The Issue of Ethnicity in Pakistan: Historical Background

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This article envisages the theoretical parameters of ethnicity. This study seeks to analyze the meaning of ethnicity, discuss its structural basis and its evolution as a political concept. Ethnicity implies the sense of belonging together as a cultural group in a given society. It is a complex combination of racial, cultural and historical characteristics by which people differentiate themselves from other groups. The term 'ethnicity' may be defined as 'the self-consciousness of a group of people united by shared experiences' i.e. language common religion, economic and political interests etc. The problems of ethnicity in a heterogeneous society are investigated in this study. This article also examines the concept of ethno-nationalism from a historical and analytical perspective. This article envisages the historical analysis of ethno-national movements in Pakistan.

Factors Contributing to Ethnicity

A number of factors can be identified as the causes of growing ethnic conflicts all over the world.

1. Economic Disparities

In a heterogeneous society, economic disparities strengthen ethnic identities. The minority groups feel themselves threatened by the dominant groups in terms of culture and ethnicity. These feelings are intensified in the absence of socio-economic justice. Socio–economic injustice (for example, the denial of fundamental rights or the neglect of economic rights such as access to adequate food and housing) fosters ethnic conflicts. Brown (1996) analyzes the economic factors of intra state conflicts. When the state fails to protect an individual's rights and liberties, and to maintain equitable opportunities among various groups, marginal identities tend to perceive state institutions and laws as unjust or oppressive. This situation is further aggravated when some ethnic groups are not drawn into mainstream politics by the state. It increases their isolation from the state structure and creates ethnic conflicts. The ethnic groups can also tend to violence, if the situation persists as the marginalized groups take violence as the only way to vent their grievances.

Therefore socio-economic injustice develops the feelings of alienation and deprivation among the marginalized ethnic groups. This sense of alienation generates conflicts and issues in the society and leads to the demand for political autonomy.

In short, ethnic conflicts are closely related to divergent and uneven levels of economic development. In this situation, ethnic groups complain of or make demands for a change in the distributive system. If a group of people or some minority in a state is deprived of its due share and suppressed economically then this difference leads towards ethnic tension. Economic disparities result into the social bifurcation and fragmentation of society. They exacerbate ethnic differences. In relation to this, Yiftachel (1997) explains that in heterogeneous societies, the unfair distribution of state resources hatch ethnic conflicts, and causes the marginalized ethnic groups to protest for the protection of their regional economic interests. They claim that they are

entitled to maximize their economic benefits from national resources. They also demand autonomy to achieve their group interests. On the other hand, the dominant groups develop a feeling of satisfaction and perceive the state structure to be congruent.

Here the role of the state becomes more pronounced. When the state cannot meet the aspirations of the diverse groups due to meagre resources then the ethnic conflicts easily develop.

2. Problems of Modernization and Competition for Scarce Resources

There is another aspect that needs to be taken into account while analyzing the causes of ethnic conflict. Today modernization is taking place all over the world. As a result of modernization, uneven levels of development exist. Discrimination in terms of development and sharing of benefits among ethnic groups creates disequilibrium in a society. In this situation, underprivileged ethnic groups may develop a perception of relative deprivation.

Figure: 1 Relative deprivation.

Relative Deprivation of Ethnic Groups

Discrepancy Between

What they deserve   What they receive
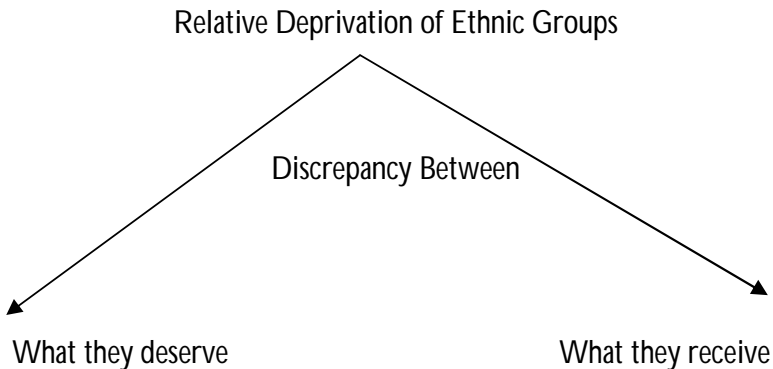
Relative deprivation (dissatisfaction among people due to economic disparities when they feel that they have less than their peers) becomes an important variable upon which ethnic groups get the momentum to agitate. Ted Gurr has defined relative deprivation as "a gap between the expectations and perceived capabilities of a group vis-à-vis their economic situation, political power and social status in relation to others." (as cited in Ahmed, 1996, pp. 68-72).

The idea of relative deprivation also helps to explain the phenomenon of political mobilization of economically and politically underprivileged groups. Uneven development generates psychological frustration among the people at the peripheries.

Moreover, the process of modernization has improved communication throughout the world. It has also increased pressure on resources due to population growth, resulting in a sense of economic insecurity among indigenous groups. Newman (1991) has quoted Connor, claiming that modernization integrated diverse ethnic groups which led to an escalation in ethnic conflicts.

Kunovich & Hodson (2002) quote scholars of 'ethnic competition theory' and 'ethnic segregation theory'. These scholars assert that modernization does not reduce ethnic conflicts; rather, it promotes inequalities and competition among ethnic groups. For this reason, they criticize the concept of a 'melting pot' which explains that modernization is a process which diminishes ethnic differences.

This paper argues that modernization increases rather than decreases ethnic conflicts in developing societies. Ethnicity re-emerges as a vital principle of identity. It cannot be suppressed in the name of a professed modernization.

3. Historical & Cultural Factors

Historical and cultural factors are very significant with regard to ethnic conflicts, especially in the context of Third World states that are heterogeneous in nature. Ethnicity is also commonly tied to territory. Sometimes alterations in territorial boundaries can lead to significant changes in ethnic identities. Ethnic groups can fuse or split apart: such processes may combine primordial sentiments. Colonial powers exploited caste, racial, linguistic and religious differences among indigenous people of African and Asian countries to perpetuate their rule. The imperial policies of the colonial powers have politicized ethnic groups in many colonies. This has been a divisive factor in the Third World.

Religious and linguistic diversities are a common feature in these countries i.e. majority – minority language issues, the question of national – official language, religious cleavages are a common phenomenon. Smaller cultural entities feel threatened by the domination of larger ethnic groups. The submergence and marginalization of smaller groups create ethnic tensions in society. Several ethnic conflicts have raged around the world due to religious differences. Religious identities are commonly transformed over time into ethnic identities. Varshney (2003) discusses the cultural factors of ethnicity, writing that traditions, customs and religion are not merely responsible for conflicts but actually reflect the relationship between the dominant culture and the subordinate culture, which generates ethnic conflicts in developing heterogeneous societies. Those ethnic groups who claim to be the 'sons of soil' deserve more political and economic opportunities. When their rights are subverted by other groups then ethnic conflicts occur.

4. Demographic Factor

Ethnic problems emerge not only due to socio-economic processes but also due to demographic changes (migration, assimilation, etc.). Large-scale migrations within the state

contribute to ethnic conflicts. Inter-state migrations also create problems of assimilation. In this way, ethnic conflict starts between local people and outsiders gradually. As Eriksen (1993) describes, when migrants come into contact with people of a distinct culture, traditions and identities, both the groups (migrants and locals) endeavor to retain their hold in the power structure of the state. This situation leads towards ethnic discrepancies in most developing heterogeneous societies.

5. Political Factors

Political factors are also responsible for ethnic conflicts. Political turbulence ensues when all ethnic groups do not get due representation in the power structure and decision making process of the state. In this situation ethnic groups tend to identify themselves on the bases of their respective regions. The elite also mobilizes ethnic groups for political purposes, reshape their identities and even form new ethnic groups and nations. Although the concept of the modern nation-state is a material force, its legitimacy depends on its claim to represent a nation. The modern nation state is comprised of diverse ethnic communities especially in the postcolonial era, which is why it has to face the challenges of ethno-nationalist movements when the political aspirations of nations are not accommodated by the state.

States adopting strong assimilationist policies may become a cause for the resistance from those ethnic groups who are not willing to surrender their ethnic identities. Ethnic groups may also endeavor to seek more political power to protect their political and economic interests. Sometimes, smaller ethnic groups feel that their socio-cultural identities are being merged into state-centric national identities because of fewer opportunities in the state structure. This shapes their disposition towards the polity. They perceive themselves to be alienated from the overall political process and state institutions, and become more indifferent towards the polity. Consequently, the socio-cultural identities of

these groups provide the bases for political mobilization. It becomes a serious threat to national solidarity and creates the problem of social divisiveness. It also impedes the path to national integration, resulting in ethnic conflict.

6. External Factors

External influences can also generate ethnic conflicts. Stavenhagen (1998) argues that sometimes ethnic groups get ideological and financial support from external actors.

History is full of examples of countries with outside interests, and cases of interference in the ethnic issues of other countries. In the post-World War I period, several treaties were signed between states regarding the protection of each other's national minorities. The League of Nations guaranteed the protection of minorities but it was not successful. A number of bilateral treaties were signed between states on the treatment of national, religious and linguistic minorities during the period between World War I and II. Subsequently the U.N. and international agencies have guaranteed against genocide and to protect human rights.

The Issue of Ethnicity in Pakistan (Historical Background)

Pakistan was established as a federation of five provinces i.e. Bengal, Punjab, NWFP, Baluchistan (was granted the status of full fledged province in 1973) Sindh, and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) in August 1947. Pakistan is a multi-lingual, multi-racial and multi-ethnic state with these provinces reflecting various diversities in terms of population, development and area. The Eastern Wing of the country (Bengal) formed the majority of the population and possessed homogeneity in terms of linguistic and cultural composition (Ali & Rehman, 2001). On the other hand, the Western Wing, which was comprised of four units:

NWFP, Baluchistan, Sindh and Punjab, depicted the intra-wing diversities in terms of socio-economic conditions. The differences between the Eastern and Western wings were very pronounced and had serious implications on the smooth functioning of the state. These disparities accentuated over time. The diversities within the Western region created additional problems for the working of federation.

The NWFP (renamed Khyber Pukhtunkhaw under the 18th Amendment to the 1973 constitution) comprises the North West region of the Western wing. The most dominant community in the area is the Pathan community, that reflects the features of ethnic tribal society. They are free-spirited people and are deeply conscious of ethnic and cultural unity. Provincial autonomy has been the major demand of NWFP. The forced action of the One Unit intensified the sense of their distinct identity.

Baluchistan consists of tribal areas and the states of Makran, Kharan, Lasbela and Kalat. At Independence, it had the richest linguistic and cultural heritage. It is a tribal society, dominated by Sardars. It was the least developed area of the Western part of Pakistan. The basic profession of the Baluch community is agriculture. The region lacks adequate infrastructure.

Sindh remained a part of Bombay Presidency till 1935. It became a separate province in 1936 under the Government Act of India 1935. After Partition in 1947, Sindh became a part of Pakistan. Sindhi people have also been very conscious of their cultural and linguistic identity. Feudalism is very strong in Sindh and is an important feature of Sindhi political and economic landscape. After Partition, the influx of large number of refugees (Mohajirs) changed the socio-ethnic fabric of the Sindhi society (this will be explained later).

Punjab is the most populous province of the Western part of the country. At Partition, Punjab was a relatively developed province in terms of its education system, skilled manpower, agriculture, means of communication etc. The civil-military bureaucracy was also dominated by a Punjabi majority which controlled the decision making processes. According to the 1951 census, Punjabis had eighty percent representation in the army and fifty-five percent in the bureaucracy. This created a sense of marginalization among all other provinces, which was further increased through the policies of successive governments. Punjab, due to its huge size and population, had always been a dominating factor in Pakistani politics, as Saigol (2009) quotes Humza Alvi:

> The moment that Pakistan was established Muslim nationalism in India had fulfilled itself and outlived its purpose. Now there was a fresh equation of privilege and deprivation to be reckoned within the new state. Virtually overnight there were ethnic re-definitions. Punjabis who were the most numerous could boast of a greater percentage of people with higher education and were most firmly entrenched in the both the army and bureaucracy. They were the new bearers of privilege.....the weaker 'salariats' of Bengal, Sindh, Sarhad and Baluchistan did not share this and accordingly they redefined their identities as Bengalis, Sindhis, Pathans and Baluch who now demanded fairer shares for themselves (p. 7).

Figure: 2
Ethnic diversity in Pakistan under 1998 Census
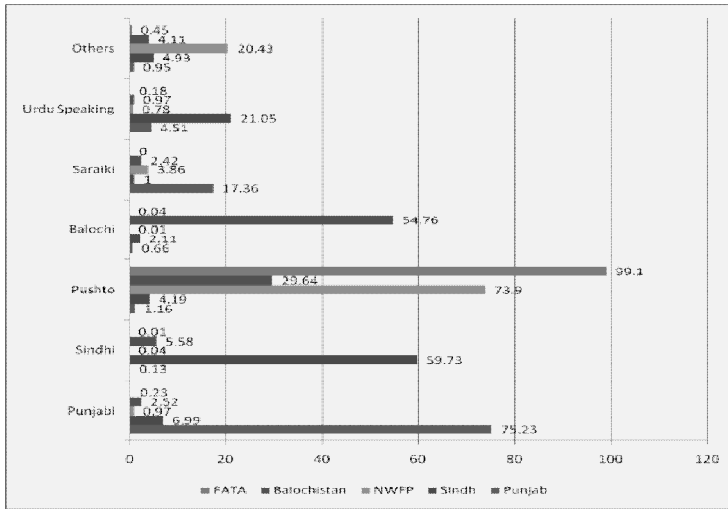
(Population Census Organization, 2000).

Ethnic Movement in East Pakistan (Bengal)

The acute differences between the Eastern and Western parts of the country put serious strains on the working of the federation in its early phase. These differences increased with the passage of time and created the problem of national integration as Pakistan's ruling elite failed to evolve a viable participatory political and social framework that could accommodate various diversities.

The Eastern wing of Pakistan consisted of the province of Bengal. Its population was seventy-eight million at Partition in 1947, and covered an area of 189,000 square miles. In the sixteenth century, Muslim rulers had come to power, converting nearly half the Bengali low caste population to Islam. Bengali society was characterized by a complex organization of castes. Feudalism was prevalent over there. During British rule (1905)

Bengal was divided into two units due to administrative difficulties. However, the Partition of Bengal was annulled in 1911 due to opposition by Hindus groups. In 1947, Bengal was divided again on religious lines. West Bengal became a part of the Indian Union; East Bengal went to Pakistan and redesignated in the 1956 constitution as East Pakistan (Adeney, 2007).

Throughout the Pakistan movement Bengal had played a very active role in the struggle for independence. But after Independence, the negative fallouts of acute differences became more pronounced. The geographical separation of the country's two wings (more than thousand miles apart) made inter–wing communication very difficult. This geographic non–contiguity adversely affected political and economic activities. Both regions were different in size and population. The main issues which caused resentment among them were: of representation in the federal legislature, nature of the system of electorates, national language, distribution of powers between the centre and the provinces.

The Basic Principles Committee (BPC) which was given the responsibility of making the constitution of the country presented its first report in 1950. This report declared that the federal legislature would be bicameral, with an Upper House (constituted on the basis of equal representation of all the provinces) and a Lower House (constituted on the basis of population). However, Bengalis perceived this report as an attempt to reduce their numerical strength in the state structure. In response, Bengali politicians appointed a Committee of Action to prepare proposals to counter BPC. Ali (1996) quotes Mr. Noor Ahmad, a Muslim League member in the Constituent Assembly, that, "In East Bengal there is a growing belief … there are principles in the report which, if adopted, will reduce the majority of East Bengal into a minority and it will turn East Bengal into a colony of Pakistan" (p. 75).

The Action Committee proposed that only defence and foreign affairs must be rested in the centre and taxes could be levied only on certain specified items. In fact, the politicians of East Pakistan demanded complete regional autonomy. Another report of the BPC was drafted in 1952 (Prime Minister was Khawaja Nazimuddin). This report suggested the formula of parity for both the wings. But it was criticized by the Punjabi elite because it would curtail their domination at the centre. Afterwards Mohammad Ali Bogra (On the dismissal of Khawaja Nazimuddin's government, Mohammad Ali Bogra was appointed as Prime Minister) put forward a proposal in 1953 on the basis of parity. (In this plan West Pakistan was given a clear majority in the Upper House / House of Units which had 50 seats equally divided among five provinces of the country, East Bengal, Punjab, NWFP, Sindh and Baluchistan. While the Lower House consisted of 300 members and East Pakistan was granted 165 seats (a majority on the basis of population). Moreover, in case of conflict during the joint session of the parliament, the issue would be resolved on the basis of majority, at least 30% from each zone).

This formula did not face as much criticism as its predecessor, with the exception of its 30% clause. However, a solution was derived in a form of One Unit. In 1955 the Prime Minister Chaudhry Mohammad Ali integrated all the provinces of West Pakistan to form a One Unit. It was aimed to counter the numerical superiority of East Pakistan in the federal legislature which was also criticized by the Bengali leaders as they perceived it as an attempt to consolidate all the federating units against them. It lasted till 1969.

The constitutional structures of Pakistan have been reflecting the trends of centralization. Under Article 8 of the Independence Act 1947 the Government of India Act 1935 was adopted as an interim constitution, had strong tendencies for authoritarianism and centralization which later set the trends of the same in constitution making. The federal government remained powerful.

Afterwards, in the constitution of 1956, the federal government retained its hold except the grant of residuary powers, provincial list and parity clause.*

The 1956 constitution did not remove the grievances of East Pakistan. Another source of central interference in provincial matters was the system of central superior services, which put a strong central hold over CSP officers appointed in provinces. Moreover, the provinces were heavily dependent on the centre for fiscal affairs. The constitutional structures (1956, 1962) did not provide adequate provincial autonomy. During this period, (1947-1969) polarization between East and West Pakistan and the assertion of Bengali ethnic difference (due to sense of deprivation on the part of the Bengalis) was a significant feature of Pakistani politics. Mistrust between both wings of the country, lack of participatory political culture and economic upheavals paved the way to military rule in Pakistan.

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* One popular method is the enumeration of the powers of only one government – central or regional and the rest of them are left to be exercised by the other set of government. These un-enumerated powers are known as residuary powers.

The second method involves the enumeration of powers for the both sets of government by establishing two specific lists – one specifying the powers of center and the other powers of units. But this way also, some provision of residuary authority has to be made as it is not possible to draw an all comprehensive list of powers and functions of the state.

Moreover, another provision regarding concurrent powers is also introduced in most of the federations. Concurrent powers are those powers on which both central as well as regional governments have the right of jurisdiction but in case of conflict, the supremacy of federal laws generally, is ensured.

Under the Martial Law regime, the sense of alienation among the Bengalese intensified due to non-participatory political institutions and processes. Ayub Khan introduced the Basic Democracies Order, 1959 a scheme of local self-government. It followed a pyramidal plan, enabling the people to elect directly to local council, who would in turn elect the upper tiers of the administration. There were a total of 80,000 Basic Democrats elected on the basis of adult franchise. The system was open to manipulation by the central ruling elite, who used it to achieve the desired results. The centre also introduced the Elective Bodies Disqualification Order (EBDO) 1959, which was aimed at disqualifying politicians on the basis of misconduct and committing any act which contributed to political instability or connected with bribery, nepotism and corruption. In reality, however, it was used to harass political opponents or manipulate them to serve the interests of the ruling class.

Although the military rulers initiated certain plans to promote national integration between both wings of the country: that is, councils for national integration, inter-wing scholarships and postings of civil officers, cultural exchanges and delegations, various measures taken to strengthen the economy and bridge the gap between East and West Pakistan (the third five year plan in 1961 provided 16000 million for East Pakistan and 14000 million for West Pakistan). However, somehow these policies were not implemented in their true spirit: certain cases of nepotism and corruption surfaced such as scholarships not being given to deserving students. The attitude of civil officers from the Western Wing towards locals of the Eastern Wing was biased (Mahmood, 1993). Similarly, Bengalis did not get their due representation in the federal cabinet. Table 1 shows (as cited in Mahmood, 1993) the representation of Eastern and Western wings in the federal cabinet.

The 1965 war also contributed to the Bengali sense of alienation because the emphasis was mainly on the defense of

Western Pakistan: only one division of Pakistani troops was deployed in East Pakistan. All these factors caused political alienation and sowed the seeds of Bengali separatism. The policies of the post-Ayub period (1969-1971, Yahya Khan) further accentuated the political confrontation in East Pakistan. In the beginning, Yahyas's basic steps to dissolve the One Unit and to give representation to all the provinces on the basis of population, seemed to move towards a reconciliation between both the wings of the country. However, demands on the basis of the Six Points[*] program by Mujeeb–ur-Rehman were not heeded by the government. Yahya Khan promulgated a legal framework order (LFO)[**] to assure the guarantee of a democratic and federal system in Pakistan. Later, in 1970 the first general elections were held in the country. Table 2 and Table 3 (As citied in Chaudhary, 1974) show the election results. In East Pakistan, the Awami League, which contested election on the basis of the Six Points, achieved a landslide victory, while in West Pakistan the PPP gained a majority.

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[*]   Six points by Mujeeb ur Rehman included the demand for a federal parliamentary system, the centre in control of defence and foreign affairs while all other departments should be in the hands of the provinces, two separate currencies for both the wings of the country, provinces should control provinces should control revenue collection and foreign exchange reserves and para–military forces should be established for East Pakistan.

[**] (See Appendix No. 1)

Table 1
Representation of East & West Pakistan in Each Cabinet

7	Prime Minister's Cabinet	Total Numbers of Ministers / Ministers of State / Deputy Ministers (at one time)	Number of West Pakistanis	Number of Bengalis	Percentage of Bengali Representation
1.	Liaqat Ali Khan (15 Aug 1947 – 16 Oct 1951)	19 *	13	6	31.2%
2.	Khawaja Nazimuddin (19 Oct 1951 – 17 April 1953	15	9	6	40%
3.	Muhammad Ali Bogra (17 April 1953 – 24 Oct 1954)	14	9	5	35%
4.	Reconstituted Cabinet (24 Oct 1954 – 11 Aug 1955)	16	9	7	44%
5.	Ch. Muhammad Ali (11 Aug 1955 – 12 Sep 1956)	17	10	7	41%
6.	Suhrawardy (12 Sep 1956 – 18 Oct 1957)	14	6	8	57%
7.	I. I. Chundrigar (18-Oct 1957- 16 Dec 1957)	16	9	7	44%
8.	Noon's Cabinet (16 Dec 1957 – 7 Oct 1958)	27	15	12	44.5%
9.	Ayub Khan 1st Cabinet (28 Oct 1958 – 17 Feb 1960)	15	12	3	25%
10.	Ayub Khan 2nd Cabinet (17 Feb 1960 – 8 June 1962)	16	11	5	26%
11.	Ayub Khan 3rd Cabinet	17	9	8	47%

* Three Deputy Minister afterwards became Ministers and Ministers of State in the same Cabinet. The total also includes the Prime Minister.

	(28 June 1962 – 23 Mar 1965)				
12.	Ayub Khan 4th Cabinet (23 Mar 1965 – 25 Mar 1969)	17	11	6	35%
13.	Yahya Khan (04 Aug 1969 - 22 Feb 1971)*	11	6	5	45.4%

Table 2
Pakistan National Assembly Elections, 1970

	Party Name	Punjab	Sindh	NWFP	Baluchistan	West Pakistan	East Pakistan	Total
1.	Awami League (AL)	0	0	0	0	0	160	160
2.	Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP)	62	18	1	0	81	0	81
3.	Pakistan Muslim League Qayum Group (PMLQ)	1	1	7	0	9	0	9
4.	Pakistan Muslim League (Council)	7	0	0	0	0	0	7
5.	Markazi Jamiat-e Ulama Pakistan (MJUP)	4	3	0	0	7	0	7
6.	National Awami Party (NAP) Wali Khan Group	0	0	3	3	6	0	6

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* The Cabinet was dissolved on 22nd February 1971 but Advisers continued till 20th December 1971.

7.	Jamat -e-Islami (JI)	1	2	1	0	4	0	4
8.	Pakistan Muslim League (Convention)	2	0	0	0	2	0	2
9.	Pakistan Democratic Party (PDP)	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
10.	Independents	5	3	7	0	15	1	16
	Total	82	27	25	4	138	162	300

Table 3

Pakistan Provincial Assembly Elections, 1970

Party Name	Punjab	Sindh	NWFP	Baluchistan	West Pakistan	East Pakistan	Total
Awami League (AL)	0	0	0	0	0	160	160
Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP)	113	18	1	0	81	0	81
Pakistan Muslim League Qayum Group (PMLQ)	6	5	10	3	24	0	24
Pakistan Muslim League (Council)	15	4	1	0	20	0	20
Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam (JUI)	2	0	4	2	8	0	8
Markazi Jamiat-Ulama Pakistan (MJUP)	4	7	0	0	11	0	11

National Awami Party (NAP) Wali Khan Group	0	0	13	8	21	1	22
Jamat -e-Islami (JI)	1	1	1	0	3	1	4
Pakistan Muslim League (Convention)	6	0	2	0	8	0	8
Pakistan Democratic Party (PDP)	4	0	0	0	4	2	6
Others	1	1	0	2	4	1	5
Independents	28	146	5	53	7	7	60
Total	180	60	40	20	300	300	600

The Awami League was entitled to form a government under the parliamentary system as envisaged by the LFO. But the West Pakistani leadership demanded power-sharing arrangements which were rejected by the Awami League leadership. Consequently Bhutto announced to boycott the proposed National Assembly session on 3rd March 1971. On 1st March 1971, Yahya also announced that he would prorogue the National Assembly session which inflamed ethnic assertion and led to violent demonstrations in East Pakistan. Meanwhile, the regime made efforts to make any compromise between the leadership of both the wings but all in vain. The Awami League continued its non-cooperation movement. Confrontation escalated in East Pakistan, which ultimately was combated by the regime through a military intervention. Mujeeb–ur-Rehman was arrested. The military action in East Pakistan aggravated the situation and was countered by Mukti Bahini (Liberation Army in Bangladesh, supported by India) who employed strategies of guerrilla warfare. This

confrontation lasted till the Indo-Pak war in 1971and the separation of East Pakistan.

Cultural and Linguistic Differences

Cultural and linguistic differences are quite significant elements in relation to the emergence of ethnic conflicts. The cultural and linguistic heterogeneity can be analyzed through the following Table 4 (as citied in Humayun, 1995).

East Pakistan was linguistically homogenous as compared to the West Pakistan where different languages i.e. Punjabi, Sindhi, Pushto, Saraiki, Hindko, Baluchi etc. were spoken. Bengalis wanted their language to be recognized as a national language along with Urdu. The supporters of Bengali based their claim on two grounds: one was that Bengali was the language of the majority and the second was that a bilingual formula would lead to stronger ties and better understanding between the two wings and thus help to strengthen the bonds of unity. The advocates of a single language argued that linguistic uniformity was essential to infuse a sense of unity and solidarity between the people of the two wings who were already divided by geography and diverse culture. Two official languages would tend to widen the existing gap between the two wings.

Table 4
Frequency of Common Languages Spoken as Mother Tongue in Pakistan (Percentage of Population)

	East Pakistan		West Pakistan	
Languages	1951	1961	1951	1961
Bengali	98.16	98.42	0.02	0.11
Punjabi	0.02	0.02	67.08	66.39
Pushto	0	0.01	8.16	8.47
Sindhi	0.01	0.01	12.85	12.59
Urdu	0.64	0.61	7.05	7.57

English	0.01	0.01	0.03	0.04
Baluchi	0	0	3.04	2.49

They further asserted that when the Muslims of India declared themselves a nation with their distinct religion, culture and language, they had Urdu in their minds and not any provincial language. Thus one of the state language disputes first emerged after Partition as early as in November 1947, when East Pakistan's representatives attended the First Pakistan Educational Conference, held at Karachi. They opposed the proposed designation of Urdu as the only state language. However, the issue was highlighted in February 1948, when Mr. D.N. Dutt, a Hindu member from East Pakistan moved an amendment to the Assembly rules for allowing the members to speak in Bengali along with Urdu and English on the Assembly floor. It was met with strong opposition. Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan also criticized this move because he thought that it was a conspiracy to destabilize the Pakistani nation.

While taking a firm stand in the favour of a monolithic state, Pakistan's ruling elite failed to realize the significance and strength of the issue in East Pakistan. The demand sought a popular support with spread of word that Bengali letters would not appear on Pakistani currency notes, money orders and stamps. The conflict led to violent clashes between demonstrators and police. The events forced Nazimuddin, the chief minister of provinces, to hold talks with the supporters of the Bengali language movement and an agreement was signed for the adoption of a resolution in the provincial legislature for making of Bengali an official language and its use as medium of instructions at all stages in the provinces. Quaid-i-Azam during his visit to Dacca in 1948 affirmed that Urdu would be the only lingua franca of Pakistan.

His visit succeeded in subsiding the issue for a while but could not satisfy the people of East Pakistan and the demand for

having Bengali as one of the state languages resurfaced with more vigor. The first BPC report recommended Urdu as the only state language but largely condemned by the people of the province. The refusal of the federal government to accommodate the linguistic identity of Eastern province caused much resentment in East Pakistan, which led the massive agitation in early 1952. A serious clash between the police and students of Dacca University on February 21, 1952 resulted in the death of many students. This incident united all political elements, including the ruling party in East Pakistan on the issue to pressurize the central government. Finally, in 1954, the government resolved this issue through bilingual formula by giving the status of national language to both Urdu and Bengali. Although the issue was resolved to the satisfaction of the Bengali people but as it was resolved after a long and bitter controversy, it left a deep and indelible mark on the minds of the Bengalis which caused a sense of alienation among Bengalis.

Inadequate Representation of Bengalese in the Civil Service and Army

Another factor which gave rise to Bengali ethnic sentiments was the inadequate representation of Bengalese in the army and civil services. The educated Bengalis resented the fact that West Pakistanis held most of the senior posts in the armed forces and the civil services. These differences can be observed in Table 5 (as citied in Adeney, 2007) which highlights the discrimination regarding the representation of the Eastern and the Western wings in the armed forces.

Table 5
*East-West Representation in the Military Office Class
of Pakistan 1955-56*

Services	East Pakistan	West Pakistan
Army	14	894
Navy	7	593
Air Force	60	640

Similarly, Table 6 (as citied in Sayeed, 1980) shows the insignificant number of Bengali Muslims in the civil services.

Table 6
*Background of Civil Service Officers on
Influential Positions 1965-70*

Year	West Pakistan	Urdu Speaking from (Indian Provinces)	East Pakistan	Others	Positions Held
1965	9 Punjab	4	0	1	Foreign affairs; agriculture and works; cabinet; establishment division; home and Kashmir; economic affairs; communications; industries and natural resources; defense; secretary to president; finance; investment promotion bureau; Wapda; information and broadcasting.
1966	9 Punjab	3	0	1	Foreign affairs; agriculture and works; defense; home and Kashmir; economic affairs; communications; secretary to president; cabinet; industries and natural resources; finance; investment promotion; Wapda; information and

					broadcasting.
1967	8 Punjab	3	0		Secretary to president; communications;
1968	1 Frontier 7 Punjab 1 Frontier	2	0	0	cabinet; Foreign affairs; industries and natural resources; deputy chairman; planning commission; agriculture and works; economic affairs; investment promotion; planning division; finance; information and broadcasting. Foreign affairs; agriculture and works; deputy chairman; planning commission; cabinet; industries and natural resources; planning division; finance; home and Kashmir; information and broadcasting; economic affairs; defense; (continued)
1969	7 Punjab 1 Frontier	2	1	0	Foreign affairs; agriculture and works; deputy chairman; planning commission; cabinet; economic affairs; industries and natural resources; planning division; finance; communications; information and broadcasting;
1970	5 Punjab 1 Frontier 1 Sindh	0	2	0	Chairman and managing director, Steel Mills Corporation; deputy chairman; planning commission; defense; cabinet; planning division; industries and natural resources; finance; communications; agriculture and works;

Sharp Economic Disparities

Sharp economic disparities, shown in Table 7 (as citied in Sayeed, 1980), between the two wings also aggravated the ethnic

issue. Economic disparities resulted in social bifurcation and fragmentation of society, and therefore deprived ethnic groups, as it effectively economically marginalized them. This is a factor that often gives rise to ethnic conflicts in a society. To East Pakistanis, it seemed that their interests had been neglected by West Pakistani policy makers. On the other hand, the economists of West Pakistan argued that East Pakistan's economic underdevelopment was due to regional attributes i.e. colonial heritage, climatic conditions and geography etc.

Table 7
Per Capita Gross Domestic Product in East and West Pakistan
1959-60, Constant Prices

	Per Capita GDP East Pakistan	Per Capita GDP West Pakistan	East West Disparity Ratio	Index of Disparity
1959-60	269	355	1.32	100
1960-61	277	363	1.31	97
1961-62	286	376	1.31	97
1962-63	277	393	1.42	111
1963-64	299	408	1.36	113
1964-65	293	426	1.45	141
1965-66	295	427	1.45	141
1966-67	290	448	1.54	169
1967-68	307	468	1.52	163

1968-69	312	490	1.57	178
1969-70	314	504	1.61	191
Growth over the decade	17%	42%		
Growth in third plan period	7%	18%		

Figure 3 shows the regional disparities in central expenditures.

Figure 3:
Central expenditures: region wise 1947-55
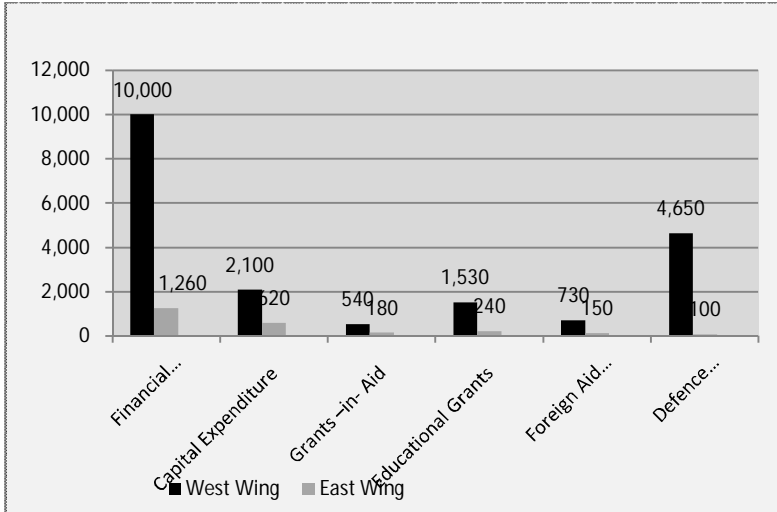
The economic disparities aggravated the discontent among Bengalis. There was a general perception among them that the

central government extended maximum economic assistance to West Pakistan and that East Pakistan was deprived even from its due share (Lambert, 1959). While analyzing the Bengali ethno-national movement, it becomes clear that linguistic, cultural identities and economic deprivations provided the basis for Bengali nationalism. Before 1947, Islam was the only binding force among all the Indian Muslims, who collectively strove for a separate homeland, whereas the post-Independence era shows a quest for regional identities. It seems that it was assumed by the Pakistani leadership that the commonality of religion would continue to integrate all the nationalities in Pakistan and to assimilate all regional diversity. However, the results of 1954 provincial elections in Bengal and the 1970 national elections proved to the contrary (Islam, 1981). In actuality, the process of national integration in Pakistan before 1971 was clogged due to the imposition of a European model of the nation-state. It discredited Bengali aspirations. The ineluctable consequences were Bengali ethnic uprisings against West Pakistani-dominated political and bureaucratic power structure (Ahmad, 1971).

The Issue of Ethnicity in Baluchistan

Baluchistan is the least populous province but the largest in terms of area. Baluchistan was annexed in 1884 by the British. Considerable changes accrued in Baluchistan by the end of 19th century when roads, railway lines, post offices, rest-houses were constructed. During British rule there were basically three forces in Baluchistan, the locally influential tribal Sardars(they wanted to retain their Sardary system), the Baluch nationalists (they wanted to establish an independent Baluch State) and Khan of Kalat who wanted to hegemonies the rest of the two. Under the 3rd June plan 1947, an electoral college was formed in British Baluchistan (northern areas of Baluchistan including Bolan Pass, Quetta, Nushki and Naseerabad) comprising the Shahi Jirga and the Quetta Municipality to decide the future of these areas. Majority of Sardars led by Mohammad Khan Jogezai along with the non-official members of the Quetta Municipal Committee voted for

Pakistan. The princely states were not included in this referendum because the Khan of Kalat wanted a sovereign state of Kalat including the northern areas of Baluchistan which were formerly leased to the British (Dehwar, 1994).

However, the Khan of Kalat declared Kalat as an independent state on 15th August 1947. He also negotiated with the Pakistani government regarding the leased areas of his state. But he was categorically told by the Pakistani government that these areas were a heritage of Pakistan. In tandem with the government, the Quaid-e-Azam continued to persuade the Khan to annex his state to Pakistan. However, he opposed the merger of Kalat with Pakistan. Meantime the 1948 war between Pakistan and India broke out. Pakistan army invaded Kalat. On 27th March 1948, the Pakistan government forcefully announced the accession of Kharan and Lesbala. The Makran (part of Kalat) was separated and annexed to Pakistan. These steps taken by the Pakistani government caused resentment among the Baluch people. The government of Pakistan assumed power in the whole of Baluchistan including Kalat State on 15th April 1948 (Awan, 1985).

Owing to the insurmountable problems faced by the Pakistani government during the initial years (that is, political instability, constitutional crises, fragile political party system) the federal government could not accommodate all the political forces in Baluchistan. Moreover, in 1952 the Pakistani government established the union of Baluch States comprising the State of Kalat, Kharan, Lasbela and Makran as a single unit. The structural changes were opposed by the Baluch nationalists because it had affected their numerical strength.

Furthermore, the formation of the One Unit in 1955 provoked ethnic consciousness among the Baluchis and led to collaboration among the nationalist forces of smaller provinces i.e. Ghaus Baksh Bazenjo, Sardar Attaullah Mengal and Nawab Akbar

Bugti from Baluchistan and National Awami Party led by Wali Khan (Titus & Swidler, 2000).

Baluchistan became a full-fledged province in 1972 after the annulment of One-Unit. Its total area is 134,000 square miles and population is 6.5 million according to 1998 census. Ethnically it is pluralistic. The main ethnic groups are the Baluch, the Brahvis and Pathans. A number of tribes (e.g. Mengals, Maris, Bugtis, Zehris, and Bazenjos) resided in the province. The main spoken languages in the province are Baluchi, Brahvi, Pushto, Persian, Sindhi and Urdu. Baluchistan has been the most backward area in terms of socio-economic indicators i.e. literacy, medical facilities, road construction & per capita income. According to the 1961 census, Baluchistan had the highest rate of illiteracy in Pakistan. The situation was the same in the 1981 census. Even the first university in Baluchistan was set up in 1970s. The per capita income in 1976 was the lowest among all provinces as shown in the Table 8 (Burki, 1980).

Table 8
Comparison of Per Capita Income among Provinces 1976

Punjab	Sindh	NWFP	Baluchistan
R.s 797	R.s 788	R.s 602	R.s 541

Despite its socio-economic backwardness, Baluchistan is very rich in natural resources. Nevertheless these resources could not be used judiciously to uplift its economy. The biggest asset of the province is the deposits of natural resources. The province has been denied its due share of natural gas royalty. The issue has been a major cause of resentment against the centre among the Baluch

people. Ethnic conflicts are closely related to divergent and uneven levels of economic development in the state. In this situation ethnic groups complain of or make demands for a change in the distributive system. If this situation persists, it leads to ethnic conflicts. The Baluch people do not have their due share in the political system, and wanted to change the power structure in order to ensure the fair distribution of resources. The following Table 9 shows the low representation of Baluch people in the top civil bureaucracy.

Table 9
Ethnic Origins of Top Civilian Bureaucrats (Class 1 Officers) Census of Central Government Employees 1973

	Number	Percent
Punjabis	1727	48.89
Mohajirs	1070	30.29
Others	349	9.95
Pushtuns	287	8.12
Sindhis	90	2.5
Baluchis	9	0.25
Total	3532	100

The Baluch people detested Punjabi and Mohajir domination in the civil and military bureaucracy. According to one study, only four out of one seventy nine persons in the federal cabinet were indigenous Baluch during 1947-77 (Phadnis & Ganguly, 2001).

According to another estimate, during 1979, out of 830 high civil service jobs in Baluchistan, only 181 were indigenous Baluchis. The Baluch nationalist leaders e.g. Sardar Atta Ullah Mengal (Chief Baluchistan National Party), Late Ghaus Baksh Bazenjo (Bazenjo National Awami Party) has been demanding the greater provincial autonomy to restrict the interference of the federal government in provincial matters.

In the 1970 elections, the National Awami Party (NAP) and Jamiat Ulama Islam (JUI)* emerged as dominant parties in the provinces of Baluchistan and NWFP. In both provinces the, PPP made coalition governments with NAP and JUI through a tripartite accord.**

On April 21, 1972 Bhutto lifted martial law when the National Assembly approved the interim constitution. The NAP-JUI Governors and Chief Ministers were appointed in NWFP and Baluchistan. (Arbab Sikandar Khan the Governor and Mufti Mahmood the Chief Minister in NWFP; Mir Ghaus Baksh Bazenjo the Governor and Attaullah Mengal as Chief Minister in Baluchistan in May 1972). However, the understanding between NAP-JUI provincial governments and the centre could not last long due to their conflicts over the issue of provincial autonomy.

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* The antecedents of JUI can be traced back to the Deoband Ulema constituted the Jamiat Ulama Hind. The antecedents of NAP can be traced to the Khudai Khidmatgar movement which was launched by Frontier Ghandhi Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan in 1925.

** The accord provided for the removal of Martial Law by August 1972, the appointments of the governors of NWFP,   Baluchistan in consultation with NAP-JUI. The formation of NAP-JUI governments in two provinces and the adoption of an interim constitution.

On 14th February 1973 Bhutto dissolved the provincial government in Baluchistan. It caused resentment in the Baluch people and the ethnic agitation in this context intensified. The dismissal of provincial government by the central government strengthened the centrifugal forces in Baluchistan.

Baluch nationalists contended that the central government did not make efforts to cooperate with the provincial government. According to them, Bhutto was interested in the aggrandizement of power, not in sharing. Mufti Mahmood in his news conference stated, "we have sacrificed more provincial autonomy by accepting the Concurrent and Federal Lists as put in the constitutional draft only to wipe out the wrong impression being created by the government that we were traitors" (Mufti Hints, 1973).

He instructed the central government to avoid controversies in order to promote national integration. He also demanded to hold fresh elections throughout Pakistan to establish a more democratic government. Atta Ullah Mengal in his speech on 17th March 1973 said, "People would continue a relentless struggle for the restoration of democracy" (Province, 1973). Bhutto was determined to bulldoze Baluchistan into abject submission. Bhutto's dismissal of the NAP government led to violent protests from Baluchistan Students Organization (BSO) and Baluch Peoples Liberation Front (BPLF). The members of BSO and BPLF were mostly young Baluch. The BSO was formed in 1967 to oppose One-Unit while BPLF was a byproduct of guerrilla warfare during 1963. They wanted the liberation of Baluchistan. Another group Pakistan National Party (PNP) formed in 1979 led by Bazenjo. PNP had a more moderate agenda as their demand was greater provincial autonomy (Breseeg, 2004). However, after his government's dismissal (Bazenjo was replaced by Nawab Akbar Bugti) his stance against the centre hardened. Breseeg (2004) quotes an interview with People's Front, Mir Ghaus Baksh Bazenjo said:

> Under these circumstances, the Baluch people had no other way out but to resort to the natural rights of self-defence, to take up arms against unprovoked attack on their lives and properties and defined their health and home as best as they could. Any man of honor and self-respect would adopt the same course in such conditions and the Baluch are no exception to natural human instincts for survival. All they have done in this connection; they have done under compulsion and extreme provocation on the part of the armed forces of the Federal Government who should be held responsible for this fratricidal strife and devastation (p. 230).

The use of force by the centre and armed resistance from different Baluch groups sharpened the differences between Baluch people and centre on the one hand, and created a rift and growing differences with the Pushtun and Baluch leaders. The major differences between them were on the question of a political reconciliation with Prime Minister Bhutto. Baluch leadership had also sharp differences with Wali Khan regarding considering the Baluch and Pathan as merely separate cultural and linguistic entities because they believed that Baluch and Pathans were distinct nationalities. Secondly, the Baluch ethnic movement receded due to the lack of unified leadership. The BSO and BPLF had extremist elements, while PNP had more balanced approach. In fact, the ethnic conflict in Baluchistan during 1970s had two dimensions. One was the NAP-JUI demand for provincial autonomy according to 1973 constitution, and the other was Bhutto's desire to dominate the provincial governments in Baluchistan and NWFP.

The Issue of Ethnicity in NWFP (Khyber Pukhtunkhwa)

Khyber Pukhtunkhwa comprises the North West region of the country. It covers an area of 74,521 Sq. K.m. According to 1998 census its population is 14 million. It is the smallest province in terms of area and third largest in terms of population. The province of NWFP was created as a separate administrative entity in 1901. It is divided into two parts known as settled areas and the Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (PATA). There is a majority of Pukhtun population. About 68% of the households in NWFP speak Pushto, 18% are Hindko speaking while 4% speak Saraiki. Around 10% speak various local languages like Kohwar etc.

Agriculture is the main profession of the majority of the population. A very significant feature of the Pukhtun community is the Jirga. The jirga is basically a decision making body that settles tribal disputes. The "hujra" is a meeting place. It is the centre of community opinions and actions. Pukhtuns are very individualistic by nature. The creation of Pakistan was opposed by the Pukhtun nationalists led by Ghaffar Khan. They opposed and criticized the incorporation of NWFP into Pakistan in 1947. They complained that they were not given a right to vote for Afghanistan.

The One-Unit scheme (On 30th September 1955 the second constituent assembly passed a bill to unify all four provinces of West Pakistan into One-Unit. The Prime Minister Muhammad Ali first announced it on 22nd November) further accentuated sense of deprivation as they felt that they were made subject to the Punjabi domination by depriving them of their distinct identity under the One Unit. Moreover, the centralized policies of the federal government created the feelings of resentment among them. They believed that the economic policies of the federal government caused the backwardness of the province. They saw that local raw produce was being transferred to factories of other provinces; the

funds for agricultural development were being channeled to Punjabi dominated areas. They also claimed that the allocation of developmental expenditure from the centre to different regions was discriminatory. Pukhtun nationalists criticized the continued practice of the federal bureaucracy being sent on deputation to take senior posts in the provincial civil service. They considered it as the interference in the provincial matters. They demanded for better opportunities for the promotion of Pushto language and other local languages like Hindko, Chitrali and Derajati in academic institutions (Ali & Rehman, 2001).

The 1967 census of manufacturing industries showed that only 7% of the fixed assets and more than 6% of production in manufacturing industries were in NWFP. The following Table (Ahmed, 1973) highlights the number of manufacturing industries and their assets in Sarhad.

Table 10
No. of Selected Manufacturing Industries & their Gross Fix Assets (In Million R.s), 1967

Type	No.	Pakistan Assets	No.	NWFP Assets
Food	270	644.11	13	123.02
Tobacco	46	95.30	6	29.82
Textiles	793	1480.86	15	105.34
Chemical	323	800.11	7	12.55
Non-Metallic Minerals	90	208.99	6	0.83

Electrical Machinery	124	112.13	7[*]	0.39[*]
Transport Machinery	125	150.36	5	0.33
Miscellaneous	448	181.33	8	2.57

According to Planning Commission's survey of farm mechanization in 1968, only 5.5% of West Pakistan's tractors and 3.3% of its tube wells were in NWFP. During 1960s the share of NWFP in wheat was 7%, rice 1.1%, Bajra 4.6%, Jowar 6.9% and maize 5.1% of the total production (Ahmad, 1998). Sayeed (1980) quotes when the NAP–JUI coalition government was formed in NWFP after the 1970 elections the nationalist leader Wali Khan pointed out:

> The natural gas of Baluchistan, while providing power to Karachi and Punjab, has already lit the dwellings of the common people of that province or brought them check it other minimum comforts and amenities. The NWFP, which is the biggest producer of raw tobacco has no cigarette producing plant or factories. The bulk of its hydro-electric power is used for the benefits of others. In keeping with trends it is no surprise that the Pathans are used as an easily available pool of cheap migrant labour in Pakistan and elsewhere (p.128).

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[*] Figures for Sarhad were combined with those of Punjab; the figures mentioned here are the ones not accounted for by the reported districts of Punjab; this is therefore the maximum figure for Sarhad, the actual figure could be zero.

The Federal Government in response stated that the distribution of powers of taxation between the centre and the provinces had not changed significantly from 1966 to 1972 and that the Bhutto government under the new constitution was making payments to the Provincial Governments of Baluchistan and NWFP from the revenues that they had realized from natural gas in Baluchistan and the generation of hydro-electric power in the NWFP.

The dismissal of NAP-JUI government (14th February 1973) in Baluchistan and subsequent military actions in Lasbela to disarm Lashkar (Private force of the Provincial Government in Baluchistan to resist Jamote tribe) resulted in the emergence of United Democratic Front (UDF) in February 1973. It was the coalition of several parties including NAP, JUI, Tehrik –e-Isteqlal, Khaksar, JI and some independent MNAs to combat the federal government. This coalition (UDF) insisted that Peoples Party was a regional party represented only half of Pakistan while the other half was represented by other parties mainly NAP and JUI. They demanded the restoration of real democracy. In these circumstances Bhutto approached Abdul Qayum Khan (PML-Q) to weaken the coalition. PML-Q was a leading opposition party in National Assembly and the two provinces (NWFP and Baluchistan) as well. This action by the government was perceived as a Sword of Damocles on the NAP-JUI ministries. However on 14 February 1973 Bhutto dismissed them while the NAP – JUI government in NWFP also resigned in protest.

The government charged the NAP leaders of conspiring against Pakistani federation. The centre banned the NAP in 1975 and took a case to the Supreme Court. Wali Khan in his statement to the court asserted that the Central Government wanted to establish single party rule in Pakistan and pushing Baluchistan and NWFP towards separation from the federation. In November 1975, through the fourth Constitutional Amendment, the Courts were deprived of their rights to grant bail to any person detained

under the preventive detention laws. This amendment was meant to put pressure on the opposition. Finally the Supreme Court banned the NAP. However, the second level leadership of NAP established National Democratic Party (NDP) in November 1975 to continue the programs of their predecessors (Shafqat, 1997).

The provinces (NWFP & Baluchistan) under these circumstances felt deprived due to a vicious circle of centralization on the part of Federal Government. As has been explained earlier, ethnic conflict starts when all the ethnic groups do not get fair shares in the power structure of the country. Such situations alienate ethnic groups from the state structure. The ethnic uprisings in Baluchistan and NWFP gradually declined due to some other factors, e.g. Russian invasion in Afghanistan and the influx of Afghan refugees in Pakistan. However, both communities (Pathans and Baluch were the victims of deprivation. Furthermore, internal fragmentation among the Pathan and Baluch leadership, inter-tribal cleavages, differences over the ends to and means of the struggle for their rights also gave a setback to these movements.

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