

Destabilizing Pakistan: Bookending Washington's China Policy

By [Tony Cartalucci](#)

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Much is being said of US activities aimed at China. Recent protests in Hong Kong together with a US-led propaganda campaign aimed at Beijing's attempts to quell a growing terrorist threat in Xinjiang are aimed at pressuring the nation to fall back into line within Washington's enduring unipolar international order.

The latter of these two campaigns in particular – claims of Chinese authoritarianism as Beijing attempts to neutralize US-backed separatists and terrorists in Xinjiang – has also been spun as China “targeting Muslims.”

This ignores the fact that one of China's closest and oldest allies in Eurasia is Pakistan – a Muslim-majority nation. It also ignores the fact that in Pakistan, the US is playing the same game aimed at cultivating violent extremism, separatism, violence, division, and even the dissolution of Pakistan's current borders.

Balochistan - the other Xinjiang

While all the focus has been directed by the Western media on Xinjiang and a supposed “anti-Muslim crackdown” in the region, Pakistan faces the same problem in its southwestern province of Balochistan. In Pakistan – attempts by the government to root out violent separatists surely is not “anti-Muslim.”

In Balochistan, the US agencies involved in fanning the flames of separatism and violence instead portray Islamabad and the Pakistani military's efforts to restore order as simply trampling “human rights.”

US interference in Balochistan is just as extensive as it is in China's Xinjiang.

Despite the recent move by Washington to list the armed Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) as a terrorist organization – Islamabad has long accused Washington of funding and arming it along with segments of the Indian government aligned with US interests.

The fact that otherwise ignored activities by Balochistan separatists are covered by certain Indian newspapers even as recently as this year seems to give credence to these accusations. NDTV's article, “[Pro-Balochistan Slogans Raised During Imran Khan's Address In US](#),” and India Today's article, “[16 EU Members of Parliament write letter to Trump to intervene in Balochistan](#),” are just two such examples.

US support is much easier to track down.

US-based Stanford University's Mapping Militant Organizations project admits that the BLA receives much of its financial aid from the Balochi diaspora. The project's [profile on the Balochistan Liberation Army](#) notes:

Due to high community support for autonomy and independence from people of the Balochistan, many analysts suspect that a large amount of the BLA's income and weapons supply come from donations from the Balochi people. Balochi leaders have also claimed that financial contributions from the Balochi diaspora make it possible to procure arms and ammunition through the black market.

Thus, even if the US is not directly arming and funding the BLA, it is openly supporting pro-separatists among the Balochi diaspora who even Stanford University experts admit are - in turn - funding the BLA's terrorism.

The US move to designate the BLA as a foreign terrorist organization holds little meaning. The BLA will find itself beside organizations like Jabhat Al Nusra in Syria which is all but openly funded and armed by the United States and a large cross-section of Washington's closest European and Arab allies.

Arming militants is only half of the overall strategy seeking to destabilize Pakistan. Subverting national institutions and replacing them with those interlocking with US special interests is the other half.

US NED Working Hard in - and Against - Pakistan

The US State Department-funded [National Endowment for Democracy \(NED\)](#) and its various subsidiaries are busy at work in Pakistan's Baluchistan province as well as China's Xinjiang.

[NED has been directly funding](#) and supporting the work of the "Balochistan Institute for Development" (BIFD) [which claims to be](#):

"...the leading resource on democracy, development and human rights in Balochistan, Pakistan."

In addition to organizing the annual NED-BFID "[Workshop on Media, Democracy & Human Rights](#)" BFID reports that USAID had provided funding for a "*media-center*" for the Baluchistan Assembly to "*provide better facilities to reporters who cover the proceedings of the Balochistan Assembly.*" It can be assumed that BFID meant reporters are "*trained*" at NED-BFID workshops and at its USAID-funded center.

There is also [Voice of Balochistan](#) whose every top-story is US-funded propaganda, including [op-eds by US representatives promoting Balochi separatism](#), foundation-funded Reporters Without Borders, Soros-funded Human Rights Watch, and a direct message from the US State Department.

Like other US State Department funded propaganda outfits around the world - [such as Thailand's Prachatai](#) - funding is generally obfuscated in order to main "*credibility*" even when the front's constant torrent of obvious propaganda more than exposes the game.

The “Free Baluchistan” movement is a US and London-based organizations. The “[Baloch Society of North America](#)” serves as a useful aggregate and bellwether regarding US meddling in Pakistan’s Balochistan province. The group’s founder, [Dr. Wahid Baloch](#), openly admits he has met with US politicians in regards to Balochistan independence. This includes Neo-Conservative corporate-lobbyist and National Endowment for Democracy board member, [Zalmay Khalilzad](#).

Dr. Wahid Baloch [considers Balochistan province “occupied”](#) by both the Iranian and Pakistani governments – he and his movement’s humanitarian hand-wringing gives Washington the perfect pretext to create an armed conflagration against either Iran or Pakistan, or both, as planned in detail by various US policy think-tanks.

There is also the [Baloch Students Organisation-Azad](#), or BSO. While it maintains a presence in Pakistan, it has coordinators based in London. London-based BSO members include “*information secretaries*” that propagate their message via social media, just as US and British-funded youth organizations did during the West’s operations against other targeted nations during the [US-engineered “Arab Spring”](#) in 2011.

And just as US-funded agitators in China’s Xinjiang region coordinate their activities with other US-backed groups across the rest of China – such as in Hong Kong and Tibet – other US NED-funded fronts in Pakistan also contribute to a wider campaign of dividing and undermining Pakistan. The US State Department funds Voice of America Deewa focused on Pakistan’s Pashtuns who inhabit Pakistan’s northwest region along its border with Afghanistan.

Despite VOA Deewa’s supposed area of focus, it is actually based in Washington DC. While many of the organizations it provides support for do not admit their US funding, organizations like “AdvoPak” are regularly [promoted by VOA Deewa](#). US NED’s online publication, “Democracy Digest,” also promotes, interviews, and defends groups who appear to be funded by Washington and undoubtedly serve US interests in Pakistan.

This includes the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM) which was featured by the Digest earlier this year in an article titled, “[Pakistan’s military targets protest movement, stifles dissent.](#)” While PTM doesn’t disclose its funding, it is regularly accused of receiving support from and working for both India and the US. The Democracy Digest article featured [a video interview](#) with a PTM member – Gulalai Ismail – who is in fact [an NED Fellow](#). There is also NED’s “[Tribute to Gulalai Ismail at the 2013 Democracy Award.](#)” And all of this is just scratching the surface of US meddling in Pakistan’s internal politics and of organizations committed to creating synergies with US-backed separatists in Balochistan.

What Does Pakistan’s Balochistan and China’s Xinjiang Have in Common?

Balochistan and Xinjiang both appear to be suffering from separatist movements, terrorism, and political destabilization. The common factor is clearly US backing behind both separatist movements – but what is the common denominator that has attracted US attention in the first place? Both Xinjiang and Balochistan are settings for massive Chinese-led infrastructure and trade initiatives. Western publications [like the Business Insider](#) note the importance Xinjiang holds in terms of China’s One Belt, One Road (OBOR) initiative.

Many of the routes that lead out of China, across Central Asia, and eventually into the Middle East and Western Europe pass through Xinjiang. US attempts to destabilize the

region in turn directly impact the viability of Beijing's OBOR initiative and the economic wealth and influence it stands to grant Beijing.

Likewise, a significant leg of the OBOR initiative extends from China and across Pakistan from north to south, through Balochistan until reaching Gwadar Port. Thus, by destabilizing Balochistan, this essential corridor's full potential is inhibited.

This is a truth US special interests and the media interests they own will never admit to. This is why - instead - diverse tales of China's "anti-Muslim" crackdown and Pakistan's "distain for human rights" in Balochistan are used to sell two different US-backed conflicts fuelled for a singular agenda - impeding China's rise and that of its allies - including Pakistan.

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Tony Cartalucci is a Bangkok-based geopolitical researcher and writer, especially for the online magazine "[New Eastern Outlook](#)" where this article was originally published. He is a frequent contributor to *Global Research*.

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