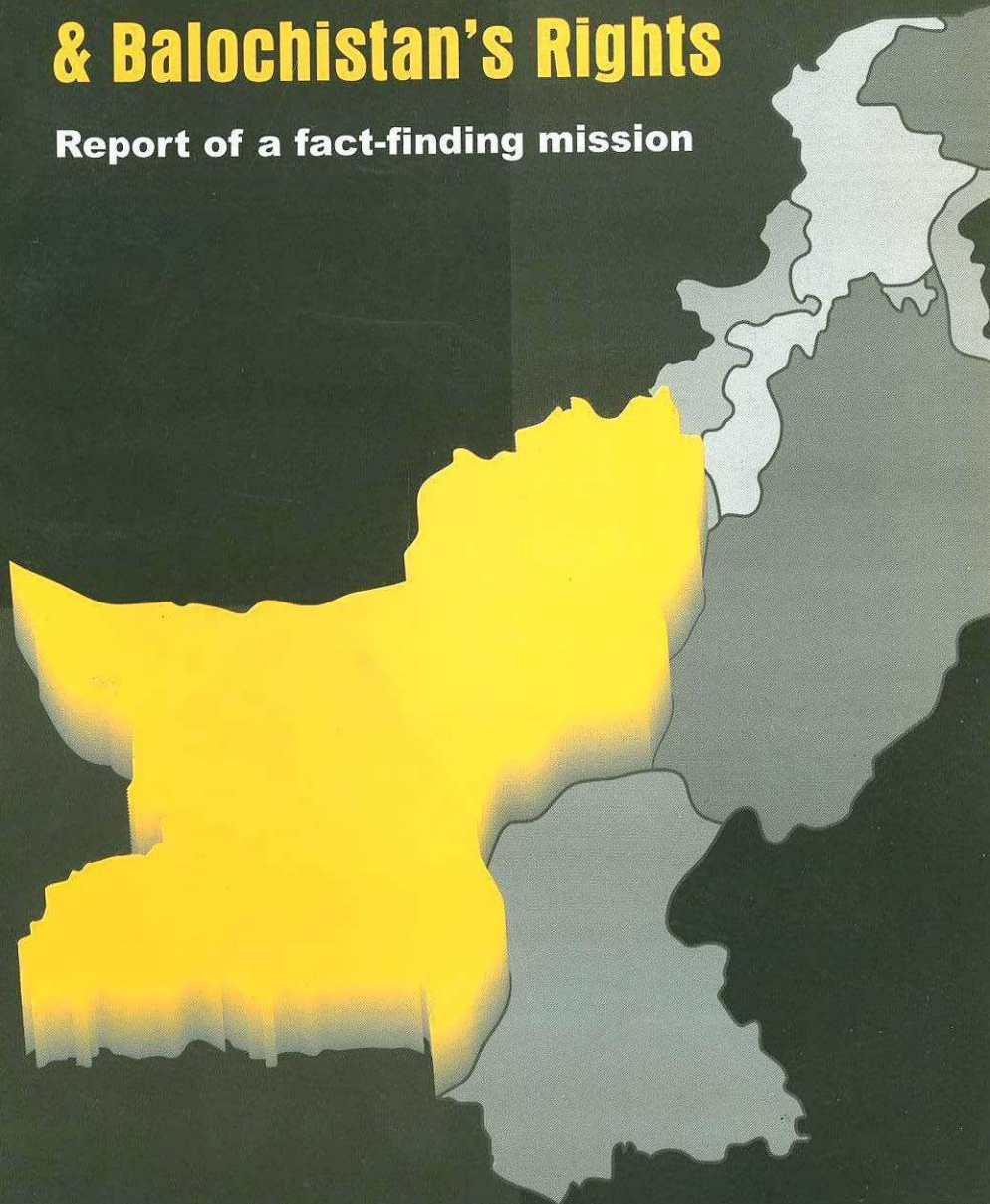


Human Rights in Balochistan & Balochistan's Rights

Report of a fact-finding mission



**Human Rights Commission
of Pakistan**



HRCP Report

on

**Human rights in Balochistan
and**

Balochistan's rights

Published by
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Aiwan-i-Jamhoor, 107-Tipu Block
New Garden Town, Lahore-54600
Tel: 5838341, 5883579, 5864994 Fax: 5883582
Email: hrcp@hrcp-web.org
Website: <http://www.hrcp-web.org>

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Human rights in Balochistan and Balochistan's rights

Report of a fact-finding mission: October 2003

Introduction

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) has been taking various measures to apprise itself of the state of human rights in the province of Balochistan. The provincial chapter at Quetta keeps a watch on developments, positive as well as negative, that have any bearing on the basic rights of the people. It organises, among other activities, fact-finding missions as and when warranted by circumstances. Investigations into human rights violations of local nature are regularly carried out by district core groups and activists. Their reports are published in the monthly *Jehd-i-Haq*, of which a combined Balochi-Pushtu edition is also published. In 2001 when large parts of the province were hit by drought the HRCP chairperson Afrasiab Khattak himself led an inquiry mission. Every two years or so the HRCP Council, the organisation's executive body, meets in Quetta to enable its members to gain first-hand knowledge of the ground reality and interact with the leaders of public opinion and the provincial civil society. However, the need for continuous overseeing

of the human rights situation in Balochistan, as in other parts of the country, can hardly be gainsaid.

In October 2003 the commission decided to organise a high-powered fact-finding mission to undertake a broad survey of the human rights situation over a sizeable area of the province. The mission was led by the HRCP Secretary-General, Ms Hina Jilani, who is also the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative on Human Rights Defenders, and included 13 other members of the Council. The mission was divided into five teams that visited Gwadar, Turbat (and Tump), Khuzdar, Loralai and Quetta. (See Annexure I) The members of the teams met a large number of people in the administration, as well as representatives of political parties, lawyers, journalists, and social activists, to elicit their views on a broad range of issues of concern to them. A preliminary mission statement containing a summary of its findings was released to the media on October 26, 2003. (See Annexure II) A more detailed report of the mission's findings and recommendations is given in the following pages.

HRCP is conscious of the fact that its mission may not have been able to cover each and every issue of concern to the people of Balochistan and that some of the matters it tried to address demand further study and analysis. However, it has decided to release this report because it does touch upon quite a few issues that have been agitating the minds of the conscious sections of Balochistan society. These issues call for urgent remedial action by the state and the civil society both if they are not to be allowed to develop into serious and dangerous causes of discontent.

A large number of people responded to the call of the mission at short notice and freely gave of their time. HRCP thanks them for their kind and generous support and acknowledges their contribution to the furtherance of the cause of human rights. The whole of Balochistan, as usual, was a wonderful host and HRCP hopes to be able to savour more of its hospitality and its candid discourse.

Report summary and recommendations

1. Public discourse in Balochistan is largely dominated by memories of injustices the people believe they have suffered throughout their history as a unit of the Pakistan federation. The collective mindset has strong elements of self-righteousness, anger, frustration and cynicism. Outsiders have difficulty in establishing their credentials as bonafide democrats or human rights activists. Even the slightest instance of discrimination or deprivation, real or imagined, revives the Balochistan peoples' memories of the circumstances in which their princely states were absorbed into Pakistan, the merger of the states and what was called the British Balochistan, the formation of the One Unit, the betrayal of the Sardars by the Ayub regime, the non-implementation of the 1973 Constitution, the military offensive of the seventies, et al. Their feeling of alienation has been accentuated by some recent developments, such as exclusion of the provincial authority from the local government scheme and the mega projects and non-acceptance of their demands for control over their resources and for a due share in the state's divisible income.

The measures required to end the Balochistan people's alienation lie in the political field, but human rights activists cannot ignore the factors contributing to the present situation. The people's right to democratic governance and participation in it and their right to control over their resources are basic human rights. Besides, lack of respect

for these rights adversely affects the people's realisation of other human rights, particularly the right to the rule of law, the right to development and the right to enjoy key social, economic and cultural rights.

It is therefore necessary to attempt a breakthrough in meeting Balochistan's aspirations for provincial autonomy. Its people must be enabled to realise that they are indeed an equal amongst the federating units of the country. This must be a high priority agenda for both the state and the civil society.

1. a) Balochistan's grievances about denial of control over its natural resources and lack of benefit from their exploitation have not yet been fairly addressed.

Balochistan's grievance is that the royalty on gas determined in 1973 was assessed on the basis of tentative income in 1953. Different provinces are paid for gas at different rates. The rate allowed to Balochistan is Rs. 36.65 per million BTU, while Punjab is allowed Rs 80-190 per million BTU and Sindh 2.4 US dollars per million BTU. Royalty to the province is allowed at the rate of 12.5 per cent. The Federal Government also charges gas development surcharge and central excise duty from consumers, which is collected by the Federal Government and placed in the divisible fund. Balochistan therefore demands that the royalty formula should be rationalised and that all provinces should be paid for their gas at a uniform rate. Another complaint is that the Federal Government progressively increases the central excise duty on the consumer bills but this money instead of being paid to the provinces is collected by the Federal Government and is put into the divisible pool. This deprives Balochistan and other provinces of their rightful share of royalty. Therefore Balochistan demands that the practice of levying surcharges on different pretexts may be discontinued.

1. b) The policy of keeping democratic elements on a tight leash and refusal to concede the essentials of provincial autonomy has tended to strengthen the tribal system. The Sardars continue to influence the justice system and the working of the police.

The Sardari system will not disappear unless the grievances related to provincial rights are removed. So long as this does not happen the people will continue to bear the load of archaic social structures despite

their manifest unhappiness with them.

2. Balochistan suffers from lack of a uniform and effective system of justice. The multiplicity of judicial systems devalues the quality of justice, adds to difficulties in securing redress and aggravates problems of access.

Although Balochistan is under a uniform civil and criminal code justice is dispensed by various categories of judicial officers. Qazis in some districts exercise jurisdiction under Dastoor Amal Diwani Kalat while in other districts the Qazis exercise the same type of jurisdiction under Balochistan Civil Disputes (Enforcement of Sharia) Regulation 1976. The Qazis in spite of years of experience have not developed a sense of dispensation of justice. Their judgments lack reasonableness and judiciousness. Therefore it was generally demanded that adequately qualified judicial officers may be appointed instead of the Qazis.

Without this the citizens will not be able to enjoy their basic right to equal protection of and equality before law.

2 (a) Complaints of harassment by Coastguards, special police (such as Frontier Constabulary and levies) are legion and there is considerable anxiety that the new police system will strengthen local despotism.

The entire law and order machinery in Balochistan needs to be revamped and the notion that a tribal society does not deserve the due process must be expeditiously buried. The role of Coastguards, Frontier Corps and Civil Armed Forces should be redefined and the capacity of the supervisory echelon to ensure discipline and probity enhanced. The same applies to the levies, even if this institution cannot be dispensed with. In the elite-dominated society of Balochistan, the new police law will demand greater attention than elsewhere in the country to safeguard against abuse of authority by police officials either on their own or in collusion with local government leaders and or criminals.

2 (b) The condition of jails, police lock-ups and judicial lock-ups is quite bad. The worst sufferers are juveniles and illegal immigrants (who enter Balochistan in sizeable numbers).

Steps need to be taken to end overcrowding in jails. The under-trials should be guaranteed easier and effective access to speedy trials

and grant of bail where judicial lock-ups are at far off distances from the place of trial. The health facilities in jails require improvement. A special mechanism should be evolved to ensure quick disposal of alien detainees' cases and their repatriation to home countries.

3. The increase in military presence in the province is viewed with suspicion by a preponderant majority, to a greater extent than elsewhere in the country, as a deliberate effort to undercut the people's right to participate in governance. There is widespread resentment against proposals to establish a string of new cantonments in the province. These plans are generally viewed as an attempt to 'subjugate' the people by muzzling their voices.

The dangers of militarization of the people cannot be exaggerated.. Even a minimum degree of respect for the history of Balochistan demands that any extension of defence establishments in the province should be subject to double scrutiny and it should be undertaken only after convincing the people of its justification. The need to reduce the military's presence in jobs traditionally and rightly reserved for civilians is even greater in Balochistan than in other provinces.

3 (a) The subservience of the administration and even the legal system to intelligence agencies causes a great deal of hurt to the people. The worst affected are obviously the under-privileged.

The expanded role of intelligence agencies and lack of clarity in laws from which these services draw their legal authority has caused widespread discontent. The functions of intelligence agencies and their interference in civil administration needs to be stopped. Many of their activities have no place in a democratic and rights-based legal dispensation.

4. The women of Balochistan constitute by and large a disadvantaged lot. Segregation, restraints on mobility, denial of freedom to choose their spouses or education courses and vocations contribute to a climate of oppression that appears more visible than elsewhere in the country. At the same time one notices significant signs of awakening and new-found confidence among them.

It is necessary to accelerate the process of social development in Balochistan by increasing opportunities for meaningful education. Where new institutions are set up due attention must be paid to the


requirements of teachers and essential teaching aids.

5. Balochistan can legitimately take pride in its tradition of religious tolerance and fair treatment of the minorities. However, there are signs of weakening of this tradition at several places, as evident in cases of abduction / conversion of women belonging to minorities, invocation of the blasphemy law, exclusivist tendencies in the management of graveyards, and denial of jobs.

All instances of discrimination should be promptly addressed. The law and order authorities must be under strict orders to protect the life and liberty of minority citizens and special efforts must be made to protect their rights to education, health and employment.

6. Unemployment is already a serious problem in Balochistan and the situation will get worse as more educated young men and women seek entry into the labour market. Even those who do get jobs are more than normally vulnerable to exploitation.

There is urgent need to enlarge employment opportunities in Balochistan and stricter regulation of wage standards and due enforcement of labour laws including those that guarantee normal trade union activity.

 7. The education and health services are inadequate and poorly maintained. Schools and hospitals are poorly staffed and badly equipped. They need to be upgraded by providing more qualified staff and the necessary equipment.

The education and health departments must draw up a time-bound programme to remove the deficiencies in educational and health institutions.

8. Frequent complaints are heard that relief operations undertaken in the wake of natural calamities are inadequate or relief promised is not delivered.

Nothing alienates a people more than indifference to their plight caused by flood or drought or famine. Relief packages must be delivered promptly and in adequate measure.

9. The mega-projects (such as the Gwadar Port Project) present a host of problems. The people have legitimate grievances regarding irregularities in land records, difficulties in getting ownership titles recognised and corrected, inadequate arrangements for people

threatened with displacement, disregard for communities' traditional vocations and non-recruitment of local workers, and a fear of disenfranchisement as a result of influx of skilled labour from outside Balochistan.

There is an urgent need to remove the Balochistan people's grievance against exclusion from the planning and execution of mega-projects. The land ownership issues should be expeditiously resolved. Nobody should be deprived of home or vocational opportunities without adequate, fair and satisfactory (to the affectee) compensation and rehabilitation. It may be a good idea to attach a high-placed official to each mega-project who should deal with local community's concerns related to justice, human rights and environment.

Human rights in Balochistan

Right of participation and control over resources

The HRCP teams noticed discontent almost everywhere in Balochistan because of the widely shared perception of the people's exclusion from public affairs. They felt deprived and ignored. The political activists only articulated, often in bitter terms, the feelings of nearly all sections of the civil society.

Strident criticism was heard of the mega-projects in the Mekran division – such as the Gwadar Deep Sea Port, the Mirani Dam, the Coastal Highway and establishment of cantonments. The main grounds were: exclusion from planning, implementation and benefits; denial of due opportunities of employment; apprehensions about the motives of the federal government and the military leadership; land-grabbing and fear of change in Mekran's political status; and fear of ethnic imbalance in Gwadar and of the Baloch being turned into a minority in the region.

While talking to the HRCP teams the local representatives rejected all arguments in support of employment of outsiders on the ground of lack of skills and technical know-how among the locals. According to them it was wrong to entrust port management almost completely to the Navy who were not technically qualified or trained for handling all port functions. They argued that before big projects were launched, human resource development plans should have been carried out and skills and expertise developed at the local level. They complained that the Baloch and other local people were not hired in any significant

number even as unskilled labour.

The most important conclusion the HRCP mission reached is that the public mind has been greatly strained by what it considers a prolonged denial of its due share in national affairs. The people are sore about the disintegration of its broad nationalist forums and the failure to deliver of those who sought share in power with the federal authorities. The people have been left to wallow in a mix of harsh realities on the ground and strong perceptions of their grievances. It does not seem completely true that popular perceptions about major projects are decisively influenced by the agenda or rhetoric of nationalist political parties / groups. The people observe and specifically refer to policies and measures that indicate a deliberate policy of concealment, withholding of information and the exclusion of local political forces and even administration from planning, decisions, and management of projects in Balochistan. Reports of plans to set up a string of cantonments in the province generate fears of further erosion of provincial autonomy. Lack of transparency fuels public apprehensions of pandering to foreign economic and political interests at the cost of Balochistan people's interests, and marginalisation of the local communities.

The nationalist sentiment among the population did not appear to have been diluted by the oppressive tribal / sardari system. The tendency to treat social and political issues in separate contexts in terms of people's relationship with sardars was quite marked – that is, the oppression of the sardars did hurt the people but they supported the sardars in political matters. At the same time the popular stance on political issues was determined by deprivation felt by ordinary citizens. Acute resentment against central government and the military edicts led to resistance to any moves that smacked of greater central control.

Rule of law, access to justice

i) In Turbat and Tump, the people generally displayed a sense of insecurity. A lack of confidence in law enforcement agencies and in the judicial system was widely shared.

At Turbat and Tump the people expressed dissatisfaction with the judicial system, comprising the Dastur-ul-Amal Diwani and the

Qazi courts for all civil matters. Dissatisfaction with the treatment of land settlement cases, where irregularities and corrupt practices of the settlement staff was widespread, was a general complaint. Confidence in the Qazis' competence was found at a low level. They were said to be lacking in professional qualifications and training. As a result their decisions were said to be flawed. The bar claimed to have repeatedly demanded the repeal of the existing system and application of the Civil Procedure Code through normal civil courts. The establishment of family courts was especially urged. An instance of judicial anomaly was presented in Turbat when it was said that a man could be jailed for stealing a hen, while perpetrators of serious crimes enjoyed immunity.

At Khuzdar HRCF was told that there were instances when women were not allowed entry into Qazi courts. It was also alleged that juvenile courts had been notified but the law was not being implemented.

Complaints of courts being inadequate were common. The sole sessions judge at Turbat dealt with cases from several districts. The absence of a sessions court at Gwadar was a major issue with the population of that district as they had to travel about 200 kilometers to reach the sessions court at Turbat.

The Chief Justice of the Balochistan High Court, who kindly found time to receive an HRCF team, expressed satisfaction over expeditious disposal of criminal cases in Balochistan. He described in detail the new system of monitoring of court work in the districts. In Turbat, delay in trial of criminal cases was not noticed as a matter of as much concern as elsewhere in the country. The trial period was said to be two to six months. However, access to justice was considered expensive.

At Khuzdar the Rasheed Azam (a journalist) case was raised by a number of people. The causes of grievance, besides his arrest on a vague report, were delay in the submission of challan (after two months), inexplicable delay in decision on his bail plea, and violation of the principle of open trial (Rasheed Azam's father was allegedly denied entry into the court).

While some people in Turbat were of the view that financial corruption in the judiciary was somewhat on a lower scale than in

other parts of the province, a majority did not agree.

At Khuzdar it was argued that the erosion of the judiciary's independence had adversely affected the electoral process.

Interviews with prisoners in Turbat revealed that legal representation was generally not available to the accused. In a number of cases convictions were based on confessions, in the absence of legal defence, sometimes even in cases of murder. The sessions judges did acknowledge the lack of legal defence but conducted and concluded trials in the absence of legal representation as lawyers could be engaged at state expense only in murder cases. In rare cases, lawyers had extended legal aid at individual level. No legal aid system had been established by the bar.

Lawyers

The lawyers who met the HRC teams generally called for genuinely democratic governance and provincial autonomy. The Khuzdar bar association representatives maintained that constitutional disorder was a major cause of human rights violations. They also criticised arbitrary changes in the constitution and concessions to extra-parliamentary authorities.

The small lawyers community at Loralai (eight members of the bar association) appeared to be a happy lot. The disposal of cases was quite fast. The pendency level at the district courts (a District and Sessions Judge, Civil Judges, magistrate and Qazi courts) was low as a number of cases were settled by jirgas or other community forums. The lawyers complained that posts in the administration, especially the police, were dominated by people from outside the province. They were quite critical of the extraordinary powers wielded by the tribal elite that monopolised jobs in the education and health sectors and the people suffered.

District administration

A strong feeling of resentment against proposals to establish new military cantonments was noticed at all places visited by the HRC teams. For instance the army presence in Khuzdar district was quite visible. An army brigade was stationed at a large cantonment. The brigade commander firmly denied any interference in administration

since the installation of a civilian government. His instructions were to withdraw from administrative matters and the army monitoring cells had been discontinued. However, he said the members of the public continued to approach the army for redress of their grievances and even for the provision of civic amenities. Only a few people believed that in practice the district administration had become free of the military's influence.

Military control over decisions was manifest. The Corps Commander of Balochistan on a visit to Turbat was quite active. He held regular meetings with the members of the district administration and heard public problems / complaints to provide redress.

The Tehsil Nazim in Loralai complained of lack of clarity in the local bodies system and also of undue interference by the provincial authorities. The population in mofussil areas (less than half of the district population) had problems in accessing both administration and courts because of long distances involved.

Jails

The HRCP team visited the district jail in Turbat. It had 126 prisoners (capacity 90) – 71 convicts (all men), including seven in death cells, and 55 under-trials. A part of the jail had been earmarked for women but it had neither a prisoner nor a warden. There had been occasions when a single female prisoner was housed in the jail, guarded by men. There was one juvenile convict (drug charge). There was no problem of transporting the under-trials to courts. The condemned prisoners were under 24-hour restraints. Medical facilities were poor. Several prisoners contested the officials' statement that each prisoner was medically examined at the time of admission. There was no woman doctor at the jail. In case a female detainee needed medical attention, she would be sent to the DHQ Hospital. The jail staff said they had no special instructions regarding juvenile detainees.

At Khuzdar, it was said that the Giddani jail was notorious for violence against women detainees. At the time of HRCP visit the murder of a woman in this jail was being hotly discussed in public. Investigations were in progress. There were no women's or children's wards at the district jail.

The jail in Loralai had more detainees (95) than its capacity (75).

The convicts numbered 49 and the rest (46) were under trial. The detainees included seven juveniles and one woman (facing trial under an Hudood Ordinance). The juveniles were not receiving the benefits of the Juvenile Justice System Ordinance. The jail had no doctor. Once a week the jail was visited by a doctor from the district hospital. Some of the under-trials complained of delays in appeal stages. The convicts said they did not have facilities for pursuing studies.

At the Mach Central Jail the HRC team found 991 prisoners as against the capacity for 600 prisoners. All of the prisoners were convicts – 135 on the death row, 28 foreigners, and 818 serving different periods of sentence. Most of the under-18 convicts had been tried on drug-related charges.

Numerous complaints of illegal detention by the police, illegal confinement before securing remand, and torture in custody were heard in Turbat and Tump.

Complaints against the coastguards were a legion. Everywhere they were accused of harassing travellers at pickets set up ostensibly to check drug trafficking and smuggling in other goods. These complaints related to coastguards' high-handedness, lack of respect for human dignity, and extortion (especially from those engaged in smuggling daily utility items/consumer goods to and from Iran). Access to senior officials was difficult.

The people generally complained of a rise in crime. They also complained of lack of protection against criminal elements and the oppression of the tribal elite. The police officials disagreed. For instance, the Turbat DPO claimed the people's sense of security would increase following the recent police success in busting criminal gangs. He admitted the tribal elite wielded considerable influence but its members were called to account if they indulged in high-handedness. According to him the police in Balochistan was 'miskeen' and not like the Punjab police. The people were docile and the police was not aggressive. There had been no death in custody.

Criminal gangs

A most serious instance of gang-power was noticed at Khuzdar. A group of criminal elements had taken over the circuit house where it held court, issued summons in writing, extorted protection money,

and tried to settle disputes through terror tactics. The police, district administration and intelligence agencies were believed to be protecting the group. At least they did little to end its criminal activities, though several complaints had reportedly been made by the victims. It was also alleged that if any member of the gang was arrested he was forcibly taken out of the police station. The group was said to enjoy the backing of sardars and the tribal elite.

In Loralai, the presence of a large body of Afghan refugees (said to be about 20% of the city's population) many of them having acquired Pakistan papers, was said to pose economic and law-and-order problems. It was generally believed that crime and use of illegal weapons had increased after their arrival. The predominantly Pashtun population of Loralai bordered with Baloch-majority districts. The threat of clashes between Lunis (Pakhtuns) and Marris (Baloch) over mining operations was recognised by all, but the authorities had done nothing to resolve their disputes.

Activities of intelligence agencies

Complaints of intelligences agencies' (ISI in particular and also MI) interference in governance and administration were vigorously voiced in Khuzdar. It was alleged that the intelligence agencies were protecting criminal elements involved in kidnapping for ransom and drug trafficking. Another allegation was that the intelligence agencies supported religious parties and promoted their interests.

Two cases in Khuzdar were cited as examples of intelligence agencies' influence over police and their interference with the justice system. One involved the arrest and detention on vague charges of journalist-activist Rashid Azam, and the denial of due process to him. In the other case Khan Mohammad Ghulamani was arrested for snatching a motor-bike from intelligence personnel. He was detained at an intelligence office for four days after which his dead body was found abandoned. It was said that diyat money was quietly paid to the victim's family when the matter became a public issue.

Journalists

At Khuzdar, journalists complained of lack of respect for freedom of expression. The nationalist papers were denied government

advertisements. One proprietor could not find a press to print his daily and had to close it down. The journalists said they were intimidated by tribal sardars as well as the intelligence agencies. The information officials regularly offered press advice. Example: The publications were told to give maximum coverage to the Prime Minister's speech against the nationalist elements. In another instance they were told to give minimum coverage to Khair Bakhsh Marri's statement.

Drug trafficking

Trafficking in drugs was found to be a major issue in the Turbat district. Large quantities of narcotics are believed to be dumped in Turbat and Tump before being transported across the border with Iran. There were widespread complaints of collusion between the drug mafia and the police, Frontier Constabulary, the Anti-Narcotics Force, and the Coastguards. The people were generally fed up with the drug traffickers who operated quite openly but were afraid of retaliation if they complained. It was said that the police and the other concerned agencies leaked out informer's identity to the drug mafia. In some cases drug addicts had pointed out links in the trafficking chain but no clampdown followed. It was strongly alleged that journalists who had taken pictures of drug traffickers' operations and dens were called by the police and warned against taking such pictures. Several journalist in Turbat asserted they had informed the police chief of a drug mafia's den but it was still functioning. They had also told the District Nazim about it. The latter had said he had neither the power nor the resources to deal with drug traffickers. He could only open a rehabilitation centre but was doubtful of its sustainability.

The Turbat district police chief blamed the people for not coming forward to give evidence in drug-related cases. He acknowledged the risks faced by witnesses against the powerful drug barons, but stressed their moral and social responsibility to fight crime. He could accept no responsibility for protecting them.

Drug addiction, even amongst women, appeared to be on the rise. Known cases were limited to those arrested. Several deaths in custody had been reported mostly caused by absence of detoxification facilities. While one or two such facilities were pointed out, there were no public or private (NGO) centres for the rehabilitation of addicts. Several journalists in Turbat asserted they had informed the

authorities of these deficiencies.

Rights of the disadvantaged

Minorities

Mekran seems to have retained its tradition of tolerance. The Hindu and Christian minorities display no visible feelings of insecurity. The Zikris had suffered persecution in the past, largely at the hands of orthodox Sunni clerics who were pursuing political gains through religio-political parties, but they did not feel threatened now. The level of tolerance is attributed to the strength of political groups in the region. However, the minorities do complain of neglect. The Christian community considered domicile a major concern for them. There was no graveyard for Christians in Turbat (80-85 families) and their dead were buried in Muslim graveyards at night under police protection. The Hindu community was targeted in the wake of the Babri mosque's demolition. Compensation was promised but not paid. The temples that were destroyed were however rebuilt and the government made a financial contribution (some money was given). However, though appearing insecure the members of the minority communities were cautious in their interaction with the HRCP team. Some of them voiced protest at what they described as the demeaning attitude of authorities towards them and the disdain with which their pleas were received.

At Khuzdar, the members of the Hindu community complained of problems in getting visas for India and pressed for the opening of the land route through Sindh (Khokhrapar). It was said that there was not a single Hindu in government service in the whole district although they had some doctors / engineers in their community. The community had suffered losses in 1992. One person was killed. Compensation had been promised but not given. The government had given some money for reconstruction. The community did not consider itself targeted though it shared the feeling of insecurity of the rest of the population. Forced conversions were not an issue. The community considered itself part of the Baloch struggle for their rights.

The Christian community at Khuzdar complained of domicile

problems and discrimination in many areas. They were too poor to claim social rights and got only low-paid jobs. When government quarters were repaired their quarters were ignored. They apprehended *qabza* over their graveyard. Their demand for a colony of their own had not been accepted. However, they praised the climate of religious tolerance which had not been affected even by the war in Afghanistan.

The representatives of the 50 odd non-Muslim families in Loralai did not mention any serious problem. They said relations with the majority community were peaceful and amicable. They had their places of worship and managed their affairs in a climate of harmony. In 1992 a Hindu neighbourhood was attacked in the wake of the Babri Mosque demolition. Six persons were killed, about 15 houses were burnt and valuables looted. The local Muslims helped in the recovery of jewellery and money but the government failed to pay the compensation it had promised.

Women

The woman in Turbat appeared to enjoy more freedom than elsewhere in the country, but their social rights seemed restricted as elsewhere. Restrictions on mobility were compounded by deficiencies in the transport system. Forced marriages were not uncommon. Segregation was not a part of the traditional culture but the trend in its favour had become stronger over the recent past due to the growing influence of extremist clerics. One of the consequences of this trend was curtailment of economic opportunities for women.

The oppression of the Sardari system was more pronounced in Khuzdar. Forced marriages and child marriages were reported to be common, education and employment opportunities for women were extremely limited. No woman participated in any of the meetings the HRCP team held in Khuzdar. Registration of marriage was not a practice in Turbat, HRCP was told.

At Khuzdar, too, HRCP was told that segregation of women was a relatively new trend. Women's major concerns were said to be denial of social rights, clerics' opposition to girls' education, child marriages and lack of employment opportunities.

In Loralai, women were invisible in social life.

Workers

The trade unionists in Khuzdar criticised the IRO and complained

of absence of consultation with Baloch unions. The workers were denied rights allowed by law and terms of employment were arbitrarily determined by the employers. Many irregularities in the mining sector were pointed out. The employers were not making their contribution to joint funds and the workers' welfare fund was dormant. Contract labour (not local) was employed and use of bonded labour system was alleged.

Unemployment

At all places visited by the HRC teams, the problems caused by unemployment and lack of employment opportunities were highlighted.

At Turbat and Tump HRC was told that many graduate and matriculate men and women had been seeking employment in vain.

A 70-member association in Khuzdar working for the people's right to work mentioned many problems faced by the jobless. The officials were indifferent to the plight of the unemployed. The Bait-ul-Mal declined them help while it dispensed charity allegedly on lists of bogus claimants. Promises of employment by the military rulers had not been honoured.

Social and cultural rights

Education

For the people of Turbat lack of educational facilities was the most critical denial of their basic rights. 52 villages were said to be without schools. The budget, staff and education facilities at colleges and schools were considered inadequate. Some people complained that although the Federal Education Minister was from their area they had not noticed any significant advance in the education sector. The high school in her village did not have a headmaster. Four other schools too were without headmasters, and one had been recently appointed. The degree college had 3,000 students but inadequate facilities. There was no woman teacher at the degree college. 24 posts of lecturers were vacant at the college for boys. A woman teacher at Tump alleged that teachers and students were exploited by institutions' administration. The high school at Mand had no science teacher. Often, it was said,

posts of teachers were created but not filled.

At Khuzdar, some young men complained that there were doubts about the permanence of the local university and a large number of seats had been given to Quetta (affecting the district quota). Many seats at the university remained unfilled. The Lecturers' Association alleged that college premises were not properly maintained. A degree college for boys and an intermediate college for girls were in a dilapidated condition. There were no residential facilities for lecturers. Public interest in higher education for girls had increased but there was no hostel for them and no facilities for the female staff. An inter-college at Awaran had been set up in a jungle, far away from the town. There were no facilities for lecturers. There was no electricity either.

The government residential college (boys) at Loralai was praised for its standard of teaching but its expenses were considered somewhat higher than people's means. Similar observations were made about a high school and an inter-college for girls.

Health

In Turbat, there was one District Headquarters Hospital for a population of 650,000 people while there were six rural health centres and 52 basic health units, and some health centres had been set up by NGOs. The HRCF team was told there had been no allocation for medicines for three years. The facilities at the hospital were far from satisfactory. Out of the four gynaecologists at the hospital, three were away on training and the fourth was absent from duty till 11 a.m. Nurses and Lady Health Visitors were attending to delivery cases. The women who had travelled from far flung areas felt unhappy and frustrated. Their anxiety level was high. The X-ray unit had no films. However, HIV test facilities were available and doctors took the initiative to raise funds through public donations to run the laboratories.

The public concerns voiced before the HRCF team included: anxiety over the local maternal mortality rate being the highest in the world; absence of LHVs in the rural areas; significant incidence of malaria and communicable diseases and lack of eradication measures; water shortage, impurities in drinking water and unhygienic conditions near wells.

Similar complaints were heard at Khuzdar. The DHQ Hospital

was said to be poorly equipped. There was no gynaecologist and LHV's looked after delivery cases. The staff was non-cooperative. Maternal mortality was high.

Disaster management

At several places HRCP heard complaints that those affected by natural disasters did not receive adequate or timely succour. At Khuzdar, the hardships faced by the drought/famine affectees were specifically stressed. It was said that relief packages were inadequate. The provincial government was urged to provide relief over longer periods.

In Loralai, which depends almost solely on agriculture and fruit / vegetable cultivation, seven years of drought had played havoc with the local economy. A large number of fruit trees had died. Many families were forced to abandon their farms and homes. The provincial government built a few dams but these were found inadequate. The relief promised by the federal government did not fully materialise.

Archaeological sites and cultural relics:

There was no say for the local community in the preservation of such sites. Cultural relics from Shahi Jumbh, Balinagar and Dasht had been expropriated by unauthorised people.

Concerns in Gwadar

The Gwadar mega-development project was one of the most significant causes of public agitation in Balochistan in the Autumn of 2003. The main grounds of criticism that the HRCP mission heard were: exclusion of the people and their representatives from the planning and execution of the project, irregularities in settlement of land titles, land-grabbing by outsiders, neglect of the traditional interests of the fishing community, indifference to the rights of the people threatened with displacement, inadequate representation of the local people in the new work-force, and the local community's fears of being swamped by settlers from other parts of the country. Those who rejected this criticism argued that some price had, after all, to be paid for development. They further accused the critics of being opposed to development. The latter assertion was vigorously repudiated by all the people HRCP met.

While much of what has been said about Turbat, Khuzdar, and Loralai in the earlier part of this report applies to Gwadar too, the port city presented quite a few problems peculiar to it. Hence, HRCP has decided to add a separate chapter on the Gwadar issues.

Hafiz Husain Ahmad, MNA and an important MMA leader, said everybody in Balochistan was interested in the development of Pakistan and Balochistan. Thus, no-one could take exception to development plans for Gwadar. However, in the past Gwadar had attracted speculators and exploiters. The way lands were grabbed and settlements planned aroused serious misgivings. Many people had

bought land for peanuts and were now selling it at the price of gold. MMA had therefore directed the Local Government Minister to cancel the allotment of plots, especially those falling under the Singhar scheme. There were also fears that the local population would be turned into a minority. The Balochistan Governor was replaced because he had opposed the grabbing of Gwadar resources. The MMA wanted that primacy be attached to the interests of the people of Gwadar and the Mekran coast just as it wanted the interest of the Chaghi people protected under the Saindak project. As a matter of principle, all mega-projects in Balochistan must be under the control of Balochistan's representatives.

Hafiz Husain Ahmad also emphasised the need for protecting the rights of Gwadar's fisher-folk. They had been struggling against heavy odds for a long time and it would be wrong to ignore their interests. They should be provided with modern fishing equipment. They needed modern boats so that they could compete with foreign entrepreneurs who used modern trawlers. Greater attention needed to be given to prawn export. The MMA leader pointed out that the Gwadar project also touched on the issue of provincial autonomy.

Mr. Abdur Rahim Zafar, a businessman, told the HRCP team that the Chinese construction company working on the Gwadar port had recruited 400 workers and out of them only 30 or so belonged to the local community. The settlement authorities had committed gross irregularities in determining land titles. The Gwadar Master Plan covered a 12-kilometer strip from the port to the airport but it was not clear as to how the land was to be secured. The land prices had sky-rocketed. When the Singhar scheme was launched in 1990 the price of a 500-yard plot was Rs. 500 but it soared to Rs. 2,500,000 and had only come down to Rs. 1,500,000 after the start of a probe by the provincial government.

At a meeting of citizens at the Rural Community Centre, several participants told the HRCP team of their concerns over the disposal of land. **Mr Nasir Baloch** alleged that the Settlement Department had recorded land titles under *benami* system. A large number of new landowners did not belong to Gwadar. They included politicians, bureaucrats and businessmen from other parts of the country. The people of Gwadar had protested and called upon the government to

publish the list of landowners. But this had not been done.

Mr Mujibur Rahman, Advocate, said he was appearing in three cases in which local people had sought reversal of fraudulent entries of their lands in other people's names. The staff of the Additional Sessions Judge had arrived in Gwadar but no building for his court was available. As a result the litigants had to go to Turbat, 200 kilometers away. He said that as the settlement record was inaccessible to the people, a large number of people did not know that their lands had been transferred to other people (by officials who took bribes).

The HRCP team called upon the Gwadar EDO (Revenue), **Mr Abdul Hafeez Hote** to ascertain his views on complaints of irregularities in land titles. He admitted that he had received such complaints but he could do nothing in this matter as the Settlement Department had not yet completed its survey. Nor had he received the relevant record despite repeated requests. The EDO (R) also made the following points:

- ♦ The Settlement Department had started land survey to determine land titles in 1983. The work had not yet been completed.
- ♦ The chairman of the Chief Minister's Inspection Team had visited Gwadar to probe complaints of irregularities in land record.
- ♦ The Gwadar Port Authority had asked him to secure another 59 acres of land and the Mulla Bund settlement was threatened. According to him, the Mulla Bund ward covered 288 acres of land and the area under houses was 65 acres. The transfer of Mulla Bund land to the Port Authority would affect 35 families. Under the Revenue Act he had issued a notice to the families concerned on September 29, 2003, asking them to file objections to the transfer of the land to the Port Authority within 30 days but not a single objection had so far been received. He had also requested the District Nazim to get the notice delivered to the affected families.

Mr. Iqbal Nadeem, the Gwadar DCO, was of the view that the port project would usher in a period of progress and prosperity in Gwadar. The fears and reservations of the nationalist elements had no basis in fact and these elements were raising issues for selfish political reasons. The settlement complaints were being probed by an inquiry committee set up by the provincial government. He had received no complaints about the recruitment of non-local hands by the Port

Authority or the harassment of fisher-folk by the Navy personnel.

Mr. Babu Gulab, the District Nazim, asserted that complaints of irregularities in the land settlement record were true and he himself had raised the matter with the Chief Secretary, who had indeed ordered an inquiry. The losers included the government and the people both. He also made the following points:

- ◆ As regards the Mulla Bund affectees, he had proposed to the government compensation at the rate of Rs. 270 per sq ft and allotment of alternative land near the coast (so that they could continue their fishing operations). When asked whether the affected families knew of the plans/ notices for their eviction and shifting, he pleaded ignorance.

- ◆ When asked to give his views about the establishment of the Gwadar Port Authority, he said he knew nothing about it.

- ◆ As regards the recruitment of labour, he said in the beginning non-locals formed a majority of the labour force but now a fair number of locals had been employed. He regretted that the wages offered by the construction company were extremely low.

- ◆ The District Nazim said it was true that the schools did not have science teachers in an adequate number. He was keen on removing this deficiency. However, people were not cooperating. An NGO wanted to set up three schools in Gwadar but nobody was prepared to give land for these schools.

Tehsildar's office: The HRCP team visited (October 21) the office of the Tehsildar, Settlement. **Patwari Ghulam Husain** told the team that nobody had made any complaint to him about irregular transfer of land during the three months that he had been at his post. He explained to the team that land title was established on the basis of possession. The patwari concerned measured the land and submitted a report to the Tehsildar in the light of statements by witnesses on the site.

[A landowner outside the office told the team that a patwari charged at least Rs 5,000 for agreeing to survey and measure the land. He alleged that the patwaris posted in the past had collected hundreds of thousand rupees for preparing bogus land record.]

Mr. Noor Ahmad, Settlement Naib-Tehsildar, Gwadar, told the team that his department was performing its duties in a transparent

manner but difficulties arose when the people did not cooperate with it. The settlement department attracted public anger only after the start of the port project. He said the revenue department had repeatedly been requested to take over the settlement record but they had declined. Since his office had no security guard (chowkidar) he requested the DCO and the DPO for security whereupon the latter shifted the record to the police station. This arrangement created problems for him and the public in accessing the record. Further, he said, the patwari was not allowed any TA/DA for land survey / measurement and the expenses on his travel, etc., had to be borne by the applicant (who wanted the land to be measured). The office was not allowed any stationery fund. Thus, those seeking help from the officials had to pay for stationery also. Besides, the government stopped making payments (at Rs 1,000 per month) to the person who accompanied the patwari and actually measured land, and his wages too had to be paid by the applicant. The land record was not open to public. Permission had to be sought from the settlement officer who had his office in Turbat.

One of the factors contributing to confusion in regard to land titles, the Naib Tehsildar said, was that some Gwadar citizens had dual nationality (Pakistan and Oman) and sometimes Omani documents were produced to claim ownership of land.

All disputed matters had to be referred to the EDO (R). The higher forums were the Senior Member of the Board of Revenue and the Qazi court. However, during his 18 months' tenure no complaint regarding title deeds had been submitted to him.

A person, **Ramzan Hasan** met the team on October 21 and told this story. The settlement office entered 200 acres of his land in the name of a landlord, Seth Rajab Shehnoori. However, the latter gave him in writing that the land belonged to him (Ramzan Hasan). When he approached the settlement office for entering his name as the landowner, he was told no mutation was possible in view of the ban on sale of land. When he pointed out that his request did not involve sale or purchase of land, he was told to wait. Subsequently, Seth Rajab Shehnoori wanted to buy his land and he refused. He said he was in litigation with another person, Saeed Mohammed Bheel, whose name had been entered as the owner of a tract of land that actually belonged to him. He said a majority of the people in Gwadar were illiterate and they did not even know that their property had been

transferred to other people.

Fisheries:

A number of people talked to the HRCP team about the problems faced by the fishing community.

Mr. Imam Bakhsh Imam, a former administrator of the Gwadar municipality, was of the view that due to the poor planning of the port small fishing boats would not be able to enter deep waters. The smaller fishermen might face starvation.

Mr. Khuda Bakhsh, Principal of the Model High School, said that at the port site there was an underwater range of rocks where fish took refuge in a large number. This range was now being split up. As a result, fishing near the coast would become impossible and the repairing of small boats would become difficult. Once the port was commissioned only fishing by big trawlers would be possible. He suggested the construction of a new wharf for fishermen.

Mr. Abdul Qadir, a political activist, complained of fishermen's harassment. The fishermen were asked as to how long they would stay in deep waters and if somebody came back earlier than he had said he was harassed by the coastguards. According to him the Navy had been given 25,000 acres of land and another 40,000 acres had been given to various security agencies and this seriously created doubts about development.

The HRCP team visited the Mulla Bund settlement, adjacent to the port, which falls within the port installation plan. One of the residents, **Mr. Abdul Razzaq Dilshad**, said the people of the village were to be shifted from their homes but no alternative land had been earmarked. He said the village folk had set up a 12-member committee to negotiate with the authorities for the acceptance of their resettlement/ compensation plans.

The team also visited the fish harbour, opposite the port and talked to several fishermen.

Mr. Ali Mohammad said he was happy about the port project as it would lead to prosperity. However, he stressed the need for expansion of the fish harbour.

Mr. Noor-ul-Haq welcomed the port project but wanted the government to help the fishermen to acquire big trawlers so that they

could survive. He said the construction of the port was not the fishermen's problem. What was a matter of concern to them was that there were only two units for the cleaning and preservation of the fish and they arbitrarily fixed the rates for its purchase. He pleaded for fish plants in the public sector and for fixing floor prices for fish.

Mr. Ali Akbar also welcomed the port project. However, he was not happy with the Naval personnel's attitude towards the fishermen.

Mr. Abbas said the port project was a positive development but it was also necessary to attend to the problems of the fish harbour.

The port project

For an overview of the Gwadar Port Project, the HRCP team talked to **Captain Bashir**, Deputy Director (Electricity), who was also looking after other affairs of the project. The project was launched on March 23, 2002. The construction work was scheduled to be completed in 36 months, that is, Phase I was due to be completed by March 2005. The project cost was estimated at Rs. 948 million. Captain Bashir rejected the view that local people had not been recruited to the labour force. 265 workers out of a total of the 412 Pakistanis employed on the project belonged to Gwadar, 150 of them to Gwadar city itself. All recruitments were done through the District Nazim. At the start of the project a large number of local workers had been engaged but many of them – between 600 and 700 – left for Karachi after acquiring skills and the contractors, who were Baloch, had to look for workers from outside the local area. A project to train local young men in port works was going on. Under the employment policy for the port, all employees in scales 1 to 15 would be required to have Balochistan domicile. Posts in scales 15 and above would be filled on the basis of provincial quotas. Besides its contribution to commerce, the port also had high defence importance. However, no land had yet been allocated for the Gwadar cantonment. In any case the cantonment had to be at a distance of 110 miles from the port. After the completion of Phase I the port would be able to receive ships of upto 50 tonnes weight and after the completion of Phase II its capacity would go upto ships of 250,000 tonnes. Captain Bashir conceded irregularities in land transactions and confirmed that about 100,000 acres of land had been sold about six times, and of this 35,000 acres belonged to the state. However, only 400 hectares were needed for port installations. 200

hectares had been reclaimed from the sea, 175 hectares of land was available with the government, and only 25 hectares were to be acquired from the public

An administrator, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, told the team that public complaints regarding irregularities committed by the land settlement department were correct. Not only the people had been wronged, the government too had suffered. According to him about 50% of the transactions / mutations were questionable. As for law and order, Gwadar was the most peaceful district in Balochistan. There had been only one murder in 10 years and atrocities against women were insignificant. However, the incidence of crime might rise once the port was completed. The local administration had requested the government to set up six new police stations in Gwadar and provide 108 police officials and 15 vehicles. He also referred to the division of law and order responsibilities between the police (under the DPO), that controlled the A area (from 5 to 15 kilometres long) while the Levies controlled the B-Area (about 95% of Balochistan).

Findings and Recommendations on Gwadar

Maybe, a deeply shared culture of a deprived community adds an extra dimension to their grievances but no independent observer can deny that their concerns are genuine and rooted in public experience.

The complaint that the local and the provincial authorities were not associated with the planning and execution of the Gwadar Port Project needs to be addressed even at this stage, by allowing them due say in all matters of concern to them. They need to be consulted in preparation of the new fish harbour and Gwadar master plan.

After the completion of the project the population of Greater Gwadar is estimated to rise to two million (from the present 16,000).

A population explosion of this size will alter the demographic map of an area larger than the port city. A serious effort needs to be made to examine the socio-economic the political implications of this development and safeguards for the local community's interests devised in consultation with its representatives.

The administration is pathetically inadequate. If the revenue record is kept at a police station and not only ordinary applicants but the revenue staff has difficulty in accessing it, and one has to travel 200

kilometers to access a judicial forum, the plight of the people can easily be imagined. There is urgent need to set up an administrative machinery capable of settling all matters on the spot.

The land settlement issue must be addressed at an appropriately high level and matters such as dual nationality expeditiously resolved.

Displacement of the people from their traditional settlements is a serious matter and they cannot be made to pay for their ignorance, poverty and lack of power. They must be compensated fairly and adequately.

The mission plan

Team 1: Gwadar – October 19-21, 2003

Members: HRCP Council members Uzma Noorani, Kamran Arif and Ronald d'Souza. Mr Akhtar Baloch, Sindh Coordinator of core-groups. Local coordinator: Mr. Ali Baloch

Meetings: Hafiz Husain Ahmad MNA; District Nazim Babu Gulab; the DCO, the EDO (R); the Deputy Director (Electricity) Gwadar Port; Revenue and Settlement officials; Mr. Imran Bakhsh, former Municipal administrator; Mr. Khuda Bukhsh (principal of a school); and members of the fishing community.

Visits: Gwadar Port; Fish harbour; Mulla Bund; Revenue offices

Team 2: Turbat and Tump, October 19-21, 2003

Members: HRCP Secretary-general Hina Jilani; Council member Shahtaj Qizilbash; Mr. Husain Naqi, National Coordinator, Core-groups. Local coordinator: Prof. Ghani Parwaz

Meetings: District Nazim Aslam Bizenjo; the Naib Nazim; the DCO; the DPO; other local government members and officials. The District and Sessions Judge, Turbat-Panjoor – Gwadar. The President and members of the District Bar Association; political workers; NGO activists; journalists; students organisation, HRCP core-group members.

Visits: District Hospital, Turbat; District Jail, Turbat; Government

Degree Colleges; private schools.

Team 3: Khuzdar October 23-24, 2003

Members: HRCP Secretary-General Hina Jilani; Council members Kamran Arif and Joseph Francis. Local coordinator: Mr. Naeem Sabir.

Team 4. Loralai October 23, 2003

Members: HRCP Council members Syed Iqbal Haider, Rochi Ram, Jam Saqi, Peter Jacob, and M. Asif Khan. Mr. Zaman, Coordinator, Complaint Cell.

Meetings: District Nazim; Bori Tehsil Nazim; Members of the district bar association; District jail staff, members of the minority community.

Visits: The jail, the district bar.

Team 5. Quetta October 23-24, 2003

Members: HRCP vice-chairperson Zahoor Ahmad Shahwani; Council members Tahir Mohammad Khan, Zohra Sajjad Zaidi, Farah Deebe and Jam Saqi, and Director I. A. Rehman.

Meetings: The Chief Justice of the Balochistan High Court; members of the Bar Council and the Bar Association; political workers.

Visits: The High Court; the Machh Central Jail.

HRCP Balochistan mission: Preliminary statement

(Issued at Quetta on October 26, 2003)

While the human rights situation is not satisfactory in any part of Pakistan, the problems being faced by the people of Balochistan can be likened to the plight of tailenders in the canal system.

Increased concerns at denial of provincial rights and growing military encroachment upon civil administration, exclusion of people from matters affecting their basic rights, unsatisfactory functioning of subordinate courts and the various branches of administration, evidence of police collusion with criminal elements and the drug mafia's accession to strength figure prominently in the findings of HRCP's mission to Balochistan.

Responding to the persistently expressed anxieties of the Balochistan population, HRCP organized a fact-finding mission. Teams comprising HRCP office-bearers and council members and supported by activists held inquiries and met with local representatives at Gwadar, Turbat, Khuzdar, Loralai and Quetta. While a detailed report based on the mission's observations will be ready after some time, HRCP deems it necessary to release a preliminary report.

At all places visited by the fact-finding teams, serious complaints about continued denial of provincial autonomy were received. The people were quite agitated about their exclusion from decision-making at both federal and provincial levels and resistance to the LFO was

vigorously expressed. Anxiety at erosion of rule of law, declining faith in the judicial system and procedure and difficulties in access to justice was quite pronounced. There was considerable dissatisfaction with the multi-discipline judicial system, especially with the way the Qazi courts functioned.

A matter of serious concern to the people is the Gwadar mega-project. The idea of Gwadar development is meaningless without improvement in quality of life of the local people. The local community has apparently not been taken into confidence in the port city's master plan and is acutely unhappy at the authorities' failure to address its apprehensions, especially those related to the displacement of the fisher-folk and disruption of their economic life. There is urgent need to end the exclusion of the people from decision-making and strike a rational balance between the demands of development and the indigenous community's right to their land and traditional economic activities. The mission is of the view that obduracy in ignoring the genuine demands and grievances of the people will accentuate their alienation from the state and sharpen tensions in the society. It is also necessary to take note of the allegations of massive irregularities in land settlement operations and allotment practices as well as the local community's need for assistance in skill development in various aspects of Gwadar port development, proper storage facilities and protection against price manipulation.

The fact-finding teams noted the following as some of the principal concerns of the people in Balochistan:

1. Apart from their complaints of exclusion from decision-making and interference with their rights on their resources, local communities are suffering from lack of employment opportunities and denial of jobs, even as unskilled labour. The denial of the right to livelihood is often mentioned.
2. There is widespread anxiety at the plans to establish new cantonments. Besides, grievances stemming from the military's increasing involvement with all aspects of civilian life, including the working of the police and local bodies, are on the rise. The intelligence agencies are regularly blamed for interference with the administration and citizen's rights to security and personal freedoms.
3. At several places, such as Turbat, police collusion with criminal

elements, especially the drug mafia, is a major problem. There are widespread complaints of the involvement of the Frontier Constabulary, the Coastguards and ANF with drug barons. The people are afraid of complaining, as the fear of drug traffickers' retaliation is strong.

4. Considerable evidence has been presented about the strengthening of the sardari system with extremely deleterious effects on the system of justice, the functioning of the local bodies, and the rights of women, minorities and the socially underprivileged.
5. The institutions supposed to look after the people's needs in the areas of education and health are inadequate in number and suffer from lack of both human and material resources. The disadvantaged are deprived of even the scanty facilities the elite is allowed to enjoy.
6. While at some places, the traditional tolerance for differences of belief has survived, and a decline in the anti-Zikri campaign is a welcome development, quite a few incidents reveal unwelcome tendencies towards discrimination against the minority communities and sects. The acts of violence against the minorities have declined but they appear afraid of articulating their concerns.
7. The conditions of detention at prisons are quite below the minimum acceptable standards. The worst sufferers are juveniles and women.

HRCP plans to present specific recommendations on ways to meet the problems and human rights concerns in its detailed report, but the need to end the Balochistan population's exclusion from matters affecting its collective interests and individual freedoms is already manifest.