

# Demographic Shifts in Iran occupied Balochistan: The Hidden Costs of Iran's Capital Relocation

Editorial

The Iranian government's decision to relocate its capital from Tehran to Makuran in the southern coastal region marks a significant geopolitical and cultural shift. While the move aims to alleviate overpopulation in Tehran and address strategic concerns, it brings with it a series of profound challenges for the Baloch population, whose historic homeland stands at the center of this decision. This editorial explores the adverse demographic and cultural consequences of this shift on the Baloch people, highlighting concerns over population displacement, cultural erosion, and rising social tensions.

## Population Redistribution: The Threat of Marginalization

Relocating the capital to Makuran will undoubtedly draw large numbers of Iranians from other regions to the area. This influx threatens to displace the indigenous Baloch population, transforming them into a demographic minority within their own homeland. Such a shift risks marginalizing the Baloch, diluting their political influence, and weakening their cultural identity in the face of an incoming majority population that aligns more closely with Tehran's central authority.

## Cultural Erosion: A Heritage at Risk

The Baloch people possess a rich cultural heritage, including unique traditions, language, and practices. However, the relocation threatens to undermine this heritage. The arrival of settlers from various parts of Iran, along with their dominant cultural practices, could overshadow and erode the distinct Baloch identity. The loss of cultural autonomy would not only alienate the Baloch but also deepen the historical grievances they hold against the Tehran regime.

## Land Ownership Disputes: Losing a Historical Claim

For centuries, the Baloch have lived in Balochistan, their ancestral homeland. The new capital's establishment could ignite disputes over land ownership, as government projects and housing developments cater to the influx of settlers. The Baloch, who often face systemic economic marginalization, may struggle to protect their land rights against wealthier and more politically connected newcomers. This dispossession could exacerbate poverty and disenfranchisement among the local population.

## Exploitation of Local Resources in the Name of Development:

This practice has been observed in many regions, where colonizers, under the guise of development, bring settlers to the area, eventually turning the local population into a minority. Pakistan has applied a similar strategy in Gwadar, where local residents endure harsh living conditions, including a severe lack of drinking water. Meanwhile, the state promotes its development agenda with false promises, offering little benefit to the people.

Both Pakistan and Iran display little regard for the Baloch nation, focusing instead on exploiting natural resources and the sea to serve their own interests. Any profits derived from these resources are channeled toward their own populations. Pakistan has plundered Balochistan's resources to invest in Punjab, and now Iran appears to be following the same pattern. By extracting raw materials and exploiting the coastline of Makuran, Iran plans to invest the resulting profits into sustaining its Tehran-centric regime.

### **Increased Surveillance and Control: A Double-Edged Sword:**

Relocating the capital to Makuran would undoubtedly lead to a heightened military and governmental presence in the region. While such measures may be framed as security precautions, they are likely to further suppress the Baloch population. Increased surveillance, policing, and control could stifle local voices, fueling resentment and resistance among the Baloch, who already view Tehran's policies as oppressive. Tehran regime has always tried to silence Baloch voices. Majority of the people convicted and hanged by Iran are Baloch. It is no shocking that everyday we hear of Baloch youth bear killed by Iranian regime.

### **A Strategic Move with Unintended Consequences:**

While Tehran's decision to relocate the capital to Makuran is rooted in strategic and developmental goals, it risks igniting demographic and cultural turmoil in Balochistan. For the Baloch, the move represents not progress, but a new chapter in their struggle against marginalization and cultural erosion. As the central government consolidates power in the region, the Baloch face an uncertain future, one where their voices may be drowned out by the forces of demographic and political change.

The Baloch will never relinquish their claim to their motherland, nor will they allow their culture, traditions, and identity to be erased. Any attempt to displace or marginalize the Baloch people will be met with unwavering resistance, as they continue to fight for their rights and their homeland. Their struggle is a testament to their resilience and determination to preserve their heritage for future generations.