balochistan, but across the country hostels are managed by the Army and para-military forces to accommodate the students from Balochistan.

Another area in which the Army and para-military forces are investing is skill development and technical education. The aim is to convert young people into effective and productive human capital. A number of institutions have been established in which the Army has collaborated with the National Vocational and Technical Education Commission (NAVTEC). The Army School of Technicians and the Balochistan Institute of Technical Education (BITE) have been performing remarkably well, and, since 2006 around 4,480 students belonging to Balochistan have been passed out.¹⁶

In 2011, the Quetta Institute of Medical Sciences was established as a non-commercial project with special free medical treatment extended to 500 to 1000 patients from Mekhtar and Chamalang. Free medical camps have also been arranged regularly at different location across the province. Another important project was establishment of the Mother and

¹⁶ Ibid.

Child Health Services, as well as the Extended Program of Immunization (EPI) against malaria, hepatitis, viral hemorrhagic fever, and other communicable diseases. Special events, training programmes, seminars, and conferences are arranged occasionally to extend learning and teaching opportunities to civil doctors and health workers.¹⁷

The provision of portable drinking water is basic necessity of life along with a good sanitation system to ensure a healthy and productive population. The Army and para-military forces have launched several schemes for this purpose in different areas, such as in Malikzai, Kohlu Town, Sahib Khan, Lasezai, Naseerabad to Brohi Killi Faiz Muhammad, Barily (Kishari Thal, and Maiwand). Similarly, the Frontier Works Organisation (FWO) has been active in building infrastructure across Balochistan by building roads, bridges, passes and tunnels, and even small dams like Mangi Dam and other water conveyance systems.¹⁸

The contribution of the Army and para-military forces in developing Balochistan has been done as part of nation-building, and this sphere can be widened through adopting the SHRD approach. It extends from establishing educational and vocational institutions, health facilities, water and sanitation schemes, welfare projects, and coal mining projects, to plantation drives for increasing vegetation in all areas of Balochistan with the aim of bringing equal opportunities to the people and to bring them into the national mainstream by empowering and enabling them through the SHRD approach.¹⁹

Role of the Navy

Health and education are the areas essential for development of the state. Pakistan Navy is not only defending the blue waters of Pakistan, but like the Pakistan Army, it profoundly extends its efforts to improve the lives of the local people, particularly the under-privileged, by establishing schools, colleges, hospitals, and other basic health facilities. A valuable contribution to Balochistan's socio-economic development by the Navy is the PNS-DARMANJAH at Ormara, a hospital which provides free medical treatment including consultancy, investigations, surgeries, and

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

medication. The word *Darmanjah* provides an inherent link with a hospital, since it means the place where a cure can be found. In that manner which is exactly what the PNS-DARMANJAH does, providing medical facilities even for civilians without any discrimination.²⁰

The Navy has also established sickbays which are small medical setups along the coastline at Turbat, Gwadar, Jiwani, and Pasni to provide basic medical treatment to the inhabitants of those areas. More serious cases, however, are referred to the Ormara facility (*Darmanjah*). Another significant contribution by the Navy worth mentioning is the opportunities given to women to receive professional nursing care training at PNS-SHIFA, Karachi, and then to give them positions in their areas. This is an immense contribution for the society of Balochistan where prenatal and post-natal care and medical treatment by male staff has been a taboo. The recruitment and training of women in a closed tribal society like Balochistan is a major achievement. It enables women getting medical/nursing training to perform as a productive part of society and to spread awareness among the women coming to get medical treatments for ailments.

Similarly, the Navy systematically arranges medical camps in such areas as KundMalir, Pasni, Gwadar, Jiwani, and Turbat so that people who are unable to reach medical centers can receive treatment close to their homes. Such medical camps play a role in spreading awareness about basic hygiene, maternal and fetal care, immunisation, and public health. School visits are also arranged to provide basic medical checkups as well as to spread health education.²¹

Education is another neglected area in Balochistan. The Navy has established Bahria Model Schools at Turbat, Ormara, Jiwani, and Gwadar. They provide quality education and have opened their doors to the local people at greatly subsidised rates. The organisation is patronising

²⁰ The author has visited the facility at Ormara and had interacted with administration as well as patients, especially women who come from distant places for their treatment. This facility has advanced child and maternal care arrangements which had been the most overlooked aspect of the closed societies.

²¹ Shazia Hasan, "Building Balochistan: Challenges and Triumphs for Pakistan Navy," *Dawn* (Karachi), updated January 04, 2018, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1100273>.

government school in Ormara and assists them wherever necessary. The Chief of Naval Staff (CNS) sponsors a child from the local population for a free education. The Navy provides a specific quota for Baloch students at Bahria Model Schools at Karachi, different campuses of Bahria University, and Cadet College Petaro. The Navy has also established a cadet college at Ormara, which is providing free education, as well as offering opportunities to join the Navy after completion of their studies at the Cadet College.²² There are further projects in the pipeline such as establishment of the Marine Sciences Department at Bahria University. It collaborates in researches with the Higher Education Commission (HEC) to provide potential opportunities for tapping the least tapped maritime resources of that area. Another substantial contribution for developing the human capital is extending equitable employment opportunities by relaxing the age limit, qualifications, and health standards for recruitment into the Navy.²³

Challenges in Developing Balochistan's Blue Economy

Despite a gigantic maritime economic base and potential human capital, Balochistan lags behind the rest of country in terms of development indices. As mentioned above, there are undeniable prospects for development of Balochistan by applying the Blue Economy approach. It can boost the sustainable growth. However, there are a number of challenges which need to be overcome.

a) Geo-Political Issues

India and Pakistan have historical enmity but the onset of the CPEC and Pakistan's potential involvement in the BRI initiative have further intensified this hostility. China's deepening ties with Pakistan in particular, and in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) in general, is cause of insecurity for India. New Delhi perceives China's presence and its

²² "Pakistan Navy: Contributing to the Development of Balochistan," March 25, 2019.

²³ The province has long been the victim of worse socio-economic backwardness and the standards set for the countrymen cannot be maintained as it is. As part of approach of inclusiveness, it has been decided by the state to provide relaxation to the people of Balochistan in terms of education and physical fitness, i.e. height, weight, chest. This is equitable approach much needed to be adopted to deal with the grievances of the people of Balochistan.

economic connectivity plan as threat to stability and status-quo in the IOR. India, as strategic partner to the US has extended its maritime doctrine with a vision to command, and control the Indian Ocean. India has used its links in Afghanistan and Iran to destabilise the internal situation of Balochistan. It is trying its best to achieve its objective of encirclement through establishing nexus with Iran and Afghanistan. For this purpose, India has been going to lengths and has even exclaimed its intentions to destabilise Balochistan.²⁴ For this purpose, India has been using Iran and Afghanistan, and Indian spies have been infiltrating by using the shared borders with Pakistan to harm the country internally.²⁵

b) Intricate Security Dynamics

There is an undeniable link between security and development of any area. In Balochistan, the security dynamics are highly intricate because of the involvement of several domestic and international actors. The dominant domestic actors have been using ethno-nationalist resentments as the source of their political power. However, the most serious cause of concern is the one promoting a militant/secessionist agenda that challenges the writ of state. The sectarian divide between Shi'ites and Sunnis is another grave concern.²⁶ It has become a sensitive issue for Balochistan which has been hit several times by terrorists as well as by extremist elements who promote hatred and intolerance and commit violent acts. The gravest terrorist attacks took place in Balochistan in January and February 2013 when 180 Shi'ite from Hazara community were killed; and in June 2014, 24 Shi'ites belonging to KPK were killed in a suicide attack in a transit hotel in Taftan, enroute to Iran for their religious visit are instances of the sectarian violence damaging peace and security in the province.²⁷ Direct involvement of international actors and non-state actors with varying agendas has been harming not only the

²⁴ "The Doval Doctrine," *Frontline*, November 13, 2015,

<https://frontline.thehindu.com/the-nation/the-doval-doctrine/article7800194.ece>

²⁵ Kulbhushan Jadev is one such example where India has used Iranian land against Pakistan.

²⁶ Farhan Siddiqi, "Sectarian Violence in Balochistan," June 18, 2015,

<https://www.mei.edu/publications/sectarian-violence-balochistan>

²⁷ "We are the Walking Dead" Human Rights Watch Report, June 29, 2014,

<https://www.hrw.org/report/2014/06/29/we-are-walking-dead/killings-shia-hazara-balochistan-pakistan>

peace and stability of Balochistan, but political independence and sovereignty of state have been challenged by and large.

c) Ethnic Divide

Balochistan has a diverse ethnic population. Since beginning there have been two major ethnic groups, the Baloch and the Pashtuns dominant in Balochistan, and several yet relatively minor ethnic groups like Hazaras, Makranis, Biharis, and even Punjabis. They share the same land space since ages, but there is distinct ethnic divide between them. The Baloch have never considered Pashtuns to be native inhabitants of Balochistan. Instead, they consider them settlers, like the Punjabis and others. This ethnic divide remains, and is, in fact, stronger than ever. This divide is even further re-emphasised when people coming from different cities or districts are considered to be outsiders and job discrimination ensues. This causes a rift in society and harms national harmony.

d) Economic Fissures

Balochistan has been a victim of illicit economic activities and transnational organised crime due to its geography, its porous borders, loopholes in law-enforcement, and inadequate legal employment opportunities. The gravest of all these concerns are the smuggling and trafficking of narcotics, consumer goods, weapons, fuel, and even humans. Balochistan is used as both a transit area and destination too for smuggled goods and a conduit for human trafficking. The situation has become murkier as the parallel economy has taken over socio-economic ground by and large, mainly due to absence of attractive employment, lack of awareness, and loose agency control. If the Blue Economy flourishes according to its potential, the resulting economic activities will attract people, and especially encourage young people to engage in these opportunities rather than engaging in the illicit economy held by formidable groups, mafias and cartels. They influence the public as well as corrupt policy makers, members of the legislatures and law-enforcement agencies, and use different strategies to find the loopholes in the system to get required benefits.

e) Red-Tapeism and Poor Governance

Strong political will and the government which is subject to public accountability makes the core of successful sustainable development. For Balochistan's Blue Economy, firm policy grounds with set principles and rules to maintain stringent working conditions are essential. A system of accountability is also needed to ensure an honest administration. CPEC and BRI and several other projects have been conceived but an ineffective, power-hungry bureaucracy causes hurdles leading to policy failures. Similarly, unwise political decisions promoting short-term gains have resulted in discouraging foreign investors.

f) Lack of Infrastructure and Basic Facilities

In Balochistan, there is dire need of provision of basic facilities like potable water, sanitation, and communication and infrastructure like roads, railway, airports, ports and harbours and the timely completion of projects as pre-requisites for development. Without uninterrupted supply of fresh water, no project can be started on the coast. Desalination plants can be built at the sites including maritime tourist resorts and beaches like Kund Malir, Hingol National Park, and rest areas on the Makran Coastal Highway. There needs to be well-planned tourist bays, boarding and lodging facilities, and recreational and sports arenas. Properly designed industrial area and special economic zones related with the Blue Economy with special quotas of employment for local people of Balochistan should be established. A well-coordinated effort between departments and ministries is the only solution; otherwise the lack of infrastructure and basic facilities are significant hurdles to develop the Blue Economy.

Conclusion

Balochistan is Pakistan's soft underbelly and needs to be defended by mainstreaming its people and spending from the national earnings to improve their lot. The most serious implication of Balochistan's geopolitical situation is largely the competing interests of regional and international actors like India, China, Russia, and the US. Unfortunately, Balochistan has long been ignored in terms of effective and strong policies. Instead, strict strategic approaches have been adopted by the governments to

resolve increasing discontent and militancy of the population. With this background, the province has been marked as a soft target by external powers. The involvement of various actors with specific interests has made the province difficult to handle, especially as ethno-nationalism has been promoted. The slow pace of development, the inefficacy of government policies, insufficient strategic planning, and a lack of understanding about particular tribal systems have further aggravated the situation. The use of force can never be a permanent solution, therefore, it could only bring “negative” peace. To bring effective yet “positive” peace,²⁸ there is need to structure and implement the policies which could address the grievances of the people of Balochistan.

The lack of vision and weak political will, poor infrastructure, bureaucratic hurdles, regional instability, and insufficient coordination between different departments are some of the factors which have been hindering the development of Blue Economy in Balochistan. As a matter of fact, the only viable solution is investing in the province through the Blue Economy and utilising the maritime economic base. Adopting the SHRD approaches will convert the population in Balochistan into an effective and productive human resource. Economic empowerment will encourage people to break the shackles of traditional and closed societal approaches, poverty, and diffidence while the exploitation of people by ethno-nationalist elements, and/or being used by international actors like India, can only be prevented through strategically efficient policies. The continuity of such an approach is the only way to lessen grievances of these people; whereby people will start thinking positively and national harmony would be achieved. Indeed, adopting the policy to create a Blue Economy, and working on SHRD approaches by the government and its elite organisations are the instruments to invest not only in coastal areas of Balochistan, but also to ensure the future of a secure, stable, and prosperous Pakistan.

²⁸ Johan Galtung, known as Father of Peace Studies/ Research, introduced these two terms, “negative” and “positive” peace in 1960s. According to Galtung, the negative peace will be the situation which shows no violence at specific time or forced peace as “absence of violence, absence of war” which can potentially be temporary; whereas “positive” peace involves the solution of the core reasons or issues causing violence and unrest which will essentially be involving “the integration of human society.” For detail, see Johan Galtung, “An Editorial,” *Journal of Peace Research* 1 (1, 1964): 2.