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# Early Phase of Electoral Politics in Pakistan: 1950s

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#### ABSTRACT

The electoral politics during the initial phase of Pakistan's political history had been turbulent to some extent. Extreme centralization and the predominant role played by the executive in the conduct of four provincial elections had been very important in the final outcome of the electoral exercise. In the provinces of Punjab, Sindh and N.W.F.P. state authority remained at the beck and call of the Muslim League leadership. The opposition was intimated and its members were subjected to various atrocities including incarceration and physical abuse. As a consequence, Muslim League managed to secure victory but it set an inevitable trend for the forthcoming generations.

In East Bengal, however, state authority could not do much and Jugtu Front swept the polls in 1954. In this paper, electoral politics in Pakistan is telescoped and the various anomalies and indiscretion committed during the provincial elections in the 1950's have been brought into focus.

KEY WORDS: Electoral Politics, Continent Assembly, Muslim Leagues, Political Parties, Elections.

Since its inception in 1947, Pakistan has experimented with myriad political systems (seven in all). All of them seemed to work but ephemerally. In none of those systems elections played a decisive role. Ironically for the initial nine years of Pakistan's political history (1947-1956), the parliamentary system was run without holding a single general election. The two National Parliaments were conjured into existence indirectly by the Provincial Assemblies. The first provincial elections were held in 1946 on a restricted franchise under the British Raj. After Partition of Indian Sub Continent, the elections for Provincial Assembly were held in 1951 in Punjab and North West Frontier Province, in 1953 in Sindh and in 1954 in East Bengal on the basis of adult franchise, forming the basis of the national legislature. The blatant indiscretion committed during the course of those elections by the power seekers forms the central theme of this chapter.

However, the central theme can not be fully addressed without alluding to the composition and the functioning of the most significant institution, Pakistan Constituent Assembly. Pakistan Constituent Assembly which also acted as a parliament drew legitimacy from the provincial elections held prior to Pakistan's creation. It had been groping with little success during all these years (1947-1956) for the political consensus between the divergent ethnic and cultural entities, considered sine qua-non for the constitution-making. The failure of the Constituent Assembly to forge unanimity among different factions resulted in a considerable delay in constitution-making. Hence, the government of Pakistan did not have the constitutional and legal frame work, necessary for holding of the general elections. With every passing day, the mutual misgivings and mistrust contributed to widen the gulf, making the task of constitution-making all the more difficult. One singularly important reason for the democracy, failing to strike roots in Pakistan can be attributed to the nonchalance of constituent assembly towards its first and foremost obligation, coming up with the Constitution. Thus shedding some light on the working of the Constituent Assembly can serve as a pertinent entry point for this chapter.

# **Constituent Assembly: An Inept Body**

The inaugural session of Pakistan's Constituent Assembly was convened in Karachi from 10 to 14 August 1947 with Jogender Nath Mandal, unanimously elected as a temporary Chairman on the first day of the session. Quaid-e-Azam being the solitary candidate proposed for the Presidency of the Constituent Assembly was elected as President on 11 August. (Choudhary, 1969: 27) Pakistan's Constituent Assembly (henceforth PCA) was a small body, "with never more than seventy five members and with an abnormally high rate of absenteeism", hence it ceased to be an institution of palpable consequence "either as a federal legislature or as a Constitution-making body" (Palmer; 179, in *Ibid*)<sup>1</sup>. The Assembly, as it is revealed by K. K. Aziz, deliberated on constitution making only for 16 days per annum on an average in seven years, as opposed to 33 days per annum on legislative work (Aziz, 1976: 86-87). Besides it lacked the requisite capacity to forge the consensus among the disparate components of a plural polity of Pakistan, a precondition to draw up an acceptable constitution. However, before Ghulam Muhammad, the all powerful Governor General sent PCA packing in 1954; it had supposedly made some headway by reaching agreement on most of the provisions of a draft constitution. PCA adopted Objective Resolution in March 1949 that had recommended a democratic political order, parliamentary and federal in form, pledged fundamental rights and social justice to all including the minorities. Representative of national and provincial fountain head assemblies elected by the people on the basis of adult franchise formed one of the core points of Objective Resolution's proposals. Its enunciation about Allah as a fountain head of sovereignty and ascribing central importance to his dictates while putting together the fundamental postulates and underpinning the constitutional frame work gave rise to the ideological ambivalence. No inference can be drawn from the speeches and the statements of Quaid-e-Azam alluding to any considerable length, any concrete plan ever delineated as to how the democratic polity on the principles of Islam would be constituted in Pakistan. However, the blue print of a West minister model of parliamentary democracy comes out quite explicitly from Quaid s articulations (Mujahid, 2001and Afzal, 1966)<sup>2</sup>. While giving interview to Mr. Doon Campbell, Reuter's Correspondent in New Delhi in 1946, Quaid said in no uncertain terms: "The new state would be a modern democratic state with sovereignty resting in the people and the members of the new nation having equal rights of citizenship regardless of their religion, caste or creed" (Munir, 1980:29).

Like any other legislature, the Constituent Assembly set up several committees and sub-committees with avowed task of framing constitution. Most important among them was the Basic Principles Committee which was appointed on 12 March 1949. Basic Principles Committee had twenty four members and "it was authorised to co-opt not more than ten members who need not to be members of the Constituent Assembly" (Choudhary, 29). One of the three sub-committees set up by the BPC was the 'Sub-Committee on franchise'3. The Interim Report of the Basic Principles Committee, based on the postulates put forward by the Objective Resolution was submitted to PCA in September 1950. Later on, in view of the intense furor, the Report engendered particularly in East Bengal, it was remodified and submitted again to PCA in December 1952. However, it took another almost two years when at the last session of PCA (before its dissolution); the Report was eventually adopted in September 1954. Immediately afterwards, the Drafting Committee was constituted, assisted by a British Constitutional expert, Sir Ivor Jennings, to draw up the draft Constitution, which came out in print but it was never made public or even put before the second Assembly for debate (Callard,).

Right after the dissolution of the PCA came to pass in October 1954, through the Governor General's proclamation a new Constituent Assembly was conjured into existence in May 1955, comprising of 80 members. The members were equally divided between the two wings (East Bengal and West Pakistan) and they were to be elected by the Provincial Assemblies through the system of proportional representation and by electoral colleges for Karachi and Baluchistan (Palmer: 179). It is important here to note that the members from Karachi were elected "by direct vote of the citizens of that city, on the basis of universal adult franchise" (*Ibid*: 179-180). Thus it was the first full exercise of the franchise by Pakistani citizens in voting for the national offices (*Ibid*, 180). Merely fourteen members from the previous Assembly could stage their come back after it was reconstituted.

# **Ascendancy of Non-Political Actors**

Eventually ignoring the will of the people, government comprising mostly of bureaucrats and army top brass called as cabinet of talents, took the task of framing the constitution in its own hands and presented its own draft to the newly constituted PCA in January 1956. That draft, though after a bit of deliberation and considerable debate, was adopted with a few amendments in February and came into effect on 23 March 1956. Until that time, the governance and administration was being run on adhoc basis on almost similar pattern, followed by the British after the promulgation of Government of India Act of 1935. Some amendments were made in that Act after the independence. Thus under section 8 of the Indian Independence Act, 1947, the Government of India Act, became with certain adaptations the working Constitution of Pakistan (Choudary, 32)<sup>4</sup>. Norman D. Palmer comments about Pakistan's political system during the first decade of its history which according to him "was closely modelled on the British system of parliamentary democracy, as modified by the more highly centralized and restrictive provisions of the Government of India Act of 1935" (Palmer, 180). The political system of the nascent state was radically modified rather mutilated by Jinnah's decision to accumulate all powers in his person as the Governor General, by the political instability and ascendancy of the non-political actors to the position of power. Yunas Samad maintains that 'thorny problems' confronting Pakistan necessitated Jinnah not only to opt for the position of a Governor General instead of a Prime Minister but also to embark on a policy of centralization (Samad, 1995: 127)<sup>5</sup>. Thus non-political actors namely bureaucracy and army had a good chance to 'over develop' themselves in a bid to bring about centralization in Pakistan. Hence people's voice got strangled from the very outset (Mitra, 1998)<sup>6</sup>. These agents of centralization even tried to influence the electoral out come as it would be demonstrated in the lines to follow.

However, before unpacking the exigent situation caused by the non-political actors with particular reference to the provincial elections, it would be appropriate to refer to the essential nature of the National and Provincial Assemblies during the early years of Pakistan's political history. So far as, the National Assembly was concerned, it had never been constituted by the direct election though the Provincial Assemblies had been elected by the direct popular vote. That pattern continued when elections were announced in the Punjab, NWFP, Sindh and Bengal which is the principal theme of the remaining part of the chapter.

The election held from 10 to 20 March 1951 in Punjab was the first post-independence electoral experience for the Punjab. These elections were scheduled in the wake of the dissolution of the Punjab Legislative Assembly in January 1949. In fact, there was a political wrangling between Nawab Iftikhar Hussain Khan Mamdot, the Premier of the Province and the cabinet member, Mian Mumtaz Muhammad Khan Daultana. Both of the rivals had locked their horns immediately after Pakistan came into being in order to secure the top position of power in the

province. Both of them hailed from prominent land lord families of the Punjab.

Iftikhar Mamdot (1906-1969) was son of Nawab Shah Nawaz Khan, the largest Muslim land owner of the East Punjab (District Ferozepore) before partition (Talbot, 2005: 428)<sup>7</sup>. Iftikhar succeeded his father as President of the Punjab Muslim League in 1943 after later's demise. After the elections of 1946, he was zealously active in anti-Khizar campaign. Iftikhar Mamdot had forged some nexus with middle class urbanites, influenced from the ideas and person of Iqbal. Ex ICS officer Khawja Abdul Rahim, Pir Ahsan Gillani and Hameed Nizami, the editor and founder of Urdu daily Nawa-i-Waqt were quite prominent among Mamdot's supporters.

After Pakistan came into existence Mamdot's intention to become Punjab's Prime Minister was realized. However, he could not last long enough as dissentions and disagreements complicated the political scenario in the Punjab. After Mian Iftikhar ud Din (1907-62) submitted his resignation for the cabinet, as he wanted to follow a discrepant course to settle refugees in the province, which Mamdot could hardly countenance, later's fall de grace became all the more imminent. Immediately afterwards, Mumtaz Daultana rose in revolt against Mamdot. The former too had a similar background as that of his political adversary, Iftikhar Mamdot.

Mumtaz Daultana hailed from, Luddan, Vehari (the then tehsil of district Multan) and son of a big land lord and Unionist stalwart, Khan Bahadur Mian Ahmed Yar Khan Daultana. Mumtaz Daultana had his support base firmly entrenched among the land lords of Multan, Sargodha and Rawalpindi districts including Nawab Sajjad Ali Khan, the brother of the then Prime Minister of Pakistan, Liaquat Ali Khan. Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan, the son of Sir Sikander Hayat Khan was also in Daultana's camp. Mumtaz Daultana was Oxford graduate and quite erudite with extra ordinary command over English, an excuse good enough for him to feel restless under a semi-educated Iftikhar Mamdot who although went to Lahore Aitchison College (famous as Chief's College) but could not go beyond school level. He rose to the position of eminence after the demise of his father on 6 August 1940. Thus he proved to be a worthy successor, demonstrated quite vividly by the services, he rendered for Punjab Muslim League in upstaging Khizar Hayat Khan. After Pakistan's creation, he became one of the four cabinet members in Mamdot's ministry (Choudhary, 1990:107)8 and was assigned the departments of Finance, Industry, Civil Supplies and Transport.

Regarding cleavage among the cabinet members that virtually snowballed into a crisis and even the intervention of Quad-e-Azam proved futile in resolving it, Ian Talbot contends that it was with respect to the rehabilitation of the refugees. According to him, Mamdot "increasingly clashed not only with Mian Iftikhar ud Din, but also Mian Mumtaz Daultana and Sardar Shaukat Hayat over the rehabilitation of the refugees. Liaquat eventually dismissed the feuding ministry in January 1949 and handed Punjab over to Governor's rule, in advance of fresh elections" (Talbot: 438). Talbot's assertion is quite lucid but too brief. He tends to

discount the personal ambition of Daultana to replace Mamdot at the top-slot of Punjab administration. The partisan role of Liaquat Ali Khan has also not been alluded to, in Talbot's analysis. Rafique Afzal also looks split occurring in the Punjab Muslim League within months of Pakistan's existence and as early as December 1947, Daultana complained that "cabinet decisions were often superseded by a shadow cabinet of the Nawab of Mamdot", (Afzal, 2002: 93). Hameed Nizami being the most prominent and also three civil servants. Tariq Ali also makes but a fleeting reference to Mamdot's exit from the most coveted office in the Punjab. He deems it sufficient to state about Mamdot "...Khan of Mamdot, a rich landlord who lost out in a faction fight with other landlords in the Muslim League, and had subsequently been removed as Chief Minister of Punjab in 1949" (Ali, 1970: 41). Yunas Samad furnishes a detailed account of the crisis situation in Punjab and detects Mamdot's resistance to the policy of centralization, sponsored by the Centre culminated into Mamdot's deposition from the premiership. Samad writes, "Liaquat had to remove Mamdot, if the centralizing process was to be successful in this crucial province. However, he lacked the means to intervene directly and interfered instead in the intra-party rivalry. He backed the attempt of his protégé, Daultana, to capture power" (Samad: 143-144). Furthermore, he picked up differences with Liaquat Ali and Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan regarding the settlement of the refugees that was yet another cause for his exit not only from the Premier's office but Mamdot had to step down from the Presidency of Punjab Muslim League in November 1948. Finally, he was ousted from Pakistan Muslim League. Samad alludes to Mamdot's defiance as the principal reason for his ouster from the office and the party, he reveals, "Mamdot refused to respond to the directives of the central executive and resisted all directives from Karachi. His defiance gained him some kudos since he stood out as the man who deified Quaid-e-Azam in favour of Punjab's autonomy" (Ibid: 144). Thus the inevitable happened on the 26th January 1949 (Choudhary, 1973: 198 and Khan, 1967: 48-49)<sup>9</sup>. Subsequently, Iftikhar Mamdot founded a new party by the name of Jinnah Muslim League and forged an alliance with Husain Shaheed Suharwardy (1893-1963), the founder-leader of Awami League. Thus Governor's rule was imposed under section 92-A of the adapted Government of India Act, 1935 (Choudhary, 1973: 369). On the first occasion on which normal constitutional process was set at rest, the central government issued the communiqué, spelling out the reasons for such a drastic measure that read:

"Public life has been demoralized by corruption and the discipline of the Services destroyed by intrigue. The administration has been carried on for the benefit of the few and little or no heed has been paid to the hopes and needs of the people. Many causes have contributed to this state of affairs, but in the Governor General's opinion, the main cause is the failure of the Members of the Legislative Assembly elected in different circumstances to rise to the greater

responsibility which Independence brings" (Ibid).

Subsequent to the dissolution of Punjab Assembly and dismissal of the Ministry, the Governor appointed 'a Committee known as the Elections Inquiry Committee Punjab' meant to:

- a) Re-visit provisions of law regarding voter's qualifications which might operate unfairly against the refugees
  - To make recommendations regarding the allocation of seats and the delimitation of constituencies as well as 'matters incidental there to, as may seem advisable in view of the great reduction in number of Hindus and Sikhs and the increase in the number of Muslims' (Hameed, 1953: 2) in Punjab. The Committee proposed adult suffrage as the basis of franchise and also delimitation of new constituencies for the provincial legislature. In view of new development consequent on the partition of Punjab, fresh electoral rules were framed. The duration of the Provincial Legislature was five years as it was laid down 'in the Section 61(2) of the Government of India Act, 1935 as adapted by the Pakistan (Provisional Constitution) Order, 1947, unless sooner dissolved, from the date appointed for the first meeting' (*Ibid.* 3-4). The authority of framing the electoral rules was vested in the Provincial Governor and the whole electoral procedure was supposed to be determined as provided in those rules.

### Law and Legislatures

The provincial legislature of Punjab consisted of 197 seats. The number of the constituencies of the Assembly is 153. 44 are out of them, were two-seat constituencies, with one seat in each reserved for refugees. The number of seats community wise, therefore was as follows:

Muslims	191
Pakistani Christians and Anglo	4
Pakistanis	4
General Community	1

There was one special seat for the Punjab University

District wise allocation of seats is as follows:

Corporation of the city of Lahore	10
Lahore Distt	9
Sialkot Distt	13
Gujranwala Distt	10
Sheikhupura Distt	10
Gujrat Distt	13
Shahpur Distt	12
Jehlum Distt	6

Rawalpindi Distt	8
Attock Distt	7
Mianwali Distt	6
Montgomery Distt	17
Lyallpur Distt	20
Jhang Distt	9
Multan Distt	20
Muzaffargarh Distt	8
Dera Ghazi Khan Distt	8
All these were Muslims seats	
Pakistani Christians and Anglo	
Pakistani	4
General	1
Muslim Women's Constituencies	
Inner Lahore	1
Outer Lahore	2
Multan City	1
Rawalpindi	1
University (Special Constituency)	

These constituencies had been created by the legislation through an Act of the Governor of the Punjab, when section 92-A of the Government of India Act, was in force in this Province, called 'The Punjab Legislative Assembly Elections Act, 1950' (*Ibid*,: 2-3).

In the elections for Punjab Legislature, besides minorities and independents, six parties in all participated namely Muslim League, Jinnah Awami Muslim League (it in fact came about as a result of a merger of Awami Muslim League and Jinnah Muslim League), Azad Pakistan Party, Jamaat-i Islami, Islam League and Communist Party. Muslim League won overwhelming majority, leaving its arch rival Jinnah Awami Muslim League way behind. Interestingly enough, however on March 30, Muslim League had the tally of 140 seats but the very next day it swelled to 153 and four months afterwards, it had 166 members (Afzal, 99). According to Dawn, Karachi, out of the total votes polled, Muslim League secured 52 percent, Independents came next by securing 23.7 percent of the total votes whereas the Jinnah Awami League clinched merely 18.3 percent votes. Azad Pakistan Party, Jamaat-i-Islami, Islam League and Communist Party bagged 2, 4.4, 0.4 and 0.1 percent votes respectively (*Dawn*, March 30, 1951 in *Ibid*).

The Party position in Punjab elections barring Muslim League.

Jinnah Awami Muslim League	32
Azad Pakistan Party	1
Jamaat-i-Islami	1

Islam League Communist Party -

Independents 17 (*Ibid*)

Rafique Afzal enumerates the factors contributing to the success of Muslim League. Despite the weakness having crept into its ranks, it still was the best organized part in contention. Then its image of the founder party was still fresh in the minds of many. Daultana, the leader of Punjab Muslim League proved to be the most capable of all the politicians vying for power. "He successfully weaned away the one-time supporters of Nawab Mamdot the Nawabzadas of Gujrat, the Sayyids of Jhang and the Sardars of Mazaffargarh and Dera Ghazi Khan" (Ibid, 98). He managed to do this, no less than a feat in spite of a quite radical manifesto of Punjab Muslim League, envisaging land reforms. Besides Jamiat al-Ulma-i Islam and Majlis -i-Ahrar were also wooed with remarkable adroitness. Quite conversely, the opposition parties were of recently founded and had disparate character. Leftist Azad Party and rightist Jamaat-i-Islami had virtually nothing in common, hence any political alliance or collaboration was not possible. Daultana countered leftist parties by appropriating their slogan of land reforms. Hence any distinction in the manifestos of the parties locked into power struggle could hardly be made. Liaquat Ali Khan's unflinching support to Daultana also was the cardinal factor that proved vital in later's electoral victory. Among other things, his broad cast speech to the nation divulging the existence of Rawalpindi conspiracy in synchrony with the election eve could not have been more timely. Fatima Jinnah, on the other hand, sided with Mamdot but of no avail (Choudahr, 1990: 172-176).

Muslim League's thumping victory, not with standing it was widely complained that these elections were nothing but "a farce, a mockery and a fraud upon the electorates" (Electoral Reform Commission Report, 1956: 1). One of the allegations was the delimitation of such pocket constituencies lacking "geographical compactness or homogeneity in other material particulars were carved out to suit the convenience and fortune of particular politicians" (Ibid). it was also alleged that bogus voters were registered on a colossal scale and they were made to vote under coercion or inducements of different sorts were deployed for the same purpose. Furthermore, wooden ballot boxes were 'forced open and clandestinely stuffed' (Ibid). Host of tricks were played upon the electorate, officials at the behest of the party in power like rejection of the nomination papers on the most flimsy grounds, kidnapping of the seconders, proposers or even rival candidates came in the press. Political opponents had been harassed or flung behind the bars on the concocted allegations. Calling them anti-Pakistan was the most common of such charges. Report of the Electoral Reforms Commission quoted a prominent member of Muslim League and former Member Legislative Assembly as saying, "In the general elections of 1951, more than 50 persons who were elected to Punjab Legislative Assembly, owed their success overwhelming to their very relationship with public servants" (Ahmad, 1970: 7). Lastly low turn out that did not go beyond 30 percent also indicated the voter's apathy towards the polls which was not a favourable reflection on the ruling party's performance.

# **Elections of NWFP Legislative Assembly**

North West Frontier Province had only a few similarities with Punjab though differences, having not only in its social and cultural ethos but also in its political history. The modern history of that region is marked by anti-colonial struggle by red-shirt movement, popularly known as Khudai Khidmatgar (servant of God), under the leadership of Abd al-Ghaffar Khan (1890-1988). His disciples used to wear uniforms, dyed with brick dust. The British thereafter called them 'red-shirts'. The method employed by Ghaffar Khan reflected a strong Gandhian influence and orientation. Thereby, he exhorted his followers to renounce violence, retaliation and revenge and devoted themselves to the service of humanity (Younus, 1942: 152).

In 1930, the massacre at Qissa-Khawni Bazaar, Peshawar at the hands of the British, served as catalyst for Ghaffar Khan to launch the campaign against colonial rulers. Hence, the movement that primarily aimed at social reform had turned political particularly after Indian National Congress adopted suraj (complete independence) as its goal in its Lahore session in 1929. Immediately afterwards, Ghaffar Khan by using his organizational skill, attracted a large following. Thereafter political activism of Red Shirt devotees of khan ensued, resulting eventually in his arrest along with his comrades. That development led to a peaceful demonstration, not countenanced by British authorities and indiscriminate firing was ordered with scores of demonstrators killed and injured. That tragedy could not dampen the spirit of the Red Shirt zealots. With in two years of its existence, Red Shirts had 200,000 members (Tendulkar, 1967: 49). Despite markedly different political orientation, Red Shirt leadership sent envoys to All India Muslim League but no affirmative response could transpire. As a consequence, they turned to Congress. Rafique Afzal reveals, "The Congress, on being approached, promised help provided the Red Shirts joined the Congress. They accepted this proposition, and adhered to the alliance, until the final break initiated by the Congress" (Ibid).

The organizational structure of the Red Shirts rested on village committees called jirgas, next was tappa, a committee for a group of villages. Then came tehsil and district committees and the supreme body was provincial jirga. The party had a volunteer corps superordinated by salar-i-azam, designated by Ghaffar Khan himself (*Ibid*, 50). Red Shirts or Khudai Khidmatgar Party entered into electoral politics, after they contested the provincial elections and pulled off an easy victory. So the formation of a Congress led Coalition Ministry, headed by Dr. Khan Sahib, Ghaffar Khan's brother, came about. That ministry resigned following the outbreak of Second World War in 1939, although civil disobedience

remained quite lack luster in NWFP except Mardan District. Dr. Khan Sahib's ministry with two years in office was "full of radical rhetoric and some 'liberal' policy measures, alienated the assorted sections of Pathan population, among them were big Khans, urban middle class and non-Pakhtun districts" (Waseem, 2007: 73). Subsequent to the resignation of Khan Sahib Ministry, these alienated sections became a staunch Muslim League constituency in the province. That changed scenario augured well for Muslim League and Jinnah with good measure of success pushed for a League Ministry under Aurang Zeb Khan obviously "by forming coalition and conceding ministerships to 'others' (Jalal, 1985: 113). That ministry as Mohammad Waseem puts it, "swam through the muddy waters of shifting alignments with great difficulty" (Waseem: 73), failed to plant its feet firmly on the ground. Muslim League's performance in 1946 elections was a clear testimony of its waning popularity in the province. Congress Ministry was formed again with Khan Sahib as the premier of NWFP. Muslim League, in those circumstances deployed the same strategy which had proven quite efficacious in Punjab against Khizar Ministry, street agitation, ideological rhetoric and search for malleable Muslim officers with in the provincial government. Khan Qayyum was put in charge of the civil disobedience movement against Khan Sahib.

However, given the different political and demographic context of NWFP vis a vis Punjab, Muslim League had to strive far harder to cultivate a support base for itself. Hindu-Muslim antagonism, a stark reality in Punjab on which Muslim League leadership capitalized in 1946-47, was conspicuously absent in that province. Hence, it took quite a while for Muslim League to win over local Pathans after they were "consistently exposed to Hindu-Muslim riots all over India" and "the alleged Muslim causalities such as on the Direct Action Day, 16 August 1946" (Ibid). Impact of that strategy obviously made tremendous difference as it was demonstrated by the outcome of referendum immediately after the Pakistan's creation. In that referendum, 289,244 votes came for Pakistan whereas 2,874 votes were for India. However, the complexity of the situation gets compounded if Ian Talbot's contention is put under consideration. He says that Ghaffar Khan asked his supporters to abstain from participating in the referendum, held in June 1947 as 'it did not include an option for Pushtunistan along with those for India and Pakistan' (Talbot,: 432). Same view is also advanced by Sri Prakash, the first Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan (Parkash, 1993: 163-164).

Muslim League had started exerting pressure on British Government urging for the dismissal of Khan Ministry but that demand did not yield any result. Hardly a week after the creation of Pakistan, the Governor dismissed the Khan Ministry under the instruction of Quaid-e-Azam. Why had it been deemed necessary to dismiss the Ministry when it still had majority in the Provincial Legislature, still is a loaded and controversial question? However, dealing with such a multi-layered question falls out of the purview of this study. Therefore, this writer hops on to the appraisal of Khan Qayyum's Ministry that succeeded Khan Sahib. Khan Qayyum Khan (1901-81) belonged to Chitral and had Kashmiri origin. Educated from

Aligarh and London School of Economics, Qayyum Khan started his political career in 1934 when he was elected unopposed as a member of Central Legislative Assembly and was elected, Deputy Leader of the Congress Assembly Party. He remained loyal to Congress and an admirer of Ghaffar Khan till 1945, when he changed his political loyalty and joined Muslim League.

Qayyum Ministry comprising of himself and Khan Abbas Khan was a minority government. Therefore, after being sworn in, first task of Qayyum was approaching budget. Having strength in the Assembly, it seemed extremely difficult to Muslim League to pass the budget. Besides that daunting task of passing the budget, Samad deciphers three problems of profound nature, confronting Qayyum's nascent Ministry:

- a) The strength of the popular Khudai Khidmatgars
- b) Opposition within the party and
- c) Emergence of Awami Muslim League (Samad, 147).

Immediately after assuming office, Qayyum set himself with the task of undermining Khudai Khidatgars and winning over their legislators, he managed to pass the budget. Mian Jaffar Shah once Ghaffar Khan's principal aide was "elevated to the cabinet in return for crossing the floor with six Red Shirt delegates and joining the Muslim League" (NAUS April 30, 1948 in Ibid). Cajoling and coercion was unleashed relentlessly against the supporters of Khan Brothers and it was made sure that the turn coats were not in short supply. Within six months, Khudai Khidmatgars were rendered absolutely spineless. By February 1948, they were left only with ten delegates in the Assembly. But the suffering for Ghaffar Khan and his adherents still had to continue with no end in sight. He was implicated in 'Hazara plot' and imprisoned along with 200 comrades. These arrests reduced the number of Red Shirt delegates only to four where as Khan Abdul Khan Swati joined Awami Muslim League. Hence, Oayyum had managed to take the sting out of Khudai Khidmatgar Party's tail. In 1950, Khudai Khidmatgars were banned along with other nineteen organizations by the provincial government.

New entrants (ex-Red Shirt delegates) in the fold of Muslim League, Qayyum's ascendancy, his assumption of seemingly absolute power and the displacement of the old guard from the positions of significance ruffled many and justifiably so. Representatives of old guard like Khan Ibrahim Khan of Jaghra and Muhammad Yusaf Khatak felt thwarted with such a dispensation in which Qayyum had acquired overriding influence, power and unequivocal support of Quaid-e-Azam. Friction within the party was at its peak when elections were announced, scheduled from December 8, 1951<sup>10</sup>. Jhagra-Khattak faction gathered enough number of delegates in the assembly to oust Qayyum's nominee, Badshah Gul. In order to avert that eventuality, Qayyum mobilised the state machinery and through 'cajoling, coaxing and threatening them' (Samad: 149).

Political dissentions also led to the formation of another party. When Quaid offered Qayyum Premiership of NWFP, "Pir of Manki Sharif was offended at

being passed over" (*Ibid*). It was then that Pir of Manki and Khan Ghulam Mohammad; the Khan of Lundkhar formed a separate party, the Awami Muslim League with Suhrawardy as its central leader. Later on, Pir of Zakori Sharif also joined them. That development proved quite exasperating for Qayyum and he retaliated to the situation with full fury and force. He banished Pir of Manki Sharif from NWFP and imprisoned nine stalwarts of Awami League.

In such extenuating circumstances for the opposition, the election campaign got under way. For them, hazards were countless and no redemption was in sight. They were nagged to the last limit. Aslam Khatak incensed over the situation, eventually withdrew from the elections with his two colleagues, allegedly, on account of official imperiousness and 'tampering of ballot boxes' by the administration (Afzal: 111)<sup>11</sup>. The nomination papers of 31 candidates of Jinnah Awami League candidates were rejected on 'frivolous grounds', whereas the papers of Muslim League candidates were accepted even if they were faulty (*Dawn*, November 10,15, 1951). Consequently, some Muslim League candidates won unopposed (*Ibid*)<sup>12</sup>. Central leadership of Awami Muslim League was not allowed to move freely to canvass. Restrictions on Suhrawardy and Pir of Manki Sharif were lifted only a fortnight before the polling day. Many of them were incarcerated. Even Qayyum himself admitted that there had been no less than 60 political prisoners and all of them, Red Shirts. He also admitted that 170 persons were prohibited from moving out of their thana limits (*Ibid*, November 6)

Like many instances in Pakistan's later history, those elections were also not contested on issues. Charges and counter-charges, statements and the rejoinders filled the whole atmosphere with acrimony. Muslim League leadership felt quite contented by coining such catch phrases and slogans like "vote for League is vote for progress" or "League victory is the defeat of Pakhtoonistan" (*Ibid.*, November 8, 1951). Similarly, the opposition had also nothing concrete on its agenda for the elections. It had neither any manifesto nor any programme to sell. All said and done, Muslim League secured a land slide victory in those elections. The Party position was as follows:

Total Seats	85
Muslim League	67
Jinnah Awami League	4
Independents	13
Non Muslims	1

With in a few days of the elections, the independents and the non-Muslim delegate also pledged their support to Muslim League. Khan Qayuum therefore, had weathered all storms coming his way, through the *Real Politik* which had its equal only in Machiavelli's Prince.

# **Elections of the Sindh Assembly**

Ever since Sindh was separated from Bombay Presidency in 1935, its political leaders had failed to evolve a required measure of mutual trust, pre-requisite for establishing a stable political order. Hence, Chaudhry Muhammad Ali seems justified when he complains about Sindh's notoriety 'for political instability produced by the shifting combinations of a number of groups' (Ali: 368) At the time of creation of Pakistan, Muslim League Ministry with Muhammad Ayub Khuhro(1901-80) (Khuhro, 1998)<sup>13</sup> as its parliamentary leader, was in the saddle. Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah had been the governor of province with whom Khuhro, the premier was not at good terms. Thus politics of Sindh was beset with two fold problems, the internal party conflicts within Sindh Muslim League and provincial government's odious relation with the centre. The issues like the settlement of the refugees, inadequate representation of Sindh in the constituent Assembly whereas it had no representation<sup>14</sup>. What so ever, estrangement between the centre and province had been caused in Liaquat Ali's cabinet, the controversy over Urdu-Sindhi added considerably to the animosity between centre and province. Sindhi, on the eve of partition was the official language and also the medium of instruction in state schools. Tariq Rehman states, "it was a subject of study at various levels in educational institutions. Above all, and what made it popular, was the fact that at the lower level of administration and the judiciary as well as in journalism, it was in demand. Thus someone who had acquired it could get jobs" (Rehman, 2002: 334-335).

However, migration on a massive scale from 1947 onwards changed the demographic profile of Sindh and also threatened the privileged position of Sindhis. The census of 1951 reveals that the migrant community constituted about 57 percent population of Karachi, 66.08 percent of Hyderabad, 54.26 percent of Sukkar and 68.42 percent of Mirpur Khas (*Ibid*). Hence, the migration had a profound impact in terms of not only politics but economy and culture (Ahmed, 1972: 10-17). Khuhro raised his voice against centre's policy to consign Sindhi language to the position of marginality.

The strained relationship exacerbated quite a few notches more, when Khuhro took on Jinnah on the question of jurisdiction over Karachi. On top of that in January 1948, the forced eviction of the non-Muslims came about, in that event the refugees from India and some of the civil servants resorted to loot, attack and even killed Sindh Hindus and Sikhs (Samad: 150). In such a state of affairs, Sindh government resolved to investigate the anomalous occurrence. Samad states, "The riots highlighted the precarious condition and insecurity of the central government. It demonstrated that it had no juridical control over the capital and was dependent on the goodwill of the Sindh government" (*Ibid*: 150-151). Realizing this, the federal government took a strong exception to the exercise of police force against its officers. In retaliation, Indian Act of 1935 was amended in February 1948, thereby bringing the offence perpetrated in Karachi under the jurisdiction of the

federal government. Besides, Khuhro was axed in April 'for his audacity in challenging Jinnah' (*Ibid*: 151).

Pir Illahi Bakhsh was the new parliamentary leader who formed the ministry on May 03 and a few days afterwards, the Constituent Assembly decided that Karachi would be administered by the central government (Afzal: 115). Sindhi was also substituted with Urdu as an official language which added acerbity to already strained relations between the province and the centre. The situation was aggravated when Sindh Muslim League demanded that at least 50 per cent of the province's import business should be in local hands and that the *waderas* should be fully protected (Samad, 151). That development was off course quite ominous for new premier who seemed to have caught up in a difficult situation.

Khuhro did not accept his dismissal lying down and reacted very sharply when he was proceeded against, by the centre under PRODA. In those circumstances, Khuhro played his cards in an adroit manner by championing the cause of Sindh vis-a-vis centre. Besides, he kept his control over the party despite loosing power. The provincial party council elected him president in December 1948. Only a few days afterwards, Pir Illahi Bakhsh was forced to step down as he was disqualified as a member of a legislative assembly. In fact "an election petition was filed against an assembly member, Qazi Muhammad Akbar. The decision on this, given in January 1949, not only disqualified Qazi Akbar for six years but also Pir Illahi Bakhsh" (Ibid: 116). Before that, another enquiry had already been instituted against later on grave charges under PRODA. Therefore, the responsibility of managing the affairs of Sindh had been thrusted on Yusuf Harun, an industrialist from Karachi. Ayub Khuhro was his eminence grise but immediately afterwards, he tried to break free from the clutches of Khuhro. Before anything to that effect could have transpired, Yusuf Harun himself had to quit the office as the Chief Court ruled on Khuhro's submission, that the tribunal constituted to try him under PRODA was ultra vires (Ahmed, 1967: 377-378). However, as the party president, he could not assume the office of the chief minister as per party constitution. Instead of becoming the chief minister, he opted to continue holding the presidentship of the party. Therefore, his handpicked Qazi Mohammad Fazl Allah formed the ministry (*Ibid*: 380).

So, Khuhro was in full control over the affair of the party. He was the reelected president of party, again in September 1950 and also became a chairman of newly constituted party organ, the Muslim League supervisory committee. It was constituted to supervise the functioning of the ministry. The importance of the committee was such that it could even hold the chief minister accountable over the working of his ministry. When in March 1951, Ayub Khuhro took over Chief Ministership and the supervisory committee was finished or abolished?

The smooth politics of Sindh could not last very long. The trouble rose again in December, 1951 when three cabinet members, namely Ghulam Ali Talpur, Ghulam Nabi Pathan and his former associate Qazi Fazl Allah had a row with Khuhro. Former had been supported by the central government; particularly

Federal Minister Abd al Sattar Pirzada was very active against Khuhro. He was once again proceeded against under PRODA. Charges and counter-charges ensued and power politics got muddled up. On December 18, Governor to resolve the matter asked Khuhro and Fazl Allah both to tender their resignations within twenty four hours (*Dawn*, 1953, January 27)<sup>15</sup>. Khuhro was also instructed to call the meeting of the parliamentary party with in three days. However, Khuhro declined to submit his resignation till new parliamentary leader was elected. Uncertainty continued unabated. When the parliamentary party met on December 26, he had lost the majority and Ghulam Ali Talpur was chosen as new parliamentary leader (Ibid., December 27, 1951). In such a situation when factionalism was rampant with centre-province striving hard to out-manoeuvre each other, Governor General directed the Governor of Sindh to dissolve the Provincial Assembly. Despite dissolution of the Legislative Assembly, Khuhro kept on calling shots in Sindh politics as he continued to hold on to the party presidentship of Sindh Muslim League. When elections to Sindh Assembly were announced to be held in May 1953, the differences between Khuhro and Sindh Muslim League Parliamentary Board, backed by the Pakistan Muslim League had fully taken effect. Oazi Fazl Allah was the Chairman of SMLPB whereas Khuhro, contrary to the instructions from the President of the central party, had branched off and Sindh Muslim League emerged as an independent body. Khuhro nominated his own candidates for the forth coming elections. Besides, Sindh Awami Mahaz, an alliance of four opposition parties, also contested elections under the leadership of G. M. Sayyid.

The manifestos of these three political parties were not markedly different from each other. "If there was any striking contrast at all, it was that while Sind League of M.A. Khuhro and Sind(h) Awami Mahaz of G.M.Sayyid stood for the abolition of jagirdari" (Ahmed, 10). The centrist Sindh Muslim League, however eschewed from making such a claim. The elections were primarily contested around personalities.

The election was to be held on 111 seats of the Provincial Assembly. Sindh Muslim League put up 92 candidates whereas Sindh Muslim League of Khuhro fielded 55 and the Sindh Awami Mahaz 51 candidates. Besides these political parties, 137 Muslims including 4 women and 43 minority candidates contested the elections as independent candidates. Party position in those elections was as follows (Afzal, 122).

Muslim League 78 Sindh Muslim League 7 Sindh Awami Mahaz 7

Independents 19 (including 10 non-Muslims)

The election campaign failed to evoke any enthusiastic response from the masses. The participation on the part of the general public remained quite tepid.

"All sorts of fraud, deceit and hooliganism were alleged to have been employed during the election." (Ahmed, 11) Those elections therefore were the travesty of the electoral process. The Report of the Electoral Reforms Commission, headed by the judge of the superior court in 1955 corroborates the above statement. The Report lamented that the elections had very badly shaken people's faith in democracy and given rise to

...feelings of frustration and despondency chiefly on account of the alleged mal-practices perpetuated and under hand tactics used, during the elections held on the basis of adult franchise in 1951, in most the regions now constituting the province of West Pakistan. These elections were a farce, a mockery and a fraud upon the electorate (Authors Italics). It was alleged that pocket constituencies lacking in Geographical compactness or homogeneity in other material particulars were carved out to suit the convenience and fortune of particular politicians. It was maintained that persons on a large scale were purposely registered as bogus voters in electoral rolls and made to vote under undue influence, coercion and inducements of all sorts. Ballot boxes were surreptitiously forced open and clandestinely stuffed. Officials at the bidding of the party in power interfered with the free exercise of the ballot and that hosts of tricks were played upon the electorate. Rival candidates were kidnapped; political opponents were harassed and thrown behind bars on the pretext of their being dangerous to the state.... Illegal tactics constituted a blot on the fair name of democracy.... And created serious doubts and fears in the minds of the general public as to the fate of democracy in Pakistan (Choudary, 1974: 106-107).

# **Elections for Bengal Assembly**

East Bengali populace was comparatively better equipped with the 'enhanced political consciousness' than the other provinces constituting Pakistan. Mohammad Waseem while drawing on Wayne Wilcox's postulates refers to three factors, differentiating East Bengal from the Western part of the country. Quaide-Azam's initiative, in Waseem's contention, to mobilize the Muslim Bengali peasantry primarily to off set the pro-Congress urban intelligentsia, vying to form a ministry at Calcutta, was crucial. On the eve of independence, the exodus of Hindu landlords allowed far more political space to the peasants than it was the case in Punjab or for that matter in Sindh. In East Bengal, therefore, no intervening role of the landed lords facilitated the rural masses to be the part of the mainstream politics. Second factor setting East Bengal apart from West Pakistan, was the

secularist orientation of the Bengali urban bourgeois, it was concerned more with the issues than ideology. Three towering personalities with their respective support bases among the rural as well as the urban professional classes constituted the third factor. These three personalities were A.K. Fazlul Haq known for his oratorical panache, Hussein Shaheed Suhrawardy and Maulana Abdul Hamid Bhashani. Rafique Afzal also includes Nazim al Din among those persons who could make the difference in the political climate of East Bengal (Afzal, 123-125). Nazim al Din's ascendancy became possible at the detriment of Suhrawardy because the later, in cahoots with Sarat Chandra Bose, strived for Independent Bengal and loosing as a consequence, lost the sympathies of All India Muslim League leadership. Subsequently, he joined hands with Bhashani and formed Awami Muslim League in 1959 and spearheaded the opposition against provincial as well as central governments. All these developments coincided with the increasing unpopularity of the Dacca government, demonstrated by "the humiliating defeat of a Muslim League candidate in a by-election for the East Bengal Assembly in March 1949, no by-elections were held for years" (Waseem, 256). At the time of the announcement for 1954 elections, there were 34 seats vacant.

Bengali sub-nationalism acquired vigour and popular support in a circumstance of all pervasive policy of centralization, zestfully pursued by non-political actors, an argument that Samad puts forwards quite cogently. The language controversy resulting in a police firing on the demonstrations on 20 February 1952 created a fissure within already culturally fractured polity of Pakistan. Earlier the pleadings of Tamaddun Majlis, an organization put together by the teachers of Dacca University fell on the deaf ears of the central government when it "demanded that Bengali should be the language of the provincial administration and courts, the medium of instruction in the schools and one of the official state languages along side Urdu" (Samad: 154). Even Nazim al Din acceded to the 'central demands of the State Language Action Committee' on 1 March 1948 but Quaid-e-Azam immediately repudiated it and unequivocally espoused Urdu as the state language (*Ibid*).

Division with in the ranks of Muslim League became quite apparent when the Interim Report was published. Akram Khan, the president of Bengal Muslim League dissented though covertly from the party line when he "issued secret instructions to his paper *Azad* to fight the constitutional proposals" (*Ibid*: 155). When Prime Minister Nazim al Din asserted that Urdu would be the national language in a public speech not deliberating on the repercussion it could engender, the resentment among the Bengali bourgeoisie mounted<sup>16</sup>.

In the sphere of economy, the grievances of East Bengali populace mostly emanated from the centralization of the all financial and economic policy decisions. Even the jute board comprised of non-Bengalis to the utter chagrin of the East Bengalis. Jute Board was headed by Ghulam Farooq, Secretary Industries, who along with M.A. Ispahani, virtually ran the economy of the province and

centre exerted direct control over the economic policy and planning. Centre had the control over transport and communications and "its recommendation on the jute acreage indirectly affected the acreage of the rice crop and consequently its price. When Nurul Amin (Chief Minister) protested to Farooq that his ministry had not been consulted on the jute policy, he was brusquely informed that the Government of East Bengal had nothing to do with it" (Samad, 153-154). Another contested area was industrial planning which was the central subject and central government did not allow the Chief Minister of the East Bengal to establish jute and paper mills, despite the fact that jute was the biggest source of foreign exchange. In these circumstances, the Provincial Commerce Minister, Hamid ul Haque Chaudhry tendered his resignation in protest as the central government disproved of his attempts like

- i) Float a loan in East Bengal
- ii) Retain industries in provincial jurisdiction
- iii) Share Income tax revenues with the Centre (Banerjee, 1969: 258).

Regarding the allocation of resources for developmental projects and licensing imports and exports, the Central government policy did not favour the Eastern wing. The policy of setting aside the funds for development projects and licensing imports and exports was dictated by the needs and requirements of each province. Hence, the financial assistance East Bengal received from the centre between 1947 and 1954, mounted to far less than that allocated to the West wing (Lambert, 1959: 53).

The figures for the period (1947-54) were:

West Pal	West Pakistan East Pakistan		xistan
	Rs. (Millions)		Rs. (Millions)
Financial assistance	1,260	Financial assistance	10,000
Capital expenditure	620	Capital expenditure	2,100
Grants-in-aid	180	Grants-in-aid	540
Educational grants	240	Educational grants	1,530
Foreign aid allotted	150	Foreign aid allotted	730
Defense expenditure	100	Defense expenditure	4,650
Foreign trade (exports)	4,940	Foreign trade (exports)	4,830
Foreign trade (imports)	2,580	Foreign trade (imports)	6,220

Other development that needs to be mentioned here, is the emergence of plethora of political parties other than Awami League in East Bengal during 1952-53. In fact, anticipation of the provincial elections scheduled for February 1954, triggered intense political activity resulting in the proliferation of new political parties (Afzal: 189)<sup>17</sup>.

Ganatantri Dal was one of the prominent parties among them that emerged on the political landscape of East Bengal on 19 January 1953, at a convention of political workers. Within a year, it attained a consider measure of maturity, with Mahmud

Ali, a former general secretary of the Assam Muslim Students Federation being its founder and a Kisan leader Haji Muhammad Danish being former's eminence grise. A five page manifesto of Ganatantri Dal called for abolition of feudalism by nationalizing big land holdings without any compensation, release of political prisoners, according Bangla the status of a national language, nationalization of Jute trade and independent foreign policy instead of accepting the over lordship of USA in that realm ( The Dawn January 20, 1953). Krishak Sramik Party (Peasant-Worker Party) was another important political entity with leftist leaning, a legatee of Krishak Praja Party it was set up by Fazl al Haq in 1927. Fazl al Haq fell out with Muslim League top leadership in 1940s and ever since he was in the opposition. Its nomenclature was changed from the Krishak Praja to Krishak Sramik Party on 27 July 1953. Krishak Saramik Party had a ten-point manifesto. Bangla as the national language, release of political prisoners, autonomy on the basis of Pakistan Resolution and reorientation of the education system were the important features of the manifesto. KSP also reserved a space for religion in its programme, amply demonstrated by its readiness to cooperate with Nizam-i-Islam Party or other ulema organizations (Ibid, July 30, 1958).

Nizam-i-Islam Party took its birth out of Jami'at al Ulema-I Islam, provincial party's President Maulana Athar Ali being its leader. That party vociferously espoused the Islamic code to be adopted. However, in the matters pertaining to language and provincial autonomy its position was no different from other opposition parties from Eastern Bengal. Khilafat-i Rabbani Party was founded on 21 April, 1952 but it was formally established in September next year in Dacca. Former General Secretary of Bengal Muslim League Abul Hashim was its President. It had twelve point party programme, quite similar to the manifesto of Nizam-i-Islam Party. It called for the promulgation of Islamic principles in Pakistan and the adoption of Bangla as one of the national languages. It also espoused for the regional autonomy as it had been envisaged in Pakistan Resolution.

In the provincial elections, however, all these parties contested from a single platform, the United Front. East Pakistan Awami Muslim League was the principal motivating force from all the opposition parties to come together and to form an electoral alliance. It was also a party with widest organizational base with its 41 agenda. However, defeating Muslim League single handedly was supposedly a tall order for even Awami League. Other parties too had the same realization, "by contesting elections on separate platforms, they would dissipate each other's resources and thus pave the way for a Muslim League victory" (Afzal: 193).

Hence Ganatantri Dal leadership took the lead and floated the idea of forging a United Front. But odds were many, more conspicuous among them had been two. Firstly, the personality differences between the top leaders of the major parties like Fazl al Haq, Suhrawardy, Bhashani and Maulana Athar Ali. Secondly, the ideological differences between the parties like Ganatantri Dal and Nizam-i-Islam Party. So the successful culmination of the United Front called for an extra ordinary measure of political sagacity and insight from the politicians of East Bengal. Besides the public pressure too was an important factor that eventually nudged them into a political embrace with twenty one-point programme (Ahmed: 15)<sup>18</sup>. In this regard, the students were the most prominent. A group of students held a sit-in demonstration before all major leaders in a bid to secure their signature on a 'demand letter' pleading for united front of opposition parties (Afzal, 194). All said and done the alliance was announced formally in December 1953.

Despite alliance was struck, United Front did not having a smooth sailing in run up to the elections. Disunity was its essential feature, from the very outset as the allies failed to rise above their incompatible interests. Disparate nature of the United Front was starkly exemplified over the selection of the candidates. Differences between Awami Muslim League and Krishak Sramik Party over candidates pointed to the existing uneasiness among the coalition partners. Similarly, Nizam-i-Islam Party too had severe reservation over the inclusion of some 21 people of whom it did not approve. Sizable number of candidates belonging to jantantri dal and Nizam-e-Islam party virtually contested elections against the candidates sponsored by the United Front itself. Despite these problems United Front's popularity in East Bengal totally unnerved the Muslim League top leadership. Therefore, Muslim League government postponed the election date from February 16<sup>th</sup> to March 10. However, this change of date worked to the advantage of the united front instead of the Muslim League.

Some other parties also took part in the elections like, The Pakistan National Congress Party, The Communist Party, The Revolutionary Socialist Party, Minorities United Front, Pakistan Scheduled Castes Federation and the Pakistan's Minorities League.

The total number of candidates who contested the elections was about 1285, the Muslim League 237, United Front 233, Pakistan National Congress Party 40, Communist Party 9, Khilafat-i-Rabbani Party 10, Minorities United Front 19 and the Pakistan Scheduled Castes Federation 19. About 20 million voters exercised their right to caste vote to elect 309 members of the Provincial Legislative Assembly.

The United Front secured 64% of the votes and swept the elections. Whereas Muslim League was put to a rout and even Chief Minister of East Bengal Nur-Al-Amin was defeated by a student leader.

The distribution of 237 Muslim seats on April 4, 1954, stood as follows:

United Front	223
KhRP	1
Muslim League	10
Independents	3

The respective strength of the parties within the United Front is furnished bellow:

EPAML	143
KSP	48
NIP	19
GD	13

A minority United Front, the GD and CPEP the Pakistan National Congress and Scheduled Castes Federation contested for 72 non-Muslim seats. The election result was as follows.

Pakistan National Congress	24
Scheduled Castes Federation	27
United Front (Minority)	10
GD	03
CPEP	04
Christian	01
Buddhist	02
Independent (Caste Hindu)	01

These election results betrayed on one hand, the political sagacity of the Bengali politicians and on the other, the ineptness of Muslim League Leadership. Despite dissenting voices being raised every now and then, United Front top brass did let the alliance dissolve till not only the elections but even afterwards. Another measure of their maturity was their issue-oriented approach as against the personality-centred *modus operandi* of the Leaguers. The issue oriented approach signified the rise of Bengali nationalism, which emerged, as argued earlier, because of the acute feeling of political alienation, economic subjugation and indifference meted out to the Bengali cultural peculiarities. In such a circumstance even visit of the figures like Fatima Jinnah and Agha Khan, the Ismaeli spiritual leader failed to stem the anti-Muslim League wave in East Bengal.

These elections heralded an era of the rise of Bengali nationalism in East Bengal which had secessionist overtures. However, the central leaders and particularly the non-political forces, instead of accommodating the regional nationalism and absorbing it into a larger nationalism, they deployed coercive means to muzzle it, which proved counter productive.

#### **Notes**

- The first constituent Assembly originally consisted of sixty-nine members; subsequently the number of members was increased to seventy-four. The States of Bahawalpur, Khairpur and Baluchistan and the tribal areas were given additional seats on their accession to Pakistan.
- 2. Mujahid's assertion signifies Islam as "a comprehensive weltanschauung that embraces the social, political and cultural aspects of human behaviour and endeavour." However, Prof.Mujahid has not provided us any blue print of the allencompassing system that Islam professes nor has he referred to any lived illustration of any polity built on the principles of Islam. For the speeches of Quaid-e-Azam, see Muhammed Rafique Afzal, (Eds.). (1966). Selected Speeches and Statements of Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan. It would not be out of place to mention here that the outline of a full fledge system, encompassing the social, political and cultural aspects can not be delineated in speeches and statements. Such an endeavour needs a comprehensive and well thought out document.
- 3. The other two committees were a) Sub-committee on federal and provincial Constitutions and distribution of powers and b) Sub-committee on the Judiciary.
- 4. The Pakistan (Provisional Constitution) Order,1947, established the 'Federation of Pakistan' which included: (1) the four provinces of East Bengal, West Punjab, Sind and North West Frontier Province; (2) Baluchistan; (3) any other areas that might be included therein; (4) the Capital of the Federation, Karachi; and (5) such Indian States as might accede to the Federation.."
- 5. Samad maintains by citing NAP, QAP, F10/51-54, 'The Organization of the Pakistan Government by Liaquat Ali Khan', 6 July 1947 "In July 1947, Liaquat at Jinnah's behest prepared the blue print for the establishment of a highly integrated state along the recommendations of the Rowlands Report on the Bengal Administration. The proposals followed the pattern of White hall and rejected the federal features formally adopted by the Indian Government."
- For detail on the role of bureaucracy and army in the centralization process, see Hamza Alvi, 'Authoritarianism and Legitimation of State Power in Pakistan'., in S. Mitra, (Eds.). (1998). The Post Colonial State in Asia. Lahore: Sang e Meel Publications.
- For biographical sketch of Iftikhar Mamdot see Ian Talbot, (2005). Pakistan: A Modern History. London.
- 8. Shaukat Hayat Khan was put in charge of Revenue, Forests, Power, Irrigation and Animal Husbandry. Sheikh Karamat Ali was another member of the cabinet with the portfolios of Education, Local Bodies, Buildings and Health. Karamat Ali came from Sheikhupura and was middle ranking lawyer by profession. After a month on 19 September, another minister Mian Iftikhar ud Din took oath and he was assigned the department of Rehabilitation of Refugees.
- 9. Chaudhry Muhammad Ali narrates the events preceding Mamdot's removal from the office in the following words, "The Punjab cabinet, instead of working as a united team, presented a spectacle of petty squabbles, sordid intrigues, and all the other accompaniments of an internecine war between fractions. The highly ambitious Finance Chief Minister, Mumtaz Daultana, was ranged against the slow and easy-going Chief Minister, the Khan of Mamdot. The Muslim League party in the legislature was split. High officials started taking sides. In April, 1948, Quaid-e-Azam summoned Mamdot, Daultana and Shaukat Hayat Khan, the Revenue Minister, to Karachi to sort out the ministerial tangle but even he threw up his hands in disgust. Soon afterward, Daultana and Shaukat Hayat Khan resigned and Mamdot formed his second ministry. After the death of Quaid-e-Azam, when there was a sense of national emergency, a move was made by the

central government to bring about unity in the Punjab. Mamdot agreed to include Daultana and Feroze Khan Noon in the cabinet, but they could be sworn in, a fresh dispute broke out. The quarrel was intensified when, in November, Daultana was elected President of the West Punjab provincial Muslim League. Finally, in the beginning of 1949, the ministry was dismissed; the Punjab Legislative Assembly was dissolved." Similarly Ayub Khan states with respect to Liaquat Ali Khan, "I believe, he was advised that if he could get a majority in the provinces, he would then be able to establish a majority at the centre. His position was considerably weakened by the political situation in Punjab. Liaqat Ali Khan had decided to support Mian Mumtaz Daultana who was the then Chief Minister, as against the Nawab of Mamdot. A PRODA case was filed against the Nawab of Mamdot for certain irregulations. All this was played up by the Press and a hostile atmosphere was built up against Liaqat Ali Khan.

- The previous Legislative Assembly was dissolved on March 10, 1951 and Qayyum Khan was nominated as the caretaker Chief Minister until the elections.
- 11. In protest against this, and the alleged use of official machinery by Qayyum Khan, 112 opposition candidates, including the president of the Jinnah League, Pir manki, withdrew their nomination papers. Pir Manki was ordered not to enter the province with the exception of the districts of Peshawar, Bannu, Dera Ismael Khan and Hazara.
- 12. Qayyum Khan himself won by default. The nomination papers of his two opponents were rejected on technical grounds.
- 13. He belonged to a Landowning family of Larkana district. He started his political career as a member of Bombay Legislative council in the mid 1920s. He had been an avid supporter of Sindh's separation from Bombay. In 1937, he joined Sindh Muslim League and in 1940, he was made minister. In 1943, he became President of Sindh Muslim League. In 1947-48, he was Premier of Sindh. From 1947-54, Khuhro was the centre of political intrigue. Later on, he served as the Minister of Defense at the centre in Firoze Khan Noon's cabinet. During Ayub Khan's regime, he was banned under EBDO. He tried to stage his come back into politics but remained unsuccessful as he lost 1970 elections.
- 14. Of sixty nine members in the constituent assembly, only four belonged to Sindh.
- 15. Both of them were found guilty and Khuhro was disqualified for six years and Fall Allah for four years. .
- 16. That speech was made at a provincial Muslim League conference, convened by the Serajganj District Muslim League. Prime Minister came for inauguration and made the fateful remarks about Urdu, becoming *lingua franca* of Pakistan resulting in the language demonstrations and police firing.
- 17. 'The life of the East Pakistan Legislative Assembly, elected in 1947 and scheduled to expire in 1951, was first extended to 1952, and then till 1953. Thereafter, another extension till 1954 was granted to it by the Constituent Assembly.'
- 18. The twenty-one point programme dealt with many aspects of political, social and economic life. For example, constitution and fundamental rights, planning and development, industry and commerce, rehabilitation of, refugees, education, administration, safeguards of democracy etc. However, the most significant points were abolition of landlordism without compensation, nationalisation of jute industry, recognition of Bengali as one of the state languages, limitation of the powers of the central government only to defence, foreign affairs and currency, and provincial autonomy.

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