DECONSTRUCTING THE TERRORIST NARRATIVE: A

SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYSIS OF BLA

Arooba Younas

Centre for Aerospace and Security Studies, (CASS), Lahore

June 2025

ABSTRACT

Terrorist organisations have established an online presence on social media. This trend is reflected in Pakistan as well. This paper examines the social media posts of the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), a terrorist group in Pakistan by employing Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis and Van Dijk's ideological square framework. It scrutinises the narratives propagated by BLA, particularly in three areas: Liberation Movement Against Occupation, "Brave" Us and "Coward" Them, and Building Exploitative Infrastructure and Looting National Resources. Through an extensive review of BLA's social media posts on its official Telegram channel, secondary data from scholarly articles, and interviews with local Baloch, the study finds that BLA is generating anti-state content and an excessive use of rhetoric delineating alleged genocide committed against the Baloch. Simultaneously, the posts glorify the organisation's personnel. Additionally, such narratives are echoed by the local Baloch populace showcasing the percolation of BLA narratives in the educated, middle class. The findings highlight the need for a state-led social media counter-narrative initiative and the need to address the grievances of the Baloch people.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, Narratives, National Security, Social Media, Terrorism

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

1. INTRODUCTION

Narratives play a significant role in making sense of the world. Therefore, unsurprisingly, political actors perpetuate narratives and turn them into grand stories to mould the public opinion.

Terrorist organisations acknowledge the potency of narratives as well. To spread them, they have instrumentalised social media. Primarily, the advantages offered by this space – cost-effectiveness, accessibility, and an interactive two-way exchange – make it an appealing avenue. The same is true for the terrorist organisations operating in Pakistan as well.

1.1. Background

Numerous terrorist organisations operate within the borders of Pakistan. The US officials have broadly categorised these groups into five types: globally oriented, Afghanistan-oriented, India and Kashmir oriented, domestically oriented, and sectarian.[1] Of particular interest for this research is the domestically oriented terrorist group, the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA).

An ethno-nationalist separatist group in pursuit of an independent Balochistan, BLA has gained notoriety for carrying out suicide attacks against targets of political and military significance, particularly against Pakistani and Chinese interests.[2] Furthermore, BLA's targeting of innocent Punjabi civilians, particularly labourers is on the rise with national and international media reports of BLA gunmen

---

[1] U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *Terrorist and Other Militant Groups in Pakistan*, by K. Alan Kronstadt, IF11934 (2023), 2.
[2] Abdullah Khan, "Understanding the Baloch Liberation Army," *Narratives*, June 18, 2022, accessed June 12, 2025.

killing individuals of Punjabi origin by singling them out from public transport after checking their identity cards.[3]

The BLA ideology is guided by grievances against the Pakistani state's alleged exploitation of Balochistan's natural resources and developmental disparities faced by the province in the domains of health, infrastructure, and education.[4] Working as a proxy for regional forces, BLA has increased its footprint in Balochistan and gained sympathisers through its digital activities to manipulate public perception. Disinformation predicated on narratives such as undermining state efforts for peace and development and declaring governmental development projects as a way to supposedly further loot Balochistan has helped attract well-educated Baloch youth and women to become a part of the organisation.[5]

1.2.   Literature Review and Research Gap

Prior literature has extensively discussed the propagation of the narratives of terrorist organisations' via social media by mainly focusing on Islamic State (IS) and Afghan Taliban. Subsequently, IS's endeavour to represent itself as standing against Western crusaders and perpetuate their legitimacy under the binary categorisation of "Self" and "Other" through social media was underscored by KhosoraviNik and

---

[3] Muhammad Amir Rana, "Problem With Punjab CNIC," DAWN.COM, September 1, 2024, https://www.dawn.com/news/1856116.; Tanika Godbole, "Pakistan: Gunmen Kill 7 Punjabis in Bus Attack," Dw.Com, February 19, 2025, https://www.dw.com/en/pakistan-gunmen-kill-7-punjabis-in-bus-attack/a-71666756.

[4] Abdul Rauf Iqbal, "Balochistan: A Victim of Geopolitics or Socioeconomic Grievances?," *Stratheia*, November 20, 2024, https://stratheia.com/balochistan-a-victim-of-geopolitics-or-socioeconomic-grievances/.

[5] Jehanzeb Iqbal, "Decoding Bots of Terrorism in Balochistan", *Margalla Papers* 28, no. 2 (2024): 63-77.

Amer.[6] Furthermore, Özkaya highlighted IS's social media narratives of vengeance and bringing societal change in countries that have failed them.[7]

The Afghan Taliban made a putative strategic use of language on social media platforms to grant legitimacy to their just jihad narrative. Thus, American troops were labelled as occupiers and invaders, whilst the Afghan soldiers were designated as hirelings or mercenaries.[8]

An extensive discussion into the social media narratives of BLA is missing. Haider et. al have presented a generalised overview of the social media use of BLA in a comparative case study of terrorist organisations operating in Pakistan.[9] On the other hand, Aziz has extensively demonstrated the social media use of BLA by analysing their videos and presenting their narratives that claim state repression, self-sacrifice, and purported marginalisation; however, his analysis remains limited to one case study: the August 2024 Hereof attack.[10]

Therefore, the study of past literature reveals a lacuna. Limited research exists to understand the use of social media by BLA to propagate its narratives. Thus, this research aims to fill that gap by focusing on the social media posts of BLA from 2020 to 2025. These years are significant to explore because they saw

---

[6] Majid KhosraviNik and Mohammedwesam Amer, "Social Media and Terrorism Discourse: The Islamic State's (IS) Social Media Discursive Content and Practices," *Critical Discourse Studies* 19, no. 2 (November 23, 2020): 124–43.

[7] Erdal Özkaya, "The Use of Social Media for Terrorism," *Defence Against Terrorism Review* 9, (2017): 47-59.

[8] "Social Media Strategies and Online Narratives of Terrorist Organizations; Case Studies of Al-Qaeda, ISIS, Taliban and Lashkar-e-Taiba," n.d., https://www.efsas.org/publications/study-papers/social-media-strategies-online-narratives-of-terrorists-groups-al-qaeda-isis-taliban-lashkar/.

[9] Abeera Haider, Saqib Khan Warraich, and Dr Alishba Mukhtar, "Use Of Facebook And Twitter By Terrorist Organizations To Radicalize The Youth: A Case Study Of Ttp, Bla And Isis In Pakistan," *Bulletin of Business and Economics (BBE)* 12, no. 2 (2023): 171-177.

[10] Sajid Aziz, "Digital Warfare: The Baloch Liberation Army's Tactical Use of Social Media in the Herof Attack," *GNET*, November 8, 2024, https://gnet-research.org/2024/11/08/digital-warfare-the-baloch-liberation-armys-tactical-use-of-social-media-in-the-herof-attack/.

headlining terrorist attacks by BLA, with a 710 per cent increase in attacks from 2020 to 2024 as demonstrated in figure 1.
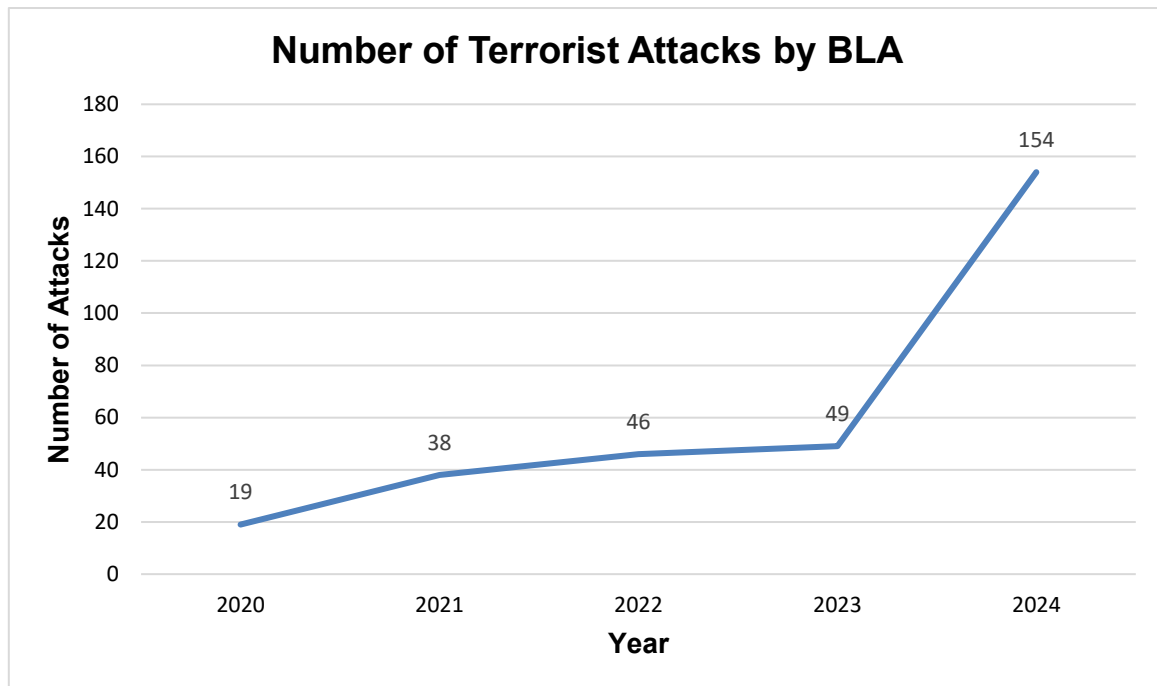

Figure 1: Terrorist Attacks carried out by BLA from 2020 to 2024[11]

The beginning of 2025 saw sophisticated terrorist attacks by BLA. Specifically, the March 2025 Jaffar Express hijacking made global headlines. Further operations by BLA resulted in the temporary occupation of suburban areas as well.[12]

In recent years, BLA has actively used social media, particularly by sharing videos of their attacks on army and paramilitary forces at the backdrop of triumphant orchestral crescendos.[13]

---

[11] The bar graph was compiled by the Author from the Pakistan Security reports published by Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies in 2021 and 2022; Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, *Pakistan's Evolving Militant Landscape: State Responses & Policy Options* (Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, 2024)

[12] Ayush Verma, Imtiaz Baloch, and Riccardo Valle, "The Baloch Insurgency in Pakistan: Evolution, Tactics, and Regional Security Implications," *CTC Sentinel*, April 2025, 27–40, https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/CTC-SENTINEL-042025_article-3.pdf.

[13] Asad Malik, "Media's Policy in the Wake of Resurgence in Terrorism," Stratheia, February 8, 2023, https://stratheia.com/medias-policy-in-the-wake-of-resurgence-in-terrorism/.

1.3. Research Questions

This research is guided by the following research questions:

1. What narratives are predominant in the social media posts of BLA?

2. How does BLA employ language in its social media posts to construct legitimacy for its armed resistance?

3. How has BLA used the binary of "Us" and "Them" in its social media discourse?

1.4. Hypothesis

It is hypothesised that BLA has produced anti-state narratives through their social media posts since 2020 through politically charged language to construct a victimised identity for the Baloch people.

1.5. Theoretical Framework

This paper utilised Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional framework for Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). This is underpinned by three levels: text, discursive practice, and social practice – namely the micro, meso, and macro levels.[14] These three levels of analysis help understand the layers of messaging and narrative construction done by BLA.

Van Dijk's ideological square framework describes the tendency of discourses to highlight positive aspects of the in-group (us), downplaying negative aspects of us, and emphasising the negative facets of the out-group (them), while suppressing their positives.[15] Dijk's framework has been equally helpful to understand the prominent us-versus-them narrative of BLA.

---

[14] Hilary Janks, "Critical discourse analysis as a research tool." *Discourse: studies in the cultural politics of education* 18, no. 3 (1997): 329-342.
[15] Teun Van Dijk, *Ideology: A Multidisciplinary Approach*, 2000. p.267

In this paper, the application of the theoretical framework brings another aspect of novelty in understanding social media's weaponisation to mould local perceptions. This is because prior research on BLA did not utilise a theoretical lens to offer an analysis of its social media posts.

1.6. Research Methodology

This paper employs a qualitative and exploratory research methodology. The data has been gathered from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data comprised three interviews with local Baloch individuals to understand the outreach of the Baloch narrative. The bulk of secondary data includes 111 BLA posts – press releases, pictures, and videos – from its official Telegram channel "Baloch Liberation Voice", selected through purposive sampling strategy. The posts were selected based on their relevance to BLA's narrative construction and their publication within the selected timeframe of 2020 – 2025. The data was subjected to Fairclough's CDA. Furthermore, open-source secondary data such as news reports, journal articles, book chapters, and opinion pieces have been used to add to the credibility of the research and create a holistic analysis.

Nevertheless, a few limitations were faced during the primary data collection phase. Although snowball sampling was employed to reach out to maximum number of local Baloch, only three agreed to come forward and give an interview due to the "divisive" nature of the research. Additionally, it was found that all three participants shared the same perspective on BLA's social media narratives, leading to limited alternative perspectives.

2. TEXTUAL ANALYSIS: NARRATIVES OF BLA

The study has found the following dominant narratives in the verbal and visual text of BLA's social media posts from 2020-2025:

2.1. Liberation Movement against Occupation

A terrorist organisation's name is not just a name. It is a part of a deliberate and symbolic strategy to appeal to its audience by carefully choosing keywords to position itself as a vanguard of the values they aim to promote.[16] Balochistan's so-called "national liberation" remains the prominent goal of BLA. Henceforth, liberation is a cherished value of the organisation and is enshrined in its name.[17]

Yet BLA's another linguistic strategy is defining itself as an ostensible "freedom fighting" group. The obligation to distance itself from the word 'terrorist' comes from the negative connotations associated with it: bloodshed, fear-mongering, unjust use of violence. Instead, despite employing violence in the pursuit of its secessionist and liberation goals, BLA has framed its violent actions as a form of just resistance. Their acts are exacted against what they portray as the occupying state of Pakistan, which, according to its narrative, allegedly illegally colonised Balochistan in 1948.[18] This shows the rhetorical strategy of invoking colonial framing by laying historical claims. Against this backdrop, the use of IEDs, hand grenades, RPGs, and BM-12 missiles against so-called colonisers become justified and even normalised as part of resistance as depicted in figure 2 as well.[19]

---

[16] Kutluer Karademir and Mahmut Cengiz, "Names Are Never Only Names: A Nominal Analysis of Terrorist Organizations," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 46, no. 11 (April 22, 2021): 2303–26.

[17] Baloch Liberation Voice (BLV), "The Pakistani state is behind the massacre of innocent Pashtuns."

[18] BLV, "We have not carried out the Karachi Stock Exchange attack."

[19] BLV, "From 15 January to 8 February 2024."
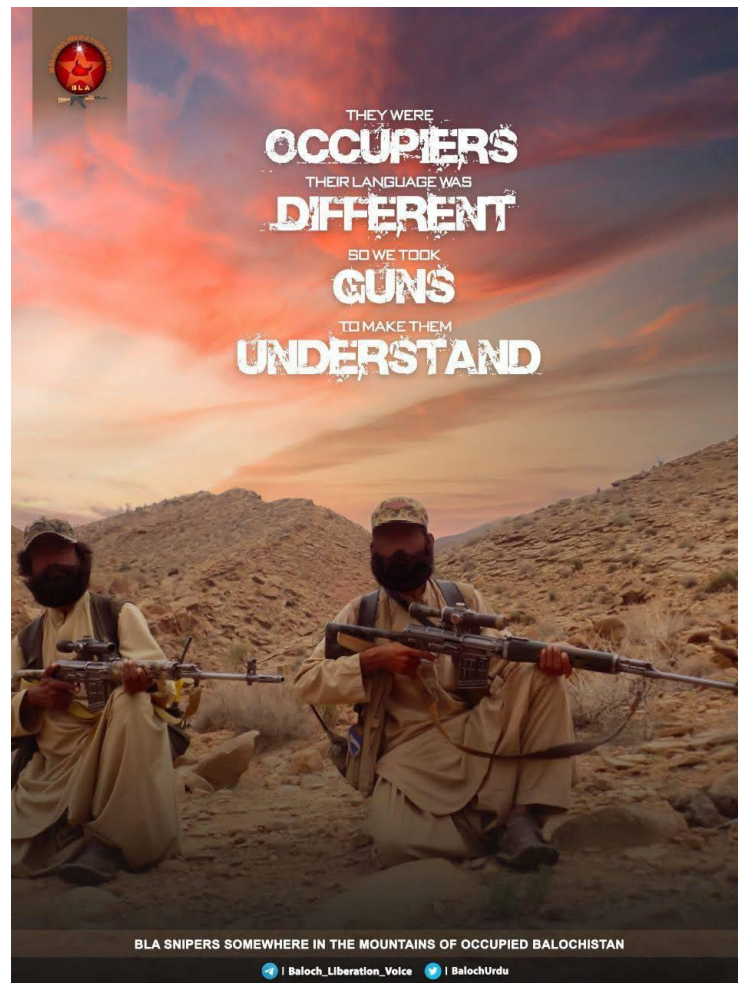
Figure 2: BLA Post Justifying use of Violence [20]

Thus, in their press releases, during the description of its members, the qualifier "freedom fighter" is always added. This allows the organisation to present itself as a legitimate actor operating in the "Baloch national interest".[21] However, the ethnic violence exacted against the non-combatant Punjabis paints a different picture. It is an illustration of collective punishment justified under the cloak of retaliatory attacks against the Baloch missing persons and those conceived by BLA as the eyes and ears of Pakistan's intelligence agencies.[22] As per Resolution 1566 of the United Nations Security Council, violence against civilians through the use of

---

[20] BLV, "They were occupiers."
[21] BLV, "We have not carried out the Karachi Stock Exchange attack."
[22] Rana, "Problem With Punjab CNIC."

weapons to create an environment of terror constitutes as terrorism.[23] Henceforth, BLA is a terrorist organisation; however, it is involved in narrative manipulation to portray itself to the contrary. One such tactic is the use of repetition as a stylistic and rhetorical device for persuasion and emphasis. Notably all the press releases of BLA end with the sentence "Our such attacks will continue till the independence of occupied Balochistan".

2.1.1. Legitimate Actors

Legitimacy remains a social product, created and maintained through social processes and perceptions.[24] Language plays a strategic role in creating the narrative of legitimacy. Therefore, BLA has instrumentalised language to gain a wider support network. Accordingly, legalistic language and declarative statements have been used to create a temporal depth.

Within this language, a binary readily develops to create the delegitimate coloniser and oppressor that violates laws of war through human rights violations by accusing them of using "force on unarmed civilians"[25] and the supposed morally superior BLA that is mindful of "human rights"[26] and "international laws of war".[27]

BLA otherised Pakistan as an enemy and a murderous state to sustain its legitimacy.[28] It has dubbed the legitimisation process of state elections as "fake" and "fraudulent".[29] Through metaphorical and symbolic language, BLA portrayed

---

[23] S.C. Res. 1566 (Adopted by the Security Council at its 5053rd meeting, on 8 October 2004), S/RES/1566, p. 2 (October 8, 2004), https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/532676?ln=en&v=pdf.
[24] Cathryn Johnson, Timothy J. Dowd, and Cecilia L. Ridgeway, "Legitimacy as a Social Process," Annual Review of Sociology 32, no. 1 (April 7, 2006): 53–78.
[25] BLV, "Pakistani army attacked our fighters."
[26] BLV, "BLA accepts responsibility for the attack on Pakistani check post in Pir Ismail area of Bolan."
[27] Bahot | باہوٹ (@bahot_baluch), "Complete Control Over Jaffar Express Maintained – Pakistani State Has Only 24 Hours Left to Exchange Prisoners – BLA," X, March, 12, 2025, 5:09 p.m., https://t.co/l3cO5sRQlb.
[28] BLV, "BLA accepts responsibility for killing the former puppet CJ."
[29] BLV, "BLA appeals to the Baloch nation to boycott Pakistan's fraudulent elections."

Pakistan as an unproven deceptive entity that "wants to throw dust in the eyes of the world" by democratically installing a "puppet government" to falsely represent the mandate of the Baloch nation.[30] To prevent this from happening, in January and February 2024, BLA utilised an assertive tone to threaten Baloch to boycott the elections or meet an unfortunate end. Like ISIS[31], BLA used emotional blackmail to frame the Baloch vote as a betrayal of thousands of Baloch martyrs who died for their independence.[32]

To claim its apparent legitimacy, Baloch public's acceptance and recognition of the assumed authority of BLA is needed. This is predicated upon fostering trust and confidence requiring transparency. BLA claims to be "accountable to the Baloch nation" "in a transparent and civilized relationship"[33] to portray itself as the locals' defender.

Though BLA's increasing strength may be indicative of local support[34], this support is selective. Geographically, it is specific to the Makran belt, Kharan, and Rakhshan division of Southern Balochistan in the Baloch dominated areas.[35] The organisation has little to no effect on Balochistan's Pakhtun belt in areas above Quetta.[36] Also, the individuals proselytised by the anti-state and secessionist agenda of BLA are the ones impacted by the insurgency and counterinsurgency operations,

---

[30] BLV, "BLA appeals to the Baloch nation to boycott Pakistan's fraudulent elections."
[31] Gerstel, Dylan. "ISIS and Innovative Propaganda: Confronting Extremism in the Digital Age." *Swarthmore International Relations Journal*, 1 (2016): 1-9.
[32] BLV, "BLA appeals to the Baloch nation to boycott Pakistan's fraudulent elections."
[33] BLV, "The Organization has no hand in forcing traders for financial assistance in Turbat."
[34] Abubakar Siddique, "The Rise of the Baloch Liberation Army in Pakistan," RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty, 2024, https://www.rferl.org/a/pakistan-balochistan-baluch-liberation-army/33099973.html.
[35] Interviewee I; Interviewee II
[36] Interviewee II; Interviewee III

specifically the families of "missing persons" – though those individuals were involved in militant and terrorist activities.[37]

2.1.2. Genocidal Rhetoric

BLA's genocidal rhetoric, accusing the state institutions like the police and the Counter Terrorist Department as assumed "Baloch genocidal institution[s]", frames its violent struggle as legitimate.[38]

Such a weighty accusation is levelled due to the involvement of such organisations in myriad putative "state atrocities" and "war crimes".[39] Accordingly, these include supposed "forced disappearance of Baloch youths, target killing, and inhumane torture during imprisonment".[40] Additionally, such institutions have been involved in giving an alleged free hand to notorious individuals for committing anti-social activities such as "robbery, illegal occupation of lands, and threatening locals in the city and its surroundings".[41]

The irony in the claims of BLA is not lost. This is especially evident given its own involvement in anti-social activities such as oil smuggling, ethnic violence against Punjabis and deliberately targeting Chinese nationals, drug trafficking, extortion, and kidnapping for ransom to generate revenue to become financially self-sufficient.[42]

---

[37] Interviewee III; Salaraaa. "Do people in Balochistan want independence from Pakistan". *Reddit*, December 10, 2023.
https://www.reddit.com/r/pakistan/comments/18enuqe/do_people_in_balochistan_want_independence_from/
[38] BLV, "We accept responsibility for killing CTD officer in Kharan."
[39] Bahot, "Complete Control Over Jaffar Express Maintained."
[40] BLV, "BLA accepts responsibility for the killing of four death squad operatives."
[41] BLV, "BLA accepts responsibility for the killing an MI operative."
[42] Interviewee III; Abid Hussain, "Who Are the BLA – the Group Behind Pakistan's Deadly Train Hijack?," Al Jazeera, March 13, 2025, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/3/12/who-are-the-bla-the-group-behind-pakistans-deadly-train-hijack.

BLA's employment of the seeming genocidal rhetoric is a broader part of its strategy to instil hatred against the state with the Baloch. They capitalise on minor incidents involving state actions and perpetuate them on their social media platforms to radicalise locals and subsequently recruit them as militants.[43]

Therefore, language plays a vital role in enabling BLA to carry out attacks against the Pakistani state and generate political consensus as words not only describe the world, but they also help create it.[44] Thus, in BLA's world, it is a self-described liberator of the oppressed Baloch, fighting a so-called genuine struggle for the creation of an independent Balochistan. Embedded in anti-colonial and liberation discourse, this framing helps BLA give moral justification to its actions.

2.2. "Brave" Us and "Coward" Them

Echoes of Dijik's ideological square are observed in the diametrically opposed portrayals of the Pakistani institutions and armed forces on the one hand, and the BLA on the other as seen in table 1.

Name of Organisation	Words Used
Baloch Liberation Army	Courageous, fierce, brave, devoted, fearless, sincere, commitment, hardworking, dedicated, passionate, integrity, capable, tactical expertise, discipline, resilience, organisational strength, adaptability, dignified, conscious, steadfast, exemplary
Pakistan Armed Forces and Institutions	Coward, morally bankrupt, shameful, puppet, conspiratorial, satanic, cunning, pimp, colluding, nefarious, hijack, fake, extort, malevolent, massacres, hypocrisy, disregard, propaganda, fabricating artificial narratives

Table 1: Difference in words used by BLA to describe BLA members and the Pakistani Institutions and Armed Forces[45]

The strategic use of positive adjectives for their fighters and Baloch nation constructs a purified image in the minds of the readers. Contrarily, the Pakistani

---

[43] Interviewee III

[44] Asaf Siniver and Scott Lucas, "The Islamic State Lexical Battleground: US Foreign Policy and the Abstraction of Threat," *International Affairs* 92, no. 1 (January 1, 2016): 63–79.

[45] Compiled by the Author from the studied BLA Press Releases posted on BLV

state and the armed forces described through highly charged vocabulary incites negative emotions in the reader.

2.2.1. Visual Discourse

Visual discourse is also embedded in BLA's social media posts to insinuate its bravery. An example of such a tactic is shown in figure 3.

Figure 3: BLA's 2024 Annual Report[46]

An authoritative image has been created through the deliberate choice of a colour palette of muted greys and hues of yellow and red. Legitimacy is postulated through the Sans-Serif font typograph to replicate state-issued documents. Recording the number of kills attained is similar to profit and loss reports generated by businesses in a financial year. Such datafication and presentation of numerical evidence further feeds into BLA's endeavour of presenting itself as a transparent

---

[46] BLV, "Annual Analytical Report."

organisation. Furthermore, it also paints heinous violence as a trite practice to be carried out under the ambit of "strategic activities".

BLA's infographic has left out its heinous crime of deliberately targeting Punjabis. As many as 39 Punjabis became victims of BLA terrorism in 2024.[47] Omitting this statistic is a calculated move by BLA to hide its true face – an organisation embroiled in terrorist activities.

In its other uploaded images, BLA celebrates fallen comrades by presenting them as apparent righteous defenders. It also seemingly sanctifies their deaths by bestowing them with the title "shaheed" to invoke religious and moral legitimacy.

Contrastingly, Pakistani security personnel are "neutralised"[48] and "eliminated".[49] This dichotomous imagery is also prevalent in the pictures posted by BLA.

Figure 4: Presentation of BLA's "Fallen Comrades"[50]

---

[47] "Timeline: Attacks Claimed by BLA Over the Last One Year," DAWN.COM, March 12, 2025, https://www.dawn.com/news/1897420.

[48] BLV, "BLA accepts responsibility for neutralizing a key informant."

[49] BLV, "BLA takes responsibility for eliminating Four Intelligence Operatives."

As seen in figure 4, tributes are paid to their martyred in a humanising manner to show their supposed defiance by putting up pictures of them alive, smiling, and at times holding up a victory sign. They are often dressed in their freedom fighter outfit and armed with their AK-47s in the backdrop of a superimposed image of the BLA flag – the "most sacred thing" in their possession as a Baloch nation.[51]

Some of their freedom fighters are conferred with the illustrious title of "Sagaar-e-Baloch" – the highest military honour, parallel to state behaviour, to elevate their so-called heroic acts of sacrifice in a bid to pay homage.

However, this is in direct contrast to the pictures they upload of the "others", such as "non-locals"[52] – a term deliberately used to create a divide between 'us', the locals, and 'them', the outsiders, thereby splintering any shared sense of Pakistani community.

Figure 5: Images of the "Other"[53]

Seen in figure 5, members of the Pakistan Coast Guard and informants to the military are subdued and stripped of their dignity in injury and death as their bloodied

---

[50] BLV, "Sagaar-e-Baloch Commander."
[51] BLV, "A National Flag is the most sacred thing."
[52] BLV, "BLA takes responsibility for hand grenade attack."
[53] BLV, "BLA takes responsibility for eliminating Four Intelligence Operatives".; Baloch Liberation Voice, "BLA fighters executed Qadir Baksh."

bodies are zoomed on, creating a spectacle meant to serve as a warning for others to change their path or meet a similar fate.

2.2.2. Numerical Triumphs

BLA regularly posts about the number of army personnel[54] killed by them during their operations whilst underscoring the lower number of causalities[55] of their side to highlight their effective strategical planning and tactics. This was particularly highlighted in the notorious BLA hijacking of Jaffar Express in March 2025, which was deemed as a successful operation that did not see a single BLA fighter injured or killed.[56]

2.3. Building Exploitative Infrastructure and Looting National Resources

BLA has viewed the construction of infrastructure in Balochistan as part of the "colonial" project of the state machinery to escalate their alleged "exploitative and expansionist intentions".[57] It specifically asserts that "no occupier can develop a subjugated nation"[58] "against the will of Baloch nation"[59] finding credence in colonialism and development to be mutually exclusive. Thus, a connection is constructed with the wider rhetoric that colonisers instrumentalise development to actively generate underdevelopment in the colonised land.[60]

Civilian development such as roads or the installation of mobile and telecommunication towers is framed as a seeming veneer for conducting

---

54 E.g., BLV, "In Chitkan clash, 11 personnel of the occupying forces were killed."
55 E.g., BLV, "BLA pays tribute to the three comrades martyred."
56 Bahot, "Jaffar Express and 182 Hostages Held for Six Hours."
57 BLV, "We attacked construction company."
58 BLV, "BLA claims responsibility attack on Pakistan navy personnel."
59 BLV, "We will only release the workers of the telecom company."
60 Harvard Center for International Development, "Colonialism and Development," May 6, 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WcAYlvrz2Ao.

surveillance and aiding in anti-Baloch activities such as abductions.[61] Thus, they are denounced by BLA through arson and destruction.[62]

In particular, the infrastructural developments made by Pakistan in collaboration with China under the auspices of CPEC, are criticised by BLA as an exploitative project.[63] This is because Pakistan and China are presented as accomplices complicit in the so-called demographic change of Balochistan. According to the claims made by BLA, this is done by the replacement of the local population with the construction of a naval base in the "Baloch Sea" that caused loss of livelihood for the Baloch fishermen.[64] Renaming the Arabian Sea as the Baloch Sea is another symbolic move by BLA to lay claim and sovereignty over the Sea, an integral asset to the Baloch people in terms of livelihood, as part of their supposed defiance to the official state narrative.

At this juncture it is important to mention the *sardari* system still followed in Balochistan punctuated by cruelty and oppression.[65] Its tyrannical tentacles have obstructed the educational and infrastructural development of the province in a bid to maintain hegemonic power of the *sardars* and *nawabs* in the region. It is demonstrated through the usurpation of billions in developmental funds by the *sardars* to systematically keep the province underdeveloped in the spheres of health and literacy.[66] Henceforth, the hue and cry raised by accusing state-led

---

[61] BLV, "We disabled the spying equipment."

[62] BLV, "We accept responsibility for setting fire to the telecommunication tower."

[63] BLV, "We take responsibility for the attack on the engineers of the CPEC."

[64] BLV, "BLA claims responsibility for the attack on Pakistan Navy personnel."

[65] Usman Ali, "Enduring Shadow of Sardari Rule in Balochistan," Centre for Strategic and Contemporary Research, April 21, 2025, https://cscr.pk/explore/themes/politics-governance/enduring-shadow-of-sardari-rule-in-balochistan/

[66] Mir Sher Baz Khetran, "Crisis in Balochistan: challenges and opportunities," *Strategic Studies* 31, no. 1/2 (2011): 24–39, https://www.jstor.org/stable/48529345; Nimra Khalil, "Balochistan's Billions Vanished: How Sardars Looted Development Funds And - Policy Wire," *Policy Wire*, April 29, 2025,

developmental projects as anti-Baloch is yet another methodical way for the sardars to maintain their stranglehold on the province.

Pakistan has promoted its minerals sector for international investment by pitching its mines to Eastern and Western delegations.[67] BLA has warned foreign investors against entering economic or trade agreements with the purported "occupying state" in Balochistan.[68] However, interestingly, BLA has been involved in a selective identification of its enemy as only Chinese investment projects have been targeted[69] in a bid to stand politically correct in front of the countries that support and abet it.

The anti-China narrative peddled is in line with BLA's belief and assertion that Beijing is allegedly exploiting Balochistan's resources and helping Pakistan consolidate its military authority in the province with the provision of intelligence and weapons.[70]

Similarly, extraction of natural gas, oil, and minerals such as marble and chromite is termed as a plunder and looting of Baloch national resources.[71] This implies the ownership and sovereignty of the Baloch nation over these national assets claiming to be rightful owners.

https://policy-wire.com/balochistans-billions-vanished-how-sardars-looted-development-funds-and-kept-the-province-backward/

[67] "Pakistan Seeks Billions in Investment as It Promotes Its Minerals Sector | AP News," AP News, April 9, 2025, https://apnews.com/article/pakistan-hosts-international-mines-minerals-summit-0ac2f697f2479fc52f3fb82723a9062b.

[68] "BLA Claims Responsibility for Attack on Saindak Project Convoy, Says Seven Soldiers Killed," The Balochistan Post, February 25, 2025, https://thebalochistanpost.net/2025/02/bla-claims-responsibility-for-attack-on-saindak-project-convoy-says-seven-soldiers-killed/.

[69] Ajmal Sohail, "A 72-hour Battle of the Baloch Freedom Fighters in Pakistan," Modern Diplomacy, February 7, 2022, https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2022/02/07/a-72-hour-battle-of-the-baloch-freedom-fighters-in-pakistan/.

[70] Riccardo Valle and Lucas Webber, "Rising Anti-China Sentiment in Balochistan Threatens Increased Attacks on Chinese Interests in Pakistan - Jamestown," *Jamestown*, January 17, 2024, https://jamestown.org/program/rising-anti-china-sentiment-in-balochistan-threatens-increased-attacks-on-chinese-interests-in-pakistan/.

[71] BLV, "BLA takes responsibility for the attack on mineral transporting trucks."

Thus, the developmental and economic activity of Pakistan in Balochistan is framed as theft and illegitimate, rather than as the state's attempt to develop the province by capitalising upon its geostrategic location and strategic value.

3. DISCURSIVE AND SOCIAL PRACTICE

The other two strands in Fairclough's CDA, discursive practice and social practice, are important as well. Discursive practice examines the production, distribution, and consumption of texts within social contexts and intertextuality – texts do not exist in a vacuum, rather they are influenced and draw on other texts.[72] Social practice is also significant to consider because it provides an overview of the context and ideology within which discourses are constructed.[73]

It is understood that BLA continues to use social media as an alternative space to avoid censorship and maintain an online presence. Thus, the propagandist material is published by BLA on platforms such as Telegram and X (formerly Twitter) to reach out to fellow Baloch and diasporic communities with their official narratives embedded in their press releases. The content also reaches sympathetic Baloch public, neutral observers like international human organisations, and their apparent opponents – the Pakistani state – considering that most of their press releases include instructions for the Baloch people and stand as a direct challenge to the state narrative. Additionally, the publication of their press releases in both English and Urdu allow their widespread readership within Pakistan and abroad.

---

[72] Norman Fairclough, "Critical Discourse Analysis", in *The Routledge Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, ed. Michael Handford and James Paul Gee (New York: Routledge, 2013), 9-34.
[73] Muhammad Aslam Sipra and Athar Rashid, "Critical Discourse Analysis of Martin Luther King's Speech in Socio-Political Perspective," *Advances in Language and Literary Studies* 4, no. 1 (January 1, 2013): 27–33.

As part of their discursive practice, infographics laden with statistics and figures are deemed weaponised for fostering credibility within the Baloch community and appealing to the younger audience. This ultimately helps BLA gain sympathisers due to their portrayal of the supposed "truth".[74] More specifically, the posts resonate with the Baloch population as they capitalise upon the situation in the province to provide a putative alternative to the "information black hole" in the province to keep the locals abreast of developments, albeit tinged with propaganda and disinformation.[75]

Intertextuality emerges as a significant part of the BLA narrative. Thereby, use of quotes by prominent Marxist revolutionaries such as Che Guevara[76] and Fidel Castro[77] connote defiance and revolutionary romanticism in a bid to form a connection with global leftist anti-colonial struggles. Furthermore, it also helps BLA present itself as a resistance validated by history.

This alignment with anti-colonial and revolutionary discourse allows BLA to supposedly augment its position as a just struggle against an imperial occupier. This also relates to the ideological beginnings of the organisation as it was originally formed with Soviet support and communist leadership.[78] Additionally, the Majeed Brigade – the so-called elite unit of the BLA involved in multiple suicide attacks – has been exposed to the teachings of Marxist and revolutionary leaders such as

---

[74] Interview I
[75] Interview I
[76] BLV, "Until victory always."
[77] BLV, "A revolution is not a bed of roses."
[78] Tofeeque Ahmed, "BLA Insurgency in Balochistan Region," *Eurasia Review*, March 13, 2025, https://www.eurasiareview.com/13032025-bla-insurgency-in-balochistan-region-oped/.
Kavita Sewda and Vasundhra Singh Panwar, "Why BLA Is Against Chinese Investment in Balochistan?," *The Kootneeti*, July 6, 2020, https://thekootneeti.in/2020/07/06/why-bla-is-against-chinese-investment-in-balochistan/.

Amílcar Cabral and Mao Zedong as their books are taught in their training centre.[79] Such leftist and classless ideology preaching for a "liberated Baloch" has appealed to the youth, especially as the province is ruled by *sardars*.[80] Therefore, it is unsurprising that BLA uses Marxist quotes in its social media posts as this helps distance itself from the terrorist label and gain alleged moral legitimacy for its violence through anti-colonial framing.

Quoting Marxist leaders is not tantamount to compliance with the Marxist ideology. The bulk of BLA attacks have been carried out against the poor workers[81] – the proletariat class under exploitation by the bourgeoisie. Thus, targeting the very class which according to the Marxist ideology has to overthrow the capitalist class works against the core tenets of Marxism.

The situational context of being branded as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist by the US in 2019[82] soon after the Gwadar Pearl Continental hotel attack[83], the UK in 2006[84], and the European Union[85] contradicts the narrative building of BLA through its social media posts. Internationally, it is proscribed as a terrorist organisation. This adds to the urge of BLA to prove itself as a liberation organisation.

[79] Khan, "Understanding the Baloch Liberation Army."

[80] Interviewee III

[81] Zayar, "The Killing of Pakistani Workers and the Dead End of Baloch Ethno-separatist Nationalism," World Socialist Web Site, September 17, 2024, https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2024/09/17/bxku-s17.html.

[82] U.S. Department of State, *Terrorist Designations of Balochistan Liberation Army and Husain Ali Hazzima and Amendments to the Terrorist Designations of Jundallah,* by Office of the Spokesperson, https://2017-2021.state.gov/terrorist-designations-of-balochistan-liberation-army-and-husain-ali-hazzima-and-amendments-to-the-terrorist-designations-of-jundallah/

[83] Interviewee III

[84] "Proscribed Terrorist Groups or Organisations," GOV.UK, February 27, 2025, https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/proscribed-terror-groups-or-organisations--2/proscribed-terrorist-groups-or-organisations-accessible-version.

[85] Farzana Shaikh, "The hijacking of a train marks a watershed in the Balochistan insurgency," Chatham House, March 21, 2025, https://www.chathamhouse.org/2025/03/hijacking-train-marks-watershed-balochistan-insurgency#:~:text=The%20event%20sent%20shock%20waves,States%20and%20the%20European%20Union.

Henceforth, BLA uses neo-imperial rhetoric to portray and claim developmental projects like the CPEC as imposed without local consent to undermine state efforts while also amplifying grievances against the state due to the province's material and cultural dispossession.[86]

Emotions are weaponised by insurgencies to build their support base.[87] Evidently, a soft corner exists in the hearts of the Baloch population for BLA as they do not call them terrorists outrightly.[88] Therefore, this can allude to the putative success of the group's social media campaign owing to its reductionist and simplistic narratives that blame the Pakistani state for the issues faced by the Baloch.[89]

4. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

4.1. Baloch Grievances Redressal

BLA's social media narratives succeed among Baloch people by capitalising upon their experiences of inequality and exclusion by the Pakistani state. This has the potential to become online or offline mobilisation that can tip into upheaval and violence.[90] This presents a national security issue.

Governance issues, mismanagement, and corruption become fodder for further radicalisation of the youth. Disillusioned by the failings of the political system, the youth become an easy target for the extremists to sway them to their side.[91] To prevent BLA's exploitation of local grievances and turning them into anti-state sentiments, the state must see the political shortcomings in the province. This

---

[86] Ayush Verma, Imtiaz Baloch, and Riccardo Valle, "The Baloch Insurgency in Pakistan: Evolution, Tactics, and Regional Security Implications."
[87] Interviewee III; Ambreen Javed, "Resistance and its Progression to Insurgency," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 30, no. 1 & 2 (January 2010): 171–86.
[88] Interviewee III
[89] Interviewee III
[90] Interviewee III
[91] Interviewee III

requires a political approach to the issue rather than sole reliance on kinetic measures.[92] Henceforth, taking the public into confidence is important.[93] This requires the avoidance of sole reliance on an iron fist approach, rather complementing it by reducing insurgents' motives for continuing an insurgency.

To assuage the grievances faced by the Baloch, the political underrepresentation faced by Balochistan must be corrected. This will allow the province to partake in moulding national policies. Furthermore, it will help to adopt a development-oriented model rather than a security centric governance paradigm that can hose down the smoulders of support for terrorist organisations.

This has been understood by the government through a two-pronged strategy: combining counterinsurgency with political engagement to pursue a political solution and economic empowerment.[94] While this recognition is a crucial first step, practical steps in the form of education and employment have yet to be taken to alleviate the grievances of the Baloch people.

4.2. State-led Social Media Counter-narrative

The use of social media is rife making the narrative of BLA increasingly accessible. This makes the Baloch youth more susceptible to BLA's propaganda, specifically the colonisation and anti-China narratives. Therefore, it is crucial for the state to present an accurate counter-narrative to challenge BLA's assertions.

An example of counter-narrative can be generated from within the Marxist ideology seemingly followed by BLA. Marxism asserts poverty is a product of class oppression. Attention of the Baloch youth has to be drawn to the fact that BLA's non-

---

[92] Interviewee II
[93] Interviewee II
[94] Hamid Asghar, "Govt Committed to Addressing Political, Economic Issues of Balochistan: Minister," *DAWN.COM*, April 3, 2025, https://www.dawn.com/news/1901707.

combatant casualties comprise poor workers such as barbers and labourers. Thus, BLA is contributing to further oppression of the poor, raising questions about BLA's Marxist inspiration.

The use of statistics and facts on social media is important to underscore the benefits derived from Chinese investment. This will help portray China as an economic and strategic partner and counter BLA's representation of China as a hostile force.

Lastly, the public needs to be educated, starting from the school level, on digital resilience and media literacy to identify propaganda and evade manipulation tactics deployed by extremist organisations.

5. CONCLUSION

Social media has presented terrorists with a space to propagate their propaganda unimpeded owing to limitations in regulating the posted content. On their official Telegram channel account, BLA has posted vitriol rich posts against the Pakistani state in a bid to paint it as an alleged aggressor and Baloch as victims. Primarily, the dominant narrative has been an assertion of liberating Balochistan from the so-called occupation of the coloniser – Pakistan. This has led towards claims of BLA establishing itself as a legitimate actor for securing the independence of Balochistan through a kinetic engagement with the security forces of Pakistan – the agents of the colonial state. In that regard, the bravery of BLA fighters is amplified by highlighting numerical triumphs over the Pakistani forces and deployment of visual discourse to emotionally seduce the audience into accepting the valour of BLA. Through genocidal rhetoric and repetition of claims, BLA has used literary devices to further their narratives. Additionally, infrastructural projects have

been deemed as exploitative and developmental structures as spyware to justify their dismantlement.

To counter these narratives, it is important for the Pakistani state to undertake a diverse range of policies that helps educate the public against the narratives perpetuated by BLA. In that regard, a counter narrative campaign concentrated on filling the information gap capitalised upon by BLA through credible and authentic factual accounts. The addressing of grievances of the Baloch people is another significant aspect. More specifically, positive media coverage to elevate the developments undertaken in collaboration with the Chinese in the province can help the locals understand the importance of such infrastructural activities. Ultimately, the successful countering of BLA social media narratives is a holistic endeavour combining counter social media narratives and confidence building mechanisms.

A few questions remain unanswered that can provide a direction for future research. BLA's co-option of religious titles despite identifying as a secular movement raises questions about the religious community supporting BLA as a movement or denouncing it as a terrorist organisation. Furthermore, BLA's alliance with Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan, an ultra-orthodox jihadist militant group further sparks a debate about BLA's legitimacy as it is in a relationship with an organisation incongruent to its ideology defined by secular ethno-nationalist secession.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ahmed, Tofeeque. "BLA Insurgency in Balochistan Region." *Eurasia Review*, March

13, 2025. https://www.eurasiareview.com/13032025-bla-insurgency-in-

balochistan-region-oped/.

Ali, Usman. "Enduring Shadow of Sardari Rule in Balochistan." Centre for Strategic

and Contemporary Research, April 21, 2025.

https://cscr.pk/explore/themes/politics-governance/enduring-shadow-of-

sardari-rule-in-balochistan/.

AP News. "Pakistan Seeks Billions in Investment as It Promotes Its Minerals Sector |

AP News," April 9, 2025. https://apnews.com/article/pakistan-hosts-

international-mines-minerals-summit-0ac2f697f2479fc52f3fb82723a9062b.

Asghar, Hamid. "Govt Committed to Addressing Political, Economic Issues of

Balochistan: Minister." DAWN.COM, April 3, 2025.

https://www.dawn.com/news/1901707.

Aziz, Sajid. "Digital Warfare: The Baloch Liberation Army's Tactical Use of Social

Media in the Herof Attack." *GNET*, November 8, 2024. https://gnet-

research.org/2024/11/08/digital-warfare-the-baloch-liberation-armys-tactical-

use-of-social-media-in-the-herof-attack/.

DAWN.COM. "Timeline: Attacks Claimed by BLA Over the Last One Year," March

12, 2025. https://www.dawn.com/news/1897420.

Fairclough, Norman. "Critical Discourse Analysis."In *The Routledge Handbook of

Discourse Analysis*, edited by Michael Handford and James Paul Gee, 9-34.

New York: Routledge, 2013.

Gerstel, Dylan. "ISIS and Innovative Propaganda: Confronting Extremism in the

Digital Age." *Swarthmore International Relations Journal*. 1 (2016): 1-9.

https://doi.org/10.24968/2574-0113.1.5.

Godbole, Tanika. "Pakistan: Gunmen Kill 7 Punjabis in Bus Attack." DW.com,

February 19, 2025. https://www.dw.com/en/pakistan-gunmen-kill-7-punjabis-

in-bus-attack/a-71666756.

GOV.UK. "Proscribed Terrorist Groups or Organisations," February 27, 2025.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/proscribed-terror-groups-or-

organisations--2/proscribed-terrorist-groups-or-organisations-accessible-

version.

Haider, Abeera, Saqib Khan Warraich, and Dr Alishba Mukhtar. "Use Of Facebook

And Twitter By Terrorist Organizations To Radicalize The Youth: A Case

Study Of Ttp, Bla And Isis In Pakistan." *Bulletin of Business and Economics

(BBE)* 12, no. 2 (2023): 171-177. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8348303

Harvard Center for International Development. "Colonialism and Development," May

6, 2022. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WcAYlvrz2Ao.

Hussain, Abid. "Who Are the BLA – the Group Behind Pakistan's Deadly Train

Hijack?" Al Jazeera, March 13, 2025.

https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/3/12/who-are-the-bla-the-group-behind-

pakistans-deadly-train-hijack.

Iqbal, Jehanzeb. "Decoding Bots of Terrorism in Balochistan." *Margalla Papers* 28,

no. 2 (2024): 63-77. https://doi.org/10.54690/margallapapers.28.2.277

Janks, Hilary. "Critical discourse analysis as a research tool." *Discourse: studies in the cultural politics of education* 18, no. 3 (1997): 329-342.

Javed, Ambreen. "Resistance and its Progression to Insurgency." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 30, no. 1 & 2 (January 2010): 171–86. https://www.issi.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/1299569767_89446052.pdf.

Johnson, Cathryn, Timothy J. Dowd, and Cecilia L. Ridgeway. "Legitimacy as a Social Process." *Annual Review of Sociology* 32, no. 1 (April 7, 2006): 53–78. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.32.061604.123101.

Karademir, Kutluer, and Mahmut Cengiz. "Names Are Never Only Names: A Nominal Analysis of Terrorist Organizations." *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 46, no. 11 (April 22, 2021): 2303–26. https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610x.2021.1913820.

Khalil, Nimra. "Balochistan's Billions Vanished: How Sardars Looted Development Funds And - Policy Wire." *Policy Wire*, April 29, 2025. https://policy-wire.com/balochistans-billions-vanished-how-sardars-looted-development-funds-and-kept-the-province-backward/.

Khan, Abdullah. "Understanding the Baloch Liberation Army." *Narratives*, June 18, 2022. Accessed June 12, 2025. https://narratives.com.pk/horizons/understanding-the-baloch-liberation-army/.

Khetran, Mir Sher Baz. "Crisis in Balochistan: challenges and opportunities." *Strategic Studies* 31, no. 1/2 (2011): 24–39. https://www.jstor.org/stable/48529345.

KhosraviNik, Majid, and Mohammedwesam Amer. "Social Media and Terrorism

Discourse: The Islamic State's (IS) Social Media Discursive Content and

Practices." *Critical Discourse Studies* 19, no. 2 (November 23, 2020): 124–43.

https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2020.1835684.

Interview I: Anonymous Baloch Individual

Interview II: Anonymous Baloch Individual

Interview III: Anonymous Baloch Individual

Iqbal, Abdul Rauf. "Balochistan: A Victim of Geopolitics or Socioeconomic

Grievances?" *Stratheia*, November 20, 2024.

https://stratheia.com/balochistan-a-victim-of-geopolitics-or-socioeconomic-

grievances/.

Malik, Asad. "Media's Policy in the Wake of Resurgence in Terrorism." Stratheia,

February 8, 2023. https://stratheia.com/medias-policy-in-the-wake-of-

resurgence-in-terrorism/.

Özkaya, Erdal. "The Use of Social Media for Terrorism." *Defence Against Terrorism

Review* 9, (2017): 47-59.

Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies. *Pakistan Security Report 2020*. Pakistan

Institute for Peace Studies, 2021. https://www.pakpips.com/web/wp-

content/uploads/2021/06/Final-Report-2020.pdf

Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies. *Pakistan Security Report 2021*. Pakistan

    Institute for Peace Studies, 2022. https://www.pakpips.com/web/wp-

    content/uploads/2022/01/Sr2021FinalWithTitles.pdf

Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies. *Pakistan Security Report 2022*. Pakistan

    Institute for Peace Studies, 2023. https://www.pakpips.com/web/wp-

    content/uploads/2023/02/SecReport_2022.pdf

Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies. *Pakistan's Evolving Militant Landscape: State*

    Responses & Policy Options. Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, 2024.

    https://www.pakpips.com/web/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Final-

    Report_RNE_withthitlesandmaps-.pdf

Panwar, Kavita Sewda and Vasundhra Singh. "Why BLA Is Against Chinese

    Investment in Balochistan?" *The Kootneeti*, July 6, 2020.

    https://thekootneeti.in/2020/07/06/why-bla-is-against-chinese-investment-in-

    balochistan/.

Rana, Muhammad Amir. "Problem With Punjab CNIC." DAWN.COM, September 1,

    2024. https://www.dawn.com/news/1856116.

Salaraaa. "Do people in Balochistan want independence from Pakistan". *Reddit*,

    December 10, 2023.

    https://www.reddit.com/r/pakistan/comments/18enuqe/do_people_in_balochist

    an_want_independence_from/

S.C. Res. 1566 (Adopted by the Security Council at its 5053rd meeting, on 8 October

    2004), S/RES/1566, p. 2, October 8, 2004.

    https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/532676?ln=en&v=pdf.

Shaikh, Farzana. "The hijacking of a train marks a watershed in the Balochistan insurgency." Chatham House, March 21, 2025. https://www.chathamhouse.org/2025/03/hijacking-train-marks-watershed-balochistan-insurgency#:~:text=The%20event%20sent%20shock%20waves,States%20and%20the%20European%20Union.

Siddique, Abubakar. "The Rise Of The Baloch Liberation Army In Pakistan." *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*, 2024. https://www.rferl.org/a/pakistan-balochistan-baluch-liberation-army/33099973.html.

Siniver, Asaf, and Scott Lucas. "The Islamic State Lexical Battleground: US Foreign Policy and the Abstraction of Threat." *International Affairs* 92, no. 1 (January 1, 2016): 63–79. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2346.12507.

Sipra, Muhammad Aslam, and Athar Rashid. "Critical Discourse Analysis of Martin Luther King's Speech in Socio-Political Perspective." *Advances in Language and Literary Studies* 4, no. 1 (January 1, 2013): 27–33. https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.alls.v.4n.1p.27.

"Social Media Strategies and Online Narratives of Terrorist Organizations; Case Studies of Al-Qaeda, ISIS, Taliban and Lashkar-e-Taiba," n.d. https://www.efsas.org/publications/study-papers/social-media-strategies-online-narratives-of-terrorists-groups-al-qaeda-isis-taliban-lashkar/.

Sohail, Ajmal. "A 72-hour Battle of the Baloch Freedom Fighters in Pakistan." Modern Diplomacy, February 7, 2022.

https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2022/02/07/a-72-hour-battle-of-the-baloch-freedom-fighters-in-pakistan/.

The Balochistan Post. "BLA Claims Responsibility for Attack on Saindak Project Convoy, Says Seven Soldiers Killed," February 25, 2025. https://thebalochistanpost.net/2025/02/bla-claims-responsibility-for-attack-on-saindak-project-convoy-says-seven-soldiers-killed/.

U.S. Department of State. *Terrorist Designations of Balochistan Liberation Army and Husain Ali Hazzima and Amendments to the Terrorist Designations of Jundallah.* Office of the Spokesperson, https://2017-2021.state.gov/terrorist-designations-of-balochistan-liberation-army-and-husain-ali-hazzima-and-amendments-to-the-terrorist-designations-of-jundallah/ (accessed June 13, 2025).

U.S. Library of Congress. Congressional Research Service, *Terrorist and Other Militant Groups in Pakistan*, by K. Alan Kronstadt. IF11934. 2023.

Valle, Riccardo, and Lucas Webber. "Rising Anti-China Sentiment in Balochistan Threatens Increased Attacks on Chinese Interests in Pakistan." *Jamestown*, January 17, 2024. https://jamestown.org/program/rising-anti-china-sentiment-in-balochistan-threatens-increased-attacks-on-chinese-interests-in-pakistan/.

Van Dijk, Teun. *Ideology: A Multidisciplinary Approach*, 2000. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446217856.

Verma, Ayush, Imtiaz Baloch, and Riccardo Valle. "The Baloch Insurgency in Pakistan: Evolution, Tactics, and Regional Security Implications." *CTC*

Sentinel, April 2025, 27–40. https://ctc.westpoint.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/CTC-SENTINEL-042025_article-3.pdf.

Zayar. "The Killing of Pakistani Workers and the Dead End of Baloch Ethno-separatist Nationalism." World Socialist Web Site, September 17, 2024. https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2024/09/17/bxku-s17.html.