

## **Political Development and Conflict Resolution in Pakistan**

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Conflicts in Pakistan emanate from a configuration of factors relating to the state system, the unstable regional setting, and the global system at large. The state system in Pakistan has been characterised by problems of constitutionally underdeveloped provincial set-ups, dysfunctionality of elections for the prevalent system perceived by a privileged migrant leadership, a centralist authority structure, and a domineering role of army. During the last five decades, the state system passed through various phases of centralism, populism, and constitutional engineering by the military-bureaucratic establishment as well as Islamisation, largely at the expense of provincial autonomy and a sense of participation in the business of the state shared by all communities. Non-recognition of electoral mandate as the final source of legitimacy led to the emergence of ethnic movements in East Pakistan, the NWFP, Balochistan, and Sindh. The perceived Punjabisation of the state has created feelings of ethnic hostility among all regions other than Punjab. Social insecurities caused by rapid social change, such as urbanisation in general and in-migration in Karachi in particular, have fuelled ethnic hatred all around. Similarly, the influx of refugees from neighbouring countries, along with arms and drug trafficking, has led to new patterns of identity politics and higher levels of political violence. The state's relative non-performance at the local level has pushed many sectarian groups to exit from the parliamentary framework of politics towards a blatant use of arms. What is needed is the creation of a third tier of government at the district and sub-district levels. At the top of the priority list should be a policy of decentralisation and a continuity in the electoral process to bring the recalcitrant elements into the mainstream, de-weaponisation, and strengthening of political parties as interest-aggregating and policy-bearing institutions.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Political development in Pakistan has been generally characterised by spurts of constitutional activity as well as moments of constitutional breakdown. Public debate generally focused on such issues as the role of Islam in shaping the life of people in legal and moral terms, appropriate form of government for the country, role of minorities, quantum of provincial autonomy and desirability of adult franchise. On the other hand, there has been a lot of activity outside the framework of parliament, where extraparliamentary forces, led by army, played a decisive role in setting the national agenda. In addition, there have been ethnolinguistic movements in all provinces other

than Punjab, sectarian movements in many areas and tribal conflict in trans-indus provinces. Wars with India 1947-49, 1965, and 1971, separation of East Pakistan and the continuing dispute of Kashmir have contributed to emergence of an unstable regional setting. On its northern border with Afghanistan, Pakistan has been engaged in a severe struggle to chart out a path for itself in the perspective of a potential opening to Central Asia in future. During the 1980s. It accommodated 3.5 million Afghan refugees. It continues to take a keen interest in the way Taliban struggled to control Afghanistan from 1994 onwards.

The politico-ideological context of the exercise of power in Pakistan has had a deterministic influence over the process of nation-building in this country. In this paper, we shall first delineate the chequered path of political development in Pakistan with reference to state formation. We shall then locate the causes of conflict and discuss policies pursued by successive governments to resolve these conflicts, leading to a mixed bag of successes and failures. Thirdly, we shall summarise our observations linking state formation with conflict dynamics. Finally, we shall suggest some policy options.

Among the major aspects of state formation in Pakistan can be included: centralisation of power; military intervention in politics; impediments in the way of transfer of power to elected representatives; deficit performance of the state; and, finally identification of the state with one ethnic community. State formation in Pakistan involved the twin processes of regulating the rule of law and establishing the rule of public representatives, reflected through bureaucratic and constitutional traditions respectively. The former was the real colonial model of government while the latter was introduced only during the last decade before independence. The former which was characterised by institutional maturity brought about centralisation of authority, largely at the cost of provinces. Military governments further consolidated this tradition inasmuch they de-institutionalised politics. However, the democratic potential of the post colonial state expressed itself after each stint of martial law through public pressure for restoration of democracy and election campaigns. Electoral democracy displayed a vast potential for conflict resolution and provided the unlimited source of legitimacy in Pakistan. Lack of democracy in the form of genuine political participation led to a gradual build-up of the nationalist movement in East Pakistan during the two decades after independence. Once elections were held in 1970 and the Bengali nationalist party Awami League won a majority in the National Assembly, the process of transfer of power to elected representatives was stunted by Yahya's military government. That finally triggered off the movement for independence. Conversely, electoral democracy brought the Sindhi nationalist elite into the mainstream politics and thus acted as a solvent of separatist tendencies after 1970.

Often in the country's history, performance of the state in terms of economic growth functioned as a solvent of ethnic and religious aspirations even under the

military-dominated governments of Ayub and Zia. However, towards the later part of the rule of the generals, the decline of financial input from abroad and frustration with the constrained trickle down effects of economic growth led to alienation of people, especially from the marginal sectors of the economy. This was combined by alienation of ethnic élites from the relatively insular ruling elite dominated by Punjab. Indeed, identification of the state in Pakistan with Punjabis to the exclusion of all others contributed to intensification and even militarisation of ethnic conflicts in the country. During the first flurry of post-independence politics, migrants in general and Urdu-speaking migrants (*mohajirs*) in particular had dominated the ruling party Muslim League, higher bureaucracy and the industrial elite. After the rise of the Punjab-based army to power in Pakistan in the late 1950s and later emergence of Punjab as a majority province in 1971, Punjabiisation of the state in bureaucratic and military terms gradually led to emergence of the politics of ethnic identity in non-Punjabi communities [Samad (1995)]. Punjabis accounted for 49.3 percent of army officers and 53.5 percent of the senior bureaucrats in 1973, while mohajirs were 30.1 and 33.5 percent respectively. In 1986, the former had gone up to 55.3 and 57.7 percent while mohajirs from urban Sindh declined to 18.2 and 18.3 percent respectively [Kennedy (1993)]. By 1993 the share of Punjab had gone up to 62.36 percent while Sindh, NWFP and Balochistan trailed behind at 17.14, 12.41 and 3.01 percent respectively, with a mere 4.98 percent for Northern areas, FATA and AJK [Government of Pakistan (1995)]. In this way, the process of state formation in Pakistan showed the seeds of non-representative politics, centralisation of power and emergence of ethnonationalist movements.

State formation did not take place in a vacuum. It constantly responded to the specific public demands and aspirations as well as the peculiar socioeconomic features of the society. The differential pattern of distribution of resources played a great role in determining the fate of the project of national integration. Political leadership of the relatively backward communities from Balochistan and NWFP which had been on the margins of the Pakistan movement or had actually opposed it, suffered from a lack of legitimacy. These areas had only a tiny middle class or none at all, and thus had no effective representation in the modern state system. They were allowed to stagnate in the development process which further increased their alienation from the Centre and progressively thinned their bonds with the state. They represented a large pool of poverty. Successive governments lost credibility because they did not deliver at the service-giving end. However, the variables of poverty as well as social indicators in general have to be properly contextualised to carry an explanatory potential for emergence of conflict. If the poor areas are neither subject to rapid change in the local class structure nor exposed to external stimuli in the form of education, media or party activities nor, alternatively, part of the drive towards out-migration, then poverty may not provide material for agitation. For example, the most violent area in the 1990s was Karachi which indeed topped the list of 94 districts of Pakistan in terms of social

indicators.<sup>1</sup> Big cities far more than towns which indeed may be poorer, are prone to conflict—both ethnic and sectarian. Poverty serves as a basis for conflict only when other factors provide a political context for it.

An important variable in the analysis of conflict is in migration. It taxes the service structure of the local administration and breeds inter-group tensions. In various areas of Punjab, urbanisation has led to emergence of social and economic insecurities and has contributed to sectarian mobilisation of people. In southern Pakistan, successive waves of migration turned Karachi into a powder-keg and bred extreme hatred between communities in the 1980s and 1990s. In-migration of 150,000 persons per year on an average has changed the demographic profile of that city. The provincial share in population quartile by level of development is a significant indicator of regional disparity. Thus, the top quartile includes Punjab at 61.1 percent, but NWFP and Balochistan at only 5.6 and 1.8 percent respectively.<sup>2</sup> Large in-migration from India and later upcountry, as well as in-flow of refugees from the neighbouring countries have turned Karachi into a volatile area. There were industrial strikes for 31 days and 2000 industrial units closed down incurring a loss to the economy worth Rs 25 millions [HRCP (1996)]. We can argue that social change is a key factor in producing conflict when it is not effectively managed by the state and when it is combined with perceived poverty and sense of alienation from the state in ethnic, cultural, linguistic or sectarian terms.

External input in the process of state formation played a decisive role in Pakistan. Especially, the impact of regional input is relatively volatile in nature because it involves continuing border disputes, irredentist feelings of neighbouring countries, revolution-induced outflow of refugees, intelligence operations and rivalry for influence in the region. Proxy wars fought by super-powers in the recent past have contributed a great deal to destabilisation of the regions [Ayoob (1996)]. In the Afghanistan war (1980-92), the US and the Soviet Union backed rival parties while Pakistan became a conduit for the flow of arms and money to Afghan mujahideen. During the war years, large quantities of arms were transferred to various ethnic and sectarian groups in all the provinces of Pakistan. The Afghan refugees in Karachi played a destabilising role in the context of ethnic conflict. Finally, intra-state conflict emerged in the framework of inter-state conflicts rooted in scrambling of colonial empires which unfolded half a century ago [de Silva

<sup>1</sup>A recent study of ranking of districts in country used 11 indicators of social development, 6 belonging to education, 4 to health and 1 to water supply. It computed the weighted factors scorers (WFS) of each district using factor loading of principle components. It also compared this score with the Z-score of each indicator. In the list of district-wise ranking of social development in Pakistan, Karachi scored 26.0147 as compared to Rawalpindi in second position at 16.9032 which has been the most peaceful district. [Ghaus *et al.* (1996)].

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid* 13.

(1996)]. Kashmir is the outstanding issue between the two powerful nations of the region, India and Pakistan, which had a deterministic influence over the worldview of their ruling elites.

It is argued that there is no single pattern of emergence of conflicts in Pakistan. It is the specific combination of variables which brings about violent conflict between the state on the one hand and one or more social and political forces, regions or communities on the other. Since conflict is a fluid category given its multiple causes, and possibilities of its expansion and resolution, an ideographic rather than nomothetic approach will be more suitable for our present purpose.<sup>3</sup> Our aim is to construct a topology with an explanatory potential for conflict resolution in Pakistan. Postcolonial states in South Asia or elsewhere have undergone a process of institutional collapse which has led to both inefficiency and corruption. That has frustrated the public on the one hand and made the state increasingly committed to preservation and enhancement of its authority on the other. In other words, these states are engaged in primitive accumulation of power which is yet to be formalised and institutionalised into legitimate authority.<sup>4</sup> Enthusiasts for national self-determination of nations, including international human rights activists, primordialists among scholars of ethnicity and activists from nationalist movements all seem to operate in the analytical framework of politics of identity. However, as Benedict Anderson has shown, the state-based national bond is mature enough to hold on its own.<sup>5</sup> Within the state, a mono-ethnic tendency has emerged which has contributed to alienation of marginal ethnic communities [Weiner (1987)]. What needs to be looked into is the specific pattern of authority and orientations of public policy seeking to resolve or contain the conflict.

### STATE FORMATION IN PAKISTAN

This section seeks to map out the authority-wielding Institutional framework of the state and the way it sought to grapple with actual or potential conflict situations. Pakistan like many other Third World countries is engaged in quest for identity, planned developmental activity and efforts at national integration. On the other hand, people of Pakistan suffer from a gross lack of civic amenities, educational and health facilities, access to institutional justice as well as decline in the law and order situation. More laws are made outside the parliament than inside it. President issued 48,93, and 127 ordinances in 1993, 1994 and 1995 respectively; there were 390, 1105 and over 2000 killings during these years, including 57, 70 and 73 sectarian killings respectively.<sup>6</sup> Analysts compare political developments in Pakistan and India as two successor states

<sup>3</sup>See 'Introduction', de Goor, Rupesinghe, and Sciarone (eds) *Between Development*, 4.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.* 10.

<sup>5</sup>For example, see his discussion of official nationalism, patriotism, census, map, and museum [Anderson (1991)].

<sup>6</sup>These figures are taken from various reports of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan.

of British India and find the former lacking in potential to develop a stable democratic system as opposed to the perceived Indian model of a flawed but working democracy.<sup>7</sup>

There are four major aspects of the state system in Pakistan which account for the way its politics took a route different from India: (1) Relative under-development of future Pakistan areas in British India in institutional and constitutional terms. (2) Ascendancy of the migrant leadership in Pakistan which undermined the growth of representative institutions. (3) Concentration of power in the hands of the Centre at the expense of provinces. (4) The pivotal role of army in the constellation of powers ruling Pakistan. First, the general impression that the two countries had a similar starting point in terms of a shared heritage of colonial rule is not correct. The areas of the Raj that eventually became part of Pakistan were relatively underdeveloped. Here, the landed and tribal elites continued to enjoy their stranglehold over the masses and emergence of professional and commercial middle classes, especially among Muslims, was delayed. Also, representative institutions at the local level remained relatively underdeveloped. Unlike the Bombay, Bengal and Madras presidencies where a rudimentary form of participatory culture had taken roots through a dominant representative element in local bodies, in Punjab, Sindh, NWFP and Balochistan the official element dominated these bodies [Waseem (1994)]. Especially, Punjab was under the paternalistic rule of 'the British mandarins' [Dewey (1993)]. This fact inhibited the growth of representative institutions in general. In addition, large parts under princely rule lagged behind British India by a wide margin in terms of growth of politico-administrative institutions. Thus, Bahawalpur in Punjab, Khairpur in Sindh, Kalat, Kharan, Makran and Lasbela in Balochistan and Dir, Swat and Chitral along with smaller principalities in the NWFP as well as the federally and provincially administered tribal areas (FATA and PATA) along the Afghan border posed a great challenge to the national integration. Even East Pakistan, which was till recently a part of the Bengal Presidency, represented a large rural hunter land away from the cosmopolitan world of Calcutta. Together, Pakistan inherited the underdeveloped part of British India.

Secondly, the All India Muslim League was dominated by the political elite from Muslim minority provinces of British India during the movement for Pakistan to be established in the Muslim majority provinces. The latter were converted to the Pakistan cause as late as 1943, 1946 and 1947. This led to a bitter legacy of mistrust between the two as the former ascended to power at the Centre in post-independence Pakistan while the latter were relegated to a secondary position as provincial leaderships. Thus, while politics in India was characterised by structural continuity, politics in Pakistan suffered from structural discontinuity. This resulted in asymmetrical distribution of power between the migrant-dominated government on the one hand and the Constituent Assembly which was elected by the Pakistan provinces and was thus dominated by 'locals' on the other. This dichotomy was essentially reflected in the loss of

<sup>7</sup>See for example, Jalal (1995).

parliamentary sovereignty, the domineering role of the executive and the perceived deffunctionality of elections for the ruling elite. The migrant political leadership shaped the country's politics along non-representative lines. It drew upon the support of the large refugee population—already 7 million in 1951—which functioned as its natural constituency. Again, India and Pakistan represented two different models of migration. In India, refugees accounted for only one percent of the population. In (West Pakistan, they were 20 percent concentrated in urban Sindh, urban Punjab and rural areas of central and south Punjab [Government of Pakistan (1951)]. Refugees in India came from 'peripheral' areas in terms of the support base of the Congress such as Punjab and Sindh. As opposed to this, refugees in Pakistan had come from the 'core' provinces in terms of Muslim leadership in cultural, educational, commercial and political fields such as VP, (East) Punjab and Bombay. Not surprisingly the migrant ethos, characterised by an enhanced sense of insecurity and a reinvigorated ideological commitment, led to general deification of the state in Pakistan at the cost of participatory models of governance.

The third factor related to centre-province relations. Pakistan is a typical example of centralisation of power in the hands of the federal government. Various factors contributed to this trend. (i) Feelings of insecurity vis-à-vis India in the perspective of the Kashmir dispute led to a cult of unity, especially for allocation of scarce resources by the Centre. (ii) In the absence of a territorial base of its own in Pakistan, the migrant leadership abhorred the idea of sub-national identities and allowed only an all Pakistan-based national identity to operate in the country. (iii) The Centre showed deep mistrust of provincial politicians who had operated from the platform of parties other than the Muslim League before 1947 and who were thus effectively delegitimised. (iv) The bureaucracy in Pakistan was re-organised on an all-Pakistan basis and was provided constitutional guarantees. In that capacity, it managed to control the administrative and financial resources in provinces and produced deep consternation among local politicians. Some top bureaucrats directly took over political office as governor general/president (Ghulam Mohammad and Iskandar Mirza) and prime ministers (Choudhary Mohammad Ali). In this way, a 'bureaucratic Centre' was entrenched against political provinces. The Centre's hegemony over provinces was realised through the dismissal of ten provincial governments between 1947 and 1958. It led to emergence of autonomy movements in all provinces other than Punjab.

Finally, army was destined to play an important role in Pakistan, as its traditional recruitment area Punjab emerged at the power base of the new country. Every fifth man in the province and every thirdman in Rawalpindi district was an ex-servicemen [Aiyer (1995)]. Not surprisingly, scholars have traced the origin of militarism in Pakistan in the large peasant base of army recruitment in Punjab [Dewey (1991)]. The army units operating under the Pakistan Military Evacuation Organisation (PMEO) were involved in refugee evacuation efforts during the 1947 Hindu-Muslim riots [Government of

Pakistan (1993)]. They were therefore mobilised along religious lines in terms of the emerging pattern of hostility between India and Pakistan. In a parallel development, the war in Kashmir which increasingly involved regular army units militarised politics in Pakistan as feelings of extreme insecurity underlined the national consciousness. The army leadership acquired a decisive role in sponsoring certain political leaders jockeying for power at the Centre. The 1958 military coup was meant not to seize power but to keep power where it already rested, i.e., with the military-bureaucratic establishment [Alvi (1983)]. In the face of external and internal security problems faced by the finance-starved new state, army developed very high stakes in the state building project [Jalal (1991)]. The prevalent insecurity provided a structural context for the army to dominate all other forces contending for power and privilege. While political leadership from the Centre and provinces failed to evolve consensus over rules of game or shared constitutional goals, initiatives slipped to army. Search for outside help in countering the Indian threat led the armed forces to develop a pro-Western, capitalist, and ideologically Pan-Islamic worldview. Army which represents the establishment in Pakistan in an ultimate sense, has upheld a unitarian model for governance—preferably presidential in form and centralising in spirit. Overtime, professional, commercial and religious elites as well as bureaucracy came to share its worldview and its preference for a relatively non-participatory system of rule. In the process of democratisation from 1985 onwards, army leadership put the power to dissolve the National Assembly under Article 58(2)(B) of the Constitution in the hands of president. Successive presidents dissolved assemblies in 1988, 1990, 1993, and 1996. The legal situation changed after 1 April 1997 when parliament abrogated that article. However, army continues to carry a deterministic influence over the way priorities of internal politics and foreign policy orientations are defined.

The civil-military relations have been at the heart of political development in Pakistan. The army often shaped the contours of constitutional thinking and even directly took up the task of constitutional engineering. It generally distrusts what it considers self-seeking, corrupt and faction-ridden politicians operating from the platform of political parties. The military-sponsored 1962 constitution was based on indirect elections thus disenfranchising the mass public, non-party elections and an all powerful president—thus reducing the parliament to a rubber stamp. The more Ayub sought to control the expression of public dissent, the more it produced conflict potential among the disenfranchised sections of the people. During and after Zia, the ISI which enormously expanded its activities during the Afghanistan war played a crucial role in politics by sponsoring alliances of parties and preparing dossiers on politicians [Hussain and Hussain (1993)]. The holding of non-party elections in 1985 meant that issues and policies were taken away from the national agenda as no individual candidate could commit himself to public policy. Candidates activated local support bases in terms of *Biradri* (caste), faction and sectarian ties [Waseem (1994)]. The fact that

governments have been constrained to seek legitimacy by holding elections and at the same time control their dysfunctional results in the form of their exit from power has pushed them to rigging as a regular practice. Various forms of rigging include bogus electoral lists, disqualification of candidates, barring the latter's polling agents from protesting against malpractices in and around the polling booth, appointment of pliant and partisan staff in the 'target' constituencies, provision of huge outlays of development funds to candidates of the ruling party, and hostile coverage of the opposition on the electronic media [Waseem (1994)]. All this resulted in stunting the growth of democracy as the true reflection of people's will and thus forced social and political forces to use extraparlimentary modes of expression.

The party system in Pakistan duly reflected prevalent constraints of the political system such as the state-controlled electronic media, gradual disappearance of issue-based agenda, and defection from parties through co-option or coercion. On the eve of independence, there were three types of parties: urban parties, engaged in ideological mobilisation of Muslims, including the Ahrar, JUH and JI; rural parties, the most famous among them Unionist Party of Punjab which was based on factional groupings of landlords; A bisectoral party, Muslim League carrying the electoral strength of landlords and the organisational potential of urban middle class elements [Waseem (n.d.)]. During the 1950s, successive governments depended on a patchwork of factional support in the parliament. The Muslim League and later the Republican Party functioned as a king's party par excellence to provide legitimacy for the establishment. This led to emergence of alliance politics in the 1960s when the (Convention) Muslim League performed the role of a king's party for President Ayub while all other parties, Islamic, sectarian, ethnic and leftist, joined hands against him. After the 1970 elections, political parties were clearly identified with certain provinces, ethnic communities, classes, sectarian groups and tribes. The PPP which dominated politics in (W) Pakistan in the 1970s and the Muslim League which was restored and refurbished in the 1980s can be grouped together as mainstream parties in the 1990s. Apart from these two parties, there are ethnic parties such as the ANP in NWFP, BNA and JWP in Balochistan, the MQM representing the mohajir community in Sindh as well as various Sindhi nationalist parties and factions, Islamic parties represent a poor third including the JI, JUP and JUI. In the 1997 elections, the three categories got 155, 26 and 2 seats in the National Assembly respectively. It is clear that mainstream parties are conglomerations of local influentials who are potential winners in electoral contests. Generally, parties have no clear profile about a policy structure.

Table 1 shows indicators of political development which point to the process of state formation and political change in Pakistan during the last half century with reference to ideology, constitution, establishment, party system, elite-mass relations and identity of the state. It is clear that from the 1950s to 1990s, the state moved from politics of nationalism to centralisation of power under various forms including

Table 1  
*Indicators of Political Development in Pakistan*

	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s
Context	Nationalism	Development	Populism	Militarism	Dyarchy
Establishment	Bureaucracy	Military-bureaucratic Establishment	Bonapartist State	Military Establishment	Invisible Government
Constitution	Constitutional Engineering 1956 (Civil)	Constitutional Engineering 1962 (Military)	Constitution by Consensus 1973	Constitutional Engineering 1985 (Military)	Constitutional Status quo
Islam	Islamic Constitutionalism (Legalistic Approach)	Islamic Modernism (Integrationist Approach)	Islamic Socialism (Egalitarian Approach)	Islamisation Programme (Legitimation Approach)	Islamic Movement (Sectarian Approach)
Party	Multi-partyism	King's Party Model	One-party Dominance Model	Non-party Model	Two-party Model
Politics	Elite Politics	Elite Non-politics	Mass Politics	Military Politics	Elite-mass Politics
Ideology	Ideology for Legitimacy	Ideology for Disenfranchisement of Public	Ideology for Public Mobilisation	Ideology for De-mobilisation	De-ideologisation of Politics

populism and military rule; from attempts at constitutional engineering by the military-bureaucratic establishment to a relatively open-ended agreement between the contending forces; from a legalistic to sectarian approach to Islam via a vehement Islamisation programme; from multi-partism to one-party dominance model to the two-party model; and, from an ideological mode of politics to a relatively de-ideologised political culture. Overall the system was more successful in containment rather than resolution of conflicts.

While politics in Pakistan has meandered through various phases of civil and military phases of government, there has been a steady move in the direction of consensual politics. On the one hand, certain debates have continued to make headlines right from the 1950s up to the 1990s, such as the role of Islamic in Pakistan, provision of separate electorates in the Constitution and lack of balance between the power of various institutions and positions, i.e., between bureaucracy and politicians, between the executive and judiciary and between president and prime minister. On the other hand, the nation has moved forward in terms of expansion of the boundaries of the political community as well as expansion of areas of agreement on fundamental issues. For example, the legitimate political community was initially represented by Punjab as a province and the large migrant community which hailed from East Punjab as well as non-Punjab areas in India—the latter called mohajirs in subsequent years. From 1970 elections onwards, especially after Bangladesh, (W) Pakistan went through a phase of inclusionary politics whereby the Pakhtun, Baloch and Sindhi nationalist parties and factions as well as ulema parties were accommodated in federal and provincial governments. Thus, a large number of people from these communities emerged as a part of the legitimate political community for the first time, represented by the NAP, JUI, and PPP. After the interregnum of Zia's martial law, the 1988 election brought major ethnic parties viz. ANP, BNA, MQM and PPP (which operated in Sindh as a Sindhi nationalist party), Jiye Sindh Mohaz, SNF and Islamic parties JUI, JI and JUP as well as minuscule leftist parties such as PKQP into the vortex of parliamentary politics. Not only the number of legitimate contenders of power increased, leading to coalition-based governments at the federal and provincial levels but also the electorate experienced successive waves of mobilisation for four elections in nine years. All this improved the potential of the state system to provide channels for conflict resolution almost by default.

In a parallel process, evolution of a broad-based agreement on certain erstwhile contentious issues has been going in. The debate on a suitable form of government for Pakistan has decisively moved away from a unitary to a federal model, even as in practice it remains in the vicinity of quasi-unitarian federalism. Between the two options of parliamentary and presidential forms of governments, the nation moved from the former (1956 Constitution) to the latter (1962 Constitution) and back again (1973 Constitution). A move in 1985 to go back to a least a quasi-presidential form of

government via 8th Amendment was finally rolled back in 1997, effectively restoring parliamentarism in full. Parallel to the evolving consensus of federalism and parliamentarism, one can see public opinion moving away from the model of unicameral legislature in the Centre (1956 and 1962 Constitutions) to be a bicameral legislature (1973 Constitution). The upper house Senate is elected by the four federating units which are equally represented to counter the asymmetrical distribution of economic and political resources and balance out the majoritarian populism of Punjab in the National Assembly. The fact that all the three martial law governments had to bow down to the public pressure to hold elections (1962, 1970, 1985) and restore democracy and no major group, community or party has shown a public commitment to military rule points to a quantum leap forward in public opinion. In the transition from the old model of political debate over shapes of pity to the new model of potential consensus on the issues, diverse ideological positions have indeed found a platform in the framework of parliamentary politics. Significantly, the four nationality thesis which was once anathema to the ruling elite now finds expression as a string of four cultures, all belonging to the Indus valley. Not surprisingly, ethnic parties have been legitimised in the process. Finally, the most important change in the political culture of Pakistan is the relative autonomy of the press. It has come a long way from the days of Ayub's notorious Press and Publications Ordinance when restrictive measures ranging from pre-censorship to harassment and imprisonment of journalists were the order of the day. The print media has functioned as a watchdog of performance of successive government after 1998. It has helped create an atmosphere in which conflicts are brought into the limelight whereby governments are constrained to respond one way or the other.

### **PATTERNS OF CONFLICT**

Sources of political conflict in Pakistan are predominantly ethnic, remotely followed by sectarian hostility. Pakistan has experienced five ethnic movements in four provinces, one each in NWFP, East Bengal and Balochistan and two in Sindh where Sindhis and mohajirs developed their separate nationalist movements. The two sectarian movements, anti-Ahmadyia agitation and Shia-Sunni strife have had their epicentre in Punjab. These conflicts involved policies of the politico-military authorities of the state, the changing socio-economic position of ethno-linguistic communities and sectarian groups and the regional input. Some conflict has historical roots from before independence such as Pakhtun and Baloch movements. Others are the product of post-independence political developments. The anti-Ahmadiay movement thrived on reaction to the perceived 'secularism' of the government in the 1950 and again 1970s. Later, it got impetus from Zia's Islamisation programme in the 1980s. There is no set pattern of rise and fall of conflicts such as in the case of Baloch nationalism (1947, 1958, 1963, 1973-77) and anti-Ahmadiay movement (1953, 1974, 1980s).

Among the five nationalist movements, Pakhtun nationalism pre-dates the

emergence of Pakistan. Led by Ghaffar Khan's party *Khudai Khidmatgars* (KK) in 1930s, it focused on issues of unity of Pakhtuns living in the tribal and settled districts, a social reformist agenda, non-violence and provincial autonomy. However the Pakhtun nationalist leadership lost initiative to the Muslim League on the eve of partition of India. The KK government lost legitimacy in the eyes of the new ruling elite in the Centre and was dismissed, followed by incarceration of the Pakhtun nationalist leadership for decades. Kabul all along condemned the Durand line allegedly imposed by the British under duress in 1893, which had divided the Pathan territory. However, ethnic movement in NWFP could not expand because of the gradual ascendancy of Pathans in the military-bureaucratic establishment, the preservation of autonomy for the tribes, expansion of the Pathan commercial interests throughout Pakistan and emigration of a large number of workers from the NWFP to Karachi and later Middle East [Amin (1988)]. On the other hand, a declining but resilient nationalist sentiment continued to operate under the charismatic leadership of Ghaffer Khan. Pakhtun nationalist party NAP—latter ANP—also changed its politics over the years from separatist nationalism to the demand for provincial autonomy and security of Pakhtun interest in general. However, the ratio of votes for Pakhtun nationalism declined from 51.70 percent in 1946 for KK to 19.4 percent in 1970 for NAP [Amin (1988)]. As the latter formed a coalition government in NWFP in 1972, it substantially dampened separatist tendencies. However, Z. A. Bhutto's centralist policies, including dismissal of the NAP government in Balochistan led to resurgence of Pakhtun nationalism. Later, Islamabad banned the NAP and the Supreme Court gave a verdict against it. A number of nationalist elements worked for an independent Pakhtunistan and even launched terrorist attacks in NWFP. However, economic integration overtook political alienation of Pakhtun leadership in the form of infrastructural development, accommodation of the urban elite in the military-bureaucratic establishment and out-migration of a large number of the civilian labour force. The ANP has adjusted accordingly and formed a coalition government in NWFP after the 1997 elections with its arch-rival Muslim League.

If Pakhtun nationalism was ethnic and historical in nature, Bengali nationalism was cultural, linguistic and economic in character. Cultural alienation was reflected in the demand for declaring Bengali as one of the national languages, while the ruling elite insisted on Urdu as the only national language for Pakistan. It condemned Bengali Muslims to be too closely integrated with their Hindu compatriots [Rizvi (1986)]. This reflected the demographic strength of Hindus in East Bengal. As opposed to the exodus of non-Muslims from (W) Punjab, Hindus in (E) Bengal numbered 12 million [Kudaisya (1995)]. East Bengali politicians maintained a steady stance on the issue of provincial autonomy and rejected plans for a centralised form of government. Despite its share in population at 55 percent, East Bengal had a share of only 10 percent and 13 percent in the army and bureaucracy respectively [Anisurrehman (1968)]. In the 1954 provincial elections, the ruling party Muslim League was put to rout. However, the new

government was soon dismissed, followed by imposition of successive governments on the province led by the centre's nominees. The 1958 military coup sealed the fate of East Bengal because army mainly represented West Pakistan. Bengalis progressively felt alienated from the political system. In various commissions of inquiry, the Planning Commission and other departments of the federal government as well as public corporations under Ayub, the share of Bengalis remained less than on-third [Jehan (1972)]. Foreign aid was disproportionately allocated, 77 percent to West Pakistan and only 23 percent to East Pakistan [Bangladesh Document (n.d.)]. It was claimed that the discriminatory pattern of inter-wing trade combined with the differential pattern of aid flow led to a net transfer of resources from East to West Pakistan worth US\$ 2.6 billion in the two decades after independence [Government of Pakistan (1970)]. All this led to formation of the six Points programme which demanded a centre with only two subjects, defence and foreign affairs, two convertible currencies or regional reserve banks for the two wings, power of taxation and revenue collection with the provinces and the latter's right of establishing direct trade relations with foreign countries [Waseem (n.d.)]. After the Awami League won the 1970 elections Yahya, Mujib and Bhutto failed to come to a compromise on Six Points. A brief interlude of bluff secession [Inayatullah (n.d.)] started in March 1971, when Mujib resorted to street action in response to Yahya's postponement of the National Assembly session. East Bengal separated as an independent country after a bloody civil war and India's military intervention.

Balochistan showed signs of a mini-insurgency in 1948, 1958 and 1963 in local areas, and finally blew up into a province-wide guerrilla war after the 1973 dismissal of the NAP government in Quetta. During the first decade, the movement for 'Greater Balochistan' was spear headed by KSNP and Ustomam Gul. A guerrilla force called parariwas organised along Che Gevera Model and Baloch ethnic awareness was cultivated with the covert support of the Soviet Union. When the Baloch nationalist leadership joined the NAP and formed a coalition government in Quetta after the 1970 elections, the separatist Agenda lost steam. However, various issues put Islamabad and Quetta on a collision course: the ouster of non-Baloch government officials from Balochistan; armed clashes of the Baloch tribes of Karachi, Lehri and Marri with Punjabi settlers on the irrigated land of Patt Feederarea; and, most dramatically, the seizure of the Soviet arms cache in the embassy of Iraq in Islamabad allegedly meant for the NAP government in Balochistan which was immediately dismissed. Subsequently, a militant group BPLF pursued a separate is agenda and waged a guerrilla war for four years (1973-77) against the state. Among the reasons which contributed to the Baloch nationalist movement (1973-1977) can be included: the perceived unjust dismissal of a representative government in Quetta by the Centre; the demonstration effect of the recent 'successful' Bangladesh war of independence; the commitment of the Soviet Union and India to support the Baloch guerrilla movement,

and the readiness of Afghanistan to provide weapons, training and sanctuaries to the guerrillas [Harrison (1981) and Awan (1986)]. In the post-1977 period, the Centre withdrew from hot pursuit of Baloch guerrillas. During the Afghan resistance movement in the 1980s, Pakistan took the war back into the Afghan territory. After the 1997 elections, an alliance of the Baloch nationalist parties BNP and JWP formed a coalition government in Quetta. The political scene of Balochistan has been quiet for more than a decade.

Sindh achieved provincial status in 1936 when it separated from Bombay Presidency. After independence, a breakaway faction of the Muslim League led by G. M. Syed espoused the case of an independent Sindh when millions of refugees came and settled there. Karachi was separated from the province in 1948 as capital of Pakistan. Nearly half of the newly irrigated land, [Kardar (1992)] i.e., 1.32 million acres of agricultural land which was brought under cultivation by various barrages, was allotted to bureaucrats and military officers, both Punjabis and mohajirs. Similarly, cultural and linguistic aspirations of Sindhis were thwarted by what was condemned as the 'Punjabi imperialism' [Syed (1976)]. The Sindhi language was discouraged as a language of literacy and higher education in favour of Urdu.

The One-Unit (1955-70) threatened to wipe out the separate 'cultural' identity of Sindhis. The urban sector which contained industrial enterprise and middle class professions remained predominantly non-Sindhi. After in-migration of mohajirs from India who generally settled in cities, educational Institutions, the press and cultural activities became Urdu-based. Obviously, the first flurry of reaction among Sindhis to the perceived mohajir domination was geared to a defensive strategy of cultural preservation [Amin (1988)]. Demand for restoring Sindhi language to its rightful place became the rallying ground for Sindhi nationalism which resulted in the Sindhi Language Bill in 1972 declaring Sindhi to be the official language of Sindh. The subsequent language riots fuelled Sindhi nationalism even further. Politically, the Sindhi nationalist forces led by G. M. Syed all along opposed centralisation of power in the hands of the federal government and merger of Sindh into One-Unit. It demanded full provincial autonomy and proportionate representation of Sindhis in bureaucracy where they accounted for only 2.7 percent as opposed to mohajirs at 33.5 percent [Kennedy (1993)]. Successive waves of migration into Sindh have sent shock waves among Sindhis who feared the prospects of their becoming a minority in the own homeland. According to the 1981 census, they were 55.7 percent in Sindh, 36.3 percent in urban Sindh and only 3.8 percent in Karachi city. The last decade land a hail may have worsened their position in demographic terms still further. The 1979 execution of Z.A. Bhutto who hailed from Sindh worked as catalyst for nationalist mobilisation. At one end stood the PPP. At the other end, Sindhi Awami Tehrik represented Sindhi nationalism in a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist mould. The continuing under representation of Sindhis in services, business and law enforcing agencies and the prospects of

repatriation of Biharis from Bangladesh which is feared to contribute to demographic imbalance still further keeps the pot of Sindhi nationalism boiling in the late 1990s.

The mohajir movement started in the mid-1980s, it is unique in many ways. Other movements emerged in communities which were never a part of the dominant elite. But Mohajirs were initially dominant in the state system and only progressively lost their grip over power. They were 3 percent in the population of (united) Pakistan, but they had 21 percent jobs [Waseem (n.d.)]. The Gujarati-speaking mohajirs from Bombay in India controlled 7 out of 12 biggest industrial houses. As a privileged minority, mohajirs operated at the national level and abhorred sub-national identities based on language, region and culture. However, the 1970 elections opened up the state to mass participation which led to indigenous revival in terms of politicisation of ethnolinguistic identities in all provinces other than Punjab. The Sindhi-led PPP's rule (1971-77) triggered an all-pervasive mohajir identity which found expression in the formation of the first APMSO in 1978 and later MQM in 1984. Successive waves of migration into Karachi from India, from the upcountry, from the interior Sindh and from the neighbouring countries in the 1940s/1950s, 1960s, 1970s and 1980s respectively have led to emergence of an acute pattern of competition for jobs and access to civic amenities. Today, Karachi has a number of linguistic groups competing for businesses, jobs and social amenities, with approximately 5.5 million Urdu (and Gujarati) speaking people, 2 million Punjabis, 1.5 million Pathans (including Afghans), 2 million foreigners (including Iranians, Iraqis, Sri Lankans, Thais, Bangladeshis, Burmese, Philippines and others) and less than a million Sindhis and the Baloch [Yasuf (1995)]. The pervasive ethnic idiom defined this competition. The mohajirs developed nativistic sentiments vis-à-vis later migrants and started a movement in pursuit of their separate rights and distinct identity. From the mid-1980s onwards, the premier mohajir party MQM has a large and committed electorate, along with a trained and well-armed militant cadre. The party has generally operated as a pressure group demanding jobs for mohajirs. The MQM cultivated a rigid party discipline and a blind faith in the party leader Altaf Hussain. It struggled against application of the perceived discriminatory aspects of the quota system for jobs and admission in educational institutions. Other issues related to demand for repatriation of Biharis from Bangladesh, holding census and redrawing electoral constituencies accordingly. The MQM has successively won the 1987 local bodies elections and the 1988, 1990 and 1996 national elections. In 1992 the army cracked down on MQM. It claimed that it had unearthed the party's torture cells, camps for training of terrorists and plans for the formation of a separate state Jinnahpur. After the army operation (1992-94), followed by a brief police and Rangers operation (1995-96) which created as much hostility as it contained, parliamentary rules of game seem to have taken over recently. However, the lack of performance of the state in such fields as urban planning, supply of civic amenities such as clean water, sewerage, dispensaries, and roads as well as the declining social, cultural and political

representation of mohajirs in public life continue to agitate the minds of that community [Hasan (1995)].

In addition to ethnic conflicts, Pakistan has experienced sectarian conflicts of various kinds. The first sectarian conflict in Pakistan focused on declaring Ahmadis infidels and removing Sir Zafrullah, an Ahmadi, from his position as foreign minister. Hostility against Ahmadis had steadily grown ever since the founding of the sect by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in the 1880s, essentially because he claimed the status of the promised messiah, Imam Mahdi and later even prophet of God. After partition, some Ahmadis occupied high positions in the state apparatus. Ulema demanded excommunication of the sect from Islam. Punjab presented a scene of street violence and selective killings of Ahmadis. Army had to be called in and local martial law was imposed in Lahore on 6 March 1953. Two decades later, Pakistan witnessed another anti-Ahmadyia movement seeking to declare Ahmadis out of the place of Islam. Z. A. Bhutto's government obliged and passed the second Constitutional Amendment to that effect. Social and cultural life of Ahmadis has experienced physical, financial and professional insecurities ever since. In 1984, Zia issued Martial Law Ordinance No 20 which held Ahmadis liable to punishment for calling themselves Muslims and their faith Islam [Government of Pakistan (1984)]. A barrage of criticism from various human rights organisation throughout the world and committees and commissions belonging to the U.S. government and the UN followed. Between 1984 and 1996, 723 cases were filed in court against Ahmadis for displaying the basic Islamic tenet Kalima, 366 for posing as Muslims, 12 for using Islamic epithets, 403 for preaching as well as 514 under anti-Ahmadi Ordinance 298-B/C and 140 under Blasphemy Law 295-C [HRCP (1996)]. The conflict continues in the form of individual acts of violence.

The Shia-Sunni conflict is more than a thousand years old. Shias account for 10-15 percent of the population in Pakistan. Sunnis and Shias often clash on the occasion of observance of the anniversary of Imam Hussain's tragic death on the 10th Moharram of each Islamic year when Shias take out public processions to express their grief. The government generally imposes a code of ethnics on Ulema belonging to the two communities. The 1978 Iranian revolution and the Afghan resistance movement (1979-92) radically changed the character of the Shia-Sunni conflict in Pakistan. Shias were disturbed over Zia's Sunni-based Islamisation programme. In 1980, a quarter of a million Shias gathered outside the secretariat in Islamabad and demonstrated against the imposition of Zakat which was considered outside the scope of Shia jurisprudence. Zia obliged and exempted them from payment of zakat. The leadership of the premier Shia party TNFJ shifted into the hands of a revolutionary leader Allama Ariful Hussaini who embarked on a radical programme of mobilising Shias for establishment of an Islamic state in Pakistan [Kennedy (1994)]. The Sunni side assumed an agitational character of its own. Zia had provided a financial support base to orthodox ulema who got inducted into Zakat Committees and received grants for opening new madrasas (religious seminaries). The

Afghanistan resistance movement which was predominantly Sunni in character provided a filip to the anti-Shia parties. The classical Shia literature was translated in Urdu and disseminated widely in Pakistan which reopened old wounds and increased hostility between the two sects. Finally, the anti-Khomeini forces in the Arab world, led by Saudi Arabia, provided moral and financial help to Sunni activists in Pakistan. A new militant anti-Shia party SSP emerged which was matched in its ferocity by its Shia counterpart Sipah Mohammad. Sectarian conflict between the two found expression in wall chalking, inflammatory speeches, murder of party leaders and rioting and looting of each other's holy places. In 1997, Shia-Sunni conflict is defined by widespread terrorism in Punjab. It is clear from Table 2 that a lack of respect for electoral mandate along with the perceived Punjabisation of the state in general has been a constant source of conflict for ethno-nationalist movements in Pakistan. The table also shows the crucial input of the Islamic establishment with its links at home and abroad, as well as political turmoil in the region in general, in the increasing militancy of the sectarian strife in the country.

### SOURCES OF CONFLICT

We are now in a position to make some observations about the sources of conflicts in Pakistan.

1. Ethnic conflicts are typically a product of dismissal of elected governments in provinces by the Centre, as in the cases of NWFP in 1947 and 1973, Balochistan in 1973 and East Bengal and Sindh in the 1950s. This shows that people have internalised such values as the rule of public representatives and elections as the ultimate source of legitimacy. They tend to revolt against the Centre whenever the latter is perceived to have violated the norms of constitutional behaviour.
2. The fact that certain princely states merged into the larger entity of a modern state system for the first time created problems of surrendering their perceived and cultivated sovereignty even if it had been typically subject to the British subsidiary system in India in a formal sense. The 'old guard' in these states took more than a generation to adjust with their new position as citizens of a remote, impersonal and interventionist state.
3. Centralisation of power in the hands of the federal government grossly alienated the leadership of all non-Punjabi communities at several moments in history.
4. Mono-ethnic tendency is a potential destabiliser.
5. The phenomenon of geographical mobility of people by way of urbanisation, allotment of agricultural lands in other provinces and inter-provincial migration in general within a short time has enormously contributed to political destabilisation. Better policies of location of industry and better management of conflict would keep communal strife from becoming violent.

Table 2  
*Patterns of Conflict*

Name	Period	Location	Parties Involved	Description
Pakhtun N	(a) 1947-48 (b) 1973-77	NWFP	KK	Reaction to Dismissal/Resignation of Elected Gs. 1947, 1973.
Bengali N	1950s/60s	East Bengal	Awami League	Language Riots 1952; Dismissal of Elected G. 1954; Regional Disparity.
Balochi N	1947, 1958; 1963; 1973-77	Balochistan	KSNP; NAP; NDP	Anti-annexation 1947// Assertion of Separate Statehood; Dismissal of Elected G. 1973.
Sindhi N	1950-90s	Rural Sindh	Jiye Sindh; Sindhi Awami Tehrik; Sindh National Alliance	Opposition to Punjabi Settlers 1940s/ Migrants from India 1950s; Sons of the Soil Movement; Suppression of Sindhi Language
Mohajir N	1980s/90s	Urban Sindh	MQM(s)	Loss of Pre-eminence in Politics, Bureaucracy and Industry; Loss of Identity in the Process of Migration and Resettlement in Sindh; Re-assertion of Sindhi N 1970/80s; Punjabisation of Centre
Anti-Ahmadiya M	1953; 1974; 1980s/9	Punjab	Ahrar MKN; JI	Ulema Against the 'Secular' Ruling Elite/ 'Heretical' Faith
Shia-Sunni C	1980s/90s	Punjab; Northern Areas	JUI, Sipah-e-Sahaba; TNJF/ Sipah-e-Mohammad	Iranian Revolution; Afghanistan Resistance Movement/ Zia's Islamisation 1980s;
N: Nationalism	G: Government	M: Movement	C: Conflict.	

6. Alienation along cultural and linguistic lines triggered the initial autonomy movements among Bengalis and Sindhis. Similarly, mohajirs' loss of history, identity, culture and geographical roots in the process of migration contributed to their nationalism in a big way.
7. Democracy is a great solvent of conflicts. Since democracy was restored in 1985, ethnic conflicts have been largely contained, with the exception of mohajir nationalism. Similarly, Islamic movement of the early 1980s seems to have lost ground in electoral terms, except the continuing Shia-Suni conflict.
8. In the late 1990s, both mohajir nationalism and Shia-Sunni conflict have their roots in the lack of the institutional capacity of the state to deliver goods to important sections of the population. The net of the services of the state in terms of education, health and civic amenities in general has not been cast around the vast urban population of Karachi and other regions, especially the geographically mobile sections.

### **POLICY OPTIONS**

Our observations in the previous sections implicitly suggested possible ways and means whereby conflicts could be avoided or at least managed at an early stage. Following are some of the broad policy outlines which can serve as agenda for elimination of the major sources of conflict in Pakistan:

1. Decentralisation of power is a dire necessity under the prevailing circumstances in the country. Centralisation of power must bear a high responsibility for creating a sense of alienation in various communities. Successive constitutions sought to concentrate real power in the hands of the Centre at the expense of provinces and within the Centre in the executive far more than in the legislature or judiciary. All this led to a quasiunitarian federalism which failed to satisfy the aspirations and felt needs of provinces. What is needed is a provision for maximum provincial autonomy.
2. An important policy option is the creation of a third tier of elected government at the local level. Currently, local bodies do not reflect the resource base of the locality, nor the priorities for development expenditure. These bodies can help rationalist policies about the location of industry, building of infrastructure and creation of employment opportunities, and thus control the inherently explosive process of migration of the unemployed youth.
3. After parliamentary sovereignty was restored on 1 April 1997, the practice of introducing laws in the form of presidential ordinances must be discontinued. Elected representatives should be encouraged to participate in the debate

- and project their regional, communal and ethnic interests and identities on the floor of the parliament. This process is not only cathartic in nature but a starting point for bargaining over policy matters affecting rival groups.
4. Judicial autonomy must be ensured. The fact that both Benazir and Nawaz Sharif government entered into an argument with the higher judiciary indicates a grey area of public policy over the role of higher courts in keeping the business of the state going on an even keel. Clear outlines should be provided for the judiciary in its capacity as a guardian of individuals and groups caught at the wrong end of law. If the judiciary is not widely perceived as a just and final arbiter of conflicts by those involved in litigation, then the latter can opt for violence as a way out.
  5. Elections should be free and fair, and perceived to be an honest reflection of the public opinion. Indeed, public feelings about rigging in 1950s in various provinces and in more recent times at the national level created more problems than solved them and cost the government in terms of legitimacy. Elections provide an ideal opportunity to resolve conflicts, especially as they promote faith in non-violence.
  6. If political parties continue to operate at the currently low institutional level, they will remain bound by local interest and fail to bring down the potential for conflict between contending social and political forces through their inability to promote a collective public life. Political parties must become more representative of interest groups in the society. They must represent well-defined policies and should be judged in terms of their record in projecting and implementing these policies.
  7. Institutional apparatus of the state should be geared to establish good governance and thus overcome the deficit of performance in the social sector. As we noted, the network of public services is too small to take care of the needs of a large number of people, groups and sectors, thereby pushing the latter to a substitute culture of drug, crime and sectarian strife. More resources must be spent on literacy, urban planning, health provision as well as civic education.
  8. Development should be broad-based, both sectorally and regionally. This is necessary to scale down the currently high rate of urbanisation and stem the tide of migration into the areas of concentration of industrial development, especially Karachi. This would bring down the pressure on urban infrastructure and keep the inter-group and inter-ethnic tension from becoming a full-blown violent conflict.
  9. The state policy generally conceives the citizen as a homo economics to the exclusion of his position as a homo civics and homo politicus. Only the citizen is the ultimate guardian of his own rights. Politics of identity in the

form of ethnonationalist or sectarian movements seeks to transfer the nominal allegiance of the people from one entity to another bearing identical features. Instead, politics of rights and duties, issues and policies as well as responsibility and responsiveness should be cultivated and encouraged. There is the need to cultivate a liberal view of the relationship between the citizen and the state.

10. Major parliamentary parties are conglomerations of local factions based on caste, tribal and sectoral alliances or alternatively primordial appeal of religion and ethnicity. It is suggested that strengthening of parliamentary parties would make them rationalist public demands and project policy alternatives. Certain positive developments points to the possibility of maturation of the political system in Pakistan such as emergence of a semblance of a two-party model, a relatively free press, a potentially autonomous judiciary and a federal structure of government with elaborate provisions for provincial autonomy.

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**Abbreviations Used in This Paper**

AJK	Azad Jammu and Kashmir
ANP	Awami National Party
APMSO	All Pakistan Mohajir Students Organisation
BNP	Baloch National Party
BPLF	Baloch Peoples Liberation Front
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Area
ISI	Inter Services Intelligence
JI	Jamiat Islami
JUH	Jaimat Ulema Hind
JUI	Jamiat Ulema Islam
JUP	Jamiat Ulema Pakistan
JWP	Jamhoori Watan Party
KK	Khudai Khidmatgars
KSNP	Kalat State National Party
MKN	Majilis Khatme Nabuwwat
MQM	Mohajir Qaumi Movement
NAP	National Awami Party
NDP	National Democratic Party
NWFP	North-West Frontier Province
PATA	Provincially Administered Tribal Area
PKQP	Pakhtun Khwa Qaumi Party
PMEO	Pakistan Military Evacuation Organisation
PPP	Pakistan Peoples Party
SNF	Sindh National Front
SSP	Sipah Sahaba Pakistan
TNFJ	Tehrik Nifaz Fiqh Jafria
UN	United Nations
UP	United Provinces
US	United States

## Comments

Muhammad Waseem's paper focuses on political development in Pakistan, with reference to state formation. He uses the authrotiy-wielding institutional framework to explain conflict situations and their resolution or containment.

Waseem demonstrates at length the way the state system in Pakistan went on the take a route different from India, the other successor state of British India. It is a useful comparison, but perhaps not necessary. His four explanations are still relevant and pertinent to the case of Pakistan. They are:

1. Relative under-development of future Pakistani areas in British India in institutional and constitutional terms;
2. ascendancy of the migrant leadership in Pakistan which undermined the growth of representative institutions;
3. concentration of power in the hands of the centre at the expense of provinces;
4. the pivotal role of army in the constellation of powers ruling Pakistan.

The civil-military relations, Waseem argues, are at the heart of political development in Pakistan. Due to external and internal security problems, the army developed "high stakes" in the state-building process and went on the shape "the contours of constitutional thinking". In particular, the army "upheld a unitarian model for governance—preferably presidential in form and centralising in spirit", and it promoted a relatively "non-participatory system of rule". The party system, weak and ineffective as it was, did not help. Mainstream parties, like the PML and PPP, essentially comprised local 'influentials' who were potential winners in elections. The result was stunting the growth of democracy in the country.

And yet, according to Waseem, the national did succeed in expanding "the boundaries of the political community" as well as "areas of agreement" on fundamental issues. For example, Pakistan from 1971 onwards, he points out, "went through a phase of inclusionary politics", with the Pakhtun, Baloch and Sindhi nationalist parties and factions as well as religious parties "accommodated" in federal and provincial governments. A large number of people from these communities "emerged as a part of the legitimate political community for the first time", represented largely by the NAP, JUI, and the PPP. After Zia and the 1988 elections, major ethnic parties, such as the ANP, BNA, MQM, Jiye Sindh Mahaz, SNF, and others moved into "the vortex of parliamentary politics". Not only that, "the number of legitimate contenders of power" increased and several coalition

governments were formed at the centre and the provinces and the electorate experienced successive waves of political mobilisation for four elections in nine years. "All this", he contends, "improved the potential of the state system to provide channels for conflict resolution almost by default".

How Pakistan moved into this phase of inclusionary politics, consensus, and conflict management, we do not really learn from his discussion. Part of the problem, I think, is the very approach to political development, resting on the principles of state formation, with the focus on the state from above, and involved, as he puts it, in the "twin processes of regulating the rule of law and establishing the rule of public representatives". There is little attention paid to the challenges from below, from masses and from political leaders, who contested the authority of the state to cause the political structures to modify and change over the years. After all, as Max Weber put it in his classic essay, "Politics as a Vocation", state is a relation of men dominating men. An examination of the role of political leaders in the last fifty years will be extremely useful to explain state formation in Pakistan. This will also help explain better the role of the state to contain or resolve conflicts at different points in time. Leaders in Pakistan caused the state behaviour and structure and were as well affected by them, especially when we look at some of the strong personalities, both civil and military; that have ruled Pakistan since its inception.

Waseem identifies and discusses various sources of political conflict in Pakistan. However, he focuses in particular on ethnic conflicts—reflected in five ethnic movements in four provinces, one each in NWFP, Balochistan, former East Pakistan, and two in Sindh, where Sindhis and Mohajirs developed their separate ethno-national movements. Waseem presents a thorough review of ethnic demands, some reflecting separatist or secessionist tendencies. He argues that, except for Bengalis in East Pakistan who separated as an independent state in 1971, for a number of factors, (varying, of course, with the given ethnic group), the conflict has been more or less managed. Economic integration, accommodation of the urban elite in the military-bureaucratic establishment, and out-migration of a large number of the civilian labour force helped things in the NWFP. After the 1997 elections, the ANP formed a coalition government with its 'traditional' rival, The Muslim League. Similarly, in Balochistan, an alliance of the Baloch nationalist parties, BNP and JWP, formed a coalition government at Quetta. The political situation in Balochistan has been quiet for more than a decade. Obviously, Sindh presents a more difficult situation. The continuing under-representation of Sindhis in services, business, and law-enforcing agencies, and the prospects of repatriation of Biharis from Bangladesh, "keeps the pot of Sindhi nationalism boiling in the late 1990s". In a similar vein, Mohajir ethnicity holds away because of the lack of performance of the state in several socio-economic sectors and the "the declining social, cultural, and political representation of Mohajirs in public life". However, Waseem points out, there is a marked shift from Army (1992-

1994) and Police-Rangers operation (1995-1996) to "parliamentary rules of game" as a means to satisfy ethnic demands.

Waseem is quite right in suggesting that long-term prognosis for Pakistan's ethnic relations is favourable. I only wish that he had also suggested as to how a competitive ethnic relationship, characterised by tensions and conflict, as in Sindh, could improve over the years. After all, it is no law of nature that multi-ethnicity must necessarily and inevitably lead to ethno-nationalisms. Ethnicity is nothing but the fact of the existence of ethnic groups in a given society; it does not assume political relevance or importance except only under certain political conditions, like the ones described in his paper. What can really be done to ease out the situation? Some writers have suggested a radical restructuring of the federal system or significant devolution of authority to accommodate ethnic groups. Broadly speaking, of course, in the section, titled 'Sources of Conflict', Waseem does suggest that democracy is a great solvent of conflicts. Since democracy was restored in 1985, ethnic conflicts, he argues, "have largely been contained, with the exception of Mohajir nationalism".

As to various policy options suggested by Waseem, I would not agree with him more. I also agree that: "Politics of identity in the form of ethno-nationalist or sectarian movements seeks to transfer the nominal allegiance of the people from one entity to another bearing identical features. Instead, politics of rights and duties, issues and policies, as well as responsibility and responsiveness, should be cultivated and encouraged. There is the need to cultivate a liberal view of the relationship between the citizen and the state". The question is how? It cannot be done unless there is a new structural system to help alter the political motivations of the people. That calls for leadership. But, then, leadership is not one of the major concerns of the paper.

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