

Exclusivism of the 1980s in Sindh: An Historical Perspective

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Abstract

Sindh was a homogenous province before the creation of Pakistan. After independence it absorbed large number of immigrant population from India and, subsequently, has been attracting people from different parts of the country. After giving a brief history of Sindh, the article looks at the evolution of ethnic heterogeneity of the province and the policy of the state in this respect. While critically examining the politicization of ethnic issue in the province, during different periods of military and civilian rule, the article focuses on the emergence of ethnic polarity in Sindh in the 1980s that paved the way for ethnic violence which has become the norm since then. It also covers attempts of the civilian government, in the late 1980s, to address this ethnic strife.

Sindh through the ages: an overview

Sindh, which now forms an integral part of Pakistan, received its name from Sindhu i.e. Indus, that flows through it. Sindhu literally means an ocean and a vast collection of water. The name was given to it by the Aryans due to the great amount of water which the Indus carries after meeting with Kabul River, and the great noise it creates while rushing through the mountainous gorges near modern Attock. In medieval times the whole valley of Indus up to the confines of Kashmir was known as Sind or Sindh as against Hind or India, which was separated from it by the desert barrier of Thar.¹

Sindh or the Indus Valley is a land of great antiquity and claims civilization anterior in time to that of Egypt and Babylon. Moenjodaro, a ruined site near Dokri in Larkana district, is believed to be as old as 2500 B.C, a period during which probably the Akkadians ruled over al-Iraq. Egypt at this juncture was under the rule of the great Pharaohs of the

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¹ Dr Mumtaz Husain Pathan, 'Sindh Arab Period', *History of Sindh Series*, Vol.3 (Hyderabad: Sindhi Adabi Board, 1978), p.26.

Middle Kingdom, who were intermediary between the old kingdom and the dynastic rule of Egypt.²

Sindh's history actually starts from 500 BC, when Darius the Great (549-486 BC), after establishing the first empire in the world and sending an expedition to survey River Indus, annexed the Indus Valley with Persia. It was during that period that Brahmanabad was built. After Iranians came the Greeks. Alexander of Macedonia, the founder of the second empire in the world, entered Sindh by 330 B.C. through the Indus and established his sway. After the Greeks rose Chandragupta Maurya; later on Sindh flourished in the period of Asoka.³

Apart from Khyber and Bolan Pass, the two historic gateways to Indo-Pakistan subcontinent, a third passage, frequented by various people, runs to the west along the sea coast of the Arabian Sea, in the very heart of the fertile crescent. It was this route through which Alexander the Great went back to Babylon, on his homeward march from Sindh. It was also the same passage through which the Arabs came to al-Daybul, the sea port of Sindh.⁴ The province has a privilege that Islam reached the subcontinent through its path that is why Sindh is referred as the 'Bab-e-Islam' or gateway to Islam.⁵ Muhammad Bin Qasim conquered Brahmanabad and Aror and established the sway of Muslims over the whole of Sindh, and Multan. With the fall of Umayyad Caliphate, Sindh was split into several principalities held by Arab dynasties. They were first ruled over by Carmathian and then by Mahmood Ghaznavi and Muhammad Ghori. After then Sindh owed only a nominal allegiance to the Khilijis and the Tughlaqs for the province was practically ruled over by its local chiefs.⁶

Sindh remained under Arghun and Tarkhan dynasties from 1519 till the time of the Mughal rule. Akbar, the Mughal Emperor, was born at Umarmkot in Sindh in November 1542⁷ and it was Akbar who brought Sindh in the fold of Mughal Empire. Mughal rule in Sindh lasted till 1736. The province then became a vassal state of the Afghan Durrani

² *Ibid.*, p.46.

³ Faiz Mohammad Soomro, *Cultural History of Sindh* (Karachi: National Book Foundation, 1977), p.9.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p.73.

⁵ Muhammad Shoaib Pervez, *Security Community in South Asia: India-Pakistan* (New York: Routledge, 2013), p.124.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p.9.

⁷ J.P. Vaswani, *I am a Sindhi: The Glorious Sindhi Heritage, The Culture & Folklore of Sind* (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 2008), p.227.

Empire, and was ruled, thereafter, by Kalhora chiefs and later the Balochi Talpurs.⁸

It was during the period of Talpurs rulers when, after the battle of Miani and Dabo near Hyderabad, the British troops with their treacherous designs entered Sindh in 1843, and annexed it a province; Sir Charles Napier became its Governor. Later on in 1847 after the retirement of Sir Charles Napier Sindh became a Division of the Presidency of Bombay.⁹ Sindh continued its appendage relations with Bombay till 1936 when All India Muslim League, led by Quaid-i-Azam, succeeded in having it made a separate province under the Government of India Act 1935.¹⁰

Sindh's annexation to Bombay had opened the way for political and economic supremacy of the Hindus. For about 16 years from 1920-1936 the movement for the separation of Sindh continued which the Hindus tried their best to suppress. In March 1937 Sindh was finally separated from Bombay. Thereafter, general elections were held and Sindh Assembly was formed. It had 60 members, 40 Muslims and 20 Hindus. Although the Muslims were in majority but Hindu domination in the government remained till 1946.

After separating from Bombay political awakening grew swiftly among the Muslims.¹¹ Muslims constituted nearly 75 per cent of Sindh's population, while their population in Punjab and Bengal was a little over 50 per cent. Therefore for a decade, from 1937 to 1947 Sindh remained a frontline province that lent support to the demand for a separate state of Pakistan. Lahore resolution was passed in 1940 and in March 1943 the Sindh Assembly¹² passed a resolution tabled by Ghulam Murtaza Syed, President of the Sindh Muslim League in favour of the creation of Pakistan and took the first step towards realization of the idea of Pakistan.¹³

Out-migration in Sindh from 1947-1950

Sindh, in general, was a homogeneous and compact province ethnically, linguistically and culturally before the partition of India; 75 per cent of

⁸ *Ibid.*, p.22.

⁹ E. lauterpacht, *International Law Report*, Vol.50 (London: Butterworth & Co., Publishers, 1976), p.54.

¹⁰ Faiz Mohammad Soomro, *op.cit.*, p.1.

¹¹ Zaheer Ahmed, *Story of G.M. Syed* (Hyderabad: Nia Dour Publisher, 1987), p.10.

¹² Maneesha Tikekar, *Across the Wagah: An Indian's Sojourn in Pakistan* (New Delhi: Promilla & Co., Publishers, 2004), p.127.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p.128.

its population was Muslim and almost all the remaining 25 per cent were Hindus and Sindhi was a common language of the province. After 1947, lingual and ethnic imbalance in its demographic trends started to set in.¹⁴ In the wake of partition there was a massive movement of population across the borders of the new states of Pakistan and India. Sindh became the third largest and third most populous province of Pakistan. It was not the only province that received refugees; Punjab and East Pakistan also bore the pressure of mass migration. However, the Muslim population of East Punjab and West Bengal migrated to the respective provinces of Pakistan which were ethnically and culturally alike. The immigrants of Sindh were ethnically and linguistically different but religiously alike.

Sindh received 20 per cent of the total number of migrants from India. These refugees replaced a sizable part of the Hindu community that migrated from Sindh to India. It is noteworthy that in undivided India the Hindu *banias* (small businessmen, who also lent money to the poor people of Sindh at exorbitant interest rates) had managed the commercial enterprises of the province. The *amils* (or agents of the Kalhora and Talpur rulers) were mostly in Hyderabad, the then capital of Sindh. The press was also owned by the Hindus and many of them were middle level professionals who had an advantaged position because of proficiency in English. On the other hand most of the migrants in Sindh were Urdu-speaking people from the more literate and politically aware areas of Northern India. They came to Pakistan with a patriotic fervour and without any idea of ethnic diversity. For the Urdu-speaking migrants, Pakistan was the 'promised land', for they had played a crucial role in the movement for the creation of Pakistan. The enterpenuring among the Urdu-speaking migrants took over professions and commerce.¹⁵ It can be asked why the inhabitants of Sindh did not replace Hindus? Why did they allow Urdu-speaking people to control the commercial activities of urban Sindh? In this regard ABS Jafri opines that the leadership and Government of Sindh from 1937 to 1947, which was in the hands of upper class Sindhi Muslims, deliberately avoided the

¹⁴ Muhammed Ibrahim Joyo, *The Betrayal—Sindh Bides the Day for Freedom*, Vol.1 (Hyderabad: Sindhi Adeeban Jee Sahkari Sangat, 2005), p.297. Mystical and non-sectarian poetry of Shah Latif of Bhit containing messages of patriotism and universal brotherhood had made it a sacred language for both religions, in the eighteenth century.

¹⁵ Soofia Mumtaz, 'Nationalism, Ethnicity and the Mohajir Political Movement in Sindh', in Soofia Mumtaz, Jean-Luc-Racine, Imran Anwar Ali (eds.), *Pakistan the Contours of State and Society* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2002), p.101.

spread of education in Sindh and did not bring their people into the mainstream.¹⁶ Thus, the rural Sindhis remained backward due to lack of education and the urban centres of Sindh continued to be run by the educated Hindus. The departure of Hindus left a vacuum which was filled by Urdu-speaking people.¹⁷

The table below shows the migration patterns of Pakistan.

Table 1: Patterns of Migration

		Number of Refugees	Share of refugees	Ratio in total population
1-	Pakistan	7.22 million	100 %	10 %
2-	East Bengal	.7 million	9. 67 %	1.7 %
3-	West Pakistan	6.52 million	90.3 %	20 %
4-	Punjab	5.3 million	73 %	25. 6 %
5-	Sindh (ex K)	.55 million	7. 6 %	11.7 %
6-	Karachi	.61 million	8. 53 %	55 %

Source: Census of Pakistan 1951, Vol. 1, Table 19-A, Vol. 6, p. 65.¹⁸

The table reveals that among all immigrant groups the Punjabi migrants constituted the bulk, but as pointed out earlier they easily assimilated into the Punjabi main stream for basically there language and culture was the same as the people of western Punjab.¹⁹ The second largest group of migrants settled in Sindh. Their proportion of the total number of refugees in Pakistan was 20 per cent. Owing to linguistic and cultural differences and because of the fact that most of them settled in the large metropolis Karachi and to a lesser degree in Hyderabad, Sukkur, Nawab Shah and Mirpurkhas, their concentration in these cities freed them from the pressure to assimilate with the local Sindhi-speaking population. This trend was even more evident in Karachi. There was also

¹⁶ ABS Jafri, *Behind the Killing Fields of Karachi: A City Refuses to Surrender* (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1996), p.19.

¹⁷ Shahid Javed Burki & Craig Baxter, *Pakistan under the Military: Eleven Years of Zia ul-Haq* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991), p.39.

¹⁸ Mohammad Waseem, 'Ethnic Conflict in Pakistan: The Case of MQM', Part II, *The Pakistan Development Review*, 35:4 (Winter 1996), p.620. Retrieved from <http://www.pide.org.pk/pdf/PDR/1996/volume4/617629.pdf> on 29/12/2008.

¹⁹ Adeel Khan, *Politics of identity: Ethnic Nationalism and the state in Pakistan* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2005), p.161.

a feeling of cultural superiority in the immigrants which made them disdainful of the local population and they did not care much to inter-mingle with them. Resentment developed clearly among the host population because their open-hearted hospitality had not been reciprocated instead they were being treated with contempt.²⁰ Mostly, the immigrants who settled in Sindh came from United Province (UP), Gujarat and Central Province (CP), the Indian provinces with Hindu majorities. At the same time around 100,000 Urdu speaking Muslims from Bihar migrated to East Bengal, which became East Pakistan.²¹ The exchange of populations between India and Pakistan made Punjab and NWFP ethnically more homogenous, it hardly affected Balochistan, but it dramatically changed the ethnic composition of Sindh.²²

It is noteworthy that by the settlement of new Sindhis in Sindh a new and dynamic culture evolved almost instantly. United by the inseparable bond of Islamic faith, the old and the new Sindhis initially lived here in peace and harmony.²³ Since more than one million Urdu-speaking people had settled in Sindh, their share in the population of the province became about one-fifth. Most of the immigrants or Mohajirs stayed in Karachi, Pakistan's capital, which soon became a sprawling metropolis and the largest city of Pakistan. The residue also formed large concentrations in Hyderabad, Sukkur, Nawab Shah and Mirpurkhas. Before the secession of East Pakistan they comprised about two per cent of Pakistan's population and four per cent of West Pakistan's population.²⁴ The Liaquat-Nehru Pact in April 1950, virtually stopped the out-migration in Pakistan.²⁵ At the international level Refugee Convention was signed in 1951, but Pakistan and India did not sign that international document as both did not fall within the purview of the convention.²⁶

²⁰ Feroz Ahmed Khan, *Ethnicity and Politics in Pakistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.44.

²¹ Christophe Jaffrelot, 'A country in search of an identity', in Christophe Jaffrelot (ed.), translated by Gillian Beaumont, *A History of Pakistan and its Origins* (London: Anthem Press, 2006), p.17.

²² Feroz Ahmed Khan, *op.cit.*, p.70.

²³ Faiz Mohammad Soomro, *op.cit.*, p.8.

²⁴ Christophe Jaffrelot, *op. cit.*, p.98.

²⁵ Iftikhar Haider Malik, *Culture and Customs of Pakistan* (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2006), p.39.

²⁶ Gil Loescher, *Beyond Charity: International Cooperation and Global Refugee Crisis* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), p.62.

In- migration in Sindh from 1951-1969

The presence of the third ethnic group in Sindh, the Punjabis, can be traced back to the colonial period. It was the practice of the British Raj to distribute land to army personnel and this practice continued after the creation of Pakistan, particularly in the period of President Ayub Khan. Agricultural and commercial plots were awarded to retiring civil and military officers who were mostly from the Punjab. The Punjabis also set up industries in Sindh and labour for those industries was imported from the Punjab. The enormous economic opportunities in Sindh, mostly in the port city of Karachi, also drew people from other provinces.

The continuous in — migration paved the way for growing Sindhi nationalism that began in the 1950s; G.M. Syed was its acknowledged founder. G. M. Syed, a stalwart of the demand for Pakistan, was active in the Khilafat Movement in India in the 1930s, and in the campaign for Sindh's separation from Bombay in 1936. He obtained a prominent position in All-India Muslim League;²⁷ in 1943 he was a President of Sindh Muslim League and played a vital role when Sindh Assembly passed Pakistan Resolution Bill.²⁸ Unfortunately, before the 1945-46 general elections in India differences grew between the Chief Minister of Sindh, Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatallah and G.M. Syed over the distribution of election tickets which led to their parting of ways.²⁹

Throughout the 1950s G.M. Syed protested against victimization of Sindhis by Punjabi-Mohajir imperialism and 'the Punjabisation of Sindh'. He viewed Sindh's interests as ill served in a centralist state. As a vocal militant leader, Syed was imprisoned by Ayub Khan, and later by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, but he continued to remain an influential Sindhi leader until his death in 1995.³⁰

Karachi's development as the country's industrial and economic hub led to an influx of skilled and unskilled wage labourers from the provinces of Frontier and Punjab from the 1960s onwards. The Pushtuns who came as labourers, gradually completely took over the public transport sector of the city.³¹ Thus the Mohajirs and the Sindhis faced tough competition from these hard-working people. At the central level,

²⁷ Nichola Khan, *Mohajir Militancy in Pakistan: Violence and Transformation in the Karachi Conflict* (New York: Routledge Contemporary South Asia, 2010), p.32.

²⁸ Zaheer Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p.7.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p.11.

³⁰ Nichola Khan, *op.cit.*, p.32.

³¹ Soofia Mumtaz, *op.cit.*, pp.100, 108, 109.

from the demographic point of view, Mohajir influence on the politics and society of Pakistan was much more than their share in the country's population. This naturally built up resentment among the elites of the Punjab, Sindh and NWFP.³²

A very obvious split especially in Sindh could be seen in 1965, when Ayub Khan's victory in the presidential elections against Mohtarma Fatima Jinnah was celebrated in a crude manner by the Pushtuns living in Karachi, a city where there was a concentration of the Mohajir population. Gohar Ayub, son of President Ayub Khan, is said to have encouraged the Pushtuns to attack Mohajir communities as a revenge for their support of Fatima Jinnah in the elections of 1965. Mohajirs many of whom were educated and formed the backbone of the administrative system of Pakistan were already deeply angered when Ayub Khan decided to shift the capital from Karachi to Rawalpindi on an interim basis while the new capital was being built. These acts made the Mohajirs feel that whatever influence and power they wielded had been further eroded. The Mohajir Pushtun clashes in the late 1964 and early 1965 'were the first ethnic riots in Karachi and determined the future course of ethnic politics in urban Sindh'.³³

Assertion of Sindhi nationalism in the 1970s

In the 1970s dissatisfaction among the second major ethnic group of Sindh grew owing to the assertion of Sindhi nationalism. The traumatic events of 1971, made Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, son of a prominent Sindhi landowner, head of the state of remaining Pakistan. His Pakistan Peoples' Party had won the country's first general elections in West Pakistan. Bhutto was keenly aware that Sindh had been deprived of its due share in the bureaucracy of Pakistan and that its military credentials were nearly non-existent.³⁴ The Punjabis replaced Bengalis as the majority ethnic group of Pakistan after the fall of Dhaka in December 1971. Bhutto was the first Sindhi to take up the reins of power in Pakistan and his cousin, Mumtaz Ali Bhutto, was made the chief minister of Sindh. In the 24 years of Pakistan's existence it was the first time when federal government and the provincial government of Sindh both were led by Sindhis. The Sindhi's interests were strongly upheld by Bhutto at the state level. His government wanted to restore the original

³² Christophe Jaffrelot, *op.cit.*, p.17.

³³ Feroz Ahmed Khan, *op.cit.*, p.109; Soofia Mumtaz, *op.cit.*, p.110; Harry Goulbourne, *Race and Ethnicity* (London: Routledge, 2001), p.232.

³⁴ Stephen Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution Press, 2004), p.139.

status of Sindhi language as the province's official language. This, however, resulted in a strong reaction from the Urdu-speaking people, the second majority of the province. They could not speak Sindhi language but were living in the big cities of Sindh where the original Sindhis had been turned into a minority.³⁵ Since the 1960s, language and preserving regional identity were key issues in the nationalist Sindhi claims for political autonomy. Although G.M. Syed's political position remained weak and he had failed to win seats in the 1970 elections, but through language, Syed drew continuities with an historic Sindhi existence dating back thousands of years.³⁶ Zulfikar Ali Bhutto preceded to co-op the key language demand of the Jiye Sindh into PPP policy. Syed responded by reconstituting the Jiye Sindh Mahaz (JSM) in 1972. The Mahaz advocated Sindh's secession from Pakistan, a separate Sindhu desh and expulsion of all non-Sindhis from land granted to them under Ayub Khan, including the return of the Mohajirs to India.³⁷

To pacify Sindhi nationalists, the Sindh Assembly, dominated by the Sindhi-speaking members of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), on 7 July 1972, passed a language bill. It was promulgated as an Act by the Governor of Sindh on 16 July 1972. By this Act, both Sindhi and Urdu became compulsory subjects for children from class IV to XII.³⁸ Although the Peoples' Party had swept elections in West Pakistan on the slogan of 'Roti, Kapra and Makan' but there was a strong element of Sindhi nationalism as far as Bhutto's agenda for Sindh was concerned. The assertion of Sindhi nationalism was the natural result of a feeling that previous governments had deliberately discriminated against the Sindhis, treated their language with contempt and not given them their due share in jobs in the bureaucracy etc. Bhutto thought that it was now time to restore the importance of Sindhi by declaring it as an official language of the province. When the language bill was approved there was an outbreak of riots in Karachi and other Mohajir dominated cities in Sindh.³⁹ Another matter which angered the Mohajirs was Article (27) in the Constitution of 1973 that set a moratorium for a ten year period reserving government's jobs for persons area-wise. The law called the quota system fixed all the public sector employment vacancies in Sindh

³⁵ Mehtab Ali Shah, *The Foreign Policy of Pakistan: Ethnic Impacts on Diplomacy 1971-1994*, (London: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 1997), p.54.

³⁶ Nichola Khan, *op.cit.*, p.32.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.33.

³⁸ Soofia Mumtaz, *op.cit.*, p.215.

³⁹ Harry Goulbourne, *op.cit.*, p.232.

for instance at a rate of 60 % rural and 40 % urban. Thus the principle of filling jobs on the basis of open merit was partly jettisoned.⁴⁰

A quota system had been first introduced in 1949, by the government of Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan for recruitment into the 'Central Superior Services' (CSS-were the elite cadre of Pakistan's civil bureaucracy). The system divided entries into CSS in the following manner: merit 20% (through the CSS examination process), East Pakistan 40%, Punjab and Bahawalpur 23%, Karachi 2%, Sindh, Khairpur, NWFP, Frontier states and Tribal Areas, Balochistan, Azad Kashmir and Kashmir refugees 15%.⁴¹

In August 1973, the quota system was reintroduced. The following table describes how the quotas were set.

Table 2: Quota Setting

Merit	10%
Punjab	50 %
Urban Sindh (Karachi, Hyderabad and Sukkur)	7.6 %
Rural Sindh	11.4 %
NWFP	11.5 %
Baluchistan	3.5 %
Northern Areas and centrally administered Tribal Areas	4%
Azad Kashmir	2 %

Source: Charles H. Kennedy, 'Pakistan: Ethnic diversity and colonial legacy', in John Coakley (ed.), *The Territorial Management of Ethnic Conflict* (London: Routledge, 2003), p.160.

In the contest of Sindh the aim was to introduce a policy of 'positive discrimination' in favour of Sindhis against the Muhajirs, the latter being perceived as having been represented in the CSS out of proportion to their share in Pakistan's population. The Sindhis, seen as being deprived of their rightful share in government jobs, were finally given the chance to make their mark in governance and administration of the country. In resource allocation too they were to receive their due share.⁴²

⁴⁰ General K. M. Arif, *Khaki Shadows: Pakistan 1947-1997* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2002), p.214.

⁴¹ Charles H. Kennedy, 'Pakistan: Ethnic Diversity and Colonial Legacy', John Coakley (ed.), *The Territorial Management of Ethnic Conflict* (London: Routledge, 2003), p.160.

⁴² Suranjan Das, *Kashmir and Sindh: Nation-Building, Ethnicity and Regional Politics in South Asia*, (London: Anthem Press, 2001), p.121.

The Mohajirs were angered by what they perceived as unfair restrictions upon their career opportunities. Thus the representation of Mohajirs in the civil administration began to decline and they bitterly realized that they were being weeded out of Pakistan's national elite. The most frustrating aspect of the quota system was the perception among the Mohajir youth that they could not make their lives on the basis of merit. This gave rise to a new Mohajir nationalism.⁴³

In the post-1971 developments such as the nationalization of banks and heavy industries, the introduction of a language bill, the quota system for government jobs in Sindh, discrimination against Mohajir youth in Sindh's government-owned educational institutions, the government's unwillingness to repatriate stranded Pakistanis, the Biharis, from Bangladesh (who had fully supported the army operation against East Pakistan) were all felt to be directed against the Mohajirs. The Mohajirs of urban Sindh felt that they were the victims of discrimination and that their loyalty to the country was beyond question.⁴⁴ The Mohajirs had always upheld their Muslim and Pakistani identity till the 1970s, and never played up ethnic individuality. Their voting pattern showed that they voted either for the Muslim League, the founding party of Pakistan, or the Jamaat-i-Islami (JI), a fundamentalist religious group, with a support base in urban centres.⁴⁵ This was the first time since the creation of Pakistan that the Mohajirs began to show a trend towards violent activism yet there was no question of separatism perhaps because they had no land which they could claim as their own.⁴⁶

The Sindh government did not succeed in making Sindhi the only official language of the province, but the Sindhi masses were happy, nevertheless, that Bhutto wanted to promote their culture and language. The Sindhi nationalists claimed that these measures were a victory of the Sindhi nationalist movement.⁴⁷

The Mohajirs became progressively more radical in the 1970s in reaction to the policies of the PPP government in Sindh. Perceiving themselves as a victim of discrimination by the state, they now began to consider themselves as a community apart rather than as the upholders of Pakistani or Islamic ideology. They now distanced themselves from JI and began to think about their separate political party. The first organization representing the Mohajirs was formed in the mid-eighties.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p.163.

⁴⁴ Harry Goulbourne, *op.cit.*, p.238.

⁴⁵ Adeel Khan, *op.cit.*, p.161.

⁴⁶ Christophe Jaffrelot, *op.cit.*, p.27.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.54, 55.

Mohajir students, led by Altaf Hussain, reacted to the new policy of quota within the education system by founding the All Pakistan Mohajir Students' Organization (APMSO) on 11 June 1978. Altaf Hussain became its Chairman and Azim Ahmed Tariq its Secretary General.⁴⁸ Altaf Hussain had recently left Jamiat's student's wing, complaining that it had been taken over by the Punjabis. The main aim of APMSO was to mobilize young Mohajir students in the country to get their rights.⁴⁹ Later on Hussain founded the Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) in 1984. It was renamed as Mutahida Qaumi Movement in 1997 to give the impression that it was not just a Mohajir nationalist movement.⁵⁰

Second wave of out- migration in the 1980s

Zia's decision to make Pakistan a front line state in the Afghan-Soviet war dramatically increased the number of Pushtuns in Karachi. The influx of around one million Afghan refugees during the war encouraged the Pushtuns to establish powerful syndicates. The proliferation of arms and weapons networks during the war led many Pushtun settlements, particularly at Orangi and Sohrab Goth, to become centres for arms trade and distribution. Sohrab Goth, at the head of the Karachi-Hyderabad highway, became a major notorious Pakistani centre for trading in weapons and heroin. The expansion of these trades accompanied by the growth of smuggling-transport-police nexus increased Mohajir-Pushtun tension. Inflow of arms and heroin from the Frontier, combined with the leadership of the Pushtuns in the transport business, positioned them at the forefront. Economic and demographic transformation put pressure on the city's resources, resulting in extreme conditions for Karachi's residents.⁵¹

Furthermore, the execution of a Sindhi Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto on 4 April 1979 by the army chief, General Zia-ul-Haq, made him a greatly loathed figure in Sindh. The regional developments of 1979, however, brought good luck to General Zia for his government gained the support of the West. Political activism or even debate was not tolerated, thus except for a few voices of protest against Bhutto's judicial murder there was not much political activity in the country. The press 'was in chains' and some astute writers and editors managed to write skillfully 'between the lines', only to be understood by the more

⁴⁸ Chirstophe Jaffrelot, *op.cit.*, pp.27, 33; *Dawn*, Karachi, 11 June 1978.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p.33.

⁵⁰ Olivier Roy, *Globalized Islam: the Search for a New Ummah* (London: C. Hurst & Co. Publishers Ltd., 2002), p.135.

⁵¹ Nichola Khan, *op.cit.*, p.39.

intelligent and sophisticated readers. Thus, from 1977 to 1983, there was political stagnation in Pakistan. The democratic forces, however, mustered the strength in Sindh to launch a Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD) in 1983. The people came out on the streets in large numbers and there were bloody clashes with the police and army. Zia decided to deal with the pro-democracy movement by deploying 45,000 troops in Sindh where it is estimated that about 300 protesters were killed. This turmoil and repression by the military regime was seen as a violation of human rights by the West and the foreign media took note of the situation in the country.⁵² Strangely the protest movement not only remained confined to Sindh, but unlike any previous uprising, it spread from the urban centres to rural areas. It took many months for the army to quell the movement.⁵³ It is being observed that:

The suppression of Sindhis, which started in 1983, became feasible only after Zia had developed special military and political relations with the USA by exploiting the Afghanistan situation. If his rule had not received legitimacy from the USA, Zia would have thought twice before taking military action against the Sindhis.⁵⁴

This movement coincided with a suspiciously steep rise of banditry in rural Sindh. This was widely seen as a fall out of the ethnic strife. The *Herald* of July 1986 concluded in a well-researched report that 250 cases of abduction by dacoits had taken place during April to June mainly in the districts of Nawabshah, Dadu and Larkana. The victims were from a broad social spectrum—landowners, politicians, civil servants, judges and even ordinary villagers. This was a period when prominent personalities in Karachi and interior Sindh lived in a constant fear of being kidnapped. Potential victims were traders of the rural areas, government officials, doctors, lawyers, engineers, big industrialists and businessmen. The landlords were also vulnerable, though there were creeping suspicions that the feudals were involved in these abductions, or had their share of the spoils.⁵⁵ There are various opinions about the social background of the bandits. Most analysts agree that they generally comprised political activists and educated unemployed youth. Many of these criminals, it is believed, were Sindhi political activists that had taken part in MRD and had now taken refuge in jungles to escape being

⁵² Mehtab Ali Shah, *op.cit.*, p.20.

⁵³ Omar Noman, *Pakistan: Political and Economic History Since 1947* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1988), p.194.

⁵⁴ Mehtab Ali Shah. *op.cit.*, p.76.

⁵⁵ Suranjan Das, *op.cit.*, p.129; *Herald*, Karachi, 17:7 (July 1986), p.26.

caught by the military and to survive resorted to banditry.⁵⁶ The culture of violence became very widespread in Sindh and Karachi for arms were easily available following Pakistan conversion into a front-line in the Afghan War. The military training of *mujahideen* in camps in Pakistan and wide spread drug trafficking in cities like Karachi further exacerbated violent crimes in Sindh.⁵⁷

Afghan-Soviet war transformed the military-bureaucratic oligarchy: Pakistan's role as a frontline state, in other words a 'proxy' in the Afghan-Soviet war deeply impacted upon the ethnic composition of the military bureaucratic oligarchy. The balance of power in the army shifted even more in Punjab's favour. It also increased the influence of the Pushtuns for they were strongly represented in the army. The presence of large numbers of Pushtun refugees from Afghanistan favoured Pushtuns. This situation adversely impacted upon the status of Mohajirs and their frustration became more and more apparent. Thus the politically active Mohajirs now thought it an appropriate time to launch their campaign to assert their separate identity and to get their voice heard in the corridors of power. An author has pointed out that when Mohajir hegemony 'was challenged by various administrations, their enthusiasm for Pakistani nationalism diminished and was replaced by Mohajir identification'.⁵⁸

During the Zia regime the Mohajirs saw the emerging Punjabi-Pathan alliance in urban Sindh as against their interests, and their frustration became more pronounced because they had no leadership that could provide them with direction. The conservative political parties, such as the Jammai-i-Islami, which had been seen earlier as representing the Mohajirs of urban Sindh, were now being drawn into the Punjabi-Pushtun alliance while the major party in Sindh, the PPP, represented the interests of rural Sindh, particularly as far as the province was concerned. The Mohajirs could not join other parties for these were parochial and had no nation-wide appeal. Previously the Mohajirs had never seen themselves as a race or nationality and had always supported the idea of a 'Pakistani nationality' instead of parochialism or regional nationalism. However, the environment that had emerged in Pakistan forced them to do some rethinking. Re-evaluating their position in the country, they were convinced that they must strongly assert their identity to survive and flourish. Their economic and political problems had greatly

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p.129.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Yunas Sammad, 'In and out of power but not down and out: Mohajir identity politics', in Christophe Jaffrelot (ed.), *op.cit.*, p.65.

increased during the Zia many of them decided to unite under one leader and one party.⁵⁹ The story of the formation of APMISO followed by the MQM has been given in earlier paras. What needs to be added is that General Zia-ul-Haq had extended the quota system for another decade and this heightened resentment among the Mohajirs.⁶⁰ The increasing show of strength by the MQM led to the formation of the Punjabi-Pushtun Ittehad (PPI). The Punjabi and Pushtuns settlers in Sindh had been feeling increasingly vulnerable because of the MQM. 'The emergence of PPI further compounded the already entangled nature of ethnic terrorism in the province'.⁶¹ It has been alleged that the Zia regime encouraged the growth of Punjabi and Pathan communities power in Karachi.⁶²

The fact that the Afghan refugees were not contained in their camps, but were allowed to roam freely in the country, to settle down and start businesses in cities, especially in Karachi, added to antagonisms within the Pakistani society and increased ethnic strife in Karachi.⁶³

Emergence of a new political force to combat the PPP: A major aim for Zia was to reduce the power and influence of PPP so that the largest political party would not be able to challenge the military regime. He thus divided the people, especially in urban and rural Sindh, on ethnic and linguistic lines.⁶⁴ The table below illustrates the percentage of different linguistic groups who resided Karachi in 1981.

Table 3: Census Figure of Karachi in 1981

Urdu	Punjabi	Pushto	Sindhi	Baluchi
61 %	16 %	11 %	7 %	5 %

Source: Christophe Jaffrelot, 'A country in search of an identity', in Christophe Jaffrelot (ed.), *A History of Pakistan and its Origin*, p.34.

This table shows that in the capital and largest city of Sindh the population of Punjabi and Pushtuns was more than that of the native Sindhis.

⁵⁹ Harry Goulbourne, *op.cit.*, p.233.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ Ishtiaq Ahmed, *State, Nation and Ethnicity in Contemporary South Asia* (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 1996), p.203.

⁶² Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1994), p.200.

⁶³ <http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/pakistan/backgrounders/index.html>

⁶⁴ [http:// www.pide.org.pk/pdf/PDR/1996/volume4/617-629.pdf](http://www.pide.org.pk/pdf/PDR/1996/volume4/617-629.pdf) retrieved on 29/12/2008

Zia is said to have adopted a well-coordinated two-pronged strategy in Sindh. A scholar has pointed out that in rural Sindh, the ISI with the help of some Sindhi landlords (*waderas*), allegedly established links with dacoits. These dacoits it is said were allotted the job of keeping the Sindhis in villages worried about their safety and security, instead of struggling for political freedom. Thus using the excuse of the need for a military operation to hunt out the bandits, large contingents of the army were deployed to stop the outbreak of another mass political movement.⁶⁵

It is said that in urban Sindh it was the military intelligence which had encouraged the formation of the MQM in March, 1984, exactly a year after the MRD had been launched. The MQM's avowed aim was to get the Mohajirs accepted as the fifth nationality of Pakistan.⁶⁶

The military regime, says one scholar, wanted to counter balance the MRD, in which the PPP was the strongest party, through the MQM. From 1984 to 1986 the MQM kept a comparatively low profile and its main concern was to build its cadre base in Karachi and Hyderabad. They recruited young disaffected Urdu speaking people from the lower middle class and a cult was built around the personality of Altaf Hussain. It is notable that in 1984 Altaf Hussain went to the United States and returned in November 1985. On 8 August 1986 first public meeting was held by the MQM at Nishtar Park in Karachi.⁶⁷ It is an interesting fact that ever since the MQM was formed in 1984, successive US ambassadors to Pakistan have visited Nine Zero (90), the headquarter of MQM, to meet the party's leadership.⁶⁸ In early 1987 a Charter of Resolution was issued by the MQM that gave a sound footing to the party.⁶⁹

The formation of MQM put an end to the hold of the Jamaat-i-Islami on the middle and lower classes in Karachi. The Mohajirs felt that their interests were being better looked after by the MQM rather than the Jamaat. As far as the Zia regime was concerned, it was convinced after the 1985 elections that the Jamaat no longer had the political clout to

⁶⁵ Mehtab Ali Shah, *op.cit.*, p.56.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ General K.M. Arif, *op.cit.*, p.224.

⁶⁸ Mehtab Ali Shah, *op.cit.*, pp.76, 77.

⁶⁹ Charles H. Kennedy, The Politics of Ethnicity in Sindh, *Asian Survey*, 31:10 (October 1991), p.948; Reterived from <http://cpriid.com/history/8Charles%20Kennedy,%20Ethnic%20Sindh.pdf> on 19-05-14

keep the MRD out of Karachi. Thus MQM was considered a wiser choice for support in Karachi.⁷⁰

Having once shown its strength in the 1986 public meeting and after releasing its charter, MQM began preparation for local bodies elections, to test its electoral strength. The previous local bodies elections, held in 1979-80, were won by JI.⁷¹ The nominees of MQM had no previous political experience, but their sweeping triumph in Karachi and Hyderabad in the 1987 local council elections led to their emergence as a political force. It also turned the political discourse of Sindh. The MQM had controlled the urban centres so completely that it has been part of every government in Sindh since 1988.⁷²

It is noteworthy that in the 1980s Jiye Sindh Movement entered into periodic alliance with the MQM. Their alliance was centered on their common anti-Punjabi-Pushtun objectives. The Sindhi-Mohajir accord of early 1988 addressed the many grievances of the two nationalist groups, and cast the Punjabis and Punjabi military as a primary foe. MQM continued courting the Sindhi nationalists; banners with the slogan 'Syed-Altaf-Bhai-Bhai' and 'Sindhi-Mohajir-Bhai-Bhai' were raised at MQM political rallies. Sindhi-Mohajir relations soared after fatal confrontation in Hyderabad between Mohajirs and Sindhis in May, September and October 1988 and again in May-June 1990. Sindhi-Mohajir alliance damaged over a period of time, despite Altaf Hussain's marriage to a Sindhi-Baloch woman, Faiza Gabol, in 2001.⁷³

After 1986 the MQM spearheaded the campaign for asserting the political and economic rights of the Mohajir community. In the ethnic riots in Karachi in the winter of 1986-87 the MQM activists who had acquired arms on a large scale, fought the Punjabi-Pushtun Ittehad which had also begun to flex its muscles, for it too had access to arms. The inclusion of armaments in party politics was a direct fall out of the Afghan-Soviet war. The availability of arms exacerbated the conflict situation and lawlessness in the country. MQM's full political weight was first felt in the 1988 elections where it won seats at the provincial and national level.⁷⁴ The authoritarian regime of General Zia in the decade of 1980s irreparably damaged the social fabric of the Pakistani

⁷⁰ Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *op.cit.*, p.200.

⁷¹ http://jang.com.pk/important_events/localbodiespolls2005/news/archive_eng/14-10-05.htm

⁷² M.A Niazi, 'Elections and immunity', *The Nation*, 7 September 2012.

⁷³ Nichola Khan, *op.cit.*, p.33.

⁷⁴ Mary Louise Becker, 'Constitutional and Political Inheritance', Peter R. Blood, *Pakistan: a country study* (Washington DC: Diane Publishing, 1995), p.222.

society. It played up the ethnic differences for two reasons: first, perpetuation of its rule; second, to gain legitimacy by the projecting itself as the only force capable of controlling chaos.⁷⁵

The ethnic fervor in Sindh from 1985 onwards: By the mid-1980s, mohajirs overtly demanded a stop to Pushtun migration from the NWFP. The Pushtuns had acquired money through the drug and armament trade which was a phenomenon directly related to ongoing bordering war.⁷⁶ A traffic accident in April 1985 triggered a chain reaction of violence demonstrating not only the fragile nature of the social fabric of urban Sindh, but the fact that the administration was helpless, corrupt, ignorant and indifferent to the problems of the masses.⁷⁷

The crisis erupted when Bushra Zaidi a female student of Sir Syed College in Karachi was over run and killed by a mini-bus in a road accident. This unfortunate accident caused the outbreak of a bloody ethnic riot, for the driver was a Pathan, and the victim was Urdu-speaking. Mohajirs lamented that they were suffering because they were un-armed and powerless.⁷⁸ An angry mob tried to lynch the driver. The Pushtuns, on their part mobilized by the transport operators, fought back the mob. Later the Pushtuns in an organized move attacked the Biharis living in slums near the industrial area with mixed Urdu-speaking and Pushtun population.

The bloody riots continued for several days and scores of people were killed and property destroyed. Curfew had to be imposed in the affected areas. These incidents intensified hatred between the two groups, and exacerbated the feeling of powerlessness among the Mohajirs, despite the fact that they were in a majority in Karachi.⁷⁹

The ordinary Pushtuns and their diaspora in Pakistani cities supported Zia who was seen as spearheading the war against the infidels (the Soviets Union) to save their brothers living across the border in Afghanistan. General Zia's regime patronized them for its own reasons.

⁷⁵ Shahid Javed Burki, *Pakistan: Fifty Years of Nationhood* (Lahore: Pak Book Corporation, 1999), p.55; *Migration, Settlement and Identity: A Cultural Theme of the Muslim Diaspora after Partition of India-1947*, pp.4, 5. Retrieved from inter-disciplinary.net/ci/transformations/diasporas/d1/documents/Zahoorpaper.pdf –

⁷⁶ James D. Fearon, David D. Laitin, *Sons of the Soil, Immigrants and Civil War*, Stanford University, p.8. Retrieved from <http://icas.ucsd.edu/papers/GTCconf/soil11.pdf> on 26/ 1/ 2009.

⁷⁷ *Herald*, 16:5 (May 1985), p.44.

⁷⁸ General K.M. Arif, *op.cit.*, p.226.

⁷⁹ Feroz Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p.121.

The Pushtuns had their networks in Afghanistan, the NWFP and Karachi for trading in contraband and narcotics. The Mohajirs greatly resented their activities because these had promoted lawlessness and also because the Pushtuns were becoming financially strong apparently owing to the blessings of General Zia.⁸⁰ From January 1986 to August 1987 there were 242 reported incidents of riots in Karachi, many caused by minibus accidents run by the Pushtun transport mafia.⁸¹

In the first massive public meeting in Karachi, in 1986, the MQM chief Altaf Hussain made a passionate promise that he would unite the Mohajirs under the banner of MQM and get his community their due rights. From this year onwards MQM leaders made a mammoth show of mass public appeal through huge public meetings and demonstrations in Karachi and Hyderabad. In their 'fighting' for the rights of the Mohajirs, the MQM had clashed with nearly all major ethnic groups settled in urban Sindh. From 1984-87 the outbreaks of ethnic violence in Sindh were between Pushtuns and Mohajirs, not between Sindhis and Mohajirs.⁸² To protect the rights of Punjabis and Pushtuns in Sindh, Malik Ghulam Sarwar Awan founded Punjabi Pakhtoon Ittehad (PPI) in 1987 that challenged the MQM's presence in Karachi when ethnic tensions rose high.⁸³

By the mid-1980s, MQM had become a national political force and an organized platform for Mohajirs to articulate their fears about Karachi's rapid transformation and the deterioration of law and order. MQM swept polls in the municipal elections in Hyderabad and Karachi in 1987⁸⁴ and won absolute majority votes in urban Sindh (Karachi and Hyderabad).⁸⁵

After the Geneva Accords that led to the pull out of Soviet forces from Afghanistan, followed by the death of General Zia in 1988, ethnic violence continued in Sindh. In the same year political parties prepared for general elections scheduled for November 1988 on party basis. Zia's death and the coming elections deepened the Mohajir-Sindhi polarization. On 30 September 1988 around 250 people, mainly Mohajirs, were killed in Hyderabad by a dozen gunmen, allegedly led by

⁸⁰ Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, 'State, Society, and the Crisis of National Identity', Rasul Bakhsh Rais, *State, Society and Democratic Change in Pakistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1997), p.122.

⁸¹ James D. Fearon, David D. Laitin, *op.cit.*, Retrieved from <http://iicas.ucsd.edu/papers/GTCconf/soil11.pdf> on 26/1/2009.

⁸² Harry Goulbourne, *op.cit.*, p.233.

⁸³ *Daily Times*, Karachi: 23 December, 2006.

⁸⁴ Nichola Khan, *op.cit.*, p.41.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

Jiye Sindh leaders Qadir Magsi and Janu Arain. Hyderabad is the second largest city of Sindh.⁸⁶ In retaliation, on 1 October, Mohajir militants killed some 60 people, mostly Sindhis, in Karachi. Troops had to be deployed and the elites of both groups signed a pact to defuse the tensions.⁸⁷

The election campaign in Sindh acquired an ethnic character because of the suppressed feelings across the ethnic divide during Zia's period (1977-1988). The MQM contested in the election on the basis of Mohajir nationalism. In the November elections the PPP won 93 seats in the National Assembly out of 207 and emerged as the largest party. The MQM won 13 of Karachi's 15 seats and became the third largest party in Pakistan with the dependable electoral support of either the PPP or that of (Islami Jamhooro Ittehad) IJI. In the provincial elections, held on 19 November 1988, the PPP won 67 seats out of 100, mainly in areas that had a Sindhi majority while in the predominantly Mohajir constituencies the MQM won 26 seats and became the second largest party after PPP in Sindh.⁸⁸

Apparently realizing that peaceful coexistence was necessary, Altaf Hussain (MQM leader) and Benazir Bhutto (PPP Chairperson) entered into a working relationship which led to the formation of coalition government on 2 December 1988. They signed an accord that had 59 points, mainly about power sharing and jobs in Sindh. The accord was to be implemented over a five year period.⁸⁹ This accord however, could not stop the outbreak of riots in July 1989. The rioting broke out when Sindhi students belonging to the University of Karachi allegedly killed a few Mohajir student activists. This incident led to wide scale violence. There were battles between the police and Mohajir militants, attacks on Sindhi and Mohajir localities by gunmen belonging to the rival ethnic groups, and widespread incidents of arson and looting.⁹⁰

The coalition formed after much deliberation collapsed on 18 October 1989. The MQM ministers in the Sindh cabinet resigned

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ James D. Fearon, David D. Laitin, *Sons of the Soil, Immigrants and Civil War*, Stanford University, p.8, Retrieved from <http://iicas.ucsd.edu/papers/GTCconf/soil11.pdf> on 26/1/2009.

⁸⁸ Ishtiaq Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p.203.

⁸⁹ Irfan Ali, 'PPP-MQM never been good coalition partners in 20 years', *Daily Times*, Karachi, 14 April 2008. Reterived from http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008%5C04%5C14%5Cstory_14-4-2008_pg7_24

⁹⁰ James D. Fearon, David D. Laitin, *op. cit.*, Retrieved from <http://iicas.ucsd.edu/papers/GTCconf/soil11.pdf>, on 26/1/2009.

protesting against the alleged non-implementation of the accord.⁹¹ There were sporadic out breaks of ethnic violence in urban Sindh after these events. The ethnic exclusivism planted in the soil of Sindh during the 1980s took roots and could not be eradicated although General Zia was dead in August 1988.

The Mohajir problem revolves around the rural-urban constituencies of Sindh. The interests of both the constituencies run contrary to each other. Sindhis' discontentment is growing due to the Mohajir domination in urban areas and they want the domicile and quota system to stay to improve their social standing. The Mohajirs, on the other hand, perceive these as an impediment in their development and want them removed. The resultant grievances caused the Mohajir imbroglio to persist in Pakistan.⁹²

Conclusion

At the time of independence three provinces of Pakistan—East Pakistan, Punjab and Sindh—had borders with India so most of the immigrants settled in these provinces. Assimilation became easy for the immigrants of Bengal and Punjab owing to similar lingual and cultural background, but the migration to Sindh changed the demographic pattern of this province as the emigrants had different language and cultural context. The state should have taken corrective measures to establish ethnic harmony and mitigate the issues of natives as well as immigrants through unifying politics and by establishing administration of justice. Unfortunately the democratic institutions could not stabilize themselves in Pakistan. The politicians were sidelined by the bureaucrats and later on the military stepped in. Their narrow objectives required external support. Long periods of political instability and military rule in Pakistan paved the way for regional politics which finally led to the fall of Dhaka. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the first elected civilian prime minister of Pakistan, was from Sindh. In his period assertion of Sindhi nationalism bred feelings of dissatisfaction in the second majority group of Sindh. The civilian government was short lived; military rule prevailed again with severe imprints on the politics, society and economy of Pakistan. Zia initiated diversifying politics especially in Sindh. To undermine the strength of the PPP, and MQM was established and strengthened by the Zia's regime in the urban centres of Sindh. In the rural areas support was

⁹¹ Irfan Ali, *op.cit.*; Ishtiaq Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p.203, and Peter R. Blood, *op.cit.*, p.221.

⁹² Syed Ali Mujtaba, *Sounding on South Asia* (Berkshire: New Dawn Press Group, 2005), p.18.

given to nationalist parties. Although such tactics could not make much dent in the popularity of the People Party especially in rural Sindh, but the military regime was successful in making MQM the third largest political party of Pakistan. The political horizon since then has completely changed with sharpening ethnic and sectarian divides, militarizing society and worsening law and under situation, especially in a city like Karachi.