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## ***Baloch Separatism and National Turmoil: Understanding Pakistan's Crisis***



A Separatist group in Pakistan's Balochistan province has killed 74 people in multiple attacks within 24 hours. The militants specifically targeted the civilians belonging to Punjab after stopping vehicles on the national highway in Musa Khel district. They hold that their fight is against the country's military. This has sparked outrage around the country and has spread fear among the citizens.

### **The Escalating Crisis: Balochistan's Violent Insurgency**

Violent attacks by the Baloch insurgents have exacerbated the sufferings of the Pakistani people. Pakistan has already been suffering from political and economic turmoil, leading to a massive brain drain from the country. Most of the country's population lacks confidence in the incumbent government due to the sham elections held earlier this year.

Moreover, the performance of the sitting government is also unsatisfactory. Pakistan's current inflation rate stands at 24.76 percent, while the current unemployment rate is [6.3 percent](#) with 4.51 million unemployed. Terrorism is another major issue adding to the agony of the Pakistani people. It is also the rudimentary factor behind the country's economic crisis.

### **The Ripple Effects of Terrorism**

Due to increased terrorism, foreign investors feel insecure while investing in Pakistan. Progress on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has slowed due to the increasing terrorist attacks on Chinese engineers. Pakistan's terrorism quandary started due to its alliance with the United States in the US-led War on Terror. This alliance sparked an anti-Pakistan sentiment across the border. People with a similar ideology and sect of the Afghan Taliban sympathized with the Afghan Taliban in this war and attacked Pakistan's civilian and military personnel. The country lost more than [70000 lives](#) due to the terrorist attacks as a result of this war. Pakistan's economic loss due to this US-led War on Terror surpassed \$150 billion.

This war also tarnished Pakistan's social fabric. Pakistan's regional and global rivals use the terrorist organizations operating in the country as their proxies. The United States, once Pakistan's closest ally, is also blamed for being involved in supporting these terrorist organizations to weaken and destabilize the country. Many inside the country believe that Pakistan's regional and global rivals sponsor terrorist attacks on Chinese engineers. Relations between Pakistan and China also suffered due to these terrorist attacks.

Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) and Tehreek E Taliban Pakistan (TTP) have been the top two organizations involved in most of the attacks against the Chinese engineers working on the CPEC. In March 2024, [5 Chinese workers](#) and 12 Pakistan military personnel were killed in the terrorist attack conducted by the BLA. The militant organization claims to fight for the rights of the people of Balochistan. However, most of the people of the province and all of the local politicians disown them. The actual motive of the organization is to destabilize the country and demand the separation of the province from the country at the behest of their foreign patrons.

Pakistan's government and military have always hinted at foreign involvement in Balochistan. The BLA's attacks on the Chinese engineers working on the CPEC corroborate these claims. The BLA militants have also been involved in igniting ethnic and sectarian violence in Pakistan. Many a time they have targeted Punjabi people traveling through the Balochistan province of Pakistan. Recently, they killed 23 people

after confirming their identities as Punjabis before setting 34 vehicles ablaze. In multiple attacks, these separatist militants have killed more than 70 people within 24 hours. These simultaneous attacks demonstrate that the terrorist organization has amplified its attacks and seeks to rupture regional peace.

BLA terrorists find safe havens in Afghanistan due to the porous border between the two countries and the weak Taliban government. The reason behind their attack on people belonging to the Punjab is due to the progress of this province. They persuade the local people by falsely claiming that the Punjab province is progressing at the expense of the regression of Balochistan. They also portray that the central government of the country prioritizes Punjab over their province. However, the actual cause behind the regression of the province is its corrupt political elite and the tribal system. Most of the politicians belonging to the province are tribal leaders who use the provincial resources for their personal benefit while disregarding the interests of their people.

### **Government Response and Future Outlook**

The recent attacks by the BLA terrorists on different civilian and military installations sparked nationwide outrage against these terrorists. Different Baloch leaders and politicians have labeled these cowardly attacks as an attempt to spark ethnic violence inside the country. Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has vowed no mercy for terrorists in the country. He stated, “Doors of negotiations are open only for those who recognize the constitution and flag of Pakistan, but there is no room for terrorists.” He also announced that all the resources would be provided to the Pakistan Army to eradicate terrorism from the country. The cabinet also approved a budget of Rs 20 billion for the [Azm-e-Istehkam Initiative](#). Pakistan’s military has also vowed to take serious action against all the terrorist organizations involved in destabilizing the country. BLA’s recent attacks would prove the last nail in its coffin, as all the Pakistani institutions are united against terrorist organizations and have firm public support in this regard. However, this operation is crucial for the progress and stability of the country. Otherwise, Pakistan’s economic and political crisis will deepen.

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