Deterring the Influence of Organized Crime in Sistan and Baluchistan Province on the National Security of Islamic Republic of Iran

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ABSTRACT: Domestic challenges have continuously gone alongside the international interventions in Iran. Out of the domestic security challenges of the country, organized crime and physical security instability and proposing possible propositions to address these challenges have been of vital significance. The diverse population, geographic placement, varied believes, potential marginalization, governance centralism, isolated borders and lack of cross-border control are considered significant factors of the subject. This organized crime has a direct and indirect influence on the national security of the country. This research studies the political facts and factors that can deter the influence of organized crime on the national security of the country and propose feasible and attainable recommendations to deter this influence.

KEYWORDS: Organized Crime. Sistan and Baluchistan. National Security. Criminal Organizations. Copenhagen School and Security

I. INTRODUCTION

The Islamic Republic of Iran has been engaged in facing and controlling several security challenges caused due to domestic and international interventions since its advent. (David Vestenskov, Amin Saikal, 2020) The domestic security challenges have been of diverse causes and facts, out of which, the organized crime of Sistan and Baluchistan province has been of vital importance. The Sistan and Baluchistan province has been associated to a history of instability and lack of development (Zia ur Rehman, 2014) which has led to the development of crimes and bringing the organized crime into being. Organized crime in rural areas has been a topic of discussion for many years. This leads to direct and direct challenges to the national security of the country, leading to force suppressions. The existence of multitude of arguments reasoning an in-depth ministration of the crime in rural areas between the scholars, policy and decision makers and individuals has always been of great importance (Vania Ceccato, Jonatan Abraham, 2022). The organized crimes have a vivid contribution to the security and peace sustainability of the country. The local communities of Sistan and Baluchistan province consider themselves marginalized and discriminated on the basis of the rumors and anti-Iranian news being circulated on media causing significant tensions between the population of the province and the central government (Matthew G. Elliott, 2020). Such hearsay causes a tremendous encouragement in the local population to support organized crime making it a great challenge for the national and cross border security. Deterring these organized crimes can not only enhance the security situation in the very province of Sistan Baluchistan and Iran, rather, it can positively affect the cross-border security as well.

II. BACKGROUND

Organized crime is one of the most important threats to the global community. The subject in science Criminology includes severe criminal activities among groups of criminals who have coherent and complex suspicions or special characteristics for the financial obstacles or power of the crime. However, the administration of organized crimes, with the vast number of industries related to trafficking, drugs and terrorism acts have acquired a national aspect and it has expanded to the cross-border arena. Perpetrators of crimes of this size are operate by establishing companies to promote themselves or to launder the proceeds of crime, and continue to cover up their secret business activities. In today's world, organized crime has evolved into a large business generating a handsome amount of revenue (Mohseni, 2012).

Organized crimes raised together with the technological and commercial advancements, in the mid 20th century while the world was engaged in the oppositions of super power (Salimi, 2001).

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According to the existing distribution of Baloch tribes, Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan all claim portions of the Baloch homeland. It is divided almost equally between Pakistan and Iran, and in Iran and is known as Sistan-Baluchistan and Balochistan, respectively. Balochistan also includes a tiny fraction of the Afghan provinces of Kandahar, Helmand, and Nimruz. The split of the region among the three nations dates back to the time of the western and southern Asian empires. The area has been at the center of power struggles since it is surrounded on either side by the Persian and Indian empires (Zeus Hans Mendez, 2020).

Smuggling is one of the most important organized crimes in Sistan and Baluchistan that mainly includes drug trafficking, arms and ammunition trafficking, human trafficking, and goods trafficking among the most important types of trafficking in this province, the deterring and effects of which are examined in this article. Organized crime, such as smuggling; leaves dangerous effects in the society, depending on the specific characteristics and intended goals of committing it. Criminal organizations, on the other hand, due to committing crimes such as drug trafficking, human trafficking, arms and ammunition trafficking, migrant smuggling, economic crimes and money laundering; and the use of criminal tools and acts of violence and; if necessary, the use of terrorism, have harmful and destructive effects on the national security of the country. They leave a strong impact on the culture, ethics, economy and security of a society. Moreover, considering that these organizations are looking for economic benefits, their incomes are re-invested in the market, expanding the capacities of the criminal organizations, developing influence in government bodies and in this way increasing them to gain more power and influence in the government. Consequently, dragging the governing body by corrupting departmental officials and community officials and even ordinary people. In this paper, deterring the influence of organized crime on the national security of the country has been studied in details.

III. STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

"National Security" as one of the most basic pillars of human life, along with other basic needs has been of great importance since the beginning of human creation. Security is the foundation of providing necessities, the lack of which initially leads to social psychosis. Organized crime has internationally been accepted as one of the most influencing and threatening challenge to the national security. Deterring the influence of organized crime in Sistan and Baluchistan province is considered problematic. This study discusses the dissuasion of organized crime in Sistan and Baluchistan province in order to contribute positively to the national security of country.

IV. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To study the importance of National Security in Islamic Republic of Iran and its effect on the region and cross border relations.
- To provide a comprehensive analysis of organized crime in Sistan and Baluchistan province.
- To study the effect of organized crime on the provincial and pan Iran security situation.
- To study the types, procedures and severity of organized crime on a broader aspect.
- To propose possible solutions to deter organized crime in Sistan and Baluchistan Province and contribute positively to the national security of the country.
- To address the significance of biased literature written pro-organized crime in Sistan and Baluchistan province of Iran.

V. METHODOLOGY

The research mainly focuses on the dissuasion of organized crime and its impact on the local and national security. In order to present an unbiased overview of the subject, international articles and scholarly articles have been cited along with literature review from the local and international books in the area. Due diligence has been given to the selection of articles and proper citations and copyright consents have been taken as and when required. The local and international media has been considered for information purposes only. No news has been cited in the study.

A. Article Selection

The subject of the research is too broad. The literary material found for the research in area is not too specific for Iran. Therefore, a number of research papers and articles were selected separately in Organized Crime, Sistan and Baluchistan Province of Iran, deterring process of organized crime and the effect of organized crime on the national security of the country in order to identify the research subjects being studied, methods being utilized and publication patterns in the area. Since, the subject is explanatory in nature, a number of other research papers and books were also screened in the area to locate the relevance of research and findings addressing one or more aspects of the subject. The scholarly articles that discussed purely criminal aspect of the area, or purely national security aspect of the the country were excluded after review.

B. Social Statistics

The social statistics, population, literacy rate, literacy classification and other data required for the study has been taken from Databanks publicly available in the country.

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C. Procedure

The literature has been studied and evaluated independently and the subject has been picked out of the Ph. D Decertation. Different opinions, social, psychosocial and cultural aspects of the rapid expansion of the organized crime and its impact on the area and across borders, as well as, the possibilities and challenges in deterring the influence of organized crime on the national security of the country.

VI. LITERATURE REVIEW

Countries of the region have introduced several approaches and measures to discourage individuals and implement penalties on joining criminal organizations. On contrary with substantive offenses like humans trafficking, drugs trafficking, arms and ammunitions smuggling and other similar organized criminal acts, individual offenses analyzed by the security departments in the area are not concerned with organizational functions and the magnitude of threat towards the national security is considered lesser (Andreas Schloenhardt, 2011). The changes of the last few decades have mainly provoked two major reactions towards the security. Some scholars believe that the study of security should not alter its focus, while on the other hand, arguments claim that fault lines between the civilizations insured continuous relevance of security studies (Allan Castle, 1997). Initially, it seems weird to consider organized crime as a factor affecting the national security of a country which has proved vise versa. Organized crime has direct connection with the national security and most of the cross border threatening acts happen through these criminal organizations. Organized crime can lead a nation to a state of fragility and the diversified industries involved in these acts organize all the mentioned crimes under gold plated names (Paula Miraglia, Rolando Ochao, Ivan Briscoe, 2012).

The main approach in the current research is based on the security principles expressed in the Copenhagen school, considered among the most important and interesting schools and theories that have explained and analyzed the issue of security with a more complete look at all aspects of the issue. In this approach, in line with the theories of the scholars such as McSweeney, Oli Weaver and Bari Bozan have presented their theories on the issue of security, and in the meantime, Bozan, with his famous book (People, Governments and fear) is better known among others. The Copenhagen school is the framework that Bill McSweeney used on the works and points of view of Barry Buzan, Oli Weaver, De Wilde and others. Considering that this school is completely based on security studies, it is one of the first approaches towards establishing an independent place for security studies (Ebrahimi, 2016). The main axes of the Copenhagen school are generally:

1. Security as an intersubjective concept (Abdullah Khani, 2008);
2. The government as a security authority;
3. Security and insecurity of topics;
4. National security as the center of gravity of security.

Geographic Placement

The isolated nature of the border areas, especially the mountainous and desert areas, has continuously been the cause of political, economic and security problems and crises for the governments of the time due to the lack of prosperity and lack of motivation for life *(Ismailzadeh, 2017).* Significantly, these crises are more visible in the border areas, the combination of insecure areas and places of terrorist activities with the area of drug production and trafficking in the southern and southwestern territories of Afghanistan and western Pakistan in Baluchistan province and the situation specific physical-ground and geographic characteristics with desert and relatively flat geophysical complications in the border areas have made border control widely difficult for Iran and the costs of border control have increased to a great extent. In addition, the huge revenue of drugs on both sides of the border and its trade to the central regions and even beyond the west of Iran (exports to Europe) has increased the risk-taking motivation of smugglers. Ethnic and tribal affiliations and ties, along with the existence of a long border with Afghanistan and Pakistan without obstacles, have created conditions and a situation where the residents of these areas can easily communicate with their fellow speakers in these two countries. The blue borders with the sheikhdoms of the Persian Gulf, the difference in the price of goods in these countries with the domestic market, whose entry is prohibited for legal reasons, and cannot be imported into the country except through smuggling and illegal methods. This generates a vivid profit for the smugglers and this issue has provided an incentive and stimulus for the criminal activities of organized groups of criminals and smugglers *(Barzgar, Mirsardo, 2017).* Major violent attacks and terrorist threats have occurred in the east of Iran, including: multiple explosions, terrorist action on the border of Mirjaveh and the attack on the border post in 2016 and the movements of groups such as Abdul Malek Rigi's group. It has its roots in the influence of Takfiri, Salafism and religious radicalism in the southeast of Iran *(Habibi, Qurbani, 2016).* The most important obstacles and anti-security components in the country's eastern borders are *(Barzgar, Mirsardo, 2017)*:

1. Drug trafficking;
2. The existence of numerous and scattered villages near the border;
3. The presence of extra-regional forces in the eastern neighboring countries;
4. Unbalanced economic development of border areas;

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5. The instability of the eastern neighbors;

6. Illegal entry of foreign nationals;

7. Geographic isolation and distance from the center; 7. Ethnic-religious tensions;

8. Underdevelopment;

9. Existence of terrorist movements, presence of terrorist groups;

10. Problems of smuggling (goods, fuel and people).

Actually, the root of the existing insecurities in the southeast region of Iran is a combination of political, economic, cultural, military, social and other similar issues, and to face them, it is necessary to combine solutions and methods brought in this context. It can be pointed out as the existence of a link between the economic interests of the people of the region and the evil *(Afshar Sistani, 2013).*

Deterring the influence of organized crimes

The literature and research show that multiple factors are effective in the formation of security crises and organized crimes in Sistan and Baluchistan province. The natural geography, social conditions, economic poverty and factors such as the state of the borders made this region face the basic problems and worries of the residents in providing livelihood. Agriculture and animal husbandry in this region did not even provide enough to provide the minimum social livelihood, and basically the lack of economic justification for dealing with these two ways of providing livelihood did not give an incentive to deal with them. Therefore, ordinary people have become part of these organizations over time. On the other hand, the arrival of soldiers, employees and demographic changes in the region have evolved the consumption pattern of drugs to some extent and the relationship between consumption and poverty has increased. Subsequently, the stagnation of commercial activities under the influence of regional developments has added to the cause and spread this disorder. In such a situation, the residents of the region have widely been motivated to migrate. These immigrants compare themselves with other ethnic groups with advantages and facilities, and mainly with the instigation of some elites, they think that the administrative weaknesses in the region are caused by some kind of suspicion and discrimination of the central government towards them. This way of thinking about the hostile bias of the government causes a conflict between the migrant people and those living on the outskirts of the cities with the central government, which has the potential for insecurity and ethnic movements.

For deterring the influence of organized crime over the national security of the country, as well as dissolution of such organizations can be carried out through several government policies and strategies as discussed in the discussion and conclusion.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Avoiding centralism and not choosing government officials, including governors, from other ethnicities. Considering that most of the officials of the province are non-native, they often either come to the province temporarily or they are unaware of the conditions of the province and therefore they do not succeed in planning. In addition, sometimes elements with poor management are sent to this province, or they mostly lack the necessary experience and do not have the necessary motivation to serve in the region. In general, it can be concluded that because the province is in a good situation in terms of the potential of nature, population, geographical location, commercial facilities and capital, one of the most important problems of the province is a weakness in management whereas, the other problem is the lack of plans, projects and coherent programs for poverty and decentralization.

Non-ethnic discrimination and avoiding equating ethnic areas and paying attention to the specific coordinates of each ethnic group. The existence of ethnic and religious discrimination at the level of middle and senior provincial administrations, especially between the Baloch and Sistani people is currently one of the concerns. The main tribe is Baloch. They expect a bi-ethnic province to be run by diverse ethnicities of the area. In this context, it must be accepted that due to some biased taste and incorrect management and lack of use of the collective wisdom of the elites, some injustices are witnessed, and the crystallization of these injustices has caused ethnic and religious barrier and created insecurity. Where religion is concerned, as one of the most important red lines of people living in Sistan and Baluchistan province, it should be taken into consideration. For a Baloch person who is a Sunni, religion is the most important factor in life, and sometimes according to the received teachings, one should live his life to preserve and protect from sacrificing it. Therefore, this issue should be followed up by officials and politicians with special delicacy and emotional management without scientific and experimental support.

Serious prevention of proposing and presenting controversial issues and tension-causing issues (difference between Shia and Sunni) or issues that arouse ethnic sensitivities in any format, including movies, books, speeches and other publicly available mediums should be avoided and banned.

Avoiding haste in decision-making and confronting ethnic trends at the national and regional levels and separating the perpetrators of the crisis from all ethnic groups. In other words, separating the leaders and effective factors of the trends, fans, spectators,

indifferent and opponents of the crisis is necessary because the lack of such implementations will publicize the crisis and put the whole nation against the system.

Recommendations

1. Identifying the organizations involved in crimes, demotivate public from joining them and penalize the members of such organizations.
2. Allocating a sufficient budget to the border control authorities in order to avoid the interference of alien nationalities in the criminal organizations and cut the ties of smuggling businesses from the area.
3. Creating audio-visual advertisements, public awareness programs and training material in layman language in order to literate the population in clean businesses, cons of drugs, importance of the national security and penalties associated with the crimes.
4. Designing and implement a pro-ethnic administration for Sistan and Baluchistan Province with a diverse presence of Sistani and Baloch tribes.
5. To issue press release and presidential decrees and declaring religious discrimination as a serious and offensive crime for everyone including government officials, media and public.

Scope for future work

Researchers may work on the statistical analysis, real life questionnaires and surveys in order to get more authentic data to provide further recommendations for deterring the influence of organized crime in Sistan and Baluchistan province or Iran.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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