

PAK-AFGHAN BORDERLAND INTERACTION: ALONE TOGETHER

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Abstract

Balochistan at forefront covers 1468 kilometers long border with Afghanistan across which the two leading ethnic groups: Baloch and Pathan dwell and interact. Balochistan neighbors four provinces of Afghanistan: Helmand, Kandahar, Nimroz and Zabul. The borderland interactions are driven by socio-cultural, economic, commercial (legal/illegal) and narcotic factors. The interaction includes day to day petty activities by tribesmen to support bread and butter for families in non-irrigated far-flung areas of both countries. The border is still a soft one with being interdependent and integrated. The tribes across are dependent and needful on one another's support.

Keywords: Borderland, Interaction, Socio-cultural, Interdependent, Ethnicity, Nation State.

Introduction

Borders are of different kinds. They emerged with rise of civilizations with a variety of reasons, either as a superficial contact or intimate relations, to unite or divide with their existence as barriers to movement can simultaneously create reasons to cross them.¹ Borders stand irrespective of geographical, ethnic and zonal considerations and differ in their ways of life. Nevertheless, due to cross-border interaction and across relationship, borderlands are special and unique areas. With the fall of empires into nation-states, borders and across interactions expanded: to refugee, to work, to trade, to migrate or then to travel.

Balochistan being the largest province of Pakistan, parts Afghanistan with a 1640 km long border. Serving as a regular international traffic road link for trade and transaction to Pakistani borders town (largely to Chaman), it can be considered as an inter-reliant and coexistent border² sharing cross-border interface between the two sides. Interaction depends on geographical, sociocultural, political and economic aspects from both sides. This paper is a humble effort to explain the borderland interaction between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The main theme of this paper is that Pak-Afghan borderland is

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mutually dependent having adjunctive boundaries along with uniformity in sociocultural, ethnic and economic perspective. This paper, which is of qualitative nature, highlights the major indices of borderland transaction i.e. sociocultural, politico-economic, smuggling, human trafficking under the theoretical framework of leading literature on borders and their inhabitants. It also touches upon the factors which, since 9/11 and the ongoing war on terrorism over the years, have changed the soft nature of the border.

Kinds of Borders

Borders are broadly divided into four kinds:³

- Coexistent
- Interdependent
- Integrated, and
- Alienated border

A coexistent border can be defined as the one with regular interaction across with both countries enjoying friendly or working relations. Both countries perceive that the cross-border interaction beneficial to their national interests. Iran and Turkey happened to be a coexistent border between Central Asian Republics. A soft border can be referred as the loose, coexistent border which people can cross with or without visa and other formal requirements. Crossway of the Durand Line, Pak-Afghan Border sets an example of soft border. When strict rules and regulations grow for the verification process of passports/identity cards, the nature of soft border changes into non-soft but can still be under coexistent category. The strained relations between the two states and military threats can change the nature of the border from a coexistent to an alienated border.

The interdependent border is experienced by regular tourists' flow, trade and mutual border transaction. Tourists with visa documents or with valid passport from any of the country can move and permitted to towns for a specified time period. The US-Mexico border is an example where people having US visa or US passport can cross the border and have access to the immediate town. Turkey-Bulgaria, and Turkey-Greece fall in this category of borders. There is not much difference between two borders: mutually dependent and coexistent.

The integrated border can be described as a border, where more facilitated and regularized interactions occur with visa waiver, better economic

mobility and tourist transaction between two countries. Many European countries in the European Union system, some of them even before, share combined borders under the Schengen visa arrangements. Regional alliances for trade, political issues and sociocultural framework lead to integrated borders. Regional cooperation for business activities, social interaction and many political affairs can be performed among joint borders. The principles of globalized society demand more interdependent and adjunctive borders.

An alienated border is marked with lack of trade and mobility of masses across. It is deemed that road and rail links and entry points can be properly ensured for security on both sides with armed forces. Borderlands with Israel and Middle East countries are considered as alienated borders. The Pak-India border in Kashmir is of similar kind. People residing across borders are aloof and separated and such borders restrict international tourism. Oscar J. Martinez mentioned it as "the least desirable" which is largely due to border dispute or strained tension between the two neighbors due to "warfare, political disputes, intense nationalism, ideological animosity, religious enmity, cultural dissimilarity and ethnic rivalry".⁴ Such alienated borders generate isolation, frustration and ignorance among masses inhabiting it, which can eventually provoke terrorism and militancy.

The Pak-Afghan border can be defined as a soft one. It is coexistent in the sense that it is open for formal and informal transaction throughout the year with friendly relations between the two countries. It can be called interdependent because it regulates tourism, trade and border transaction in mutual coherence. Tourists with valid visa from any of the country are permitted to cross it. Tourism was and is a meaningful source of income for the locals from the transit tourists.

Balochistan: History and Demography

Balochistan is the largest province (area-wise) by constituting 347,000 sq. km or 44% of the total area of Pakistan. In terms of population, it is the smallest but with the highest growth rate. The population of the province in 2016 is tentatively estimated around 17 million compared to only four million in 1981; almost quadrupled. The demographic density is 15 persons per sq. km. The 83 percent of its population is spread in non-urban areas. The Revolution of Afghanistan in 1978, which led to a prolonged Mujahedeen resistance, civil war and events following the 9/11, resulted in the huge influx of Afghan refugees -

now a permanent abode.⁵ It is evident that the majority of Afghan immigrants purchased assets and pursued national ID entitlement to become permanent residents of the province. The refugees constitute the largest chunk of the overall population (Pashtun, Baloch, Brauhi-settlers and Hazara). The number of Hazara and Pashtun have dramatically exceeded after 1981 due to massive migration. The immigrants include Uzbek and Tajik, predominantly of Shia sect.⁶

Interaction across the Border

Borders are created by men and circumstances being the ultimate result of the “Divide and Rule” policy of the imperialist powers between the 17th to 20th centuries. The Durand Line or Pak-Afghan Border is one of them. This Line was drawn as a result of the agreement made on 17th November 1893 between the British Indian Government and the ruler of Afghanistan, Abdur Rehman Khan. King Abdur Rehman being a strong and sovereign ruler would never have allowed cession of his area, had he not been under pressure for pursuit of British help due to internal conspiracies. Sir Mortimer Durand, the then Secretary of State for India, divided the work of boundary demarcation into different boundaries commissions. The sizeable portion of the boundary between Balochistan and Afghanistan was assigned to Capt McMohan, a trusted civil servant of Mr. Durand. That is the reason, it has also been referred as “McMohan Line.” McMohan headed the Boundary Commission formed for the demarcation of a part of the Durand Line between 1893 to 1895 along with Gul Mohammad Khan, the appointee of King Abdur Rehman. After 1947, the Line emerged as a permanent border between the two countries with Afghanistan having its reservation of claiming it as a disputed border. President Karzai called its Eastern border (Western for Pakistan) as the “Line of hate”.⁷

The border on Pakistan side travels from Domandi near the Gomal Pass/River in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to Chaman in “irregular and intended” Southwest direction.⁸ From Chaman it turns towards South and ends up at Rabat near Malik KohSiah. It is a border triangle, where the borders of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran meet. McMohan worked on the larger part of the demarcation between Chagai and Malik KohSiah, known as McMohan Line - part of the Durand Line. The total length of the Durand Line is 2560 kilometers. The length between Balochistan and Afghanistan is 1468 km. It touches the Goldsmid Line or Pak-Iran border near Malik KohSiah, which stretches from KohSiah to Arabia Sea with the total length of 909 km.⁹

Ethno-lingual & Demographic Division of Borderland

The 1268-km borderland from Domandi to Malik KohSiah is predominantly inhabited by the two ethnic groups: Pashtun and Baloch. They fall largely in seven border districts of Dalbandin, Chagai, Noski, Killa Abdullah, Pishin, Killa Saifullah, and Zhob. The chunk of the area of Quetta and Sherani districts touches borders.

On ethnic grounds, the line can be divided into two zones. First zone is 670 kilometers long starting from Domandi to Sarlat near Chagai and dominated by Pushto speaking population. The remaining 598 kilometers area, starting from Chagai to Malik Koh Siah, is predominantly occupied by Baloch population with Balochi as a largely spoken language.

According to Ferraro, the ability to develop and use a communication medium to set it as a symbolic aspect is a trait of humans. As stated by him, language is a medium through which cultural heritage is passed into generations.¹⁰ Samuel P. Huntington argues that the prominent aspects of a culture are language, civilization and its religion.¹¹ Similarly, languages play an important role in the social and cultural assimilation of border people. Brauhi is also spoken on the Pakistani side but the use of Brauhi on the Afghan side is nominal. The use of Dari (a version of Persian language, which is common lingua franca) is more often in Baloch borderland than Pashtun.

The leading Pashtun borderers are Achakzai and Kakar, divided into a number of sub-tribes or independent small tribes. They are Suliemankhel, Mandokhel, Noorzai, Syed, Kakozei, Jalazai, Mardanzai, Jalazai, and Dawa tribes. Among Baloch tribes are Musazai, Notezai, Mamdani, Yar Mohammad Zai, Mohammad Hasni, Sherzai, and Sasoli. Pashtuns are in numerical superiority. The exact population ratio of the borderland is not existing; however, Pashtuns are in numerical superiority. It is largely due to the fact that the border cities and towns, where Pashtun population lives, are more densely populated than Baloch areas. Pashtuns constitute the largest ethnic group in Afghanistan. The number of Pashtun tribesmen increased after the 1978-Afghan Saur Revolution and the massive immigration following it. An armed conflict between the military forces of one state with another, has always compelled human beings to flee their homes in order to avoid immediate danger.¹² Michael Bortin is right when he says that every year "thousands of people are forced to leave their homeland. Some flee from persecution, others more as a result of war, violence, environmental

disasters or harsh economic condition. Determining who should qualify for refugee status and thereby enjoy international protection is a complicated and controversial issue.¹³ Nevertheless, after Afghan war all those who fled Afghanistan for asylum were given refugee status. The huge influx of refugees resulted in demographic changes for Pakistan. Three factors were primarily accountable for the housing of Afghan refugees in Balochistan. First, the geographical location of the provinces along the Durand Line adjacent to Pakistan. Second, the close affinity and cultural similarities of Afghan refugees and inhabitants of the two provinces, largely of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as they spoke similar language and enjoyed many cultural similarities. Third, the ongoing Jihad or counterrevolutionary factor where Western support for the continuation of armed resistance to the Soviet backed PDPA regime was to be operative from the two provinces. The immediate major impact of the influx was the sudden change in the demography of the province. According to an estimate, more than 3.0 million Afghan refugees migrated to Pakistan and Iran during the prolonged years of the Afghan war.¹⁴

They are economically and agriculturally more developed than the Baloch areas with Chaman-Spin bolduk, as the only regular entry point for transit trade. The irregular entry points in Pashtun belt from Afghanistan are though shingle but are comparatively more accessible/passable and less distant to Pakistani sides than the ones in Baloch areas. Also, the cities across the border in Afghanistan parallel to Baloch belt are less developed and accessible to markets with larger distances. According to the latest census, Baloch in Afghanistan constitute around 720,000 of the overall Afghan population. The ratio of those living on border is around 7%, higher than the Pashtun population.¹⁵

Socio-Cultural Ties

Social interactions are the acts, actions, or practices of two or more people mutually oriented towards each other's selves, that is, any behavior that tries to affect or take account of each other's subjective experiences or intentions. This means that the parties to social interaction must be aware of each other having each other's self in mind. Social interaction is defined by Jonathan H. Turner as the situation where behavior of one actor is consciously reorganized by, and influence the behavior of another actor, and vice versa.¹⁶ The categories of border crossers, mainly divided into seven classes including migrants,

refugees, visitors, trader tourists, travelers, customers and traffickers, are broadly summed up in three categories: accidental, repeated, and regulated.

In case of Pak-Afghan border, the social interaction is largely repeated and regular; no matter there is accidental and regulated interaction too. They include all categories of border crossers, no matter the nature of them have been changing from time to time. The repeated and regular interaction is largely due to cultural similarities and economic interaction. The cultural similarities lead to social interaction amongst tribesmen. Eminent scholars of culture, Edward Taylor and Hatch describe that culture is a multifaceted whole encompassing knowledge sharing, belief, skill, ethics, rules, traditions along with many competencies, and conduct and practices by masses in a specific society. In a leading sociologist's definition, "culture is a "mental map which guides us in our relations to our surroundings and to other people." To him, there are two kinds of culture: material and non-material.¹⁷ Further defined by Dr. Baqai that man-made items comprise tools, furniture, automobiles, buildings, canals, cultivated farms, roads, bridges etc.¹⁸ and non-material items include language for communication, ideas, customs and beliefs. The latter themselves are included therein along with the practices followed by people. The cultural similarities between the two borders are of both material and non-material.

The repeated and regular interaction across border is due to the fact that the Pak-Afghan border had been a soft one. The regular entry point, where one can enter through visa, is at Chaman and others are irregular entry points (particularly near divided villages). Chaman was the only entry point guarded officially. There were many irregular entry points, which in the past were unmanned or partially monitored. But, during the last many years, particularly after 9/11, which ultimately resulted in the deployment of huge American and ISAF troops, the irregular entry points have been heavily monitored. There has been deployment of Frontier Corps (FC) on the Pakistani side, which has made the entry points under more surveillance. The major cross-border interaction was through irregular entry points. There are a large number of towns and villages, where the houses are at walking distances or even penetrate both sides of the border. No visa or permission was required, and the Rahdari system was not much in use.

Unlike the Pak-Iran Baloch borderland, the Rahdari system across Pak-Afghan border had little demand and was not very effective. The system existed

in papers with the eligibility of the borderers for it but was not applied at large. The system of Rahdari was familiarized in 1947 after Pakistan came into existence but it has never been a requirement for those traveling into Afghanistan from Pakistan. In fact, the Rahdari system suits people, who do not possess passport and opt to travel for short period of time but due to the softness of border, it has never been a demand. Afghanistan had traditionally been a tribal society, where the federal government or internal security system was lenient and limited to fewer major cities. Unlike the Baloch borderland, the system of dual nationality does not exist in case of Pak-Afghan border. Rahdari is issued by the District Administration.

Private loan-taking is a source of interaction amongst borderers. It has traditionally been practiced, particularly amongst Pashtun borderers; although it is practiced among Baloch as well. There are many kinds of private loan-dealing; three are more common: cash, seeds and livestock-loans. In the case of cash loan, the borrower has to pay a fixed amount of money (surplus to the original money), which the lender has to decide at the time of lending money. In case of seed-loans, the borrower has to pay a fixed quantity of crop to the lender along with the value of seeds borrowed. The repayment of livestock-loans requires virtually the same method as of seed-loans.

Intermarriages are common among border people. The system of intermarriages has been in practice for the centuries and is supported by two leading factors. First, the tribal/family and ethnic bonds which can be served and strengthened by finding a matrimonial match across borders. It is more common in case of arranged marriages within close family members living on both side. Second, to find new opportunities of interaction by making new relationship. It is very common in the border people. The Vani or Vulver (bride-price) is practiced in variety of forms.¹⁹ The practice of dowry is existing where bride's side is demanded little or more.

The Afghan borderland population, Baloch and Pashtun, are mostly Sunni. Pashtuns are, however, less flexible in practicing sacred principles than Baloch. In Pashtun area, Islam, like Irish Catholicism, is traditionally known for conservatism.

Economic Interaction

Borderlands promote economic cooperation, thus, providing many openings for both legal and illicit enterprise.²⁰ Similar to the culture of Arab, Beduins depended upon camel for milk, transport/ travel, trade and smuggling. It is a factor essential for their survival.²¹ Since centuries, they have been engaged in cross border interaction as the major source and incentives for livelihood. The Pashtun population is comparatively well off as the land they possess is agriculturally more fertile than Baloch. The Baloch borderland is least irrigated and comprises desert areas. It is easily affected by drought if there is insufficient rain.

The necessity of trade facilitation between the two countries has been discussed and safeguarded in the important Treaty of Gandamak signed in 1879 between the Amir of Afghanistan, Yakub Khan and the British government. The article 7 of the treaty makes both sides incumbent upon to use their endeavors to ensure the protection and facilitation of the transit of goods.²² The principles of the treaty were followed by the Durand Line Agreement in 1893 that the border would be a soft with cross border interaction of the tribesmen facilitated.

Pakistan and Afghanistan, the latter being a landlocked country, have a mutual transit trade agreement known as the Afghanistan Transit Trade Agreement (ATTA) signed on 2nd March 1965. According to the agreement, renamed as Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Agreement (APTA), Pakistan and Afghanistan would not levy customs duty, taxes, dues or charges of any kind whether national, provincial or municipal on goods in transit regardless of their destination.

According to the agreement, Afghanistan can import and export through (then only Karachi Port) two of the ports of Pakistan, i.e., Bin Qasim and Karachi, and transport into Afghanistan and vice versa through two transit routes of Peshawar-Torkham and Chaman-Spin Boldak. According to the trade agreement, the goods destined for Afghanistan are offloaded on the Pakistani soil along the border. They are examined by the concerned Afghan authorities, known as "Wakil Tijar" and "Jawazilm Kahar" and are allowed inside Afghanistan. Similarly, from Afghanistan, they examined the goods on Pakistani soil and then allowed to concerned destinations. According to the agreement, the items allowed are those which are mentioned in the list agreed upon by the two countries. The six items: cigarillos and cigarettes of tobacco; cooking oil;

tyres and tubes; television and parts; auto parts; and telephone sets are not allowed. The list does not contain any item which is contrary to Islamic spirit and principles i.e. liquor, pornography etc.²³

The major import from Afghanistan into Pakistan, legally and illegally, is of fresh and dried fruit, scrap, auto parts, motor tyres, and vehicles. From Pakistan, it is construction material, food items like flour and rice, fresh vegetables, and cattle. Pashtun tribesmen are more beneficiary of the Trade Agreement as the entry point is in their area and major smuggling dumps inside Afghanistan are closer to them than the ones in Baloch area.

Like many international dependent borders, the smuggling of goods is a major part of economic interaction on the borderland. Hasting Donnan and Thomas Wilson argue that “one can hardly open a book about borders without finding at least passing reference to smuggling and the clandestine movement of people and goods from one side of the national boundary to the other.” As per their belief, practices like smuggling has been existing in past to destabilize the sharing states while strengthening harmony among co-ethnic minority groups.²⁴

Smuggling is facilitated by a number of divided villages, whose population over the years has grown, as well as adjacent villages. The divided villages are those which are bifurcated by the Pak-Afghan boundary. There are twelve major divided villages the Frontier Corps has marked: Lelejal, Mullah Mutam Khan Ziarat, Azam Khan, Shamuzi, Sera Tsahan, Kakow Kalay, Kurdun, Jogeh, Spinki Tash, Bashshi Kalay, Sale Karez and Sradarga.²⁵ The houses in the villages have big mud-wall compounds, the imported/smuggled items from Afghanistan are dumped/parked and at convenient hours are slipped into Pakistan. They include vehicles to be smuggled into Pakistan and sold at 30% to 60% profit, depending on the condition and brand of the vehicle.

Smuggled/Non-Duty Paid Cars

Entry of duty-free vehicles (cars, double-cabs, jeeps) to Afghanistan and its smuggling across the border into Pakistan is common. The cars poured into Pakistan without duty are subject to seizure by the law enforcement agencies, particularly the Customs Intelligence but the seizure is minimal in far-flung areas. The import of cars is a multi-billion dollars’ business run by a mafia, which is being backed by many influential businessmen on both sides of the border. The cars, imported in Afghanistan, come from Japan, the UAE, North Cyprus, the

USA, and Germany. These cars include new as well as old models. The research shows that import of good condition used cars is frequent. According to the Customs Department, Provincial Excise and Taxation Office, and car dealers' sources, there are two major methods of cars smuggling into Pakistan. Afghan dealers and their agents travel to those countries, which have new and old car markets. Pakistani dealers are reported to have booked the cars in their names with destination in Afghanistan. They book new and old vehicles and import them into Afghanistan through two Iranian ports i.e. Bandar Abbas and Chabahar. Japan and the UAE are the leading countries to have big junkyards for used cars. According to the one dealer who travels to Japan for buying junked cars told me that in Japan, space and parking lot is a real problem. People can afford buying cars but due to non-availability of space and huge parking tickets, they dump their cars in junkyards or sell these cars on nominal price. Dealers buy them in bulk and book them for the UAE with minor entry fee. In the UAE, these cars are repaired and rebooked for Chabahar port in Iran, closer to Afghanistan. These cars are then transported to Islam Killa, near Iran-Afghanistan border and further driven into Afghanistan." He added that "thousands of vehicles are bulldozed to scrap in Japan each day; subsequently this scrap is auctioned. Thus, scrap is also billion-dollar business. These cars and spare parts are brought to Afghanistan and finally smuggled to Pakistan across the border." Pakistan is the only country in Afghanistan's neighborhood (compared to Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan), where the duty on imported cars is very high. "By smuggling a car into Pakistan is many times more profitable for dealers, and concessionary for those who even have to get them cleared by deals with the Customs departments."²⁶

Drug/Human Smuggling

Whenever, the forces of global economic integration shape boundaries of a nation-state, their illicit activities play an equal role in formation as *raison d'être*.²⁷ The 1268 kilometers long border between Afghanistan and Balochistan (Pakistan) is a source of arms smuggling and drug trafficking. This phenomenon was unknown until the decade of Afghan war, which began in March 1980 as a resistance to Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. It involved huge Western military and financial support for resistant groups enroute Pakistan. The forcibly shift of heroin producing mechanism from Iran to Afghanistan after the Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979, patronized and illicitly commercialized with sudden hike in the growth and production of poppy/opium inside Afghanistan. It made

the border-towns conduits of drug supply with drug mafia penetration. The three Afghan provinces from where drug is penetrated into Pakistan are Kandahar, Helmand and Nimroz. Helmand and Nimroz have drug supply routes into Pakistan but the worst hit is Helmand due to growing poppy cultivation and heroin manufacturing.²⁸ In Helmand, the closer city to Balochistan is Khanashin. There are a number of border-towns, where drug is produced. Dishu is one of them. The important one is, however, Brabcha, a divided village with rapid expansion of drug factories during last two decades.

The Taliban rule in Afghanistan brought the poppy and drug smuggling to its lowest ebb but since 9/11, the poppy cultivation and its conversion into heroin/opium is drastically increased as the drug money is one of the major sources of support for terrorist activities. There is a strong evidence that more than 90 percent of the unlawful opium production is found in Afghanistan, while more than half of this production is across Pak-Afghan border into Iran and Pakistan.²⁹ The drug smuggling across Pak-Afghan border into Pakistan is common. It is smuggled individually and collectively. Individually means in a vehicle or two. By collective it means that there are caravans from Afghanistan enroute Pakistan which comprising not less than 60 to 100 vehicles include technicians, informers, snipers, and resistant groups. They largely travel into Pakistani territory at night. They usually carry Thuraya (mobile satellite phones), highly sophisticated weapons, duty free petrol, Toyota pickups, and international currency.

The Frontier Corps is an effective force in border area to maintain law and order situation and perform anti-smuggling duties. It has traditionally been deployed along the border since the demarcation of the Durand Line in 1893 with gradual increase of the corps.

The cases of human trafficking on Pak-Afghan border are less frequent than the one on Pak-Iran border as entering Pakistan from Afghanistan is easier. There are two categories of border crossers. Those, who intend to enter Pakistan per se, are largely Afghans and they cross the border for livelihood. In the past, Bangladeshis also entered Pakistan through it. Those, who enter in pursuit of further slip into Europe enroute Iran. But, these are occasional cases of human trafficking and can lead to disastrous incident. One such incident occurred on 4th April 2009, when after delivering goods, a container entered Quetta from Afghanistan near Bagram airport used for NATO forces, with 110 Afghans as

illegal trespassers to Europe enroute Iran and Turkey. Due to suffocation and the failure of power generation, 52 people were found dead.³⁰

Conclusion

The Pak-Afghan border is one of the important demarcations of the “Divide and Rule” policy of the British Empire. It was drawn in the heyday of the British rule in India with the Amir of Afghanistan since 1893 and has been regarded as the source of cultural, trade, economic, social and even political interaction of the borderers of both sides. Being a coexistent and interdependent border with regular interaction, however, it has been losing its soft nature since 9/11. The major factors accountable for the change are growing terrorism and Taliban threat, the deployment of US and NATO troops under ISAF command and growing security concerns. Therefore, this border is manned by the FC on Pakistani side at important irregular entry points. Now-a-days, unlike the past, an Afghan or Pakistani national, crossing the regular entry point, needs proper documentation, which majority of the tribesmen are either short of or avoid it. They demand to ease the border-crossing procedures and bring its softness back as was before. However, irregular border interaction is not uncommon.

NOTES

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- ²³ For detail of the transit trade rules, see Najib A Choudhry, *The Custom Act 1969*, Lahore: T N Cooperation, 1969, p 545
- ²⁴ Op. cit., Hastings & Wilson, p. 100
- ²⁵ With the courtesy of the The Frontier Corps Headquarters in Quetta, Balochistan.
- ²⁶ Personal Interviews with vehicles' smugglers/dealers
- ²⁷ op.cit, Hastings & Wilson, p. 89
- ²⁸ Helmand is now just a criminal province, it is a Colombia situation. It is producing 60 to 70 per cent of Afghan opium. There are major international criminal groups processing and trafficking there."
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