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Regional Political Parties: Challenge to Political Stability in Pakistan

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## Regional Political Parties

National integration have been a challenge to Pakistan, a federation. Regional political parties have played a critical role to add up to the misery of situation. The regional parties have their vested interests and they do everything to achieve those interests. The leadership is mostly low profile and parochial. Since it is not possible for them to achieve some prominent place in the national politics, they appeal to the regional sentiments of the masses and aggravate the provincial and ethnic issues to stay in news headlines. They contest elections on basis of regional issues, and traumatized later to make people feel scared about the threats to the community's interests and even to its survival. They win a few seats in elections and start blackmailing the government on the matters of national interests. Some of them have no recognition among the masses but they continue to haunt the process of national integration. No doubt the regional discrepancies and deprivations remained there and the allocation of scarce resources had been the source of conflict in Pakistan. The absence of representative institutions and the prolonged periods of military rule further complicated these issues but the strong articulated political parties could have consolidated the feelings of oneness among the people of Pakistan. Nonetheless the absence of organized political parties established on democratic principles and the negative role of regional parties made the national integration process a challenge for the political stability and to the existence of polity. This paper studies the challenges to the political system of Pakistan due to the presence of regional political parties.

## INTRODUCTION

In post-colonial era, the political instability of developing countries has been problematic which poses a serious challenge not only to the political system of these countries but also disrupts the economic development. This article studies the problem of political stability in the context of the role the regional political parties have been playing in Pakistan. It also highlights that the organized national political parties must play their role in keeping society integrated and in maintaining legitimacy to the government otherwise regional parties would keep on maintaining their influence successfully and prove to be the pressure groups in for the major parties. First section deals with the background of the party politics in the colonial period. Second section deals with the party system and its importance in a federation. Third section describing the national and regional parties discusses as to how regional parties, having a few seats in the parliament enter into alliance politics and exploit main stream political parties threatening to withdraw their support if the government would not full fill their demands. This has become a serious blow to the survival and stability of the government. Nonetheless these are vitally important elements for attaining the goals of national integration and nation building.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

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Man is a social animal as expounded by Aristotle. It has natural instinct to be organized in associations. These associations cover different aspects of human life like social, economic and political domains. A political party is an organised body of people assembled for certain common principles to achieve some goals within the political system of a country. It carries the ideology and the demands of the society. It provides a link between the people and the elected representative institutions. The political parties are considered to be the pre-requisite for making and running the representative governments. Strong political parties are inevitable for open, competitive and representative politics especially in emerging democracies.<sup>1</sup> They influence the political life at the grass root level.<sup>2</sup> In sociological institutional theory “the penetration of the state by some non-state actors provides political stability.”<sup>3</sup> These non-state political institutions are the political parties. They create awareness among the masses and mobilize them on national issues. The political party system not only provides options to choose better representatives on the basis of their proposed programmes (Party Manifesto) but it also fills the gap between regional and national interests, by interest articulation at both levels. In fact a political party established on national level performs the function of national integration in a heterogeneous society, if it works properly. But for that purpose it has to establish itself at the grassroots level in larger areas of the country.

Counter to national political parties there are some political parties which do not enjoy influence at the national level. Their area of influence and activities are confined to particular region or the provinces. Such parties are established to represent the aspirations of a particular region.<sup>4</sup> To earn the support of the local masses such parties choose to stand for regional and provincial issues which has been the source of resentment and deprivation in that region. These parties if work positively may collaborate with mainstream parties to accommodate to of their regional interests without hindering to achieve national goals. Such regional parties claim themselves as “to be regional parties with a national outlook.”<sup>5</sup> It is advocated by the regional politicians that the “future belongs to provincial parties which championed the hopes and aspirations of the people of their respective regions.”<sup>6</sup>

However most of the time regional parties work for parochial, ethnic and economic interests of a particular region even at the cost of national interests and aggravate such issues to the extent that cause disruption in the political system and challenging the political stability of the country.

## BACKGROUND

Before independence in 1947, the areas which were later included in Pakistan were having almost all the political parties with regional interest, except those which had established their branches in these areas like Muslim League and All India National Congress. Some of these parties were non-communal but since these areas were Muslim majority areas therefore most of them were Muslim political parties.<sup>7</sup>

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Three political parties were working in Punjab, and one each in NWFP, Balochistan and Sindh.<sup>8</sup> These regional political parties played an important role in struggle for independence, though all of them were not in favour of the division of India into two states, India and Pakistan, on communal basis.

### CAUSES OF DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES

#### **Failure of Muslim League**

In post-independence period Muslim League emerged as the creator of Pakistan and regional parties were side-lined due to two reasons: one they were discredited due to their opposition to the demand for Pakistan and other that most of their prominent leaders had joined Muslim League at the time of independence. It had roots among the masses and like other native parties in colonies<sup>9</sup> it emerged outside the parliament and later became a part of elected institutions. Indian National Congress (INC) retained its stronghold over political system of India till 1969, maintaining single party dominating system<sup>10</sup> but Muslim League could not retain its unity and within first three years of independence it split into many political parties mostly around personalities.<sup>11</sup> The dominance of executive power over legislature and administration over politics left the Muslim League as an effete political force unable to control the provincial branches of the party and to respond to the political aspires of the masses.<sup>12</sup> This gap led to reactivation of the regional parties.

#### **Provincial Autonomy and Constitution Making**

All the provinces of Pakistan were asking for more provincial autonomy.<sup>13</sup> The issue of provincial autonomy remained one of the main hurdles in the constitution making process in Pakistan. The dominant forces like military and bureaucracy were in favour of a strong centre because at provincial level it was difficult for them to operate at provincial level. They were supported by the non-representative bureaucrats turned politicians<sup>14</sup> who had common interests. The Mahajir politicians were also in favour of ideological fervour rather than regional sentiments since they were having no roots in the present land of Pakistan. Moreover the agony of migration added to anti-Indian sentiments never to be forgotten. Therefore they were in favour of a strong military against India and to have a strong centre to exercise absolute powers for the security and prosperity of Pakistan. But a bid for strong centre was directly in conflict to the demand of more provincial autonomy. It intensified the ethnic and regional sentiments not only in smaller provinces but also in the largest province of Pakistan.<sup>15</sup> Struggle for power among the provinces and ethnic groups led to the creation of new regional parties with vested interests.

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The integration of provinces and states of West Pakistan and establishment of one unit to create a parity between the two wings of Pakistan in 1954 through an executive order led to further discontentment in smaller provinces of Pakistan. Prime Minister Mohammad Ali Bogra asserted that this action would promote national integration, eliminate provincialism, reduce administrative expenditures and facilitate the task of constitution making. So much so he argued that a unitary form of government was the best for Pakistan but given the distance of 1000 miles between the two wings of Pakistan it could not be adopted. He said “As it [was] not possible to unify the whole of Pakistan we should at least unify the whole of West Pakistan.”<sup>16</sup> It shows that the head of the government was not receptive to the demand of more provincial autonomy. This action was taken against the demand of provincial autonomy. The result was regional struggle for the repeal of ‘One Unit.’

The federal governments’ efforts to control the provincial governments, dismissing and appointing handpicked chief ministers and undue interference in working of provincial legislatures created resentment in the provinces.<sup>17</sup> Since the federal government was dominated by Mahajir and Punjabis therefore all the provinces, other than Punjab were alienated from the central government. In India the same policies of Mrs. Indra Gandhi led to the emergence of non-Congress parties in Union and regional parties in states. The political leaders, who founded regional parties later, claimed that the national parties ignored regional aspirations. Therefore there was a requirement of regional parties to take care of regional aspirations.<sup>18</sup>

### **Intolerance for Opposition**

From the very beginning politics became a domain of the ruling party. Liaqat Ali Khan, the first Prime Minister of Pakistan assumed the headship of Muslim League along with the office of the Prime Minister was apparently an effort of ‘reinvigorating’ the Muslim League but later it converted the ruling political party as a ‘handmaiden of the government.’<sup>19</sup> The attack on Unionists in Punjab and harsh language against the opponents like H. S. Suhaverdi and Abdul Hamid Bhashani further intensified the trends of intolerance in Pakistani political culture. The introduction of PRODA in 1949<sup>20</sup> was another step towards authoritarianism by the civilian government of Pakistan.<sup>21</sup> This law showed distrust towards politicians and was also misused by regional political factions against each other.

The concentration of power in Muslim League’s government without any fresh mandate from the people of Pakistan and distrust towards politicians from East and West wings of Pakistan led to intensive grouping of Bengalis and non-Bengalis within Muslim League and Government. This grouping led to the disintegration of Muslim League and strengthening of regional political parties in Pakistan. As a result the Muslim League was defeated in provincial elections of 1954, by the United Front, a coalition of regional

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parties in East Pakistan. Intolerance to criticism, establishment of personal rule and lust for power led to the creation of new political parties, most of which were hardly known at country level.

### **Military Rule and Ban on Political Parties**

Prolonged military rule further increased the discontentment of the provinces. All the military dictators banned political parties in the country immediately after the imposition of martial law. It disrupted the process of the growth of political parties.<sup>22</sup> Military dictators restored political parties but under strict condition. The legal cover or constitutional engineering were the ultimate resort.<sup>23</sup> They also started the process of accountability against the politicians keeping them outside the domain of politics. General Ayub Khan, the first military dictator, was more furious against the politicians. He introduced (ABDO).<sup>24</sup> Such type of behaviour was adopted to check the anti-martial law sentiments among the politicians and the result was the creation of a class with vested interests that helped to civilianize the face of military regime in the form of a King's Party<sup>25</sup> on one hand and the strengthening of anti-establishment sentiments on the other. General Zia postponed the elections twice to complete the process of accountability of the politicians and hanged the elected prime minister through a quasi-judicial trial. He took all the measures to block anti-martial law political parties generally and Pakistan People's Party particularly using all the powers of the state.

He conducted party-less elections which relegated fragile national politics from provincial to local level fragmenting the society into clans and baradris.<sup>26</sup> General Musharraf also played the religious, ethnic and provincial differences to gather the support of politicians against his opponent Mian Nawaz Sharif, whom he dismissed from the office of the prime minister. He also established National Accountability Bureau for the persecution of politicians and their supporting bureaucrats.<sup>27</sup> Ruining national politics at such a level made it discreditable and opened the avenues for regional politicians. Moreover the rival groups were encouraged by the military government creating blatant factionalism among political leaders of a region to counter balance each other and let military government safe sailing.<sup>28</sup>

### **Elite Culture and Regional Leadership**

British colonial rulers established their control in Northern India through the elites and feudal. Since most of the time in the political history of Pakistan there were military governments. Therefore they preferred to operate through the local elites following the institutional legacy of the colonial rulers. But

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civilian interludes were also marked with the dominant civil and military bureaucracies. They established links with the local elites to get civilian support and appease the masses. These regional elites were among those which were the beneficiaries of the military-bureaucratic rule. Their vested interests were served by the military regimes and they extended their support in return. But the real issues of the region remained unaddressed which caused resentment in the area in the form of either split in regional parties or creation of new regional parties with anti-government and in-turn anti-Pakistan sentiments. The regional politicians, not capable of entering into national politics, availed the opportunity to take up these issues and aggravated them, sometimes against the national interests.

## **POLITICAL SYSTEM OF PAKISTAN**

Pakistan is a federation of four provinces<sup>29</sup> having a parliamentary system of government with a bicameral parliament. Senate, the upper house represents the provinces and is elected by the provincial assemblies through proportionate representation. While the National Assembly, the lower house of the parliament, is elected directly by the electorate of Pakistan on the basis of population. The president of Pakistan is elected for a period of five years through an electoral college consisted of the national and provincial assemblies of Pakistan. The tenure of National and Provincial assemblies is 5 years while the Senate is a permanent body where every member is elected for 6 years and one third retire after every 3 years.<sup>30</sup>

All the federating units and the federal government derive their authority from the constitution, which provides separate lists of areas for the central government and the provinces. The Eighteenth Constitutional Amendment abolished the concurrent list from the constitution giving residuary powers to the provinces, guaranteeing more provincial autonomy to the provinces.<sup>31</sup>

The same pattern is followed at the provincial level.<sup>32</sup> There is a list of areas which fall under the jurisdiction of the provinces; provincial legislature can make laws on the provincial matters. The head of each province is the Governor appointed by the President of Pakistan. Provincial Assembly of each province is elected by the people of that province on the basis of population. Majority party in the Provincial Assembly makes the government. The Provincial Assemblies of all the provinces choose the member of the Senate of Pakistan.<sup>33</sup> Provincial Assemblies also act as the electoral college for the elections of the president of Pakistan. Mostly the regional parties make government in the provinces.

## **PARTY SYSTEM IN PAKISTAN**

From the onset of independence Pakistan has a multi-party system. The cultural diversity, pluralism and ideology shaped this multi-party system in Pakistan.<sup>34</sup> There are 178 political parties

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registered with the Election Commission of Pakistan.<sup>35</sup> The democracy has worked in Pakistan in short interludes between the longer periods of military rule. Therefore natural growth of political parties has suffered. When the electoral democracy was restored in 1988, no political party was in a position to make government alone. The result was fragile coalition governments. The whole political system remained wadding under the 58 (2B),<sup>36</sup> but a positive development was that a direct competition of two parties; Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) (PML (N)) was established leading to what was just short of two party system in Pakistan. Though both political parties could not secure absolute majorities but were able to make government at the federal level in collaboration with the regional and small parties.

## **NATIONAL PARTIES AND REGIONAL PARTIES**

Although there is no definition of national parties and regional parties in the constitution or the election laws of Pakistan but practically a clear distinction exists between these two types.<sup>37</sup> Those political parties which exercise influence all over the country are called national political parties. It does not mean that a national party would enjoy equal footings in all the provinces; it may vary from province to province.<sup>38</sup> Contrary to the common perception, the regional political parties are neither weak nor short lived. Some of these parties are very strong in their region and they enjoy overriding status in their area of influence and national parties have to rely on their support in electoral process and later in government formation. MQM is the most recent example in urban areas of Sindh. Awami League had this status in later half of 1960s in East Pakistan.

## **MAJOR NATIONAL PARTIES**

In Pakistan very few political parties enjoy the status of national political party. Most of the political parties are confined to one or two provinces. In 1990s although there was a fragile democracy in a post-withdrawal period but a positive development was the emergence of a new pattern of party politics. The alliance politics was a known phenomenon especially in the presence of a multi-party system. The fragile majorities in the elections of 1988, 1990 and 1993 compelled political parties to make alliances to secure required majorities to form government. Both in case of electoral and post-electoral alliances one national party was at the centre for which people voted. This pattern established a just short of two party system in which the PPP and PML(N) were at direct contest with each other.

Pakistan People's Party (PPP)



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One of the major national political parties is Pakistan People's Party (PPP). It was established in 1967 by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. The PPP won all the seats in elections of 1970 in West Pakistan. But it emerged as a regional party in joint Pakistan since it won from West Pakistan only and did not contest any seat from East Pakistan. It secured 85 seats out of 138 total seats reserved for West Pakistan, mostly from Punjab and Sindh.<sup>39</sup> After secession of East Pakistan it emerged as a majority party in the new Pakistan.<sup>40</sup> Its power base is rural Sindh and the Punjab. Initially it recruited socialist and enthusiast intelligentsia, youth, lawyers, doctors, teachers and university professors, blue collar workers, small businessmen and peasants and won the elections of 1970. Since the manifesto was prepared in haste, there was no solution to the rising expectations of different constituencies with conflicting interests. Therefore most of them were alienated from the PPP. Instead of addressing the grievances of its supporting constituencies Z. A. Bhutto, the PPP's chairman, turned back to the traditional land owning class in the elections of 1977. Its already narrow power base in Khyber Pakhtun Khwa (KPK) and Balochistan was further squeezed due to miss-handling of Baloch issues, dismissal of NAP-JUI coalition government and army action in Balochistan. It reduced PPP to the rural Sindh and Punjab. Regional parties in Balochistan and KPK headed their way against PPP.

The PPP remained in power from 1971 to 1977 when General Zia-ul-Haq imposed martial law in Pakistan. He instituted a judicial trial and hanged elected Prime Minister Z. A. Bhutto.<sup>41</sup> He exiled the family of deceased Prime Minister and harassed all other leaders of the party in an unsuccessful bid to eliminate it forever. Later he banned all the political parties including the PPP. The PPP was an important component of the Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD), which was started by eleven parties to pressurize General Zia to restore democratic order in the country. The PPP quitted out just before the elections of 1988. It was a political mistake because MRD was the strength of the PPP. The PPP did this to avoid commitments it had to full fill under the charter of MRD, after taking over government.

When the military allowed the general election in the post-Zia-ul-Haq period, PPP won the elections securing a fragile majority and was offered to make the government.<sup>42</sup> Its government was twice dismissed in 1990 and in 1996. It served as an opposition party from 1990-1993 and 1997-1999. It also emerged victorious in the elections of 2008 after the murder of its Chairperson Benazir Bhutto.<sup>43</sup> Now it is a ruling party with its coalition partners, Awami National Party (ANP), Muthhida Quami Movement (MQM) and Jamiat-e-Ulama-i-Islam Fazl-ur-Rahman group (JUI- F).

The PPP emerged as a left to the centre political party with a socialist leaning on economy. It rose to power within 4 years of its creation due to the charisma of its founder Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. After assuming power Bhutto could not get rid of his feudal mentality. Instead of strengthening political party

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he concentrated his persona. This style of politics led to a despotic rule in the name of an elected democracy. After his execution in 1979, the PPP became a dynastical party and leadership was transferred to Mrs. Nusrat Bhutto, his wife and Ms. Benazir, his eldest daughter. Benazir served as an elected Prime Minister for two terms in 1990s. She was elected lifetime chairperson of PPP. Family fudges led to misunderstandings between mother and daughter allegedly due to the husband of Benazir. After the death of Benazir, there was a hope that now the family monopoly would be ended and leadership would be transferred to the senior most leader of the PPP, Makhdoom Amin Fahim hailing from a Pir family of Sindh.<sup>44</sup> But all the hopes were dashed when party council agreed to accept the son of deceased chairperson as a chairman. Since he was a university student therefore Asif Ali Zardari,<sup>45</sup> her husband, was appointed as co-chairperson to handle the affairs of the party. Despite a long struggle for restoration of democracy in Pakistan PPP could not exercise democracy within and its chairpersonship has never been given to the non-Bhutto candidate.<sup>46</sup>

### Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz)

The founding political party of Pakistan which led the struggle for independence was All India Muslim League established in 1906. After the creation of Pakistan it was renamed as Pakistan Muslim League (PML). After the early death of founding founder the ruling Muslim League suffered from internal factionalism which later resulted into intra-party conflicts leading to its division. The central leadership was also divided into groups and was unable to perform its earlier function of moderating and neutralising factional splits in the parliament and the provinces. Following the first martial law of Ayub Khan in 1958, it was banned like all the political parties. This party was used by all the dictators as a Kings Party when they switched their military rule to a civilian one. Those politicians who stood with the dictators restored their party with the name of the PML (Convention). It was a Kings Party. The others who did not support military named their party as the PML (Council). In the general elections of 1970 the PML could not register its presence due to split into different factions mostly around personalities. In general elections of 1977 PML contested as a part of electoral alliance of nine political parties called Pakistan National Alliance (PNA), which was instrumental in starting mass movement against Bhutto that resulted in another martial law in 1977.<sup>47</sup>

The Muslim League was again restored in the National Assembly elected through party-less elections of 1985 under the leadership of then Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo. In 1988 its leadership was in the hands of Mian Nawaz Sharif and it was known as the PML (N). It contested elections in an alliance Islamic Jamhuri Itihad (IJI)<sup>48</sup> coined by ISI<sup>49</sup> as a counter balance to the PPP.<sup>50</sup> But the IJI could secure only 55 to 92 seats of the PPP in the House of 207. The other largest group was

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that of independent ones, 27 in total. In 1990 the election results were reversed. The IJI won 92 seats and PPP's electoral alliance Pakistan Democratic Alliance (PDA) won 45 seats. Despite representing the interests of establishment the IJI government could not survive more than two years. The IJI government was once again replaced by its opponent PPP through the elections of 1993. This time both parties contested the elections without entering into an alliance. The margin of success was low; the PPP secured 86 seats to 73 seats of PML (N). The key to national power remained Punjab, the largest province, in all the elections of post-Zia period. The PML (N) had constituencies among middle class, small businesses, industrialists and workers where the PPP demonstrated strength in more feudal southern Punjab.<sup>51</sup> Politics of confrontation and regionalism continued during the second term of the PPP. The mass corruption, lack of accommodation, mismanagement of issues and confrontation with judiciary led to dismissal of the PPP government again. The PML (N) replaced it with a landslide victory, the largest since the elections of 1988.<sup>52</sup> Being a Punjab based party the PML (N) made striking inroads in Sindh, the traditional heartland of the PPP. The insecurity, personalization of rule, efforts to gather all powers in the office of the Prime Minister, Kargil issue and mismanaged affairs with Gen. Musharraf, the Army Chief led to the dismissal of the PML government and imposition of martial law for the fourth times in Pakistan. With the exile of Nawaz and his family and emergence of new PML (Quaid-i-Azam)<sup>53</sup> pushed the PML (N) into periphery of politics following the elections of 2002 under military dictator Gen. Musharraf as the President of Pakistan. Nawaz, the head of PML (N) was allowed to come back in Pakistan in 2007. The PML (N) and PPP signed a Charter of democracy to launch a joint struggle against military dictator. Following the victory of PPP in the elections of 2008, PML (N) first allied with government but later played a role of friendly opposition for more than two years. But greater disagreement led to the reactivation of hostility between the two parties again. Although the temperature is high on both sides against each other, but it is much lower than the level of that prevailed in 1990s.

Like the PPP, the PML (N) from the very beginning of its rule has been a party of Sharif Family. The presence of Mian Sharif, father of Nawaz, his brother Shahbaz Sharif and now their sons Hassan Nawaz and Hamza Shahbaz and daughter Maryam Nawaz and son-in-law Capt. (R) Safder in leadership position confirm that it is too a heridity dynasty.

### **Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-i-Azam)**

This is a faction of PML coined together by General Pervaiz Musharraf before the elections of 2002,<sup>54</sup> when the PML (N) was under clouds. Nawaz and his family was facing trial under terrorist act.<sup>55</sup> Therefore those who were rivals of Nawaz within PML (N) and those who were scared of persecution by military government parted their ways from the PML (N). When Musharraf in 2000-01 called for

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restoration of the PML as a king's party they joined it attending the call of time.<sup>56</sup> In 2004 when Gen. Musharraf signalled the change of Prime Minister Mir Zafer-ullah Khan Jamalli's Government, further five factions of the PML merged in the PML (Q) under the leadership of Chaudhry Shujat Hussain. The PML (Q) is an important political party in the parliament with its presence in all the provincial assemblies but it has lost its political standings after Gen. Pervaiz Musharraf and restoration of democracy in Pakistan. Now they are the coalition partners of PPP government. Some wise politicians are working for reunion of the PML (N) and PML (Q), so that the PML may emerge as a strong party.<sup>57</sup> There is another faction of the PML in the National Assembly of Pakistan with only one insignificant seat, i. e. PML (Functional).

### **POLITICS OF ALLIANCES AND REGIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES**

In addition to the mainstream national political parties strong regional-based parties are there in the smaller provinces. This phenomenon existed since independence and continued to-date. It is the recognition of the ethnic and regional diversity which these political parties represent.<sup>58</sup> The alliance politics which became a feature in the period of 1988-99 and later restored in 2008, was good to accommodate regional politics with the mainstream national political parties to ensure their representation at national level to avoid sense of deprivation and alienation among different ethnic and regional groups. Therefore both the IJI and PDF have, one major political party, the PML (N) and the PPP respectively accommodated a few smaller regional parties as their allies. In coalition government formation the same principle was followed. However the regional parties exploited this opportunity and instead of playing a positive role in national government, integrating their regional aspirations in mainstream politics and adjust their demands with the national goals, continued their chorus of deprivation and exploitation by the central government and threatening the break up from the coalition if their demands would not be fulfilled. Such type of politics caused instability in the political system. Even both mainstream political parties having power bases in different provinces used different slogans in different regions to appeal to the ethnic and provincial sentiments of the voters. This type of appeal intensified already present ethnic problems in different region. This study is confined to the regional political parties which are there in the parliament and it focuses on the role they play being the member of the parliament or the government.

### **POLITICAL PARTIES IN PARLIAMENT**

The election results of 2008 shows that in addition to PPP, PML (N) and PML (Q) there are three regional parties in the National Assembly, i.e., MQM, ANP and BNP (A). Rest of the parties claiming

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one or two seats were the personality based factions or break away of national parties. They included Pakistan People's Party (Sherpao) and National People's Party (NPP), disintegrated from PPP. PML (Functional) was a faction of PML and it could secure five seats.<sup>59</sup>

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, 2008	
Party	Seats
Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians, (PPPP)	126 (ruling party)
Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) PML (N)	91 (Previously part of coalition government)
Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-i-Azam) PML (Q)	50
Muttahida Quami Movement, (MQM)	25
Awami National Party (ANP)	13
Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal(MMA)	8
Pakistan Muslim League (Functional)	5
Pakistan People's Party (Sherpao)	1
National People's Party (NPP)	1
Balochistan National Party (Awami) BNP (A)	1
Independents	20

Source: Election Commission of Pakistan.<sup>60</sup>

### **Muttahida Quami Movement (MQM)**

The MQM is the most organised ethnic political party which has its roots in middle and lower middle class of those communities migrated from central provinces of India in the years following independence (commonly called Mahajir) and settled in urban centres of Sindh. They were having different languages and culture but mostly Urdu speaking. This party has complete hold in urban Sindh especially Karachi and Hyderabad. They exhibited astonishing successes in the elections of 1988 and

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1990 by securing five per cent of national vote which was translated into 13 seats in National Assembly. It was also successful in securing 28 seats in Sindh Provincial Assembly. The MQM boycotted the elections of 1993. It again secured 12 seats in the elections of 1997 claiming a share of slightly fewer than five per cent of national votes.<sup>61</sup> These results provided the MQM a leverage to bargain with every government on its own agenda.

The MQM is not a real separatist movement but it is an ethno-linguistic phenomenon.<sup>62</sup> Mahajir when migrated from India were initially socio-economically more advanced than the host society in Sindh. Since opportunities were available due to migration of the educated Hindu community to India, virtually all from urban Sindh, they enjoyed privileged position and became key actors in cities especially Karachi, the national capital at that time. First they felt threatened when the Sindh University and Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education declared that the Sindhi would be compulsory for all in Sindh.<sup>63</sup> Their political action was a reaction to their declining influence after the national capital was shifted from Karachi to Islamabad. The reason was the emergence of local groups, which assumed predominant power especially Punjabis and Pakhtun in the new capital. Later in 1980s the socio-economic changes in cities like Karachi and Hyderabad due to Pakhtun dominance in economy further reduced the influence of the Mahajir community leading to riots and escalating violence.<sup>64</sup> This became a serious intimidation to not only national security and political stability of Pakistan but also to its economy.

Altaf Hussain, a student of Karachi University, founded All Pakistan Mahajir Students' Organisation (APMSO) in response to the perceived threat to the Mahajir community in terms of university admissions and government jobs. The allocation of jobs in Sindh on the basis of urban and rural quota and adopting Sindhi medium of instruction were the reasons for this threat perception.<sup>65</sup> Later he established MQM in 1984 by combining all cadres of APMSO.<sup>66</sup> Ethnicity augmented due to party-less elections conducted by Gen. Zia in 1985. MQM registered its presence through landslide victories in local Government Elections, in Karachi and Hyderabad. From the very beginning MQM established a hold over the Mahajir community of urban Sindh by articulating their demands to end discrimination in a highly organised way. The party took the task of public welfare like free bazaars, free dispensaries and beautification of cities. At the same time it acquired the reputation of being involved in violence, intimidation of opponents and other terrorist acts.<sup>67</sup> Despite all allegations the MQM, undoubtedly continued to exist as the most powerful political force in urban Sindh. MQM re-named itself as the Muthhida Quami Movement claiming itself the only force to bail out all deprived factions of Pakistan in the 1990s. It was an effort to extend its area of influence to the other areas of the country. But progress on

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this front was checked due to internal rifts within the party which resulted in the emergence of a faction MQM –Haqiqi.<sup>68</sup> It was opposed to Altaf Hussain.

The MQM joined the PPP government in 1988 following an accord signed with Benazir which was declared as a “charter of peace, love and rights by both sides.” The PPP and MQM leadership declared that it was an effort to unite the rural and urban population of Sindh.<sup>69</sup> It was a political expediency for Benazir to make a coalition government and get the MQM’s support in the province. At the same time the accord was very ambitious and in the wake of colliding interests of the two communities it was not possible for Benazir to implement this accord, especially the demand for repatriation of 250,000 Pakistanis living in camps in Bangladesh.<sup>70</sup> The hawks within PPP led by Makhdom of Hala were highly critical to this accord. The MQM was also aware of this fact. It appears that they were taking time to get their activist released by the authorities.

Mass killing and violence in Karachi threatened the cordiality between the government and MQM. In the following months three ministers of MQM in provincial government resigned.<sup>71</sup> The situation in Karachi was slipping out of hands while the Prime minister declared it as a mini-insurgency. Instead of addressing the real issue she attributed it as a legacy of dictator which needs some time to recover.<sup>72</sup> Altaf Hussain’s detention for three hours on Hyderabad airport during his visit to the city was taken as a humiliation of the MQM leadership. The MQM joined opposition the IJI in criticising government but at the same time declared resignation of the MQM ministers not as a sign of termination of Karachi Accord.<sup>73</sup> Government also reversed its decision to reduce the number of seats from urban quota in Dawood Engineering College but the MQM observed 26 May as a Black Day. It was followed by a wave of violence in Karachi, cross firing between the APMSO and PSF, taking several lives and created the environment of terror in Karachi. In order to pressurise government Altaf Hussain appealed to the President of Pakistan, Ghulam Ishaq Khan to intervene.<sup>74</sup> This move put a question mark on the survival of coalition government.

Keeping the fragile majority of the PPP government the MQM decided defection from the government. The day after the opposition tabled the no confidence move in the National Assembly. Altaf Hussain appeared in a press conference with the IJI president Muhammad Nawaz and announced the break up with the PPP government. He concluded a 17 point new accord with IJI mainly highlighting the repatriation of Biharis. The loss of 14 MQM members was a great threat to the existence of the PPP government. Although the PPP government won the day with 12 votes but democratic process was damaged through this move.<sup>75</sup> The MQM threatened the existence of central government and derailed political process just to blackmail government for their regional agenda and terminated a few months old

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agreement without negotiating the other partner. The political stability was further threatened when the MQM remained at forefront in the anti-PPP movement. The show of power in the form of grand rally at the Quaid-i-Azam Mausoleum was virtually the largest one in the political history of Pakistan. It followed a grave wave of violence in claiming 57 innocent lives who became victim of cross fire between the police and unknown terrorist. MQM's show of power continued and death toll was very high. Ghulam Ishaq Khan, the President summoned Aitizaz Ahsen, the Minister for Interior to explain the deteriorating law and order situation in Karachi.<sup>76</sup> It adversely affected already fragile economy and business because Karachi was the only port and the economic hub of Pakistan.

The rising violence in all urban centres of Sindh had serious repercussion for Sindh government. It led to the change of Chief Minister Sindh from Qaim Ali Shah to Aftab Shaban Mirani. The efforts of all law enforcement agencies and rangers were dashed. The panic of government was at peak when in Hyderabad, city police opened fire in a search operation for illegal weapons, killing 40 people.<sup>77</sup> The threat to the survival to the PPP central government was further intensified because an Urdu speaking powerful Chief of Army Staff was there in office.<sup>78</sup> Nonetheless this violence by MQM and government's inability to deal with it led to the dismissal of Benazir government.

The MQM continued to be a part of coalition government with the IJI. Both government and MQM became at odd when army extended its action against dacoits both in rural Sindh and urban Sindh in order to create a better situation of law and order. Nawaz, the Prime Minister was not willing to bring this army action to urban Sindh but army command was independent in its decision. The MQM was caught in surprise when the army recovered weapons and its torture cells. In order to neutralise the power of MQM, the army also supported the internal rifts of the organisation and sponsored the creation of a new faction named MQM (H). MQM protested to the federal government but the Prime Minister was helpless before army command. Altaf Hussain resorted to self exile and continued to command its party organisation through satellite phone from his home in north London.<sup>79</sup> MQM boycotted the elections of 1993 as a protest but again won 12 National Assembly seats and became the coalition partner of the Nawaz government.

The MQM's militancy remained a major source of conflict in urban areas of Sindh. Its popularity at the grass root level is still intact as it is taken as a guardian of the interests of the Mahajir community. Almost all its leadership has a criminal record and hundreds of activists are wanted by the court of law. Therefore MQM cannot afford to stay out of power. At the same time no government can ignore its participation due to its control over Karachi, the economic hub of the country and other urban areas of Sindh.



### **The Awami National Party (ANP)**

This party is a regional party having appeal to Pakhtun-majority areas. Its power base is Khyber Pakhtun Khwa but with its few seats it remained a coalition partner in National Governments in 1990s and then after the restoration of democracy in 2008. Although at provincial level it remained in power many times. It is also a family dynasty and Khan Abdul Ghafar Khan, commonly known as Bacha Khan then, Wali, his son and now Asfandar Yar Wali, his grandson is its chairmen. Nasim Wali also played an active role in party politics when her husband Wali was arrested in 1975, under Bhutto regime.

The party passed through three phases. The first phase was the Khudai Khidmatgar movement, also known as red shirts. It was led by Ghafar Khan who was titled as Frontier's Gandhi due to his ideas and affiliation with the INC.<sup>80</sup> His anti-British stance was the cause of considerable political activism in NWFP (as it was named at that time), but at the time of partition people of the province voted for Pakistan in a referendum.<sup>81</sup> After independence Ghafar Khan took the oath as the member of the constituent assembly but the central government remained suspicious due to his continued struggle for Pakhtunistan which intensified at the time of tensions with Afghanistan and India. He tried to expand Khudai Khidmatgar movement outside KPK and consequently was arrested with his son Wali.<sup>82</sup> He had frequent travels to Afghanistan and was awarded the Nehru Peace Award by India in 1969. It was an open secret that he was raising the issue of Pakhtunistan on the backing of Afghanistan and India to destabilise Pakistan.

In the second phase of the party Ghafar Khan joined hands with Baloch, Sindhi and Bengali nationalists along with left to the centre Punjabi politicians and formed a new party, the NAP. It adopted the stance as a secular party advocating social reforms. As a left to the centre party it was in opposition to the conservative PML. It exercised a strong hold over provincial politics. It demanded dissolution of one unit and more provincial autonomy. Soon it was broken away and its Pakhtun faction was headed by Wali was able to establish coalition governments with the JUI (Madni group) in the provinces of Balochistan and KPK in 1972.

The provincial governments in KPK and Balochistan tried to strengthen its political base in the provinces at the cost of the PPP and its sympathisers using all the state resources. Balochistan government headed by Sardar Atta-ullah Mangle repatriated a large number of Federal government civil servants who belonged to other than Baloch communities. He instigated his supporter tribes to uproot the Punjabi settlers from Pat-Feeder area in Balochistan. Balochistan government of the NAP established a local militia Balochistan Dehi Muhaz (BDM) and mobilized it against their opponent tribes in Lasbella and other areas of Balochistan. Federal government intervened by sending troops to rescue these tribes. It repeatedly warned the provincial government to windup its operation against rival tribes but the later did

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not heed the advice. Federal government again sent the troops to stop war between provincial government and Bazinjo- Mangle tribes and against Jamot tribes. The clashes erupted again in February 1973. An arms cache was discovered in Iraq Embassy. The federal government alleged that it was en-route to NAP government in Balochistan. The Balochistan provincial government of NAP was dismissed on 15 February while the NAP-JUI government of KPK resigned in protest.

A large number of tribesmen and NAP activists recruited in provincial security force absconded with their weapons and continued their operations against the provincial government and army troops.<sup>83</sup> The groups of youth like Balochistan Student Organisation and other Marxist and nationalist factions joined them to make a greater Balochistan. A Balochistan crisis emerged which continued in the form of militancy against the federal government and the settlers in Balochistan. The federal government responded by an army action to deal with the situation which ended with the end of Bhutto government in 1977. But it still continues as chronic issue challenging the national integration and solidarity of the country.

The NAP continued to raise Pakhtunistan issue in collaboration with Afghan government. Pakhtunistan was an Afghan irredentist which was carried by the Khudai Khidmatgar and its successor NAP, led by his son Wali. It had its roots in just four of the six settled districts of the province where this movement was led by land lords supported by their tenants in rural areas.<sup>84</sup> The NAP leaders continuously challenged the very rationale of Pakistan. Sardar Dawood, the Afghan President, not only supported Pakhtunistan issue in his government's official communication with Pakistan but also justified the cause of NAP and provided asylum to Baloch insurgents.<sup>85</sup> In urban areas Pakhtunistan could not receive any significant following. The reason was that Pakhtun urban middle or lower middle class were drawn into the instruments of state; the civil services and the Army. They were more represented in the ratio to population, in the security services of Pakistan than Punjabis. The provincial economy was more integrated with that of the Punjab. Pakhtun are highly entrepreneurial and mobile.<sup>86</sup> Therefore they prefer to live in Pakistan and that's why national political parties, both the PPP and the Muslim League won the seats in Khyber Pakhtun Khwa and Balochistan in all the general elections from 1970 to 2008.<sup>87</sup> However NAP, a regional political party with limited following continued its efforts to destabilise Pakistan on the initiative of hostile Afghan governments for decades. It was banned by the federal government on account of anti-state activities of the party and the decision was upheld by the Supreme Court of Pakistan.<sup>88</sup>

The ANP was the successor party of the NAP. It remained powerful political force in KPK, especially in Pakhtun areas. Although diametrically at odds the ANP, a more left to the centre party, joined conservative PML (N) in IJI, an anti-PPP alliance in his effort to gain more popular vote in the elections of 1988. Difficulties arise but the ANP compromised this time to achieve its demand to rename its province from NWFP to Khyber Pakhtun Khwa. Its demand was opposed by non-Pashto speakers, a

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reason why the PML (N) could secure gains in Hazara areas at the cost of local parties, while the ANP was reduced to 3 seats in 1993 elections from 6 in 1990. In 1997 an agreement with the PML (N) bolstered the position of the ANP in its own province and it won 10 seats in National Assembly. But soon it dissociated from federal government due to alleged betrayal of Nawaz government from the old promise of renaming its province.<sup>89</sup>

The ANP is a part of present government of PPP Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani with its 13 seats in the National Assembly. It has ultimately achieved its objective of renaming NWFP as Khyber Pakhtun Khwa through the Eighteenth Constitutional Amendment. The decision was hailed by the ANP provincial government and people of Pakhtun districts. But bloody clashes were seen in Abbotabad, Mansehra and other areas where Hindko<sup>90</sup> speaking are in majority. They objected that if Pakhtun Khwa is for Pakhtun then their areas should be separated from the province to make a new province named Hazara. The ANP's regional politics resulted in further ethnic violence in the province on the issue of language identity. The provincial government of ANP in KPK is aiming at to establish Bach Khan's philosophy as the political lines of the province. The opposition parties are accusing it for reviving the dream of greater Pakhtunistan<sup>91</sup> which has been a threat for national integration of Pakistan for decades.

### The Balochistan National Party (BNP)

It was formed by Sardar Atta-ullah Mangle, the former Chief Minister of the NAP-JUI coalition government in Balochistan (1972-1973). He formed Balochistan National Party in late 1996. This party tried to gather various small, nationalist Baloch parties. The BNP took 3 National Assembly seats in 1997 while the Jamhoori Waten Party (JWP) of Akber Bugti claimed 2 only. The party was in a position to make a government in Balochistan with 10 provincial seats. In the National Assembly of 2008 it could return only one MNA. The Balochistan politics showed the regional trends from the very beginning further specific to the Pakhtun and Baloch areas. National political parties had limited appeal to the people of province. The PPP, PML (N) and PML (Q) secured a few seats but smaller parties have their strong constituencies along regional and ethnic lines and those lines are intensified. Bloch politicians hardly play national politics.<sup>92</sup> All the Baloch parties are established along ethnic or tribal lines and hardly make any appearance on the national scene due to their small vote bank.

### **Jamia'at-e-Ulama-i-Islam (Fazl-ur-Rahman)**

JUI is another regional party having stronghold in KPK and the Pakhtun areas of Balochistan. Its different factions operate in these areas. Mulana<sup>93</sup> Mufti Mahmood was the head of JUI (Madini group)<sup>94</sup> when in the first general elections in 1970 the JUI won notable seats in KPK and Balochistan. It was able to make a coalition government in both provinces. Although JUI represented KPK and Pakhtun areas of

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Balochistan, it played a leading role in the movement against Bhutto in 1977 at the national level. It was due to the presence of JUI and JI in the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) that the issues were transformed from rigging to imposition of Islamic system and military imposed martial law again. These religious political parties supported the execution of Bhutto in 1979 and strive for Islamization which Gen. Zia used as a justification to prolong his personal rule for more than eleven years.

In post-Zia period from 1988 to 1999, the religious parties contested the elections as a part of different alliances with conservative and secular parties. JUI under the leadership of Mulana Fazal-ur-Rehman<sup>95</sup> aligned with the PPP (Benazir) and won the elections of 1988 and 1993, and lost in 1990 and 1997. His party attributed the lost elections to the elections engineering by the agencies.<sup>96</sup> Fazal-ur-Rehman enjoyed prominent position in PPP government

The religious political parties acted as a strong street force in Pakistani politics albeit they could not secure more than 5 per cent vote in any of the general elections before 2002.<sup>97</sup> It was only in 2002 elections when the religious parties took initiative to unite themselves in the form of an alliance at national level. It was for the first time before the elections of 2002 when the Jamia'at-i-Ulama-i-Islam (JUI), Jamia'at-i-Ulama-i-Pakistan (JUP), Jamat-i-Ahl-e-Hadith and Pakistan Islamic Tehrik (previously Tehrik-Nafaz-i-Jafria which was banned in 2000) on the initiative of Jamat-i-Islami (JI), which has renamed itself Pakistan Islamic Front (PIF), became engaged in an alliance under the headship of Shah Ahmed Noorani setting aside all their sectarian differences.<sup>98</sup> The anti-American stance helped it to broaden its vote bank. Further gains were accumulated by combining all votes which were previously wasted in contesting each other.

The MMA played as an opposition in the National Assembly with 53 seats after the elections of 2002, the third largest number of seats. It was able to exert pressure on martial law government of Gen. Pervez Musharraf to put its Legal framework Order (LFO) for the ratification of the parliament. MMA lost its standing when it cooperated with military dictator to institute the seventeenth amendment to the Constitution of 1973 which restored all the abusive powers of the president provided by the Eighth Amendment to the 1973 Constitution.<sup>99</sup>

In the wake of 2002 election results MMA appeared as a national alliance registering its presence in all the provinces. However its power base remains the Pakhtun areas of KPK and Balochistan, temporary gains were from Punjab and Sindh due to uniting factor. In the elections of 2008 MMA disintegrated and the title of alliance was used by the JUI (F). However it could return only 8 members to the National Assembly. One reason was the return of the mainstream political leaders, Nawaz and Benazir, and the other is that the people of Pakistan never supported a theocracy in Pakistan. The JUI

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under the leadership of Fazl-ur-Rahman still exercised a strong influence in policy making despite its 8 seats in the National Assembly. It criticized government policies in National Assembly and tried to influence the government through boycotts<sup>100</sup> and 'going public policy'<sup>101</sup> outside the parliament. It also resisted law making process blocking the demand of the society.<sup>102</sup>

Like his father Fazal-ur-Rehman has been against the PML. However he was successful in changing his party's image of "an anti-secular religio-political entity," temporarily by supporting PPP during its second term. But at the same time his cooperation with Benazir as the prime minister tarnished, his party's image, to some extent. He was taken as an opportunist, who compromised his party's ideology for material benefits by making an alliance with a leftist ruling party.

## CONCLUSION

Political instability is a serious problem threatening the survival of the country especially in the ethnically diverse developing countries. It is creating massive problems and hindering the development process of these countries. Pakistan is also facing this problem. Regional parties threatened to the very existence of the country and it had lost its half of the territory and population. Secession of the East Pakistan was not only a setback but also a time to rethink national priorities and to accommodate the regional aspirations through acknowledging the pluralism existed in the political culture. Low profile leadership always led to regional politics since they were not able to rise to the national level. Generally deprivations are usually there in post-colonial societies but the Pakhtun have never been deprived in terms of places in government apparatus: Both military and bureaucracy. They were given more space as compared to their ratio of population. They remained mobile and never denied opportunity in any part of the country in terms of fortune hunting, establishing business and settling household. Despite all this the Pakhtun leadership continued to detract people and hindered the process of national integration by raising the issue of Pakhtunistan time and again at the instigation of a neighbouring country. The leadership of the NAP was not denied its right to govern its province in the honour of the peoples' mandate. But it exploited the opportunity to eradicate all the opponents and play factional politics. Consequently the centre-province clash in Balochistan led to a situation similar to that in East Pakistan in 1970-71.

Those political parties which are having seats in the parliament bear more responsibilities to strengthen the political system but in Pakistan, the regional parties with few seats in the parliament find it appropriate that its regional agenda should be materialized in lieu of political support, the mainstream political party needed in making government. The MQM is the clear example that is contesting for allocation of jobs and quotas in the educational institutions while the life has been paralysed in the Urban areas of Sindh for decades, virtually paralysing all the economic activity. But they are not ready to

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reconcile. They join all the national governments in a hope to extract more benefits. But threaten break away when hopes are not fulfilled. Its leadership is highly educated and always talked about rights and respect for law but having most violent clashes with the law enforcing agencies. They are involved in mass killings of not only other ethnic groups like Pakhtun and Sindhis but also their own dissident factions. They are fighting for more resources but their violence strategy has blocked the existing prospects, threatening peace and survival of individuals and society as a whole.

The problem lies in the treatment of ethnic issues. All the political governments took ethno-nationalist issues as a mere law and order problem while these issues need a well chalked out political solution based on national consensus. The question of regional autonomy should be addressed as given under the constitution. The Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution progressed on this issue and abolished concurrent list, leaving all the residuary powers with the provinces. But still grievances are there which require sincere and transparent implementation of the law.

The prolonged military rule increased the already present regional aspirations. The inability of the politicians to reconcile with the needs of time and resolve the political problems through the political process provided armed forces room to intervene. There is no other solution except to respect the constitution, consolidating institutions and respecting plural nature of the political culture. Strong political parties of national character are pre-requisite for this purpose. The working of democracy, how fragile and short-lived it was, groomed the political system into a visibly clear two party system. If these national political parties could exercise democracy within their own ranks, they would be able to serve better interests articulation function to fill the gap of representation by all the factions. It is believed that it may be dangerous for democracy if leaders remain in office for longer periods.<sup>103</sup> Therefore fresh leadership from the grass root level could end the sense of deprivation. Elite politics is no more the solution of the problem.

Strong representative institutions, accommodation of all factions in the process of governance and leadership from the middle class will lead to patriotism which will not respond to foreign dictates, offers and incentives at the cost of nation.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Michael Johnston, *Political Parties and Democracy in Theoretical and Democratic Perspectives* (Washington: The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, 2005), 3.

<sup>2</sup>Thomas Janoski, "Political Institutions Fundamentally Influence Political Life," *A handbook of Political Sociology: States, Civil Societies, and Globalization* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), 103.

<sup>3</sup>Kevin T. Leicht, J. Craig Jenkins, *Handbook of Politics: State and Society in Global Perspective*, books.google.com.pk – 2010.

<sup>4</sup>"National Political Parties," <http://www.nios.ac.in/srsec317newE/317EL19.pdf>, 3/02/12.

<sup>5</sup>L. S. Gassah, *Regional Political Parties in North East India* (India: Omsons Publications, 1992), ix.

<sup>6</sup>Biju Patnaik, who formed the Utkal Congress in 1970 in India advocated this theory.

<sup>7</sup>Whether communal or non-communal, all these regional parties were led by Muslims.

<sup>8</sup>In Punjab the Nationalist Unionist Party, Mujlis-i-Ahrar-i-Islam, Khaksar Organization, in NWFP Khudai Khidmatgar, in Balochistan Anjuman-i-Watan and Sindh Hari Committee in Sindh province.

<sup>9</sup>Indian National Congress and All India Muslim League fell under this category. M. Weiner and La Palombra (eds.), *Political Parties and Political Development* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), 9-10.

<sup>10</sup>K. C. Suri, "Parties under Pressure: Political Parties in India since Independence," pdf, retrieved on 28/01/12.

<sup>11</sup>The ex- Muslim Leaguers established 9 out of 13 parties by 1949. M. Rafiq Afzal, *Political Parties in Pakistan, 1947-58* (Islamabad: National Institute of History and Culture, 1986), 36-37.

<sup>12</sup>Mohammad Waseem, *Politics and the State in Pakistan* (Islamabad: National Institute of Cultural and Historical Research, 2007), 114-115.

<sup>13</sup>East Pakistan was the largest province in joint Pakistan; its provincial assembly passed a resolution in 1948 demanding maximum provincial autonomy.

<sup>14</sup>The third Governor General of Pakistan was a retired civil servant and was followed by the fourth Governor General (later became first President of Pakistan) Major General (Retd.) Iskender Mirza was a serviceman later converted to civil services. They never contested the elections and were appointed as the head of the state through executive action.

<sup>15</sup>The language issue caused acute reaction in 1953 in East Pakistan, the largest province of Pakistan. They were demanding Bengali as National Language and more provincial autonomy. These sentiments led to a humiliating defeat of Muslim League at the hands of an alliance of regional political parties in the provincial elections of 1954. It was the end of national politics from this province and rise of regional politics which ultimately resulted in separation of East and West Pakistan in 1971.

<sup>16</sup>For the text of the Prime Minister's address on Radio Pakistan see Pakistan News Digest, 1<sup>st</sup> December 1954.

<sup>17</sup>President Iskander Mirza dismissed the elected governments of provinces and appointed his handpicked as the governors of the provinces. Politicians from West Pakistan like Feroze Khan Noon and Dr Khan Sahib were appointed as the governors of East Pakistan. This action further aggravated the sentiments against federal government and was taken against the provincial autonomy.

<sup>18</sup>K. C. Suri, "Parties under pressure: Political Parties in India since Independence."

<sup>19</sup>Ian Talbot, *Pakistan: A Modern History* (London: Hurst & Company, 2005), 136.

<sup>20</sup>Public Representative Disqualification Order (PRODA) was introduced to disqualify politicians for the offences like nepotism, bribery and corruption. The limit of the punishment was disqualification for ten years.

<sup>21</sup>Seven cases were instituted against the politicians during the five years life period of PRODA (1949-1954). Four of them were convicted including Mohammad Ayub Khuhro, Kazi Fazl-ullah, Ghulam Nabi Khan Pathan (all from Sindh) and Hamid-ul-Haq Chaudhry from East Pakistan. Cases were registered against Iftikhar Hussain Mamdot, Mian Mumtaz Ahmed Daultana (from Punjab) and Ghulam Ali Talpur (from Sindh) but they could escape conviction. The Governor General exercised his power to withdraw restriction under PRODA to give relief to Khuhro.

<sup>22</sup>It remained a common practice starting from first martial law in 1958 to the fourth martial law in 1999.

<sup>23</sup>The Political Parties Act 1962, 1984 and 2002 are the examples.

<sup>24</sup>EBDO means the Elected Bodies Disqualification Order. It was issued to discredit politicians from mainstream politics.

<sup>25</sup>Ayub Khan lifted martial law and restored political activity in the country in 1962, and assumed the headship of Pakistan Muslim League (Convention).

<sup>26</sup>In the absence of support from party people contested the elections on family, clan and cast basis which torn the fabric of society into smaller communities.

<sup>27</sup>Zafar Hussain Chaudhry, *National Accountability Bureau Ordinance, 1999: as amended by ord., CXXXIII of 2002 and Anti-Terrorism Act with narcotics laws* (Lahore: Nadeem Law Books, 2003)

<sup>28</sup>Creation of MQM to balance Sindhi Nationalism and to check the power of PPP in Sindh is a clear example.

<sup>29</sup>At the time of independence in 1947 Pakistan was a federation of five provinces East Pakistan (Bengal), Punjab, Sindh, NWFP and Balochistan and ten princely states. It was disintegrated in 1971 when East Pakistan became Bangladesh.

<sup>30</sup>Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, as modified till 2004. <http://www.mofa.gov.pk/Publications/constitution.pdf>, retrieved on 27/3/12.

<sup>31</sup>“The Text of the Eighteenth Amendment to 1973 Constitution of Pakistan.”

<sup>32</sup>The National Assembly has 342 seats while the four provincial assemblies have 728 seats in total.

<sup>33</sup>All provinces have equal seats in the Senate, with the total strength of hundred senators.

<sup>34</sup>There are four provinces in Pakistan with its own language and culture. Every province has further language and cultural diversity like Baloch and Brahvi are prominent languages along with Pakhtun and Punjabi settlers in Balochistan. Khyber Pakhtun Khwa (KPK) has almost half of the population of Pakhtun and other half is Hidko speaking. Southern Punjab has Siraiki speaking population on the borders of Sindh and Balochistan in addition to Potohari speaking districts of Jhelum to Attock. A large population is Punjabi speaking in Central Punjab. Sindh has Sindhi speaking native population in rural Sindh. But in the years followed by independence migration from central provinces of India changed the demographic composition of the urban areas of Sindh and Mahajir emerged as the fifth nationality at par with Punjabi, Sindhi, Baloch and Pakhtun.

<sup>35</sup>They are registered under the Executive Order of 2002, when General Musharraf restored political activity in Pakistan before the general elections of 2002.

<sup>36</sup>It was the constitutional clause incorporated by General Zia-ul-Haq (Chief martial law administrator 1977-1988) through the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution of 1973 before lifting martial law in 1985. It empowered the president to dissolve National Assembly and dismiss elected government declaring them corrupt and unqualified. Four consecutive elected governments were dismissed by three presidents in a period of less than 10 years.

<sup>37</sup>In India a political party which could secure 4 percent of the popular vote is considered to be a party with national influence. “National Political Parties,” [www.nios.ac.in/srsec317newE/317EL19.pdf](http://www.nios.ac.in/srsec317newE/317EL19.pdf), 10/04/12.

<sup>38</sup>“Long Live Pakistan With Altaf Hussain & MQM,” <http://forum.urduworld.com/f101/political-parties-pakistan-311513/>

<sup>39</sup>Awami League presided by Mujeeb-ur-Rehman won 160 seats (out of 162 reserved for East Pakistan) in a House of 300. The insistence of Z. A. Bhutto to reach a compromise outside the parliament and inability of leadership of both parties to accommodate each other's demands led to a deadlock which could not be resolved and army action by the martial law authorities and later Indian intervention led to separation of East Pakistan.

<sup>40</sup>Although Awami League won 160 seats and secured a clear cut majority in the joint National Assembly of East and West Pakistan but it was still a regional party because it could not get any seat from any other province of Pakistan. Its stubborn attitude towards other political parties led to the disintegration of the country.

<sup>41</sup>The Supreme Court of Pakistan is reinvestigating the judicial trial of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (Elected Prime Minister of Pakistan from 1973-1977). The jurists are agreed that his trial was not a fair one and the victim was not given due right of defence.

<sup>42</sup>Under the Eighth Constitutional Amendment instituted by General Zia to get indemnity to all the actions and ordinances military had taken during the period 1977-1985, the president was empowered to appoint any member of the elected National Assembly as Prime Minister whom he believed could win the vote of confidence from the National Assembly. This power was restricted to March 1990. General Zia instituted this power in the office of the president because he believed that he would remain in office for life time and appoint prime minister in a house based on non-party elections. But following his death in an air-crash in August 1988, the Supreme Court of Pakistan ordered that the general elections scheduled in October 1988 would be held on party basis in response to a petition by Miss Benazir. She was offered to make the government after a compromise with the military high command. PPP government was a coalition given its 88 seats in a house of 207.

<sup>43</sup>Benazir was murdered after a public meeting in ‘Liaquat Bagh’ Rawalpindi when she was coming out after addressing a large public meeting in December 2007 when President Gen. Musharraf allowed her to come back home.

<sup>44</sup>He was the senior most leader of the PPP after Benazir and deserved the top leadership position in the party.

<sup>45</sup>He was notorious for controlling all the politics of party by distributing party tickets in 1988 elections to his handpicks ignoring party loyalists. He was titled as Mr. Ten Percent during the first regime of Benazir due to his corruption. After Benazir's murder PPP became the main beneficiary of sympathy vote in the elections of 2008.



Zardari did not assume the office of prime minister because he was having lot of corruption cases against him. Therefore he opted to elevate himself as the president of Pakistan forcing Gen. Musharraf to resign.

<sup>46</sup>The widow of Mir Murtaza Bhutto, the eldest son of Z.A. Bhutto was not accommodated within the party therefore she disintegrated making PPP (Shaheed Bhutto group). Initially the blessings of Mrs. Nusrat Bhutto were also with her. However due to lack of leadership it could not establish itself as a challenger to original PPP.

<sup>47</sup>The opposition alliance Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) refused to accept the election results and started protest movement against the ruling PPP. Bhutto took it lightly but when the situation was aggravated, he had to call military to restore order in 5 major cities of the country. Failure of political forces to reconcile with each other and military's continuous involvement in the process led to the imposition of another martial law, the third time in Pakistan in 1977.

<sup>48</sup> Its English translation is Islamic Democratic Alliance.

<sup>49</sup>Inter services Intelligence Services of Pakistan.

<sup>50</sup>ISI was assigned the task to combine two groups of Muslim League and coin together the anti-PPP parties in an alliance. Gen. (R) Hamid Gull, Interview with the researcher at International Islamic University, Islamabad on 30 October 2009. He instituted all this as the Director General of ISI, the Inter Services Intelligence of Pakistan at that time.

<sup>51</sup>Ian Talbot, *Pakistan: A Modern History* (London: Hurst & Company), 332.

<sup>52</sup>PML (N) won 35 seats while PPP could get only 19 in a House of 207.

<sup>53</sup> It was consisted of the disgruntled members of PML (N) and other politicians who wanted to en-cash the fruits of martial law government by joining it. It was named as PML (Q) after the name of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the Founder of Nation.

<sup>54</sup>Gen Pervaiz imposed martial law in 1999. Like most of the military dictators he instituted a king's party to civilianize its military rule.

<sup>55</sup>Pervaiz Musharraf dismissed Prime Minister Nawaz's government on the charges that the later attempted on his life by not allowing his flight to land on Karachi airport. Therefore Nawaz Sharif, his brother and sons were arrested and were under trial, when Royals of Saudi Arabia intervened to save Nawaz's life because it was suspected that he would be hanged as Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was by Gen. Zia in 1979 after a judicial trial. On their request Nawaz and his family was exiled to Saudi Arabia and then London.

<sup>56</sup> Some high profile and close aides of Mian Nawaz Sharif were among these politicians like Chaudhry Shujat Hussain, Tariq Azeem, Mashahid Hussain, Naeem Chatta etc.

<sup>57</sup>PML (N) has 91 seats while PML (Q) secured 50 seats. If they could afford to unite again they will have a strong majority in the National Assembly even more than PPP with 126 seats.

<sup>58</sup>Adam Ziegfeld, "Why the Rise of Regional Parties Isn't So Bad," 10/11/2010, <http://casi.ssc.upenn.edu/iit/ziegfeld>, retrieved on 12 April 2012.

<sup>59</sup>Election Commission of Pakistan, <http://www.ecp.gov.pk/Misc/PartyPosition/NAPosition.pdf>, retrieved on 29/03/2012.

<sup>60</sup> <http://www.ecp.gov.pk/Misc/PartyPosition/NAPosition.pdf>, retrieved on 29/03/2012.

<sup>61</sup>This numbered was secured in a House of 207. Later in 2002 number of National Assembly seats were increased to 342.

<sup>62</sup> Tariq Rehman, "Language and Ethnicity in Pakistan," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 37, No. 9 (Spring, 1997): 833-839.

<sup>63</sup> It led of a series of riots and violence as Pakistan People's Party's provincial government which actually represented the native Sindhi, passed a bill in provincial assembly to increase the use of Sindhi vernacular, then imposed quota for admissions and jobs. *Ibid.*, 837.

<sup>64</sup>Rodney W. Jones, *The Prospects for State Failure in Pakistan: Ethnic, Regional, and Sectarian Fissures*, [http://www.policyarchitects.org/pdf/Pak\\_statefailure\\_ExSumm.pdf](http://www.policyarchitects.org/pdf/Pak_statefailure_ExSumm.pdf)

<sup>65</sup>Altaf Hussain was a student in Pharmacy department in Karachi University. He established this organization to protect the interests of Mahajir students. His organization faced first challenge from Islami Jamiat-i-Talaba. Bloody clashes with PSF resulted in loss of life and militancy in the student organizations. The hostels were converted to armed bunkers. Altaf Hussain was expelled from university along with other fellows.

<sup>66</sup>There were evidences that Gen. Zia supported its emergence as an opposition party to the PPP. MQM challenged the PPP in its home ground and reduced its influence to the rural Sindh. Ian Talbot, *Pakistan: A Modern History*, 452-453.

<sup>67</sup>Ian Talbot, *Pakistan: A Modern History*, 453.

<sup>68</sup>The army command used internal fudges of MQM to check the violence in Karachi. But later clashes between the two factions of MQM created more violence. Ibid.

<sup>69</sup>10 out of its 59 points were related to education. It also addressed the longstanding issues of domicile and job quotas. It demanded for compensation for the victims of Hyderabad bombing. *Dawn Overseas Weekly*, week ending 14 December 1988.

<sup>70</sup>The demand was a part of long struggle of MQM but the native Sindhi have apprehensions about increasing threat to their already declining majority in the urban Sindh. But MQM was not ready to compromise less than that.

<sup>71</sup>Altaf Hussain declared that this violence is targeted due to the fear that MQM might not unite the oppressed classes against exploiters in Pakistan. *Dawn Overseas Weekly*, week ending, 4 April 1989.

<sup>72</sup>*Dawn Overseas Weekly*, week ending, 17 May 1989.

<sup>73</sup>Public Statement of Bader Iqbal, MQM's Joint Secretary.

<sup>74</sup>*Dawn Overseas Weekly*, week ending, 26 July 1989.

<sup>75</sup>Khalid-bin-Saeed, "The Three Worlds of Democracy in Pakistan," *Contemporary South Asia*, Vol. 1, no. 1 (1992), 62.

<sup>76</sup>*Dawn*, 9 February 1990.

<sup>77</sup>Police version of the incident was that they opened fire in retaliation to the firing from the homes. Both parties claimed their innocence but whatever the real picture was, 200 people were killed in the protest against this incident in Karachi, Hyderabad and Sukhar.

<sup>78</sup>In post Zia period General Aslam Beg was the one who decided to allow the democracy to work. But the real powers were with the military which operated through the powerful President. There was an extra-constitutional arrangement at the government level, called Troika, where the Army Chief, President and Prime Minister were the power sharing offices.

<sup>79</sup>Hassan Askari Rizvi, *Military, State and Society in Pakistan*, 212.

<sup>80</sup>Mohandass Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948) was the prominent leader of All India Congress in colonial period. Ghafar Khan was the disciple of Gandhi following his philosophy of non-violence.

<sup>81</sup>It was called for asking their opinion whether they wanted to join Pakistan or India.

<sup>82</sup>The Khudai Khidmatgar was banned and Ghafar Khan remained under arrest till 1954.

<sup>83</sup> Hassan Askari Rizvi, *The Military and Politics in Pakistan: 1947-1997* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 1998) , 227-228.

<sup>84</sup>These districts were the Pashto speaking areas of NWFP (now renamed as Khyber Pakhtun Khwa (KPK)) Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu and Mardan. It had little reach among Pakhtun in FATA or elsewhere.

<sup>85</sup>Hassan Askari Rizvi, *Military State and Society in Pakistan*, 156.

<sup>86</sup>Pakhtun are highly entrepreneurial. They establish small businesses and do not hesitate migrating for jobs either within the country or the Gulf States. They own a large share of private transport businesses not only in KPK but all over the country including Karachi. Karachi has the largest population of Pakhtun even more than Peshawar, the capital of KPK.

<sup>87</sup>"National Assembly General Elections," <http://www.ecp.gov.pk/GE/2002/PartiesPositionNA.aspx>, retrieved on 12/04/12.

<sup>88</sup>The Supreme Court conducted the proceedings of the case in open and press reported freely from March to September. *Asian Recorder*, 23-29 April 1975, p.12556 and 8-14 January 1976, p. 12966.

<sup>89</sup>Rodney W. Jones, "The Prospects for State Failure in Pakistan."

<sup>90</sup>It is different from Pashto, a variation of Punjabi which is spoken in Abbotabad and Haripur divisions of KPK.

<sup>91</sup>Provincial leader of JUI-F Gull Naseeb also alleged that the "Bacha Khan Education Foundation was being fully funded by the US and American delegations were frequently visiting the educational institutions run by the foundation. He demanded a thorough probe into the millions of dollars being spent by the foundation." see "ANP Plotting to Disintegrate Country: JUI-F Leader," *Pak Tribune*, <http://www.paktribune.com/news/print.php?id=207694>, retrieved on 5 may 2012.

<sup>92</sup><http://www.einfopedia.com/political-party-of-pakistan-top-ten-10-best-or-largest-parties.php>

<sup>93</sup>Mulana is used for the religious leader of Muslims.

<sup>94</sup> Mufti Mahmood from District Dera Ismail Khan (KPK), the head of JUI was the president of Pakistan National Alliance (PNA), an alliance of all opposition parties against the PPP, the then ruling party in 1977. The JI was also a part of alliance and it provided impetus through its youth membership from universities and colleges. His family enjoyed a mass public support in the Dera Ismail Khan because of that Mufti Mahmood was the only leader in Pakistan who had defeated Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the PPP Chairman, despite all his charisma in the 1970 general elections.

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<sup>95</sup>Mulana Fazl ur-Rahman is the son of Mufti Mahmud (Former Provincial Chief Minister of KPK). He is the President of his political party Jamiat-e-Ulama-e-Islam (the Assembly of Pakistani Clergy). He belongs to Dera Ismail Khan District of the KPK Province, Pakistan. His involvement in financial scandals, of supplying permits for exporting diesel from Pakistan to Afghanistan, proved a blow to the party's reputation. His opponents considered him as a corrupt man posing himself as an Islamic leader. "Fazl-ur-Rahman, Pakistan Elections 2007-08," <http://elections.com.pk/candidatedetails.php?id=2509>, retrieved on 3 May 2012.

<sup>96</sup>This term is used for Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) and Intelligence Bureau (IB). Particularly the role of ISI became deep rooted in Pakistan during the prolonged military rule. They were secretly involved in facilitating alliance formation to counter PPP in the elections of 1988.

<sup>97</sup>In fact the JI is an ideological party of middle and lower middle class and had a restricted membership. Therefore it could not increase its vote bank. But the JI has all the ability to play street power and mobilize the youth through its larger student wings in many education institutions of the Punjab, KPK and Sindh. The can mobilize people in KPK and Pakhtun areas of Balochistan. Other religious parties also have their support in urban areas of all the provinces. They give call for strike and assert their policies on government through street politics. No government can dare to make anti-Islamic policies in the presence of religious parties inside or outside the parliament. These religious parties act as the guardian of faith and try to pressurise government. In the event of Gulf War in 1990 they publicly opposed official stand of Pakistan. Nawaz government was in favour of restoration of the statehood of Kuwait on the principle of the sanctity of the international borders, declaring Saddam Hussain as an aggressor. But religious parties especially JI mobilized street power conducting public demonstration against the government.

<sup>98</sup>Ian Talbot, *Pakistan: A Modern History*, 402.

<sup>99</sup>The Eighth Constitutional Amendment created a strong office of the president with powers to dissolve the National Assembly and dismiss the elected government (clause 58 (2B) ), which was alien to parliamentary form of government. It was repealed by Thirteenth Constitutional Amendment in 1997. See the Thirteen Constitutional Amendment, <http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/constitution/amendments/13amendment.html>, retrieved on 10 May 2012.

<sup>100</sup>"Foreign Policy: JUI-F Ends Panel's Boycott Conditionally," *Tribune*, 12 April 2012, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/363449/foreign-policy-jui-f-ends-panels-boycott--conditionally/>, retrieved on 4 May 2012.

<sup>101</sup>Addressing a large rally in Karachi JUI-F chief criticized the role of establishment that it never allowed Pakistan to become an Islamic welfare state. He claimed if establishment stops influencing elections, they would win the next election. He also pointed out 60 percent budgetary allocations for military and criticized the US role in war on terror. It is claimed that 70,000 people were present in the rally named as 'Islam Zindabad Rally.' see "We will make Pakistan an Islamic Welfare State: JUI-F Chief Fazl-ur-Rahman," *Express Tribune*, 27 January 2012.,

<sup>102</sup>The JUI has recently created a deadlock in the process of law making against domestic violence on the grounds that this bill is a western assertion and against the values of Pakistani society. See Zahid Gishkori, "Domestic Violence Bill: JUI-F opposition leads to another deadlock," *Tribune*, 6 April 2012, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/360681/domestic-violence-bill-jui-f-opposition-leads-to-another-deadlock/>, retrieved on 4 May 2012.

<sup>103</sup>Robert Michaels, *Political Parties, A sociological study of the Oligarchical Trend of Modern Democracies*, <http://www.zipdf.com/view.php?id=http://socserv.mcmaster.ca/econ/ugcm/3ll3/michels/polipart.pdf&k=main%20political%20parties>, retrieved on 27/03/12, 61.