

## **An Analysis of Jeay Sindh Tahreek as an Ethno Nationalist Movement of Pakistan**

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### **Abstract**

*Jeay Sindh Tahreek is an ethno-nationalist organization which is working for the independence of Sindh. Sindhu Desh is the core objective of the tahreek. It emerged in post-Bangladesh era. It during Bhutto's rule gained popularity and strengthened subsequently during martial law of General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq. The nationalist tahreek of Sindh had started during the British Raj but it could not gain popular support. The purpose of this study is to examine the causes of the emergence and strengthening of this movement. The role of Jeay Sindh in the democratic movement is also included in this article.*

### **Introduction:**

The ethno-nationalist movements existed in Sindh even before the creation of Pakistan. In this connection Hur<sup>1</sup> militant movement against British rule and movement for the separation of Sindh from Bombay Presidency were some of the movements. The separation of Karachi from the rest of Sindh was the main reason behind Sindhi nationalism after the independence of Pakistan. The formation One-Unit in West Pakistan increased nationalist thinking in Sindh. The slogan of *Jeay Sindh* was introduced at that time by Hyder Bakhsh Jatoui and became popular among Sindhis. Anti One-Unit movement became strong in Sindh as compared to other parts of West Pakistan. In this period many Sindhi nationalist organizations were formed.

Jeay Sindh Tahreek is a nationalist and secessionist party led by late Ghulam Murtaza Sayed, well known as G. M. Sayed. It was formed in 1972, during the Bhutto government, but flourished under Zia regime. The Sindhi nationalists have been divided into various groups; Jeay Sindh Tahreek has been the most popular and strongest of them. This

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<sup>1</sup> They are the followers of Pir Sahib Pagara.

party is struggling for Sindh Desh (Azad Sindh). Rasol Bakhsh Palejo, Dr. Kadar Magsi, Mumtaz Ali Bhutto and others are nationalists but they are not secessionists. Shaheed Benazir Bhutto tried to make a distinction between them. According to her, 'the Nationalists want rightful place for Sindh within Pakistan. The secessionists want a role for Sindh outside the context of the federation, and possibly for a union with India.'<sup>2</sup>

The leader of Jeay Sindh Tahreek, G. M. Sayed, was active in the politics of Sindh both before and after independence. He played a very vital role in the Pakistan movement. G. M. Sayed was born on 17 January 1904. He entered politics at the age of 14. He participated in the Khilafat Movement in 1919 and was also the member of Indian National Congress. He was active in the movement for the separation of Sindh from Bombay Presidency and actively participated in the Sindh Hari Committee.<sup>3</sup> G. M. Sayed formed Sindh People's Party along with Sir Shah Nawaz Bhutto in 1934. He contested and won provincial assembly seat in the elections of 1936 on the ticket of Itihad Party. He left Congress in 1938, and joined the All India Muslim League. After joining Muslim League he worked day and night to organize the League. He was elected President of Sindh Muslim League on 3 March 1943. Sindh Assembly passed the resolution in the support of 'Lahore Resolution' under the leadership of G. M. Sayed in 1943. He was a firm believer of the 'two nation theory'. When Hindu Muslim riots took place in Sukkur on Masjid Manzil Gah issue, he led the Muslims and played active role to organize the Muslims against the Hindus. He agitated against the government on the issue and was imprisoned for two months. He played a role in the formation and toppling down of governments. He left All India Muslim League over the interference of centre in the provincial party matters and on the nomination of candidates of Sindh Assembly in the elections of January 1946. He explained that he left the Muslim League because Muslim League ignored provincial autonomy in its objectives.<sup>4</sup>

G. M. Sayed formed Sindh Progressive Muslim League. This party won 4 seats of Sindh Assembly in the elections of 1946, but he was personally defeated. He challenged the results and, was declared a winning candidate by the election tribunal. After independence, he wrote a letter to Liaquat Ali Khan for co-operation in the development of the

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<sup>2</sup> Bhutto Benazir, 'National Problem in Sindh and its impact on the Federation', *Sindh Quarterly*, Karachi, V: 2 (1988), pp.221.

<sup>3</sup> An organization of the peasants of Sindh.

<sup>4</sup> G. M. Sayed, *The Case of Sindh* (Karachi: Naeen Sindh Academy, 1995).

new country.<sup>5</sup> G. M. Sayed, however, opposed the separation of Karachi from Sindh; he was also against the formation of One-Unit. He formed the Anti One-Unit Front and mobilized the masses against it. After the dissolution of One-Unit, G. M. Sayed organized Sindh Mutahida Awami Mahaz in April 1969.

### **The Bhutto period (1971-77)**

G. M. Syed contested the general elections of 1970 on the platform of Sindh Mutahida Mahaz. He made an election alliance with Mumtaz Mohammad Daultana and Muhammad Ayub Khuhro both had strongly supported One-Unit. Therefore, the people of Sindh did not vote for him. He himself admitted: 'We, the nationalist, did not win a single seat in the general elections of 1970.'<sup>6</sup>

G. M. Sayed supported Awami League which, after winning the 1970 elections, launched the movement for the transfer of power to the elected representatives. After 16 December 1971, when the power of the rest of Pakistan was transferred to Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, G. M. Sayed offered co-operation for the development of the country and for the provincial rights of the smaller provinces.<sup>7</sup> G. M. Sayed also helped Bhutto on the prisoners of war issue with India by using his old relations with Nehru family.<sup>8</sup> He also cooperated with Bhutto in the formation of interim constitution of 1972. He met with Baloch and Pushtoon nationalist leaders and convinced them to cooperate with Z.A. Bhutto.<sup>9</sup>

G. M. Sayed formed Jeay Sindh Mahaz on 18 June 1972 after the merger of Sindh Mutahida Mahaz and Jeay Sindh Nojawan Mahaz,<sup>10</sup> led by Yousif Leghari. Before the formation of the Mahaz, the students formed the Jeay Sindh Students Federation. G. M. Sayed supervised the students' organization. 'The program of the Mahaz was to get maximum

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p.130.

<sup>6</sup> Sayed Ghulam Mustafa Shah, *Bhutto, The Man and the Martyr* (Karachi: Sindhica Academy, 1993), p.252.

<sup>7</sup> Abdul Khaliq Junejo Chairman Jeay Sindh Mahaz, interviewed on 31-12-2004.

<sup>8</sup> G.M. Sayed, *op.cit.*, p.188.

<sup>9</sup> Dr. Abdul Hayee Baloch, President National Party Balochistan, interviewed on 8-4-2005.

Amanullah Sheikh, Sindhi nationalist intellectual, interviewed on 20-05-2004.

<sup>10</sup> G.M. Sayed, *op.cit.*, p.192.

provincial autonomy for the federating units and recognition of Sindhi as the only national and official language of Sindh'.<sup>11</sup>

Sayed's party was active in the language crisis of 1972. Many workers of Jeay Sindh Tahreek were arrested. Party opposed the agreement of PPP government and Urdu speaking leadership on the language issue. Jeay Sindh demanded that Sindhi should be made the national and only official language of Sindh. They launched the processions and demonstrations for their demands. Bhutto government took strict measures against the Jeay Sindh Tahreek.

When the 1973 constitution was passed by the Bhutto government, G. M. Sayed opposed it. Korejo wrote about it as under:

Sayed also found fault with Bhutto's 1973 constitution because it failed to provide the status of nationality and adequate autonomy to Sindh thus perpetuating its helplessness against the uncontrolled immigration.<sup>12</sup>

Sayed said that situation was deliberately created by Punjab to enslave Sindhis. He further said: 'Under those circumstances the only solution for Sindh was to secede and declare itself an independent Sindhu Desh'.<sup>13</sup> Sayed was impressed by the independence of Bangladesh. He argued that 'where majority of the Bengalis could not succeed to get their rights, how it would be possible for Sindhis that they would get their rights in Pakistan'.<sup>14</sup> Tahir Amin states in this connection:

As the center adopted repressive measures towards this faction of the movement, it turned secessionist and began openly working for the independent state of 'Sindhu Desh' on the pattern of Bangladesh.<sup>15</sup>

G. M. Sayed demanded Sindhu Desh as an independent state of Sindh on 31 March 1973.<sup>16</sup> Workers of Jeay Sindh Tahreek chant the slogan of *Tunhanjo Desh Muhanjo Desh Sindhu Desh Sindhu Desh*.<sup>17</sup> The ultimate aim of the Tahreek is to struggle for a separate homeland.

<sup>11</sup> Tahir Amin, *Ethno National Movements of Pakistan: Domestic and International Factors* (Islamabad: Institute of Policy Studies, 1993), p.144.

<sup>12</sup> Mohammad Soaleh, S. Korejo, G. M. Sayed: *An Analysis of his Political Perspectives* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2000), p.76.

<sup>13</sup> G.M. Sayed, *Azadi Chho Aen Chelae*, Sann, G.M.Sayed Academy. Abdul Khaliq Junejo, Chairman Jeay Sindh Mahaz, interviewed on 31- 12- 2004.

<sup>14</sup> Ghulam Mustafa Sayed, *op.cit.*,

<sup>15</sup> Tahir Amin, *op.cit.*, p.144.

<sup>16</sup> Jeay Sindh Study Circle *Quomi Tahreek Jo Mazi Haal ain Mustaqabal*, 2005, p, 25.

<sup>17</sup> Your country my country Sindh country Sindh country.

The Tahreek consists of four points: nationalism secularisms, democracy and socialism.

G. M. Sayed, in his book *A Nation in Chains*, said that Sindhis were a separate nation due to their geographical status, historical heritage, culture, language, and economic and political interests.<sup>18</sup> The four points of the party program show some confusion. While G. M. Sayed advocated the cause of nationalism, he added socialism as well in his party program. Actually he was not a socialist and was an opponent of the class struggle. He said that before independence advocacy for the class struggle would have been enmity with Sindh.<sup>19</sup> G. M. Sayed declared his party program according to the regional and international situations. As the state of Pakistan was pro-West in its orientation, therefore, the nationalists of Pakistan looked for Russian help. Further he mentioned secularism and democracy in his party program to seek help from India. However, during Bhutto era, he could not succeed in getting support for his separatist ideas.

G. M. Syed opposed the settlement of Biharis in Sindh. In his famous book he openly called for independence of Sindh and opposed the 'two nation theory' and said that 'Pakistan only protect the interest of Punjabi Muhajirs imperialism'<sup>20</sup> and called Bhutto as a 'Show -boy of the Punjabi Muhajir axis.'<sup>21</sup> Bhutto countered him very wisely. Addressing the people, Bhutto said: 'The program of G.M. Sayed was not in the interests of the people of Sindh.' He further told that there is no place for Sindhis out of Pakistan. He argued that present and future of Sindhis is only and only with Pakistan.<sup>22</sup> So there was a big competition between the two leaders.

Bhutto, as the President of Pakistan, issued the ordinance against secessionists, regionalists and nationalists. Senate passed this ordinance in January 1974<sup>23</sup> and gave the government the power to ban such organizations and take action against persons associated with them. G. M. Sayed was arrested and a ban was imposed on his writings and on

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<sup>18</sup> G. M. Sayed, *A Nation in Chains*, Bombay, 1974, p.24.

<sup>19</sup> Shahzad Manzar, *Sindh Kay Naslee Masail* (Lahore: Fiction House, 1994) p.140.

<sup>20</sup> G. M. Sayed, *op.cit.*, p.24.

<sup>21</sup> *Pakistan Times* (Lahore), 28 January 1974.

<sup>22</sup> Amanullah Sheikh Sindhi nationalist intellectual, interviewed on 20-05-2004.

<sup>23</sup> V.F Ageef, *Sindh Tareekh Ke Aaine mein* (Karachi: Danyal Publication 1989), p.332.

more than 37 magazines and Sindhi newspapers.<sup>24</sup> Some students and intellectuals supported G. M. Sayed's Jeay Sindh Tahreek, while majority of the people of Sindh were impressed by his program. Describing the situation Korejo said: 'During the Bhutto's tenure of 1972-77, the idea of Sindhu Desh remained subdued and confined to small pockets of pro Sayed groups, while main stream Sindhis became busy in taking advantage of many opportunities opened up for them for the first time by Bhutto.'<sup>25</sup>

Bhutto took the measures for the betterment of Sindhis and tried to compensate all the grievances of Sindhis against the previous governments. Many Sindhis benefited during this period. As a result, the people of Sindh as such rejected the ideas of G. M. Sayed. The main reasons of this rejection were:

- Z.A. Bhutto's charismatic personality
- The social structure of the province

In the seventies, the Sindhi middle class had started to emerge. Bhutto played an important role in their growth. Middle class play an important role in nationalist movements. Bhutto government appointed Sindhis in the government as well as in the private sectors. It was for the first time in the history of Pakistan that the government issued permits of export and import to Sindhis and gave them license for industries. Many Sindhi families such as Jatoi, Juman and Mir families started their business and established industries during this period.

On the one side Bhutto tried to compensate the Sindhis by providing jobs and developing the infrastructure of Sindh, on the other side, he took hard line towards Jeay Sindh Tahreek. Sayed was house arrested and many other workers of Jeay Sindh Tahreek were also sent to jail many of them under Defense of Pakistan Rules (DPR).

When Bhutto government imposed governors rule and took action against Baloch leaders, G. M. Sayed opposed Bhutto and supported Baloch movement. When a movement was launched against Bhutto by Pakistan National Alliance (PNA), G. M. Sayed and his party, Jeay Sindh Tahreek, supported the movement. When Bhutto was ousted and martial law was imposed by General Zia, leader of Jeay Sindh Students Federation, Qamar Bhatti, wrote a letter of congratulation to General Zia.

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<sup>24</sup> Abdul Khaliq Junejo, Chairman Jeay Sindh Mahaz, interviewed on 31-12-2004.

<sup>25</sup> Mohammad Soaleh and S. Korejo, *op.cit.*, p.81.

### **The Zia era (1977-88)**

Jeay Sindh Tahreek made most significant headway in terms of gaining public support in Sindh during this phase.<sup>26</sup> The main causes of the rise of Sindhi nationalism were the policies of military regime of Zia towards Sindh and Sindhis. Some of them were as follows:

*Alienation from power:* Sindhis felt Bhutto government as their own because it was the first time that Sindhi politicians entered into the power structure and benefited. Common Sindhis felt the ouster of Bhutto from power as the ouster of Sindh from the power structure. Therefore an inferiority complex and sense of deprivation grew in them. Mushahid Hussain described that 'The sense of alienation among Sindhi intellectuals and other educated professionals from Islamabad is greater than before.'<sup>27</sup> Dr. Tahir Amin also mentioned: 'The state elite during this phase consisted of Punjabis, the Pushtoons and the Muhajirs, while the Sindhis and Baluchis were greatly ignored.' Writing about it Ayesha Jalal said: 'Predominantly Punjabi military and federal bureaucracy has at each step heightened the sense of alienation on the part of non-Punjabi provinces and significant linguistic minorities with in them.'<sup>28</sup> Zia followed the policy of repression in Sindh. The regime adopted a number of both subtle and strong handed methods to break the PPP and other regionalist parties' power in Sindh.'<sup>29</sup>

*Termination and less representation in services:* The military regime was of the opinion that 'Sindhis were the supporters of Z.A Bhutto'.<sup>30</sup> So the regime targeted them. It was the policy of Mr. Bhutto to involve Sindhis in government, semi-government and autonomous bodies. When Zia came into power he took steps to terminate and suspend Sindhis from services. 'After Zia's coup Sindhis recruited to the provincial civil services were dismissed on the grounds that they were political appointees. By February 1978, some 1,746 Sindhis... were thrown out of the provincial service.'<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Tahir Amin, *op.cit.*,

<sup>27</sup> Mushahid Hussain, *Pakistan's Politics The Zia Years* (Delhi: Konark Publishers Pvt Ltd, 1991), p.96.

<sup>28</sup> Ayesha Jalal, *Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia, A Comparative and Historical Perspective* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publication, 1995), p.184.

<sup>29</sup> Tahir Amin, *op.cit.* pp.168-77.

<sup>30</sup> Aziz uddin Ahmed, intellectual of Punjab, interviewed on 24-05-2005

<sup>31</sup> Ayesha Jalal, *op.cit.*, p.195.

The fixation of quota for the army men in the civil services minimized the chance for Sindhis to get the jobs. The appointment of non- Sindhis in the place of the terminated Sindhi officers created the feelings of enmity against the army in the minds of the Sindhi speaking people. 'The subsequent replacement and victimization of PPP workers also fuelled ethnic antagonism from 1977 to 1985'.<sup>32</sup> Sindhi administrators were quite often displaced by Punjabi military officials, Sindhis felt such policies of the Zia regime as targeted victimization. The actions of the military regime created a sense of deprivation among the people of Sindh, both the PPP and the Sindhi nationalists raised their voice against this discrimination. All other federal, political and religious parties were silent. Zia regime preferred army men and other Punjabis as compared to the Sindhis. 'In 1980s about 4 million Punjabis settled in Sindh; many of them were inducted in bureaucracy.'<sup>33</sup> This situation went in the interest of the anti-state elements and they tried to use it against the unity and integrity of the country.

The key posts of the administration were occupied by the military and civil bureaucracy, and majority of them belonged to the Punjab. At that time the representation of Sindhis was very marginal; there was only one Sindhi among fifty top military officers. The following table shows representatives of Sindhis in the army:

**Ethnic origins of top military elite**

Punjabis	20	40%
Pushtoons	17	34%
Muhajirs	10	20%
Sindhis	01	2%
Balochs	00	0%
Others	02	4%
Total	50	100%

*Source: Regional Representation In Pakistan Army: An Unpublished Report, 1981.*

Sindh's share in the civil service is clear from the following table:

<sup>32</sup> Omar Noman, *The Political Economy of Pakistan 1947-58* (London: KPI, 1988), p.181.

<sup>33</sup> Christina Lamb, *Waiting for Allah, Pakistan's Struggle for Democracy* (New Delhi: Viking Penguin Book, 1991), p.124.



**Ethnic origins of top bureaucratic elite (Class I Officers)**

Identification	Number	Percent
Punjabi	6590	47.94
Pushtoon	1638	11.91
Muhajir	2382	17.32
Sindhi	601	4.37
Baloch	103	0.74
Others	2438	17.72
Total	13752	100

*Source: Federal Government Civil Servants Census Report, January 1983 (Islamabad: Government of Pakistan, 1984)*

So, the marginal representation of Sindhis in the top military and civil officers created a sense of alienation and that situation went in favour of nationalists, as compared to federal politics.

*Bhutto's assassination:* The people of Sindh thought that the murder case of Muhammad Khan Kasuri against Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto was political move and his execution was the conspiracy of the generals and judges. It was really a big shock for the people of the country in general and specially for Sindhis because Bhutto was the first Sindhi who occupied highest executive post of the government. It was only during the period of Bhutto government that Sindhis had a share in the power structure.

*Sindhi language:* It was decided in 1972 that Sindhi should become the official language of the province after twelve years, but after take over of the military, army rulers ignored the Sindhi language and tried to develop and improve Urdu instead. 'The people of Sindh were ignored in various institutions because they could not speak Urdu fluently.'<sup>34</sup> During the Zia regime, ban was imposed on the many Sindhi newspapers and journals. And there was strict policy regarding declaration of any new newspaper or journal. Therefore, there were less chances of

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<sup>34</sup> Feroze Ahmed, 'The Language Question in Sindh', *Regional Imbalance & the National Question in Pakistan* (Lahore: Vanguard Books, 1992), p.168.

publishing any writing in Sindhi. These reasons also increased the nationalist feeling.

*Kalabagh dam:* General Zia reopened most controversial issue of Kalabagh dam in 1984, and tried to create differences between the people of Punjab and smaller provinces. The issue of Kalabagh dam also created hatred against the military regime. This issue helped the nationalist cause in Sindh. The proposal of Kalabagh dam and barrage was raised during British rule in 1871; Sindh opposed it and as a result the scheme was postponed. Contradictions on the water distribution continued until 1945 when Punjab and Sindh government signed an agreement on water distribution. According to that accord 'any barrage or Dam would not be established with out the acceptance of Sindh. That accord was known as 'Sindh Punjab Agreement.'<sup>35</sup>

*Ban on political parties:* The ban on political parties by marital law regime also created space for regionalist, ethnic and sectarian organizations. It was also the policy of regime to create a political vacuum to be filled by regional organizations as compared to political parties. Because it was very easy to crush the small ethnic and regionalist organizations as compared to country level political parties. In this connection Zia regime targeted the political parties specially Bhutto's PPP and other democratic and progressive parties and groups. The secessionist took advantage of it. 'This anarchic situation ideally suited regionalist like G.M. Sayed and communists like Rasool Bakhsh Palejo in subverting the minds of the people of Sindh against Pakistan and its ideology,'<sup>36</sup> noted Jehan Dad Khan. Dr. Teesta Gosh Butt described rise of nationalist feelings in Sindh during Zia regime in these words:

Zia encouraged the rise of ethno-nationalists groups primarily, because political parties were not allowed to function. In fact it has been suggested, that Zia deliberately encouraged the ethnic and sectarian divisions to perpetuate his rule. It is a well-known fact that Zia sponsored the creation of MQM solely with the objective of undermining his main political opponent, the PPP. The MQM came into being at the time when Sindh was in the midst of the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy in 1984. Zia also courted G. M. Sayed, the leader of Sindhi

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<sup>35</sup> Barkat Ali Bhutto & Naimtullah, *Kala Bagh Dam* (Shikarpur: Peoples Publishing Academy, 1998), p.85.

<sup>36</sup> Jehan Dad Khan, *Pakistan Leadership Challenges* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1999), p.241.

nationalists party Jeay Sindh Mahaz, and implacable enemy of the PPP.<sup>37</sup>

Mohammad Suleman Korejo narrated it as

He sought to fill the vacuum, in Sindh at least, by patronizing ethnic nationalism, represented in rural Sindh by Sayed and his Jeay Sindh Movement, and in urban Sindh by Altaf Hussain and his MQM. In Zia's calculation this step posed no danger to Pakistan; once the monster of Bhuttoism was demolished, the rural part of Sindh would be swallowed by Sayed and the urban part by Altaf Hussain. If need be, Zia could then move to crush both of them using his military muscle if they failed to cancel each other out.<sup>38</sup>

On the whole, all actions and policies of General Zia directly or indirectly went in the interests of the regionalists and secessionist groups and organizations. That was the period when Jeay Sindh became stronger as compared to the previous period. But situation changed after the MRD movement when Jeay Sindh lost its sympathies amongst Sindhis due to its opposition of the movement. The Zia regime proceeded to crush the movement as ruthlessly as possible. It employed nearly two divisions of the army (40,000) and also used gunship helicopters to staff the villages.<sup>39</sup>

At that time the politics of Peoples Party Sindh chapter was also nationalistic. PPP demanded provincial autonomy and struggled for the rights of the people of Sindh. They demanded more share in the services for Sindhis. Jeay Sindh Tahreek during the military regime arranged big gathering in the name of *Jashan-e-Latif* (to celebrate the day of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai, a great poet of Sindhi language); the birthday of the leader of Tahreek, G. M. Sayed, was also celebrated every year at Sann, the native village of Sayed. It became a political gathering of the Tahreek where JST leaders spoke against Pakistan in their speeches. The educational institutes of the interior of Sindh were under the control of Jeay Sindh Students Federation (JSSF). Military regime did not take any action against those culprits who were involved in the kidnapping and beating of the workers of progressive organizations as well as common students. The lenient policy of Zia regime towards JST was only due to

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<sup>37</sup> Teesta Ghosh, 'Ethnic Conflict in Sindh and its impact on Pakistan', *Ethnic Conflict & Secessionism in South & South East Asia: Causes, Dynamics, Solutions*, Rajat Ganguly & Ian Macduff (eds.), (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2003), p.118.

<sup>38</sup> Mohammad Soaleh, S. Korejo, *op.cit.*, p.109.

<sup>39</sup> Tahir Amin, *op.cit.*, p.177.

Bhutto enmity. Dr. Magsi said: 'Bhutto's enmity was common between G. M. Sayed and Zia.'<sup>40</sup> Both wanted to paralyze the PPP. In continuation of this policy Zia established contacts with Sayed. He succeeded in his strategy and Sayed did not support the MRD movement, as this movement was led by the PPP in Sindh and all over the country.<sup>41</sup> G. M Sayed said, 'Zia is a good person than Bhutto.'<sup>42</sup>

Though Sayed opposed the MRD movement and said that it was save Pakistan movement but after two years he gave a three-point formula to save Pakistan. The three points were to sign a new accord between the provinces on the basis of right of autonomy; distributions of taxes and federal wealth on the basis of justice; independent foreign policy and peaceful relations with India. In this connection, Sayed requested Khan Ghafar Khan to play his role.<sup>43</sup> In 1987, G. M. Sayed suggested a round table conference in which he asked Pir Pagaro, Khan Abdul Ghafar Khan and General Zia to participate. He said: 'now who want to save Pakistan they would arrange the conference.'

Sayed argued in his policy that martial law government was favorable for Sindh due to its oppressive policies and actions which created the way to mobilize the people against the federation as well as the Punjab, hence it was fruitful for the independence of Sindh.<sup>44</sup> He further said that the leaders of MRD were the power lusting people; they wanted to see Tikka Khan and Asghar Khan in the place of General Zia. If they found opportunity to rule, it would be more dangerous for Sindh cause.<sup>45</sup> The opposition of MRD by G.M. Sayed went in the interest of the military junta and those feudals and *waderas* of Sindh who used the name of G.M. Sayed to gain personal interests from the military government. Sayed's opposition of the MRD movement, however, went against the interest of Jeay Sindh Tahreek.

The people of Sindh had doubts about Sayed. They feared that he might have allied with the army in his opposition of Bhutto. These doubts changed into certainty when Zia met him in Liaquat Medical College Hospital (LMCH) in Hyderabad. The meeting was arranged by

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<sup>40</sup> Chairman Sindh Taraqi Pasand Party, Dr. Qadir Magsi's interviewed on 22-06-2006.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> Ghafoor Ahmed, *General Zia Ke Aakhri Des Saal* (Karachi: Jang Publishers, 1993), p.325.

<sup>43</sup> Shahzad Manzar, *Sindh Kay Naslee Masail* (Lahore: Fiction House, 1994), pp.137-38.

<sup>44</sup> Amanullah Sheikh, Sindhi nationalist intellectual, interviewed on 20-05-2004.

<sup>45</sup> Qamar Bhatti, *Sindhian te zulum keesaitan*, Larkana, 1991, pp.7-8.

Illahi Bakhsh Soomro.<sup>46</sup> Soomro contested the elections of 1985. He was the candidate of the prime ministership. During his meeting with G. M. Sayed, Zia succeeded in persuading Sayed that he would not oppose the non-parties elections. Sayed had already lost his support in the Sindh. because of his statements in the favour of General Zia. The common people of Sindh saw the meeting of Sayed with Zia against democracy and Sindh. Due to his lenient policy towards Zia, and the selection of Hamida Khuhro as party chairperson, many workers of Jeay Sindh resigned from the party in protest. Hamida Khuhro had good relations with Zia and her brother Shah Mohammad Pasha Khuhro was minister in Zia's cabinet. At that time Sindhis considered Zia as their enemy and whosoever supported Zia was also labeled as the enemy of the land.

Students wing of Tahreek, JSSF, worked in the educational institutions of the province. They were stronger in the University of Sindh and other educational institutions of Hyderabad and interior Sindh. Jeay Sindh Students' Federation imposed a ban on progressive and democratic students' organizations in the institutions of Jamshoro, such as DSF, SST, Progressive Jeay Sindh Student Federation and Sindh Dost Students Organization (SSO). The student leaders of Jeay Sindh targeted Punjabi settlers and Muhajir students. At the time of the admission their documents were snatched from them. The members of the progressive organizations and even common students were also beaten by them. They were not allowed to takeout the processions, arranged by Democratic Students Federation (DSF) in Sindh University, against the death of Nazir Abbasi who had died in the military torture cell.<sup>47</sup> Criminals were living in the university hostels which were occupied by JSSF. Some leaders of JSSF were themselves involved in criminal activities, but government did not move against those notorious persons. The leaders of Jeay Sindh Students Federation were used by Zia regime in their interests.<sup>48</sup> When some leaders and workers of Jeay Sindh tried to work independently they were intervened by the military regime. The murder of Ihsan Memon and Thori incident were the examples of the policy of the regime. Army killed seven members of Tahreek, in Thori Railway Crossing incident, when they had gone to Larkana to attend the party meeting on 17 October 1984.

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<sup>46</sup> Jahan Dad Khan, *op.cit.*, p.255 & interview of Illahi Bakhsh Soomro on KTN.

<sup>47</sup> Jam Saqi, leader of the Communist Party of Pakistan, interviewed on 29-12-2003.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

During the military regime the Jeay Sindh Tahreek acquired the potential to become the focal point of the resistance in Sindh'.<sup>49</sup> G. M. Sayed went to India on 2 July 1987 with his son Sayed Imdad Mohammad Shah who was the member of the Sindh Assembly. In India he met Rajiv Gandhi and other officials of the Indian government. After coming from India he said that India would not help the Sindhis in its fight for the independence of Sindh.<sup>50</sup>

MRD was the largest democratic movement in the history of Pakistan. Launched by the allied parties of MRD against Zia's martial law, the movement became stronger in Sindh as compared to other provinces. In the beginning it was peaceful but after the oppressive actions of the military it turned violent and militant in struggle. Sindh, the home province of Bhutto, became the centre of the movement.

It was the fear of military regime that if democratic and nationalist forces became united and moved against army rule it would be difficult to control them. In his strategy to unite anti-Bhutto forces, Zia selected Pir Pagaro, G. M. Sayed and other Bhutto opponents from Sindh and MQM from the Muhajirs of Sindh province. When the people of Sindh fought against the army in 1983, Pagaro fully supported the military regime and his Hur force was deployed in some parts of Sindh to crush the democratic movement. G. M. Sayed also opposed the MRD movement. Sayed in a statement on 4 July 1983 said: 'The people of Sindh would not support the MRD movement because the leaders of the movement only seek the power.'<sup>51</sup> Actually Sayed was disappointed; he expected the people of Sindh would support him and was unhappy at the participation of rural Sindh in the MRD movement. M. S. Korejo narrated it as, 'Sayed was disappointed that rural Sindh rose to a rebellion of this magnitude for democracy but not for his cause. This rural Sindhi rebellion for the restoration of democracy reduced the significance of Sayed's struggle for Sindhu Desh to game of hide and seek.'<sup>52</sup>

Military rulers used all means to linger on their rule. They used military, paramilitary, and private forces and even air force against the movement. Those actions of the government raised the feelings of

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<sup>49</sup> Shahid Kardar, 'Polarization in the regions and prospects for integration', *Regional Imbalance & National question in Pakistan* (Karachi: Vanguard Books, 1992), p.313.

<sup>50</sup> Abdul Khaliq Junejo, Chairman Jeay Sindh Mahaz, interview with this research scholar on 31-12-2004.

<sup>51</sup> Ghafoor Ahmed, *General Zia Ke Aakhri Des Saal* (Karachi: Jang Publishers, 1993).

<sup>52</sup> Mohammad Soaleh, S. Korejo, *G. M. Sayed: An Analysis of his Political Perspectives* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp, 109,110.

nationalism. Tariq Rehman states this in these words: 'The suppression of the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD) was so violent in Sindh, where anti Punjabi and anti military feelings ran high, that it took on the nature of a civil war.'<sup>53</sup> At that time many workers and some leaders of JST requested G. M. Sayed to join the movement, in the interest of Sindh. But he plainly refused and said: 'We would not participate in it because it is the movement for the protection of Pakistan.'<sup>54</sup> After that policy many members and leaders of the organization left the party and supported the democratic movement. Idress Chandio, a member of the Central Committee of Jeay Sindh Tahreek, Bagh Bughio, Chairman, Sindhi Porhiat Sangat, Faiz Pirzada, General Secretary, JSSF, and Asghar Qureshi, Joint Secretary of JSSF, and many others left the Tahreek.

General Zia met G. M. Sayed twice and called him patriotic and in return Sayed called Zia, the killer of hundreds of Sindhis, '*Sharif un Nafas*'. Sayed was not only against MRD but also did not believe in the democratic system of the government. He believed that democracy in the framework of Pakistan is only to protect the interests of the Punjab. He was against class struggle because Sayed himself also belonged to feudal class. 'He thought that the class struggle was the conspiracy against the unity of the Sindhi nation.'<sup>55</sup>

### **From Zia's demise to Sayed's death (1988-95)**

In the last days of Zia regime Sayed was active to form nationalist alliance. He succeeded in forming Sindh National Alliance (SNA) on 20 May 1988. In those days general elections were announced by Zia, but before the holding of these elections the General died in an air crash near Bahawalpur on 17 August 1988. Senate Chairman Ghulam Ishaq Khan became the President of Pakistan. Elections were held on party basis. There were two big lobbies that were contesting the elections, pro and anti-Zia. Sayed's SNA also contested these elections in Sindh. Where there was no candidate of the alliance, SNA supported pro-Zia candidate. In Sindh SNA was defeated in the elections; even their leaders could not win a single seat.

In the elections PPP won more seats than others and Benazir succeeded in forming her government. SNA was more active during

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<sup>53</sup> Tariq Rehman, *op.cit.*, p.127.

<sup>54</sup> Dr. Arbab Khuhawar, Secretary General Watan Dost Inqulabi Part, interviewed on 18 -05-2005.

<sup>55</sup> Babar Ali, 'Political Forces in Sindh', *Regional Imbalance & the National Question in Pakistan* (Lahore: Vanguard Books, 1992).

those days. In the meeting of SNA at Beto Jatoi, village of Abdul Hamid Jatoi, Sayed openly opposed Benazir Bhutto's government. When leader of Sindh Dost Inqulabi Party, Idress Chandio, asked him about his opposition of Benazir Bhutto, he openly said that he wanted to topple the government. After these remarks and the decision of the alliance to move against the government, Sindh Dost left the alliance.<sup>56</sup> Sayed moved against the PPP government and scheduled his program of political visit of Sindh to mobilize people. At the end of his tour the flag of Pakistan was burnt at Sukkur air port and Sayed was arrested. Sayeds bungalow at Sann was declared as sub-jail, and Sayed was imprisoned there. During the imprisonment of Sayed PPP government was dissolved by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan. New elections were held in 1990 and in these elections Sayed again opposed the PPP. In the 1990 elections Muslim League Nawaz won majority of seats and formed the government. Nawaz government was soon toppled and fresh elections were held in 1993, PPP won these elections.

During the days of martial law of Zia-ul-Haq Muhajir-Pakhtoon and Punjabi ethnic riots took place in Sindh, specially in Karachi and Hyderabad. G.M. Sayed supported MQM after the 1987 local body elections riots took place between Sindhis and Muhajirs. Many innocent peoples from both sides were killed Sayed's Jeay Sindh Tahreek was fully involved in those riots. Sayed, however, himself tried to normalize the situation between the Sindhis and Muhajirs. During those riots Sindh Tahreek got divided into various groups but all groups accepted Sayed as a leader and symbol of Sindhi nationalism. All groups of Jeay Sindh Tahreek were separated from each other in their organizations but they agreed on the program of Sindhu Desh.

### **The period after Sayed's death**

G. M. Sayed died on 25 April 1995. It was a big tragedy for Jeay Sindh Tahreek because after the death of Sayed no person was in a position to lead Jeay Sindh Tahreek. There was pressure on various factions of the Tahreek to unite and survive. Under this pressure, Jeay Sindh Tahreek, Jeay Sindh Mahaz and Jeay Sindh Inqulabi Party were united under a new Jeay Sindh Qomi Mahaz under the leadership of Bashir Khan Qureshi, Abdul Wahid Aarisar and Sayed Zain Shah.

The merger of various groups of Jeay Sindh Tahreek did not continue for more than five years. There were contradictions and conflicts between them. Sayed Zain Shah grandson of G. M. Sayed left

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<sup>56</sup> Idress Chandio, Chairman Sindh Dost Inqulabi Party, interviewed on 22-5-2006.



Qomi Mahaz in 2000 with their comrades and formed Jaey Sindh Mahaz along with A. Khaliq Junejo. After that Shafi Mohammad Burfat left Qomi Mahaz and formed Jeay Sindh Mutahada Mahaz on 25 November 2000.

During this period the elected government of Muslim League Nawaz was toppled by the army the chief, General Pervez Musharraf. When the General announced his plan to build Kalabagh dam, Jeay Sindh opposed it and made an alliance with MQM. Against the scheme of Kalabagh dam big rallies were arranged in the various cities of Sindh. In such rallies the leadership of MQM also announced its participation but their workers presence was just nominal.

Although all the groups of Jeay Sindh were active against Kalabagh dam but the ruling authority of Pakistan did not cancel the scheme. In this connection violent activities occurred in Sindh and Sindh Libration Army took the responsibility of those activities. Pakistan government put the blame on Jeay Sindh Mutahada Mahaz (JSMM) of Shafi Burfat. Many workers of JSMM were arrested and its vice chairman Samiullah Kalhoro died because of the torture of the agencies as claimed by JSMM leadership.

Jeay Sindh Tahreek is the ethno-nationalist organization formed by G. M Sayed during Bhutto period to pressurize the government for the rights of Sindh. Jeay Sindh did not succeed to gain the support of the people of Sindh due to the democratic government of Bhutto, specially the policies of Bhutto to patronize the Sindhis in government, semi government and private sectors. After the ouster and hanging of Bhutto by Zia and the termination of Sindhis from services, Jeay Sindh Tahreek gained popularity, but when Sayed opposed MRD movement and supported Zia the support of Jeay Sindh among the Sindhis declined.

After the death of Sayed, Jeay Sindh could not maintain its support in the masses. Jeay Sindh got divided into various groups and lost its strength. Even then a faction of Sindhis support its ideas due to the policies of the central government. If federal government continues with its anti-Sindh policies then there are more chances in the future, that Jeay Sindh would again gain support of the people and threaten the unity and integrity of the country.