



International Boundary Study

No. 167 – March 28, 1979

Iran – Pakistan Boundary

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**The Geographer
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Bureau of Intelligence and Research**

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IRAN - PAKISTAN BOUNDARY

I. BOUNDARY BRIEF

The Iran - Pakistan boundary is approximately 904 kilometers (562 miles) long. It extends between the Kaij-e Gavater on the Arabian Sea and the tripoint with Afghanistan on Kuh-e Malek Siah. Demarcated throughout, the boundary follows various straight-line segments, rivers, and drainage divides.

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Baluchistan, including territories both to the east and to the west of the present-day boundary between Iran and Pakistan, was historically an outlying province of the Persian Empire. Later, from about 1595 to 1638, Baluchistan was under the rule of the Mughals,¹ who controlled large parts of the Indian subcontinent between 1526 and 1707. With the decline of the Mughal Empire, eastern Baluchistan again for a time came under Persian administration. In 1747 Kalat, one of the major divisions of Baluchistan, became subject to the sovereign of Afghanistan.

The first British outpost in the Indian subcontinent was a trading station (factory) established by the British India Company in 1619 at Surat on the northwestern coast. Also in the 17th century, the Company opened trading stations in Madras, Bombay, and Calcutta. British influence spread rapidly throughout the subcontinent in the course of the next two centuries.

From 1838 to 1842, during the first of three Anglo - Afghan wars, British military forces invaded Afghanistan and also captured the town of Kalat. The Khan of Kalat entered into a subordinate treaty or alliance with the United Kingdom in 1854, but owing to tribal unrest and raids into British territory, British troops intervened in Kalat at various times.

The British East India Company administered British India until 1858, when the Government of the United Kingdom assumed direct control during the mutiny of Indian troops or Sepoys in the service of the Company. By the end of the 19th century, most of the remainder of India was administered by the United Kingdom through treaties and agreements with local rulers.

On September 1 and 4, 1871, notes and an attached map constituting an agreement on the delimitation of the Iran (Persia) - Kalat (Baluchistan) boundary from Kuhak to Kalij-e Gavater on the Arabian Sea were exchanged by Mr. Alison, Minister Plenipotentiary of the United Kingdom and acting for the Khan of Kalat, and Mirza Saeed Khan, the Minister of

¹ The Mughals (Moguls, Mogols) were descendents of Mongol, Turkish, Persian, and Afghan invaders of southern Asia.

Foreign Affairs for Iran. The boundary was delimited by the allocation of local entities based on political loyalties as follows:²

This line, may be described: commencing from the northern point, or that which is furthest from the sea, the territory of Kelat is bounded to the west by the large Persian district of Dizzuk, which is composed of many dehs or minor districts, those on the frontier being Jalk and Kallegan. Below these two last named is the small district of Kohuk, which together with Punjghur, comprising Parum and other dependencies, is on the Kelat side of the frontier, which on the Persian side is Bampasht.

Below Punjghur, the frontier possessions of Kelat to the sea are Boleida, including Zamiran and other dependencies, Mund and Dusht. Within the Persian line of frontier are the villages or tracts belonging to Sirbaz and Bahu Dastiari. The boundary of Dushi is marked by a long line drawn through the Drabol hill, situated between the Rivers Bahu and Dusht, to the sea in the Bay of Gwetter.

To summarize, Punjghur and Parum, and other dependencies, with Kohuk, Boleida, including Zamiran and other dependencies; Mund, including Tump, Nasserabad, Kedj, and all districts, dehs, and dependencies to the eastward; Dusht, with its dependencies as far as the sea. These names exhibit the line of actual possession of Kelat, that is to say, all tracts to the east of the frontier of actual Persian possession, which frontier comprises Dizzuk and Bumpusht, Sirbaz and Peshur, Bah and Dustiary.

In 1872 a joint Anglo - Iranian commission examined the boundary between Kuhak and the Kalij-e Gavater but did not demarcate it by pillars. The small district of Kuhak was later claimed by Iran, and the British agreed that the line should be to the east of Kuhak. Iran occupied Kuhak in May 1874.

British influence in Baluchistan spread rapidly following (1) a mission of the British administrator Sir Robert Sandeman to Kalat in 1875 and (2) the conclusion of a new treaty the next year between the United Kingdom and the Khan of Kalat. The new treaty reaffirmed the treaty of 1854 and provided for the stationing of British troops in Kalat territory and the constructing of railway and telegraph lines in the state. By the treaty of Gandmak after the second Anglo - Afghan war (1878 - 79) and additional treaties with the Khans of Kalat, the territories acquired were incorporated by 1896 into British Baluchistan Province and Tribal Areas, while Kalat became a protected princely state.

On December 27, 1895, an Anglo - Iranian agreement was signed for the demarcation of the Iran - Kalat boundary from Kuhak to the tripoint with Afghanistan on Kuh-e Malek Siah. In 1896 a joint Anglo - Iranian commission demarcated the boundary by 11 pillars between

² Agreement between Persia and Great Britain respecting the boundary between Persia and Kelat. September 1 - 4, 1871. Recueil des Traités De L'Empire Persan avec Les Pays Etrangers. 1908, pp. XVIII - XX.

Kuhak and Gorani-ye Bala. However, the Iranian Government had failed to send a surveyor to work with the British surveyor, and the boundary north of pillar No.11 was not demarcated. Instead, it was described and shown on existing maps that were subsequently found to contain many inaccuracies.

An agreement dated March 26, 1896,³ relating to the demarcation of the boundary formally included the district of Kuhak in Iran. The alignment of the boundary was given as follows:

Commencing from the Mashkel river it is defined by the bed of that river from pillar 1 to pillar 2. Pillar 1 is placed on a conspicuous hill on the left or north bank of the river, about a mile and a half below the junction of the Gazbastan stream with the Mashkel, and almost immediately south of Kohak Fort.

Pillar 2 is built on a well marked hill on the right or south bank of the Mashkel river about 6 miles above the junction of the Mashkel and Rakshan rivers. From pillar 2 the boundary runs in a north-westerly direction to a conspicuous peak on the subsidiary range which runs from the Tank-i Grawag to the Siahah. The peak is marked by pillar 3. From pillar 3 it follows the watershed of this subsidiary range to its junction with that of the Siahah Koh and thence it is defined westward by the main watershed of the Siahah range to a point about 4 miles east of the pass called Bonsar or Sharindor, on the main road connecting Isfandak with Jalk. At this point, which is marked by pillar 4, a subsidiary watershed or spur runs northward, along which the boundary extends, leaving all drainage into the cultivated tracts of Kalagam on the Persian side. The boundary is here marked by a conspicuous peak, distinguished by a natural bluff resembling a tower on its summit. From this peak 5, it is carried to pillar 6, which is placed on the main road leading a little south of east from the village of Kaladen towards the Mashkel river. Pillar 6 is 4 miles from the village of Kaladen. From pillar 6 the boundary runs direct to pillar 7 on the main road connecting Jalk with Ladgasht and Mashkel at 12 miles from Zirat-i-Pir-Omar at Jalk.

From pillar 7 the boundary is carried in a northerly direction by a straight line to pillar 8.

Pillar 8 is placed on the road connecting the date groves of Ladgasht with those of Muksokhta or Muksotag, and it is erected at a distance of 3 miles from the southern edge of the Muksotag grove, so as to divide the southern group of date groves, including Ladgasht and Kalag, from the northern group, which includes Muksotag, Gorani, and others.

Ladgasht, with its date groves, becomes the property of Kalat, and Gorani with its date groves, has been allotted to Persia, on the understanding that the frontier

³ Agreement relating to the demarcation of the Boundary between Persian Baluchistan and Kalat. March 26, 1896. C. V. Aitchison, Treaties, Engagements and Sanads: Aden, Persian Gulf, Muscat (Oman), Baluchistan and North-West Frontier Province. Vol. XI (1933), pp. 371 - 74.

Governors of the Persian Government in future become responsible for the conduct of the Damani cultivators of these groves.

From pillar 8 the boundary runs 14 miles nearly north to pillar 9 at the southeastern edge of the Kindi date grove, and thence in the same direction for 3-1/2 miles to the north-eastern edge of the same grove of Kindi, where pillar 10 is erected.

From pillar 10 the boundary runs 11 miles a little south of west so as to clear the northern edge of the Kindi date grove, to pillar 11.

Pillar 11 is on the edge of the right bank of the Talab watercourse, and about 1 mile east of the northern end of the Gorani date groves.

From pillar 11 northwards the Talab river becomes the boundary to its junction with the Mirjawa river. From the point of junction it is carried by a straight line to the nearest point on the watershed of the Mirjawa range, which limits the drainage into Mirjawa river on the north.

Thence it follows the main watershed northward to the highest point of the Kacha Koh.

From the highest point of the Kacha Koh the line is carried straight to the highest point of the Malik Siah Koh.

On May 13, 1905, an Anglo-Iranian agreement⁴ was signed, under which the United Kingdom withdrew its claim to Mirjaveh while Iran undertook to permit the British post at Padaha to procure water from the Mirjaveh side. Due provision was made for supplies for the neighboring British posts. In consideration of this settlement, the two countries agreed to abandon the further examination of the boundary by a joint commission.

In 1907, an Anglo - Russian Convention signed at St. Petersburg formally recognized Afghanistan as a buffer state whose integrity would be respected. Afghanistan, however, refused to endorse the convention because it was not consulted prior to the negotiations. Also in 1907, another Anglo - Russian Convention made a de facto division of Iran, with Russian control in the north, the United Kingdom in control in the south, and a neutral zone between the spheres of influence.

Following a third Anglo - Afghan war (May - August 1919), the United Kingdom afforded Afghanistan freedom of action in foreign relations and recognized its complete

⁴ Agreement between the Government of His Majesty the King of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India and His Imperial Majesty the Shahinshah of Persia, for the Settlement of Certain Outstanding Questions on the Frontier of Persia and India. May 13, 1905. C.V. Aitchison, Treaties, Engagements, and Sanads: Aden, Persian Gulf, Muscat (Oman), Baluchistan and North-West Frontier Province. Vol. XI (1933), pp. 381 - 82.

independence through the Treaty of Rawalpindi, signed on August 8, 1919. This treaty was supplemented and reaffirmed in November 1921.

During World War II, Iran was again under Russian influence in the north and British influence in the south. In January 1942, the de facto occupation of Iran was acknowledged in a British - Iranian - Soviet Tripartite Treaty.

In accordance with the Indian Independence Act of 1947, Pakistan became independent as a self-governing dominion within the Commonwealth on August 14, 1947. India became independent on the following day. Pakistan at this time consisted of two noncontiguous parts known as West Pakistan and East Pakistan.

Baluchistan Province became part of Pakistan in 1947, and the various entities of former British Baluchistan (settled districts, native states, and tribal areas) were made an integrated administrative unit. In 1948 the state of Kalat acceded to Pakistan. During 1955, Baluchistan Province, along with three other provinces, was merged into a newly created "Province of West Pakistan." This unit was abolished on July 1, 1970, when Baluchistan was reestablished as a separate province in its present form. Pakistan adopted a new constitution in 1956 that proclaimed the state an Islamic republic.

On February 6, 1958, Iran and Pakistan signed an agreement in Tehran to clarify the boundary on the basis of the agreements and notes concluded and exchanged in the past between Iran and the United Kingdom. Article I of the agreement states:

The Boundary line between Pakistan and Iran from Gwatur Bay to Koh-i-Malik Siah shall be as agreed to by the two Parties, and specified in Article II of this Agreement, on the basis of the following documents:

- (i) Notes dated the 1st and 4th September, 1871, and the map attached thereto, exchanged in Tehran between Mr. Alison, Minister Plenipotentiary of the United Kingdom, and Mirza Saeed Khan, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran.
- (ii) Agreement, dated 27th December, 1895, and note attached thereto, concluded in Tehran between Amin-us-Sultan, Sadar-i-Azam of Iran, and the Minister Plenipotentiary of the United Kingdom.
- (iii) Proces verbal (mentioned as "Agreement" in the English text) regarding delimitation of the border dated 24th March, 1896, and the map attached thereto, drawn up between Ehtesham-ul-Vizareh and Colonel Holdich and approved by the Governments of Iran and the United Kingdom.

Article II of the 1958 agreement gives the sources for the alignment of the boundary as follows:

The agreed boundary line, mentioned in Article I, shall follow the alignment of the line drawn on the maps and described and defined in the memorandum attached to this Agreement, and explained as follows:

- (a) From Gwatar Bay to existing pillar No.1, (South of Kohuk), the agreed boundary line is drawn on a copy of 1" = 4 miles (1/253,440) scale map, comprising of sheets Nos. 31 - F, G, I, J, K, M, N & O. The description of points, their grid coordinates and the definition and description of the alignment of the boundary line have also been given in a separate memorandum. The said map and the memorandum, signed by the Chairmen of the two Commissions, shall form Appendix I of this Agreement.
- (b) From existing Pillar No.1, (South of Kohuk) to existing Pillar No.11 the boundary line shall be in accordance with the line demarcated in 1896.
- (c) From existing Pillar No. 11 to Koh-i-Malik Siah the agreed boundary line shall have the alignment as drawn on 1" = 4 miles (1/253,440) scale map, printed in 1932. The description and approximate geographic coordinates of the points and description of the boundary line have been given in a separate memorandum. The said map and the memorandum, signed by the Chairmen of the two Commissions, shall form Appendix II of this Agreement.

Iranian and Pakistani commissions demarcated their common boundary in three sectors by pillars numbered consecutively from B.P. 1 near Kuh-e Malek Siah to B.P. 256 on the Kalij-e Gavater. The demarcation was completed between February 22, 1958, and May 10, 1958, and between October 1, 1958, and February 10, 1959. On December 8, 1959, a Final Protocol giving descriptions, spherical and grid coordinates, and heights of boundary pillars was signed by the chairman of each of the boundary commissions.⁵

III. ALIGNMENT

The alignment of the three boundary sectors, as determined by the Final Protocol of December 8, 1959, is as follows:

⁵ Included in the appendices to the Final Protocol were the following 20 boundary map sheets: (1) the northern sector on a single sheet at a scale of 1:253,440; (2) the central sector on sheets numbered 12 through 19 at a scale of 1:50,000; and (3) the southern sector on sheets numbered 1 through 11 at a scale of 1:63,360.

Northern Sector

The northern sector of the boundary extends for 269 kilometers (167 miles) between the tripoint with Afghanistan on Kuh-e Malek Siah (29°51'31.950" N., 60°52'19.707" E.) and B.P. 119⁶ on the Rud-e Talab (Tahlab River) northeast of Gorani-ye Bala. The tripoint is marked by a Survey of Pakistan geodetic station designated BAB/CLXXXVI; B.P. 1 is about 2.4 kilometers (1.5 miles) to the southeast.

Southward from the tripoint, the boundary follows a number of straight-line segments along the Kacha Kuh, the middle line of the Rud-e Mazavad (Mazavad Rud) for a short distance, the main drainage divide of various ranges including the Mazavad and the Mirjaveh, and a second series of straight-line segments to the Rud-e Mirjaveh. The boundary then continues downstream for about 130 kilometers (81 miles) along the middle line of the Rud-e Mirjaveh and the Rud-e Talab to B.P. 119.

Central Sector

The central sector of the boundary extends for 216 kilometers (134 miles) from the Rud-e Talab to B.P. 160⁷ on the Rud-i-Mashkel (Rud-e Mashkid) south of Kuhak. From the Rud-e Talab, the boundary passes eastward by a series of straight-line segments for about 19 kilometers (11.8 miles) to the vicinity of Hamun-i-Mashkel. It continues southward along various drainage divides, including those of the Siahan Kuh (Kuh-i-Siahan), and then traverses straight-line segments to the Rud-i-Mashkel. The boundary follows the middle line of the Rud-i-Mashkel upstream for about 11 kilometers (6.8 miles) to B.P. 160.

Southern Sector

The southern sector of the boundary extends for 419 kilometers (261 miles) between the Rud-i-Mashkel and the Kalij-e Gavater. Boundary pillar 256 (25°10'14.23" N., 61°37'03.03" E.) is located on the Kalij-e Gavater about two meters above the high-water line on the south side of a sandy island.

Southward from the Rud-i-Mashkel for a total of about 63 kilometers (39 miles), the boundary first passes along a series of straight-line segments and then continues along drainage divides between the Central Makran Range of Pakistan and the Kuh-e Bam Posht of Iran to the Niking (Rud-e Nahang). It follows the middle line of the Niking for about 150 kilometers (93 miles). The remainder of the boundary consists of alternate series of straight-line segments and drainage divides reaching the Kalij-e Gavater at a point between the Dasht Kaur and Rud-e Bahur.

⁶ Boundary pillar 119-I on the right bank of the Rud-e Talab corresponds to B.P. 11 of the 1896 agreement. Boundary pillar 119-P is located on the left bank of the river.

⁷ Boundary pillar 160-I on the left or north bank of the Rud-i-Mashkel corresponds to the B.P. 1 of the 1896 agreement. Boundary pillar 160-P is located on the right bank of the river.

This International Boundary Study is one of a series of specific boundary papers prepared by the Office of the Geographer, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State, in accordance with provisions of the Office of Management and Budget Circular No. A-16.

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