

# Global Village Space

— magazine —

AUGUST 2018 VOL I ISSUE VIII - RS 300

**Separated but also united at birth: India & Pakistan**

Sudheendra Kulkarni

**South Asia: Dilemma of democratic governance**

Salman Bashir

**Ambassador Ali Jehangir Siddiqui speaks with GVS**



**ELECTION 2018: DIRTIEST OR THE FAIREST?**

SPECIAL FEATURE

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# Global Village Space

August 2018

## 08 The Future is Young & so is Pakistan

**Dr. Adil Najam, Meeran Jamal & Umer Akhlaq Malik**

Dr. Adil Najam is the founding Dean of the Pardee School of Global Studies at Boston University and served as VC of LUMS university, in this paper based on the National Human Development Report (NHDR) on youth done for the UNDP, he traces the desires and aspirations of Pakistan's youth and discusses the need for the 3 E's to harness Pakistan's youth: Education, Employment & Engagement.

## 12 Religious Minorities: The Significant Others

**Asif Aqeel**

Is a prominent writer and researcher in the area of marginality & exclusion of religious minorities. He presents a comprehensive history of Pakistan's different minority groups and covers the invaluable contributions made by them in Pakistan's emergence and subsequent history. Did you know that around 1000 Jews still live in Pakistan?

## 22 The Evolution of Civil Service in Pakistan

**Asim Imdad Ali**

Is an ex-DMG officer and is currently a partner in an Islamabad based law firm. Asim traces the evolution of the elite cadre of civil services from the days of the robber barons of The East India Company to showing how political dynamics that emerged in Pakistan have gone full circle and created the 'go-getter' group that is hands in glove with politicians in the extraction of public resources for personal gain.

## 30 Opportunities & Challenges in Pakistan's Foreign Policy

**Ambassador Munir Akram**

Pakistan's former Permanent Representative to the UN both in New York and Geneva and seasoned Foreign Service diplomat for 4 decades, contextualizes geostrategic interests in the shifting global power dynamics and meticulously deals with Pakistan's foreign policy concerns.

## Special Feature:

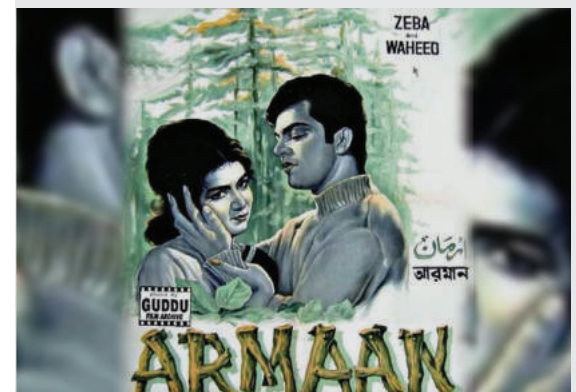
## 40 Elections 2018: Dirtiest or the Fairest?

**Dr. Moeed Pirzada**

Prominent TV Anchor & Columnist analyses how the 2018 elections faced inexplicable hostility from the western press - in fact its support for the status quo was disquieting, given the misogyny and corruption allegations the ruling party faced - the same Western ideals that are usually lauded and standard bearers held up to these.



Evolution of





72

50 What is the Reality to the Rigging Allegation in the July 25, 2018 General Elections?

**Sarwar Bari**

General Secretary of Free & Fair Election Network (FAFEN), addresses concerns and confusions surrounding form 45 and the increasing numbers of rejected votes in Pakistani elections. FAFEN is the largest Pakistani organization that deployed thousands of volunteers to monitor Elections in 2013 & 2018. Bari is also National Coordinator with PAT-TAN, an organization that is committed to political mainstreaming of Pakistan's marginalized and isolated communities.

54 **No Free Lunch**

Our Economic Gurus this month, Dr Ashfaq Hassan & Dr Aadil Nakhoda, discuss the challenges, for Pakistan's incoming Government upon taking the reins of power.

58 South Asia: Dilemma of Democratic Governance.

**Salman Bashir**

Pakistan's former Foreign Secretary and former Ambassador of Pakistan to India and China presents an economically bleak picture of South Asia, and questions the utility of democratic governance to bring development in the region; especially at a time when it seems to have been cast aside in the West, with the rise of illiberalism under Trump's America and right-wing nationalism in Europe.



92

64 Separated but also United at Birth: India & Pakistan

**Sudheendra Kulkarni**

As we celebrate Independence days this month in India and Pakistan, Sudheendra Kulkarni, advisor to former Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Chairman of the Observer Research Foundation, explains that the true intent of our founding fathers - wanting to live in peace and passport-free countries has been lost over the decades. He has great hope in Prime Minister Imran Khan to help to bring both countries together.

**Pakistani Cinema**



72 **Ambassador Ali Jehangir Siddiqui speaks with GVS**

At a time when Pakistan is on the cusp of a financial crisis, Pakistan's Ambassador to Washington discusses the potential of enhancing trade as crucial both for the country and as a catalyst for the normalization of Pakistan and US relations. Improving economic relations is one of his key goals in the country.

82 Frenemies for Life: The Difficult Trajectory of U.S.–Pakistan Relations

**Dr. Sahar Khan**

Research Fellow at the Cato Institute in Washington D.C., Dr. Khan, explores the inherent difficulties between U.S. and Pakistan relations due to the lens through which they are viewed. She asserts that the only way forward is for the two countries to shed these biases and create a relationship of mutual trust and cooperation that is based on the least common denominator of interests.

## 88 Pakistan's Unexpectedly Rich English Literary Evolution

### Huma Kirmani

The author of 'Corridors of Transmutation' and honorary member of the UN, weaves a literary journey of Pakistani authors of English literature post partition. The different social narratives that have been picked up and discarded over the decades, from the scars of partition horrors to religious extremism and the rights of women.

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## 92 Evolution of Pakistani Cinema

Global Village Space takes you to back to pre-partition British India to explore the rich cinematic history of Pakistan's movie industry and its evolution over the decades to where it stands today from producing its first movie on 7th August 1948, Teri Yaad starring Dilip Kumar's younger brother, Nasir Khan, to the country's first horror movie in the 1970's, to social documentary movies such as Bol, and much more.

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## 95 Movie Munching

Review of our favourite movies in July.

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## Dear Reader,

William Wordsworth had framed the French revolution and immortalized himself by his famous lines, “Bliss it was in that dawn to be alive, but to be young was very heaven”. Such is the sentiment of young PTI supporters and many others who see a new Pakistan being born in the July elections. What kind of Pakistan emerges remains to be seen, but after decades a new national party has emerged in power that derives its support from every nook and corner of the country. Imran Khan’s PTI has won seats from KP, Punjab, Sindh, Karachi, Balochistan, Islamabad and FATA, disappointing all those who had prophesied that future of Pakistan lies with regional parties with localized pockets of influence. Most amazing were the results from Karachi where PTI has emerged as the single largest party with 14 seats out of 21.

But PTI that is set to form governments in Center, Punjab and KP is confronted by humongous challenges. Outgoing Nawaz government has left a huge debt crisis with external debt now close to \$90 billion and internal borrowing in excess of Rs.16,000 billion - more than Rs.7000 billion added in last 4 years alone. Exports are now all time low below \$20 billion and imports are all time high above \$50 billion, budget deficit was never that high even in Pakistan’s tumultuous history and oil prices are now gradually rising in international markets. New government will need quick decision making and legislation but it will have a slim majority in center and Punjab and is confronted with the biggest opposition in Pakistan’s history. Knocking at IMF doors looks inevitable, but Washington appears displeased with the direction of political change in Pakistan and US led media launched an unprecedented demonization campaign against the elections - calling Imran Khan as Army’s stooge and elections bogus and rigged. There is little evidence on ground to justify these wild assertions as we examine in our elections special feature articles.

The August issue also dovetails with Pakistan’s 71st anniversary. We examine the state of politics and society. Prof. Adil Najam, Dean of Pardee School of Global Studies, Boston University, takes the lead in arguing that Pakistan’s future lies with its young, Asif Aqeel, explains the role that different minorities have played in Pakistan’s creation and its subsequent development. Asim Imdad, an ex-DMG officer laments over the evolution of civil services into something very different from what it was supposed to be. Ambassador Munir Akram, from New York, applies the real politick lens on challenges faced by the state, whilst Sudheendra Kulkarni, former aide to Prime Minister Vajpayee, explains how both countries have drifted away from the vision of their founding fathers. Ex-Foreign Secretary Salman Bashir questions whether the democratic governance model promulgated in South Asia is best for achieving the development of close to 2 billion people. Academic and author Huma Kirmani, takes us on a path to explain the evolution of English literature in the country since 1947 and the GVS team does the same for Pakistani cinema; there really was a time when people moved back from India to work in Pakistani movies. Pakistan’s Ambassador to the USA, Ali Jehangir Siddiqui gave time to GVS to explain how he is taking a cue from Trump to improve our trade relations with the USA among other things and Dr Sahar Khan from the Cato institute explains why both countries should stop being judgmental over each other and just learn to live with the lowest common denominator interests.

Enjoy reading and do give us your feedback.



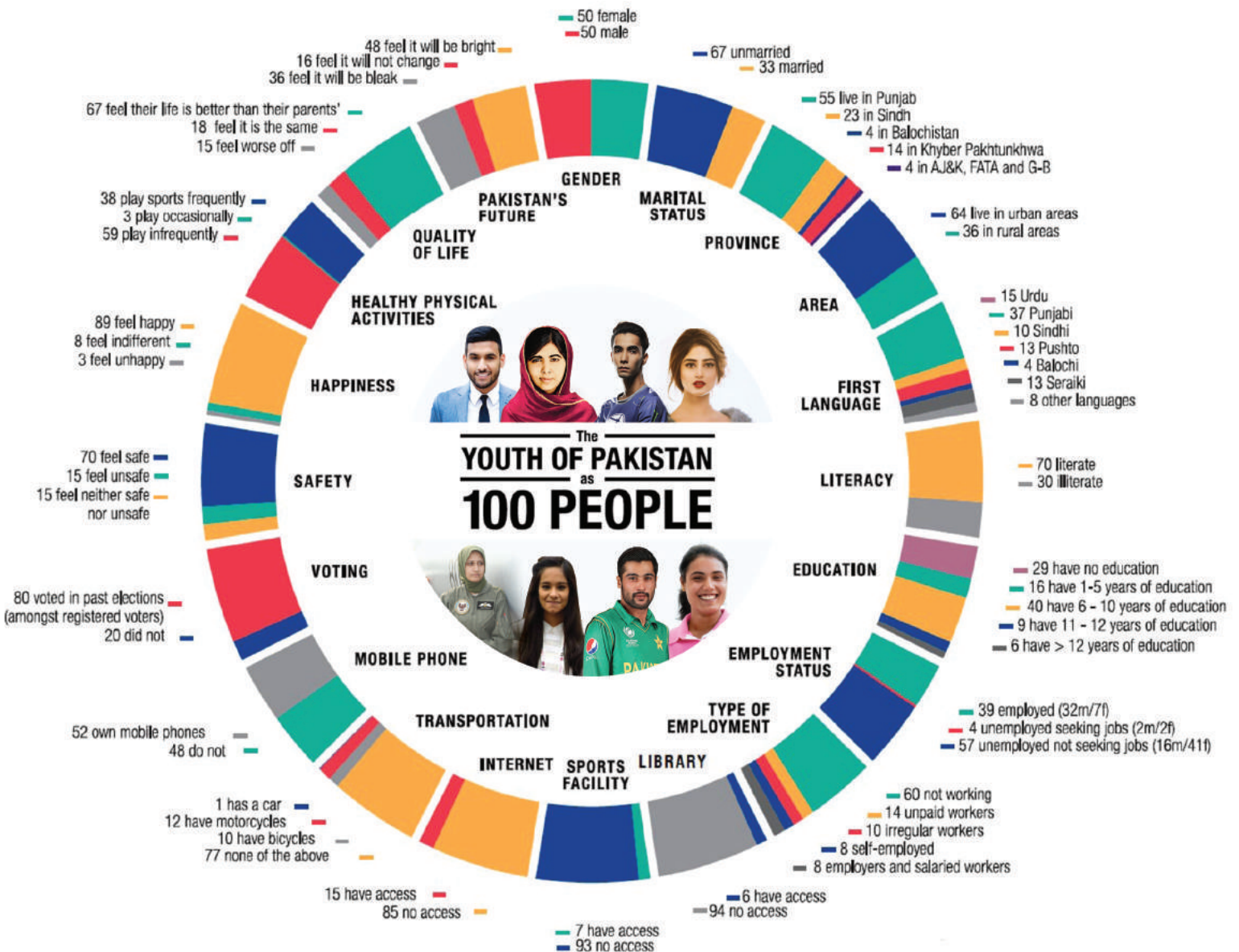
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# The Future is Young and so is پاکستان



Dr. Adil Najam, Meeran Jamal & Umer Akhlaq Malik

A staggering 90 percent of the world's 1.8 billion youth live in less developed countries, with almost one fourth concentrated in South Asia. Pakistan is currently not only one of the youngest countries in the world, but also the second youngest in South Asia after Afghanistan.

The world is young, but Pakistan is even younger, 29 percent of Pakistanis are between the ages of 15 and 29, and overall 64 percent are below the age of 30. Pakistan has the largest numbers of young people ever recorded in its history, and this number will continue to increase till about 2050.

However, the youth are no longer only the future, they are the present too. The question is what are we going to do about it? Are we going to invest in these young people, realise the potential of the much-feted youth bulge or are we just going to sit as spectators and see yet another opportunity of a better tomorrow grow old with time?

They can define the direction we are headed in as a society. Not tomorrow, but today! The question is while this generation is visible everywhere, we see them on the streets and on our TV screens, but do we understand their thoughts, their needs and their aspirations? Do we appreciate what it means to be young in Pakistan? Do we recognise that the "youth" is not just a homogenous mass?

Interestingly, despite the growing political consensus about the youth's significance for economic growth, and the importance of reflecting their needs in policymaking, there has never been a comprehensive survey encompassing all aspects of the Pakistani youth and their lives. The recently released Pakistan National Human Development Report (NHDR) on youth, commissioned by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Pakistan, was the first step towards understanding what it means to be young in Pakistan.

The NHDR is essentially a report "by the youth, for the youth". Having

been involved in this journey, we can say with confidence that this has been an intensely inclusive and participatory process. Together, we reached out to a total of 130,000 individuals across the country, including politicians, policy professionals, pundits, public intellectuals, personalities, and of course, lots of young people.

We spent a great deal of time listening to young Pakistanis from all across the country, with a special focus on the underprivileged and the marginalised. This was done through the National Youth Perceptions Survey, the Razakar (volunteers) programme, #KhwabPakistan (Dream Pakistan, involving young leaders), Your Idea Counts campaign, youth conferences, an art competition, video messages, radio shows and with the use of online platforms, like Twitter and Facebook.

What we learnt has left us dazed, amazed, elated, disturbed, hopeful and scared. All at the same time. Most of all, it has left us convinced that the future of Pakistan — good or bad — will be determined by those who are presently between the ages of 15 and 29.

However, the richest insights came neither through the experts nor through the data collected. They came from 81 national youth consultations held with the young people of Pakistan from all different corners; from Kalash to Karachi

to Khuzdar; from Gwadar to Gujjar Khan to Ghizer. The wide array of opinions and aspirations we heard from these young people confirmed the basic heterogeneous composition of Pakistan's youth. So, we went a step further, by using our survey and other data to visualise what the youth of Pakistan would look like if we could reduce all of them

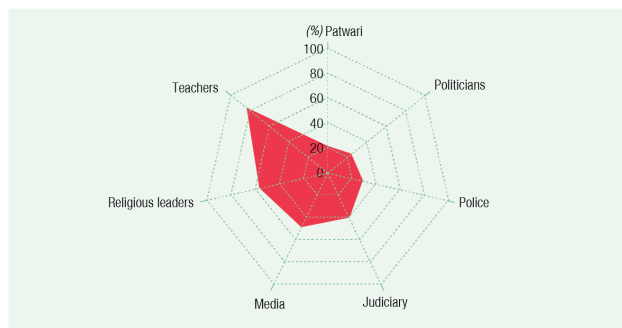
**“ Are we going to invest in these young people, realise the potential of the much-feted youth bulge or are we just going to sit as spectators and see yet another opportunity of a better tomorrow grow old with time**

to a representative sample of 100 young people.

The results were a mix of the obvious and the very surprising. The most obvious, but still worth mentioning nonetheless, is that out of a 100 young people in Pakistan, as many as 55 would live in Punjab, 23 in Sindh, 14 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and only 4 in Balochistan. The remaining 4 would come from Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan and FATA. On education we can say that 30 of the 100 would not be able to read or write. Only six would have 12 years or more of education, 29 would have none. Unsurprisingly, 94 of the 100 would have no access to a library. Only 38 out of the 100 youth will play sports frequently. Moreover, only seven out of 100 will have access to sports facilities.

In terms of communication links: 52 percent would own a mobile phone, but only 15 would have access to the in-

Young people's trust in various public figures and institutions



Source: UNDP estimates based on National Youth Perception Survey 2015.

**Celebrating People of Pakistan**

**Arfa Karim (1995 - 2012)**

*"If you want to do something big in your life, you must remember that shyness is only the mind. If you think shy, you act shy. If you think confident you act confident."*

Arfa Karim was a Pakistani computer prodigy who, in 2004 at the age of nine, became the youngest Microsoft Certified Professional and had her name in the Guinness Book of World Records until 2008. She was invited by Bill Gates to visit Microsoft Headquarters in the United States. Arfa received a Pride of Performance award from the Government of Pakistan.

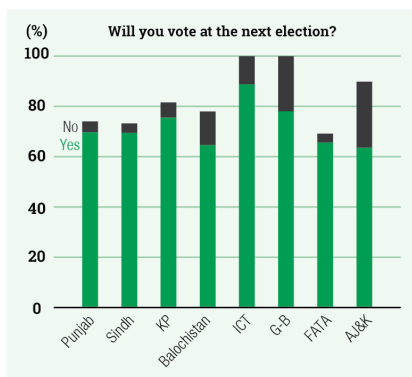
“It has left us convinced that the future of Pakistan – good or bad – will be determined by those who are presently between the ages of 15 and 29.

ternet. Of the 100, only 23 would have their own transportation, whereas only one would have a car, 12 a motorcycle, and 10 a bicycle.

Positively, political engagement amongst the young is very high: while, only 24 will say they trust political leaders, 90 percent of males and 55 percent of women express their intent to vote in the next elections. Happily for the country, 70 of the 100 young Pakistanis would say they feel safe, 89 would say they feel happy, 67 would say their life is better than their parents, And 48 would say that Pakistan’s future is bright (as opposed to the 36 who believe it would be bleak).

In short, the world of young Pakistanis is as diverse, differentiated, and divided as the rest of Pakistan. However, they also have greater expectations and aspirations, which, if nurtured properly, could yield high dividends. Along with

#### Future voting behaviour of youth by provinces/regions



Source: UNDP estimates based on National Youth Perception Survey 2015.

this comes much impatience and restlessness which, if ignored, could result in disaster.

Whether one seeks high payoff or reduced risk, there is no better investment to make in Pakistan today than

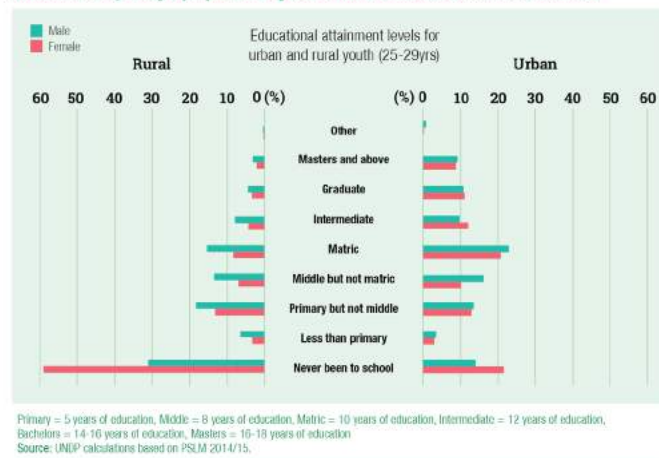
investment in the youth. Our research posits that thoughtful and immediate investment in youth development - providing them with what we call the three E’s; quality education, gainful employment and meaningful engagement opportunities, can keep the country’s tide moving in the right direction; empowering them to unleash their potential. Deny them, and what we will end up with is an angry and anguished youth.

### Education

Despite, Article 25A of Pakistan’s Constitution which promises education to all children of school-going age, we still have a high number of children who are out of school or without an education. This made us wonder, how long would it take to fully implement Article 25A and get all the children - or at least a majority - in Pakistan enrolled within the education system. Our calculations gave us a harrowing answer.

At the current net enrolment growth rate of almost one percent, it will take another 58 years to reach the target of ‘zero out-of-school’ children, that is,

While a significant proportion of youth (25 – 29 years) in urban areas manages to attain at least matric, a major proportion of youth in rural areas has never been to school.



Primary = 5 years of education, Middle = 8 years of education, Matric = 10 years of education, Intermediate = 12 years of education, Bachelors = 14-16 years of education, Masters = 16-18 years of education  
Source: UNDP calculations based on PSLM 2014/15.

we would meet it in the year 2076! To get to the target sooner we increased the net enrollment, and found out that to meet the goal before 2050, we would need to double the net growth rate in school enrollment. Whereas, to reach the Sustainable Development Goal target of 2030, we would have to nearly quadruple the current net enrollment growth rate.

This poses a huge challenge, however we discovered an even bigger challenge to be the “quality of education”.

The current situation classifies quality education as a luxury, accessible only to those who can pay the price. This creates further class distinctions in society, as the opportunities in life for those with quality education are far better than those with poor quality education. This has a direct bearing on the second ‘E’: Employment.

### Employment

The youth makes up 41.6 percent of Pakistan’s total labour force, and almost 4 million young people attain working age every year in Pakistan, we became curious to know the amount of jobs that would be needed to absorb everyone into the job market.

Therefore, we estimated that to absorb this populace into the job market - at the current participation and unemployment levels (5.8 percent), considering the number of retirees - Pakistan needs to create 4.5 million new jobs over the next 5 years (0.9 million jobs annually). Daunting as this challenge may seem, it is an achievable goal. The much more important, and difficult, task

is to provide gainful employment.

The problem is that on the one hand the employers complain that the majority of young workers lack necessary skills and qualification for entering the job market. On the other hand, they produce a bulk of low quality jobs that are casual, unreliable, and

unsafe, without rudimentary benefits or basic dignity for the worker. This upsets the balance of demand and supply in the labour market.

The crisis is even deeper for women in the workplace. Just like the lack of toilets in schools are a major reason for girls to drop out, the lack of basic facilities, such as transportation, maternity leaves, and anti-harassment laws, in the workplace become an exclusionary

device for the female employee.

Merely educating young people and providing jobs does not empower them, unless they themselves feel that they can, in some capacity, influence the decisions that shape their lives. This leads us to the third ‘E’ that is interlinked with the other two E’s education and employment.

## Engagement

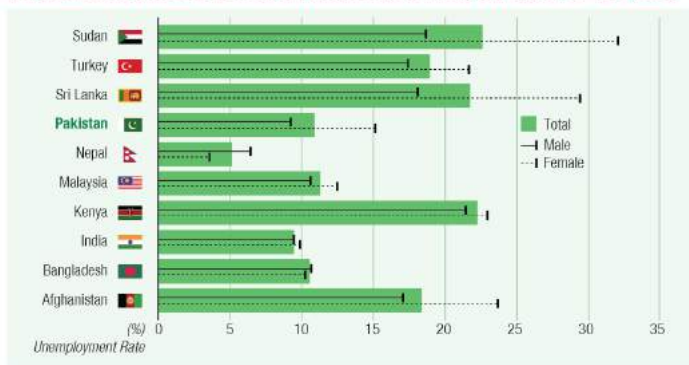
The third ‘E’ is meaningful “Engagement”: the belief amongst the young that they have a voice in the most important decisions that impact their lives. It was saddening to hear that most young people believe that they are never heard, and felt that they had no choice in making the most important decisions in their lives. It was alarming to realize

we spoke to young people in the terror-stricken city, two things became very clear. First, this was a generation that had grown up with violence and insecurity. Second, in too many of the recent terrorist attacks, it is the young who do the killing and it is also the young who are dying. Even as things become better, the scars of this legacy will not heal easily.

Also evident was the fact that the intolerance, doubt and distrust that defines our society at large has been passed on to our young. Within this context, the space for meaningful engagement is even more constrained. On the other hand, our research found out that despite the constraints the desire to engage is palpable. This is evident from examples of entrepreneurial energy — for business as well as social causes — that

find their way to shine across all geographies and classes. A few good examples are: the invention of the designer naan, the introduction of women-focused pink rickshaws, a group of young women reclaiming public spaces

Regional comparison of unemployment rates amongst youth (15 -24 years)



Source: ILO 2016f.

that they were desperate to find ways to make their voices heard.

The context, however, does not make things easier. Our research teams visited Peshawar literally days after the horrendous APS terror attack. As

**“However, they also have greater expectations and aspirations, which, if nurtured properly, could yield high dividends. Along with this comes much impatience and restlessness which, if ignored, could result in disaster.**

and defying conservative social norms by “loitering” at tea-stalls and cafes, the spontaneous blossoming of Dewar-i-Meharbarani across all major cities in Pakistan and various app development sprouting everywhere.

Young people in all domains and at all levels, from different geographies and backgrounds, are demanding change and demonstrating that they are willing and able to “be the change” that they want.

We realized, the challenges in education, employment and engagement for our youth are, indeed, monumental. Yet, with the youth willing to do what it takes to change things, they are not insurmountable. Pakistan’s youth is buzzing with brilliant, innovative ideas, propelled by unbounded energy and a desire to act. These three years of lis-

tening has reinforced our belief that the most important and best source of ideas to help the youth are from the youth themselves.


We just need to listen, respect, and learn from them. They warrant a favourable policy environment, institutional support and the societal space to nurture their energies and ideas. They deserve better than to have to fill in for deficiencies of the state and society that confront them.

The choice between providing Pakistan’s youth this environment, support and space, or not, is the difference between a future defined by a youth boom or a youth bust.



*Dr. Adil Najam is the co-lead author for Pakistan National Human Development Report. He is the inaugural dean of the Pardee School of Global Studies at Boston University, and has previously served as vice-chancellor of the LUMS university. Umer is a Policy Analyst with UNDP Pakistan. He has previously worked with Mahbub ul Haq Centre contributing to South Asia Human Development Report. Meeran is a Young Professional associated with the Report and contributed significantly to research and advocacy for the Report. She holds a Masters from University of Nottingham in International Development Management.*

Celebrating People of Pakistan



Abdul Sattar Edhi (1928 – 2016)

“When you stop living for luxuries, you understand the real meaning of life.”

The celebrated philanthropist set up a nationwide network of humanitarian centers and the world’s biggest volunteer ambulance network, saving thousands of lives in Pakistan. Starting from just \$500 at the time of the partition in 1947, he created a foundation which took in more than 50,000 orphans and had a fleet of 1,800 ambulances, 28 rescue boats and 2 airplanes to help save lives in emergencies.

# *Religious Minorities: The Significant "Others"*



*Asif Aqeel*

It was around 3p.m. when two suicide bombers almost simultaneously entered the men's and women's campus of the International Islamic University in Islamabad on October 20, 2009. The first one, wearing a burqa and women's sandals, shot the guard at the gate and then raced towards the cafeteria to cause maximum damage where about 150 girls were chatting and having lunch.

Sensing the danger, Parvaiz Masih, who had started working there only two weeks earlier, rushed towards the bomber and overpowered him, only 10 feet outside the entrance of the cafeteria. Masih had no relatives inside the building and the students whose lives he was attempting to save, had never given him another look. He fitted into the discriminatory stereotype in Pakistan, a Christian working as a janitor, an occupation despised in the Indian subcontinent and assigned only to an outcaste, yet it was he who responded bravely to the call of humanity.

Despite all the social, cultural and religious differences and repeated warnings from the bomber, that he would blow himself up, Masih stood firm, insisting that he would not let him enter as "there were girls inside". Masih's bravery cost him his life, as the bomber triggered an explosion scattering both of their limbs all across the hall.

Two minutes later, the second bomber blew himself up outside the room of Shariah Law Department Chairman Prof. Dr. Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq. It was the first time in Pakistan, the terrorist's specifically targeted women. The incident claimed five lives and Masih



Bani Israel graveyard in Karachi, located South-East of the Haji Camp area

saved dozens.

Though Masih made many Pakistani Christians proud that day, his chivalry has long been forgotten, and there has been no recognition of his service to humanity by the state.

The tale of other religious minorities is no different from that of Masih. Religious minorities have made invaluable contributions to the life of Pakistan, far greater than what they are recognized for, given their percentage in Pakistan's population.

### Pakistan's Religious Minorities

Only seventy one years ago, the part of the subcontinent, now known as Pakistan, had a large number of Hindus, Sikhs, Jews and Jains. It had a large number of Western, Anglo-Indian, Goan and Punjabi Christians as well. The partition of the subcontinent dramatically changed demographics of the area, especially of Sindh and Punjab. The upper caste Hindus and Sikhs migrated to India and a large number of Muslims migrated to Pakistan.

Thousands of Hindu, Sikh and Jain temples, Shamsan-ghats (crematoriums) and colonial era churches can be seen across the country. Still so many places have Hindu, Jain, Sikh or Christian names that remind Pakistan of its culturally rich history.

Today, Pakistan is a 210 million strong nation, with roughly 3.43 percent religious minorities. The latest data on religious minorities has not been released by the Census Bureau yet. However, the data released by NADRA, shows that there are 3.63 million registered voters and the projected popula-

tion is over 7 million. The census data records minorities as Hindus, Christians, Scheduled Castes, Ahmedis and "Other Religions".

The "Other Religions" includes Parsis, Sikhs, Buddhists and Baha'is. The 1998 census included Jews as well. And then there are people of the Kalasha Valleys who observe a religion close to ancient Hinduism.

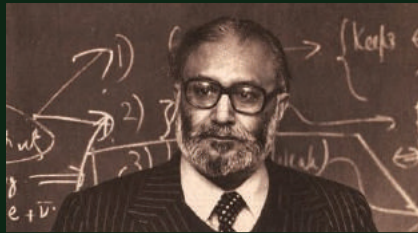
### Jews and the Ten Lost Tribes of Ancient Israel in Pakistan

The 1941 census showed that there were 1,199 Jews living in what is now Pakistan and 1,051 lived in Karachi. According to one report, there were some 809 Jews in Pakistan in 2013 and a Jewish graveyard, Mewa Shah Graveyard, is still preserved in Karachi.

The Jews arrived in India after

Minority Voters in 2018 General Elections	
Minority	Votes
Total	3.63m
Hindus	1.77m
Christians	1.64m
Baha'is	31,453
Ahmadis	167,505
Sikhs	8,852
Parsis	4,235

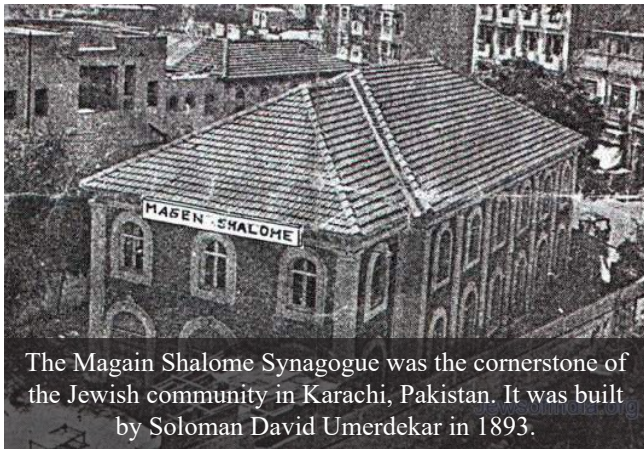
Celebrating People of Pakistan



Prof. Dr. Abdus Salam (1926 - 1996)

"Scientific thought and its creation is the common and shared heritage of mankind."

Prof. Dr. Abdus Salam was a renowned theoretical physicist and a co-recipient of the Nobel Prize in Physics for his ground-breaking work on the formulation of the electroweak theory; making him the first Pakistani to secure this grand prize. His dedication to the field netted him qualifications and work from the world's most prestigious universities; including University of Cambridge and Imperial College of Science and Technology.



The Magen Shalome Synagogue was the cornerstone of the Jewish community in Karachi, Pakistan. It was built by Soloman David Umerdekar in 1893.

invasions and mass migrations from Jerusalem. This land, on the crossroads of three continents – Asia, Africa and Europe – often played a role as a buffer zone among ancient Babylonian, Assyrian, Egyptian, Greek and Roman empires and it remained under Byzantine, European and Islamic rulers much of time.

From 1050 BC to 930 BC, the twelve tribes of Israel lived in the land of Canaan when Prophets David and Solomon ruled them. It is from this “Golden Age” the six sided flag of Israel was given the name of “Seal of Solomon” or “Star of David”.

But then the Israelites got divided into two states: the tribes of Benjamin and Judah became a Jewish state called the Southern Kingdom of Israel and the rest of the ten tribes became an Israelite state called the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

In 722 BC, the Northern Kingdom of Israel was ransacked by the famous Assyrian king Sargon II who deported many of Israelites to various parts of the kingdom.

Although Jerusalem, the capital of the southern Jewish kingdom was also besieged and destroyed by Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar II in 587 BC and Jews were deported to Babylon, the Jews returned to Jerusalem after 70 years. Since then, they believed they are the “pure” Israelites and any other Israelites people were “impure” and are strongly segregated communities.

Three main Jewish groups had arrived in the Indian subcontinent: Baghdadi, Bene Israel and Cochin Jews. The Bene Israel mainly lived in the Bombay presidency which includes current day

Sindh. These folks believed that they were a part of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel.

Hebrew University Prof. Shalva Weil believes that they started arriving in the subcontinent no less than two thousand years ago through sea routes and landed at Konkon Coast,

south of Bombay. They were absorbed into the indigenous culture and adopted the Brahmanic caste stratification system in villages. They were called Shanwar Telis, or “Shabbat-observing oilmen”, “because they did not work on the Sabbath”, Weil tells.

Weil in the Encyclopedia of the Jewish Diaspora, notes down the chronology of the Bene Israel people. Around 175BC, these people arrived on the shores of India. In the 19th century, they settled in the “the western part of Maharashtra to nearby cities, chiefly Bombay but also Poona, Ahmedabad, and Karachi, the latter in present-day Pakistan.” In the 20th century, they built synagogues in New Delhi, Karachi, Pune, Ahmedabad and Aden. In 1893, Bene Israel’s built famous Magen Shalom Synagogue or “The Bene Israel Masjid”, locally called “Yahoodi Masjid” in Karachi in the area that is now

“ The Kalasha retain their ancient culture and their religion. Many in the closely-knit Kalasha community believe that they descend from the soldiers of the Alexander the Great who were left behind.

Ranchore Line. The community set up the Young Man’s Jewish Association in 1903 and build a Hebrew school and Nathan Abraham Hall in 1918.

There was a small Jewish community living in Peshawar, the community also had a prayer facility with two halls, which was shut down after the first anti-Jewish riots. Moses Samuel Reuben, a foreman in the North-Western Railways, was attacked in July 1947 after which he migrated to Karachi. Demonstrators attacked Jews and their synagogue in Karachi after Israel was declared an independent state in May, 1948. Some members also migrated to Israel or the UK via India. On July 17, 1988, the Magen Shalom Synagogue was demolished by the orders of President Zia-ul-Haq.

### The Kalasha of Chitral

The culture of the Kalasha community is in danger of being forgotten. The three Kalash valleys in Chitral district, Khyber Pakhtunkhawa, sur-



Kalash women

rounded by the Hindu Kush mountain range, covered in snow most of the year, are inhabited by about 4,000 Kalasha people. Unlike their Siah-Posh (black-robed) neighbors in Kafirstan, known as Nuristan in Afghanistan, the Kalasha people have not converted to Islam.

The people of these valleys speak Kalashamun, a Dardic language of Indo-Aryan group that falls under the broader Indo-European group of languages. The Kalasha retain their ancient culture and their religion. Many in the closely-knit Kalasha community believe that they descend from the soldiers of the Alexander the Great who were left behind. However, their animistic religion is closer to ancient Hinduism, recognizing multiple gods and spirits rather than following the faith of the Greeks in Alexander's army.

**“The greatest feature that distinguishes them from their Muslim neighbors is that ‘their women are free.’ Kalasha women do not wear a hijab or headscarf; nor are they confined to the home in purdah.**

Regarding the Kalasha women, the Encyclopedia of the Peoples of Asia and Oceania notes that *“the greatest feature that distinguishes them from their Muslim neighbors is that ‘their women are free.’ Kalasha women do not wear a hijab or headscarf; nor are they confined to the home in purdah.”* It is for this reason, the Pakistani state endeavored to convert them to Islam in the 1950s because *“Kalasha women were seen as immoral and tempting to Muslim men”*. But now they are constitutionally protected people who cannot be legally forced to convert.

The Kalasha's make living through agriculture and by moving their herds of cattle, sheep and goats seasonally to find pasturage and water. Agriculture is mainly women's work who grow wheat, corn, barley, apples, walnuts, grapes and mulberries.



Parsees celebrating Khordad Sal, birth of Lord Zoroaster, in Karachi

Within the Kalash culture it is still believed that Kalasha women are “inherently polluted”. When in the summer the snow melts and leaves behind rich fields of grass, men move to high elevations with their herds. But in winter, men bring their herds down to lower elevations and live with their wives and children. *“Even in winter when herds and families are in the same location, the men's sacred goats must be protected from the polluting influences of women and from possession by evil spirits.”*

Since 1970s, the government had made roads that link the Kalasha valleys with the rest of the country. From Upper Dir through to Lowari Pass provides the easiest access. But these developments have benefitted the timber companies more than the Kalasha people.

A report by the Human Rights Commission in 2017 says that the conversion of Kalasha women by Muslim

men is the greatest threat to this culture and may cause it to go extinct.

### The Philanthropist Parsees

In Pakistan, Zoroastrians are the most affluent and influential minority. Despite being no more than 5,000 in number, they have made their name in politics, media, business and education.

The most prominent Parsee name that comes to mind is of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's wife Rattanbai, the daughter of Sir Dinshaw Petit. Also, Dr. Mistry from Bombay was in the medical team that sought to save Mr. Jinnah “towards the end.”

Parsees are the Zoroastrians who came to India after Iran was invaded by Arab armies between AD 636-AD651. The word means “Farsi” or “Persian”. Most of the Zoroastrians marry among themselves. They have strong nucleus family structure, with low divorce rates.

Minorities in 1951 census			
Minority	East Pakistan	West Pakistan	Total
Scheduled Castes	5,052,000	369,000	5,421,000
Caste Hindus	4,187,000	162,000	4,349,000
Christians	107,000	434,000	541,000
Buddhists	319,000	-	319,000
Parsis	-	5,000	5,000
Others	40,000	2,000	42,000

*“The basis of Karachi’s Parsee wealth was their role as military contractors and commissariat agents from the days of Sir Charles Napier,”* who conquered Sindh in 1943, notes John R. Hinnells’ book *The Zoroastrian Diaspora: Religion and Migration*.

Hormusji Dadabhoy Ghadialy and Burjorji Nanabhoy Bilimoria were amongst the first Parsees to arrive in Karachi. They worked with the British forces as contractors in the first Anglo-Afghan War (1839-1842) and made a fortune. The Parsees supplied general goods including liquor as merchants and many worked at the docks. But there were also a few Parsees who developed interest in medical science and engineering.

The major developments in Karachi were opening the port in 1853. Ardeshir Wadia, a government employee at the Bombay dockyard, started the Indus steam flotilla to develop Indus trade. Byramjee Eduljee arrived in Karachi in the 1850s and developed the liquor trade. Another name was Byramji Pirojshah Minwalla who became an owner of the fishing vessels. Dinshaw Maneckji established the first native press in the region. Hormusji Jamshed Rustomji was the first to develop “extensive European trade” and imported wine but also had business in insurance and real estate. In 1884, Rustomji started Karachi Tramway Company with the help of the Europeans. The Parsee firm, Ardashir & Co. Parsis was one of the important founders of the Karachi Chamber of Commerce in 1860.

It is said: “O Parsee, their second name is philanthropy!!!” Their presence proved this in Karachi.

In the second Afghan War (1878 – 1880), some of the Parsees, including Seth Edulji Dinshaw, made fortunes. Dinshaw was the biggest single donor to the Sindh Arts College in 1883. In the middle of the nineteenth century, he owned almost half of the Karachi city.

When the “Vicerene, Lady Dufferin, collected funds to build a hospital in Karachi in 1884, she collected Rs 10,000 from the whole population of the city. Edulji Dinshaw, personally, gave Rs 85,000”. Lady Dufferin Hospital is where the late Prime Minister of Pakistan Benazir Bhutto gave birth to Bilaw-

al Bhutto Zardari.

The British founded a university in 1921, to train the engineers in charge of building the Sukkur Barrage. The Dinshaw family provided the main funding, which is why it was named after Seth’s son Nadirshaw Edulji Dinshaw (NED) University of Engineering and Technology. The two white statues of the Dinshaw’s were placed in the city of Karachi, but now they are nowhere to be seen.

By 1911, when their population was around 2,000 the Parsee community had set up their temple, Bai Virbaiji Sopariwala (BVS) Parsi High School, Karachi Parsi Gymkhana, three charity dispensaries, charity flats, a home for Parsee widows, Parsi Maternity Hospital and Young Men’s Zoroastrian Association.

In 1859, the first school was opened for Parsee students to teach them Gujrati. It was later moved to a larger house donated by Shapurji Soparivala and the school was named after his wife Bai Virbaiji Sopariwala. In 1918, a separate premises was arranged for girls named the Mama Parsi Girls’ Secondary School. After partition in 1947, *“on the personal request of the Quaid-I-Azam, the elders of the Parsi community immediately opened the doors of the school to all Muslim and other non Parsi children of the new nation.”*

The flood of migrants to Karachi changed it from a Hindu majority city to a Muslim majority city. In 1951, about 57% of residents of Karachi were refugees. However, the new minorities continued to influence Karachi’s lifestyle

**“ It is said: “O Parsee, their second name is philanthropy!!!” Their presence proved this in Karachi.**

and culture.

Bapsi Sidhwa, a Parsi novelist wrote the “Ice Candy Man”, which was later adapted into a movie, capturing the trauma of partition.

The Marker family has played a prominent role in politics. Kekobad Ardeshir Marker’s (1896–1984) father started off as a supplier to the British and both of them served as senior civil judges. Kekobad’s son Jamsheed Marker served as an ambassador in the United States from 1986 to 1989.

Sidhwa’s father Mr. P.D. Bhandara was member in the first constituent assembly who supported the separate electorates for religious minorities. She writes that Mr. Bhandara had a liquor shop on the Mall in Lahore. Her brother, MP Minocher Bhandara (MP Bhandara) was a seasoned politician. His son, Ispahanyar Bhandara, is the current CEO of the largest liquor company in Pakistan, the Murree Brewery, and was a National Assembly member in the most recent PML-N tenure.

Ardshir Cowasjee (13 April 1926 – 24 November 2012) was a renowned Dawn columnist and was also Chairman of the East & West Steamship Company, the oldest ship company in Pakistan.

Supreme Court Justice Dorab



Sikhs offering pilgrimage at Gurdwara Panja Sahib

Framrose Patel (13 April 1926 – 24 November 2012) was a Parsee who is famous for his minority decision “in a split decision of 4–3 that upheld the decision of Lahore High Court that handed down death penalty to former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.” Justice Patel was also the founding member of the Asian Human Rights Commission in 1987 and co-founder of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan. Justice Patel’s contemporary Rustam Sidhwa (1 September 1927 – 31 March 1997) was also Supreme Court Justice from 1989 until 1992.

After partition, the number of Parsees increased to 5,018 in 1951 but then their population began to dwindle. In 1961, they were 4,685 and by 1995 there were only 2,824 Parsees in Pakistan. Knells identifies two reasons: “the common Parsee demographic reflects a pattern of an ageing population, preference of interfaith marriages and having smaller families”. Many Parsee families have also migrated to western countries.

## Sikhs

Only 20,000 Sikhs live in Pakistan but they have an extensive heritage in current day Pakistan. Sikhs mostly inhabit the Nankana Sahib, Peshawar and Hasan Abdal districts. A small number of Sikhs were living in FATA, but they left from there and migrated to one of these three areas, after the Taliban threatened them and ordered them either to pay jizya or convert. The Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (PGPC) represents this small community.

Gura Nanak, the founder of Sikhism was born in 1469 in what is now

Census 1961			
Minority	East Pakistan	West Pakistan	Total
Scheduled Castes	4,993,046	418,011	5,411,057
Caste Hindus	4,386,623	203,794	4,590,417
Christians	148,903	583,884	732,787
Buddhists	373,867	2,445	376,312
Parsis	193	5,219	5,412
Others	31,793	872	32,665

Nankana Sahib. There are hundreds of Sikh places of worship in Pakistan, called Gurudawara (the Door of the Guru).

Most of the Sikhs do business and run their shops of clothes and other general merchandise, while few of them are inducted in public service. However, they were barred from entering the armed forces until 2005 when the first Sikh, Harcharan Singh, was inducted into the Pakistan Army.

## Baha’is

Although we have more Parsees and Sikhs in politics, the largest number of people after Hindus and Christians are the Baha’is in Pakistan, but because they live a quiet life, so many of us do not realize their presence amongst us.

The Baha’is community is the 3rd largest minority in Pakistan. According to media reports, there are at least 33,734 registered voters belonging to the Baha’i community in Pakistan.

The roots of the Baha’i faith go back to 1844, when Baha-ullah, born Mirza Husayn Ali Nuri, founded the

Baha’i faith in Iran. Baha’i faith preaches that all religions are good and teaches unity and equality of humankind. During Baha-ullah’s lifetime, Shaykh Sa’id Hindi from Multan adopted the Baha’i faith. Baha-ullah himself visited Lahore, Sialkot, Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. The local

Spiritual Assembly of Quetta and Hyderabad were formed in 1943.

In late 1970s, the Baha’is of Pakistan expanded their services in the educational sector by establishing a Montessori School in Karachi, today known as “New Day Secondary School”. By 1974, there were Baha’i converts from the Bheel community in Thatha.

An influx of Baha’is came to Pakistan after Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini’s Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979. According to an unconfirmed report, President Zia-ul-Haq declared them non-Muslim in 1981. Most migrated to western countries.

In 2004, there were at least 250 Baha’i families in Lahore with their house of worship. However, their major challenge has been, obtaining a place for an exclusively Baha’i graveyard.

The Baha’i encyclopedia says that Baha’is in Pakistan are free to hold worship ceremonies but they are not allowed to travel to Israel.

Last year, Baha’u’llah’s 200th birthday was celebrated around the world. A program was arranged in Islamabad which was attended by the then Christian National Assembly member Asiya Nasir.

**“ Untouchability in India, like the racial discrimination issue in the West, rested upon the idea of the superiority of one section of people over others on account of their birth.**



Buddhist temple in Islamabad’s Diplomatic Enclave

Census 1972	
Minority	Population
Scheduled Castes	603,369
Caste Hindus	296,837
Christians	907,861
Buddhists	4,318
Parsis	9,589
Others	205,250

## Buddhism

You may not have met a single Buddhist in Pakistan, but government statistics consistently show that a very small number of Buddhists live in Pakistan. A 2012 media report says that, 1,500 Pakistanis declared Buddhism as their religion. By 2018, this number has increased to 1,884.

Buddhism is the fourth largest religion in the world. Like Sikhism and Hinduism, Buddhism has a long history in the areas, which is now Pakistan. It took roots in these areas over 2,300 years ago during the Maurya Empire of Ashoka. Gandhara, what is now south of Khyber Pakhtunkhawa, was once predominantly a Buddhist stronghold. There are several historical sights of Buddhism in Taxila, Mingora, Swat and Peshawar. According to Emi Foulk, Buddhists now only live in Azad Kashmir and the only operating Buddhist temple is in the Diplomatic Enclave in Islamabad.

## Christianity

Christians make up about 1.5 percent of the total population and their highest concentration is in central Punjab. Those living in other parts of the country also have their roots in Punjab. Tradition dictates that, Jesus Christ's Apostle Thomas, evangelized as far as Taxila, but Christianity in today's Pakistan was brought by western Protestant

**“ Christianity in today's Pakistan was brought by western Protestant missionaries in the middle nineteenth century.**

missionaries in the middle nineteenth century. They were joined by the Catholics a few decades later.

With the British rule extending to the Punjab and Sindh in the middle of the nineteenth century, American and European missionaries also

strengthened their presence. Sometimes they were helped by the British and other times they were at odds with them.

In order to initiate conversion, especially among high classes, these missionaries set up schools, colleges and hospitals. The most prominent among them was Dr. Rev. Charles William, the founder of the Christian Mission College in 1864, later named after him, the Forman Christian College.

Dr. Forman setup the Rang Mahal School in Lahore in 1849. St. Patrick's School in Karachi was setup in 1861, St. Joseph's Convent School in Karachi in 1862, St. Denys School by the Anglican Bishop of Lahore in Murree in 1882,

Murray College in Sialkot in 1889, St. Anthony's High School in Lahore in 1892, Gordon College in Rawalpindi in 1893, Kinnaird College in Lahore in 1913, and many more prestigious institutions were set up.

These institutions hardly served to convert Hindu, Muslim and Sikh elite to Christianity but spread western understanding and knowledge. However, en masse conversion, unexpectedly, began with the most downtrodden people in Sialkot.

In order to improve lives of these new converts, more than a dozen Christian villages were founded: Martinpur and Youngsonabad villages in Nankana district (1899), Khushpur in Faisalabad (1900), Clarkabad in Kasur (1868), Ransonabad in Harappa, Mariamabad in Sheikhpura (1892), Montgomerywala in Toba Tek Singh (1898), Batemanabad in Toba Tek Singh (1900), Franciscabad in Jhang (1904), and Stuntzabad in Khanewal (1916), Shantinagar in Khanewal (1916), and Amritnagar in Khanewal (1916).

Christians were the only religious minority in the region, who unanimously stood side by side with the local Muslim communities at the time of indepen-



Christians celebrating Easter in Pakistan

## “ Two incidents in history - creation of Pakistan and creation of Bangladesh – have dramatically changed the demographics of the Hindus.

dence from British. Their leader Dewan Bahadur S.P. Singha was the speaker of the Punjab Assembly who supported Pakistan at the time of partition.

The Punjab Education Minister Sheikh Karamat Ali on January 5, 1948, said on the floor of the Punjab Assembly that *“We cannot deprive minorities, especially Christians, from their due rights ... The Christian minority will be given its due right in policy making in this cabinet.”* Ali thanked the three parliamentarians – SP Singha, Fazal Elahi, and CE Gibbon – for voting in Pakistan’s favor. He said *“We will hold Christians with respect for what they have done for us.”*

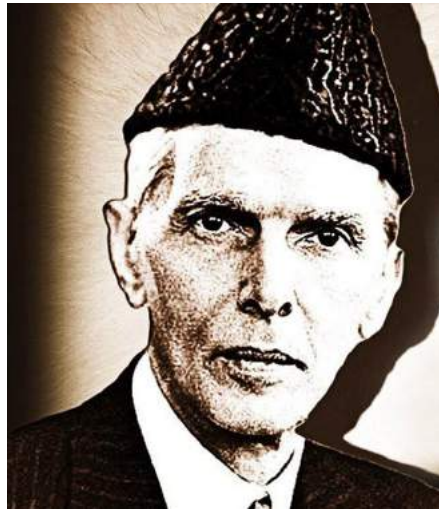
Because of these services of the Christian community, Fazal Elahi was elected unopposed as the Deputy Speaker in the first Punjab Assembly of West Pakistan. Chaudhry Chandu Lal Sundar Das, a lawyer, was elected Deputy Speaker in the second Punjab Assembly (1951 to 1955). Cecil Edward Gibbon was elected as the Deputy Speaker of the second Constituent Assembly in 1955, while another Christian Joshua Fazl-uddin, the former General Secretary of the Lahore High Court Bar Association, was appointed as the Deputy Law and Par-

Census 1981	
Religion	Population
Muslim	81,450,057
Ahmadi	104,244
Christian	1,310,426
Hindu	1,276,116
Parsi	7,007
Sikh	2,146
Budhist	2,639
Others	101,009

liamentary Affairs in the West Pakistan Assembly (1956 to 1958).

In the Pakistan Army, Major General (r) Peter Julian and Major General Noel Israel Khokhar achieved the highest rank ever awarded to a non-Muslim. Cecil Chaudhry, late Group Captain Pakistan Airforce, not only emerged as a national figure but also made his mark as humanist, educationist and a reformer par excellence.

In the field of music Saleem Raza, S. B. John and A Nayyer earned huge recognition. Benjamin Sisters literally defined an era of Pakistani sound and rhythm. Afia Nathaniel, the director of Dukhtar, and Ashir Azeem Gill, a civil servant turned director-producer of films (famous recently for “Maalik”) all come from the Christian community. Professor Christy Munir, Professor Sara Safdar, Professor Cusrow J Dubash, Dr. Mira Phailbus, Professor Bernadette



**“You are free; you are free to go to your temples. You are free to go to your mosques or to any other places of worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion, caste or creed—that has nothing to do with the business of the state.”**

Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah  
(August 11, 1947)

Dean, and Professor Farzand Masih have made a mark as educationists. Dr. Mira Phailbus that remained principal of Kinnaird College, Lahore for almost four decades became the symbol of quality education in the country. But naming a few individuals should not divert attention from the larger role Christians have played in Pakistan’s nation-building.

### Hinduism

A sizable Hindu population resides in the district of Tharparkar in Sindh on the South Eastern border between India and Pakistan to Bahawalpur and Rahim Yar Khan in Punjab. A small number of Hindus also live in Balochistan and

Census 1998	
Religion	Population
Total	132,352,279
Muslim	127,433,409
Christian	2,092,902
Hindu (Jati)	2,111,271
Ahmadi	286,212
Scheduled Castes	332,343
Others	96,142

Khyber Pakhtunkhawa.

According to the PEW Research Center, Pakistan has the fifth largest Hindu population in the world. The Pakistani Hindus speak a variety of languages including Sindhi, Gujrati, Marwari, Vaghri and Koli.

The 1998 census says that there are 1.6 percent Jati (upper caste), Hindus who make up about 3,360,000 living in this country while there are about 0.25 percent of 525,000 scheduled caste Hindus live in Pakistan.

Two incidents – creation of Pakistan and creation of Bangladesh – have dramatically changed the demographics of the Hindus.

Pakistan’s total population, according to the 1951 census, was 75.64 million. Out of this, 64.96 million were Muslims -- 32.73 million of them in West Pakistan and 32.23 million in East Pakistan. The vast majority of the remaining population, about 10.68 million, was of



Hindu woman in Tharparkar, Sindh. The white bangles show that she's from the Scheduled Caste.

Hindus living mostly in East Pakistan.

*"When the British Indian Empire was partitioned in 1947, 4.7 million Sikhs and Hindus left what is today Pakistan for India, and 6.5 million Muslims left India and moved to Pakistan,"* note Arif Hasan and Mansoor Raza in their report "Migration and Small Towns in Pakistan".

The 1941 census data shows that there were 21 percent Jati or upper caste Hindus and 5.6 percent scheduled caste Hindus in Sindh. In 1951 census, the number of Jati Hindus dropped from 21 to 3 percent as 7,500,000 Hindus migrated to India but the Scheduled Caste

Hindus increased to 6.9 percent which shows that they did not migrate.

Unlike West Pakistan, the Jati Hindus did not migrate in such a large number from East Pakistan to India.

According to the 1951 census, there were 369,000 Scheduled Castes and 162,000 upper caste Hindus in West Pakistan while in the East Pakistan the Scheduled Castes were 5,052,000 (about 12 percent of the East Bengal population) and Hindus were 4,187,000 (about 10 percent of East Bengal population). So Hindus and Scheduled Castes made up about 22 percent of the total population of East Pakistan.

Unique to India, casteism, based on ritually purity, is a millennia old system of social stratification in the Indian subcontinent. It attaches occupation with descent and affects every person's life in various ways. In the four castes system, the upper three are considered noble while the fourth is considered serving.

But almost one fifth of the population in the subcontinent are described as outcaste, "untouchables" who were forced into degrading occupations, not allowed to participate in politics, forced to live outside the village and not allowed to obtain education.

*"Untouchability in India, like the racial discrimination issue in the West, rested upon the idea of the superiority of one section of people over others on account of their birth. A Brahmin might be as poor as the untouchables, but he is not ill-treated by our society on that account,"* wrote Paladugu Parvathi Devi in her doctoral thesis for Acharya Nagarjuna University.

The British described them as the "depressed classes" who deserved special affirmative measures. The India Act 1935 through a schedule identified dozens of such depressed classes and since then they are described as "Scheduled Castes".

*"Of the sixteen districts in East Bengal, they were in majority in nine and in the other four districts their number was almost equal to that of the Caste Hindus. But they were under the influence of the upper class Hindus who had higher social status and a better economic position,"* notes Muhammad Mahfuzul Haq in his book "Electoral

## “When the British Indian Empire was partitioned in 1947, 4.7 million Sikhs and Hindus left what is today Pakistan for India, and 6.5 million Muslims left India and moved to Pakistan

Problems in Pakistan”, published in 1966.

Since the cessation of East Pakistan, the number of Hindus has dramatically dropped because the larger Hindu population was living there. But, interestingly, upper caste Hindus have now encouraged the Scheduled Castes to return as Jati Hindus in the census which is why the number of Scheduled Castes have dropped and Jati Hindus have swelled.

After partition, thousands of Hindu temples were left abandoned across the country. Many of them were confiscated or left unattended while others are run by the local Hindu population. The community in Sindh has long been complaining about the force conversion of their young women. Every year thousands of Hindus, mostly from upper castes, migrate to India.

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*Asif Aqeel is a prominent journalist, researcher and writer, and a vocal member of Pakistan's Christian community. His area of work is "Marginality & Exclusion" with focus on religious minorities. Apart from Christians, his research includes "Brahmanic Caste System" and its challenges to Pakistan's poor Hindu minorities. Asif holds degrees in MSc Sociology and MPhil in Public Policy and Governance and his MPhil thesis was "Post-Partition Rural to Urban Mass Migration and Subsequent Illegal Settlements of Punjabi Christians and their Adoption of the Sweeping Occupation in Pakistan." Asif has worked with the Daily Times and Express24/7 and several non-government organizations.*

**Celebrating People of Pakistan**

**Cecil Chaudhry (1941 - 2012)**

*"By birth I am a Christian but my religion is humanity."*

Group Captain Cecil Chaudhry was a Christian Pakistani academic, human rights activist, and veteran fighter pilot. He fought the 1965 war as a flight lieutenant and the 1971 war as a squadron leader. Chaudhry was awarded the Sitara-e-Jurat by the government of Pakistan. He was also an influential human rights activist and worked for the betterment of children with disabilities and for education reforms.

# Shahenshah-e-Qawwali

fondly remembered  
as the "Singing Buddha"

Ustad Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan passed away on 16th August, 1997.



**1948**

Born in Lyallpur (Faisalabad), immediately after partition. His family originated from Jalandar in Indian Punjab and moved to Pakistan.



**1964**

Having shown a penchant for singing since he was 10 years old, he performed in public for the first time at his father's funeral.



**1966**

Gave his first public performance along with his uncles, Ustad Mubarak Ali Khan & Ustad Salamat Ali Khan, gaining recognition as a Qawwal



**1971**

His uncle Ustad Mubarak died, leaving the family's legacy in his hands. Nusrat continued to study his father and uncle's style, producing beautiful music of his own.



**1985**

Performed at a concert in the United Kingdom at the World of Music, Arts and Dance Festival, and was promoted by the famed musician Peter Gabriel. Soon he was regularly performing throughout Europe.



**1987**

Received Pakistan's "Pride of Performance" award for his contribution to music.



**1989**

Toured the US for the first time and sang at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in New York.



**1992**

Nusrat became a Visiting Artist in the Ethnomusicology department at the University of Washington, Seattle.



**1995**

Honored with the UNESCO Music Prize. He also began contributing soundtracks to a number of popular films during this decade.





# DUM SPIRO SPERO:

'WHILE I BREATHE, I HOPE'

THE EVOLUTION OF CIVIL SERVICES IN PAKISTAN

ASIM IMDAD ALI

From being the state itself, to being the steel frame of the British Raj, to being powerful functionaries of the newly independent state, to being the development administrators, to being blunt tools in the hands of military and political masters, to being underlings and camp-followers, and unfortunately some even becoming business partners of lustful political regimes, the decline in the integrity and the performance of Pakistan's civil service is palpable. Whether it is maintaining the law and order, generating revenue, running trains on time, managing schools and hospitals, collecting municipal waste, conducting vote count, or maintaining fiscal discipline, the output of the state functionaries is hardly a civil or a true service.

## The Age of Robber Barons

In the pre-Raj days, entry into the East India Company service was chiefly patronage-based. The function of the Company-era administrators was to extract local resources of the Sub-Continent and ship them off to mother-metropolis in London. There were no codified laws to regulate the interaction of the state functionaries with the local population. It was an era of unregulated discretion and governance through force and personality. The interaction thus depended on the personal character, knowledge and sense of fair play of the individual administrator. A few officers were indeed honest and fair, however most were nothing short of being outright scoundrels and Robber Barons.

As the East India Company tightened its grip and extended its control in the sub-continent, it did attempt to train and discipline its officials to be fair in their dealing with the locals. This fair play was a necessity for maintaining stability which in turn was essential for optimal revenue collection. Previously, revenue collection in most cases was farmed out to officers who worked as contractors for the Company. The Company later introduced a revolutionary shift towards a salary-based administration. It ensured that the remuneration of its officers was commensurate with the breadth of their responsibilities and was sufficient to disincentivize any off-Company books, private corrupt practices aka robber barons.

Recruitment practices also started to change during the post Company-era. The Company-era officers, were recruited at a very young age and then sent to the Haileybury College to imbibe them with the knowledge and character deemed essential for their future governance roles. In the Presidency coastal towns, there were multiple men-on-the-spot: judges, municipal functionaries, policemen, railway men, district administrators. Most of the time these multiple officers functioned independently without much coordination and harmony.

## The Age of Steel-Frame

Then came the Raj in 1857 followed by the codification of laws. The Raj even at its peak lived in continuous fear of the local population. Hence the management of law and order trumped all other state functions. The civil servants at that



Charles Cornwallis (1738-1805) was a Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief of India

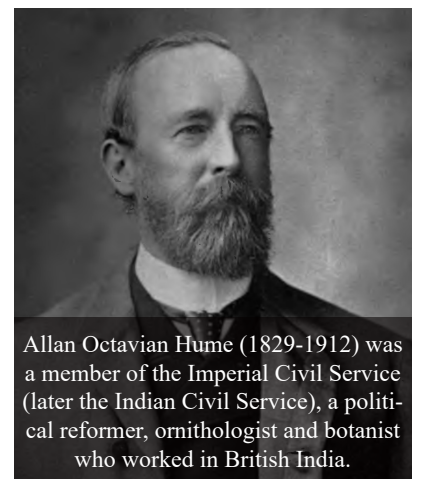
time were evaluated for their role in revenue collection and policing. The development goals of the state and evolution of judicial functions were always subordinated to the prime goal of maintaining law and order.

The Raj officials were bound by lengthy legal codes and detailed regulatory manuals that were aimed at reducing discretion and increasing discipline. The entire edifice was built on the principle of subsidiarity under which matters were required to be handled by the smallest, lowest or least-centralized competent authority.

One critical example of subsidiarity was enshrined in Section 551 of the Criminal Procedure Code. It stated that all powers conferred on the officer in charge of a police station (the much-reviled SHO) could be exercised by all his superiors, even up to the level of the Inspector

General of the Province. In other words, no police officer had any additional power that the SHO already did not have under the lengthy code. Hence, the junior most officer was delegated all these powers and he was expected to resolve matters at that local level.

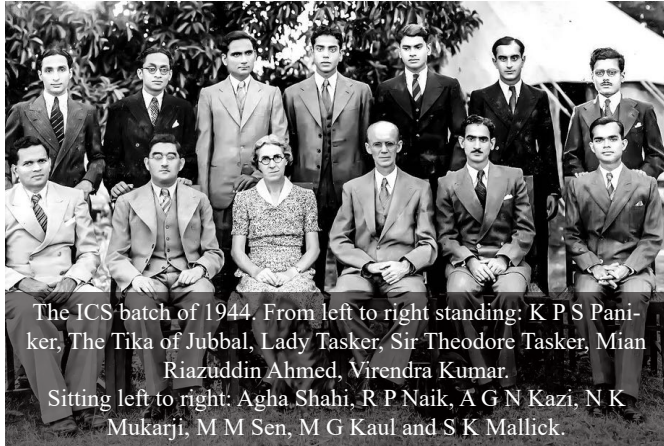
Once, the Raj extended its geographical limits, the old multi-functionary model was changed to more centralized control and more harmonious functioning. The judge, the railway man, the irrigation official, all could remain in the district, if so required by the Raj, but all had to report to one district functionary: the Deputy commissioner. The Deputy Commissioner, in fact, epitomized in himself all three branches of the state: the 'legislative' under Section 144 of the Criminal Proce-



Allan Octavian Hume (1829-1912) was a member of the Imperial Civil Service (later the Indian Civil Service), a political reformer, ornithologist and botanist who worked in British India.

Code whereby he could frame a law for a limited period of time in order to maintain order; the ‘judicial’ when he functioned as the magistrate of the district as well as the revenue collector deciding cases; and the ‘executive’ representing the Raj in the district. This was again in line with the principles of subsidiarity on which the entire system was built: the man on the spot was to be all powerful.

Even for the British Imperial history it was indeed an astonishing fact that the Raj was administered by a mere 1,000 or so civil servants, when in 1901 the total population of the sub-continent was about 300 million (equal to today’s US population). These competition-wallahs or the heaven-born, were selected in London through a merit-based system of rigorous



The ICS batch of 1944. From left to right standing: K P S Paniker, The Tika of Jubbal, Lady Tasker, Sir Theodore Tasker, Mian Riazuddin Ahmed, Virendra Kumar. Sitting left to right: Agha Shahi, R P Naik, A G N Kazi, N K Mukarji, M M Sen, M G Kaul and S K Mallick.

examination introduced in 1850s, had the highest educational qualifications, mostly belonged to the middle class, were bound in their conduct by codes and laws that were perhaps one of the longest ones in the world, and answerable only to the Governors and the Viceroy, ultimately, became the *steel frame of the Raj*. The term was first used by Lloyd George, the British Prime Minister, in 1922 during his speech in the House of Commons: *‘If you take that steel-frame out of the fabric, it will collapse. There is only one institution, we will not cripple, there is one institution, and we will not deprive of its functions...and that is that institution, which build up the British Raj – British Civil Service in India.’*

The same civil servants were also deputed to construct some landmark development projects across the sub-continent. These included major railways and irrigation networks, which survive to this day. Granted that as compared to the actual needs, these projects were much smaller in scope, and granted also that these were always designed for some imperial purpose, but these projects did have significant positive economic contributions. The civil servants working on these projects were skilled and dedicated people. Furthermore, some officers also left behind a legacy of value-creation through setting up colleges and hospitals in association with local philanthropists. There is no cavil with the fact that the entire system was based on meritocracy, run honestly by people of exceptional intellectual capacity.

## The Age of Mandarins

In 1947, the Indian Sub-Continent took the global lead in

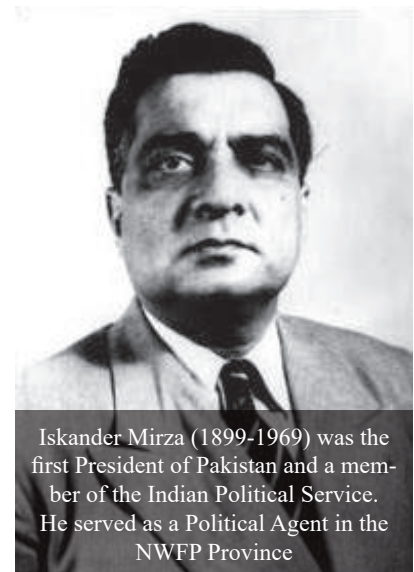
“ This was again in line with the principles of subsidiarity on which the entire system was built: the man on the spot was to be all powerful.

securing the end of the Raj. Starting from 1800, and more so during 1857 and 1947, as compared to the political and legislative branches of the state, the executive was over-developed. Potent political institutions could not be allowed to emerge during the Raj. The division of power between three branches of the state was thus totally tilted in favor of the executive. The new state in 1947 was in the hands of these over-developed civil servants and weak, or virtually non-existing, political institutions. Evidently these civil servants decided to continue with the Raj-era legal codes and regulatory manuals that created the steel-frame. That is why in Pakistan the first decade post-1947 saw civil servants becoming Prime Minister, Governor-General and President. Most of these after retirement lived a life with meagre resources, none accused of lining their own pockets while in power.

All efforts were made by them to protect the turf of the civil service and to scuttle competition from the emerging political institutions. Proper division of power between the executive and the legislature could not be devised despite the 1956 Constitution. Within a decade after 1947, the façade of pursuit of democratic institutions was brushed away and the military and the civil service joined hands in 1958. Thereafter, the true inheritors of the Raj, the civil and the military bureaucracy (the over-developed executive), were fully in the saddle. They worked in tandem to usher in controlled democracies under the self-elevated Field Marshal.

The age of the Field Marshal (1958-1969) was the high-noon for the civil service in Pakistan. The country needed to make long strides to improve its economy and finances. The new development manager-cum-civil servant was designated to undertake all these tasks. All development schemes were planned and managed by the civil servants in consultation with controlled democrats, which again were handpicked by the same civil servants in each district.

The Field Marshal was totally enamored with the genius of the civil service. He kept assigning various new tasks and functions to these officers, making them chairmen of banks, authorities, corporations, and



Iskander Mirza (1899-1969) was the first President of Pakistan and a member of the Indian Political Service. He served as a Political Agent in the NWFP Province

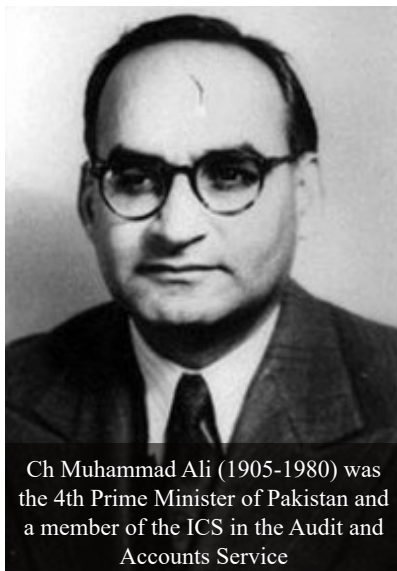
even appointing them to the high courts and the supreme court. The new development managers-cum-civil servants were deputed to build dams and canals, divert rivers, construct barrages and power houses, plan and bring the green revolution to the farms. The much-trumpeted decade of development of 1958-1968 was the product of this civil service, most of whom were people of high intellectual capacity and immaculate honesty, some of whom even dreamed of laying foundations of a true welfare state in Pakistan.

## The Age of Politics

This golden decade of mandarins was followed by the emergence of charisma and populism. Against all civil service predictions and analysis, the people became so fascinated with their first populist leader, that in the end he had to be handed over power in the left-over and ash-covered Pakistan. Thereafter began in all earnest the process of dismantling the steel frame. Hundreds of civil servants were summarily dismissed. The tenure and condition of services of the civil service officers, who were given special protection by Section 240 of The India Act 1935 (and later carried forward in 1956 and 1962 Constitutions), were done away with. By design this left the civil servant more vulnerable to the whims of the changing rulers. The organized bureaucracy was defeated by the charismatic populist.

The sun began to set on the golden age of the mandarins. The rule-bound bureaucracy, which post-1958 had been transformed into development and economic administrators, began its journey towards vulnerable subordination to the political leadership. The old division of power between the executive and the legislature swung the other way instead of finding a proper equilibrium: the executive became subordinate to the populist political leadership.

The new political elite did need the civil service to run nationalized industries but its main objective remained converting the independent and impartial implementer of laws into a mere tool which could be used against its political opponents. Those civil servants who performed well the role of being such potent tools were given preference to those who tried to adhere to rules and regulations. The now vulnerable and enfeebled civil service was deputed to plan the re-election of the charismatic leader in 1977. As it turned out, the plan miserably backfired and triggered a nation-wide protest movement. Naked and bold attempt was made to extend this re-tooling exercise even to the military officers by ordering them to conduct operations in the streets against those protes-



Ch Muhammad Ali (1905-1980) was the 4th Prime Minister of Pakistan and a member of the ICS in the Audit and Accounts Service

“ The rule-bound bureaucracy, which post-1958 had been transformed into development and economic administrators, began its journey towards vulnerable subordination to the political leadership.

tors, which back-fired.

In the end, this re-tooling of the civil service cost the populist leader dearly. In 1978 one of such re-tooled civil servants, in cahoots with military leadership, became an approver against the same populist leader. The price paid for this re-tooling proved to be drastic for the leader who for short-term and selfish gains had caused enormous and irreversible damage to the institution of the civil service. Had this exuberant enthusiasm to use the civil servants as mere tools to pursue personal agendas been eschewed, and had the objective been to govern purely under the laws, the drastic fate may not have befallen the populist leader in 1979. Thus, began the journey towards decline in governance, where the vulnerable civil servant began to dance to the tunes of the changing masters.

## The Age of Vulnerability

Once the populist leader had been sent six feet under, the civil servants became the underlings of the new military leadership. The new military master (1977-1988) used this tool to inflict maximum pain and suffering on his political opposition. This dark era witnessed civil servants completely subjugated to the whims of the dictator. Gone were the days of lengthy codes and detailed regulatory manuals as the new master always contrived re-writing those as he deemed fit. The vulnerable civil servants were left in no position to raise any voice against the continued subversions and mutation of the laws and regulations.

The objective of those ambitious civil servants who wanted key positions was clear: to protect, defend and to uphold the dictator at whatever cost. The low water mark was reached when the national referendum of 1984 produced utterly fake albeit positive results, under the aegis of the civil service. This gave the dictator the much-dreamed aura of fake legitimacy and hence a lease of life.

One major contributor to this under-



Sir Malik Ghulam Muhammad (1895-1956) was the third Governor General of Pakistan and a member of the Indian Civil Service in the Audits and Accounts Service.



General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq voting in the 1984 Referendum

### Zia's Referendum - 19 December 1984

Zia conducted a referendum on his Islamization policy, asking voters whether they supported the Islamic ideology of Pakistan. The referendum was also used to extend Zia-ul-Haq Presidential term by 5 years.

Official results: 98.5%

ling status was the drastic decline in the compensation paid to the civil servants. Compensation became completely incongruous with their responsibilities and with the financial and economic conditions, thus generating incentives for off-the-books corrupt practices. It was not linked to performance but to seniority. The compression ratios between the junior and the senior grades also started to decline from 1:100 to 1:10, thus creating further incentives against performance. The laws protecting the tenures of civil servants had already been thrown out of the window. Hundreds of civil servants were arbitrarily removed leaving them more vulnerable to the dictatorial onslaught. They became cronies and partners in the social and political re-engineering that was mandated by the dictator through the earlier tried and tested model of controlled democracy.

The development administrator role was also subordinated as the first war on terror took all the resources leaving peanuts for the economic and development activities. The civil service was back to the days of maintaining law and order: all the additional functions that had been assigned post-1947 were slowly minimized or handed over to serving or retired military officers directly. The goal of a true welfare state, governed under laws, administered through honest, dedicated and capable

**“ The price paid for this re-tooling proved to be drastic for the leader who for short-term and selfish gains had caused enormous and irreversible damage to the institution of the civil service.**

civil servants started to fade away.


### The Age of Camps

The post-1988 political elite had seen how the civil servants were used against them by the erstwhile dictator. The next step in this downhill journey was taken during 1988-1999 when the civil servants started to align themselves with the newly emerged political elite. This alignment quickly descended into the abyss of personal, dynastic and clan commitment. Such loyalty led to the creation of a pool of camp-follower civil servants who were willing collaborators. Such camp-followers were brazenly ready to use the legal provisions aimed at empowering them to serve the public, for buttressing their preferred political parties. Instead of neutral functionaries of the state, they were ready to be partisans and selective in the implementation of laws, award of contracts, and recruitments to sought after jobs.

Each political personality, dynasty and clan started to sponsor and support its favored camp of civil servants. The price for entering in a particular political camp and for climbing up the totem pole was to excel in finding ways and means to protect and support the personal and political interests of the preferred political master. The tasks assigned to the civil servants ranged from approval and speedy implementation of dubious and shoddy development schemes in particular constituencies, managing vote count during elections, and outright abduction, torture and even elimination of political opponents. There was no hiding from the camps as no-man's-land was not available: any ambitious civil servant who wanted to climb up the totem pole had to kiss the ring of allegiance. After this the veneer of rule-based bureaucracy gave way to personalized (personal to the ruler or the dynasty or the clan) administration. Such political commitment is the complete negation of the concept of impartial and neutral rule-based functionaries of the state and the root-cause of mal-governance.

One major contributor to this process of withering away of the rule-based bureaucracy was the creeping distortion between policy and operation. Policy making, which is the proper domain of the political institutions, was slowly extended to include operations. The politicians wanted to award contract and recruit their own constituents. Old rules empowering senior civil servants to decide postings, transfers, promotions, housing, and disciplinary proceedings of their subordinates were changed. Most of the critical admin-

Celebrating People of Pakistan



Ustaad Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan (1948 - 1977)

"A man learns all this life, and dies the day he thinks he has learnt everything."

Often referred to as "Voice from Heaven" or the "Qawali King", Ustaad Nusrat is loved and revered across the globe for his Sufi influenced catchy tunes and glorious musical career. He has received numerous awards including the UNESCO Music Prize in 1995, the Grand Prix des Amériques at Montreal World Film Festival 1996 and the President of Pakistan's Award for Pride of Performance 1987.

“ It also further incentivized civil servants to seek refuge in preferred political camps as a form of insurance against harassment by the accountability process.

Administrative powers were slowly usurped by the policy makers themselves. Once this distinction between policy and operation was distorted, political bosses used their newly acquired administrative powers to favor those civil servants who were ready to support their particular dynasty or personality and to openly penalize those who were not ready to toe their line.

In this distortion process, the civil service also lost control of its internal turf and its vertical discipline and control. The Chief Secretaries and Federal Secretaries became post offices as real administrative powers (postings, transfers, promotions, housing, and disciplinary proceedings) were usurped by the political bosses to be administered through the compliant camp-followers. This governance model was a reversion towards patronage-system and a step away from meritocracy which used to be the hallmark of the institution in 1947.

### The Age of De-Construction

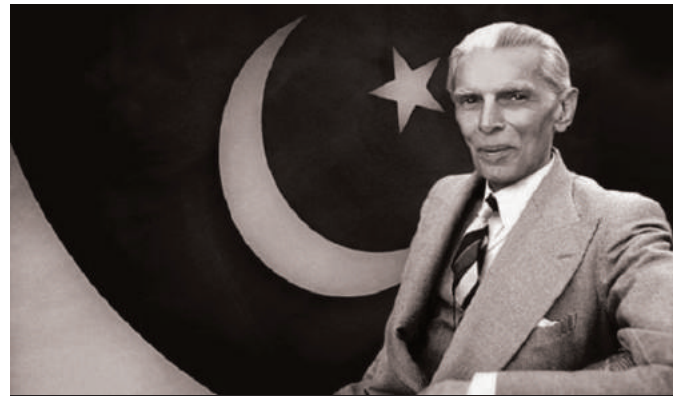
This vertical loss of power was followed post-1999 by the horizontal loss of authority. The new commando-cum-generalissimo went about devising and implementing the national reconstruction plan to decimate whatever was left of the civil service. This was clubbed with the new ‘removal from service’ laws and the national accountability regime under which whatever protections were available to the civil servants were done away with, leaving the civil servants by design even more vulnerable than before.

The so-called accountability process created a new potent tool for smothering political opponents and for making civil servants weaker and thus compliant. It was the worst possible horizontal intrusion in the turf of the civil service. Arrest, detention without bail, and trials lasting decades, resulted in civil servants further abdicating whatever decision-making powers they were left with. It led to further collapse of the efficiency and decision-making in the civil service. It also further incentivized civil servants to seek refuge in preferred political camps as a form of insurance against harassment by the accountability process.

This twin framework of the national reconstruction plan and the accountability process contributed to the failing state that we witness presently, when trains do not run on time, municipal waste splatters urban areas, farmers have little water at the canals’ tail-ends, hospitals and schools are broken down, etc.

### The Age of Business

The next step on this road downhill was, however, taken when the camp-follower functionaries of state aligned themselves with the political elite to create business opportunities



## Quaid’s Message for Civil Servants of Pakistan on 14th April 1948

“Whatever community, caste or creed you belong to you are now the servants of Pakistan...”

You have to do your duty as servants; you are not concerned with this political or that political party; that is not your business. It is a business of politicians to fight out their case under the present constitution or the future constitution that may be ultimately framed. You, therefore, have nothing to do with this party or that party.

You are civil servants. Whichever gets the majority will form the Government and your duty is to serve that Government for the time being as servants not as politicians. How will you do that? The Government in power for the time being must also realize and understand their responsibilities that you are not to be used for this party or that.

I know we are saddled with old legacy, old mentality, old psychology and it haunts our footsteps, but it is up to you now to act as true servants of the people even at the risk of any Minister or Ministry trying to interfere with you in the discharge of your duties as civil servants. I hope it will not be so but even if some of you have to suffer as a victim. I hope it will not happen — I expect you to do so readily. We shall of course see that there is security for you and safeguards to you. If we find that is in anyway prejudicial to your interest we shall find ways and means of giving you that security. Of course you must be loyal to the Government that is in power.”

**“ We may have come full circle and reverted all the way back to the pre-Raj days of the civil service. Welcome back to the era of buccaneers, robber barons, and go-getters of the East India Company days!**

for the rent-seeking regimes. Having proximity to the political masters gave the ambitious and lustful civil servants vast opportunities to line their own pockets. Pleasing their political bosses, and using their bureaucratic chicanery, they contracted out mega-projects to companies of dubious repute under newly devised procedures aimed at getting rid of all ‘cumbersome’ rules and regulations of audit and controls.

The political bosses, who had over decades worked hard to enfeeble the institution and make it vulnerable, justified this innovative distortion of laws and rules by accusing the civil servants of being too inefficient to deliver mega-projects on time. Thus, emerged the new ambitious and lustful business-partner civil service, nick-named by some quarters as, the go-getter group; who is not only a mere camp-follower but an active participant in resource-extraction. This is indeed a sharp decline from the days of honest and capable functionaries of the state who were dedicated to the cause of forging a value-creating true welfare state.

This re-emergence of the extractive state that had existed in the pre-Raj days, and was dubbed Sikha-Shahi, where instead of creating value the functionaries of the state lived off the people and the land, is fast becoming the new normal. It is sad that we now read about, and witness, ambitious and lustful civil servants who create business opportunities for their greedy political bosses and in the process also create illegal business opportunities for themselves being portrayed as ‘role-models’. We may have come full circle and reverted all the way back to the pre-Raj days of the civil service. Welcome back to the era of buccaneers, robber barons, and go-getters of the East India Company days!

There are indeed many exceptions to such camp-follower and business-partner civil servants but they are ‘properly and duly’ penalized and eliminated through the promotion processes. This distortion in promotion process created the much-preferred under-19 teams who were ready to jog when ordered by the political bosses to walk: the age of blind obedience and complete compliance dawned. This governance model is based on patronizing pliable juniors, who, overwhelmed by the unexpected vast powers and direct access to political authority, are willing to take all kinds of risks to remain in those undeserved positions of authority and access. These junior brigades in each camp climbed up the promotion totem pool through a process designed to weed out all those who were not considered enthusiastic camp-followers of the regime. The much-trumpeted promotion policy of the-best-of-the-best translated in reality to this narration by Shakespeare:

“King Henry and the prince his son are gone:  
Clarence, thy turn is next, and then the rest,

Counting myself but bad till I be best.  
I’ll throw thy body in another room  
And triumph, Henry, in thy day of doom.”

### **Dum Spiro Spero**

Today the civil service, as a whole, is seen by the common man to be primarily motivated by value-extraction rather than interested in real value-creation. We have de-constructed the rule of law and reverted back to the days of law of the ruler. The impartial rule-based bureaucracy based on the Weberian model of maximizing efficiency, maintaining order, eliminating favoritism, and administering dispassionately demised long ago. The entire edifice created post-1857, based on rules and laws, has now slowly withered away leaving behind a plastic frame ready to adjust to the changing weather patterns.

This decline in integrity and performance is attributable both to internal dynamics (education, recruitment, training, promotions, compensation, performance evaluation, internal reward and punishment mechanisms, etc.) as well as to external pressures (population explosion, economic change, social media, ethical degradation, etc.). But perhaps the most critical contributing factor is decline in leadership: both internal to the civil service and external to those who have to give vision and formulate policy.

The way out of this abyss will require leadership commitment to stop this fast decline into a failed state. Proper division of power between the executive, legislature and now even the judiciary, will have to be devised. Vertical authority within the civil service will need to be restored by revising the now distorted distinction between policy and operation. Fixing tenures of senior officers will also have to be mandated. Apart from a host of other measures to restore and strengthen this institution, compensation of civil servants will have to be revised to bring in line with the economic and financial conditions. Compensation cannot be based on seniority and promise but has to be linked to performance. Hence, creation of an elitist-generalist cadre, or national executive service, recruited purely on merit and compensated on performance, will also be required.

The hardest part will be to bring back the rule-based bureaucracy. And this hardest part will come from the leadership itself. Building institutions is a painstaking job. Only leadership committed to rule of law can set an example. Otherwise if we continue on this downhill road, the dreaded failed state will soon be our destiny. But one lives with hope, and one wishes that may be there will be times when the functionaries of the state will rise above their temptations and ambitions and administer this glorious land in the true spirit of the welfare state. As the philosopher Cicero said ‘Dum Spiro Spero—while I breathe, I hope’.

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*Asim Imdad Ali is currently a partner in an Islamabad based law firm. He earlier served in Central Superior Services, at positions of increasing responsibility, in its prestigious DMG group (1992-2006), and later served as Head of legal and regulatory affairs in a major multinational company. He is an LLB (gold) from Punjab University, LLM from Kings College London, and did Masters in Public Administration at Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University where he was an Edward S. Mason Fellow.*



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# Opportunities and Challenges in Pakistan's Foreign Policy



Ambassador Munir Akram

*Ambassador Munir Akram could probably be called the doyen of realism when it comes to Pakistan foreign policy. He has a foreign service career spanning four decades, joining the elite cadre in 1967. His last position was as Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations during 2002-08. Prior to that Ambassador Akram has held positions as Pakistan's Additional Foreign Secretary, Ambassador to EU, Ambassador to UN's Geneva office, he has specialized in multilateral diplomacy and has held positions in many intergovernmental organizations including UN Secretary General's Advisory Board on Disarmament and President of the Security Council.*

*The following pages are a short excerpt of his conversation with Najma Minhas, Managing Editor in the United States, to discuss Pakistan's foreign relations since 1947.*

**Let us just jump into the deep end. What's going on with India and Pakistan – why is it, that in the last 70 years we have not been able to live peacefully with each other?**

I think first of all, living together was never going to be possible, because the partition of the subcontinent had a strong logical foundation. That logic being, Muslims could not get along and prosper within a Hindu majority country; and time has shown us the logic proved to be correct. The two-nation conclusion was reached much earlier than the creation of

Pakistan, subsequent history has proved the correctness of the conclusion that was reached by Pakistan's founding fathers.

Furthermore, these conclusions were immediately confirmed after the partition, as India held back our money, migration riots and later killings; the occupation of Jammu and Kashmir and the 1948 war. These have solidified the sentiments and the political conclusions of the Pakistani leadership, that there would be difficulty in living peacefully with India.

Since then, grievances, differences and disputes between the two countries; 1971 war, Siachen occupation, Silk route dispute have added to the regional rationale for the division of the Subcontinent.

**You are suggesting that peace would never have happened between the two countries, and it is not as some would put it, due to the power structure (civil-military relations) in Pakistan.**

If you read the short history from 1935 onwards, the 1935 elections, the formation of the Indian national government, and the way the Muslim League and Quaid-e-Azam

were treated, solidified the sentiment of Pakistan leading to the 1940 resolution. The resolution led to the demand for the creation of Pakistan, it was a linear confirmation of whatever we had thought was the rationale for the creation of Pakistan; Jammu and Kashmir oppression, 1948 war, the various subsequent actions by India, these are all confirmations.

There was some hope at partition of a friendly Subcontinent. The sentiments of bridging the gap or living together or creating a monetary or customs union, all these were possible because the economies were self dependent and people knew each other, the leaderships of both countries knew each other, the bureaucracy knew each other. Yet today, people say the conflict is happening because Pakistan has become Islamic and more fundamentalist. That's true, we are more Islamic, but on the other side, India is much more Hindu.

The people of India are not only the people who led the Hindu Muslim riots, but they are also the same people who killed Mahatma Gandhi because he was considered too soft on the Muslims. So, I think the division that happened in 1947 has been exacerbated by political disputes, by military competition, by the strategic competition. But also because, the nature

of the two countries has changed, India is much more Hindu and Pakistan is much more Islamic.

**What do we need to do to create a peaceful relationship between the two countries?**

The compulsions for a peaceful relationship, even if it's not a friendly relationship, is much higher on Pakistan than on India, because as a country we cannot deploy the same resources for military, or the economy, etc. However, there are certain fundamental problems, which will not go

away unless we address them. The first problem is the Indian oppression in Kashmir, the Pakistani public will always object to that. There will always be people in Pakistan wanting to help the Kashmiris no matter what the governments think, or whether one wants to believe that it is the ISI doing this or that. The sentiment on our side will always be such that people will want to go and support the Kashmiris. So, in some way we need to eliminate the oppression and killing in Kashmir, even if the problem is not fully resolved.

The second problem, which has compounded the relative relations between the two countries is the fact that Indians have used and are using Afghanistan as a base for subversion and terrorism in Pakistan. They consider it as a payback for Kashmir. In Balouchistan and FATA they have fomented terrorism, in order to create subversion and to keep Pakistan occupied on the Western side, in order to get Pakistan's submission on the Kashmir issue. So, that's the second fundamental problem, until the Indian's stop that terrorism and interference from the Afghan territory, this difficulty with India will continue.

The third aspect, of course, is the military posture, the LOC firing, the deployment of weapons, the threatening state-

ments, but of course, they need to be addressed in a different way. However, the two main and immediate issues that need to be addressed remain the terrorism from Afghanistan and the oppression in Kashmir, these are immovable requirements from the Pakistani side in order to normalize relations.

### **Ok, but what is needed for an immediate working relationship, I mean if we sit around for Kashmir to be resolved...**

I am not saying that the issue has to be resolved, but the killing has to stop. Until India maintains 700,000 troops there in occupation and Kashmiris are not able to move. I think the kind of oppression that Kashmir is facing, whether the Pakistani government wants to or not, the Pakistani people will always support them. Therefore, there will never be normalization, unless violence and oppression is curbed. The reality, which nobody seems to accept, is that there are millions of people in Pakistan willing to fight for the Kashmiris. We can not stop them, we will not be able to stop them. It will be counter productive for the rulers of Pakistan if they try and stop them, look at what happened to Musharraf.

The religious parties thrive on the pro-Kashmiri sentiment and reflect the conservative opinion of that section of the Pakistani people. That's why you can't act against Lashkar-e-Taiba or Jaish-e-Mohammad, or Hizbul Mujahidin, because they have grass-root support in the country.

### **Why has SAARC failed to keep these two countries in consort – many in the initial days had expressed hope that it would act similar to the EU with regard to the relationship between France and Germany, who had been historical enemies.**

I drafted the SAARC charter, this was a time at some interval in our relationship with India, where we thought it could be good to try and emulate the sort of template under the ASEAN format rather than the EU. It was more of a hope than an expectation, to be frank. Because, the comparison with France and Germany coming together after the Second World War does not fit. They both came together once Germany was defeated. Secondly, they both came together under a US umbrella, so there was a super power compelling cooperation. Thirdly they came together against a common threat; the Soviet Union. We don't have those conditions in South Asia. We are not mutually against any external power, whether its Russia, China or the US. There is no strategic rationale that is bringing the two neighbors together, on the contrary, the strategic rationale is pulling them apart.

In SAARC, India is a dominant power, and its resented by all the smaller states, with Pakistan at the forefront. Therefore, all the smaller states are looking for external equalizers. Therefore, we see Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka looking

to develop relations with China. So, the conditions for a kind of ASEAN or European Union do not exist in SAARC and they will not exist until the strategic differences with India go away.

### **Why has Pakistan pushed for China to be a member of SAARC? Will that change the nature of South Asia?**

The rationale is straightforward. For us, China has been a geostrategic partner. Pakistan needs an external equalizer, we have looked towards the US, we look towards China and at times we look to both; to neutralize India's power in the region. Pakistan, in turn was a cheap neutralizer for China, for Indian ambitions - at very minimal cost for the Chinese. And now, of course things are changing, as the Chinese economy is five times the size of India's and despite the fact the Indian's crow about its fast growing economy, the gap between the Chinese and Indian economy is widening. It continues to widen. China will soon be producing 25% global GDP, India will be at 10% at most.

As far as Chinese partnership is concerned, for Pakistan it makes complete sense. Because in South Asia there is one dominant power, you cannot have cooperative relationship like ASEAN or EU, where there is only one power dominating the whole forum. So bringing in China would provide at least two powers in the SAARC mix, which would balance each other and give space to the smaller members of SAARC to promote cooperation at a more equal footing.

Moreover, India has always said, the security problems with Pakistan cannot be solved between India and Pakistan, because China is a fact. There-

fore, in any military equation in any denuclearization effort, control of strategic missiles, nuclear weapons, China must be involved. If we apply the same logic to the economic side. In order to promote cooperation in South Asia, to ensure equality amongst all the regional states we must bring in China, and that will have its own strategic dimension.

**“ They are still hoping that since the two economies are so inexplicably linked to each other, that good sense will prevail and US will come into a cooperative relationship with them in what they call the bipolar world.**



UN Security Council President, Ambassador Munir Akram of Pakistan, American Ambassador John Negroponte,

## **If we turn towards another multi-forum - the SCO - how do you see joining the SCO affecting the relationship between India and Pakistan?**

Well, for us, SCO makes sense at this time, because our relationship with the US has been deteriorating ever since the US chose India as a strategic partner. Therefore, it makes sense for us to become close to the main drivers of the SCO, which are China and Russia. As far as the Indians are concerned, the Indians want to be everywhere, where Pakistan is and they also want to play on both sides of the fence. They want good relations with the US, at the same time; they want good relations with Russia and China.

Both, Pakistan and India have given a commitment not to raise their bilateral issues on the SCO forum. There is a realization that SCO is going to be a vehicle for a geostrategic shift in global politics. The Asian heartland is increasingly being controlled by China and Russia. The Chinese Belt and Road Initiative will cut through the whole of the Eurasian heartland up to the shores of the Atlantic, so, this is a huge political shift that is taking place. SCO could be the vehicle for moving that chip forward and BRI is going to be a major part of it.

## **What has been the force behind the Pakistan-China relationship since the 1950s.**

Its simple, we needed China as a strategic equalizer to India and China needed us as a neutralizer to India, so, there was a clear convergence of strategic interests. We developed a very good relationship with them because of efforts on both sides. We never had problems with the Chinese. They always stayed away from our internal affairs. Going forward, these interests will remain the same. However, at this moment, China's interests have become broader and more diverse. It has become the main competitor of the US and in order to compete it must try and keep the Indians out of the US lap. To that extent, they have made moves to try and prevent the Indians from developing a close, strategic relationship with the US. The recent two summits that Xi Jinping had with Modi. These were efforts where the Chinese conveyed to the Indians, that it is not worth India's while to compete with China and confront them on behalf of the US, or the border problems could become very acute.

## **How do you view CPEC? We are hearing so much in the media about the Sri Lankan experience with the Hambantota Port and that other central Asian countries have negotiated a far better deal with China. Are they colonizing Pakistan?**

Let me take it from the top, CPEC has two dimensions, one is a strategic dimension, which is very important for China. Why? Because China will circumvent the potential danger of its shipping being curtailed in the Malacca straits, by creating this alternate route through the back door. Secondly, and this is of course not talked about, but China will be transformed from a one ocean power to a two ocean power, it will finesse the whole Indo-US strategy in the Indian ocean by its route to Gwadar. That is the strategic rationale for China.

**“ So in every country, the military has a large role to play and the weaker your politicians, the more vulnerable they are to pressure from outside, the more ready they are to sell out the country, the more the military has to play the role of safeguarding the national interests. Look at what is happening in USA.**

That strategic rationale also benefits Pakistan, because it will be a way of neutralizing the rise of Indian power in the Indian Ocean. So, there is a conversion of strategic interest between the two economies.

As far as the Chinese economy is concerned, they will benefit from transit trade, their companies will benefit by implementing projects in Pakistan, utilizing their excess capacity. Part of the rationale of BRI, is precisely to sell Chinese excess manufacturing capacity through infrastructural development across ASIA and CPEC rationale is the same. As far as specifics on projects are concerned, it is our own fault. Chinese companies work on market principles; they are highly competitive not only with foreign companies, but also within themselves. They try and negotiate the best deals possible. Our fault lies in our people, who have allowed a lot of the cream of the top to go into a few select hands. Guess who is benefiting! Yes, the Chinese companies have benefitted, but this could only happen with the complicity of our own decision makers. So, whatever economic difficulties we have are our own fault.

On the other hand, whenever we have had a financial problem, the Chinese have come in and bailed us out and they don't publicize it. We have not publicized it, but there are huge transfers of Chinese money into Pakistan through various methods to bolster and keep our economy alive.

## **We are in the midst of an economic crisis, do you see the Chinese bailing us out now, as the amount required this time around is much higher?**

I think the amount required now is probably too high for the Chinese to justify injecting into our economy. It is not that they don't want to help. It is a question of how to justify it, and how they expect us to pay it back, because we have dug ourselves into a deep hole. So, I think we are now headed for an IMF bail out with all its implications.

Essentially, what I am saying is that CPEC is not a conspiracy to colonize Pakistan. That propaganda is coming from the West. It is our own fault that we have not negotiated as well as some other countries have. But I am confident when push comes to shove and if we have difficulties in pay back we will be able to make adjustments with China. Sri Lanka's Hambantota is quoted as an example. But what happened in Hambantota, has a context. The agreement with the Chinese was signed by the then President Rajapaksa, threatened the US

and Indian interests, who got together and ousted him in the elections. When the new Sri Lankan government came in, China called in its chips. They pressurized the new government by saying, ok pay up, and when they couldn't pay up they said we will take over management of Hambantota. It is a strategic play. As far as Pakistan is concerned, we are a strategic partner and they don't need to make that play with us. On Gwadar, we are the ones who sort of said, well here's Gwadar. It wasn't the other way round and whenever our people said, 'Oh Gwader will become a Chinese naval base', the Chinese dismissed the narrative, they have never asked us for a naval base there.

At least for the next decade or more, they won't need a naval base there. When they need it, things will happen, but for now the Chinese are still trying to forge a cooperative relationship with the US and they are still hopeful. The US will not step into a Thucydides trap of confronting them. They are still hoping that since the two economies are so inexplicably linked to each other, that good sense will prevail and US will come into a cooperative relationship with them in what they call the bipolar world.

### Does it make sense for Indians to join CPEC?

Well, you know, I think the rationale is quite clear, the Indians want access to China, to central Asia, and through to Russia and to Western Europe this is the land corridor.

If Indian opts for security of economic development and peace in the region, then the obvious choice is that it joins the Eurasian and the SCO class. That makes strategic sense from economic, social and progressive point of view. However, if they want to be a great power rapidly then they can fall into the trap, which is being offered by the US; where it offers to help to build it up as a 'counter tool against China', equipping them to compete in the Pacific ocean and establishing partnership to be one of the two great powers in Indian and Pacific ocean. This is what's on offer for India. They are trying to play both sides of the game. They have not made up their mind. But sooner or later whether its 2 years, 5 years, or 10 years down the line, India will have to make up its mind. India, so to speak, is a "swing state" "strategically.

### What has determined Pakistan-USA relationship in the past 70 years?

Well, I think first of all, it was Pakistan's search for the equalizer. That was the initial ground for our relationship. Pakistan needed an equalizer and the US was searching for cold war allies against the Soviet Union. It had approached India and the Indians had turned them down, so Pakistan was the obvious alternative. Then in some ways it was a natural Anglofied successor to the British Empire. So, there was a comfort zone as far as the relationship was concerned. There was a kind of cultural closeness, because Pakistan was Anglofied and the US offered economic support and planning etc., until we shot ourselves in the foot. But, you know those were the golden days of the Pakistan-US relationship. Then, as you know, the history, it went downhill for several reasons. There were peaks and troughs for many reasons.



Munir Akram with US President Bill Clinton

### How does the deepening strategic relationship being developed between India and USA affect us – it may not be a zero sum game, but what are the implications? A 2+2 dialogue between the two countries is being planned in Delhi in September.

The dialogue will happen, there have been a lot of reports that US postponed this dialogue multiple times, its obviously not a high priority item for them. The US is currently preoccupied with other concerns, like North Korea and Iran and all of that. The US-India relationship has been developing since 2005, when the Civil-Nuclear and the Defense agreements were signed with the Bush administration. It has done great damage to Pakistan. Assessments differ, but the military supplies and the opening of technology, have affected the military balance and will continue to affect the military balance (between India and Pakistan) in the future. After 9/11, the US has outlawed the Kashmiri freedom struggle, which they had not done so before. They have, if not enabled, but certainly allowed India to intervene in FATA, and Baluchistan in Pakistan from Afghan territory. After all US military is present in Afghanistan areas and knows what's happening in the country. So, they have allowed the Indians to do this to us.

There have been several consequences for Pakistan, we obviously need to be conscious of that. We have tried to neutralize it to some extent, by strengthening our relationship with the US, and building strategic relationship with China and

“ There is a possibility that things could change if China and US decide that in order to stabilize Afghanistan, they need a strategy of co-development in Afghanistan and Pakistan, the whole rationale would change, CPEC would become the instrument, of such cooperation. I think that it is still fluid and various outcomes are possible.

Russia. But, this is still a game in play.

### **Do you see the US viewing Pakistan differently post CPEC - sensing it has fallen into the Chinese camp? There was the statement on CPEC going through ‘disputed’ territory.**

Because of the developing US-Indian relations; the US is trying to win over India as a partner. Therefore, the reservations that they have expressed, the China dimension, the US establishment sees them as part of its strategic competition if not a confrontation with China. Therefore, the BRI and CPEC, which is a part of it, is seen as a strategic challenge to the US domination of the region. Secondly, there are the Indian objections. That they have catered to the Indian objections on the part of the territory that Indians claim as their own. I think these are very superficial rationales presented by the US. Privately, they have told the Chinese that they don't have a problem. Privately, they have told Pakistan, there is no problem. But publically, they have tried to appease the Indians. There is a possibility that things could change if China and US decide that in order to stabilize Afghanistan, they need a strategy of co-development in Afghanistan and Pakistan, the whole rationale would change, CPEC would become the instrument, of such cooperation. I think that it is still fluid and various outcomes are possible.

### **Going forward, do you see any particular changes in the Pakistan and US relationship, or do you think it's going to stay like this for the next couple of years.**

I think, primarily, the US wants a solution in Afghanistan, they don't want to leave, but they can't stay in the present circumstances, and so they need a stable kind of coalition government. The kind of a government in Kabul, which allows them to continue to play a role in the region. Whether that is possible or not I am not sure, I think it is a very difficult task. But one day Trump may get up and say I want to leave. So, I think Pakistan-US relations are completely linked to Afghanistan. Pakistan is trying to be helpful, I think we tried to support them. We do think it will be a good idea to push them out of chaos. Because, Afghanistan will descend into civil war, and that's not in Pakistan's interest either. So, we have to be careful of what we are seeking in Afghanistan. A stable Afghanistan, whichever way it is achieved, with the US or without the US, is in Pakistan's interest.

### **What's the reason for the Afghanistan-Pakistan unstable relationship? Mainstream media poses that this is all due to Pakistan's support for the ‘good’ Taliban.**

There is a long history, which goes back to 1948, when we joined the UN as an independent state, Afghanistan was the only country that voted against us, and they didn't recognize our borders. The Frontier province came into Pakistan through referendum, and it was a close referendum. As you know, the red shirts of the Badshah Khan did not support any association

**“ The Indians are ensuring that the Hindu lobby in Bangladesh remains dominant, that's the rationale. Until that changes, I think tensions will remain. But the larger strategic picture is working to change that.**

with Pakistan and the whole Pashtunistan movement arose from the Durrani rulers of Afghanistan. With Zahir Shah, we created a modus vivendi through the Shah of Iran. We were able to have a fairly decent working relationship during the 1965 war. We parked all our civil aircrafts in Afghanistan etc., during that war. But then Kabul moved closer to the Soviets and started the Pashtunistan movement and we countered it by supporting the religious opposition. The first time I met Gulbuddin Hikmatyar and Ahmed Shah Masood, was in 1976 in Mr. Bhutto's office. So, it has been a long story. It wasn't only when the Soviets intervened. I mean we saw the writing on the wall, when the communists took over. They had internal fighting; they had resistance from the mullahs. Our people I must tell you predicted the Soviet intervention six months before it happened. So, there is a long history of difficulties with Afghanistan.

And yes, the current relationship has a lot to do with the Taliban and the Haqqanis'. But if suppose, ok, whatever you say about Haqqanis' and Taliban is fine, but the fact of the matter is Afghanistan is not ready to accept the border. What is the basis for good relationship between two neighbors? It is good borders; a good fence makes good neighbors. We are trying to build a fence, which they are opposing.

### **So if they accepted our borders, we would stop using Afghanistan as a ‘strategic depth’ in terms of policy.**

We have never used Afghanistan as a strategic depth except in 1965. Some stupid military guy came up with a paper on strategic depth. We never exercised it, we never needed it, Pakistan is a nuclear weapons state. What strategic depth will Afghanistan give us? If, and when, the Indians cross the border we have nuclear weapons to stop them. Why do we need strategic depth? What is the rationale behind strategic depth? Again it is these detractors in the west, and these very great minds of think-tanks, who cook up these kind of things. No. What we want is a friendly government in Kabul because of what is happening, in that the India has a free rein to use Afghanistan's territory against us. The TTP is financed and has safe havens arranged by the RAW. They are interfering in Pakistan. They are promoting terrorism from Afghan territory and it is no secret. And they have tried to use it as leverage against us. In order to get our cooperation on the Taliban issue. We have told them, this is a faulty equivalence that you promote instability in our country in this way. And we will take care of the Indians ourselves if we want to. But so far we have exercised patience and restraint in not retaliating against the Indian interference in

Afghanistan but we have the capability to do so.

**Iran was the first country to recognize Pakistan after independence in 1947. Pakistan enjoyed good relations during the Shah's time, where do we stand now. Does Indian investment in Chabahar affect our relations with Iran?**

Now you see, for good relations with Iran we need two hands to clap. In the recent past, things really went down after 1979, when Zia ul Huq was in power, he was seen both as a Sunni fundamentalist, and as a US ally on Afghanistan. There was abuse from Tehran. Zia played his cards very well, he did not respond to the abuse, he cooperated; he did not intervene on the Arab side, in the Iran-US war. He opened various channels for cooperation, including on civilian nuclear cooperation with Iran and that's when our relations reversed and became good relations. But then after a certain time, there were certain leaders who came into power, and cut that cooperation with the Iranians. When that happened and we became closer to the US, the Iranians also turned tail, and started interfering in Pakistan's Shia movements and that really deteriorated the relationship. There was Balochistan, Gendola, and all these sort of shadowy movements supported by certain intelligence agencies, not our own. Things went bad, but in recent months they have seen an improvement, because both sides have made an effort. We have problems with the US, Iranians have problems with the US. So there is a certain internal logic. They want to build relationship with Russia and China, so do we. There is a certain strategic rationale for better relationship between Pakistan and Iran now.

With regards to Chabahar, I think we overestimate the port. It's meant to export Iranian oil, and to transit goods from various countries through Afghanistan. The Indians through song and dance have committed 500 million and they have not spent it. They have been talking for 15 years about Chahbar. Given the relationship with the US and the secondary sanctions being imposed on anybody cooperating with the Iranians, Chahbahar will probably be placed on the backburner again. Chahbahar is not strategic card by any means.



Ambassador Munir Akram with officers of the Foreign Service

**“ What we want is a friendly government in Kabul because of what is happening, in that the India has a free reign to use Afghanistan's territory against us. The TTP is financed and has safe havens arranged by the RAW. They are interfering in Pakistan.**

**Our current relations with Bangladesh are very acrimonious, why? They were not this bad even immediately after 1971 independence of East Pakistan. Zulfiqar Bhutto was garlanded when he went to Bangladesh in 1974. Later, Pakistan and Bangladesh worked together to create SAARC. So why now?**

First of all, the Awami league and the lady in power have always had an animus against Pakistan. She blames Pakistan for the death of her father. I think even more than that. In the internal power struggle between the Awami league and Khaleda Zia's party, the Jamat-e-Islami party played a swing role. They were able to balance out the Awami league and Khaleda Zia. Now, since the BJP has come to power in India, they have pushed a anti-Islamic agenda in Bangladesh and they have convinced the Prime Minister, that it is in her parties interest to decimate the Jamat-e-Islami. So they have gone after all Jamat-e-Islami people with accusations of having supported Pakistan in their so-called freedom struggle. Hence you saw the death sentences and the cooked up trials, and so on and so forth. And obviously we had to comment as they were killed on the basis of supporting Pakistan. For us they remain patriots, and for them they are traitors. Therefore that stressed the relationship. However, the rationale for bitter relations, firstly, lies in the Awami league's efforts to neutralize Khaleda Zia and secondly, the Indian efforts to ensure that the Awami league stays in power. The Indians are ensuring that the Hindu lobby in Bangladesh remains dominant, that's the rationale. Until that changes, I think tensions will remain. But the larger strategic picture is working to change that.

Bangladesh requires China's help and influence and their cooperation with China is increasing. BJP rule will end sooner or later. And I think that rationale for a Bangladesh –Pakistan relationship will restore itself to a balance. They are after all a Muslim majority state. And that reality will come back.

**How has having nuclear weapons changed our foreign policy? Are we doing the kind of things that we wouldn't do otherwise, for example, maybe we wouldn't have gotten involved with non-state actors, had we not been so confident that we would get away it?**

Non-state actors are a different kettle of fish. Had you

gone to the stage where you would have had any choice in the matter, then you would have been conquered a long time ago. The Indians would have done another 1971 on you several times. Before we exploded the nuclear weapons, they threatened us. After Kargil, they couldn't threaten us. After 2002, they were ready to attack us, but as we had nuclear weapons, they couldn't do it. There have been no wars since we developed nuclear weapons, it speaks for itself, it is obvious. Indian aggression is not possible anymore, unless they go for MAD. Iran could be attacked but Pakistan cannot be attacked in the same way because we have nuclear weapons. That's the bottom line. You know whether we support non-state actors, whether we support bad guys. Hell! Every country in the world is supporting non-state actors, we can name names of people promoting non-state actors, they are part of the instruments of power of states and Russians, Americans, Indians and everybody uses them. Let's not assume the blame for using non-state actors because everybody does.

### **Finally, to address the elephant in the room – do civilians even have a say in foreign policy or is it in the realm of the military?**

Yes, of course civilians are involved. If by civilians you mean the Foreign Office. As far as politicians are concerned barring certain exceptions, I would not give them the dignity of saying that they can understand anything, much less understand foreign policy. We have not had that kind of political leader since Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. There have been certain good politicians, but it's really up to the Foreign Office, and professionals in the Foreign Office to guide foreign policy, and that they have done quite admirably in the past. All the papers and policy positions since 1965 are all there to see.

### **To what extent would you say the military has a role in foreign policy? Since, one of the arguments made by the PML-N and some sections of the international media is the ex-PM was ousted, because he wanted to have a closer relationship with India?**

One thing is closer relationship, a mutually respectful relationship between two sovereign states, which leads to a working relationship. Provided, you don't do things to exacerbate the relationship. The second type of relationship is, 'I am willing to sell out, but saying I am not being allowed to do so, because we have military establishment, which will not allow me to do so.' There have been occasions when Prime Ministers have tried to sell the country out. I won't take names, but it has

**“What is the basis for good relationship between two neighbors? It is good borders; a good fence makes good neighbors. We are trying to build a fence, which they are opposing.**

happened more than once. When they say, yes we will open up our nuclear program, when they have said we will give up Kashmir. Then unfortunately the military has to be the instrument to go and give them the bad news, 'sorry you can't do it', they have the power because they have the guns ultimately. It is not that the foreign office is concurring on what these politicians are saying either, if it comes to the strategy of selling out the country. The foreign service are paid to give options on how to deal with these difficult situations. Of course there are military issues involved, whenever there are national and strategic interests involved, then of course they have a say, they have a large say and they should have a large say. Doesn't the Pentagon have a large say in U.S. Foreign Policy? Who is dictating the foreign policy of U.S. in Afghanistan? Who is it in India, stopping the process to find a solution on Siachen? It is not the civilians, it is the military. So in every country, the military has a large role to play and the weaker your politicians, the more vulnerable they are to pressure from outside, the more ready they are to sell out the country, the more the military has to play the role of safeguarding the national interests. I am glad that they are there to save our national interests because some of these Johnnies, for their personal power, to stay in power, to earn the good graces of Washington and New Delhi, they would have sold out our national interest.

### **The concept of democracy is that you have been elected into power, so you have the mandate of the people to do exactly what you want. Who are the military or the foreign office or the technocrats to say otherwise, when you have the people's mandate?**

I think even if the election is the fairest in the world, it does not allow the leader to sell the country out or act against the national interest of the country.

### **Who defines the national interest?**

I think national interest is very clear and visible. If you look at what Mr. Trump did in his summit meeting with Putin in July, then you have a very clear illustration of what is good for the country and what is not good for the country. Mr. Trump is an elected leader and even with all the allegations of meddling with the elections, no one is saying that he is not the elected leader, but when he does something wrong, he is taken to task. He is not allowed to compromise the national interests of the U.S. as seen by the people of U.S., the Congress of U.S., the leaders of the U.S., he is not allowed to do that. Similarly, in Pakistan, when a national leader says I will open the nuclear program to foreign inspection or foreign control then should that be allowed by the military? No. Should it be allowed by the people who elected him? No, so the election is not a free mandate to do anything you want. Secondly, for Pakistan, we're a flawed democracy, what choice do our people have? We have rascals being put on tickets as electables. They are thugs coming into power because they are supposed to be the leader of a tribe or a Chaudhry of a local community. These are the leaders and we know they are rascals.

# August in Pakistan



**1 August**  
**1960**

Islamabad is declared as the capital of the Government of Pakistan. Islamabad's development work was ongoing, in the meanwhile Rawalpindi was used as the temporary Government headquarters. Islamabad became functional as the capital in 1966.



**14 August**  
**1947**

British India was divided into two independent dominions and Pakistan legally came into existence on the map of the world as a sovereign nation state.



**2 August**  
**1989**

Pakistan re-joins the Commonwealth of Nations after having left in 1972, when other member countries recognized Bangladesh as a nation-state.



**13 August**  
**1954**

Radio Pakistan broadcasts the "Qaumī Tarāna", the national anthem of Pakistan, for the first time. For seven years post independence, Pakistan lacked a national anthem, but arrival of Reza Shah Pahlavi of Iran required a customary welcome with an official anthem. Ahmed G. Chagla composed it within two weeks, before the Shah's arrival.



**11 August**  
**1947**

National Flag Day of Pakistan – The Constituent Assembly of Pakistan approves the design for the national flag, just three days before the country's independence.



15 August  
1947

Founder of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah is sworn in as first Governor-General of Pakistan in Karachi.

17 August  
1988



President of Pakistan, Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq, his top leadership and U.S. Ambassador, Arnold Raphel are killed in a plane crash.

20 August  
1971



Pilot officer, Rashid Minhas, embraces martyrdom in a jet crash while trying to wrest control of the jet from a defected pilot: Flt Lt Matiur Rahman. Matiur attempted to hijack Lockheed T-33, 'Blue Bird' being flown by Minhas for the Bangladesh Liberation Army. The struggle between the two resulted in a crash, with the young officer Minhas embracing martyrdom. He was posthumously awarded the highest military gallantry award, The Nishan-e-Haider.

Riaz Rafi

# Elections 2018

## Dirtiest or the Fairest?

Dr. Moeed Pirzada



Financial Times (FT, 18 July) coined the term, “Dirtiest Elections” to describe Pakistan’s July polls that brought Imran Khan’s PTI to power in center, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab. The party also emerged as the largest political force in Karachi, winning 14 out of 21 seats in country’s largest metropolis.

FT launched its salvo a week before the actual elections on 25th July, but it was not the first western publication to frame Pakistani elections. A researcher in Dunya News, while working to make sense of this crusade, printed a list of more than 100 articles, Op-Eds, reports and editorials that were published in the few weeks before the Pakistani elections. These stories and Op-Eds carried repeatedly by some of the biggest media brands – that included New York Times, Washington Post, Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy, CNN, Economist, Bloomberg, Guardian, Telegraph and dozens of other publications – were remarkably similar to each other: all cried that Pakistani elections will be bogus, were being rigged by the military in favor of Imran Khan. These pieces, scant on evidence – often woefully superficial – relied upon statements by Imran’s political opponents and known anti-PTI or anti-military commentators. Most of these pieces were Op-Eds from Pakistanis considered rabid enemies of the PTI leader, some were from Indian commentators, and then few from lesser known western writers or correspondents. It was amazing that none of these western publications ever considered inviting or engaging the alternative opinion – or the “other opinion” as

Al Jazeera calls it - on an issue that was apparently important to them.

### Lobbyists or West’s Liberal Media Establishment?

It was known that Nawaz Sharif, the ousted Prime Minister, had hired lobbyist firms in the US after his disqualification (Roberti Global; as claimed by Pakistani papers in September 2017), and perhaps also in the UK. This single minded, black & white content that was published repeatedly ad-nauseam – in which Nawaz is always mentioned not as a corrupt billionaire public office holder convicted by multitier system of courts, in an open transparent process, covered daily by hundreds of media portals, but rather as an innocent political victim - had the hands of an influential lobbyist written large on it. But then it’s a fact that no lobbyist – even of the prestige of Roberti Global - would have succeeded in producing such continuous stream of insane propaganda against a country, its institutions and political process if the editors had not been unusually sympathetic to the idea. One could still have blamed the demonization of a country on the inherent religious, racial and cultural biases of liberal media establishment – after all they are still trying to decapitate Trump - but then came the US State Department with its cynical judgement on Pakistani Elections. And what was that based on? Commentaries by HRCP, a private NGO – that operates more like a Family & Friends Club – funded primarily by western sources and known for taking positions that align it with the western governments’ world view. That was not enough, because soon, Mike Pompeo, US Secretary of State, appearing on CNBC warned IMF that it should not be bailing out a Pakistan burdened with Chinese debt. Pompeo conveniently forgot that the US owes the biggest debt to the Chinese Dragon! But pompous Pompeo did a huge favor to Pakistanis, because he finally convinced any remaining skeptics that an unprecedented media campaign, on both sides of the Atlantic, was not an intellectual commentary by those who care for democracy in Pakistan but was an expression of displeasure on the imminent political and social change in Pakistan.

Media campaigns are orchestrated to shape narratives; post-colonial societies like Pakistan suffer from a “reverse racism” in which pathetically superficial or ill-informed opinions, even coming from the most ignorant of people anywhere in the Western hemisphere, can be taken seriously. Argument is: “hum nahin kah rahay, yeh tu puri dunya kah rahi hay”

“Media campaigns are orchestrated to shape narratives; post-colonial societies like Pakistan suffer from a “reverse racism” in which pathetically superficial or ill-informed opinions even coming from the most ignorant of people, anywhere in western hemisphere, can be taken seriously.

#### FINANCIAL TIMES

### Pakistan heads for dirtiest election in years

Candidates allege widespread interference by army and intelligence services

The Washington Post  
Democracy Dies in Darkness

### Is Imran Khan the Pakistani military's 'favourite son'?

Given Khan's personality and policy positions, there's reason to doubt that he is the army's blue-eyed boy.



### Shadow of 'engineering' hangs over Pakistan election

Political leaders in Balochistan province claim they are being threatened to switch parties, alleging army involvement.

(the whole world is saying this). Nawaz's Govt. and powerful media groups had in 2015 joined hands, and exploited the news story published in The New York Times to target their feared rival "Bol Television" (some media sources argue that whole investigation was conducted by Pakistani media groups and their business associates). Don't forget that Nawaz's opponents could capitalize on "Panama Leaks" only because the facts originated from ICIJ, a consortium of German and American journalists, otherwise there was nothing new or extraordinary in those pitifully inadequate 1.5 facts disclosed by ICIJ. Nawaz loyalists initially claimed that this represented a western (read American) conspiracy to defeat CPEC; many in the Army and Foreign Office also suspected that. However, Imran Khan, along many in the media and legal community had finally discovered the "magical dagger" of "A Thousand and One Nights" or the "silver bullet" (Argent used to kill the Beast of Gevaudan) in ICIJ that could help demolish Nawaz's deep penetration and systematic control on Punjabi bureaucracy, (DMG, Police & Revenue officers called "Patwaris") system of electorates and the carefully manufactured public perception of his invincibility.

### Pakistan: On a Road to Genuine Modern Democracy & the Resurgence of a Nation State?

The irony for the western world is: most people in Pakistan – especially the educated intelligentsia in cities – consider these elections as the fairest and most just in the nation's long troubled electoral history; an election that might have its own set of irregularities, lapses, failures, tricks here and there, but was a remarkably transparent process on the whole after a long time and has broken the inertia of the past three decades. They have opened up Pakistan for a middle class led democracy, meaningful political change, economic stability, cultural modernity and genuine woman empowerment. Despite the hostility expressed by Washington, a political dispensation in Pakistan that will provide for much better and realistic relations with the United States – and even with India.

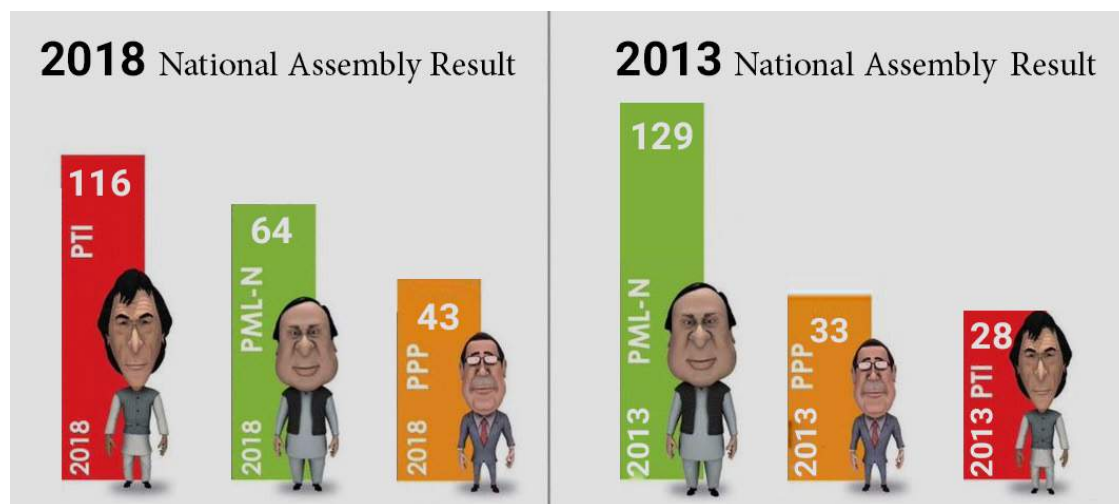
Election results are best understood and absorbed by carefully reflecting on tables and charts – and comparing historical data over years. This is a kind of luxury most international commentators don't have and most Pakistani colum-

**“ Irony for the western world is most people in Pakistan – especially the educated intelligentsia in cities – consider these elections as the fairest and just in nation's long troubled electoral history.**

nists don't indulge in. I am providing some charts and tables to explain what I am saying in these lines; but an overview is important between elections 2013 and 2018. In 2013, PMLN of Nawaz Sharif took around 129 directly elected seats, in a house of 272, (National Assembly) from all the four provinces of Pakistan and FATA – but a full 120 out of these seats it won from Punjab alone out of 148 seats then (81% of the total) and only 9 seats from the rest of Pakistan (7%). Interestingly, PTI, that had won 5 million vote from Punjab in 2013, only got 6 National Assembly seats. PTI in 2018 won 115 seats out of 270 directly contested seats but these come from all over Pakistan; it got 60 out of a total of 141 from Punjab (42%) 30 from 39 (77%) seats of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 15 from 61 seats of Sindh (25%), 6 from 12 seats of FATA (50%), 2 from 16 seats of Baluchistan (13%) and 03 seats out of 03 seats from federal territory (ICT, Islamabad). The figures need to be understood in the context that PMLN of Nawaz in 2013 was deeply penetrated into the administrative machinery (DMG, Police & Revenue Dept. Patwaris) that actually holds election on ground – ECP is a sort of regulator that sets rules and regulations, from Islamabad, but is totally dependent on the machinery it contracts from provinces.

The broad based nature of PTI support oozing out from every nook and corner of a nation state of 200 million, plus spread over around 800,000 square kilometers of territory, corresponds well with the overall narrative – of dreams and aspirations of "Naya Pakistan" – party has shaped since its Lahore Jalsa of 30th Oct 2011. This would have never been possible without the rise of twenty plus 24/7 Television channels, hundreds of radio stations, hundreds of online publications like 'Global Village Space', 140 million hand held phone devices, 55 million WhatsApp handles, 30 million Facebook users, 15

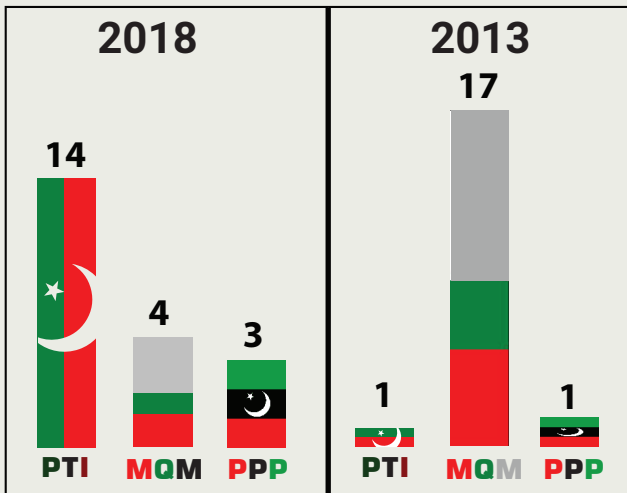
million plus twitter users and countless YouTube channels being run by Pakistanis and so on. This election, driven by the sentiments of young men and women under 37– if correctly understood by academics – is a kiss of death for all those pundits across the world who have seen Pakistan as a state riven



by regional centrifugal forces. Whether Imran Khan and PTI leaders had imagined this or not does not matter; a strong belief in the Pakistani nation state, from Khyber to Karachi, is on vivid display through support for PTI.

The outpouring support from Pakistan’s largest metropolis, Karachi, where PTI won 14 seats out of 21 (67%), speaks of a gigantic change. But MQM insiders, after 2013, confessed to media sources that PTI had won 8 seats on 11th May 2013, (in official results PTI was runner up in 80% of NA seats) however, MQM with a stranglehold on the city’s administrative machinery was able to over turn results overnight. PTI in the end got only one seat – NA 250 of Dr. Alvi – where elections got cancelled on 11th May, due to violence (Presiding Officers of 40 plus polling stations never arrived; apparently abducted and restrained by MQM gangs) and because affluent, upper middle class educated voters, in Defense & Clifton, resisted dictation from the goons of a London based Altaf Hussain. Crowds of young angry protesters staged a dharna (sit in) at Teen Talwar, a large landmark in the center of Clifton, against

### Karachi Scenario Comparison



MQM, and a visibly irate Altaf Hussain thundered from London that “his enraged followers can teach a lesson”.

Then on 18th May, Zahra Shahid, President of PTI Woman Wing Sindh, was murdered outside her home – in a typical Karachi style political violence covered under the panoply of uncontrolled criminal activity – one day before the rescheduled election in NA-250 was to take place. Imran Khan blamed Altaf Hussain for murder, prompting PTI supporters in London to lodge protests to Metropolitan Police in thousands, jamming its phone lines in the process – this was literally the beginning of the end of Altaf Hussain’s “reign of terror” over Karachi. Propagandists against the elections 2018 talk of “media suppression”; it’s a ridiculous claim that takes the English word, “hypocrisy” to new heights, because none of them – and us - could even muster the courage to speak a word against the murderers, rapists and abductors of Karachi – or the misogynists of Punjab.

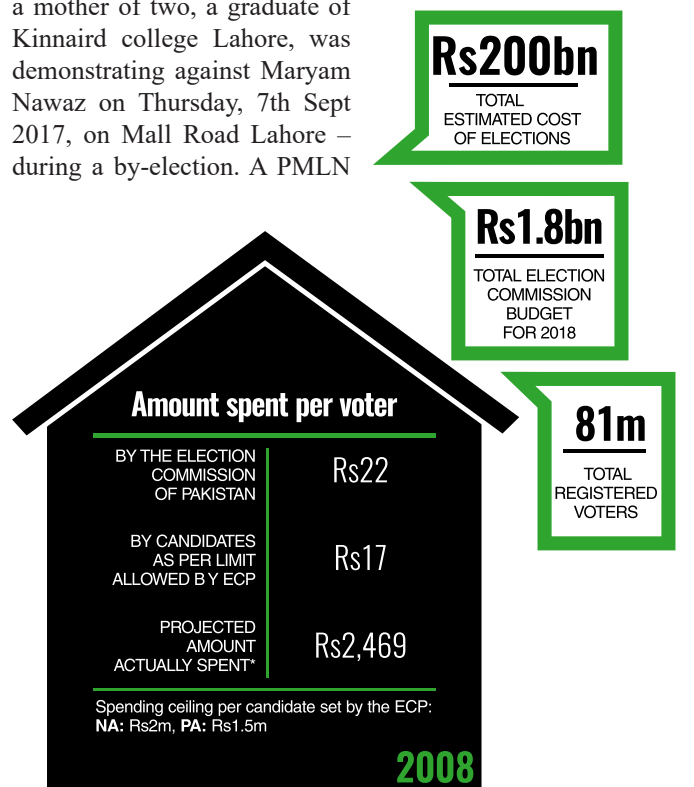
Political change in Karachi, in 2018, also allowed PPP to win three seats despite its crucial loss in Liyari (where Bilawal Bhutto stood at 3rd slot) is clearly connected with two factors:

**“ British Foreign Office, New York Times, Washington Post and dozens of American think tanks support in Pakistani politics; those who criminally violate every principle held sacred by Western values, but uphold “Washington Consensus”**

one, the eradication of MQM’s militant gangs that controlled the city of 20 million with instruments of fear from 1999 onwards and second; the “delimitation exercise” that rearranged voter concentrations. One liberal commentator recently, while trashing July elections, lamented that Karachi’s dominant party, MQM, is now running “helter-skelter for relevance”. One gets the impression that eradicating MQM’s militant gangs – that controlled Karachi’s politics through orgies of blood and fire - was not fair? One wonders what kind of moral consciousness is this? One also wonders: who are those supported by the State Department, British Foreign Office, New York Times, Washington Post and dozens of American think tanks in Pakistani politics; those who criminally violate every principle held sacred by Western values, but uphold “Washington Consensus” or those who identify with “values of the West” but disagree on Washington’s geostrategic goals in the region?

### Defeat of the Misogynists & the Defective Lens of the New York Times?

What about the misogynists of Punjab? Nida Luqman, a mother of two, a graduate of Kinnaird college Lahore, was demonstrating against Maryam Nawaz on Thursday, 7th Sept 2017, on Mall Road Lahore – during a by-election. A PMLN



gangster, Abid Mushtaq, a certain Gen. Secretary of the Trader’s Association, dragged her from her car and beat her with kicks in front of her two daughters – ages 7 and 8 – in full view of public and cameras of the safe city. Dr. Yasmin Rashid held a press conference for her, she hired a lawyer, filed a FIR, medical reports of external and internal injuries provided to the police and the Lahore Police promised to take action to thwart political protests. Months passed, nothing happened against the politically connected misogynist and the case first disappeared inside the labyrinthine system of police, lower judiciary and sections of law – and then was disposed of, when she and her lawyer were exhausted. Nida is the daughter of Dr. Rehana, ex-Superintendent of Services Hospital and married to a telecom executive; if this could happen to her for protests against the political elite in Punjab, on a place like Mall Road, in full visibility of public and cameras, then one can imagine the brutal system of control – instituted through police and lower judiciary – that ultimately ensures political loyalty of the subjects and the so called “Electables”

Pakistan’s media endlessly discussed Meesha Shafi’s trivial allegations against singer Ali Zafar; so called liberals have done to death Ayesha Gulalai’s ambiguous accusations against Imran Khan; writer, Mohammad Hanif could pen an Op-Ed about that in New York Times; HRCP could blow hot and cold on issues that sync with an international theme on Pakistan, but no one could even squeak when it means annoying those who actually controlled the reins of political power. The same silence of death prevailed when Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman, Rana Sana Ullah and other Punjabi leaders used demeaning language to condemn women participating in PTI rallies, referring to them as whores or women who are “not from respectable homes”. Police investigations into the mysterious gangs that suddenly appeared in PTI rallies in Lahore, groping young girls, to this day remained inconclusive – just like the police investigations into the beating of Nida Luqman. But to any political analyst, it was obvious that misogynists that dominate Punjab’s politics were targeting young women, scaring their husbands, fathers and families to prevent their impact in shaping the politics of Pakistan. If the editors of New York Times would have been genuinely alive to the political dynamics of Pakistan – instead of seeing everything from their rusty lens of “Civil Military” - they would have vomited on the primitive mindsets aligned with the “Washington Consensus” across Pakistan.

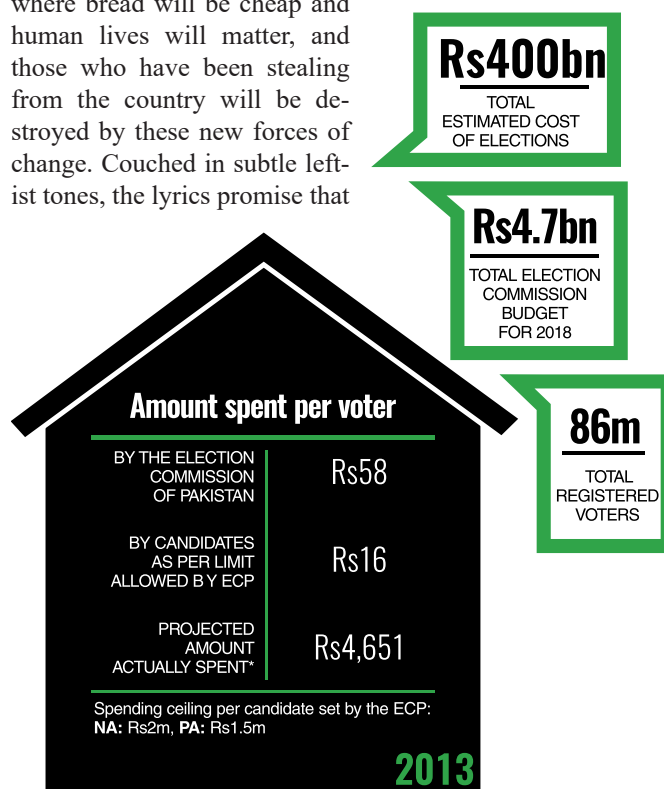
### From Faiz Ahmed Faiz to Strings: Romance against Injustice & “Status Quo”

Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Pakistan’s revolutionary poet of the left, had written the iconic, “Hum Dekhenge” (One day we will also see) somewhere in 1979. It promised a new paradigm in Pakistan of a day when the poor, the dispossessed, the weak, the subjugated would witness the end of tyranny, a revolution which would blow away the rich and powerful. Faiz – though a Marxist and an avowed secularist – uses intense religious references towards the end of these lyrics, almost Quranic in sentiment. These lyrics became legendary with the famous rendering of Iqbal Bano, who was waxing against Zia’s Marshal Law in 1985. These words have adorned many a famous lip,

“ If the editors of New York Times would have been genuinely alive to the political dynamics of Pakistan – instead of seeing everything from their rusty lens of “Civil Military” - they would have vomited on the primitive mindsets aligned with “Washington Consensus” across Pakistan.

including Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, Rahat Fateh Ali Khan, Abida Parveen and many others. The context has been changing, at times referring to Kashmir, at times to Palestine and at times to imperialism, but the spirit remains the same: defiance of the “all powerful”, their ultimate downfall and collapse of the status quo being witnessed by the subjugated. Few days ago, in July 2018, Coke Studio opened its Eleventh season with a beautifully rehashed ‘Hum Dekhenge’ - spearheaded by producers Ali Hamza and Zohaib Kazi, giving an altogether new universal touch to Faiz’s undying spirit.

Yet, none of the modern rehashes can come close to the twist Pakistani rock band, Strings, gave to Faiz’s words when it produced “Mein Tou Dekhoonga” (I will see) in April 2011. This song, written and produced by the band founder, lead guitarist and vocalist Bilal Maqsood, has powerful imagery of the singers talking to poor children of Pakistan and telling them that there will soon be a new Pakistan (Aisa Hoga Pakistan), in which children or the young will rule the country, while powerful politicians will be put in the schools, it will be a Pakistan where bread will be cheap and human lives will matter, and those who have been stealing from the country will be destroyed by these new forces of change. Couched in subtle leftist tones, the lyrics promise that



in this new Pakistan different colors of ethnicities will merge and unite under the national flag, and those who have left the lands (expats) will come back home – as if they had lost their way. Its not clear, if rock band String’s original video was inspired by the politics of Imran Khan, but it set the stage for the historic jalsa of October 2011 around Minar-e-Pakistan, where Bilal Maqsood and Faisal Kapadia, from Karachi, were immortalized as they sang, “Mein Tou Dekhoonga” and “Aisa Hoga Pakistan”, to hundreds and thousands of roaring young men and women from Punjab and KP, mixing the colors of ethnicities into one flag of Pakistan.

A young Lahori woman, now 27, had just turned 20, and she amongst many others had described her feelings to me; that electric spark running down her spine, in Urdu words similar to what Wordsworth had once said, about the French revolution, , “Bliss it was in that dawn to be alive, but to be young was very heaven”. Literature, poetry and arts have always inspired vivid imaginations laying ground for something big. In the afternoon of the 25th of July, thousands of Karachites, now unbounded, rushed to the polling stations in the strongholds of ethnic MQM making PTI, with its roots in KP and Punjab, largest party in Pakistan’s biggest metropolis - the dream composed by Bilal Maqsood was being realized.

### Of Demography, Technology & Tragedy after 9/11

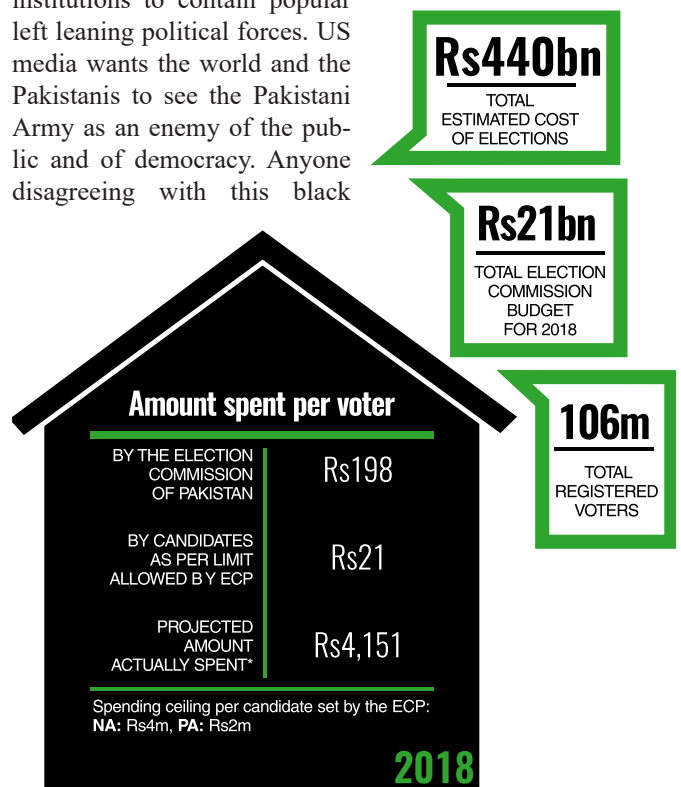
Political change in Pakistan did not just magically happen on the morning of 25th July; it has been evolving every day, for the past several years. The Minar-e-Pakistan Jalsa on October 30, 2011 may have been an important milestone. Many certainly think it was, but perhaps this change was in the air much before that. Perhaps it has been shaped by the demography, in a land where almost 65% of the population is less than 37 years of age; and by technology, in a nation of 200 million, where around 140 million use hand held devices, around 55 million use WhatsApp, and above all by income inequality, where few dozen families control most of the resources, making the worst possible use of neoliberal economics. Financial experts, in different security firms in Karachi looking at the overall data flows, pointed out that almost 70% of banking loans are owed by a mere 34 families, and top politicians became billionaires without anything to show in terms

“ They know that they are important in their own cities and communities because of the importance being conferred from outside – the modern version of medieval knighthood. This is a classical problem of a post-colonial society – but election 2018 has dealt a severe blow to this community and will reduce its power.

of a spread sheet or a money trail. This makes middle class Pakistanis wonder whether Nawaz Sharif and Zardari created Microsoft, Apple, Facebook or Amazon after coming to power?

None of the Al Qaeda attackers in New York on the eve of 9/11 was a Pakistani, Afghan or a Pashtun. But since then, Pakistan has seen almost 80-100,000 violent deaths, including more than 10,000 of security personnel. Pakistani cantonments, cities, courts, colleges, streets, parks, hospitals, mosques, churches, literally every place came under attack – the Army Public School, where more than 150 school children and teachers were massacred, represented the climax of this madness. While Western media and Pakistani intellectuals that act in sync have continuously defined this as an implosion within the sects of Islam, but gradually most educated Pakistanis have come to realize this mayhem as less ideological and more a kind of strategic warfare between regional interests from Afghanistan to India. This has slowly shaped a new political consciousness that considers corrupt, super rich leaders acting in self interest responsible for the pain of the common people – be it Zardari or Nawaz – and desires a more responsive, accountable sensitive leadership. Turkey’s Erdogan and Malaysia’s Mahatir Mohammad are perhaps the most cherished leaders amongst the new generation of Pakistanis.

This is a Pakistan which Western media, think tanks and universities don’t understand and perhaps don’t want to understand. The only and the only lens they have to make sense of Pakistan is the “Pakistan Army” – everything, good or bad, is judged in that context. The singularity of this political lens would have been limiting any way, but this “single lens” is also defective; most Americans see Pakistani military through their experiences of Latin America, where Washington for a greater part of 20th century had relied upon ruthless military institutions to contain popular left leaning political forces. US media wants the world and the Pakistanis to see the Pakistani Army as an enemy of the public and of democracy. Anyone disagreeing with this black



and white world view risks being considered a stooge of the soldiers. The reality is the opposite: Latin American militaries acted against people in the US interest; Pakistani military is perceived to be standing by the public against elites - like Nawaz and Zardari – supported from the outside.

This flawed US narrative – disconnected from ground realities of South Asia - can only be sold to that small section of Pakistanis who, because of their situation or ambition, need support of Western institutions for the advancement of their careers. Anyone who relies upon Western recognition – for a byline or running a NGO – quickly learns to say things which please the Western opinion; almost all of those who wrote blistering opinion pieces against the July elections fall into that category. They know that they are important in their own cities and communities because of the importance being conferred from outside – the modern version of medieval knight-hood. This is a classical problem of a post-colonial society – but the 2018 elections have dealt a severe blow to this community and will reduce its power.

### Imran: A Multifaceted Villain, a Joker or a Dangerous Reality for the Liberals?

I moved back to Pakistan from London in 2007; Imran Khan was still a relatively lesser known, insignificant player, a kind of junior. Most of my close friends were in PPP or PMLN, and they often described Imran Khan as a stupid man, a confused idiot, a dreamer, impractical buffoon, an idealist; a man of no consequence. I could see their point that Imran did not have that street smartness, that cautious political tone, that grasp of political principles enshrined in Machiavelli's "The Prince". But, I, being a TV anchor found myself being invited to schools, colleges and universities to speak and was stopped on streets by vendors, shopkeepers, laborers and so on. I could sense something totally different shaping up from the ground upwards, by the young who will be joining the ranks of voters. I could hear the young seeing Imran as the only hope for them,

their identity, their survival.

As Imran's political prowess became more and more obvious, after 2011, his frightened political opponents – still not prepared to accept him as a genuine historical phenomenon – went berserk with whatever they could lay their hands on. Imran has since then been described as "Gen. Pasha's creation", a terrorist who attacked police, a Jewish agent of Goldsmith family, West's agent against CPEC, Taliban supporter, a womanizer, a misogynist, cocaine peddler, homosexual, beater of wives, elitist of Banigala, tax evader and what not. Articles, in Western press, targeting Elections 2018 abundantly mention the PTI case against Nawaz Sharif as pre-election rigging, but they have forgotten PMLN's own case against Imran Khan, that dragged endlessly in the Supreme Court, questioning even his modest Banigala residence (built for less than \$1 million, before 2005) and forcing him to show his incomes from County Cricket from 1970's onwards and the sale of a modest London apartment.

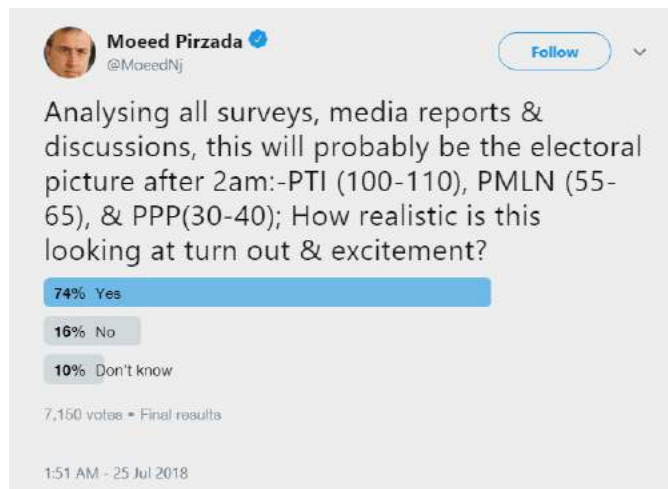
**“As Imran's political prowess became more and more obvious, after 2011, his frightened political opponents – still not prepared to accept him as a genuine historical phenomenon – went berserk with whatever they could lay their hands on.**

However, nothing has succeeded in driving a wedge between him and his followers. Imran's opponents – whether inside Geo TV or CNN – have failed to understand the nature and dynamics of this new politics in Pakistan (collapse of country's neoliberal mumbo jumbo), the last minute rush before elections to capitalize upon Reham Khan's book, published on Amazon, through a newly created company, with juicy details about Imran was yet another proof of this failed imagination.

### Who failed RTS and What Happened to Form-45s?

Imran and PTI's success was inevitable in 2018 and was palpable for the past two to three years – all internal surveys by independent TV channels, in the few weeks running up to the elections, predicted that PTI will win above 100 directly elected seats. PTI leaders had predicted 120-125 directly elected seats, but Dunya News TV Network had meticulously carried out a constituency wise survey of 272 constituencies across Pakistan. Habib Akram, Head Election Cell, Dunya News (and a known critic of PTI politics over the past few years) had repeatedly predicted, in scores of TV programs, that PTI will win from 103 to 112 seats. In the morning of 25th July, I tweeted that PTI will win from 100-110 seats, PMLN will win from 55 to 65 seats and PPP from 30 – 40 seats.

Losers in Pakistan and their supporters abroad, in Western media, are still trying to find lame excuses like the crash of RTS and denials of Form-45 etc. to justify demonization of what was otherwise a very transparent and predictable outcome. But now we know for sure that RTS (Result Transmission System) was conceived, created and operated by NADRA on turn key basis. It totally relied upon NADRA's infrastructure (Intermediate Server and Data Based Servers inside NADRA), receiving input from 85,000 polling stations through a dedicated pipeline of 400 MBPS hired from Nayatel and then relaying the data to the ECP and Returning Officers (ROs) for creating Form-47 (result of whole constituency) that was to be



fed through RMS (Result Management System) operated by ECP, but supported financially by UNDP through 840 Hewlett Packard Laptops. RMS delivered 100%, facilitating transmission of all 840 Forms-47 to the ECP by mid day July 26th – evidence of an excellent cooperation between the Election Commission of Pakistan and UNDP. RTS, on the other hand, was not legally mandated, it was merely to speed up the delivery of polling station results to Returning Officers so that a fuller picture could emerge by 2am; it had started to slow down after 10pm and then collapsed after 11pm on the night of July 25th, but its control lay entirely with the top NADRA team and these were all appointees of the PMLN government. The significance of its collapse did not and could not affect election results (since physical records exist at multiple levels, along with CCTV footage from all polling stations), but it fueled a public controversy and a narrative of possible rigging – and thus its actual victim was the new government, whose legitimacy has been thrown into doubt. The incoming PTI government must conduct a detailed “forensic investigation” to determine if it was the incompetency of NADRA (in creation and management of the Android App of RTS) or foul play inside (as being accused by many) to tarnish the Elections 2018.

PMLN, PPP, MQM, PSP and others losing in different constituencies had alleged on the night of 25th July, that their polling agents had been expelled and votes counted in their absence. By now it is becoming clear that as per convention, only one polling agent of each party was allowed during the vote count and additional polling agents had been asked to leave – just like in 2013. Fortunately, CCTV footage exists of all polling stations, Form-45 are being put up on ECP website (Form-14 in 2013 were never put up, not even till today) and any accusations – if formally submitted – can be cross checked and verified.

### Pakistan: Failure of Neoliberalism, What Lies Ahead?

So, all those who are thinking of the return of the Sharif’s or Zardaris after a hiatus of two or five years are living in a mistaken world. The rise of PTI lies in the failure of Pakistan’s neoliberal moment – or perhaps its gross exploitation. The Pakistan of 1960’s and 1970’s was rich in ideas; politics was shaped around debates of left and right, it was in that climate that Zulfikar Ali Bhutto could sell his slogans of “Roti, Kapra aur Makan”, but with the collapse of Soviet Union and Fukuyama’s “End of History” Pakistan experienced its “end of political ideas”. Gen. Zia’s brutal martial law (1977-1988) supported by Jammāt-e-Islami and Washington gave way to the political era of “brain death” in the 1990’s. A seriously corrupt Benazir Bhutto – and politically compromised – looked smart or intelligent only because she was pitched against a class of buffoons headed by Nawaz Sharif, whose sole purpose in politics was to make money and further his family’s business interests. This is not to suggest that Nawaz was not street

“ A politically compromised Benazir Bhutto looked smart or intelligent only because she was pitched against a class of buffoons headed by Nawaz Sharif whose sole purpose in politics was to make money and further his family’s business interests.

smart, he is perhaps the most intelligent living politician in this category, of “street smarts” instead I am simply asserting that he, Mr. Street Smart– who never read a book in his entire life – was never capable of meeting the challenges thrown up by failure of neoliberalism in Pakistan.

Nawaz himself – along with almost all elite Pakistani families – was the biggest beneficiary of this “Neoliberal mumbo jumbo” which in Pakistani context only meant: lets privatize and make money. Concepts of regulation never existed, no one in the political class thought of developing regulatory institutions and whatever functional strength was left in the British era institutions of civil services and judiciary was drained when political elite politicized these through appointments against merit. Total institutional collapse of the state apparatus brings political elite face to face with Pakistan army – the only British era institution that has maintained its own control on recruitment, training, placement, promotion and accountability. US lead Western political establishment’s geostrategic conflict with Pakistan army – on issues related to Afghanistan, India and China - thus provides a valuable fault line to the political elite, like Nawaz, for empowering itself. However, slogans of civilian supremacy do not mean that Pakistani political elite ever seriously believed in the separation between the civil and military spheres; what their mantras meant was control over military to be used against other political opponents; model exists in GCC countries of Middle East. Nawaz had welcomed the formation of JIT, with military officers; he genuinely believed that he will be able to influence them from the top of GHQ and will use their credibility to rescue himself from the Panama scandal, which was being

### The Big Players in Provincial Election 2018

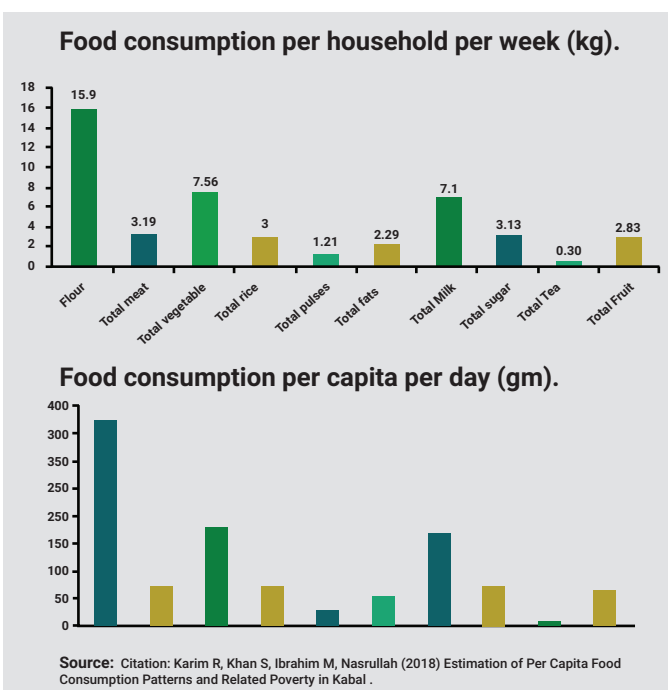
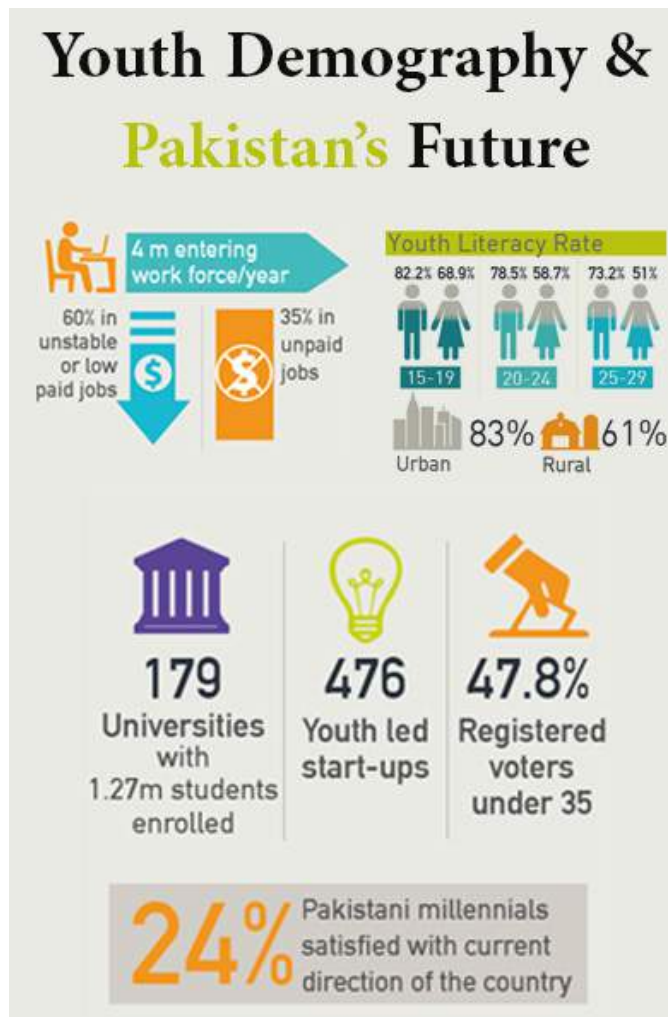
	PTI	PMLN	PPP	MMA	BAP	MQM	GDA	IND
<b>Punjab</b>	123	129	6	-	-	-	-	30
<b>Sindh</b>	23	-	76	1	-	16	11	-
<b>Balochistan</b>	4	1	-	9	15	-	-	5
<b>KP</b>	66	5	4	9	-	-	-	6

pushed by his political opposition – PTI and media.

Wholesale abdication of education and health by Pakistani state under mantras of “privatization” that began in 1990’s has reached a stage where 90% Pakistani university graduates hit job markets with no or limited skills – average starting salaries for graduates can be less than \$120/month (Rs. 15,000) and most young men and women are suffering from effects of low calorie diets.

The political class since 2002 elections – while making money for themselves – has attempted pacifying teeming millions through either the political rhetoric of democracy, autonomy and democratic rights (PPP& its 8th Amendment) or through building impressive mega projects (Metros; pocketing huge commissions in the process) celebrated as “progress and development” through a bought and penetrated media (PMLN). This large scale fraud had to collapse at some stage; it has given rise to a new phase of “neoliberalism” that demands “honest leadership”, “good governance”, “strong institutions” (the kind of rhetoric used by World Bank & other donor agencies) with moderate doses of nationalism and patriotism. This is the space in which Imran Khan and PTI are selling their political slogans. Watch any speech of Imran Khan or his TV interview, he talks against corruption, abuse of political office and the compromise of national interests for personal gains – and the dire need for a welfare state through strong institutions.

There are no guarantees that PTI will succeed. Like the flawed US lens on Pakistan, PTI too has a limited world view. It has failed to understand that the US and EU are Pakistan’s largest trade partners – and Pakistani institutions, even Pakistan Army and courts, are made in Britain. The relation with the US was never merely a security relationship; US is the contemporary leader of Western civilization, no nation in the last one hundred years has contributed more to the understanding of sciences, arts and natural phenomenon. Our world as it exists around us is to a huge extent a creation of American



ideas. PTI must find ways to engage the US government, US Congress, media and the think tanks. If the New York Times has a rusty lens to look at Pakistan, then it is the responsibility of Pakistani media and politicians to provide a lens cleaner. The tsunami of anger, desires and expectations which has unleashed Imran and PTI, and the change which they have unleashed in turn may end up destroying them the way founders, leaders and rebels of French revolution were consumed by the forces they had unleashed. But while monarchists did return for several decades after Napoleon made himself emperor, no one in right mind today will deny that it was the storming of the Bastille in 1789 that transformed France and Europe – Gen. Zia’s citadel built in 1979 has finally collapsed.

*Moeed Pirzada is a prominent TV Anchor and Editor Strategic Affairs with Dunya News Network and a known columnist. He previously served with the Central Superior Services in Pakistan. He studied international relations at Columbia University, New York and Law at London School of Economics, the UK as a Britannia Chevening Scholar. He has been a participant in Chaophraya Dialogue, has lectured and given talks at universities and think tanks including Harvard, Georgetown, Urbana Champaign, National Defense University, FCCU, LUMS, USIP, Middle East Institute and many others.*



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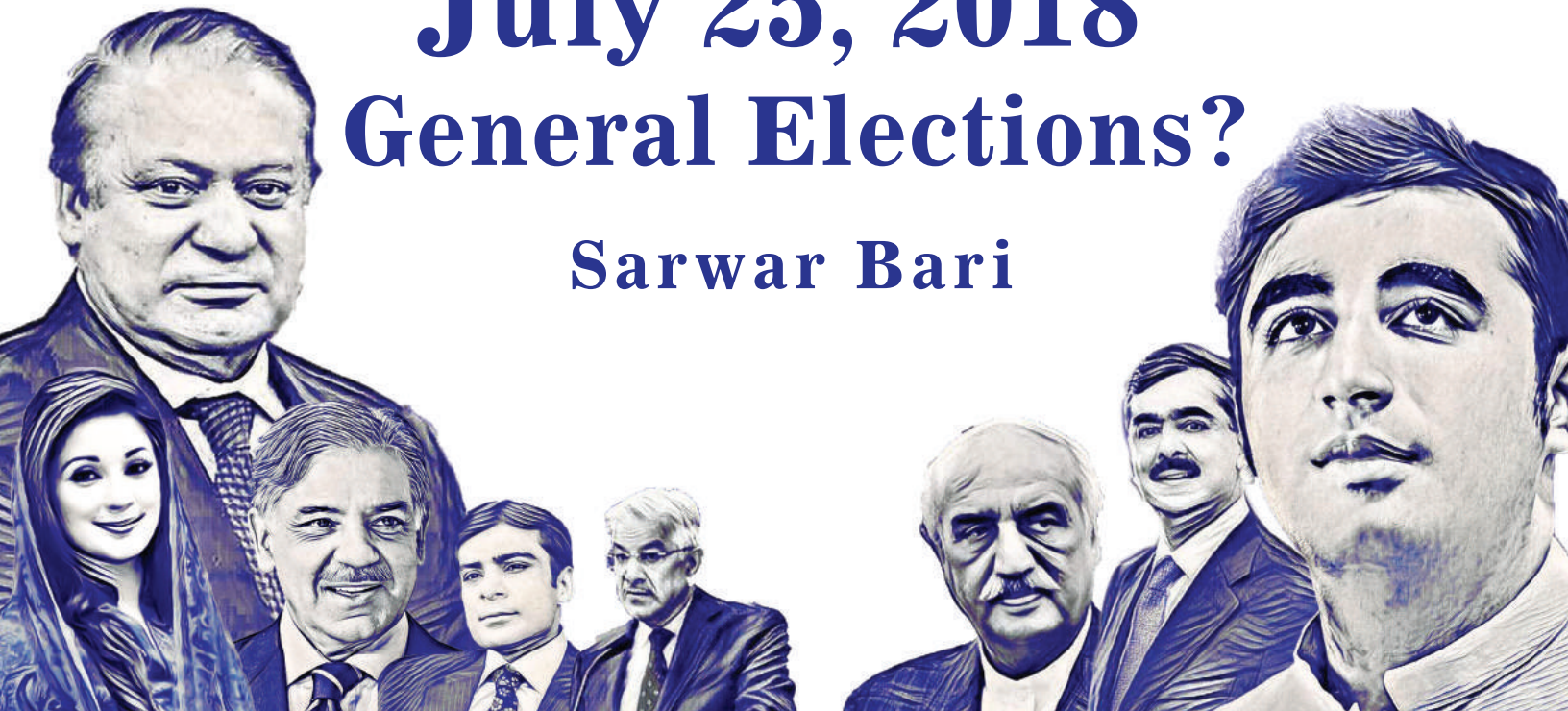
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# What is the Reality to the Rigging Allegations in the



**July 25, 2018**  
**General Elections?**

**Sarwar Bari**



Were the General Elections 2018 different from the previous elections or not? If not, then in what way and if yes, then to what extent? In order to assess the credibility of any election, you need to be absolutely independent, neutral and experienced in the use of comprehensive and robust methodology, tools and standards required to ensure free and fair elections. Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN), with whom I am associated since its inception in 2006, not only has the required skills, but has also established its neutrality and independence over the decades. For instance, FAFEN was the only civil society network, which was called as witness by the Supreme Court Inquiry Commission on the General Elections 2013. Political parties and sub-committees of parliament, seek our advice on electoral and governance issues. Without any exception, all national and international media houses seek our opinion in this regard. We are humbled.

We achieved this credibility because of our outreach, strict enforcement of scientific methodology and analysis of the data with utmost honesty. For instance, to observe the 2013 General Elections, FAFEN deployed about 40,000 short-term observers, and we had 19,000 on July 25, 2018. Prior to the polling in every district and constituency, long-term observers had already started working by end May. Besides political environment and campaign observation, about 5,000 district level office bearers of major parties were interviewed and amazingly, as many as 90% of them stated that, they did not face any form of intimidation or harassment from anyone. Table 1, shows party-wise percentage of responses.

Our 19,000 trained observers watched the polling and counting from start to end at 72,000 polling stations. FAFEN released its preliminary report on July 27<sup>th</sup>. It was based on the observation of 37,001 polling station and interviews of 1,550 candidates, which were conducted during the polling period. 83% of the candidates were found to be satisfied with the polling. In all the polling stations that had been observed in the morning, the polling staff arrived for duty before 8 am. During the course

of the polling, all day, no one including contesting candidates, media groups or observer groups reported any case of serious irregularity or rigging. Rather, everyone was praising the peaceful, orderly and disciplined polling.

Therefore, it was surprising when some candidates began to complain about rigging later in the evening, and within a couple of hours, the elections were being made out to be controversial. Eviction of polling agents and non-issuance of Form 45 were allegedly used as proof of rigging. After midnight around 12:30, the electoral authorities suddenly announced that the Result Transmission System (RTS) had collapsed and the alternative was being used.

Ignorance is always hazardous as it kills common sense. Sadly, many polling agents, political leaders and even reporters appear to be ignorant about the polling process. Most polling stations have multiple polling booths, some polling station may even have four or five polling booths and in different rooms. Therefore, candidates can appoint agents accordingly. However, for counting purpose, ballot boxes of each polling booth are collected in a specified room in each polling station. In order to observe counting and ballot validity, only one agent per party is required.

This is exactly what happened on the night of the 25<sup>th</sup>. All extra polling agents were told to leave aside from the one required according to procedure. This was not new at all. It has been the case in all-previous elections. This issue has never been raised in previous elections. Just recall the General Elections of 2013, when there was controversy surrounding Form 14. Now, Form 45 has come into the limelight. In 2013, the Result Management System

had also failed. As the news was spread about the so-called 'eviction' of the extra polling agents, it was perhaps taken as a repeat of 2013. Obviously, those extra polling agents could not have the Form 45, as they had left before the counting. The candidates who were losing at that stage, perhaps, thought that their victory was going to be snatched. Keeping in view, the rigging and gerrymandering around the past elections, it

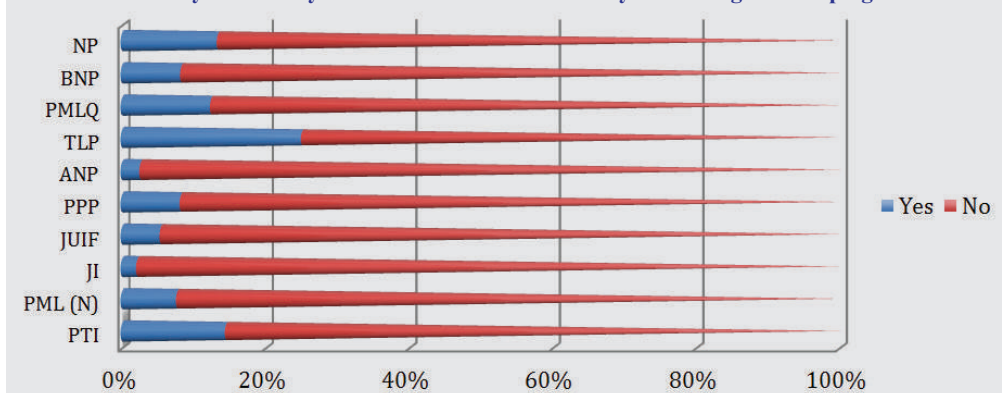
is predictable that the direct beneficiaries were going to instigate suspicions around the 2018 elections. The election authorities must have known this, and thus enhanced and ensured greater procedures for transparency.

### A surge in rejected vote numbers in 2018 elections

The issue of a large

**“ Keeping in view, the rigging and gerrymandering around the past elections, it is predictable that the direct beneficiaries were going to instigate suspicions around the 2018 elections. The election authorities must have known this, and thus enhanced and ensured greater procedures for transparency.**

**Table 1: Did you face any kind of intimidation from anyone during the campaign?**



number of rejected votes across many constituencies further fueled the rigging allegations. Once again this is a persistent phenomenon in all General Elections, and even the senate elections held in Pakistan. It happens in countries where the literacy rate is low. The rejected vote count was massive in India too before the introduction of electronic voting. Table 2, illustrates a staggering increase in the rejected vote numbers between 2002 and 2018.

The overall growth in rejected vote counts, since GE 2002 and GE 2013, is 93.7% and in GE 2018, it is 114.5%. This means the major jump took place up until GE 2013, while between 2013 and 2018 it was just 21%. Interestingly, no one turned it into a controversy during the last elections.

However, when the rejected number of ballots exceeds the margin of victory, it is a call for concern. FAFEN's analysis of the 2018 results, reveals that rejected votes were in excess of the victory margin in 50 NAs and 120 PAs constituencies. In 2013, it had happened in 35 NAs constituencies, while in the 1988 elections in 25 NAs constituencies. A short article could only flag this double-edge phenomenon. 1.66 million rejected ballots is not a small number. It is equal to the voters of three National Assembly constituencies and, unnecessarily taints the credibility of the ECP. Therefore, we would like to recommend to the ECP to study each and every rejected ballot in order to

### Rejected Ballot Papers in General Elections 2002, 2008, 2013 and 2018

Province/Region	2002	2008	2013	Excluded from the count 2018
KPK + FATA	88,036 (0.29%)	100,948 (0.28%)	190,597	241,505
ICT	1,881	1,531	2,448	4,942
Punjab	508,926	638,623	850,735	904,550
Sindh	131,426	185,703	381,757	408,521
Balochistan	45,451	46,889	77,180	104,481
Overall	775,720	973,694	1,502,717 (54%)	1,663,999 (10.7%)
Increase since 2002		25.5%	93.7%	114.5%

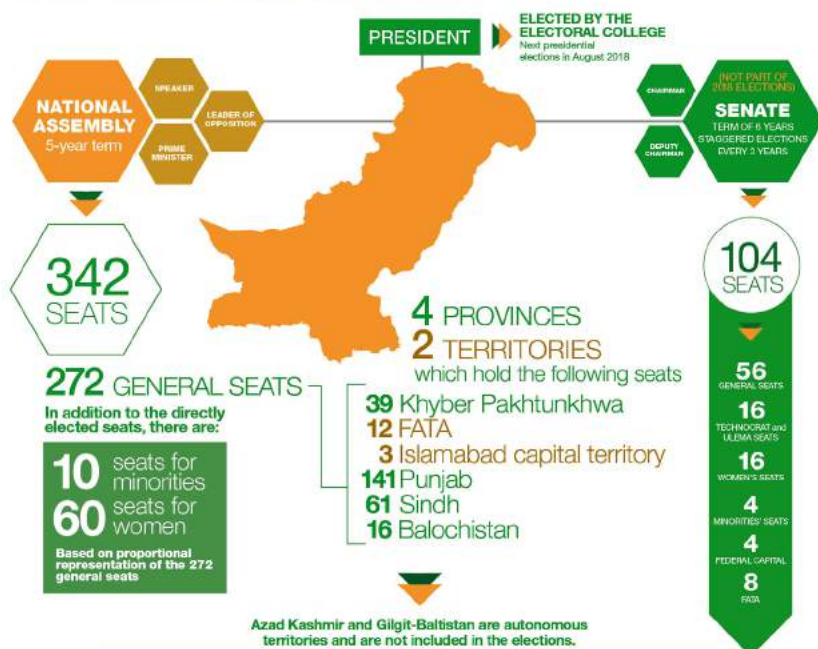
Source: FAFEN ELECTION OBSERVATION REPORT, JULY 31, 2018.

“ A little examination of politicking is required here. Most parties who have been rejecting the results, believing that their victory was snatched through organized rigging, in fact, happen to be the beneficiaries of this alleged sin.

prevent it from happening in the future.

Another related issue is - whether excluded ballots made any impact on the victory of a certain candidate? As far as our understanding is concerned, it appears to us that the larger the gap between margin of victory and excluded ballots, the higher the likelihood of mischief. This must also be investigated.

## PAKISTAN ELECTIONS 2018 Government structure



A party needs to win 137 of the general seats to form the government

Source: Election Commission of Pakistan |

### The Form 45 conspiracy

Now lets go back to Form 45. This form provides polling station wise count of each contesting candidate. It also gives the details of tendered, challenged and excluded ballots. Therefore, it is a basic document. Its issuance to polling agents and display on the polling station wall is made mandatory under the law. According to our observation and preliminary analysis, in most cases Form 45 was issued to most of the polling agents. If any candidate has complained about it, their complaint must be investigated. This could also be done by obtaining copies of Form 45, that were issued to the other present polling agents. Here, I would like to mention Form 42 – an equally important document. This is the only form that is signed by all the present polling agents after confirming that ballot boxes were empty at the start of the polling day. Analysis of Form 42 can also be used to establish how many polling agents were present in the morning. Their number must be deducted at the start of the counting. However, it helps greatly, to establish the factual presence of polling agents.

A little examination of politicking is required here. Most parties who have been

## How 2018 General Elections made history



Women voted for the first time in the history of Lower Dir and Upper Dir.



Youngest women entrant in KP Assembly, Dr. Sumera Shams, is elected from Lower Dir.



Tanzeela Qambrani becomes the first Sheedi, African Pakistani, woman to be elected as the member of Sindh Assembly.



Mahesh Kumar Malani becomes the first Hindu to be elected as a member of National Assembly on a general seat.



Transgender candidates contested in the General Elections for the first time in history.

rejecting the results, believing that their victory was snatched through organized rigging, in fact, happen to be the beneficiaries of this alleged sin. For instance, MMA defeated most of PKMAP candidates, including Mr. Mahmud Khan Achkzai. Overall, one can find examples where united opposition parties defeated each other. The Pakistan Peoples Party defeated some MMA candidates in Sindh. Consider this - in NA 200 Larkana, Mr. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari defeated MMA's Mr. Rashid Soomro by 34,000 votes. I must not draw any conclusion with this. I leave that to the readers. Having said that, we still demand the ECP to investigate all complaints in a transparent manner.

Lastly, to address the hot question of whether the General Elections 2018 were free, fair, transparent and better than 2013, first consider the statement of Dr. S Y Quraishi, the former Chief Election Commissioner who was part of the Commonwealth Observers Group. He said, "we found everything to be fine and our mission did not find any such (rigging) thing." As far as comparison with the GE 2013 is concerned, the EU group said there was much improvement", while the Commonwealth group stated "The General Elections, 2018 were an important milestone in strengthening democracy in Pakistan and the polling process was on the whole, well administered." However, both groups pointed out the need for improvement. FAFEN too was satisfied with the elections.

It is worth noting that the ECP has ordered recounting in 70 constituencies – an unprecedented occurrence. Wish, this would have happened in the aftermath of GE 2013.



*Sarwar Bari is the Secretary General of Free and Fair Election Network, and heads Pattan Development Organisation. He has more than 20 years of professional experience in Election monitoring. Bari can be reached at bari@pattan.org.*

# Pakistani Women in Politics

Only **305** candidates among the **11,885** total candidates contesting in the **2018** general elections are female.

Almost **45%** political parties have not contested a single female candidate, despite the new election law that mandates each party to contest at least **5%** female candidates.

There was no women quota in the **1970** General Elections and there were no women in the first elected National Assembly which passed the **1973** Constitution of Pakistan.

**10** reserved seats for women were introduced in **1977** elections, but only one woman contested and won on the general seat. The quota was increased to **20** in **1985** General Elections.

Quota reserved for women was abolished in **1988** and women representation went down to **0.9%-2%** in the next three National Assemblies.

In **2002** General Elections, the quota system was reintroduced and women were granted **60** reserved seats. The total representation of women rose to **20-25%** in the next three national assemblies.

In the last **PML-N** government, out of the **31** federal ministers in the cabinet, only **3** were held by women.

# Economic Gurus: Concerns and Implications for Pakistan's Incoming Government

Our Gurus were asked what are the challenges the incoming government will face.

## Dr. Aadil Nakhoda

*Dr. Aadil Nakhoda is an assistant professor at IBA (Karachi). He holds a Ph.D in International Trade from the University of California, Santa Cruz. He specializes in topics on international trade and development economics. Apart from his publications in journals, he writes in national newspapers.*



The main challenge that I think they will face when they come in will be that they will have to go to the IMF. I think that will be a pretty straight forward decision due to a number of reasons.

First, we have a high fiscal deficit. Second, we have a historically high trade deficit. Third, our rupee is devaluing rapidly. On the fiscal deficit - the latest numbers show it having overshot to \$1.48 trillion and it will definitely go up further, as generally it is higher in an election year. It will be a challenge to the incoming government.

During the elections, PTI like other political parties promised the electorate many things, including increased housing, more jobs, etc. How will they do that, when the immediate challenge of the fiscal deficit is that you have to increase your tax revenue and then you can spend. I think the challenge is to increase the tax revenue. They will have to figure out a way to get everyone into the tax net, and only once they are in it, should it be decided who gets to pay less and who more, based on their income. So, regardless of what the income is, everyone should file their taxes. Rather than constantly increasing indirect taxes, such as the tax on fuel, GST, etc. Giv-

en our low levels of education, they will have to develop simple but automated systems so that income can be filed.

On the external sector; we have a trade deficit of approximately \$36 billion, and a current account deficit of \$18 billion. Within PTI's 5 years, they will have to bring in long term solutions with respect to the trade deficit. A recent Planning Commission report predicts that by 2023, imports will have gone up to \$80 billion. It also predicts that exports will double or go up to \$50 billion in the next 5 years. Which means that you will have to have an export growth of 15%, but this still leaves you with a trade deficit of \$30bn.

The problem of depreciation will remain, because we don't have foreign reserves and unfortunately the gap between the imports and exports will not shrink. Personally, I think we can go up to around \$35-40 billion in exports, which in itself is not very easy to achieve. The demand and supply factors for exports need to be considered when trying to increase them.

The last government went for short term measures, such as subsidies. This will only lead to more problems in the long run. We need to diversify our export base and create the right product basket. So, at the present moment, we are mainly exporting rice, cotton or cotton yarn. These are raw materials, we need to go for higher value added products, especially in our textile industry.

Then, we need to evaluate our trade policy. We talk of letting go of Free-Trade Agreements (FTAs), but we have to realize we need those FTAs in order to get cheaper, intermediate inputs. Furthermore, our textile policies are restricting trade with the largest exporter of handmade fibers, i.e. India. I see that as another challenge for the incoming government; how they will increase exports and change trade restricting policies. The government needs to focus on attracting foreign investments, which will require them developing policies to pursue this. CPEC has encouraged more investment from other places. For example, we are now seeing automobile manufacturers and other different producers come into Pakistan, as they see the potential in the country, especially because of improved security and better environment laws.

## Dr. Ashfaqe Hasan

*Dr. Ashfaqe Hasan Khan is currently the Principal and Dean, School of Social Sciences & Humanities, National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST), Islamabad, as well as a member of the Economic Advisory Council of the Government of Pakistan. He has also been the Spokesperson of the Government of Pakistan on Economic Issues for eleven years (1998-2009). Dr. Khan holds a Ph.D degree in economics from the Johns Hopkins University in USA. He was awarded the Sitara-i-Imtiaz in 2005.*



There are immediate, short term and then medium to long term challenges. The immediate challenge for the new government is what to do with the external balance of payment. Should they go to the IMF for a balance of payment support? Or do they have some alternative proposal that will enable them to manage without going to the IMF?

According to my calculations, if we go exactly the way we are going, then our current account deficit will be \$21 billion, plus \$10 billion will be our net servicing requirement. So, Pakistan will be needing \$31 billion. The external inflows will be about \$11-12 billion, because the lending from ADB and the World Bank has almost stopped. They have informed the government that unless and until you go to the IMF, there will be no new lending. So, the gap of \$19-20 billion has to be filled.

The government needs a team of experts if they decide to go to the IMF, so that they can negotiate with the IMF. Inexperienced people who have never dealt with the IMF will be lost in the economic terminologies. Improving the balance of payment will be the greatest challenge, and the route to improving the balance of payments passes through the fiscal side.

How do we address our fiscal challenges? Whenever there is a large deficit, it reflects the growing demand in the economy. This growing demand will be reflected as higher imports on the external balance of payment side, which widens the current account deficit. Therefore, the route is the budget. The new government will have to see how can they rationalize their expenditure, but increase their revenue.

In my view, the critical challenge that the new government will face, as far as the budget is concerned, is how to address the next NFC award. In the presence of the current 7th NFC award, there will never, never, never be a stable macro-economic condition in Pakistan. There is a manufacturing defect in this award. I have repeated "never" three times deliberately, because I know its implications.

How to address the current NFC award will be the another great challenge. The new government will have to sit down with the team of local experts who know exactly what is happening in Pakistan's economy. Even if it brings 7 Nobel Laureates in Economics to address Pakistan's problem, they will fail. Because they will have no idea about how the

system works and how the economy of Pakistan works. So, the solution has to be indigenous, the people have to be indigenous. If the government addresses the fiscal situation, it will also, by definition, address the external side.

Then our taxation structure has to be reviewed. In the last 4-5 years, we have brutally damaged our tax sector. We have enhanced tax rate, to collect more revenue, which has damaged our industry and the investment environment in the country. No investor will go to a country where the tax rates are high, particularly, when the oil prices are rising, and the exchange rate is depreciating. In the midst of that, the caretaker government raised the tax rate, and this is the worst economic policy that any government or finance minister could implement.

The new government will also have to form a committee of experts to deal with the Benazir Income Support Program. There has to be a third party evaluation of this program. When I say third party, it should be a genuine third party, and not an external third party, again the solution has to be internal. You can ask any university student to go and randomly select those people who are supposed to be the beneficiary, then go and check. Today, I think that this program is being used for political parties lower level workers and their families, it is not being used for the poor. The program needs to be reviewed and rationalized by the third party, to see whether it is reaching the desired targeted people.

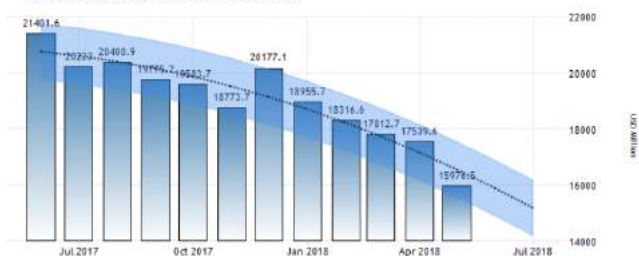
Overall, if the government controls their budget, then they will be able to control the economy.

PAKISTAN UNEMPLOYMENT RATE



SOURCE: TRADINGECONOMICS.COM | PAKISTAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS

PAKISTAN FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES



SOURCE: TRADINGECONOMICS.COM | STATE BANK OF PAKISTAN

PAKISTAN RUPEE



SOURCE: TRADINGECONOMICS.COM | OTC: INTERBANK

# Pakistan's Economy in July



Pakistan trade deficit widens by **16%** to an all-time high of **\$37.7bn** in the fiscal year **2017-18**.



Almost **55,000** people file returns declaring **Rs.577bn** worth of foreign assets and **Rs.1,192bn** worth of domestic assets under the new tax amnesty scheme.



Pakistan, despite being an agricultural economy, imported **\$6.2bn** worth of food in **FY17-18**. An increase of **0.68%** from the previous fiscal year.

Pakistan is seeking up to **\$2bn** from Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and Swiss banks, and may increase the surcharge of electricity consumption to meet the funding needs of Diamer Basha dam.

Current account deficit (CAD) of Pakistan touched an all-time high of **\$18bn** in FY18, up by **42.5%** compared to the previous fiscal year.



Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves dropped to **USD15.7bn** from **USD16.1bn** in just a week due to debt payments.



Power generation in the country grew **11.8%** to **120,539Gwh** in the last fiscal year (FY2018), compared to **107,858** Gwh generated in the previous fiscal year.



Pakistan's public debt increased to **23.7tr** rupees from **20.77tr** rupees in the previous year.



The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) rallied on the post-election positivity with the benchmark **KSE-100** index gaining **750** points to close at **42,089** points.

Asian Development Bank (ADB) loaned **\$200mn** to the government to mitigate risks of natural disasters. It will further contribute **\$1bn** over the next decade.

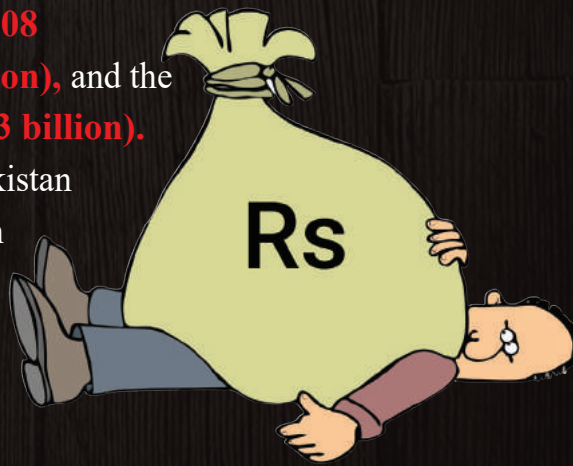
To meet electricity requirements of the Diamer Bhasha Hydro Project (**DBHP**) during construction, the government is planning to construct **15MW** Tangir Hydropower Project in Gilgit Baltistan which will increase the cost of the project by **PKR6bn**.

The proposal will be submitted to the next elected government for approval.

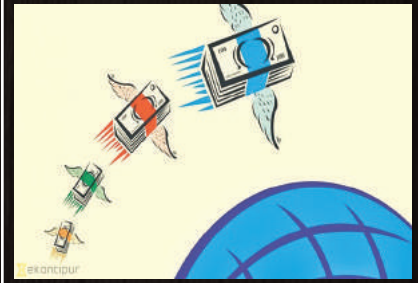


The **2018** General Elections were the costliest elections in the history of Pakistan, costing the national exchequer a whopping **Rs25 billion**, more than the combined cost of the **2008** General Elections, (**Rs1.84 billion**), and the **2013** General Elections, (**Rs4.73 billion**).

The Election Commission of Pakistan blamed the unprecedented rise in election-related expenses on the import of watermarked paper for ballot papers. The remuneration paid to the presiding officers was also increased from **Rs3,000** to **Rs8,000**.



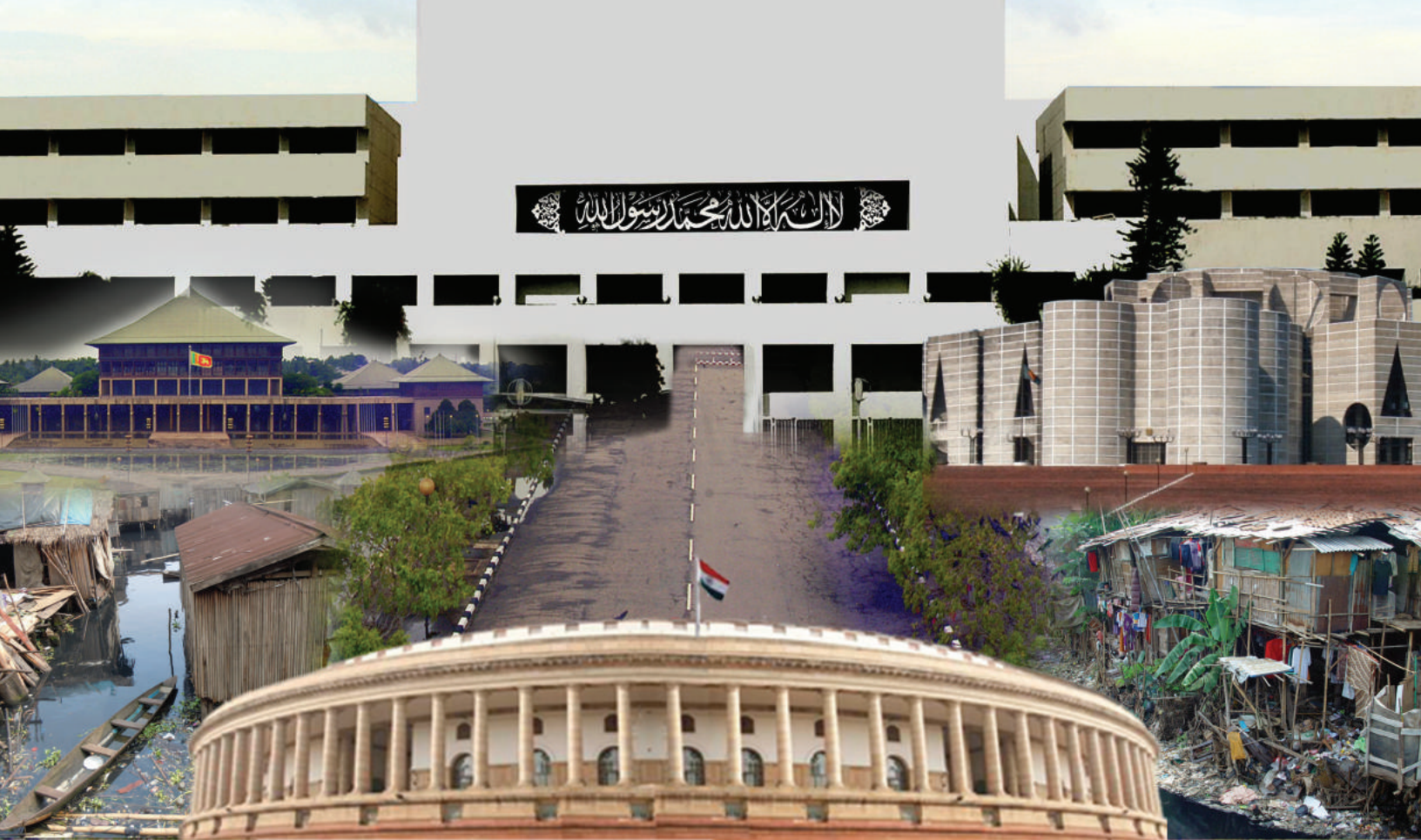
Pakistani rupee has devalued by around **PKR 13** compared to the dollar since the caretaker government assumed charge on June 1. It has added **PKR 120 bn** to the country's debt.



Overseas Pakistanis sent remittances worth **\$19.6bn** in **FY17-18**, a miniscule increase from **\$19.4bn** in the previous year. Despite a decline of **11.2%**, Saudi Arabia remained the largest source of remittances with inflows of **\$4.9bn**.



The total Foreign Direct Investment (**FDI**) remained constant at **\$2.8bn** in **FY2017-18** with a small increase of **0.8%** from the previous fiscal year. However, the share of Chinese investment rose to **57%** from **44%** in the previous fiscal year.



**SOUTH ASIA: DILEMMAS OF**

**DEMOCRATIC**

**GOVERNANCE**

By Salman Bashir



**D**eliverance by democracy has been the grundnorm (basic norm) for political governance in much of South Asia. However, the application of this prescription has not resulted in good governance; South Asia has been left far behind in Asia's march to progress and prosperity, billions of peoples of this region remain mired in vicious cycles of poverty, misery and injustice. Realizing democratic ideals remains a forlorn hope. Endless series of General Elections have only perpetuated the unjust status quo. This raises the question, whether, this system of political governance is suited to the ethos of the people or to their socio-economic circumstances.

Seasons of General Elections in Pakistan this year and in India in 2019 have put on hold rational and routine governance. Political expediencies have overshoot all other considerations. The political discourse in Pakistan has centered on accountability; obliging the judiciary to step in to sift allegations of corruption and corrupt practices. The standard theme of the liberal elite has been that ills of democratic governance require even higher doses of democracy. Course correction for accountable governance has nonetheless, caused collateral damage- discrediting of state institutions and veritable impairment of the functioning of the civil service.

India has been a democracy for some seventy years. Yet, democratic governance has produced no panacea for ordinary mortals. A hardline Hindu extremist government was voted into power in 2014. True it enjoyed legitimacy of the ballot, but flagrantly violated basic democratic norms and values of humanity. It is possible to vote into power, criminals and strongmen or bring into existence by democratic legitimacy, fascist regimes. The manner in which India has violated human rights, run pogroms against minorities and used brutal means to stifle dissent is a glaring example of legitimized misgovernance. Muslim and Pakistan bashing is anticipated to be a convenient tool for the RSS and BJP to extend their political shelf life. In other South Asian states, such as Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and the Maldives, democracy has delivered little.

The talent and creative spirit of the people has remained tied to experiments of democratic governance and not been utilized for optimum progress and prosperity. External hands have found it expedient to use political parties as proxies for promoting their own agendas. Indian interference in the internal affairs of Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Bangladesh illustrates this point. Very often extra regional powers have provided safe havens to political protagonists of choice and accommodated their ill-gotten wealth. This has brought into serious disrepute the entire value chain of ideals associated with democracy.

Recent years have witnessed a wholesale retreat from democratic ideals in the heartlands of the free world. Democratic means have produced outcomes in western societies, which are in variance with the liberal order. Illiberalism has spawned narrow nationalism, xenophobia, neo-tribalism, indicative of regressive trends that will impact humanity for a long time and could result in uncontrolled chaos, strife and wars. The political and economic systems are becoming dysfunctional. Fascination with authoritarian figures and strong regimes is gaining traction. Anti-establishment mood is pervasive in developed societies and institutions of governance

**“Extra regional powers have provided safe havens to political protagonists of choice and accommodated their ill-gotten wealth. This has brought into serious disrepute the entire value chain of ideals associated with democracy.**

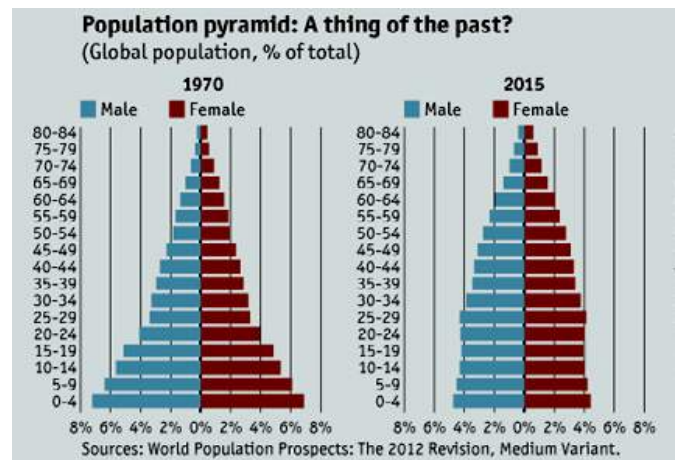
are discredited.

Any easy explanation for this reversal is the transformation of societies all around. Three distinct factors are ‘demography’, ‘generational shift’ and ‘technology’. The baby boomers, a generation that was born after the Second World War and shaped the previous century is fading out. A generational shift is in the offing. Technological advancements have gained a rapid pace and are impacting individuals, families and societies as a whole. The digital age has not only sharpened awareness, but also empowered individuals. Technology is a huge enabler and for the less developed societies may prove to be a great equalizer.

These dynamics of change are also impacting South Asia with considerable consequences for governance and development. Those who will read the trend lines will have an opportunity to ride the waves of transformation to a better future. Others may simply be overwhelmed and cave into chaos caused by the disruptive effects of demography and technology. Is South Asia prepared for the challenges of the twenty first century or will it wilt further into crass oblivion?

**S**outh Asia is one the most densely populated regions of the world. It is home to almost two billion people with varying ethnicity, religions, customs and traditions. Despite these differences, there is something distinct, which is more than geographic or cultural- a sense of South Asian identity; a common theme running through the maze of individual societal and pluralistic complexities. Contiguous geography confers ecological and subterranean homogeneity- be it climate change; depleting water resource; or geological shifts.

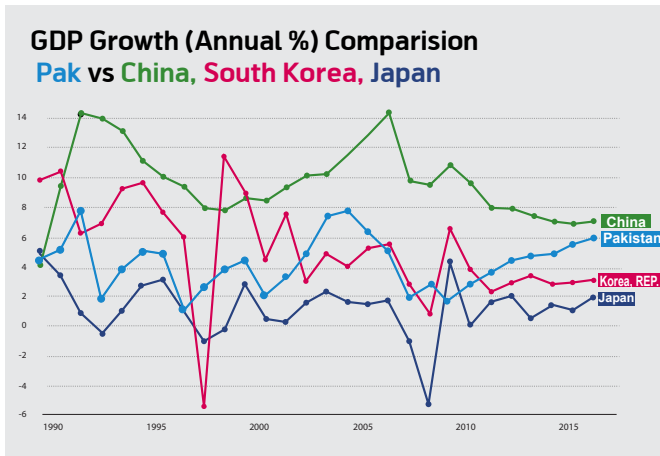
On the whole, South Asia has missed out on Asia's march to economic development. Japan, China, South Korea



and the ASEAN Ten have leapt forward and tilted the center of gravity of global politics towards Asia-Pacific, compelling a reversal of the tide of history with accompanying strategic notations.

Development correlates directly with history and cul-

**“ Illiberalism has spawned narrow nationalism, xenophobia, neo tribalism, indicative of regressive trends that will impact humanity for a long time and could result in uncontrolled chaos, strife and wars.**



ture. In a broad sense, culture is a state of mind- outlook towards oneself, society, life and the cosmos. Inert cultures lack the spark to ignite creativity or inventions and are mostly contented with what is taken as a given order of nature. Seeking personal contentment, especially in conditions of scarcity and adversity perpetuate deference, self-abnegation and a lack of will to strive for personal or social well-being. Submission to what is construed as divinely ordained fate is one aspect that would explain the political and social morass and lack of societal progress. It also explains reconciling to what is given - existing political and economic systems.

Historically, for centuries the region remained the domain of principalities and fiefdoms over-lorded by powerful invaders or insiders that established dynastic rule. The British Raj was replaced through a series of legislative measures; granting the people the concept of self-governance. Nevertheless, democratic institutions that gradually sprouted, under constitutional dispensations, did not radically transform the culture and the habits of obeisance to the strong and powerful. The system of governance suited the elite, who were generally interested in perpetuating the status quo. The feudalist and the rich grabbed political power through democratic rituals, espousing democratic ideals, but interpreted wholly to suit their own vested class interests.

Take seventy years of undiluted democracy in India. The political class mostly remained confined to considerations of dynasty and could not deliver for the poor the socio-economic

transformation that was, for instance, achieved by China or even the city state of Singapore.

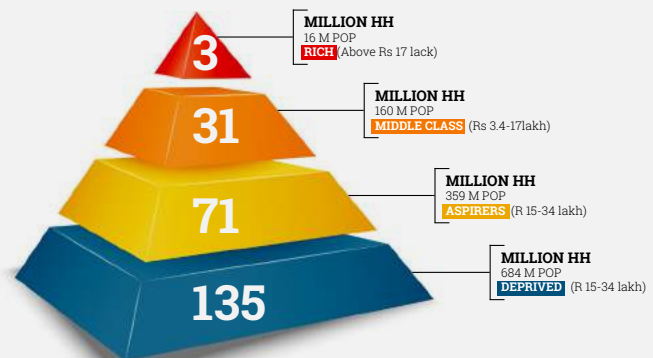
It is fashionable for India to speak about its rapid economic growth, and that it will by the end of 2019 overtake United Kingdom in terms of its GDP size, or that it will in fifteen to twenty years become the second largest economy of the world. Yet, vast majority of Indians languish in poverty with no prospect of deliverance to better days. It is estimated that there are some 119 US dollar billionaires in India, with an aggregate worth of \$440 bn - more than any other country, except the US and China.

According to James Crabtree, in his article “The Staggering Rise of India’s Super-Rich” in the Guardian on 10 July 2018, “India’s new hyper-wealthy elite have accumulated more money, more quickly, than their plutocratic peers in almost any country in history”. “Narendra Modi won an overwhelming election victory in 2014, having promised to put a stop to the spate of corruption scandals that had dogged India for much of the previous decade... voters turned to Narendra Modi...hoping he would deliver a new era of clean governance and rapid growth, ridding India of a growing reputation for crony capitalism...Modi pledged to end a situation in which the country’s ultra-wealthy - sometimes called “Bollygarchs” - appeared to live by one set of rules, while India’s 1.3 billion people operate by another.... Modi is fighting the perception that India is unable to bring such men to heel, and that it has been powerless to respond to the rise of this new moneyed elite and the scandals that have come with them.... India remains a poor country... The top 10 % of earners now take around 55% of all national income - the highest rate for any large country in the world.”

Crabtree concludes that, “India has created a model of

### Indian Income Pyramid

Entire country stratified by NCAER-CMCR 2010 annual income data



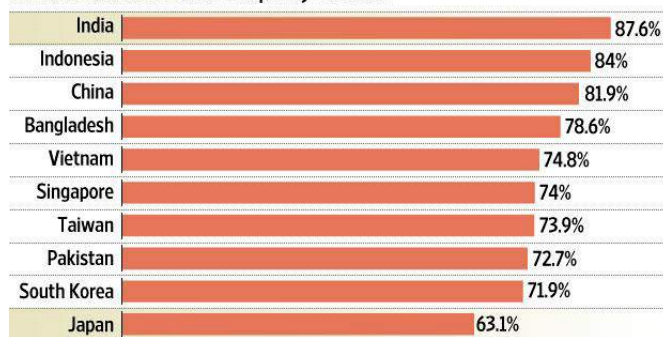
Notes:- HH- Households; POP-Population Figures in Million except Annual Income Strata (in Rs Lakh); Total Household: 240 Million. Source: NCAER-CMCR-DOOR-TO-DOOR Survey

development in which the proceeds of growth flow unusually quickly to the very top. Yet perhaps because Indian society has long been deeply stratified, this dramatic increase in inequality has not received as much global attention as it deserves.”

“ Many politicians also became astoundingly rich, and would have made the Forbes list had their holdings not been hidden carefully in shell companies and foreign banks... Rapid economic growth increased the value of political power, and what could be extracted from it.... India’s 2014 election cost close to \$5 bn... Politicians spend money to fund campaigns, but also on handing out favors, jobs and cash to constituents, “it’s sort of unholy nexus”.... This nexus between business and politics lies at the heart of the third problem of India’s billionaire Raj, namely the boom-bust cycle of its industrial economy.”

## JAPAN BEST, INDIA WORST

Gini coefficient of wealth inequality for 2016



Source: Credit Suisse Databook

It is perhaps not fair to lay the blame for gross iniquities, corruption and scandals entirely on the doors of democratic governance of the kind we have in this part of the world. Compare the situation in India with that of China, which succeeded in not only becoming the second largest economy of the world in less than forty years, but also emancipated over 800 million people from abject poverty. The political and governance systems deliver, and with wise leadership having a vision of “national rejuvenation,” China has been able to make requisite course corrections that are entirely suited to its national needs and in accordance with the aspirations of its people.

Pakistan’s - Westminster style - political system is now being renewed consecutively for the third time. There are stark parallels with the situation in India. The scourge of dynastic politics, the oligarchs and feudals is one such parallel. Iniquities and disparities together with injustice and a failed system of governance have created a situation that is absolutely unsustainable. The democracy and its defense have been the watchwords of the political class and the liberal elite. All debates and discourse on television screens and social media rivets around democracy as if this was synonymous to the very existence of the state and welfare of the people. Yes, democracy has served to give the elite a stake in the state, but has it really delivered or promises to deliver on the expectations of the people?

The people, poor and mostly illiterate stamp into political life, lifeless political symbols denoting various political parties. The so-called game of ‘electables’ spread around

“ Despite these differences, there is something distinct, which is more than geographic or cultural- a sense of South Asian identity; a common theme running through the maze of individual societal and pluralistic complexities.

the electioneering chessboard, assuring the elite to come into power by merely changing labels. The Parliament composed as such has no interest to discuss the issues of the ordinary citizens. Never in the history of parliamentary democracy in Pakistan have the problems of the citizens such as health and education, job creation or any other pertinent matter such as water, sanitation etc. found any echo in the hallowed halls of the Assembly. Then there is the question of intent-legislate yes but to what effect? To pass laws or adopt rules that will facilitate or make life easy for the ordinary citizen or pass cumbersome Acts that will ensure corruption free governance, but only make it fool proof, so that the corrupt can never be caught or brought to account. The added disadvantage is that it induces self-paralysis in governance.

The civil service system has over the years been rendered ineffective. The politicization of the civil service has rendered useless the executive arm. It is so bad that the higher judiciary has to intervene in nearly every domain to get things going. In this extraordinary labyrinth of the game of power, the state suffers. Challenges multiply, societal expectations surge with awareness brought by the media and the internet, exercise of democratic right to elect representatives of choice offer hope, but all is lost in the din and chaos of democracy at work.

Pakistan cannot afford to neglect any longer the critical issues of survival and development. We have already wasted nearly five decades of our existence as an independent state. Sometimes to regional ventures, accountability and removing corruption, or to intrigues designed only to enable elite capture of state resources. Clarity of direction and national purpose have been obfuscated by theoretical and self-created deceptive debates by an oligarchy that wishes to maintain its stranglehold on the state and stifle creativity and initiatives of the people of this resource rich country.

Taking other examples of South Asia, consider Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives, where prevalence of democratically elected governments has been extremely problematic. Under the sway of India’s hegemonic impulses, these countries have had to contend with external demands and expectations, which are not necessarily authentic. Taken together, prospects of regional cooperation under the SAARC have been rendered ineffective. Political dispensations, at least some, have sought legitimacy not by the ballot, but acquiescence of extra regional major powers. Foreign agendas delivered by local parties with funding and assurances of asylum and safe havens abroad, a sad commentary on democratic governance in South Asia, indeed.

## “ Yes, democracy has served to give the elite a stake in the state, but has it really delivered or promises to deliver on the expectations of the people?

Societies in South Asia are being impacted by globalization, technological advancements, demographic trends and the generational shifts. Rising expectations and lack of effective avenues to address the iniquities and injustice together with pervasive, increasing poverty and inequalities of class and castes are creating an explosive situation. The political systems and associated governance models provide little hope for redressing the situation or restoring hope and removing despondency. All of this is being further amplified by the demolishing of the democratic ideals in the heartlands of democracy.

Pretensions of living by or even adhering to democratic ideals seem to have been cast aside in the west. Illiberalism has caught on a life of its own in developed societies. Under the Trump Administration, the United States is in the process of unburdening itself of the heavy baggage of maintaining global peace and security, it has carried for almost a century. US national interests require redefining domestic and foreign policy. The US is prepared to jettison the baggage of democratic values, that it so virtuously and vehemently upheld around the world. The election of President Trump is a watershed in the history of the free world. It conforms to US national requirements and takes off the halo of the earlier prescriptions of governance. Europe is not far behind. Rise of narrow nationalism, neo-tribalism, xenophobia, protectionist trends and the triumphalism associated with rise of the far right connotes the dawn of a new age in international relations. The historians will see unmistakable signs of regression- a new historic cycle that will again see the triumph of power over ideals. National interests will trump all other considerations. But in South Asia, a somewhat similar story will continue to be followed with a cast that is perhaps not imbued by a sense of national purpose, but rather self- interest.

One wonders if almost 2 billion people of this region, worthy inheritors of a glorious past and who are imaginative, intelligent and creative cannot find answers to their own daily issues and plan a better future for their children. This will happen if a certain sensitivity to national requirements supersedes all else. It is time to delete recipes and prescriptions that do not work and find national and local answers to all that relates to governance and the organization of state systems.



*Salman Bashir is a former Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, and has served as Ambassador of Pakistan to India, China and Denmark over or career spanning three decades. The seasoned diplomat is an expert on international affairs and a regular writer for many major news publications.*

# Economic condition of women in India



Women in India contribute **1/6th** to its economic output, lowest in the world and half of the global average.



The female employment rate in India has fallen from **35%** in **2005** to **26%** in **2018** even though the economy has almost doubled in the same period.



India has **235m** fewer female workers compared to male workers. These are enough workers to fill all factories in Asia.



Women do **90%** of the household work in India. If men spent **2 hours** per week on house chores, women will have more time to participate in labor which can increase the GDP by \$550bn.



India would become **27%** richer if it rebalances its work force.



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# Separated but also United at Birth: India & Pakistan

reconciliation hinges on our understanding  
of the true meaning of 14-15 August 1947



Sudheendra Kulkarni

YET another August has come, the month of Independence for both India and Pakistan. So many memories, reflections and questions converge as the people of Pakistan celebrate their Independence Day on August 14, and their counterparts in India do the same on August 15. The very first troubling, and also perplexing question that demands an answer is — Why are India and Pakistan so close, and yet so far from each other?

Our history as well as our geography tells us how close we are. Foreigners may need a map to know about our geographical proximity, but it was a surreal realization for me when I first travelled from Amritsar to Lahore, crossing the border on foot at Wagah. I could hardly figure out how one part of Punjab was different from the other. Similarly, when I had gone to visit Sir Creek many years ago, I was told by the locals that they could see the lights of Karachi on a clear night. They also told me about a Sufi shrine located almost on the border where the people from Kutch (on the Indian side) and Sindh (on the Pakistani side) come to pray regularly. Among the devotees are Muslims as well as Hindus. Undoubtedly, sacredness knows no religious or national boundaries.

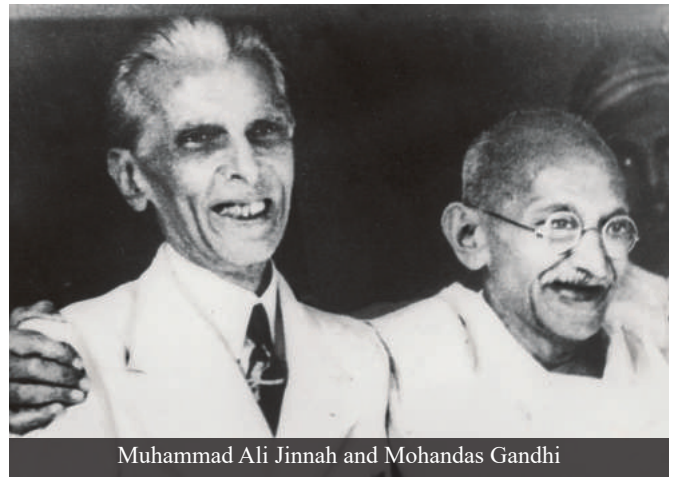
The historical proximity of India and Pakistan is evident in a lot more than the fact that our Independence days follow one after the other. Even the tale of August 14 and 15 is so beguiling that, had both the Congress and the Muslim League shown some farsightedness and spirit of mutual accommodation, history could have taken an altogether different turn. After all, Allama Iqbal, in his presidential speech at the Muslim League session in 1930, had called for the formation of a separate Muslim state “within India”. Even as late as in May 1947, Quaid-e-Azam Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the supreme leader of the Muslim League, was willing to consider an agreement with the Congress and the British that fell short of the kind of Pakistan that came into existence three months later. In other words, August 14 and 15 could have assumed a completely different historical significance than what they now have.

### Partition Cannot Erase Kinship

Eventually — though not inevitably — India and Pakistan were born as two separate, sovereign and independent nations on those momentous days in 1947. But did the separation completely dissolve our unity?

To this day, even after the passage of seventy-one years, there is still an inconclusive debate in both countries about the exact meaning of the independence of Pakistan and the claimed ideological basis — the so-called two-nation theory — for its creation. This is because August 14-15 mark both in-

**“As in the case of India, Pakistan won independence from the British colonial rule. Thus, our very common struggle for independence from foreign rule constitutes a historical bond of unity that can neither be denied nor belittled.**




Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Mohandas Gandhi

dependence and partition for Indians and Pakistanis. Here is a curious question: from whom did Pakistan gain independence? It could not have been from India, for India never colonized Pakistan or the areas that later constituted Pakistan. As in the case of India, Pakistan won independence from the British colonial rule. Thus, our very common struggle for independence from foreign rule constitutes a historical bond of unity that can neither be denied nor belittled.

The partition debate has remained inconclusive because of another glaring question. The two-nation theory claimed that Muslims and Hindus constituted two separate nations. What was, or what is, the basis of this? Even after partition, nearly as many Muslims continue to live in India as there are in today's Pakistan. Do these Indian Muslims have a national identity different from that of Hindus in India? And do the Hindus in Pakistan, now a very small minority, have a national identity different from that of Muslims in Pakistan? Clearly, Pakistan needs to discard the old two-nation theory and come up with a new narrative to support its nationhood.

This requires a realization that there is an indissoluble bond of unity even in partition itself. Pakistan was born when it was carved out of India at the time both attained independence. This happened because a large number of Muslims in India, responding to the call of the Muslim League — please note the full name of the party; it called itself ‘All India Muslim League’ — demanded “a separate homeland for Muslims in India”. Indeed,

Celebrating People of Pakistan



Noor Jahan (1926 - 2000)

"The world will sing my songs."

Noor Jahan, also known as Malika-e-Tarranum is one of the most influential singers in South Asia. Recorded over 20,000 songs in languages varying from Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi and Sindhi. Her music, elegance and talent brought her tremendous recognition, as is evident with her many awards, including the President's Award, the Taghma-e-Imtiaz, the Pride of Pakistan, Bulbul-e-Pakistan, and the Millennium Singer. Due to her charisma and ability to inculcate Pakistani culture wherever she went, she was appointed as the Cultural Ambassador of Pakistan.

## “Pakistanis should also accept that the land their national poet (Allama Iqbal) praised as “Saare jahan se achchaa” does not exclude today’s India.

the Muslim League’s ‘Lahore Resolution’, which is regarded as the basis for the creation of Pakistan, mentioned “independent states” (in plural) — and not one single independent nation-state — in areas “in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the North Western and Eastern Zones of (British) India”. Throughout the Lahore Resolution, also in other previous and subsequent resolutions and statements of the Muslim League, the party was speaking on behalf of “Muslim India” — namely, Muslims living in all parts of India. Let us not forget that the main activity of the Muslim League and its leader Jinnah, and also the main support base for him and his party, were in areas that remained part of India after 1947. None of the four provinces that constitute today’s Pakistan were the strongholds of the Muslim League. Thus, the history of the Pakistan movement has an unbreakable ideological link with Muslims in India, and not just with Muslims who later became citizens of Pakistan.

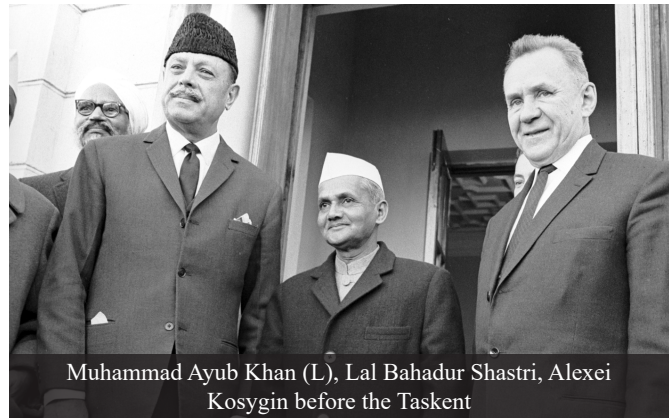
This begets three pertinent questions. One, do Muslims of Pakistan and post-1947 India have nothing to do with one another after Partition? True, they are citizens of two separate nations. But don’t they have a common history that long predates 1947? And aren’t they even now tied by many bonds of common language, culture, kinship, customs and civilisation, not to speak of a common religion?

Two, what about the by-no-means-insignificant numbers of non-Muslims who remained in both West and East Pakistan? Did their historical, cultural, social and civilisational roots with India vanish after 1947?

There is also a third question. In 1971, Pakistan, which was the creation of a bloody partition in 1947, itself suffered a bloody partition with East Pakistan being reborn as Bangladesh. But has the existence of Pakistan and Bangladesh as two independent, separate and sovereign nations brought to naught all historical links between the peoples and the two nations? Can Pakistanis forget that the All India Muslim League was born in Dhaka in 1906? Or the fact that the ‘Lahore Resolution’ — later called the ‘Pakistan Resolution’, even though the



The final phase of Partition Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Liaquat Ali Khan, and Jawaharlal Nehru



Muhammad Ayub Khan (L), Lal Bahadur Shastri, Alexei Kosygin before the Taskent

name ‘Pakistan’ did not figure in it at all — was presented by A.K. Fazlul Haq, who was then the Prime Minister of Bengal?

### From Iqbal to Tagore... the Common Theme of Unity

If further proof is needed to show how India and Pakistan (also Bangladesh) are united at birth, here it is. The most popular patriotic song in India, which is played and sung with great gusto, especially on August 15, happens to be penned by one whom Pakistan honours as its national poet — Allama Iqbal. He is no less celebrated in India than in Pakistan. And what does the song say? “Saare jahan se achchaa, Hindostan hamara, Hum bulbulain hai iss ki yeh gulsitan hamara...” (Better than all the world, is our India. We are its nightingales and this is our garden.) Of course, Indians should accept that the Hindustan that Iqbal eulogised includes areas that later became Pakistan in 1947. However, Pakistanis should also accept that the land their national poet praised as “Saare jahan se achchaa” does not exclude today’s India.

This everlasting civilisational bond between India and Pakistan also finds an expression in India’s national anthem ‘Jana Gana Mana’.

Our national poet Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore had penned it in 1911, when partition was nowhere on the horizon. There is a line in our anthem “... Punjab, Sindh, Gujarat, Maratha, Dravid, Utkal, Banga”, which sings the praises of regions which are either fully (Sindh) or partly (Punjab and Bengal) outside the boundaries of post-1947 India. But independent

#### Celebrating People of Pakistan



Dr. Mahbub-ul-Haq (1934 - 1998)

*“People are the real wealth of a nation.”*

As Pakistan’s Finance Minister and the Director of Policy Planning at the World Bank, Mahbub-ul-Haq developed the Human Development Index in 1990, which is the most commonly used form of measurement by the United Nations Development Program. His book “Reflections on Human Development” left a staggering impression on global human development through the formulation of opportunities in the policy proposals for human development paradigms. He has frequently been referred to as “the most articulate and persuasive spokesman for the developing world”.

India did not change this line because the very roots of the name 'India' go deep into the 5,000-year-old civilisation cradled in Sindh (Indus).

## From Nehru to Jinnah to Mahatma Gandhi... a Call for Togetherness

Our first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, in his historic 'Tryst With Destiny' address to the nation on the midnight of August 14-15, 1947, spoke of this ageless India, which belongs as much to Pakistanis as it does to Indians:

*"Long years ago, we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but very substantially. At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance. ..."*

*At the dawn of history India started on her unending quest, and trackless centuries are filled with her striving and the grandeur of her success and her failures. ...The achievement we celebrate today is but a step, an opening of opportunity, to the greater triumphs and achievements that await us. Are we brave enough and wise enough to grasp this opportunity and accept the challenge of the future?"*

Our friends in Pakistan should know that Nehru, in his speech on the night of freedom, wished for the well-being of Pakistanis too.

*"We think also of our brothers and sisters who have been cut off from us by political boundaries ... They are of us and will remain of us whatever may happen, and we shall be sharers in their good or ill fortune alike."* (Emphasis added)

Jinnah, who almost singlehandedly founded Pakistan, was no less unequivocal in affirming the newly born nation's special relationship with India. On 1 August 1947, just days before his departure to Karachi, Pakistan's first capital, he made a startling statement:



President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto shakes hands with PM Indira Gandhi in June 1972 in Shimla, India, also present his daughter Benazir Bhutto and Indian Foreign Minister Swaran Singh



Pakistani PM Benazir Bhutto and Indian PM Rajiv Gandhi

*"I am going to Pakistan as a citizen of Hindustan. I am going because the people of Pakistan have given me the opportunity to serve them. But this does not mean I cease to be a citizen of Hindustan. Just as Lord Mountbatten who is a foreign citizen has accepted the Governor-Generalship of Hindustan in response to the wishes of its people, similarly I have accepted the Governor-Generalship of Pakistan. But I shall always be ready to serve the Muslims of Hindustan."*

Anyone who reads Jinnah's speech — indeed, the most important speech of his life — in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan on 11 August 1947 will find that he had not fully shed

his 'Indianness'. Calling for Muslims and Hindus to remain united, and promising that they would have equal rights and responsibilities in Pakistan, he nevertheless made an intriguing appeal.

*"Indeed, if you ask me, this (disunity on religious lines) has been the biggest hindrance in the way of India to attain the freedom and independence and but for this*

*we would have been free people long long ago. No power on earth can hold another nation, and specially a nation of 400 million souls in subjection; nobody could have conquered you, and even if it had happened, nobody could have continued its hold on you for any length of time, but for this. Therefore, we must learn a lesson from this."* (Emphasis added.)

Pay attention to the fact that Jinnah was still talking of "a nation of 400 million souls". His reference point was undivided India, and how it could have averted its division.

Jinnah made another highly instructive, albeit indirect, reference to India in his speech to the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan on 14 August 1947.

*"The tolerance and goodwill that the great Emperor Akbar showed to all non-Muslims is not of recent origin. It dates back 13 centuries ago when our Prophet not only by words but by deeds treated the Jews and Christians handsomely after he conquered them. He showed to them utmost tolerance and regard and respect for their faith and beliefs."*

Here we see that, on the day Pakistan was born, the founder of Pakistan was holding as his ideal, apart from Prophet Mohammed, one of the greatest emperors of India. Again, a proof of India and Pakistan united at birth.

Not many people (in India or in Pakistan) today know

**“ Though geographically and politically India is divided in two, at heart we (Indians and Pakistanis) shall be friends and brothers helping and respecting one another and be one for the outside world.”**

what Jinnah did on 15 August 1947. He hosted a reception to celebrate the Indian Independence Day in Karachi. On that day, on his order, the flags of Pakistan and India flew together! The same thing was done in Calcutta, on the order of Mahatma Gandhi. He was in the city on a mission to douse the flames of Hindu-Muslim violence. His collaborator in this peace mission was Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, who later became the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Gandhiji even had the audacity to declare: *“Both India and Pakistan are my country. I am not going to take out a passport to go to Pakistan.”* At his daily all-religion prayer meeting on 26 January 1948, just four days before his assassination at the hands of a Hindu extremist, he emphasised the need to safeguard Hindu-Muslim unity and said:

*“Before leaving this topic of the day, let us permit ourselves to hope that though geographically and politically India is divided in two, at heart we (Indians and Pakistanis) shall be friends and brothers helping and respecting one another and be one for the outside world.”*

This is the stuff our leaders from the Era of Freedom were made of. If India and Pakistan have drifted apart so much in the past seven decades to become enemies of each other, one of the main reasons is that the people and leaders of our two countries have forgotten our unbreakable cultural, social and civilisational unity. We are overemphasizing the fact that we are two separate nations. We forget that this is merely political separateness. It need not lead to separateness in every other walk of life, as has sadly become the case now.

As both Indians and Pakistanis celebrate their respective days of Independence in August, let us remind ourselves that what unites us is far larger and stronger than what has made us as two separate nations. Therein lies our salvation.



President Pervez Musharraf (R) and PM Atal Behari Vajpayee shake hands at Agra Summit in 2002



Nawaz Sharif meeting with Narendra Modi in 2014

### Postscript: Imran Khan’s Commendable Victory Speech

August 2018 will be highly significant for Pakistan and, hopefully, also for India-Pakistan relations. After the elections to the National Assembly on July 25, Imran Khan, leader of the largest party, sworn in as the country’s new Prime Minister. As a well-wisher of Pakistan and as a longstanding campaigner for Indo-Pak peace, I must say that his victory speech on July 26 was very impressive. It was reassuring to hear him begin his speech by invoking Jinnah’s name and vision: *“When I came into politics, I wanted Pakistan to become the kind of country that our leader Muhammad Ali Jinnah wanted.”*

He pledged that *“for the first time, Pakistan’s policies won’t be for the few rich people, it will be for the poor, for our women, for our minorities, whose rights are not respected.”*

His remarks on India were truly heartening. He was bang on target when he said, *“I am the Pakistani who has the most familiarity with India, I have been all over that country.”* True, there is simply no other Pakistani who is as well known, and as widely admired, in India as Imran Khan. Therefore, when he said, *“It will be very good for all of us if we have good relations with India”*, and called for stronger trade and economic ties that *“will benefit both countries”*, it was music to millions of Indian ears.

Of course, he was right in drawing attention to Kashmir, *“a core issue”*, and to the suffering of Kashmiri people. The path ahead he has shown is the only path that can lead us to an amicable and just solution — *“Pakistan and India’s leadership should sit at a table and try to fix this problem.”* Lastly, Imran Khan deserves our praise and support for stating, *“If India’s leadership is ready, we are ready to improve ties with India. If you step forward one step, we will take two steps forward. I say this with conviction, this will be the most important thing for the subcontinent, for both countries to have friendship.”*

This truly is the call of August. May the month of freedom for India and Pakistan mark the beginning of reconciliation and normalisation.

*Sudheendra Kulkarni, a former BJP politician, currently heads the Mumbai-based think tank Observer Research Foundation. He was an aide to India’s former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and is now an independent Mumbai-based socio-political activist promoting India-Pakistan-China friendship and tweets @Sudheenkulkarni.*



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- Over 140,000 indigenous trees and 15000 + fruit trees planted to prevent rainwater run-off and to recharge underground natural springs
- Extensive water and environmental conservation education sessions held for local communities in project areas, and for schoolchildren, tourists and the media
- Through our recent partnership with MGPO more than 4,000 individuals have access to potable water and better sanitation facilities
- Providing irrigation water supply for crops & forest cultivation on 335 hectares

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Rotary



An exclusive interview with

# Ali Jehangir Siddiqui

*Pakistan's Ambassador to Washington is known for his business acumen, philanthropy and his work to promote the arts & culture of Pakistan*

He was Special Assistant to Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi at the Minister of State level. Siddiqui is accredited for establishing JS Bank, in 2006 by acquiring the American Express bank. He was also the Chief Investment Officer and Managing Partner at JS Private Equity and JS Private Equity Fund. In 2014, he was honoured by the World Economic Forum as a Young Global Leader. He studied Economics at Cornell University.





Given your particular strengths, you have studied at Cornell, you have set up businesses, worked in the Private Sector, Advisory Board of the Planning Commission, Privatisation Commission, and your last posting was with the Prime Minister as his Special Assistant, where will your focus be as the Ambassador to the US?

I think there are two distinct areas that are going to take the bulk of my time; security and economic relations between the two countries and then other focal points will be education collaboration and then a variety of matters that are important from a US policy stand point – which the US is interested in improving across the world, such as people trafficking, religious and minority freedoms and so on.

Since you mentioned security, what is the immediate challenge that you are looking at in terms of relationship with the US, is it Afghanistan, India or the militants?

The security relationship has two major elements that require immediate attention, one is the counter-terrorism synergy between the two countries and the other is achieving peace and stability in Afghanistan. On the counter terrorism front, there is a significant amount of cooperation and I think it is recognized that Pakistan has made huge strides in that area, in particular in defeating Al-Qaeda and IS. While, we cannot say that they have been totally eliminated; as you know the most recent attacks during the election were claimed by IS, but they have been largely defeated.

Does the US recognize that within its own borders, Pakistan has done a lot to remove militancy?

Yes, the US and the rest of the world recognize that it



Ali Jhangir with U.S. President Donald Trump

**“ Pakistan exercises some level of influence over the Taliban but they have an independent policy and they are not amateurs at foreign policy, They have been dealing with foreign policy for nearly 30 years.**

is not just about defeating militants, it is about resettling the affected population reconstructing cities and creating an environment where such groups cannot grow again. Pakistan has delivered in a very short time frame, very large scale reconstruction, which in many cases has been superior to what had been there before. As a consequence, this is a case study for the rest of the world, on how to do a major counter-terrorism offensive and also return the population to stability through reconstruction. So on the counter-terrorism front, we have been recognized as a country that has accomplished our objectives and delivered through persistent effort and sacrifice.

In the context of Afghanistan and you've mentioned that peace in Afghanistan is a big agenda item, what kind of talks are you having with the US on this?

I think the US is recognizing Pakistan's bilateral efforts begun under the Afghanistan-Pakistan Action Plan for Peace Solidarity (APAPPS). If we look at APAPPS in the past 8 months, both our former Prime Minister and our Chief of Army Staff traveled twice to Afghanistan. Afghanistan's National Security Adviser has traveled to Pakistan twice and in

one of those trips, the Afghanistan Defense and Interior Ministers accompanied him. There has been a very recent meeting as well. So, there have been seven major high-level trips in eight months. The objective of APAPPS is to achieve peace and a path, principles and working groups have been agreed on and now we are in the process of implementation.

Has the US signaled what they would like from Pakistan further; apparently, the South Asia strategy is undergoing a review?

The review is expected to start some time in August or soon after and is an evaluation of the strategy President Trump outlined in August last year. We are obviously engaged with the US administration on that. It is too early to say where that is heading but, of course, we are staying on top of it.

There is some discussion in the media that the Trump administration will start talking to the Taliban again and that this is a part of the review?

The US position has been consistent which is that they are happy to engage the Taliban on peace talks but that the Taliban should have the Afghan government on the table also. The Taliban position is different which is that they are happy to talk to the US but not with the Afghan government. Recently, the US has shown some flexibility to have direct talks with the Taliban and it appears that there is some progress in this regard.

Pakistan's position has always been that there should be a dialogue with the Taliban. Does the US expect

## Pakistan to deliver the Taliban to the table, can we do that?

Pakistan exercises some level of influence over the Taliban but they have an independent and experienced foreign policy view as they have been dealing with foreign policy for many decades. Since, they are skilled at dealing with these matters, the expectation that, Pakistan will snap its fingers and they will come to the table is not a reasonable expectation at all. But we have consistently tried to create the conditions for talks. I will refer back to APAPPS, and additionally Pakistan's participation in all multilateral peace efforts so we are pushing quite hard.

## Pakistan in the USA tends to be seen through the lens of Afghanistan or India. Do you see that changing in the near future? Do we need to stand up and be counted in ourselves as a country?

I have thought about it quite a bit and your observation is very accurate. While in many areas perhaps it is better to fly under the radar but in this case we need to stand up and be counted - we need to have a voice of our own. With the sensitivity of the issues involved such as peace in Afghanistan, relationship with India and also the fact that the narrative is seen through filters that hinder a positive relationship with Pakistan, not having a voice means others set the policy which is pursued for Pakistan. This needs to change and it is part of my set of goals to change the conversation on the political, security and the economic front.

## Are you seeing a lot of interest on CPEC in your interactions in the USA?

This is a topic for those interested in Pakistan that's on everyone's mind. So, I am getting a significant number of questions around CPEC, both on the data, and whether it is simply an economic project or whether there are other elements to it? The more interesting questions revolve around the size of CPEC, and what implications it will create for Pakistan with regards to ownership of infrastructure. There is a narrative coming out here as to the intentions behind CPEC and another prevailing narrative is that CPEC will result in a situation similar to that of Sri Lanka. I feel that Chinese investment in Sri Lanka is widely misunderstood. CPEC is a bilateral economic deal and we, by and large, have been transparent in bits and pieces as needed.

If I can give one example, 60% of CPEC funding is for electricity plants, which aggregate to a little over 10,000MW.

## “ The narrative is seen through filters that hinder a positive relationship with Pakistan, not having a voice, means others set the policy which is pursued for Pakistan.

However, in the same time period the Government of Pakistan and the private sector have added another 8,000MW of power to the grids, about the same size as the CPEC power plants. Further private power plants are also planned, and once completed they will amount to the same size as the electricity that CPEC power plants will add to the national grid. However, the focus of the narrative is that all the infrastructure in Pakistan now belongs to China, but that's not true. In parallel we are building enormous amounts of infrastructure that is not China related. But the fact that there are so many questions around it, is clouding the conversation on CPEC itself and on Pak-China relationship, means we must find a way to address the narrative gap.

## Given Trump's protectionist tariff measures against Chinese imports and Pakistan's increasing reliance of Chinese investment - Do you think Pak-US ties risk being collateral damage?

I think great powers have a goal to exercise their sphere of influence and if any country is in a different sphere of influence or partial sphere of influence then that is an issue for the great power. If Pakistan is in a new sphere of influence, or seen to be getting closer to China, the US, may be apprehensive. But I would say that the US being a sophisticated foreign policy player, fully understands that it is our right to maintain multiple partnerships and these partnerships can co-exist. We have had the longest of relations with both, China and the USA and indeed as you are aware, played a part in bridging the two



countries together at one point.

CPEC is a big economic deal, in the absence of significant other investments getting similar coverage, the narrative of Pak-China strategic alignment has garnered attention. But I don't think CPEC should be considered as a foundation for new relations between Pakistan and China. I think the onus is on us to propel the true narrative that development in Pakistan is not anchored to China. With regard to the questions around the debt interest rates and whether the CPEC is quid pro quo for some other political goal. Well the reality is that if that were the case, we would have lower rates of debt. We would get better rates of financing. The Independent Power Producer debt for CPEC is all-commercial and infrastructure debt, such as the roads are at the same rate at which World Bank and others would lend to us - so it's actually just like any other commercial investment package without any advantage, so we can explain that it doesn't make sense that there would be a quid pro quo.

### Given your background of economics and business, have you set any goals for securing investment from US industry for Pakistan's economy?

So there are some very big goals that we have and I am actually taking a cue from President Trump's thesis on trade. While I am in favor of freer trade, the question that the President has asked is that if the US is importing large quantities of goods from certain countries then what is it getting in exchange. I think that's a good question to ask from Pakistan's standpoint as well. We are giving trade surpluses to other countries and we ought to consider potential opportunities in exchange. If we can somehow give a trade surplus to the US, it would mean that we could get an enormous amount of market access for our exports to the US.

I think there is a great opportunity to create a trade surplus in the US. For example, we could consider importing US energy. Pakistan is importing large quantities of LNG and that is about to increase dramatically because of our development needs and the fact is that we are now replacing furnace oil with

## “ If Pakistan is in a new sphere of influence, or seen to be getting closer to China, the US may be slightly apprehensive. But I would say that the US being a sophisticated foreign policy player fully understands that it is in our right to maintain multiple partnerships

LNG, which is cheaper and produces more electricity. The US is becoming the largest LNG exporter. So there is a great opportunity to buy US LNG for Pakistan's needs and in exchange negotiate market access for Pakistan's exports to the US.

### Pakistan has been put back on the FATF grey list, how will this impact your plans to raise more investment from the USA for Pakistan.

We should be concerned about FATF, because being on the grey list is a serious matter and we have to comply with the conditions. Some of those conditions in my view are quite strict but we have to find a way to comply with them.

As of yet, I have not had any questions from the investment community, from companies that are doing business in Pakistan or the ones starting or considering setting up shop in Pakistan, but of course, if we were not able to comply, this could become a serious challenge.

An action plan has been agreed upon with the FATF and we have to go ahead and execute it. We do have a huge amount of focus on attracting both large US companies and mid-sized US companies into Pakistan. One of the bigger challenges we face right now is the travel advisory on Pakistan, where if individuals can't travel or secure insurance, then coming to Pakistan becomes difficult. The slightly better news is that the advisory is multi-layered which means that big cities in Pakistan are rated better to travel to than the rest of the country. But we are still ranked quite poorly. We are advising and giving information to the State Department to improve our travel advisory.

### Are you engaging the Pakistani diaspora in the US to bring in more investment?

Diasporas are extremely important and in more ways than one. Engaging the diaspora is essential for attracting the US private investment. When the embassy talks to an American company about going to Pakistan, the first thing they do is call up someone in the diaspora that they know. They ask them about investing in Pakistan, and if that answer is resoundingly positive, that's a plus but if the answer is, "I had trouble with my own investment" or "Pakistan is too risky" or "I had a bad personal experience in the country", then that is a problem for attracting investment from the American company.

This is why the diaspora are so vital because whether they invest or not, we must attract them, so that their view on Pakistan is positive. And so, we are engaged in using a lot of data tools around the diaspora. We are in the process of map-



ping them accurately; their socio-economics, their businesses, and figuring out how to engage them in a much more intense and meaningful way than has ever been done in the past, both for investment and otherwise.

### Have you put any numbers on the amount of wealth that you can get from the diaspora?

Not yet, I mean the stats are that the diaspora has 20% higher earning levels, on average than the US average i.e. \$50,000 per capita is the US average while the diaspora is around \$60,000, though these figures are from a couple of years ago. The diaspora population is estimated at, between 700,000 and 800,000 people including first and second-generation migrants.

Some people in the diaspora have of course invested in Pakistan, but they are very few. We need to build a positive narrative to attract them. However, It is not just about business, we need to engage the diaspora on a variety of issues about Pakistan because, their level of awareness and engagement is limited. We have asked them to engage in Pakistan but we haven't given them the tools for that engagement. For example we haven't given them our policy position on a variety of matters such as CPEC.

How will you go about engaging them? Recently, a Pakistani-American citizen, Dr Nisar Chaudhry was arrested under the Foreign Agent Registration Act for working on behalf of the Pakistani Embassy in the US and going through the documents, it seems as though, all he was doing was going and attending conferences and meetings and talking about Pakistan in those meetings. So won't such incidents create fears among the diaspora community with regards to engaging with the embassy.

I am familiar with that case, it is very unfortunate that it happened. But I think the way we are approaching it is very different. One, we are aware of the requirements of the Foreign Agent Registration Act, and I think the diaspora is largely aware of those requirements also and we take great care that

**“ When the embassy talks to an American company about going to Pakistan, the first thing they do is call up someone in the diaspora that they know. They ask them about investing in Pakistan, and if that answer is resoundingly positive, that's a plus**



the diaspora are not engaging in lobbying for us.

Our involvement with the diaspora is in several layers; the first layer is that, the diaspora understands the Pakistani policy positions on a variety of matters. The second layer is that the diaspora is engaged in that conversation with decision makers, if the diaspora believes that this engagement is in their and US interests. The third layer is to have them invest in Pakistan. The fourth, is that they engage in spreading a positive narrative about Pakistan. We get regular feedback from them since they may not always agree with our policy positions.

I have only been here for a couple of months, but I can give you some examples of the things that we have been doing. I went and spoke at the Association of Physicians of Pakistani descent in North America (APPNA) convention in Dallas. I was asked, how would the Embassy of Pakistan like the diaspora to be involved in advocacy to help the government of Pakistan. And my answer to that was, the Government of





and disproportionately smaller numbers are involved in politics. That's where the Indian advantage is. Our goal is to not necessarily compete with India or their lobby. Of course, we are aware that on some matters such as Kashmir we have competing interests. But we must chart the course of our own relationship with the United States based on interests where Pakistan and the US have convergence. Our goal is to build the Pakistan-US relationship without influence from external parties. Like in India's case, a larger economy will help in this cause tremendously.

### How can Pakistan attract investment from its Diaspora in US for productive use in Pakistan, in contrast to just receiving remittances for local consumption?

Well, first of all, money going back home for consumption is not a bad thing. That still drives our economy in the same way. If people build a house, they buy steel and cement and that helps to drive the economy and create jobs and so on and so forth. Our trade missions have a plan on how to engage the diaspora especially in the area of investment. Now the onus is on us to showcase investment opportunities. A large proportion of our diaspora are doctors and there is a huge opportunity in health care. Some Pakistani American doctors are already participating in different diagnostic centers and hospitals. The easy part is to take existing initiatives and support them. As far as their fundraising efforts and reducing the red tape for them is concerned, we are trying to actively help them. There are a number of Pakistani hospitals starting such initiatives, we are actually supporting their fundraising efforts quite significantly and we just agreed to help on a very big one. We have to check the legal side of it because when raising money, one has to be a little bit careful. But I think we can do it as long as we follow certain guidelines.

Pakistan does not have a stake in the future of the citizens of America; therefore we are not involved in your political advocacy. You have to engage in political advocacy if it serves the interests of Pakistani Americans. Having a united voice will support your point of view. We will automatically benefit if there is a positive view of Pakistani Americans, including Pakistani Americans in politics because you will carry some level of balance in your perspectives on Pakistan.

### However, the Indian lobby is extremely important and active in supporting the India-US relations?

The Indian advantage is an economic advantage. The Indian economy is many times greater than ours and their economy is growing faster than ours. It will continue to be much larger. It is already the sixth largest economy in the world. Large American corporations want to export to India, they want to manufacture there and they want to access the Indian domestic market. That's the advantage on which they are playing. On the political side, they do have a large number of people of Indian ethnicity involved in US politics. It is the numbers again. Where Pakistanis have been involved, they have been reasonably influential but our diaspora is smaller

**“The Indian advantage is an economic advantage. Large American corporations want to export to India, they want to manufacture there and they want to access the Indian domestic market. That's the advantage on which they are playing.**

### How are you raising funding for them?

They will raise funds from the Pakistani American community through a transparent process. It's a Pakistani American initiative with core funding from Pakistani businessmen from Lahore and they will need the balance of the funds. They have already raised \$20 million from Pakistani business people in Lahore. We are getting involved since it adds credibility to the project - when people give the money they often want to see that there is some institutional support behind it.

### What would you consider as an achievement for yourself in the next 6 months? Have you set a target for yourself?

There are specifics but overall a general improvement to the relationship, which leads to more economic engagement.

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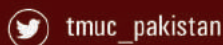
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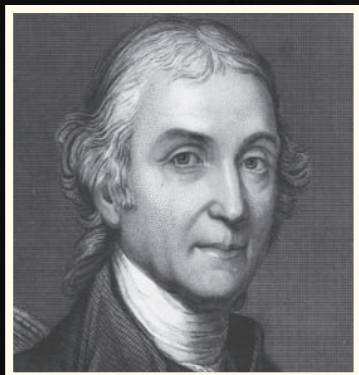
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# AUGUST

## IN THE WORLD



August 1

# 1774

Chemist, Joseph Priestly, discovered 'oxygen', which he initially called 'dephlogisticated air'. He placed a lump of mercuric oxide in a glass container and focused some sunlight onto the compound. A colourless gas was emitted and a candle began to burn.



August 10

# 1920

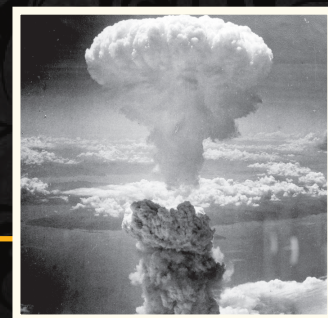
World War I: Ottoman Sultan Mehmed VI signed the Treaty of Sèvres, that divided up the Ottoman Empire between the Allies. This created the modern nation of Turkey.



August 1

# 1834

Slavery was abolished in the British Empire with the exception "of the Territories in the Possession of the East India Company", Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), and Saint Helena; as the Slavery Abolition Act 1833 came into force.



August 6

# 1945

The first Atomic Bomb was dropped over the centre of Hiroshima at 8:15 am, by the American B-29 bomber, Enola Gay. The bomb detonated about 1,800 ft. above ground, killing over 105,000 persons and destroying the city. Another estimated 100,000 persons died as a result of radiation effects.

August 3

# 1492

Christopher Columbus set sail from Palos, Spain with three ships: Nina, Pinta and Santa Maria. Seeking a westerly route to the Far East, he instead landed in the Bahamas, on October 12<sup>th</sup>, thinking it was an outlying Japanese island. He later became known as the first person to discover the Americas.



August 31

1997

Britain's Princess Diana died at 36 from massive internal injuries, suffered in a high-speed car crash in Paris, reportedly after being pursued by photographers.



August 13

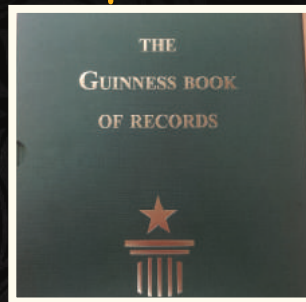
1961

The Berlin Wall came into existence after the East German Government closed the border between the East and West sectors of Berlin with barbed wire to discourage emigration to the West. It became a notorious symbol of the Cold War.



August 27

1955



The first edition of The Guinness Book of Records was published, and printed 50,000 copies in its first year. By Christmas 1955, the book had become a bestseller in the United Kingdom.

August 17

1978

The first transatlantic balloon trip was completed by three Americans, all from Albuquerque, New Mexico. Starting from Maine on August 11th, they travelled in the Double Eagle II over 3,000 miles in 137 hours, landing about 60 miles west of Paris.



August 24-25

1814

During the War of 1812, Washington, D.C. was invaded by British forces that burned the Capital, the White House and most other public buildings, along with a number of private homes.



August 18

1920

The 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified, granting women the right to vote. The first wave of Feminism achieved its primary goal with this amendment.



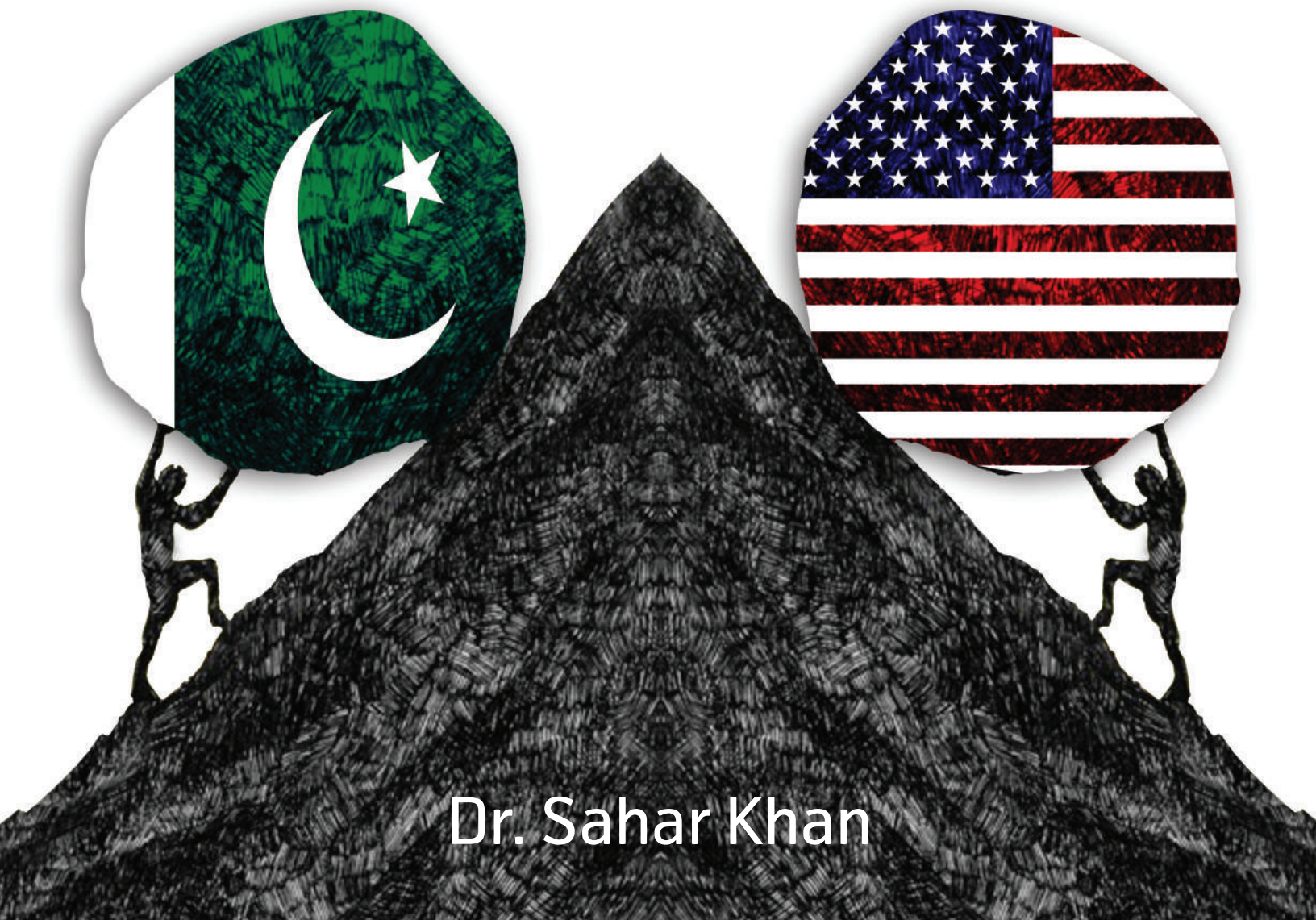
August 19

1991



The Soviet Union was dissolved, and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev was placed under house arrest. The world became unipolar, with United States as the sole superpower.

# **Frenemies** for Life: **The** Difficult Trajectory of **U.S.-Pakistan** Relations



Dr. Sahar Khan

The United States and Pakistan have had a fraught relationship for decades. Both blame each other for being an unreliable ally. Washington blames Pakistan's support for militant groups, like the Afghan Taliban, Haqqani Network, Lashkar-e-Taiba, amongst others, and is apprehensive over security safeguards of nuclear weapons contributing to the the unstable bilateral relationship. Whilst, Islamabad accuses Washington of being dismissive of the human toll the country has suffered due to the U.S.-led Global War on Terror (GWOT), and for always siding with India when Indo-Pak relations go cold. With respect to the international community, Islamabad often finds itself on the defensive with almost none to negligible support from the United States.

The question that plagues analysts on both sides is: can the U.S.-Pakistan relationship improve? The answer is complicated.

### Washington's Outlook on U.S.-Pakistan Relations

Over the past two decades, the United States has developed two lenses by which to analyze its relationship with Pakistan: the "Indo-Pak" lens and "Af-Pak" lens.

The "Indo-Pak" lens shaped by the Cold War, focuses on how the United States can balance the rivalry between India and Pakistan, in a way that enhances U.S. interests in the region. The Indo-Pak lens also implies that within South Asia, which consists of seven countries, India is the most important, and hence dictates U.S. policy in South Asia. This lens, however, has often increased tensions within the U.S.-Pakistan relationship, as Pakistan views U.S. actions to be blatantly pro-India. For example, Pakistan considers the 2008 U.S.-India nuclear deal, that lifted a three-decade long U.S. moratorium on nuclear trade, as a means by which India can improve its nuclear superiority, and hence a direct threat to Pakistan. Similarly, the Trump administration has exempted India from sanctions imposed on countries that have had business dealings with Russia over the last year. The U.S. Congress passed the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act last year to punish Moscow for interfering in its 2016 elections. However, India along with a few other countries has been exempted from sanctions—an exemption that has not been extended to Pakistan, much to its dismay and annoyance.

The second lens routinely used by U.S. officials is the "Af-Pak" lens, a term created by former U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Ambassador Richard Holbrooke in 2009. This lens specifically focused on the U.S. mission in Afghanistan to dismantle al Qaeda, undermine the Taliban, and support the Afghan government. Similar to the Indo-Pak lens, the Af-Pak lens puts Pakistan in a dyad with Afghanistan, where the latter's stability is a priority, and any action by Pakistan that seems to undermine Afghanistan's stability is seen as a strategic liability by the United States.

These U.S. lenses, however, have created a myriad of problems for U.S.-Pakistan relations. The aim of both these lenses has been to simplify South Asia as a region to enable U.S. administrations to create smart policies. But they have done the exact opposite. Not only have these lenses created unproductive binaries, but they have also failed to recognize

**“ Not only have these lenses created unproductive binaries, but they have also failed to recognize nuances that are crucial for the development of an effective U.S. policy.**

nuances that are crucial for the development of an effective U.S. policy. For example, throughout the 1990s, the Clinton administration's South Asia policy focused on nonproliferation and improving ties with India, the largest country and economy, in the region. After Pakistan successfully tested nuclear weapons in 1998, the Clinton administration's hope that the rivals would sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty was dashed. Kashmir, the disputed territory between India and Pakistan, remained on Washington's backburner even as evidence emerged that Pakistan was sponsoring anti-Indian militant groups operating in Indian-administered Kashmir. It was only after the Taliban took control of Kabul in 1996, that the Clinton administration shifted its focus to Afghanistan, where Russia, Iran, and India were supplying arms to the ousted regime of Burhanuddin Rabbani, and Saudi Arabia and Pakistan were doing the same for the Taliban. Clinton's Indo-Pak focus, therefore, prevented the administration from analyzing regional dynamics and the Taliban's upward trajectory within Afghanistan.



Both the Bush and Obama administration's have also used the Indo-Pak and Af-Pak lenses to create their own policies towards Pakistan. The Bush administration's foreign policy approach was shaped by the September 11, 2001 attacks and the subsequent launch of GWOT. As a result, the Bush administration's policy toward Pakistan was dominated by how Pakistan could positively contribute to the U.S. war in Afghanistan. Similarly, the Obama administration's focus on Afghanistan remained disrupting, dismantling, and defeating al Qaeda, and preventing al Qaeda from establishing a "safe haven", from where another attack could be launched on U.S. territory. While Pakistan remained frustrated with Washington's insistence on viewing U.S.-Pakistan relations in the context of Afghanistan, events like the uncovering of the Abdul Qadeer Khan's illicit nuclear trading program and the discovery of Osama bin Laden hiding in Abbottabad further soured Washington's relations with Islamabad, creating distrust that remains firmly in place under the Trump administration.

### Islamabad's Outlook on U.S.-Pakistan Relations

Similar to Washington, Islamabad has a tendency of looking at the U.S.-Pakistan relationship through two prisms. The first is a post-Cold War prism, which Pakistan uses to highlight how the U.S. disengaged from the region when the Soviets withdrew, eventually resulting in the rise of the Taliban. The second is the Global War on Terror (GWOT) prism, which runs counter to Washington's Af-Pak lens, and is centered

on the U.S. led war effort to eliminate al Qaeda and dismantle the Taliban in Afghanistan and beyond. Through the GWOT prism, Islamabad highlights how Pakistan is not a sponsor of militancy, but rather a victim of militant groups. Pakistan has not only lost thousands of soldiers during GWOT, but has also lost countless civilians in U.S. drone strikes in the tribal areas.

Pakistan has routinely accused the U.S. withdrawal from the region after the Cold War, and subsequent negligence of

Afghanistan, as one of the main reasons for the Taliban's rise in the 1990s. But for many scholars and analysts, the key question is: what should the United States have done right after the Cold War? This is a difficult counterfactual to analyze. From a restraint-oriented perspective, Afghanistan offers little strategic value because of its land-locked location and tendency for internal fractionalization and war. U.S. administrations, however, have found themselves overly reliant on questionable allies like Saudi Arabia and Pakistan when they have wanted to engage with Afghanistan (and other Central Asian states like Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan) on economic issues. In the absence of a coherent and consistent policy, the United States has overused its military, relying on its superior operational force to "solve" problems that should be resolved via vigorous diplomacy. Having a military-centric policy, therefore, has sidelined the use of restraint as a feasible strategy within U.S. policymaking.

For the past two decades, therefore, U.S. policy toward South Asia has been military-focused—and Pakistan has often taken advantage of this. As a partner in the GWOT and a non-North Atlantic Treaty Organization member, Pakistan's military establishment has received millions of dollars in U.S. aid that includes grants to purchase U.S. arms and reimbursements

for using Pakistani army bases. U.S. drone strikes have killed thousands of civilians in the tribal areas, but the strikes have been carried out with Pakistan's tacit consent as the Pakistani military has launched its own counter-insurgency campaigns in the tribal belt, namely Zarb-e-Azb (from June 2014 to April 2016) and the ongoing

Radd-ul-Fasaad that began in February 2017. Yet, the military establishment continues to make a distinction between militant groups, targeting only those that attack the Pakistani state. For example, the military has not targeted groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba, responsible for the 2008 Mumbai attacks that killed over 150 people, and Jaish-e-Mohammad, which routinely targets Indian security forces in Indian-administered Kashmir, but it has actively pursued Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, a militant Sunni group that targets Pakistani Shias. This "good vs. bad" group strategy has not only worsened Islamabad's relations with Washington, but has also increased political instability and violence within Pakistan, which continues to experience terrorist attacks.

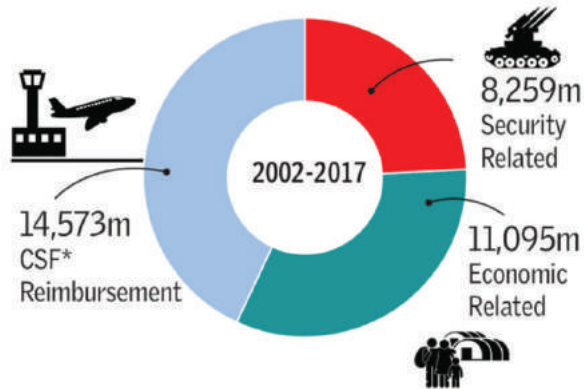
**“ But the stability of the relationship largely depends on the acceptance of each other's interests, rather than persuading the other to adopt the its own (or an alternative) point of view.**



### The Way Forward: Focus on Ending the U.S. War in Afghanistan

Despite their troubled past, it is imperative that both the United States and Pakistan remain engaged and committed to a bilateral relationship. Ultimately, it is in both of their interests to have a stable relationship. But the stability of the relationship largely depends on

## Where US's \$33.9 billion aid to Pakistan in 15 years went



\*CSF is US reimbursement to Pakistan for logistical and operational support of US-led military operations; technically not foreign assistance.

Source: US Congressional Research Service

the acceptance of each other's interests, rather than persuading the other to adopt its own (or an alternative) point of view. In other words, the United States and Pakistan need to stop persuading each other of the 'rightful' validity of their geo-strategic interests. Instead, both states should focus on finding common ground on important issues that encourages cooperation and mutual benefits.

For Washington, this means that it needs to stop expecting Pakistan to halt militant sponsorship. Instead, the Trump administration should focus on constructing a feasible political solution that will allow the U.S. to withdraw from Afghanistan without further aggravating the ongoing civil war in Afghanistan—and the United States needs Pakistan to be able to help it exit Afghanistan with a political solution. The Trump administration should use Pakistan's relationship with the Taliban as leverage, and as a way to hold talks with the Taliban and Afghan government together.

Similarly, Pakistan needs to stop acting like a victim, blaming U.S. negligence for the rise of the Taliban in the post-Cold War era, and accusing the United States for not appreciating its sacrifices. Pakistan's involvement in Afghanistan may have started off with the U.S.-led Global War on Terror in 2001, but has since evolved, where Pakistan has its own interest for remaining involved in Afghanistan. Therefore, under the leadership of Imran Khan, Pakistan's new administration should focus on how to reduce its reliance on militant sponsorship and increase security within its borders. It remains unclear whether Khan would be willing—or able—to do so.



*Sahar Khan is a visiting research fellow in the Cato Institute's Defense and Foreign Policy Department. She holds a Ph.D in Political Science from the University of California. Sahar has also served as the Associate Editor of The Washington Quarterly at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.*



## China's baby woes:

Due to the disparity in male-female gender ratio and declining fertility rates in women in China, the Chinese government has started a campaign encouraging women to go back to 'good family virtues' and go home and have more children.

The fertility rate in China is **1.6** children born/woman, which is very low compared to countries with similar GDP per capita.



China has **115** boys for every **100** girls. Boys outnumber girls by **33 million** creating widespread social issues.



In **2012**, new mothers were given **98 days** of paid leave, but in **2017**, the average increased to **138-158** days. However, this worked against women as:



- > **54% women** in China were asked about marriage, children and pregnancy by potential employers.
- > **11.5% women** felt that they lost promotion opportunities because of pregnancy.
- > **62% women** with one child were reluctant to have another one and **35% among** them did not want another child because of career concerns.
- > **19% civil** service job posts in China were either 'men only' or 'men preferred'.
- > China has the most number of self-made female billionaires with **64** out of the total **102 female** billionaires in the world. However, the average monthly salary of women in China is **22% less** than men.

# Regional Dynamics and Strategic Concerns in South Asia

*Aneel, Sarah S. (ed.) 2018, Regional Dynamics and Strategic Concerns in South Asia, June, Islamabad: Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI)*

The book comes out at an opportune time, as India and Pakistan celebrate their 71st independence. It is this relationship between the two largest countries in the area, which is the fulcrum of South Asia and its interplay dominates the dynamics within the region, as well as those outside.

Most academic discourse on issues pertaining to South Asia is either met with wary optimism or plain cynicism. This could be attributed to the traditional security lens through which most South Asian issues are studied from and the lack of accepting alternate views in academic circles, which has created echo-chambers in policymaking circles. This is where the latest anthology on South Asia, coming out of Pakistan, titled “Regional Dynamics and Strategic Concerns in South Asia” comes as a pleasant surprise. The book is based on the deliberations and discussions of experts that took place at an international conference organized in Pakistan, by the Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) in collaboration with Hanns Seidel Foundation in November 2017. The themes of the anthology are not only reserved to pertinent outstanding disputes, such as Jammu and Kashmir or the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan, but also cover an array of other equally pressing issues, such as climate change and socio-political trends in South Asia – areas which are usually not given enough academic attention.

The book starts with an insightful overview of the region by General

Zubair Mahmood Hayat, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC), Pakistan, and includes comprehensive and important policy recommendations from a number of internationally renowned experts in the field.

There are four thematic sections in the book. The first section is titled “Regional Dynamics of South Asia.” It contains essays on topics ranging from socio-political trends in South Asia, to the threat of climate change to regional states. Admiral (R) Dr. Jayanath Colombage writes in his essay, “Assessment of Socio-Political Trends in South Asia”, that the major conundrum facing the region is the mistrust between India and Pakistan. He argues that Chinese investment in the Belt and Road Initiative is increasingly being seen with suspicion by major countries. This has resulted in strategic convergence against it by states like India, USA and Japan, and in doing so, has created a strategic opportunity dilemma for smaller states in the region and will potentially hinder their economic, social and political development. Dr. Boris Volkhonsky discusses the effect Pakistan and India’s membership of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) could have on the bilateral relations between the two states. While, he opines that Indo-Pak bilateral differences could possibly cloud the SCO agenda, he points out that in the long term the SCO membership could accrue dividends for both. SCO has vigorously endorsed China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which will establish Pakistan as a regional connectivity hub for development in the Central Asian countries. Furthermore, on issues of water-sharing, which have become another major Indo-Pak bone of contention, the

author recommends using SCO as a forum for discussion. He also points out that Russia’s role in the region should not be overlooked, especially by Pakistan. In fact, one of the recommendations in the book is to accord priority to re-arrange a visit of President Putin to Pakistan.

Biswas Baral takes on the environmental concerns facing and being ignored within South Asia. In his piece, he warns us that floods are likely to cost South Asia USD 215 billion each year by 2030, he notes that India, Bangladesh and Nepal are currently investing more than USD 32 billion on building 78 water projects to combat flooding. Pakistan, in this regard, is far behind, and unfortunately environmental issues were not given enough priority by any political party during the General Elections. Biswas recommends greater sharing of water-related data, which is classified as ‘sensitive’, as being vital among SAARC countries, along with more investment in climate-resilient agriculture and agro-product diversification. He even calls for the demilitarisation of the Himalayan glaciers, which is an ecological crisis zone.

After laying the foundation with the current regional dynamics in the first

**“SCO has vigorously endorsed China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which will establish Pakistan as a regional connectivity hub for development in the Central Asian countries.**

section, the book shifts to “Strategic Concerns in South Asia” in the second section. This section covers an array of topical issues such as the rising tensions between China and the United States, and the possibility of war between these two global powers, and how this would play out in South Asia.

Andrew Small, German Marshall Fund, Washington, D.C., “Accelerating Competition: The Risk of Regional Blocs in South Asia,” talks of the increased political competition between India and Pakistan that may change the underlying nature of the relationship between the two, especially if the USA decides to challenge China, in what the latter considers its own territory. However, he argues that the US-China relationship has generally been one of cooperation and competition, but this has fluctuated over time. He further elaborates that both the countries are deeply embedded in a global economic order and thrive off one another. However, this cooperation is becoming difficult, due to emerging strategic differences between the two countries. As far as the South Asian region is concerned, it plays second fiddle in this relationship, except for times of extraordinary crisis. Mr. Small’s assertions can be countered by reading the US National Security Strategy, released last December, and the National Defense Strategy released in January this year. The documents term China as a “revisionist power” and underlines US intent to counter Chinese efforts to “displace the US in the Indo-Pacific region”. It is this strategic objective which is responsible for the ongoing trade tensions between the two powers and may even lead to the expiration of the decades long US policy of engagement with China.

The third section solely focuses on the Afghan conundrum titled “Strategic Situation in Afghanistan and its Regional Implications.” Ambassador (R) Rustam Shah Mohmand, in his thoughtful piece titled “Navigating Troubled Pathways: India’s Role in Afghanistan and Pakistan’s Apprehensions”, explains that despite making admirable contributions towards the stability of Afghanistan, Pakistan has not been able to undertake a successful strategy for peace-making in Afghanistan. This he puts down to the

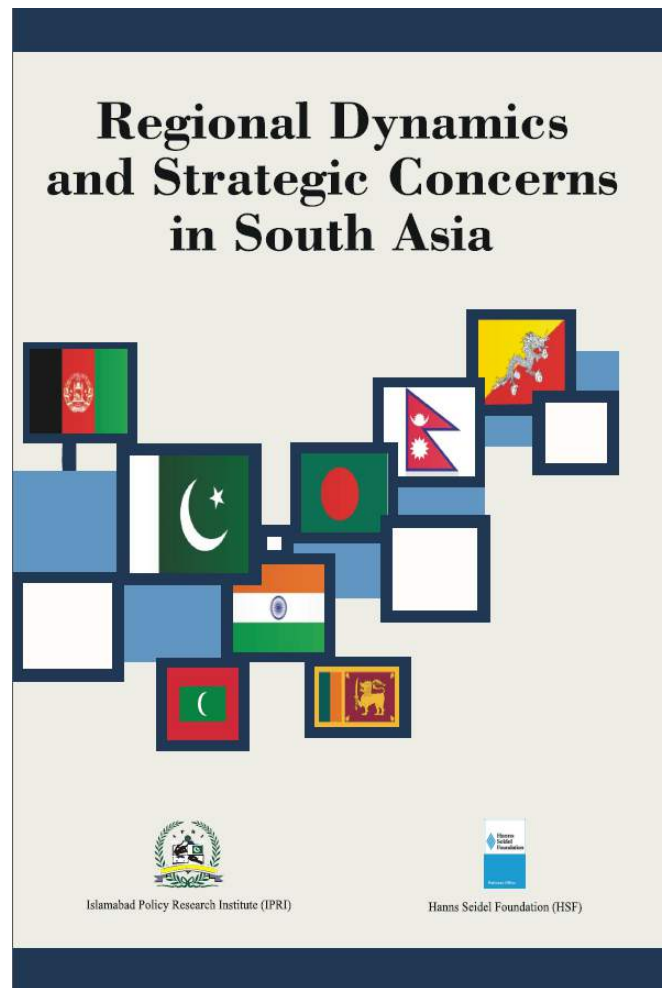
country not being able to address the root cause of insurgency and being preoccupied with India’s role in Afghanistan. Vladimir Potapenko, Deputy Secretary-General, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, in his paper “Reconciliation Process in Afghanistan: Role of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization,” assesses the role that the SCO could play in stabilizing Afghanistan.

The fourth and final section of the book is devoted to finding solutions to issues discussed at length in earlier sections of the book. The acclaimed scholar, Dr. Christian Wagner, writes about “The Role of Global Powers in Building a Cooperative Security Order in South Asia”, he proposes, South Asian countries rely on themselves to work on an issue-specific security order which helps in mitigating regional differences, rather than relying on major powers to create a conducive regional environment for the resolution of outstanding disputes. Unfortunately, the experience of SAARC has shown that the forum becomes hostage to the relationship between two of its largest countries, India and Pakistan. However, given world events with Europe grappling with the exit of Britain, and NATO under constant attack by President Trump, the future of ‘collective’ institutional visions at the moment seems rather bleak. However, Professor Dr. Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, has hope in the UN in his paper titled “Resolving the Jammu and Kashmir Dispute: An imperative for Regional Peace”, writes that the Modi government has given up a policy engagement and instead, has

intensified brutalities on the people of Indian Occupied Kashmir. He emphasizes the role of the United Nations in ensuring a plebiscite which would allow Kashmiris to exercise their right of self-determination. The emphasis on the role of the UN is especially significant in the light of the recent UN report (the first of its kind), which condemned India on human right violations in Indian Occupied Kashmir (IOK).

The anthology offers nuanced and dispassionate study of some of the most pertinent issues facing South Asia today, and is worth delving into for anyone interested in understanding South Asian strategic issues (old and new). The book is available in hard copy and free online download: <http://www.ipripak.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/rdib1362018.pdf>.

*Reviewed by Mr. Umar Farooq Khan. He holds a Masters degree in ‘International Studies & Diplomacy’ from the School of Oriental & African Studies (SOAS), University of London.*



# Pakistan's Unexpectedly

Rich English Literary Evolution

*Burnt Shadows* by Kamila Shamsie

Mohsin  
Hamid

**Moth Smoke**

*A Case of exploding mangoes*

by Muhammad Hanif

**Shadows of the Pomegranate Tree**

by Tariq Ali

**THE CROW EATERS** BY BAPSIE SIDHWA

**The Shadow of the Crescent Moon**

by Fatima Bhutto

Huma Kirmani

The development of English literature in Pakistan has evolved its own identity and has become the socio-cultural document of an era of aspirations and austerity over the last seventy years. Authors have a third eye which venerates curiosity, inspiration, imagination, where seeing is a synecdoche and synesthetic gerund. The disbandment of the British throne in the Subcontinent in 1947, and the accompanying mass migration between the newly independent states of India and Pakistan, stands out as one of the momentous developments in socio-cultural history. Post-partition literature categorized issues of class, community formation, ideological fissures and cultural separatism, however, with the absence of women and ordinary people playing any role.

In the post-1947 inception of Pakistani English literature, authors tried to hold their ground for the leftist and liberal issues of class and people, in a discourse, which simply portrayed a pivotal and exclusive role for novels of partition horrors. However, these historical accounts never acquired the discipline of art, and no literature based on hate and prejudice can be great. Thankfully, by the 1960s, the Pakistani English literature authors found fresher themes and hypotheses regarding long-neglected areas, like gender, the celebration of people over power and the evolution of newer paradigms involving tribes and peasants.

The enormity of English literature on existing themes is preoccupied with the formation of the country, the role of Islam, geopolitical developments and the recurrent issues of governance. Whereas, socio-economic disquisition hinging on identity politics and national integration remain few and far between.

The writings in the English language, which had appeared as a literary trend in the early years of Independence,

“ They see themselves and others as characters in a narrative called life and see endings, even before they write a beginning, where the reader can escape.

have gradually formed a tradition and a large number of younger writers have taken to expressing themselves in the English language.

The literary prism of Pakistani English literature writers is extraordinary; their contribution to literature is honest, curious, self-critical; acting as profound sightseer of the convoluted society, razor sharp prose, and a fine sense of negotiation. The writers see the world as a storehouse of story ideas with moral ambiguity and drama. They see themselves and others as characters in a possible narrative, even before they write a beginning, providing the reader with a literary oasis, an escape from the harsh realities of life. They see every complication as a potential resolution, and every resolution as a potential complication using English language as their playground.

Pakistani writers have penned some of the world's most recognized and acknowledged English literature; offering the best discourse, enlightening the long shadows of reality, they narrate the tales of a holistic society in a manner which exquisitely depicts the whirlpool of rituals, which devours the real essence and sustenance of life.

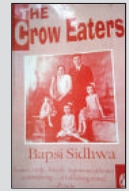
Bapsi Sidhwa's, *'The Crow-Eaters (1978)'*, is one of Pakistan's most beloved storytellers. Her raucous sense of humour captures a long gone Pakistan, setting her story of Freddy Junglewalla in pre-Partition Lahore. Come for Freddy — Parsi, entrepreneur, fraud, and arsonist, but stay for his “tank” of a mother-in-law Jerbanoo. Her other novels - *'Ice Candy Man (1988)'* and *'The American Brat (1993)'* - describe the life of Parsi families in Pakistan in a trans-cultural setting. *The Thirteenth House*, published in 1987, gives a cross-section of Pakistani consciousness, connecting the past with the present, and opening inroads into astrology and mysticism. It mixes desire with horror and attempts to regain the imaginative grasp of a child's perception through the unfolding of its story.

Tariq Ali's novel, *'Shadows of the Pomegranate Tree'*, published in 1993, is a historical narrative, which seeks to find sources of strength in the civilization of Muslim Andalusia. Structured as a family saga, the colorful ambience of the medieval Muslim-European world is

## Ten Books that define Pakistani Literature

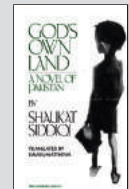
### 'The Crow Eaters' by Bapsi Sidhwa

The story is set at the dawn of the 20th century in Lahore and describes family problems. The writer keeps the reader occupied with suspense, humor, romance, laughter and tragedy, painting a vivid picture of life in the Parsee community.



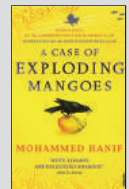
### 'God's Own Land' by Shaukat Siddique

Through the eyes of ordinary commoners living in the slums of Pakistan's urban centers immediately after partition, the writer tells a powerful saga of the rich and powerful exploiting the poor and vulnerable and the longing that young people have of a better life in a new country.



### 'A Case of Exploding Mangoes' by Muhammad Hanif

Muhammad Hanif tells the story of Gen. Zia's plane crash, conspiracy theories, CIA spies, blind prisoners and a love story between two cadets, keeping the novel light-hearted and humorous.



### 'The Shadow of the Crescent Moon' (2013) by Fatima Bhutto

Written in the backdrop of the War on Terror in Pakistan's tribal areas, tells a story about five young people trying to live and love while their home is enveloped by war.



### 'Geometry of God' by Uzma Aslam Khan

Set against the backdrop of Zia's Pakistan, where religious fundamentalism is rife in society, the novel tells the story through four colorful characters and touches upon love and longing, curiosity, heresy, blasphemy and more.



**“You know the expression, worse the place, the better the literature. Possibly,” Hanif replied, but I’d rather have peace and bad books.”**

evoked to reconstruct a loving past.

Fatima Bhutto’s novel as ‘The Shadow of the Crescent Moon’ (2013) is written in the backdrop of the insurgencies in Pakistan’s tribal areas near the border of Afghanistan. The incredible strife of women who pave the path for survival through the turbulence of tribe’s stubborn conventions.

Mohammad Hanif, a prominent, darkly humorous and talented author, was once asked whether Pakistan’s violent and often oppressive political system was the reason the country was producing such fine novels.

“You know the expression, worse the place, the better the literature. Possibly,” Hanif replied, “but I’d rather have peace and bad books.”

His work, ‘A Case of Exploding Mangos’ (2008) based on the real life - on the martial law of General Ziaul-Haq - shows how only a writer as skilled as Hanif could weave a tale about the dictator’s eventual assassination in a mid-air plane explosion, and satisfy our predilection for conspiracy theories, while still keeping it humorous.

Kamila Shamsie, the British Pakistani author of five novels including ‘Burnt Shadows’, (2009) which was shortlisted for the Orange Prize for Fiction, and translated into over twenty languages. ‘Kartography’, (2002) is a story about home and friendship, set in the shadow of the 1971 war that split East and West Pakistan. It’s the only novel written in English capturing the war that divided Pakistan. Though Shamsie has gone on to write many more novels, this is a superb introduction to life in Karachi’s web of intricacies.

Mohsin Hamid, who moved to the US for his studies, later returned to Lahore as a freelance journalist. ‘Moth Smoke’ was his first novel (2000) which earned the winning of a Betty Trask Award and was shortlisted for the PEN Hemingway award. Subsequent books

have gone on to win other prizes and indeed one ‘Reluctant Fundamentalist’ (2007) has made it to the silver screen.

Pakistani English literature has been in vogue for years however the novels such as Salman Rushdie’s ‘Shame’ (1983) appeared as a site of the archaic, hell-bent on distorting reality, moving between the civilian and military, shut off from the rest of the continent and from the contemporary world, not quite Pakistan.

“Shame is like everything else,” Rushdie writes, “live with it for long enough and it becomes part of the furniture.”

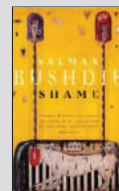
The contemporary style of Pakistani English literature authors offer a vision of Pakistani modernity cleaving right through the stereotypes. The abandonment of anti-modern discourse became a necessity for literary diversity, as literature is not all about smartly crafted plots, and enchanting heartfelt words. Authors have portrayed issues of women empowerment, domestic violence, post trauma of war and terrorism. Great literature emerges from what is inspired by the real, the intense, and the present.

Here a question arises whether these writers are successful in molding a positive visage of Pakistan. The ultimate rejoinder lies in the Pakistani writers ability to construct raw experiences with emphasis on the positive and softer aspects; the writers through complex and varied genres paint a multi-faceted picture of Pakistan. Their books are often the western readers window to the soul of Pakistan; one which is not necessarily the same as shown on their TV screens. The discerning folk anecdotes as the foremost Pakistani genre in English, engages the readers from all walks of life, and from every corner of the world.

*Huma Kirmani is an author and has written 13 books. She is a public speaker, a social activist, a mentor and an honorary member of United Nations of Pakistan. Her first novel, “Corridors of Transmutation, “ is on Afghan war and refugees crisis.*

### ‘Shame’ by Salman Rushdie

Depicting a country that Rushdie says is “not quite Pakistan”, the novel tells a vibrant, sensuous political tale that encompasses the civilian and the military, society, politics and human experience with the author’s characteristic ‘magical realism.’



### ‘Reluctant Fundamentalist’ by Mohsin Hamid

The novel is a monologue between Changez, a Princeton graduate who made it big in the Big Apple, and an unidentified American visitor in Lahore. Changez narrates how his vision of America changed to something very dark after 9/11.



### ‘Haveli’ by Zeenat Mahal

A tale set in the 1970s in Pakistan, the writer tells a story about the old-school romance through the eyes of a fiercely independent, stubborn, young Pakistani girl, who longs to be re-united with her father.



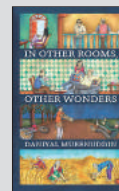
### ‘Burnt Shadows’ by Kamile Shamsie

Part terrifying and part heart-breaking, the novel deals with grief, trauma, racism and death immersing the reader in a story that traverses six decades and five continents. It was shortlisted for the Orange Prize in 2009.



### ‘In Other Rooms, Other Wonders’ by Daniyal Muezzudin

is a collection of eight stories set in Punjab in the 1970’s, 80’s and 90’s. The writer paints a striking picture of class hierarchy and patriarchy that dominate the social landscape in the country and where the characters are almost typecast Punjabi Pakistanis.



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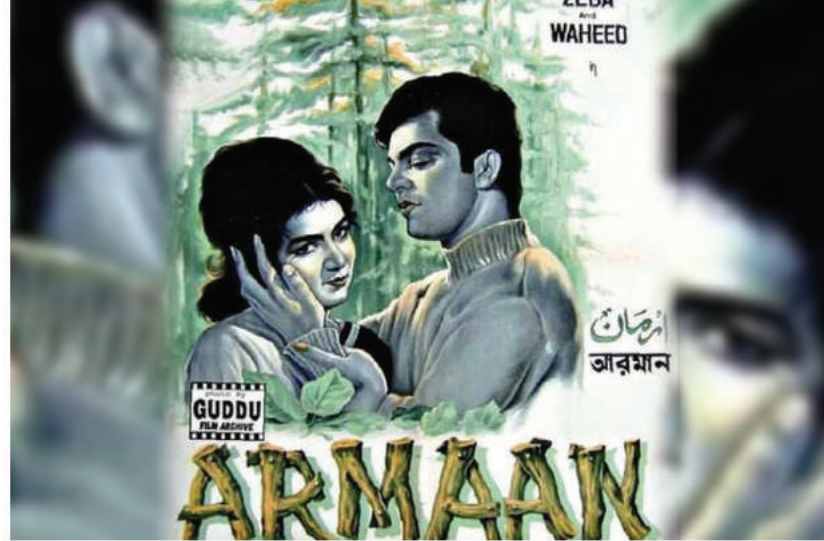
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# Evolution of Pakistani Cinema



**M**otion pictures came to the subcontinent in 1896, when the Lumiere Brothers showcased six films at the Watson Hotel in Mumbai (then Bombay). This marked the introduction of cinema in India as we know it today. Dhundiraj Phalke is considered the pioneer of the Indian film industry who made the first feature film. The success of his films prompted the rise of the first chain of Indian cinemas, the Madan Theatre. Film steadily gained popularity in all parts of the subcontinent in subsequent years, specifically in cities like Madras, Calcutta, Bombay and Pune. Lahore, too, emerged as a hub of cinematic activity with a number of film studios, and it is from there that the Pakistani film industry began to emerge.

Pakistani film industry has come a long way since its humble beginnings. The first studio and production company, United Players Corporation was established in Lahore (in British India) in 1929 by actor and director Abdur Rashid

Kardar. A year later the production company released its first feature film *Husn Ka Daku* (Mysterious Eagle), which, although, just a modest hit, managed to establish credentials of Lahore as a location for a functioning film industry. The studio then rebranded itself as *Player Phototone* and released the popular classic love story “*Heer Ranjha*” in 1932.

Lahore’s film industry continued to thrive with the launch of some new production houses, such as Agha G. A. Gul’s *Evernew Studios*, Noor Jehan and Shaukhat Hussein Rizvi’s *Shahnour Studios* and J.C. Anand’s *Everready Pictures*. The last of these, eventually became the largest film production and distribution company in Pakistan.

After independence, Lahore emerged as a center of Pakistani film industry and soon enough, the first Pakistani feature film “*Teri Yaad*” (Remembering You) was released on the 7th of August 1948. The film featured Asha Posley and Dilip Kumar’s younger brother, Nasir Khan, and was directed by

Dawood Chand. Running for five weeks, the movie failed to woo audiences who were used to seeing superior quality Indian films. The fledgling film industry received further blows, as two major studios, Shorey Studios and Pancholi Pictures, owned by Hindus moved to India in the wake of partition. The making of Teri Yaad constituted a long, tedious process given the lack of proper equipment, financial resources, the absence of star casts and the ensuing riots in the country. Despite the film's poor production value and lackluster reception, Teri Yaad ushered in an era of successful local films in Pakistan.

Teri Yaad's release prompted other directors to try their hand at making and releasing movies in Pakistan, but it wasn't until the 1950 that the Pakistani film industry finally struck a chord with the movie audiences in the new born country. On 7th April 1950, director Anwar Kamal Pasha released his second film "Do Ansoo" (Two Tears) with actors Santosh Kumar, Ajmal, Sabiha Khanum and Allauddin. The film became a huge hit, attaining a 25-week viewing and becoming the first Urdu language film to celebrate a silver jubilee in the up and coming Pakistani film industry. The movie elevated Santosh Kumar and Sabiha Khanum to stardom. The 1950's saw many milestones being reached by the Pakistani film industry. More and more cinemas were opening up in the country, especially, in the then, national capital Karachi, where 'cinema culture' prospered. Names like Darpan, Noor Jehan, Sudhir, Nayar Sultana became household names and drew crowds to theatres.

In fact, around this time a reverse movement began to occur for industry related individuals, who had earlier left Lahore for Central India, to pursue a career in film before the partition, now wanted to return to their homeland to carve out a career in the Pakistani film industry. A famous example was actor, director and producer Nazir, who returned to his hometown Lahore to produce films in Pakistan. Noor Jehan's directorial debut "Chan way", made her the first female film director of Pakistan. Gul remained the major producer in the early fifties, but J.C. Anand established himself as a top-notch producer in the country with the success of the 1954 hit "Sassi" (True), which received the golden jubilee status and proved to be a huge hit, playing in cinema halls for over 50 weeks. The popular playback singer, Ahmed Rushdi also began his career in the mid fifties. The first Sindhi language film, "Umar Marvi", was released and the annual film awards, the Nigar Awards were launched. Quota-restrictions imposed on Indian films at that juncture, also helped the Pakistani film industry blossom.

By the 1960s, Lahore had become the foothold of the Pakistani film industry, the Hollywood of Pakistan. The rise of the Pakistani cinema spurred Indian artists, including Sheila Ramani and Timir Baran Bhattacharya, to visit Pakistan and work in Pakistani Films. In 1962, "Shaheed" (Martyr), a film showcasing the atrocities against people of Palestine, directed by Khalil Qaiser, emerged as a big hit with cinema goers. The year also marked the debut of Mohammad Ali, who would later become an icon of Pakistani cinema. With the introduction of color films, "Sangam", the first full-length colored film, drew audiences even more to cinema houses. In 1966 "Armaan" (Desire) became a mega hit in Pakistan, with

75 weeks in theaters and earning the rank of "Platinum Jubilee". The movie was written and produced by Waheed Murad, later known as Chocolate hero of Pakistani cinema, who starred with Zeba in lead roles. The film had an immensely successful soundtrack, which is also credited with the introduction of pop music in Pakistan. Hassan Tariq and his wife Rani also contributed to the success of Pakistani film industry with hits like "Mera Ghar Meri Jannat" (1968), "Anjuman" (1970), "Umrao Jan Ada" (1972) and "Ek Gunah aur Sahi" (1975). "Aina" (1977), featuring Nadeem and Shabnam in lead roles, is known as the last mega hit from the Golden Age, accomplishing the record of clocking approximately 400 weeks at the box office.

During the 1970's, some production houses toyed with the idea of horror movies and adult-only films in Pakistan, but failed to make a mark in those genres. The Shabnam and Ejaz starrer "Dosti" (1971) clocked 101 weeks at the box office, thus qualifying for a "Diamond Jubilee" status, further added to the credentials of Pakistani cinema industry.

During this time the country was in turmoil due to the tragic dismemberment of East Pakistan, as well as the consequential political unrest in the country. The chaotic scenario began to impact the film industry, and soon a mob set fire to a cinema in Quetta just before the release of the first Balochi film, "Hamalo Mah Gunj". Piracy coupled with the advent of VCR further dissuaded the viewers to leave the comfort of their homes and go to cinemas. Hence, as time progressed, more and more individuals and families preferred watching pirated films on their VCRs.

In 1977, General Zia's successful military coup was followed by implementation of his Islamization agenda. Under this new policy, film-makers were forced to comply with a strict censorship regime. New registration laws for film producers were enforced requiring stringent qualifications. The government forcibly closed most of the cinema houses in Lahore and banned numerous projects if it deemed them in violation of codes devised by the Zia regime, in terms of national interests, decency, morality and the public good. Having been left with little to screen and being unable to compete with home entertainment vistas (VCR, piracy, PTV), hundreds of cinema houses ceased to be operational. Enhanced tax rates further added to the woes of cinema owners, prompting them to convert cinema houses to shopping plazas. It naturally impacted the number of films being produced in the country and had adverse ramifications on the standard of the films. The ever dwindling number of Urdu films in the 1980s and 90s stimulated the growth of Punjabi cinema. The violence and abysmal quality of the Punjabi movies further led the middle class families to abandon Pakistani cinema. While cult classics, such as "Maula Jutt", were successful, most of the movies failed to connect with the masses and tended to focus more on violence than quality. These so called "gandasa" films were targeting the taste buds of the illiterate audiences and thus failed to magnetize middle and upper class educated viewers. Pashto films also began showing soft-core pornography, which had a detrimental effect on people's overall view of Pakistani films.

By the 1990's Pakistani cinema had transformed into

a shell of its once prestigious self. The passion for Pakistani films began to die out in that era, especially after the demise of Waheed Murad. Even Saeed Rizvi's internationally acclaimed science fiction effort — the first of its kind in Pakistan — failed to lure audiences back to cinema screens. GVS spoke to veteran film director Syed Noor, who opened up about the fall of the Pakistani cinema, as under:

*“It wasn't the film quality that started slipping, - we were still making the same quality - as much as it was the conditions of the cinema halls, which made them unsuitable for visits by family.”*

The 1990's saw the complete collapse of the Pakistani film industry. The annual output of films was reduced to less than half of what it used to be in Pakistan's golden era of filmmaking. The death of the famous director Nazrul Islam dealt a mighty blow to the industry. In the decade under lens, Anjuman quit, Sultan Rahi was murdered and director Sangeeta decided to leave the industry to focus on her family. In 1998, “Jinnah” premiered with Hollywood actor Christopher Lee, and the subsequent year saw release of some films such as, “Dewaane Tere Pyar Ke”, “Mujhe Chand Chahyee”, Sangaam, “Tere Pyar Mein”, and “Ghar Kab Aao Gay”. However, the public failed to connect with these films, and by the start of the new millennium, the industry was pronounced as dead. With no Indian films being shown in theaters, there wasn't much to screen, therefore more cinemas and theatres closed.

It took several years before there was another spark of hope for filmmakers, and this happened due to the arrival of Shoaib Mansoor's “Khuda Kay Liye” (In the Name of God). The 2007 film focused on themes like religious extremism, terrorism and family, resonating with audiences across Pakistan and around the world. Around this time, many TV Drama makers and studios in Karachi developed an interest in using their TV equipment to produce films.

Several other films were released, but none succeeded in capturing the audiences' attention until Mansoor came back with “Bol” in 2011. The movie took the Pakistani audiences by storm, breaking and setting new records. According to Nadeem Mandviwalla, the success of these films did not have to do with Indian movies being aired.

*“Indian films, are generally considered to be driving the revival of Pakistani cinema. However, this is only part of the explanation. Other factors and policy decisions - especially regarding taxation - taken by the Musharraf government between 2001 to 2006 are actually responsible for the revival of the whole industry.”*

Prior to these changes, the government, and not filmmakers and studio owners, was earning profits from tickets, and the lowering of these taxes helped make it easier for more and more people to finance films.

Bol (Speak) is attributed with reviving the Pakistani film industry, because the success of Bol ostensibly stirred many

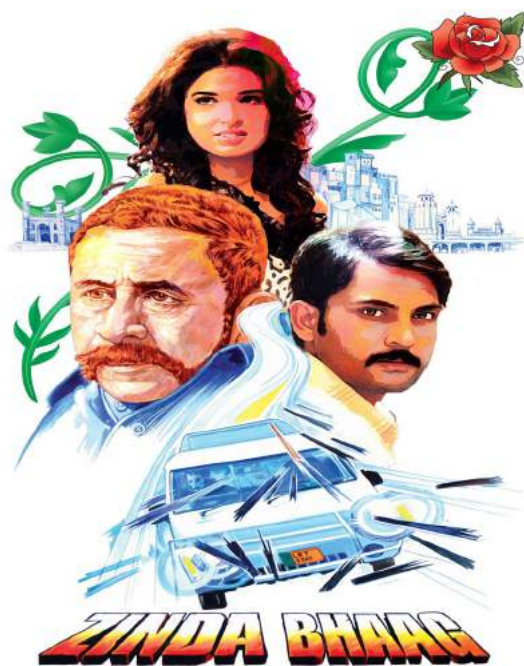
production houses to contemplate seriously about investing in Pakistani films. This was visible when a new wave of filmmakers and actors came to limelight. It was followed by Bilal Lashari's “Waar” (Strike) which became the highest grossing movie for Pakistan. Films like “Ishq Khuda”, “Main Hu Shahid Afridi”, “Na Maloom Afraad”, “Lahore Say Aagey”, “Jalaibee”, and “Wrong No.” added to the list of successful Pakistani films. Another milestone was Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy's animated feature film, “3 Bahadur”, which not only became the highest grossing animated film ever to be released in Pakistan, but also one of the highest grossing Pakistani films of all time. Pakistani cinema also had some moderate success with its parallel cinema ventures, namely, “Zinda Bhaag”, “Dukhtar” and “Manto.”

Nadeem Bayg's ensemble romantic comedy “Jawani Phir Nahi Aani” finally proved, once and for all, that the Pakistani film industry was back in action. The movie collected an unprecedented Rs. 49.44 crores, becoming a huge blockbuster. “Ho Mann Jahan”, “Actor In Law”, “Janaan”, “Na Maalom Afraad- 2” and “Punjab Nahi Jaungi” have all been rated as highly successful with the latest becoming the highest grossing Pakistani film of all time. This year alone we've

had hits like “7 Din Mohabbat In”, “Azaadi” and “Wajood.” Interestingly we've also had two of the best Pakistani films made in recent times, Asim Abbasi's gloriously crafted “Cake” and the romantic comedy, “Teefa In Trouble”, which is on track to become the highest grossing film of Pakistan. Both these films, like so many other hits,

showcase just how far Pakistani cinema has come and for Pakistani filmmakers and fans, it truly offers a glimmer of hope for the future of Pakistani Cinema.

**“ So called “gandasa” films were targeting the taste buds of the lower class, illiterate audiences and thus failed to magnetize middle and upper class, educated viewers.**





## Movie Reviews

At this point, it's practically a given that a Dwayne Johnson film will be a generic, slightly dull action film with a few daring stunts thrown in for good measure. Sure, there are exceptions — like last year's highly successful *Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle*, which surprised everyone with how inspired its take was on a classic plot device — but mostly wrestler The Rock's film career has been filled with forgettable flicks. And although they've managed to turn him into Hollywood's most bankable actor and a bonafide action hero, ultimately his films are not the kind that cinemagoers will remember fondly for years to come. His latest offering, *Skyscraper*, is the latest addition to his tally of entertaining, but ultimately bland movies.

Starring Johnson, Neve Campbell, Noah Tyler, Pablo Schreiber, Byron Mann and Hannah Quinlivan, the Rawon Marshall Thumber directed film revolves around an ex-FBI amputee working in China, as a security assessor, for a recently constructed building that, is said to be the tallest in the world. Things take a turn for the worse when terrorists set the building on fire and our hero has to save his family from inside the burning building. If the premise doesn't make you want to invest 1 hour and 42 minutes watching the film, then you're probably better off not seeing *Skyscraper*. That said, if you're looking for a Hollywood summer blockbuster with some electric action scenes and little else, then *Skyscraper* could be what you need.

The film tries to impress early on when it introduces a twist that sees our protagonist getting blamed for the fire the terrorists have set and while that works in the film's favor (adding an urgency that is badly needed in a film like this), other such twists actually make the film needlessly complicated. In fact, the biggest problem with *Skyscraper* is that the film suffers from a weak script. The film exchanges character development, good writing and common sense for one action scene after the other, and as guffaw-worthy as they may be, they're simply so stupid that they are often hard to digest.



What works are the actors' performances. Johnson is pretty much the charismatic character that he has been in his previous action films, except this time he's a father who is hell bent on rescuing his family. His earnestness helps sell all the crazy action and it is a credit to Johnson's star power that he makes every single shot (as CGI filled as they are) so captivating. In all honesty, this film with another actor may not have worked, so if this film continues to do solid business at the box office, it will very much be due to Johnson's star power. Neve Campbell, who plays The Rock's wife, Sarah Sawyer, gets some good scenes and she manages to make the most of them. The film makes the smart decision of making her a Navy surgeon and so Campbell gets to have some fun in the movie too.

In a film like *Skyscraper*, it's important to mention the work of the cinematographer because without him, *Skyscraper* would not be half as entertaining as it is. Robert Elswit (*Nightcrawler*, *Mission Impossible: Rogue Nation*) manages to make each shot wondrous, whether it is the CGI fire dangerously close to our leads or it's the shots of Sawyer hanging by duct tape (yes, it's that stupid), Elswit makes every scene beautiful and terrifying at the same time.

The movie plays homage to (read: unabashedly rips off) 'Die Hard' and 'The Towering Inferno' which is a fact that it hasn't tried to hide, but considering the two films are much superior in pretty much every aspect, that only undermines the overall merits of the film.

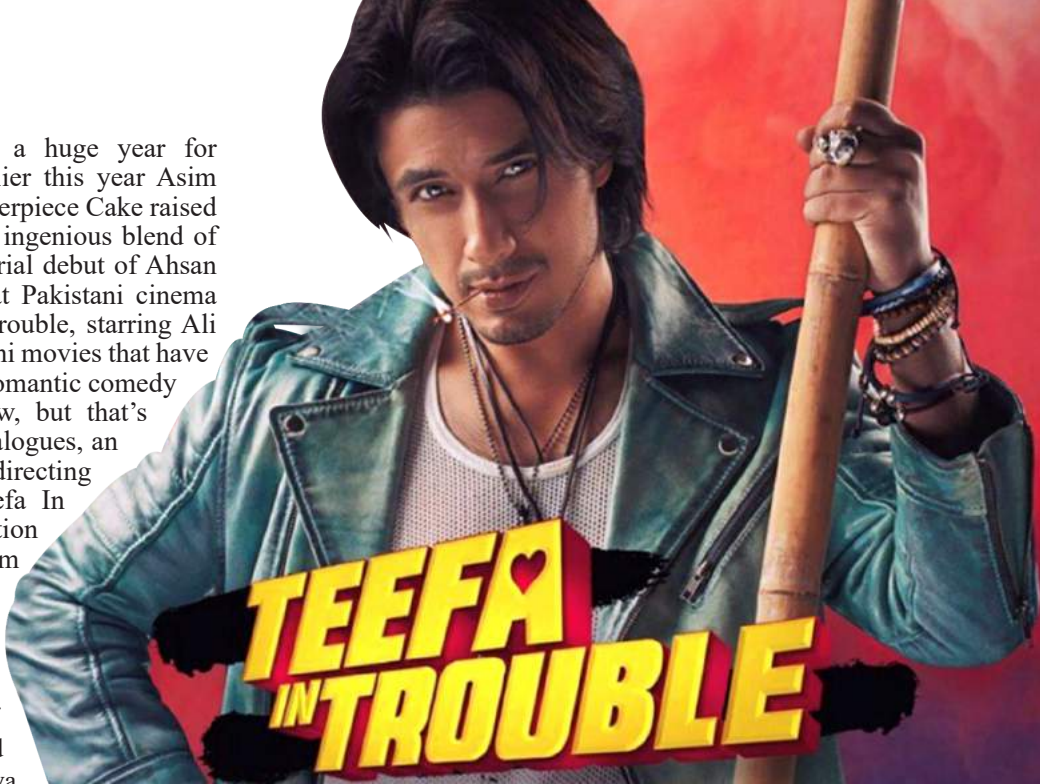
All in all, *Skyscraper* is a silly but wildly entertaining action film that is purely meant to be enjoyed on the big screen. The movie lacks depth and logic, but if death defying stunts and awe inspiring CGI scenes are your cup of tea, then *Skyscraper* should not be missed.



**2018** is shaping up to be a huge year for Pakistani cinema. Earlier this year Asim Abbasi's comedic masterpiece *Cake* raised a new bar for Pakistani Cinema with its ingenious blend of comedy and drama, and now the directorial debut of Ahsan Rahim has proved once and for all, that Pakistani cinema has the potential to be huge. *Teefa In Trouble*, starring Ali Zafar and Maya Ali, isn't like any Pakistani movies that have come before. Sure, the film is a musical romantic comedy featuring an all-Pakistani cast and crew, but that's where the similarities end. With witty dialogues, an engaging story, superb acting, stylish directing and awe inspiring cinematography, *Teefa In Trouble* is easily the biggest and best action flick audiences have seen from our film industry so far.

The movie is centered on Teefa a good hearted Lahori goon who is tasked by his boss Butt Sahab (Mehmood Aslam) with kidnapping the daughter of his friend-turned-enemy Bonzo (Javaid Sheikh). Maya Ali plays the daughter, Anya who Butt Sahab wants to bring to Pakistan in order to marry her off to his son Billu (Marhoom Ahmad Bilal). What follows is a fairly predictable plot in which Teefa travels to Poland to kidnap Anya but falls in love with her as he gets to know her. He is assisted in his efforts by the ever reliable Faisal Qureshi playing Teefa's girl crazy sidekick, Tony.

Credit is due to cinematographer Zain Haleem for making the most of both Lahore and Warsaw and because of him, every scene and frame in *Teefa in Trouble* is beautifully shot. The film's overall production value supersedes all Pakistani films before it and that's very clear throughout the film. *Teefa In Trouble's* script is also excellent and the witty dialogues are sure to have the crowds in fits. The film is very engaging and fast paced from the get-go and because of its score and soundtrack, the first half of the movie goes by in the blink of an eye. It's the sluggish second act of the



film that squanders what could have been a master class in how to make a really good desi action film. While the first half of *Teefa In Trouble* skillfully balances introducing the characters and getting the story going, the second half is torn with wanting to appropriately end the movie and add a lot of action. Don't get me wrong, the action in *Teefa In Trouble* is the kind Pakistani audiences have not yet seen in their own films, so it's a pleasure to be able to see the film execute them so deftly on screen. At the same time though, the car chases and fight scenes in the second half do get weary as the film carries on. Had the film been forty minutes shorter or so, the movie would have been pretty close to being perfect.

*Teefa In Trouble's* supporting cast is also quite terrific. Mehmood Aslam and Javaid Sheikh prove their mettle very early on in the film when the two start insulting each other over Skype, in a scene that showcases just how brilliant the two actors are. Asma Abbas, Sofia Khan, Marhoom Ahmad Bilal, Simi Rahael, Faisal Qureshi and Nayyar Ejaz also turn in fine performances. Maya Ali's Pakistani film debut showcases why she has become so popular on TV.

And then there's Ali Zafar. The singer turned actor has been under fire for Meesha Shafi's harassment claims and while I'll let you draw your own conclusions about that, I will say that Ali Zafar is simply phenomenal in this film. It's not tough to see that Zafar has poured his heart and soul into this project. Not only is he producing it and acting in it, he has also penned the songs and the dialogues of the film, sung them himself and done all the stunts by himself. From the start to the end, *Teefa in Trouble* is anchored by Zafar's captivating performance.

Though the film is not without its issues, *Teefa In Trouble* is an entertaining film that deserves to be seen on the big screen. Prepare yourself for some solid action, hilarious comedy, catchy music and a post credits scene you wouldn't want to miss.





**S**haad Ali's *Soorma* may not be the most eagerly awaited biopic this year — that credit belongs to the Sanjay Dutt biopic *Sanju* — but the film based on the life of Indian hockey star Sandeep Singh is definitely one to watch. Like *Sanju*, this biopic is no ordinary one, in the sense that the life of both Dutt and Singh wasn't just your average rags to riches story. The film features Punjabi film actor and singer Diljit Dosanjh turn into the young hockey player, and it's clear, from the very beginning, that this is the role of a lifetime for Dosanjh. He plays the athlete with sensibility, making him a brazen mischievous, vulnerable and strong character. Indeed, his performance is the strong suit of an otherwise average film.

*Soorma* handles the life of Sandeep Singh deftly. The film details his early interest in hockey and how it dissipated due to an abusive sports teacher, before resurging after he falls for a women's hockey team player Harpeet (Taapse Pannu) who encourages him to return to the turf. Honing his natural skills, he becomes the gifted athlete that he was destined to be, helping India's national team become better than ever. That is, until tragedy befalls him, and he is paralyzed from the waist down when a police officer accidentally shoots him. Just when Sandeep Singh has prepared himself for a life away from a sport which he loves, his brother Bikramjeet (Angad Bedi, a standout in this film) helps Sandeep slowly regain his strength and get back on the field.

The first half of the film where we watch Sandeep grow into his own and become a great hockey player is pretty great. But after his freak accident the film isn't very insightful in exploring the internal struggle of the player and chooses to skim through all that in a way that damages the film, when in fact, it could have connected the viewers to the Sandeep. It's also nice to see a hero who isn't really heroic as much as he is ordinary. Sandeep is depicted as being more naive and sensitive than macho or tough, and this not only separates him from the kind of heroes we usually see in Bollywood

films, it also helps us relate and empathize more with him.

Other actors put in some good work too, Taapse Pannu doesn't have the best material but she's able to be charming and likeable. She even seems natural in the scenes, in which she plays hockey, which makes her role all the more effective. But call it lack of chemistry or just bad writing, their relationship seems unnatural and even a bit awkward. That said, the film does manage to end their story in a memorable way, which is something to be excited about. Danish Hussain and Satish Kaushik put in fine performances too, but it's Vijay Raaz, the coach of the team, who manages to outshine other supporting characters with good acting and some great lines.

The film is weak in other areas. After a solid first half, the film stumbles and never seems to find its footing. The movie falters in developing Sandeep Singh's motivations in the second half, particularly his love for hockey. After all, it is established very early on that his joining the men's national hockey team, has more to do with him earning the approval of his girlfriend and his girlfriend's brother, than with the actual sport itself. So *Soorma* doesn't allow us to understand exactly why the sport means so much to him all of a sudden. Despite the real life Sandeep Singh and his brother managing the choreography of the hockey matches, the movie can't seem to make them look interesting. The match scenes are badly shot and aren't the best feature of the film which is a shame. The soundtrack of the film is serviceable but not memorable.

*Soorma* may not be the best biopic you'll see this year, but it is certainly the more honest of the two. Aside from weak execution in its latter half, the film is certainly good enough to be categorized among the best Bollywood films of the year so far and is worthy of a watch.





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