

Compare and Contrast separatist notions of East Pakistan and today's Balochistan. Will there be another separation?

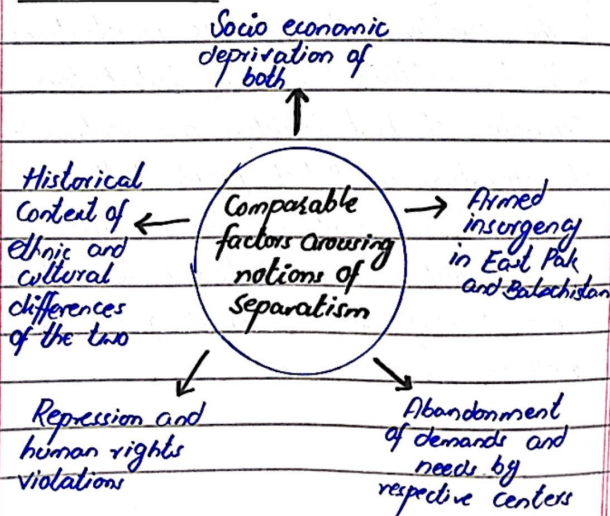
## 1) Introduction

Balochistan and East Pakistan both have faced notions of separatism. Both of these regions faced abandonment from their respective central governments which gave rise to feelings of alienation and marginalization. The fall of Dhaka on December 1971 is a precedent that the oppressive regimes are not the solution to the problem. It requires negotiations with the political leaders of Balochistan. Separation of East Pakistan and sentiments of separation in Baloch people both have similarities and contrasts. The partition of Balochistan and Pakistan is less likely since it may disturb overall global as well as domestic order.

"Since inception, the primary driver behind fall of Dhaka and the insurgent movements of Balochistan, is Crises of Federalism in Pakistan"

(Khan, G. Politics of Nationalism, Federalism and separatism in Pakistan, 2014)

## 2/ Similarities in Separatist notions of East Pakistan and today's Balochistan



## (A) Historical context of Ethnic and Cultural differences of East Pakistan and Balochistan

The ethnocultural difference of East Pakistan and Balochistan with Pakistan have shaped notion of separatism among masses.

In East Pakistan, it was imposition of declaring Urdu as official language which created sense of alienation in Bengalis.

The language Movement of 1952 is evidence of fact.

Today's Balochistan, have difference in their language and ethnicity. which creates sense of separatism.

## (B) Socio economic deprivation of Balochistan and East Pakistan agitated sense of separatism among the masses of two

Another factor which led to separatist nation is socio economic deprivation.

**East Pakistan** was economically significant due to its **jute production**, which contributed to Pakistan's economy. Economic inequalities existed with perception that resources were being unfairly distributed to West Pakistan.

"**I smell the jute fields of Chillagong**"

(**Sheikh Mujibur Rahman**)  
- on his visit to **Islamabad**

**Balochistan** is resources rich with **Natural gas and mineral resources**. Despite being rich in resources, the province faces developmental lag as compared to fellow provinces. The major jobs in industry of Balochistan are given to outsiders and local Baloch are hired as labours.

(c) **Armed Insurgency in East Pakistan and Balochistan**  
**igniting separatist movements**

Presence of Armed insurgent group Mukti Bahini in East Pakistan and BUA, BUF in Balochistan are similarity in separatist movement of both

(D) Abandonment of demands and needs by respective central government exacerbating the feelings of alienation

**East Pakistan:** Provision of less jobs, disregard of political aspirations of East Pakistanis and limited enrolment in military led to call for autonomy and independence.

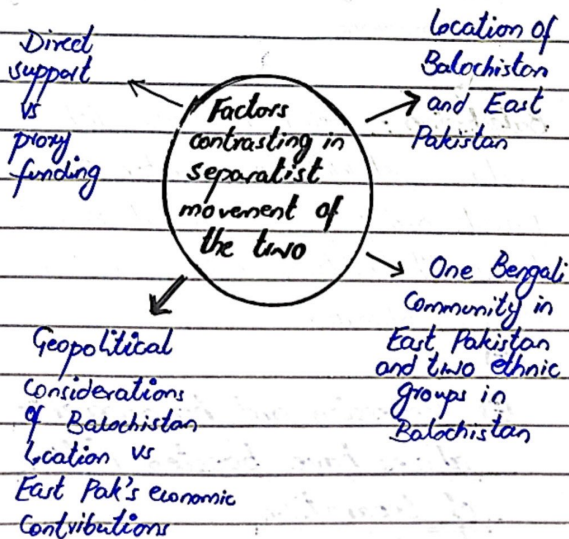
**Balochistan:** Being a resource rich countries, yet with low number of private and public educational institutes, less health facilities, which is causing feeling of alienation.

(E) Repression and human rights abuses have boosted notion of separatism

East Pakistan: Operation Searchlight by Yaha Khan, which involved killing of East Pakistanis suspected to be involved with India against Pakistan

Balochistan: There have been a number of allegations of human rights abuses and enforced disappearances

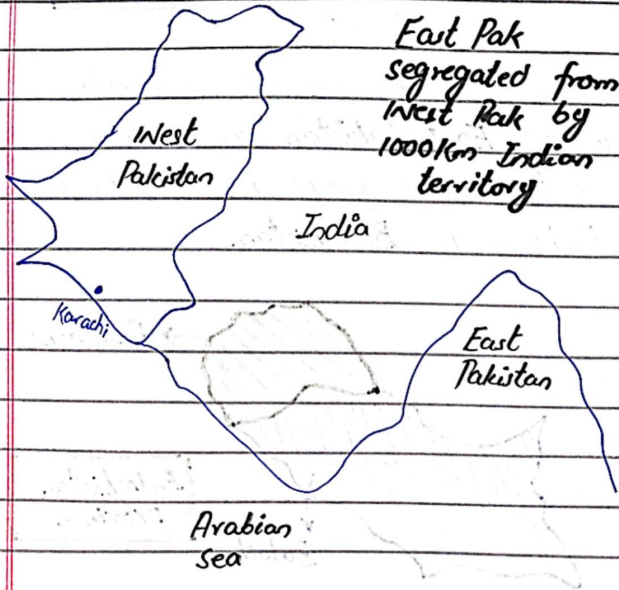
### 3) Contrasting factors in Separatist notions of East Pakistan and today's Balochistan

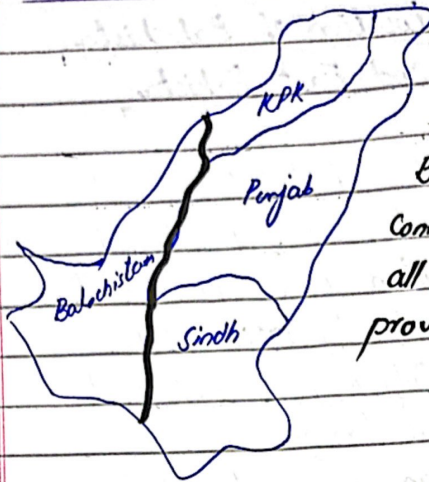


## (A) Location of Balochistan and East Pakistan

The location of Balochistan and East Pakistan are very different. East Pakistan was segregated from West Pakistan by 1000km Indian territory. Only way to reach west Pakistan was through sea.

Balochistan is connected to all three provinces, giving a sense of integration.

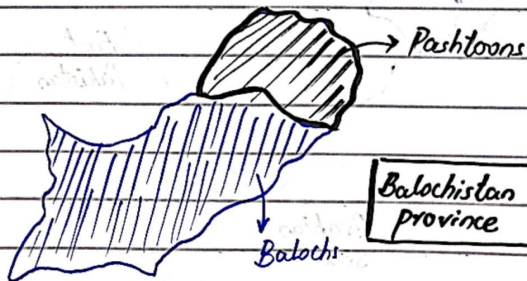




Balochistan  
connected to  
all three  
provinces

(B) One Bengali community  
in East Pakistan while two  
ethnic groups in Balochistan

There was one Bengali community in all East Pakistan while there are two ethnic groups i.e. Balochs and Pashtoons in Balochistan.





(c) Geopolitical location of Balochistan and East Pakistan  
Economic Contribution

Balochistan has geopolitical location of great strategic importance due to its close proximity with Persian Gulf. While East Pakistan was of great geopolitical significance for its economic considerations.

(d) Direct foreign support to East Pakistan while proxy funding in Balochistan

Bangladesh Liberation War received significant international support while Baloch separatist are getting support in terms of proxy fundings.

4) Prediction of another partition is challenging nowadays

The international institutions like UN, support principle of territorial

integrity through dialogues. It is difficult for separatists to get international recognition. Pakistan's neighbouring countries like China have strategic interest in Gwadar Port of Balochistan. They would not favour partition of Balochistan and Pakistan.

## 5/ Conclusion

While there are similarities in separatist notions of East Pakistan and Balochistan with socioeconomic disparities, resource exploitation, armed insurgencies, abandonment of basic facilities, the outcomes of partition are very different. There are contrasting factors in between separatist movement of two with being two ethnic groups in Balochistan, its geopolitical location. The partition would not be supported by International and neighbouring countries.