

## Balochistan rights package: Ensure resources for locals

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**ISLAMABAD, Aug 17:** A roundtable discussion on the potential of the natural resources of Balochistan held here on Wednesday demanded an equitable resource redistribution mechanism for the people of Balochistan so that the public grievances and issues of under-development could be redressed better.

The roundtable was organised by the Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS) and ActionAid Pakistan as part of government-civil-society consultations on issues raised in the ‘Balochistan rights package’ so as to lobby for effective implementation of the promises made in the package.

Sheikh Asad Rehman of the Sungi Development Foundation and Naseer Gillani of the Planning Commission’s National Programme for Drought Recovery System considered it “mandatory” for the government to ensure better utilisation of the resources available in contrast to “the apathy it shows” to the resource exploitation in Balochistan.

They alleged that the government had leased out major resources of Balochistan to foreign companies when the share of the Balochistan government in revenue collection was next to nothing. They termed revenue allocation mechanism with regard to major mining projects like Saindak as sham where the provincial government of Balochistan is entitled to mere two per cent of the total revenue collection.

Atle Hetland, a Norwegian social scientist currently working in Pakistan, said Norway and other Scandinavian countries provide good examples as far as agreement on local natural resources was concerned. Adapting their “good practices” would help alleviate concerns and apprehensions of the Balochistan population, he suggested.

Other speakers were critical of handling of the Koh-i-Dalil gold reserves which were leased out to an Australian company.

They alleged that terms and condition agreed benefit the company at the cost of the people of Balochistan.

They also asked the government to suspend the fishing licenses issued to multinationals and develop fishing industry in Balochistan to generate more financial resources for development activities in the province.

# INTERNATIONAL THE NEWS

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## Govt ownership key to better exploitation of Balochistan resources

**Rasheed Khalid**

Islamabad

Atle Hetland, a Norwegian scholar, has said that the government ownership of the development process is key to better exploitation of natural resources in Balochistan.

Hetland was speaking at a roundtable on 'Potential of natural resources and state of various agreements in Balochistan' organised by Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS) in collaboration with ActionAid, Pakistan, here Wednesday.

The Norwegian social scientists referred to successful state

and non-state enterprise for equitable and efficient exploitation of natural resources in Norway as the best example for the government of Pakistan to emulate.

Sheikh Asad Rahman from Sungi Development Foundation said that the government pretension of lack of technological development as the excuse for poor exploitation of natural resources does not pass the test of scrutiny. He said it were local Baloch labourers, engineers and experts who started and developed Saindak gold project back in 1975, which later had to be folded due to pathetic govern-

ment response. He said that Reko Diq leasing in the Chaghi District was also a replica of Saindak project where Balochistan government was bypassed. He said it was due to the judicial activism that the issue is being renegotiated by the provincial government today.

Naseer Gilani from Planning Commission of Pakistan said that the government of Pakistan's over dependence on foreign investment and foreign technology is the real stumbling block in the development of the bounty of natural resources in Balochistan. He observed that the governments hire foreign

firms for development of local natural resources in order to get maximum kickbacks and commissions out of such deals. He said local ownership and development of the natural resources is the best way to fully utilise the potential of natural resources and address the long held grievances of Baloch people.

In the question hour, participants demanded a new discourse on Balochistan issue and asked the government to play proactive role to ensure that natural resources of Balochistan are utilised for the progress and uplift of Baloch people.

# Daily Times

Your right to know A new voice for a new Pakistan

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## Equitable resource distribution stressed for people of Balochistan



**ISLAMABAD:** Speakers at a roundtable discussion forum demands for an equitable resource redistribution mechanism for the people of Balochistan so that the public grievances and issues of under development are better redressed. In a roundtable discussion forum 'Potential of Natural Resources and State of Various Agreements in Balochistan' held here Wednesday by ActionAid Pakistan and Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), issues related to proper implementation of 'Balochistan Rights Package' was discussed in detail. Speakers including Sheikh Asad Rehman, Director Programs Sungi Development Foundation and Naseer Gillani, National Programme Director for Drought Recovery System, Planning Commission of Pakistan said that government ownership of the recent development process in Balochistan is mandatory for better utilization of the resources available to people of Balochistan. They criticized the apathy shown by the government to the resource exploitation in Balochistan. They alleged that the government had

leased out major resources of Balochistan to foreign companies whereas the share of the Balochistan government in revenue collection was equal to nothing. They termed revenue allocation mechanism with regard to major mining projects like Saindak as sham where the provincial government of Balochistan is entitled to mere two percent of the total revenue collection. The speakers were also critical of handling the Koh e Dalil gold reserves, which were leased out to an Australian company. They alleged that terms and condition agreed upon during the lease out process did not at all work for the benefit of the people of Balochistan while on the contrary; central government and the international leasing companies are exploiting their resources. The participants of the conference asked the government to develop fishing industry in Balochistan so that more financial resources were generated from such development activities. They demanded for early suspension of fishing licenses issued to multinational fishing contractors who bring heavy trawlers and sweep away all fishing resource from the province. PR