

# **The Kutanran of Lakki Marwat: An Inquiry into Its Position and Challenges Amidst State and Society Constructs**

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## **Abstract**

This study examines the status and problems of the Kutanran community, a marginalized community in the Lakki Marwat district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, Pakistan. The Kutanran have historically been marginalized in the state's social and political structure. Hence, this study aims to explore the nature of their marginalization and the kinds of issues they face. To achieve this goal, the study employs a qualitative research approach by interviewing members of the Kutanran community. Findings suggest that the Kutanran face various problems related to education, health, employment, and political representation. Further, the community is also subject to structural discrimination and exclusion from mainstream society, which limits their access to resources and opportunities. The study concludes that both the state and society are responsible for their marginalization and some policy interventions can improve the status of the Kutanran community.

**Keywords:** Migration, marginalization, Kutanran, fundamental rights, inclusion

## **1. Introduction**

Marginalization is a process that occurs when certain groups in a society are systematically excluded from social, economic, and political structures. In Pakistan, marginalized communities face significant challenges due to their exclusion from mainstream society and lack of access to primary resources.

One marginalized community is the Kutanran of Lakki Marwat, in the northern province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The Kutanran are a group of people once involved in the leather tanning craft. They have been marginalized due to their low socio-economic status and lack of access to education, health care, and other essential resources. This has led to various problems for the Kutanran, including poverty, poor health, and limited access to legal and political systems.

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This paper investigates the status and problems faced by the Kutanran of Lakki Marwat. The article has used qualitative method to explore the social, economic, and political structures that contribute to the marginalization of the Kutanran. Around 30 interviews with members of the Kutanran community, as well as with local government officials and other stakeholders, have been conducted. In this study, firstly an overview of the concept of marginalization and its impact on marginalized communities in Pakistan is given. Secondly, it examines the social and economic structures that contribute to the marginalization of the Kutanran, including their limited access to education, health care, and other primary resources.

## 2. Literature Review

Sources consulted for the study have rare direct links with Kutanran. Most of them in the first place, or either the details of the subject came out as a result of the whole society links or connections with Kutanran. Some accounts and minute details about Kutanas (Kutanran) are given in census reports of India. Baines gives their count and some minor details about their social status and works.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, H. A. Rose tells about their count in Punjab and N. W. F. P, and the duties done by them.<sup>2</sup> He further describes them as Muhammadan Churas. He writes that Kuratanas are the class of sweepers converted to Islam, and about their works except sweepers.<sup>3</sup> Some other details are given about Kutanas or Koratanas of society by C. Latimeb. He gives their count details, sheds light upon their social status and works. He describes the differences among the Churas, Mussalis or Kutanas of local society. Specific clue about Lakki Marwat Kutanran can only be found in C. Latimeb's Census report of 1911.<sup>4</sup> Thorburn (1876) has described the social, political and day to day life of the Trans-Indus tracts, Pashto proverbs and their English translation.<sup>5</sup> Pennel's work throws light on domestic, social life, moral and religious aspects of life along with a sketch of economic

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<sup>1</sup> J.A. Baines, *Census of India 1891* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1893).

<sup>2</sup> H.A. Rose, *Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North West Frontier Province*, Vol III L-Z (New Delhi: Nirmal Publishers and Distributors, 1997).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol II A-K (Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1911), 573.

<sup>4</sup> C. Latimeb, *Census of India 1911, Vol. XIII: North West Frontier Province* (Peshawar: Government Printers, 1912).

<sup>5</sup> S.S. Thorburn, *Bannu or Our Afghan Frontier* (London: Trübner & co., 1876).

structure.<sup>6</sup> Edwardes (1851) gives a detailed sketch of the geographical and social traits of inhabitants of district Bannu.<sup>7</sup> Gazetteer of Bannu (1883-84) provides some basic information about District Bannu and its people from a colonial perspective.<sup>8</sup> Caroe also gives some details of social and political life of the inhabitants of area.<sup>9</sup> A few documents produced by Government of Pakistan and international organizations were also consulted for the study. These include constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Pakistan's International Human Rights Obligations: Training Module for Capacity Building document, National Social Inclusion Program,<sup>10</sup> UK document,<sup>11</sup> World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe Copenhagen, HEALTH21: The health for all policy framework for the WHO European Region document,<sup>12</sup> World Bank (2007),<sup>13</sup> Social Protection in Pakistan: Managing household Risks and Vulnerability World Bank Report,<sup>14</sup> Government of Pakistan Poverty

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<sup>6</sup> T.L. Pennell. *Among the Wild Tribes of the Afghan Frontier: A Record of Sixteen Years Close Intercourse with the Natives of the Indian Marches* (London: Seeley, Service & Co., Ltd., 1913).

<sup>7</sup> Herbert Edwards, *A Year on the Punjab Frontier* (London: DB Publishing & Co., 1851).

<sup>8</sup> F. Cunningham, *Gazetteer of the Bannu District 1883-4* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 2015).

<sup>9</sup> Olaf Caroe, *The Pathans 550 B.C.–A.D. 1957* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965).

<sup>10</sup> Saad-ur-Rehman Khan & Imaan Hazir Mazari, *Pakistan's International Human Rights Obligations: Training Module for Capacity Building*, The Research Society of International Law, Pakistan. <http://rsilpak.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Pakistans-International-Human-Rights-Obligations-Training-Module-for-Capacity-Building-of-Government-Officials.pdf>, accessed on 10.01.2020.

<sup>11</sup> *National Social Inclusion Program*, UK; <http://www.socialinclusion.org.uk/home/index>, accessed on 18.06.2019.

<sup>12</sup> *The Health for all Policy Framework for the WHO European Region*. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe HEALTH21, 1999). [http://www.euro.who.int/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/98398/wa540ga199he\\_eng.pdf](http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/98398/wa540ga199he_eng.pdf), accessed on 22.07.2019.

<sup>13</sup> *Pakistan - Social protection in Pakistan: managing household risks and vulnerability* (English). Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/493331468059090991/Pakistan-Social-protection-in-Pakistan-managing-household-risks-and-vulnerability>

<sup>14</sup> Ianchovichina, Elena & Susanna Lundstrom, *What is Inclusive Growth*. World Bank. 10 February 2009. <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTDEBTDEPT/Resources/4689801218567884549/WhatIsInclusiveGrowth20081230.pdf>, accessed on 15.08.2019.

Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)-II, Finance Division,<sup>15</sup> Program for Poverty Reduction (PPR) document, Planning Commission, Government of Pakistan, International Labor Organization (ILO) and United Nations Development Program (UNDP) documents,<sup>16</sup> European Commission Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions (inclusive) process documents,<sup>17</sup> World Bank documents were approached for proceedings of the study.

### 3. Methodology

The study at hand adopts a qualitative research approach. The research is predominantly based on interviews and aims to uncover insights related to the ethnographic study of the region. The study investigates state affairs and directives pertinent to the topic's dimensions to achieve this goal. Around 30 interviews were conducted by visiting residences of the Kutanran and those involved in one way or the other with the community in district Lakki Marwat using a convenient sampling technique. Some interviews were conducted through telephone. The methodology identifies key themes and patterns to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research subject. Qualitative research allows researchers to remain open to new perspectives and ideas, allowing them to gain a deeper understanding of the subject matter.

Key research questions are identifying the current status, the problems and negligence of the State apparatus towards the Kutanran community of district Lakki Marwat. In some cases, the female segment of the said community was further investigated in terms of the treatment and violence they are facing from their community as well as the rest of the society living around them.

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<sup>15</sup> *Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)-II*, Finance Division, Government of Pakistan, 2009. <http://www.finance.gov.pk/admin/images/poverty/PRSP-II.pdf> accessed on 13.10.2019; *Program for Poverty Reduction (PPR)*, <http://ppr.org.pk> Introduction, accessed on 12.11.2019.

<sup>16</sup> Asad Sayeed, *Social Protection in Pakistan: Concept, Situation, Analysis and the Way Forward* (Islamabad: Centre for Research for Poverty Reduction and Income Distribution [CRPRID], Planning Commission, Government of Pakistan & International Labor Organization [ILO] and United Nations Development Program [UNDP], Feb 2004).

<sup>17</sup> European Commission Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, *A Stronger Role of the Private Sector in Achieving Inclusive and Sustainable Growth in Developing Countries*. 13 May 2014. <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/node/37440>, accessed on 12.07.2019.

#### 4. An Overview of Kutanran, their Marginalisation and Problems

Kutanran are the poor<sup>18</sup> and landless inhabitants of Lakki Marwat.<sup>19</sup> Being non-Pashtuns, they are viewed as inferiors. There is little historical data regarding their migration, origin, and ancestry.<sup>20</sup> The Kutanran of Lakki Marwat trace their origin to Qamar Mashani, district Mianwali in Punjab province, because of their connections with some residents of that area. However, some sources suggest they lived there for centuries, even before Marwats arrived. Their presence in the Pashtun belt is proved by a famous verse, rightly or wrongly associated with Khushal Khan Khattak (1613-1689), *نور مصلي وے*

وے واندي خيخوچ

Trans. — being a blackish *musali* was acceptable with being young’.

Those who migrated from Punjab or the Baloch Saraiki region and had black complexion, speaking Saraiki, were referred to by Marwats as Kutanran.<sup>21</sup> Since they do not yet know about the migration of their ancestors or have access to reliable information, there are differing opinions and accounts on the time of their migration to Lakki Marwat.<sup>22</sup> Some people suggest that when the railways began operating, some of their families moved to the Marwat region in quest of a brighter future. They were abandoned to the hardships of life, nevertheless, and failed to find any wealth there.<sup>23</sup> They were first engaged by the Railways as sweepers and in other subordinate roles at the Frontier Constabulary Headquarters. As sweepers, for instance, *Ardalian*—office boys and

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<sup>18</sup> ‘Fundamentally, poverty is a denial of choices and opportunities, a violation of human dignity. It means lack of basic capacity to participate effectively in society. It means not having enough to feed and clothe a family, not having a school or clinic to go to, not having the land on which to grow one’s food or a job to earn one’s living, not having access to credit. It means insecurity, powerlessness and exclusion of individuals, households and communities. It means susceptibility to violence, and it often implies living on marginal or fragile environments, without access to clean water or sanitation.’ — United Nations, 1998, [https://www.learningforjustice.org/sites/default/files/tt\\_poverty\\_h1.pdf](https://www.learningforjustice.org/sites/default/files/tt_poverty_h1.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> Ayesha Bibi & Altaf Qadir, ‘Kutanran of Lakki Marwat, Pakistan: A Note on their Origin, Customs and Rituals’, *Pakistan Vision*, 24:2 (July-December 2023), 139-54.

<sup>20</sup> Personal interview with Zahid Khan, a local Kutanra, dated 17.04.2018.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, dated 03.03.2019.

<sup>22</sup> Personal interview with Noor Aslam Khan, a lakki Marwat, dated 22.11.2017.

<sup>23</sup> Personal interview with Zafar Khan at his residence in Sarai Naurang, dated 24.09.2018.

*Dhobian*—washer men. Documents from the colonial era state that in 1861, railways construction began in the region of Bannu, which included Lakki Marwat. It appears that there was some migration between 1860-70.<sup>24</sup> Some names of Kutanran are in the Marwat genealogical record of different *khels*—clans who served as menials with Marwats.<sup>25</sup>

It is commonly accepted that Kutanran are marginalized non-Pashtuns and are not allowed to mix with local Marwats. Their overall way of living differs significantly from Marwats living in the area. The social, political and economic condition of Kutanran is worse, while religiously, they are Muslims. In the following section, some of their daily problems are enlisted.

### 1. Social Problems

The quality of life for Kutanran people is significantly lower than that of other ethnic groups; in other words, they lead terrible lives. They are born and raised in a modest house, typically a tent or hut. The weather, including heat, cold, rain, and wind, can affect their tents. They live in extremely crowded quarters. It is important to note that they rarely struggle to better their way of life and appear content with things as they are; the few struggled to bring some positive changes in their lives, had to deal with a lot of difficulties. Those that are marginalized typically have little room and infrequent opportunities to speak up in public.<sup>26</sup>

Despite having lived in the region for generations, the population nevertheless experiences social isolation. Their ability is undermined and they are forced to lead subpar lives due to limited access to municipal services. They lack hygienic conditions, good drinking water, education, and decent housing. For Kutanran, social prejudice is at its worst.<sup>27</sup> While some Kutanran of Lakki Marwat continue to migrate as they always did, many have made permanent settlements in particular locations. They typically set up camp under the protection of a village chief or other well-off individual. Their encampments are located on the

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<sup>24</sup> Personal interview with Khan Wali at his office in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Provincial Archives Peshawar, dated 17.04.2018.

<sup>25</sup> Personal telephonic interview with Mr Haroon ul Rashid, a local Businessman, dated 14<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

<sup>26</sup> This is a significant dilemma for the Pashtun self-proclaimed nationalists who consider Pashtuns/Pukhtuns egalitarian by nature. Historically, a few people are considered equal Pashtuns, while others are deemed low-cast or lesser Pashtuns/Pukhtuns.

<sup>27</sup> Personal interview with Ibrahim Khan, a local Kutanra, dated 26.12.2018.

outskirts of the communities, and their tents are made of split bamboo or mucu grass.<sup>28</sup>

Kutanran are viewed as a separate group living in a remote area and are not permitted to mix up with the Pashtun community around. They are unable to operate as independent contractors in the open market or freely engage in the labour force. Due to a lack of space in the market, even someone with intermediate qualifications works as a menial labourer. Since Kutanran are known for being petty thieves, they are not allowed to work in a business since the owners do not trust them. The majority of them often labour in groups at brick kilns. To break the social isolation and achieve a better lifestyle, they have taken up labouring. It should be noted, however, that relatively few people are conscious that they need to provide better living standards to their families. The majority of males spend their earnings on gambling and alcohol consumption.<sup>29</sup>

The locals are opposed to sharing any customs or becoming mixed in with the Kutanran. They cannot interact with the locals during their ceremonial rites of joy and grief since they are regarded as a lower caste. They are not permitted to attend events as attendees or guests. Nonetheless, they show up for every event to sing, dance, carry out other menial tasks, and even beg. The Kutanran refer to themselves as the locals' slaves because they believe they are mentally inferior. While begging from door to door or shop to shop, non-Kutanran males frequently humiliate and mistreat Kuntanrai (females).

They even suffer from sexual abuse in addition to hooting harassment. Very infrequently, male Pashtuns and female Kutanrai get married. The Marwat man occasionally developed feelings for the Kutanrai female and went on to marry her. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that none of these men took a first or single bride who was a Kutanarai. A Malak of Zafar Mama Khel developed feelings for a Kutanrai when she was dancing at a Pashtun wedding ceremony. The said Malak married her and both have children. Not to mention that their children keep their mother's identity a secret. However, the union between Pashtun women and Kutanran men never happened.

Kutanrai dancing was a common practice in the past for the men in *Hujra* during local weddings. However, due to the fear of the Taliban,

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<sup>28</sup> Personal interview with Sibghatullah Shah, a lakki Marwat, dated 08.01.2019.

<sup>29</sup> Personal interview with Laila, a local Kutanrai, dated 14.11.2018.

this has become less common.<sup>30</sup> The Taliban have repeatedly threatened Kutanran to stop performing dance and music events, which are defiantly forbidden in Islam. The Taliban had chastised and dismissed them. Their ancestral and traditional music and dance performance programs are thus reduced to the minimum. In the same way, locals can be a threat or a means of harassment for Kutanran. Kutanran can occasionally cause problems for the local population. Usually, they steal at home when Pashtun women are busy in taking care of household chores or go inside their room to bring alms for the alms seeker. Usually, two to four people work at a time. When Kutanrai became friends with local ladies, she would use various methods or techniques to get some benefit out of them.<sup>31</sup> The men of Kutanran have a gambling addiction. They don't give a damn about tomorrow or their families. Most of them bet even when they have nothing left in their pockets. Because they have no houses or other property to give up after a losing bet, they consequently sell their daughters, wives, or other female family members. They give their ladies to the winner, who keeps them until the money is paid. Kutanran regain their females once the set sum is paid. These women are required to take care of all domestic chores as slaves and, if the winner so chooses, to satisfy his sexual urges. When Kutanran is unable to pay the set price, they might lose their women for life, but this is uncommon. Because those ladies are viewed as morally or ethically deficient, the Pashtuns find them uncomfortable and unsettling. Those women are just a source of entertainment for the Pashtun males.<sup>32</sup> Even if their children are without food or clothing, a female spouse is compelled to hand over her earnings to her husband for gambling. Children raised by Kutanran are trained in begging, and they also utilize their charm to mislead people and beg in local stores and homes.<sup>33</sup>

The majority of Kutanran males are alcohol addicts while living in abject poverty. Since the majority of male Kutanran are unemployed, they force their wives to bring cash for their drinking. If a lady doesn't get the necessary amount, the man will beat her severely. Their addiction demands are their primary priority, and they do not give a damn about

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<sup>30</sup> Mr. Moinuddin, a local Marwat, dated 16.07.2018, interviewed by Mr Faridullah Shah (husband of principal author). Mr. Moinuddin is a local Pashtun who has married a Kutanrai.

<sup>31</sup> Personal interview with Ambreen Nasir, Theology Teacher Government Girls Middle School Sperka Wazir, Bannu, dated 23.11.2018.

<sup>32</sup> Personal interview with Mr Mira Jan Shah, Principal (Retd) Government Higher Secondary School Sarai Naurang, Lakki Marwat, dated 01.05.2019.

<sup>33</sup> Personal interview with Shama Bibi, a local Kutanrai, dated 23.11.2018.

their family's daily requirements. The majority of the day is spent by male Kutanran inside their tents, where they gamble, drink, or just stare at people passing by or in the area around their home.<sup>34</sup>

Kutanran typically marry off their daughters before adolescence, sometimes even before the girls reach puberty. Regarding this behaviour, they said that their poverty is the reason for it. The fact that Kutanran do not send their single young women to beg is important to mention. If a young girl is sent for this job, she will be accompanied by her mother or another elderly lady of the family, and the main purpose of her company is to get more alms in the name of the young girl's approaching marriage. To make money, they even sell their daughters. Since most girls begin earning after marriage, they relieve themselves of their daughters' responsibilities and provide an opportunity to her husband to earn some amount for his needs. In Kutanran, where there is a high birth rate ratio, a young woman would typically have two or three children when she is just a teenager. It is easy to spot a baby in a Kutanrai lap and another having trouble walking when she is begging on the streets; occasionally, the baby is dragging herself and is crying because she is unable to walk. There may have been two or three additional babies strolling alongside her.<sup>35</sup> They are aware of family planning methods, but they choose not to use them. Severe weakness and malnourishment cause deaths before, during, and after childbirth.<sup>36</sup>

Among Kutanran, education is scarce. There are numerous causes for this, such as the community's lack of interest and the State institution's inability to offer facilities. Kutanran lack both awareness of education and comprehension of its requirements. Out of all the tents, just two young boys have earned Secondary School Certificates and Higher Secondary School Certificates. There are a few kids that go to elementary school, but just grade 10. A portion of the Kutanran work for the government as sweepers in municipal committees, hospitals, and schools.<sup>37</sup>

Arguments at loud volumes between Kutanran is another one of their negative habits. It's interesting to see the scenario where they quarrel on sympathy issues. The fight involves every age group in the camp—males, girls, and kids alike. They fight loudly and generally

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<sup>34</sup> Personal interview with Parveen, a local Kutanrai, dated 23.11.2018.

<sup>35</sup> Personal telephonic interview with Mr Ikramullah Marwat, Assistant Professor Government Postgraduate College, Lakki Marwat, dated 16.07.2018.

<sup>36</sup> Personal interview with Laila, a Kutanrai, dated 22.10.2019.

<sup>37</sup> Personal interview with Baqi Tror, a Kutanrai, dated 15.06.2018

inflict physical harm on one another. Because they rarely approach the police, the current study appreciates that they have never been imprisoned by the police as a result of conflicts. They never bother going to court to resolve their conflicts. Instead, disputes are settled by the community's elders.<sup>38</sup>

Nevertheless, because of societal and governmental carelessness, Kutanran are engaged in stealing and other negative social behaviours. Because Kutanran are indolent people, they steal when they are denied access to services and requirements.

The male Kutanran side is also somewhat to blame since they are unable to accept accountability or perform any duties. They are indolent and want other people to feed and take care of them. However, the state might also take charge of it by setting up seminars and training sessions, providing them with incentives, and raising awareness. After being trained, they would be active and like earning.

## 2. Political Problems

Kutanran's political situation is comparable to its social situation. They don't feel the need to participate in politics. Kutanran continued to be destitute, reliant, and homeless. Few people have money, own homes, and lead settled lives; the majority are nomads. Lacking any kind of defence, Kutanran would rather reside in the city near the police station or under the protection of well-known Khans. They used to switch locations in the past for a variety of reasons, including weather, safety, and finances. Still, they have lived there permanently for many years in cities like Sarai Naurang and Lakki City.<sup>39</sup>

Kutanran typically have political ties to the politicians in their adjacent camps. Usually, when they need it, that political figure gives them some refuge, support, or electricity. As previously noted, Kutanran typically form an alliance with the Khan or Malik of the village or area in which they set up camp. In exchange, they are paid infrequently or in small amounts, and the village's Khan takes advantage of their labour force. In addition, they utilise their women for domestic chores, dancing at weddings and other joyous occasions, and sometimes even for sex.<sup>40</sup>

Even at the local level, Kutanran lack a political representative despite having resided in the region for a very long time. They were not

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<sup>38</sup> Personal interview with Nadia Dard, Assistant Professor in Urdu, Government Girls Degree College, Lakki Marwat, dated 17.07.2018.

<sup>39</sup> Personal telephonic interview with Amir Mohammad, former Director FBR, GoP, dated 05.05.2019.

<sup>40</sup> Zafar Khan, a local Marwat, 08.05.2018, interviewed by Faridullah Shah.

registered to vote before the 1990s since they lacked National Identity Cards (NIC). Government occupations were exclusively held by persons with NICs. Almost all of them now have National Identity Cards, particularly the men.<sup>41</sup>

During election season, certain workers of local political leaders and parties visit Kutanran's camps and persuade them to get their National Identity Cards to cast ballots. Voting was done by the polling agent since the political agents convinced them they didn't know how to vote. Only their votes, worth between PKR 1,000 and PKR 3,000, earn Kutanran compensation. Their only benefit is this; on election day, other voters receive a portion of the development projects.<sup>42</sup>

According to the current study, local political elites use Kutanran for their ends and do not offer them the same municipal amenities as other Marwats in the community. Without a doubt, Lakki Marwat is one of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's most impoverished districts, with few basic amenities. The district is developing at an extremely slow pace. Local Marwats in far-off areas are also bought off with small amounts of cash during elections by political elites. Nonetheless, there are occasionally ongoing development projects taking place in those isolated settlements. These projects include building streets, roads, clinics, and schools in addition to installing tube wells and electricity. On the other hand, Kutanran receive little money in exchange for their votes and receive no basic services. The camp typically receives a single electrical connection, and the Kutanran are afraid that it might be cut off at any time. In Sarai Naurang, around thirty-five mud dwellings and tents have only one water tap by the side of the road. Water and electrical facilities are hard to come by in Lakki City. They carry water in carts or jugs on their shoulders as they travel great distances.

### 3. Economic Problems

Kutanran is the poorest community in the area, as was already said often facing discrimination and exclusion. Members of the community do not own any land or other property, such as stores or companies. Nearly every home has some movable assets, such as motorbike carts and horses. These carts are mostly utilized for transportation during the harvest season. The majority of the population in the district of Lakki Marwat is impoverished and has few financial means, making it a backward and destitute place. Other than the 1993-founded Lucky Cement Factory, there are no industries. The district of Lakki Marwat's

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<sup>41</sup> Personal interview with Hashim Khan, a lakki Kutanra, dated 16.06.2018.

<sup>42</sup> Personal interview with Farhat Jabeen, a lakki Marwat, dated 15.06.2018

primary economic activity is agriculture. The majority of the district's land is unoccupied and relies on rainfall to produce agricultural goods.<sup>43</sup> People are getting better every day and have adapted to other economic resources in recent years. Kutanran are reliant on the local populace.<sup>44</sup>

Many Kutanran moved to the area in hopes of a brighter future and to change their life following the British occupation in Lakki Marwat. Still, they were unable to uncover any unique financial benefit here, most likely as a result of a lack of economic opportunities. They worked for railroads and frontier constabulary as sweepers, *ardalian*, and washer men. A few more held labouring positions in government hospitals, schools, and departments. Since the Pashtuns in the area were hesitant to perform menial tasks, they were employed in government offices on lower posts. Their families were too numerous and too dependent on booze and gambling for them to manage their incomes. It is said to satisfy their cravings for addiction and daily necessities, their women are forced to beg in the neighbouring communities. *Parda*<sup>45</sup> is not observed by Kutanrai women. As such, they visited both nearby and far-off households quickly.<sup>46</sup>

Begging is the main source of income for Kutanran people, mostly through the use of their women and kids. Their ladies would formerly beg for flour in the name of Allah by going door to door on every street. They'd disappear after somebody gives them a handful of grains or flour. They beg for cooking oil, sugar, clothes, and money nowadays, pleased with more than just grain. They swear at the villagers if they offer them anything except flour. Upon receiving more, they (the female) leave the house.

In addition to teaching their children to beg, Kutanran used to prey in neighbourhood homes and businesses and would employ cunning begging techniques.<sup>47</sup> When Kutanran couldn't satisfy their daily cravings for gambling and addiction, they used to beat their females.<sup>48</sup> In addition, Kutanran performs some light labour. In Marwat communities, kutanran men carrying a basket over their heads filled with

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<sup>43</sup> Personal interview with Prof. Fazal Raheem, former Vice Chancellor Bacha Khan University Charsadda, visiting Professor at Pakistan Study Centre, University of Peshawar, dated 02.05.2019.

<sup>44</sup> Personal interview with Naimat Shah, Lecturer Government Degree College No.02 Bannu, dated 11.10.2018.

<sup>45</sup> Lakki Marwat ladies observe *parda* strictly.

<sup>46</sup> Personal interview with Ishaq Shah, Senior Science Teacher, Government Higher Secondary School Sarai Naurang, dated 17.03.2018.

<sup>47</sup> Personal interview with Hawa Bibi, a resident, dated 16.07.2109.

<sup>48</sup> Personal interview with Parveen Bibi, a local Kutanri, dated 03.04.2019.

children's toys, bracelets, lipsticks, and other accessories were known as *Wanjare*. Since Marwat women were either unable to access markets or were not permitted to go there, *Wanjare* delivered toys and feminine accessories right to the home, making them prepared to shop from Kuantan. The presence of toys for enjoyment made kids happy. The Kutanran used to make the toys themselves; they were made of clay. Additionally, female Kutanrai would sell women's and children's items in villages by carrying a basket full of them. *Wanjarai* was the name given to those female Kutanrai. Bracelets were the most popular item from a *Wanjarai*. Bangles were traditionally worn by Kutanrai women. A common prevailing tapa in Marwat society is,

‘Jinai spin marwand de rawra,

Kutanrai raghale che tor bangri dr waachawi na,’

مرراو یوزد درم نی سب ینج

نا یدر واچو یرت و رب نگ یچ یراغل یرنبتک و

Trans. 'Bring your white wrist,

Kutanrai has come to put on a black bracelet on it'

These days, one can also find those *wanjarai* in communities, although male *wanjare* is becoming increasingly scarce.<sup>49</sup> The street sale of cotton candy is a vital source of income for the men of Kutanran. They make their candies in the shapes of many objects and animals, including flowers, dogs, cats, goats, and cows. Youngsters are drawn to the craft of shaping it into various forms and ultimately purchase it.<sup>50</sup>

Kutanran were, and to some extent still are, engaged in their customary careers in entertainment. Animals trained to dance to music include bears, monkeys, horses, dogs, and goats. People pay them for their jokes when they bring those trained animals to the villages and have them do various stunts and dances. For the inhabitants, those dancing animals were a source of amusement as there were no other entertainment options in the area. They were also and still are skilled acrobats, magicians, jugglers, impersonators, and beggars. In addition to this, they provide rides and sing traditional folk music for the village residents, occasionally including dancing by the women. Because of their frequently melodic voice, they draw attention from the audience.<sup>51 & 52</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Personal interview with Prof Fazal Raheem, *op.cit.*, 02.05.2019.

<sup>50</sup> Personal interview with Zakir Khan, undergraduate student Government Postgraduate College Bannu, dated 03.03.2019.

<sup>51</sup> Famous Pashto singer Zar Sanga belongs to this community (Sarai Naurang).

<sup>52</sup> Personal telephonic interview with Abdul Hamid Marwat, Ex-Chief Environment Planning Commission, Director National Programme UNDP, Government of Pakistan, dated 03.03.2019.

In the Marwat area, Kutanran were also skilled physicians. *Zawaraa*, or leaches, were the insects they once kept. People frequently had boils and pimples from the use of heavy water because the area is hot and there is rarely clean drinking water available. Back then, leach was applied around the damaged area to clean the blood by sucking, as antibiotics were not commonly utilised. The boils and pimples were said to be treated as the leach drew up pollutants and bacteria. Since some locals still conduct this kind of treatment in their villages, medical anthropology needs more thorough study. People flock to the Kutanran, who still keep leaches to use their services for blood cleansing.<sup>53</sup>

Kutanran's main source of income is daily harvesting season, period from April to May. It's time when Rabi crops are harvested, cut and threshed into grains. The district's sole source of revenue, the Rabi crop, is distributed to them in large portions. Every Kutanran household used to purchase a horse and a cart back then, and travel from village to village and community to community gathering grains and crops. They harvest a lot of food, and around that time of year, piles of crops can be seen outside their homes before they are threshed. Motorbike carts have mostly replaced horse carts in recent years. Since they don't have much room to store and preserve the grains, the majority of them sell them and receive the money. The meat of the animals that are sacrificed on Eidul-Azha is another significant item that they obtain and gather in great quantities. When Kutanrai (the female) goes door-to-door with her kids, they gather meat. The meat is preserved by being salted and then left out in the sun to dry for a few days—a process known locally as *taraze*.<sup>54</sup>

Some Kutanran have started selling ice cream bars on their motorcycles at various locations throughout the summer for the past five years. By offering their ladies for sex with the locals, they also make money.<sup>55</sup>

According to the current study, Kutanran's economic situation was both poorer in the past and nowadays, as they are living below the basic life economic standards set by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).<sup>56</sup> They don't own any stores, businesses, or personal

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<sup>53</sup> Personal interview with Mr. Fazlur Rahman, Director FBR, GoP, dated 06.05.2019.

<sup>54</sup> Personal interview with Prof. Fazal Raheem, former Vice Chancellor Bacha Khan University Charsadda, visiting Professor at Pakistan Study Centre, University of Peshawar, dated 02.05.2019.

<sup>55</sup> Personal interview with Baqi Tror, a Kutanrai, dated 26.05.2018.

<sup>56</sup> [https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/UDHR/Documents/UDHR\\_Translations/eng.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/UDHR/Documents/UDHR_Translations/eng.pdf)

land holdings. Reference to Kutanran is considered a curse in Marwat society as prescribed in the following tapa,

ه وف ا جانان يد ك رم خ ف ه ب ردي

ذایرزاوگ یک یچ رین بتک و یکر دی دیخدا<sup>57</sup>

Trans. You have displeased me beyond limits

May God give you a Kutanrai, so you wander along household commodities all time.

While it is true that they are not given permission or resources for earning, their incompetence, passivity, and incompatibility are hard to overlook. They take life too easy, are sluggish, and don't make plans for the future.

### **State Indulgence and Negligence: Fixing Responsibility**

The necessities of life, such as food, clothing, and shelter, are either scarce or nonexistent for Kutanran. They do not own any private land or businesses as a community. The local population would rather not allow Kutanran's integration into the established social hierarchy. They are excluded from the locals and kept apart in their camps. They still belong to the untouchable groups. Nobody likes being tangled, sharing food, or doing anything else with them. They are usually given alms but are not permitted to use the everyday utensils and accessories of the locals.<sup>58</sup>

The government has shown no regard for the aforementioned community since its inception. The existence and rights of Kutanran of Lakki Marwat were unknown to any State entities till recently. Resolving their issues and integrating them has never been a priority for any of the institutions. Non-Governmental Organisations, international humanitarian organisations, and UN affiliates have not published a report on Kutanran until very recently in an attempt to raise awareness and secure funding to begin a programme for their uplift.<sup>59</sup>

The status of Kutanran or others who resemble them is not determined by any legislation or provision in the current version of the Pakistani Constitution. As a member of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), Pakistan is required by law to provide its inhabitants access to all essential rights and amenities. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) and the

<sup>57</sup> Personal interview with Zaitoon Bibi, a local Marwat lady, dated 29.05.2024.

<sup>58</sup> Personal interview with Abdul Basit Khan, a local Marwat, dated 08.04.2019.

<sup>59</sup> Personal interview with Sifatullah Khan, Area Advisor, Agriculture Department Lakki Marwat, dated 07.04.2019.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICESCR) state that, subject to resource availability, Article 28 A<sup>60</sup> of Human Rights Laws should be amended to recognise every citizen's right to food, health, education, a clean environment, and shelter.<sup>61</sup> It is crucial to remember that in the case of common citizens, it depends on the availability of resources. However, state managers, both military and civil, seldom connected many of their privileges to resource availability since it benefited the elite.

Although untouchability is prohibited by the Pakistani constitution, it is nonetheless practised by powerful individuals and common folk, with state institutions taking a silent stand on the matter. People on the margins, or Kutanran, are viewed as outsiders by society. HRCP has received multiple accusations over the past few decades alleging that basic rights and amenities have been denied to low-caste residents living in separate housing. The issuance of National Identity cards is the only privilege the state has granted to the Kutanran people as citizens. Kutanran residents of the Sarai Naurang region can vote at least. Voting is not done by the Kutanran residents of the main Lakki Marwat city or its environs. A local politician or his employees gather their identity cards, and in exchange for casting a ballot, the voter receives a few thousand rupees in cash.<sup>62</sup>

The political answer to social exclusion is social inclusion. Projects and programmes for the improvement of disadvantaged people

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<sup>60</sup> Fundamental Rights of Pakistani citizens are safeguarded in article 8 to 28 in the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. According to it, the security of a person, safeguards to arrest and detention, right to fair trial, against taxation for any particular religion, and safeguards to educational institutions in respect of religion are guaranteed. Slavery and forced labour are prohibited, protection against retrospective punishment, double punishment, and self-incrimination, and inviolability of dignity of man is forbidden. Freedom of movement, assembly, association, speech, trade, business, profession, safety of religion and religious institutions are guaranteed. Protection of property rights and equality of citizens, safeguard against discrimination in services, and non-discrimination regarding access to public places are given. The right to education and preservation of language, script and culture is guaranteed to citizens of Pakistan ([https://na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1549886415\\_632.pdf](https://na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1549886415_632.pdf), accessed on 24.10.2019).

<sup>61</sup> Saad-ur-Rehman Khan & Imaan Hazir Mazari, *Pakistan's International Human Rights*, op.cit., 22.

<sup>62</sup> Personal interview with Habib ur Rahman, former Tehsil Nazim District Lakki Marwat, dated 27.03.2018.

vary throughout nations. Programmes are frequently set up using multidisciplinary techniques, taking into account additional underlying issues at various societal levels. The British Social Inclusion Programme, for instance, was launched in 2007 and covered a wide range of topics, including employment, reintegration into the community, health and social care's role in combating social exclusion, stigma and discrimination, and vocational training and services.<sup>63</sup> Regretfully, Pakistan hasn't set up any initiatives of this kind to help underprivileged individuals like Kutanran. NGOs, government agencies, and other public institutions rarely placed a higher priority on improving the situation of those who are excluded. At times, rather than raising the bar for those who were excluded, the State of Pakistan and its public institutions disenfranchised additional individuals and groups. The world society pays attention to religious minorities, yet marginalized individuals are rarely included in and actively involved in projects and programmes aimed at improving social status.<sup>64</sup>

It was discovered during the field survey that Kutanran had permanently settled in the district, something that the local legislator, Lakki Marwat, was unaware of. He said their continual travel prevents them from working for their welfare. We told him they had spent almost a century living in Sarai Naurang and the Lakki city area. Then he said that Kutanran or nomads are left behind and that the PTI-led administration is not doing anything for the benefit of the general populace. He claimed that they had no plans and that nothing was being done for them. While the Book (The Holy Quran) was provided to them by them (members of the legislator's party i.e. JUI-F). They ought to adhere to it and live by the Quran's precepts.<sup>65</sup>

Human poverty is a deprivation element that affects social and cultural aspects of life in addition to the economic one. Countries must keep an eye on poverty in their societies, not just in terms of economics, statistics, and unemployment, but also in terms of fundamental amenities like health and literacy, as well as other crucial elements. They also need to look into cases where individuals or groups are marginalized or excluded from community life. Because of their poverty, there was an increase in the use of illegal drugs, alcohol, and tobacco among them. In

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<sup>63</sup> National Social Inclusion Program, UK; <http://www.socialinclusion.org.uk/home/index>, cited at 18.06.2019.

<sup>64</sup> Personal telephonic interview with Professor Ikramullah Khan, G.P.G.C. Lakki Marwat, dated 26.06.2018.

<sup>65</sup> Personal telephonic interview with Maulana Muhammad Anwar Khan, MNA District Lakki Marwat), dated 25.09.2019.

addition, there is a higher chance of food insecurity, antisocial behaviour, depression, suicide, and violence among those who are poor. Poverty is also linked to a wide spectrum of bodily ailments and disorders.<sup>66</sup>

As for as health is concern need, diabetes affects many Kutanran people. Additionally prevalent among the Kutanran of Lakki Marwat is tuberculosis. Men are more likely than women to get tuberculosis because of their substance addiction and smoking habits. Hepatitis is the other prevalent illness. Among them, there are also more than 10 cancer cases. Malnutrition affects most women and children. Pregnancy and childbirth account for the majority of female fatalities.<sup>67</sup>

Considering that those who belong to lower social classes generally die younger, as do those with lower incomes and educational levels. They therefore have a greater likelihood of illnesses and health issues.<sup>68</sup> It is clear from field studies that there are many health issues in the camps, most of which are treated with traditional herbal remedies without further testing. In the city of Sarai Naurang and Lakki Marwat, the oldest Kutanran is fifty-seven years old. The average age of other people in the area is about seventy, but anyone over sixty among the Kutanran is extremely uncommon.<sup>69</sup>

Social protection and welfare initiatives are generally designed to protect vulnerable people against livelihood risks, transfer maximum income or assets to people experiencing poverty, and enhance the marginalized people's social status and rights. In the context of Pakistan, the World Bank (2007) defines social protection as 'The broad objective of social protection policies and programs is to guarantee a minimum and stable level of income for those most in need while providing them with the necessary means to ensure income over time and eventually exit poverty. Basic income support and essential services ensure that the living conditions of the chronically poor and those who fall into poverty (as a result of a shock) do not deteriorate beyond a minimum acceptable level while increasing access of the poor to employment opportunities and through investments in human capital among the poor to open new

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<sup>66</sup> *The Health for All policy framework for the WHO European Region* (Copenhagen: World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe, 1999), 13.

<sup>67</sup> Personal interview with Fawad Muhammad, District Field Supervisor (Organization Program: TB Control, NGO: Green Star Social Marketing, District Lakki Marwat), dated 22.11.2018.

<sup>68</sup> J. Mackenbach, *Health Inequalities: Europe in Profile*, 2005 <http://www.eurohealthnet.eu/index>, accessed on 18.06.2019.

<sup>69</sup> This is in the case of normal death, which does not consider the killing of youth in bomb blasts.

avenues for them to exit poverty. Similarly, putting mechanisms in place for risk mitigation helps (vulnerable) households maintain more stable consumption levels and potentially prevents them from falling into poverty.<sup>70</sup>

In terms of social welfare, no public activity has been done by social welfare departments to improve the socio-economic standing of the Kutanran. Certain outlying regions of Lakki Marwat, such as Takhti Khel and Tajori, are supported by health and education-related projects. Maktab schools were established in those places to provide education for underprivileged children whose parents are unable to further their education. The commission workers have urged that the local district doctors provide free medical care to the underprivileged and needy residents of the area, including some Kutanran.<sup>71</sup>

Since Pakistan's founding, no project or programme has been started expressly for the wellbeing of Kutanran. In the district, some vocational training—particularly for women—has been initiated recently, but not for Kutanran. They received certificates based on the talents they possessed. Wheelchairs and a monthly allowance of Rs 5,000/- were also provided to disabled individuals; however, Kuantan was not included in this scheme.<sup>72</sup> The social welfare district office does not currently have any records, past or present, about the welfare of the gipsies.<sup>73</sup>

Sarai Naurang and Lakki Marwat, the Tehsil Municipal Administrations, have given Kutanran free water and power. They are also assigned to the municipal government as sweepers. Occasionally, they are also given access to additional resources, such as money for marriages or medical expenses. The effort to drill a tube well is intended to benefit the entire region, not just Kutanran. Since they had never requested it, they were not given any additional facilities like transformers or submersible pumps.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> *Social Protection in Pakistan: Managing household Risks and Vulnerability* (World Bank Report No: 35472-PK, 2007), <http://document.worldbank.org/curated/en/493331468059090991/Pakistan>.

<sup>71</sup> Personal interview with Mrs. Shereen, Social Worker, World Commission on Human Rights, District Lakki, dated 15.10.2019.

<sup>72</sup> Personal interview with Mohammad Mushtaq, District Social Welfare Officer Lakki Marwat, dated 15.09.2019.

<sup>73</sup> Personal interview (record checking) with Shabir Jan, Office Assistant, Social Welfare Office District Lakki, dated 15.09.2019.

<sup>74</sup> Personal interview with Mr Anwar Hayat Khan (M.P.A PF. 73 (Lakki), Ex-Chairman T.M.A Sarai Naurang), dated 29.10.2019.

According to the current study, various developmental projects should be implemented and concentrated in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan, particularly in underdeveloped areas like Lakki Marwat, to assist marginalized individuals in becoming valued citizens of the nation rather than beggars.

A rules-based, accountable bureaucracy can alleviate many of the problems related to targeting a nation such as Pakistan, where political favour is incentivized. Researchers have outlined the issues with Pakistani bureaucratic management that prevent the establishment of a bureaucracy with a set of rules. Even with improved policy design and information flow, greater targeting of social safety schemes will not be possible until the nation implements effective bureaucratic and policy reforms.<sup>75</sup> According to the current research, Pakistan as a State is a remnant of colonialism. The foundation of the entire system is elitism and defending the rights of individuals in the power corridor or those who are affiliated with them. More communities and groups will be disenfranchised until the State reforms its organisational structure and views people as citizens rather than subjects.

## Conclusion

The situation faced by the Kutanran community in Lakki Marwat is an issue of immediate concern for the authorities that requires immediate attention and prompt response. The discrimination and marginalisation they face on multiple fronts i.e., - economic, social, and political - conflicts with the norms of a democratic society. Therefore, a comprehensive approach is needed to address these issues and provide relief to the community.

For this purpose, firstly, the government needs to launch a programme to ensure the enrollment of Kutanran kids in schools and the provision of education and vocational training to the Kutanran community, males and females alike. This would help improve their economic status and empower them to become active participants in society. It is also essential to address the issue of political representation for the Kutanran community, at least in the local bodies. Second, the government should also work for their permanent settlement in

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<sup>75</sup> Asad Sayeed, *Social Protection in Pakistan: Concept, Situation, Analysis and the Way Forward* (Islamabad: Centre for Research for Poverty Reduction and Income Distribution (CRPRID), Planning Commission, Government of Pakistan; International Labor Organization (ILO) and United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Feb 2004), 19, accessed on 30.10.2019.

government-owned areas and allocate space and allot land to them for agricultural purposes instead of allotting such lands to the military, judges, bureaucrats, politicians and other privileged sections of society.

Last but not least, within the existing framework and resources, the state must provide better access to education, healthcare and measures to promote inclusion and reduce discrimination. To address this issue, it is recommended that the state takes immediate steps to provide legal protection to the Kutarnan community and ensure their access to fundamental human rights such as education, healthcare, and employment. The State must also ensure the community has political representation and is included in decision-making processes. In addition, it is essential to create awareness among society about the discrimination and marginalisation faced by the Kutarnan community. Social campaigns can be launched to educate people about the importance of inclusivity and diversity in society. Society must also be encouraged to create equal opportunities for all, regardless of caste, gender, or social status.