Human security lies in depoliticisation of knowledge, opportunities, control and rights.

—Jennifer Bennett

The crises of governance are no exception in Pakistan. Neither is the security situation, in whatever form. Ideological, political and democratic structures, which define governance mechanisms, have been fraught with state-centric euphoria, perpetuation of power and control, pluralistic movements and ethno-religious legacies since the inception of the country. More importantly, democratic rule, with tentacles in human rights and forming the basis of human well-being, has been only paid lip service. This has left the citizenry at the mercy of governments who rule through national policies and associated governance mechanisms bent on the securitisation of society. There is, thus, a direct and linear interrelationship between governance and security, is we can define linearity as a composite of multi-dimensional factors.

In this interrelationship, the quality of governance is determined by the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources for development and the quality of life enjoyed by its citizens.¹ It further translates into the management of the affairs of a state through public administration and socio-political constructs to process equal rights, enhance opportunities and basic entitlements to provide an environment promoting human well-being. These stipulations are the right of every citizen and form the sine qua non for coexistence and survival. This, in other words, is democracy which forms the base of all encompassing securities for

individuals. It will be argued that denial of these rights leads to conflicts exercised in an attempt to attain these entitlements. Human security is, therefore, a compulsive need for individuals. It is, perhaps, in the wake of this realisation that these rights have been reflected in constitutions with respect to political, economic and social life. The responsibility of a state is to ensure 'security' and 'protection' to every citizen of a country through the agential process of governance.

Generally speaking, conventional and elementary measures of good governance rest on growth and the developmental policies which determine the development status of a country and its people. These measures are contingent upon economic policies and the manner in which the national resources of the country are distributed. Through established institutions of governance such as political institutions, the judiciary, the public administration system, and the civil society the government determine the dynamics of endowment distribution. These constructs then determine 'which institutions exercise more or less influence to guide us in the prioritisation of a process of governance reform' or its exercise. The form of governance, thus, hinges on the ideology that guides the rules of governance and direct the policies adopted to implement that ideology.

2.1 IDEOLOGY AND DEMOCRACY

The euphoria of creating a separate homeland for the Muslims of the pre-independence Indian sub-continent appears to have fallen short of the expectations of millions who made sacrifices in the national movement that created Pakistan. It was not so much a matter of the success of the movement or the gain of a separate homeland or even loss of life, property and displacement but the anarchy that beset the country since its inception that is noteworthy, though the post-independence administration was, spearheaded by the vanguards of the pre-independence nationalist movement, the Muslim League. The state floundered because of ideological schisms and the split within the Muslim League on the question of identity of the country: was it going to be a democratic state or an 'Islamic State'? Pakistan today, after 59 years of independence, is still grappling with such ideological issues. The powerful and the influential, who inherited the privileges of the British and especially the military,

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took on the task of defining the governing contours of the country, setting a legacy of dictatorship and authoritarianism. Democracy, which promotes egalitarianism, remained elusive and rhetorical. In the history of Pakistan, four main forces shaped the state of politics and governance: dictatorship, the military, fundamentalist and ethnic forces and confrontational forces. The concoction of these forces has generated "ingovernable" state of affairs giving rise to denial of human rights, insecurity of the citizenry and increasing poverty. To date, there have been four military regimes that managed to entrench themselves for long periods. “Repeated military interventions have undermined democratic institutions, systematically deinstitutionalising various governmental and constitutional organs, and emaciating the institutions of civil society.”

Even during periods of democratic governments, too short-lived to develop and mature democratic traditions and practices, military guardians acted as monitors disallowing the strengthening of democratic institutions.

Faced with the challenges of a newly formed nation-state, which inherited the syndrome of weak institutional and economic bases, the country’s immediate challenge and focus, as perceived by its rulers, as well as its successors, were to pursue border security as a national agenda. The intractable economic and political problems, along with the desperate situation of the population of a newly constructed country, were, thus, relegated to secondary importance. This meant that the country’s developmental policies centred around strengthening the military, and diversion of the major chunk of resources in achieving this objective became the norm. Not only did the country fail on this count, but as will be seen later, lack of focus or prioritising human security and development as national goals, beset the country with internal security problems, disturbing social and economic equilibrium, ethnic and religious disharmony, and undemocratic practices and leading ultimately to discontent and conflict.

There are four basic and over-arching causes of the current state of (mis)governance in Pakistan: first, the absence of multi-party democracies, military regimes enjoying political continuity as opposed to periodic democratic regime change that has negatively influenced the quality of governance and development in Pakistan; secondly, that the behavioural patterns of regimes whether in power through an

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electorate mandate or more forcible arrangements, over long tenures, have led to autocracy, weak accountability and indifference to democratic pressures; thirdly, infighting for power has led to a divisive political scenario where money and violence are used as instruments of electoral gain and support. With parliament emerging as ineffective, and with a confrontational parliamentary culture, there has been moral degeneration in the political system. Fourthly, the military, the civil-bureaucracy and feudal lords have been influencing and controlling political and administrative institutions. They have been the principal actors shaping the structures of the economy and controlling development and governance of the country and its citizenry. Most political parties have been enmeshed in the power struggle through unfair means that are contrary to their design and role. Civil society at large has remained peripheral, and has had nothing to contribute to decision-making on matters that capture their lives and that of the country they live in.

An offshoot of the deterioration of the economic, political and policy-making is the manner in which authority has been exercised through formal and informal institutions for managing the country's resources and its allocation, ultimately affecting the citizen's quality of life. Sarfraz Qureshi has highlighted three interlinked dimensions of the country's poor governance:

1. The decline in institutional integrity and capacity, aggravated by arbitrary actions, and further compromised by a conflict of interests;

2. Weakened institutional capacity caused by the politicisation of public sector management. Political interference and patronage appointments have systematically reduced the public sector's institutional autonomy and integrity. Under such politicisation, informal and non-transparent systems for public sector management have increasingly come to affect established procedures; and

3. This has greatly undermined both the accountability processes and the technocratic capacity in the public service. In such an environment, coordination and technical consultation across bureaucratic boundaries has become difficult. Weakened institutional capacity and control has created a hotbed of bureaucratic corruption. The lack of effective mechanisms for

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4 Rehman Sobhan, op. cit.: 319-363.
formulation of policies is linked to budgetary constraints; and the weak enforcement of the rule of law has contributed to a high degree of arbitrariness in government actions. Conflicts of interest in these conditions have been generally overlooked and rent-seeking behaviour prevails.

Because of the weak internal situation, external forces have had a major impact. A systematic donor sponsored agenda has been exercising significant influence over aspects of the state policy. Of significance is the imposition of economic liberalisation and development policies, disempowering the nation-state and hampering its autonomy. Such a thrust has been ditched by the Bretton Woods Institutions (BWI), namely, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The systematic disempowerment of the state has continued in the absence of any particular social group having the ability for state intervention. As a consequence, coalitions of individual groups have been able to address the anarchic state conditions, resulting in the creation of a disempowered civil society. Thus, in the absence of a functioning democracy and effective popular participation, aversion and resistance to militaristic rule, leading to civil strife, violence, sectarian militancy and other social evils have been hallmarks.

Pakistan, as it stands today, is perceived as a country fraught with governance problems which, relatively speaking, are beyond manageable proportions. According to Transparency International’s annual report for 2005, out of the 158 countries it had surveyed, Pakistan ranked as the 14th most corrupt country in the world. Such status was conferred based on the country’s deteriorating economic situation, and was based on International Country Risk Guide (ICRG) ratings, which are computed by weighing three elements: corruption, rule of law and bureaucratic quality. These ratings for Pakistan in 1998 were three times what they were in comparison to 1982. This means that on a relative scale, the situation in Pakistan was three times as bad in 1998 as that was in 1982. Notwithstanding the statistical rating, the ongoing civil strife, the widespread violence and the corruption charges against elected officials, speak volumes about the endemic nature of corruption, both petty and serious. Such a situation has deteriorated the credibility gap between the so-called rulers and citizens and has

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6 Rehman Sobhan, op. cit.: 319-363.
7 Cited in Sarfraz K. Qureshi, op. cit.
Pakistan
denied people their legitimate rights as citizens as enshrined in the
constitution. “Over time, corruption has increasingly corroded the
legitimacy of democratic systems of governance. While South Asian
citizens, ‘including Pakistan’ have not been demanding authoritarian
regimes, they are certainly demanding an end to persistent and pernicious
corruption in public life.”

2.1 ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROGRESS
A country’s economic growth and poverty are largely determined by its
structures of governance and its implementing mechanisms. Following
neoliberalist theory and practice for decades, Pakistan’s economic growth
has become the centre-stage of overall development frame. Although
economic growth has been dwindling in the past decades, Pakistan has
been able to maintain an average economic growth rate exceeding 5
percent. Despite such economic development, human resource development
has remained a much neglected factor in the process of economic
development. According to various Economic Surveys by Government of
Pakistan, the social expenditure from the late seventies has oscillated
between 2 and 3 percent and has stayed roughly constant since then,
regardless of the need of the rapidly growing population. Low priority
has been accorded to every other sector associated with human resource
development. The reasons for this are demonstrated by past and
present scenarios which reveal apathy, lack of political will and
commitment, and unequal and biased utilisation and distribution of
resources in favour of monetary gains for special interest groups. Such
macro-economic follies are exacerbated by negative forces which include
bad governance and ineffectual administrative and management systems.
Also, a substantial part of the GNP of the country is channelised
towards military and debt servicing. Military expenditure has been
increased regularly over the years in response to the arms race with
India and in the name of national security. Such expenditure has been
part of the national agenda spent at the cost of citizens’ security. The
arms race between India and Pakistan accounted for 93 percent of the
total military expenditure in South Asia. In these two countries,
military expenditures have been growing at an average annual rate, in
nominal terms, of as high as 12 percent.

9 Akmal Hussain, “Poverty, Growth and Governance in South Asia” in ibid, pp. 364-384.
Pakistan today is amongst those countries in the world where the disparities between the rich and the poor are ever widening. The country has witnessed soaring inflation and unprecedented poverty escalation. Pakistan ranks now 142 out of 178 countries in the Human Development Index (HDI) conducted by UNDP, 2004. This, despite the fact that in recent years, as impact of increased US assistance to Pakistan in the aftermath of 9/11, Pakistan’s economic growth rate has been about 8 percent or higher, as claimed by the Prime Minister. For fiscal year 2004-05, the growth rate stood at 8.4 percent, the world’s second highest after China as reported in News Weekly, the international magazine, in its dated 27 of March 2006 issue. Given such economic scenario, it is easy to see that poverty is ubiquitous, reaching as high as 40 percent, although various sources give divergent figures. There is now an emerging consensus amongst development thinkers and practitioners that economic growth cannot be sustained without social progress. Scholars like Akmal Hussain argue that ‘the pace at which GDP growth reduces poverty, and indeed whether it is reduced at all, depends not just on the magnitude but on the structure of economic growth’. Adverse structural features of economic growth can actually inhibit the capacity to alleviate poverty. He argues that despite higher GDP growth rates, the pace of poverty reduction can be low. Comparing of Pakistan and Indonesia, which had GDP growth rates close to each other, he notes that ‘Pakistan in three decades (1962-92) was unable to reduce the percentage of its poverty from 40 in 1962 to 22 in 1992. Whereas Indonesia was able to reduce the rate from 58 to 17 in just one decade (1972-84), India by contrast, with relatively lower GDP growth compared to Indonesia was able to bring about a decline in poverty from 53 percent to 35 percent in over two decades (1970 to 1993)’. The comparisons show that this difference is not simply due to lower GDP growth but more because of the structure of the economic growth process. This example clearly demonstrates that Pakistan has failed to provide its citizens with the fundamental features of security because of its inflated military and bureaucratic apparatuses. Hence, policies vigorously implemented in the name of development appear farcical and raises questions about the role of the government and its governing mechanisms.

Verification of such trends was provided by the Mahbub ul Haq Human Development Centre in its recent annual report on the ‘Crisis

10 Akmal Hussain, ibid.
of Governance in South Asia’, which developed a Humane Governance Index (HGI) that attempts to quantify humane governance with the use of several indicators of economic, political and civic governance. The first-ever HGI constructed for 58 industrial and developing countries, including Pakistan, shows that Pakistan ranked 52 on the basis of humane governance, 47 in terms of civic governance, 48 in terms of political governance, and 52 in terms of economic growth. Pakistan’s ranking confirms that it is in the grip of a severe governance crisis. Such a situation is the ‘ball rolling’ and collective effect of decades of misgovernance and insensitivity to human needs rather than a failure of any particular institution or a particular regime.¹¹ Reviewing the historical connotations of misgovernance in the country is, therefore, imperative to unfold the follies of centralised governance. Reminders like these should continue to be made in order to take corrective measures to salvage the nation, keeping intact the significance of human security, which is the ultimate end to the security of the country.

2.3 HISTORICAL JUNCTIONS OF CENTRALISED GOVERNANCE

Pakistan was created in 1947 as a ‘Muslim State’ and not as an ‘Islamic State’ which is a theocratic conception. Although British India was partitioned on grounds of religion, the fact remains that Islam has nearly as large a presence in India, in numbers of adherents, as in Pakistan and Bangladesh. Therefore, it will not be inappropriate to say that the partition of the Indian Sub-continent hinged on political considerations, especially ethnic differences. Religion, in the recent past, was used as an active tool, especially for political gains, but the ethnic divide did not end with the independence of the countries of South Asia. History shows that ethnic conflicts led to the creation of Bangladesh out of Pakistan. And ethnic conflicts, whether based on religious, linguistic, regional or other identities have been a constant source of divisiveness and tension in this region. The historical explanation for redrawing the national boundaries of the Indian Sub-continent was sparked by serious political concerns the Muslim League had over Congress insistence on a strong central government with Hindu dominance. The Muslim League opposed this view and perspective as a move against the Government of India Act of 1935, and a means to relegate the Muslim population to a powerless minority. This stance

paved the way for the demand of a separate state, which was considered essential for preserving the rights of the minority Muslims under the plea that Islam was in danger. Notwithstanding the fact that in the 1937 elections to the provincial assemblies was sanctioned by the Government of India Act of 1935, out of 489 Muslim seats, the Muslim League won only 104. After the adoption of the 1940 resolution, British India was demarcated to create Pakistan in 1947 on the basis of areas in which the Muslims were in majority in the North-Western and Eastern zones of India.12

Soon after independence, Pakistan, whose first government was formed by the Muslim League, faced an identity crisis. Its ‘Muslimness’, soon became an issue as a result of the contradiction and divide amongst the Muslim League’s secular leadership and its religious lobbyists. Such a divide compelled ruling groups to maintain at least a semblance of unity. This meant emphasising Pakistan’s Muslim heritage, a strategy adapted by Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan. The charismatic leadership of Pakistan emphasised the official inclusion of the term in referring to the state. This resulted in the Objective Resolution of 1949, formulated by Liaquat Ali Khan, Jinnah’s deputy and the Prime Minister. The Objective Resolution sought simultaneously to appease the population by promising that Pakistan would be a democratic state in which minority rights would be guaranteed, and one in which all Muslims would be able to build their life in accordance with the teachings and injunctions of Islam. Islam was made the state religion. Ulemas were employed as advisors to the legislators. The role of the Council of Islamic Ideology was gradually strengthened. Rather than going directly to the people for support, those in power decided to use religious ideology as a crutch on which to stand up. The ground was thus prepared for theocracy rather than democracy. Successive regimes continued to grapple with the task of Islamisation of laws. The governments functioning under the Constitutions of 1956, 1962 and 1973 made provisions in the existing laws in injunction with Islam but the real process of Islamisation of laws remained incomplete or in abeyance until 1977.

The struggle for curving out an identity and determining the ideology of the country was enmeshed with the mindset of authoritarian rulers. Its origins lay in the extraordinary powers that Jinnah was

bestowed with by the Muslim League well before independence. This
tradition of centralisation entrenched itself when Jinnah was elected
by members of the Constituent Assembly rather than through direct
election soon after independence. He assumed his responsibilities as
the Governor General instead of the Prime Minister and functioned in
the manner of British viceroy rather than the executive of a
parliamentary system of government. Meanwhile, the Muslim League
failed to evolve into a national party, and found itself grappling with
factional splits as a result of serious conflicts that arose with regards to
the founding principles of the state. The state tried its best to evoke
support from several Muslim inhabited princely states that later
became part of India after partition. Because the Muslim League had
lost the majority support of the local constituency, it was reluctant to
face the electorate with confidence. It instead colluded with the elite,
mostly senior bureaucrats, military officers and landlords who thrived
on the vestiges of the colonial structures of the British Raj. Since the
first government was formed, the power nexus ended up determining
the governing structures of the country, its rule on centralised control,
insisting on retaining authority and dominance at the state level. It left
the consolidation of a political ideology in abeyance and the two
constituent assemblies (1947-54, 1955-56) spent eight years struggling
with basic questions, such as the role of Islam, the centre and
provinces. The elitist nature of the party excluded the masses from
political discourse, and impeded the cultivation of a sense of participation
in the political process by ordinary people. The military was in the
forefront owing to the power, might and privileges it enjoyed under the
colonial structure. History shows that throughout the 1950s, two high-
ranking bureaucrats, Ghulam Mohammad and Iskander Mirza, brazenly
abused their powers as governor-generals to make or break governments.
In April 1953, Ghulam Mohammed dismissed Khawaja Nazimuddin on
the grounds of Khwaja's failure to resolve the 'difficulties facing the
country. This was the first major blow to democracy and could not
have been struck without the tacit support of General Ayub Khan, the

14 Gowher Rizvi, op.cit.
Commander in Chief (C-in-C) of the army, Ghulam Mohammad installed Mohammed Ali Bogra, who was dismissed later when he tried to limit the powers of the governor general.

While these events were taking place, there were other more formidable tasks at hand which were detrimental to institution building in the country: the early phase of construction as an independent country, including national unity and integration and homogenisation of people characterised by cultural and linguistic plurality. Geographically and economically speaking, except for the Punjab, the regions that made up the country were underdeveloped and the financial and administrative structures that the country inherited were extremely weak and inadequate for the early phase of state construction. These difficulties were enhanced by border hostilities with India soon after partition, that created an unprecedented burden on a very narrow state resource base. Economic limitations coupled with disproportionate requirements of the military, systematically channelled resources away from the provinces. The provinces were averse to parting with their already strained resources due to massive socio-economic dislocations in the wake of the partition. However, the state dominated by a Punjabi military and an entrenched federal bureaucracy continued the stripping of provincial autonomy unabashedly. Instead of resorting to diplomacy and negotiation to win the allegiance of the provinces of newly constituted Pakistan, the central government found it difficult to consolidate its own authority without undermining provincial powers and the use of coercive methods. Since then, governments have changed but the strategy has remained the same and have continued to dominate the nation's politics to date.

2.4 FLIPFLAP OF THE MILITARY ROLE

The state governance of Pakistan can largely be characterised by a militaristic and centralised approach. In the 59 years of the existence of the country, the military has led the country for at least 10 years. During different periods of the political history of Pakistan, the military formed governments either guised as democratic or purely dictatorial one. The military rulers in Pakistan civilianised their regimes and made an attempt to legitimise their presence as a response to the growing demands for the restoration of democracy.

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18 Gowher Rizvi, op.cit.
2.4.1 Military Rule in Pakistan

The following chronology provides an account of successive military takeovers and imposition of martial law:

- October 1958—June 1962: General Mohammad Ayub Khan
- July 1977—December 1985: General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq
- October 1999—November 2002: General Pervez Musharraf

The role of the military in state affairs was considered indispensable and it was assumed that the only institution that was equipped to deal with the discord that the country faced at the time of its inception was the army. Given the importance of the military in sustaining British rule, the civilian administration ensured that sufficient resources were available for the army and security-related activities. As the only “disciplined” institution inherited by Pakistan, the army became an important tool in the administration of state affairs. Tensions between India and Pakistan reinforced and legitimised the strength of the army. The perception of security threats from India was affirmed by the dispute over the accession of the state of Jammu and Kashmir to India (October 1947), and the first Indo-Pakistan war which took place in Kashmir (1947-48), and Indian military action in Janagadh (November 1947) and Hyderabad (September 1948). Coupled with the communal riots that had taken place during partition and the disagreement over the division of the assets of the British Indian army, the resentment against India became entrenched in the minds of not only the public but also the civil and military leadership. The military leadership internalised this threat perception and it soon became evident in its institutions. The Staff College of Quetta “trains officers for war” and their syllabus deals with technical matters and tactics on Indian strategy. In its curriculum, “Indian strategic objectives are presented (to the Pakistani officers) as a fixed doctrine, rooted in communal attitudes and pretensions to great power status.” The Indian threat to Pakistan was thus amplified and indoctrinated in the minds of the officer corps. Military strength was unanimously deemed essential to the protection and sustenance of the new state. As early as October 1948, Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan (1947-51) declared, “the defence of the state is our foremost

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19 Shafqat, op. cit., p. 36.
21 Ibid, p. 78.
consideration. It dominates all other governmental activities."22 Prime Minister Mohammed Ali Bogra (1953-55) declared in his defence policy that he would much rather starve the country than allow any weakening of its defence.23 Consequently, between 1948 and 1959, 60 percent of Pakistan's budget was spent on defence.24 The Government's priority was thus the security of the borders, and human development was placed of its periphery of national concerns.

The landed and feudal classes, which constituted the leadership of the Muslim League, drew mainly from the Punjab and NWFP and placed their family members, thereby securing their influence in military and establishing linkages with the military-bureaucrat elites.25 The nexus between these landlords and the small trader-merchant class generated economic policies that enhanced bureaucratic powers. Feudal domination in the government did not allow reforms to be enacted to address this concentration of power in the hands of the ruling elite.

The first coup d'état was orchestrated by General Mohammad Ayub Khan and President Iskander Mirza in October 1958, who declared martial law, using the pretext of controlling the disintegrating political process: Iskander Mirza attempted to confirm his bid for the next presidency declaring that he feared that the deterioration of the political and economic conditions might threaten the military's professional and corporate interests.26 Ayub Khan abrogated the constitution and assumed the presidency, holding on to power for almost a decade. His Law (Continuance in Force) Order allowed the country to function as closely as possible to the abrogated laws.27 This Order, however, provided meagre concessions to the legal system; the Supreme Court and high courts were allowed to function but could not challenge martial law. The highest legal authority also became vulnerable to the military hegemony. Through a declaration on October 27th 1958, the Supreme Court provided legitimacy to the military government. The bureaucracy thought it in their interest to cooperate with the military. Senior bureaucrats became Ayub's administrative advisers willingly. Commanders were dependent on civil servants to administer the state machinery and often used coercive methods to ensure that the bureaucracy would tow the line of the military.

22 Hasan-Askari Rizvi, 2000, p. 62.
26 Hasan-Askari Rizvi, 2000, p. 82.
27 Ibid, p. 84.
Under Ayub Khan, the public sphere was depoliticised significantly, public parties and movements were restricted, and public meetings were banned. He introduced the Basic Democracies (BD) as a new form of electoral politics. Under BD, constituencies were formed with 1000 people, who would elect one representative to voice their concerns to the government. Keeping a check of a higher loyalty-bound affiliates, that is to say the bureaucrats, his advisers, performed the task of devising policies to address his concerns through a process they deemed appropriate. Yet again, trust was placed in the civil bureaucracy rather than representatives from the grassroots to experiment and create reforms. The undemocratic attempt to create participatory politics from top down inevitably failed.

Admittedly, Ayub Khan’s tenure was the only episode where ‘autocratic rule coincided with modest robust economic performance between 1958-69. During Ayub’s time, on average, growth rates of around 6 percent led to significant industrial development and diversification in Pakistan. However, this growth proved unsustainable, owing to in-built inefficiencies, as well as, serious disparities between East and West Pakistan, sharpening inter-personal inequalities along with a high degree of concentration of wealth. In other words, while power was being concentrated in West Pakistan, the Bengalis in East Pakistan who constituted the majority were being effectively marginalised.

Ayub Khan surrendered power due to serious unrest in the country in 1969. The armed forces, however, continued to believe that they were the vanguards of the Pakistani state. General Yahya Khan took over on 25th March that year, declaring himself President and Chief Martial Law Administrator (CMLA), while maintaining his rank as the Commander-in-Chief. This was yet another attempt by the army to hold on to state power. In an address to the nation on March 26th 1969, Yahya Khan declared: “The armed forces could not remain idle spectators of this state of near anarchy. They have to do their duty and save the country from utter disaster.” After the takeover, other army chiefs made similar speeches on national television, declaring it their moral prerogative to intervene and save the country from utter disaster. In truth, however, the army was trying to protect the people not from an external security threat but from the people themselves.

29 Jones, op. cit., p. 269.
Following a particular pattern and tactics, Yahya Khan tried to hold elections and transfer power to elected representatives, in a move to appease agitating groups comprising labour unions and student groups who opposed Ayub’s regime. By promoting participatory politics, Yahya gave himself political space. The first general elections were conducted in December 1970 under the Legal Framework Order (LFO) promulgated by Yahya Khan. He conducted transparent elections and allowed political parties to campaign freely. In the events, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman clearly won the elections on the basis of the Six Point Agenda for regional autonomy for East Pakistan. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, the main contender from West Pakistan, refused to accept the election results. Such a stance could not have been possible without the support of the West Pakistani civil bureaucrats, military officials and landlord politicians who unequivocally opposed the Bengali majority in the parliament that could potentially erode their powers. Such designs on the preservation of political and economic power through any means undermined the democratic process. Bengali grievances were neglected and their demands for equal representation dismissed. General Yahya Khan did not allow a new parliamentary government to be formed despite the clear Bengali victory in the 1971 elections. The ultimate cessation of East Pakistan (December 1971) was a mammoth political failure of the defence establishment. It gave a boost to ethno-nationalism in what was West Pakistan and served as a catalyst for a violent revolt within East Pakistan.

Bengali nationalism was seen as a threat to Pakistani ideology as understood by the military. The Awami Leagues’ actions were viewed as a rebellion by dissidents and were dealt with as hostile elements. However, the East Pakistan debacle was considered a disgrace for the Pakistan army. It had shattered the Islamic ideology that had been considered essential to forge unity of diverse cultures. A State that had supposedly been created for the Muslims of the Sub-continent now stood divided. The Muslim brotherhood could not withstand the strains of ethnic nationalism as well as the greed of the West Pakistani leadership.

Thus, the transition from a military regime to a representative government was marked by a bloody civil war and the dismemberment of Pakistan. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto assumed the positions of CMLA and President. Martial Law was finally lifted in 1972 and replaced by an interim constitution that was approved in 1973. The period of civilian
rule under Bhutto created provisions for restraining military intervention and asserting the supremacy of civilian rule. Yet Bhutto, a popular democratic political leader, had also resorted to coercive measures to suppress political opponents in the NWFP and Balochistan through massive military operations.\(^{30}\) upholding, in the process, the legacy of authoritarian rule.

Bhutto also used Islam for political purposes when he came under pressure from religio-political parties demanding adoption of more steps towards Islamisation in lieu of support for the country's first ever democratic constitution, and from one of the major foreign aid donors, Saudi Arabia.\(^{31}\) Bhutto adopted the slogan of Islamic socialism which signified a socialist ideology with the identity of an Islamic state.\(^{32}\) Although Bhutto initiated certain reforms that stressed egalitarianism and social justice under the Islamic banner, there were contradictions and ambiguities in his policies. It was, however, apparent that the steps taken by him to implement certain Islamic laws were half-hearted and only a means to increase his popularity, although it was Bhutto who, for the first time, directly addressed the populace at their level, especially the women, and made them aware of their basic rights.

At the end of his term, however, Bhutto tried to rig the results of the 1977 election to hold on to power. This was indicative of rejecting the popular verdict of the citizenry, even if the election process was to be fair. He was eventually arrested and hanged (on charges of murder) by General Mohammed Zia-ul-Haq, who assumed the CMLA's position in 1977 in a military coup. Pakistan was back under martial law. In other words, after a brief civilian interlude, Pakistan was about to face another eleven years of military hegemony. Zia-ul-Haq injected the state with Islamic ideology and introduced several laws and reforms to mould Pakistani society in the light of Islamic principles. Promulgation of the Islamic system with the President at the centre and excluding political parties from the process was part of the strategy. Zia institutionalised the role of the army and entrenched military interest within the state by appointing military personnel to civilian jobs, assigning them to civilian positions and semi-government and autonomous corporations. In effect, the military penetrated the ranks of the civil machinery.

\(^{30}\) Gowher Rizvi, op.cit


This was typical of the attempts by the army to reform the state with the belief that they were the vanguards of the Pakistani state and ideology, equipped to civilise ignorant, civilian masses. Zia acted as if he was salvaging the lives of the Pakistanis by Islamising the constitution, the legal framework, family laws and even the organisation of the military. Religion was integrated into the syllabus of the Staff College, Quetta. Islamic conceptions and rules of war were incorporated into the teachings at the Pakistan Military Academy, where young cadets were indoctrinated with the idea that they were soldiers of Islam. Zia wanted to create a more devout and puritanical army. Religion became a factor even in considerations for senior appointments and its extensive use was a major blow to the religious minorities in the country. Islamisation process had its calibrated use among the ranks of the army. The non-commissioned officers, and the jawans, were the ones being mobilised by this rhetoric of a higher calling, whereas most of the commissioned, senior officers merely provided lip service. In the same stream, the Inter-service Intelligence (ISI) was transformed into one of the most lavishly financed institutions of the country which operated with little regard for legislative or judicial scrutiny. This lack of accountability remained even after the end of Zia's authoritarian rule.

After Zia's death, the military made a conscious decision to distance itself from the political process. Senior commanders were aware of the declining reputation of the military and deemed it sensible to step back from power. They reluctantly allowed Benazir Bhutto to form a civilian government after party-based elections were held in 1988, appointing Ghulam Ishaq Khan as President with the blessings of the Pakistan Army. Her government was soon dismissed on the 6th of August, 1991 by him. Her ouster was triggered because of her divergence from the military agenda and differing economic and foreign policy goals. The President dismissed the government by initiating the Eighth Amendment which gave the him executive power to dissolve parliament any time and call for fresh elections. Thereafter, Nawaz Sharif was sworn in as the Prime Minister on the 6th of November, 1991. In less than two years,

33 Jones, p. 252.
34 Cohen, pp. 93-98.
Nawaz Sharif's government was ousted, owing to continuing differences between him, the then Chief of the Army Staff and the President who once again used his executive power to dissolve parliament. The case was taken to the Supreme Court where Nawaz Sharif's powers as the Prime Minister were restored. However, continued differences between Nawaz Sharif, the army and the President led to marathon talks between them, resulting in the voluntary resignation of the Prime Minister on the condition that Ishaq Khan also stepped down as the President of Pakistan. New elections took place and, Benazir Bhutto became the Prime Minister once again in October 1993. However, Bhutto was not allowed to take office despite her electoral mandate. "The President, using the powers conferred to him under the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution and backed by the civil-military bureaucracy, refused to invite Bhutto to form a government and was reportedly engaged in an attempt to cobble together a coalition in order to keep the Pakistan's Peoples Party (PPP) out of power."36 She inherited the government but did not exercise power. Thus, the military maintained a tacit presence in the civilian government hoping to ensure its own survival.

Such is the might of the military in Pakistan that political parties either have to establish an alliance with the military or the military is easily able to sponsor a particular party. Such doings also reflect on the behaviour, strengths and democratic determination of the parties, their leadership and commitment to their manifestoes and weak institutional base. The struggle for power or the fear of being excluded from power along with the long drawn control over the military was so intense that the brief but so-called 'democratic governments' of Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif went to the extent of appealing to the military to help oust the elected government. On all three occasions, the President dismissed an elected government on the grounds which were arbitrary and constitutionally of dubious validity. In May 1993 Bhutto insisted on the election being conducted under military supervision; the leaders of the opposition (both Bhutto and Sharif) have not only in turn supported the President's action but also implored the military to act as the arbiter. The effect of this at best was to legitimise the role of the military, at worst to give them a veto power."37

General Pervez Musharraf became the Chief Executive Officer of the country through a bloodless coup in October 1999. Like his predecessor,

36 Gowher Rizvi, op.cit.
37 Gowher Rizvi, op.cit.
Zia, he assured a return to democracy and political and economic stability that had been ravaged at the hands of previous civilian governments. Musharraf made the promise of a representative government in October 2002 and at the same time, secured his office as President for another five years in a referendum held in May 2002. Ironically, in the light of what happened subsequently, in his address after the coup, Musharraf said, “the armed forces have no intention to stay in charge longer than is absolutely necessary to pave the way for true democracy to flourish in Pakistan.”38 An authoritarian rule was being enforced in the name of ensuring people’s rights. The military, in its typical fashion was once again in control of state affairs, under the garb of democracy and its legitimacy was acknowledged so by the Western countries, especially the USA. This time the restoration of the so-called democracy was in line with “the support for democracy movements and human rights which led to the overthrow of communism in Eastern Europe and Russia.”39 However, in the case of Pakistan it was the same military face wearing the mask of democracy without making the basic structural changes necessary to alter the system of centralised control.

2.5 DEVOLUTION AND DECENTRALISATION: WHAT HAS CHANGED?

As a response, and after being pressurised by external hegemonistic forces (mentioned above), the Musharraf government launched a programme of institutional and developmental reforms, under the ‘Devolution of power’ plan and through the promulgation of the Local Government Ordinance (LGO) 2001. Prior to 2001, local governments possessed limited authority and most functions were carried out by the provincial administration. Under the devolution plan, there were to be three main officially stated objectives: to introduce new blood into a political system considered to be the domain of historically entrenched interests: to provide positive measures for marginalised citizens—women, workers, peasants to have access to politics and to introduce a measure of stability into a turbulent political scene by creating more accountability between newly affected politicians and the local electorate.40 The argument was that local governments, appropriately empowered,

38 Jones: 270.
39 Gowher Rizvi, op.cit
staffed and resourced, would deliver better social services. It was seen to be an important element of participatory development, intended to generate a more inclusive and representative political atmosphere and designed to increase welfare through various mechanisms.

However, devolution of power does not necessarily improve the performance and accountability of local governments if the underlying political conditions, class stratification and resource distribution are not streamlined accordingly to the extent that rural and marginalised groups can access the opportunities created by decentralisation. There is growing evidence that a devolved system is being captured by the local elites who are better able to access these new resources and channel them for their own benefit, at the expense of the poor. The plan for the devolution of power is likely to meet the fate of yet the other failed national level development plans, because of the weak political awareness of the citizenry, the existing high social and economic inequality that limits the political participation of the poor and minorities, the anarchic state of law and order, lack of effective competition between political candidates and parties with vested interests and the lack of nationally representative and reliable information channels for political and civic education.

In fact, the extent of financial decentralisation is still limited and is, as before, reliant ultimately on federal funds. The federal government collects 90.7 percent of the total revenue whereas its share in total expenditure is only 67 percent.41 Additionally, as has been seen, the process of decentralisation in the country is not uniform indicating that the status quo is being maintained through controlling key decision-making channels. It is interesting to note that where certain functions have been devolved, others such as policing have been retained by the province. Even within devolved departments such as education, not all services but only certain functions have been transferred. In other words, while the process of decentralisation supposed to involve transfer of powers from the provincial to local level, there has been no decentralisation of any federal powers to either provincial or local levels.

The bid to initiate decentralisation by the Musharraf government was not unique in Pakistan. Local governments have existed since as far back as 1947. In the Punjab they took the form of village panchayats

41 Husain, 1999.
and municipal councils. But, despite official pronouncements, there were no real commitment to the process of decentralisation. On the contrary, the 1950s witnessed further centralisation of power and a centre dominated by civil and armed bureaucracy. However, after the imposition of martial law in 1958 by General Ayub Khan, which led to the disqualification of 60,000 politicians and officials under the Elective Bodies Disqualification Order (EBDO), local governments were revived as the only representative tier of the government. After a nascent period under Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto (1971-1977), local governments were revived again by General Zia-ul-Haq (1979-1985). These local bodies were elected in all four provinces during 1979 and 1980, while centralised political power at the federal and provincial levels was further consolidated through martial law. The importance of local bodies was stunted due to lack of decentralisation of any federal and provincial administrative functions or financial powers at the local level. In the early years of the Zia regime, the military had significant control over local governments because of the appointment of military officers as provincial governors, who were to head the administration of provinces. The military dictators used local governments to legitimise their authority by overruling the existing political parties and creating new and competing classes of collaborative local level politicians. The new devolution plan followed a similar pattern and was likely to meet the same fate in the larger political and authoritarian-rule context. Although, the impetus for decentralisation has come, yet again, from a military government which has an implicit agenda for legitimising its authority, one can still hope for a more effective and efficient service delivery system through decentralisation in the future.

2.6 PROVINCIAL FINANCES AND CRISIS

Pakistan’s most significant governance challenge lies in the context of relations between the federal government and the provinces. Over-centralisation of functions, planning and even the decision-making of development expenditures at the federal level has created a huge gap between planning and implementation. This is reflected in the large number of schemes in the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP)

42 Cheema, Khwaja and Qadir (forthcoming) mimeo.
43 Cited in Cheema et al.
that are regional in nature but orchestrated through federal funds. The Federal government assumes an exclusive role (e.g. population planning, electricity, curriculum development, syllabus planning, centres of excellence etc.) or a dominant role (e.g. social welfare, vocational/technical training, employment exchanges, historical sites and museums). Provincial and local governments thus find themselves merely administering federally defined and funded programmes. The most contentious issue thus has been the autonomy of the provinces and more specifically financial autonomy and coming up with a formula for sharing the federal revenue.

The inter-governmental fiscal framework of the federal and provincial governments is defined under the constitution. Revenue sharing takes place on the basis of National Finance Commission (NFC) awards announced every five years. Provinces get 80 percent of their revenue from federal transfers. The principal share is decided upon the fiscal space that the government is able to generate after meeting its own expenses, particularly in the two priority areas of defence and debt servicing. In the fiscal year 2003-2004, the total federal tax revenue receipts (both tax and non-tax) were shown as Rs. 780.3 billion. Interestingly, the expenditure under the two heads alone, defence and debt servicing, was Rs. 382.5 billion. The share of the provinces was only Rs. 192 billion out of the total tax revenue, almost half of what was spent on the above non-development heads.

The sixth NFC completed its term without announcing an award for the share of the federal divisible pool income among the provinces. The fifth NFC award (1997) decided on 37.5 percent share for the provinces, which was later raised to 40 percent by the military government. However, the provinces have demanded equal fiscal shares. The basis of allocations which have varied from province to province has been considered to be discriminatory and was rejected by the provinces other than the Punjab: Punjab desires population density to be the determining factor, whereas NWFP and Balochistan appeal to the backwardness or level of poverty factor to demand funds. Other variables considered for the award include tax collection, fiscal efforts of the province, area, development gap, inverse population density and fiscal discipline.

47 Ibid.
The heavy reliance on federal funds for recurrent and development expenditure of the provinces has created disincentives for the provinces in raising their own revenues. The centre has usurped most taxes, including taxes on goods and services. Further, taxes on international trade, income and wealth, domestic production and sales have also been assigned to the Federal government. Provincial and local governments are, therefore, left with residual fiscal sources owing only to the weak and narrow tax-base and limited revenue generation potential. "The Sales tax, which was originally perceived as a provincial tax, remains with the centre. While almost all broad-based taxes are assigned to the centre, the residual taxation authority of the provinces has also been curtailed with the extension of taxes on the provincial tax base. As compared with the share of provinces in the expenditure, which increased from 22.9 percent in 1999-2000 to 26.2 percent in 2004-5, the share in overall revenues increased only marginally from 6.8 percent in 1999-2000 to 8.2 percent in 2004-5. Consequently, the provinces have come under greater fiscal pressures—the basic cause behind the paralysis on the NFC award."48 The efforts to reach consensus on the sixth award with the proposed population-plus formula failed when Sindh's demand for considering revenue collection, as one of the factors, was rejected by the other three provinces. "The Population-Plus formula proposed 94 percent resources on the basis of population density, and 6 percent on the basis of other factors, like backwardness/poverty and area, which addressed the demands of both Balochistan and NWFP."49

The issue of gas royalty is another sore point. Balochistan raised the issue of Gas Development Surcharge (GDS) in National Finance Commission (NFC) meetings. Balochistan receives Rs. 4.1 billion per annum GDS out of the actual collection of about Rs. 15 billion per annum, while the rest goes to Sindh. The provincial government has demanded 68 percent share in the GDS, but Sindh has refused to accept this demand. Under the existing NFC award, provinces are entitled to get only 37.5 percent revenues out of the divisible pool in accordance with their respective shares, which gives 5.11 percent to Balochistan.50

On January 17th, 2006, General Pervez Musharraf announced a new resource allocation formula in an attempt to make it more attractive for the provinces, considering the failure to announce the last

50 Ibid.
NFC award. He offered 45.3 percent for vertical distribution of the federal divisible pool to the provinces. General Musharraf decided to offer 50 percent resources to the provinces in a five-year period. However, for horizontal distribution the same old formula was applied and the demands by the provinces for a multi-factor forum were rejected because of disagreement between the provinces. The announcement of the distribution by a non-representative government and a military general created doubts in the minds of the smaller provinces, with a deep suspicion that the decision was biased towards the Punjab.

As long as the federation maintains centralised control of all resources, grievances of the smaller provinces will persist. Increased provincial autonomy and decentralisation of responsibilities from the federal to provincial governments will create more incentives and efficiency at the provincial level. It is a phenomenon of good governance that “in most of the federal-provincial concurrent list areas, the federal government should remain concerned with providing strategic direction, setting national minimum standards and providing financing to the provinces conditional on their compliance with these standards.” While the provinces can be more responsive to their local needs if they enjoy more fiscal autonomy, what seems to be needed is a fair assignment of tax and the responsibility of raising most of their own revenues.

2.6.1 Balochistan Crisis

Pakistan’s largest province, Balochistan covers about 40 percent of its land area. It is also the most sparsely populated and impoverished of the four provinces. Only 36 percent of the population is literate as compared to the national average of 47 percent. The neglect of the province is evident from the poorly developed social and physical infrastructure, despite the fact that the province possesses almost 20 percent of the country’s mineral and energy resources. The total development outlay for the province for 2004-05 was a mere Rs. 12.8 billion.

Balochistan is marked by a historically evolved tribal structure of social organisation. Each of the major 17 tribal groups is headed by a Sardar (tribal chief). Some of the prominent tribes in the province are

53 *Economic Survey of Pakistan 2004-05*.
54 Ibid.
Bugti, Mengal, Marri, Mazari, Zehri, Raisani, Gichki, Achakzai and Mandokhel. This *sardari* or tribal system in the province has militated against central authority and resisted the erosion of provincial autonomy.

Long standing resentments caused armed conflict in 1948, 1958 and 1973. During the deliberations for the partition of India, Balochistan opted to be an independent state. The matter was not resolved by the British, and the day after Pakistan emerged on the map, the Khan of Kalat declared the independence of Balochistan, rejecting the national boundary of Pakistan. On 1 April 1948, the Pakistan army moved into Kalat, forced the Khan to sign an instrument of accession and ended the 255 days of independence of the Kalat confederacy. In 1973, Bhutto employed a military operation to crush the opposition against his dismissal of the elected Baloch government of Ataullah Mengal. The violent conflict (1973-1974) caused more than five thousand deaths among the militants and over three thousand fatalities in the Pakistan army. The opportunity for a political resolution of the centre-province issue was squandered. Many *sardars* went into exile and till today resentment against the central government remains.

The recent crisis in Balochistan was sparked by the rape of a Baloch lady doctor. Other developments that have once infuriated tribal leaders are the development of the Gawadar port, Marani Dam, Gadani Shipbreaking Yard, Hub Industrial Estate, the Sui gas supplies and the Saindak copper mines. A total development outlay of Rs. 130 billion has been announced by the federal government. The irony of all these plans for a Baloch is that they will not make much of a difference to the vast majority in the province. Instead this one was viewed as attempts to usurp the resources of the provinces to feed an already robust centre. The plan to develop military cantonments in three more districts has also been vehemently opposed by the three main tribal leaders, Nawab Akbar Bugti, Nawab Khair Bukhsh Marri and Naseer Mengal. They see such a plan as a move to increase military control of the province.

Rocket attacks on Sui gas installations and key public assets have created havoc in the entire province. Hundreds of innocent civilians, women and children have suffered, infrastructure destroyed and Pakistani soldiers and tribal militants have perished in the conflict following the resurgence of Baloch nationalism in early 2005. According to

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The Nation, the leading Pakistani English daily, an estimated 1,568 “terrorist” attacks have occurred through April 3, 2005. Since General Musharraf’s visit to Kohlu district in Balochistan (14 December 2005) and the ‘coincidental’ rocket attacks in the area, a hundred people have died, accelerating the two-year conflict. The government has promised to crackdown on ‘militants’ and promises not to be deterred by the ‘saboteurs’. A major military offensive has been launched to establish the “writ of the state” and eliminate ‘anti-development’ elements in the province. The presence of 15,000 troops, helicopter gunships, heavy artillery and armoured vehicles in the province are reminiscent of the military operation of 1973, when political negotiation was rejected in favour of forceful oppression. The exact number of civilian casualties in the helicopter raids carried out on suspected tribal militant camps is not known. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan has detailed widespread violations by the security forces, including extra-judicial killings—a report government officials claim to be one-sided. The government maintained that the Balochistan crisis was a construction of only three sardars. It claimed that the rest of the sardars were supportive of the government and its initiatives. Thus, the operation confined to two districts was geared towards ‘militants’ or ‘tribal miscreants’. Sardar Akhter Mengal, former Chief Minister of Balochistan, and chief of the Balochistan National Party (BNP) rejected the government’s stance saying that:

The Balochistan issue involves not just three sardars but the six million people of this province. They want rights over their resources and equal rights in the country. The Baloch nation is struggling for its survival and culture.

The three main tribal leaders resisted the state’s military offensive with their thousands strong home-grown armies. Nawab Akbar Bugti contended, “The military government has imposed military rule and this has forced the Baloch to defend their land and resources against the might of the armed forces of Pakistan assembled in our area.”

Calls for provincial autonomy, demand for increased representation in civil and military institutions and insistence on the right to exploit their own natural and mineral resources have escalated. Protest rallies

02/05/2006: 4 attacks on major gas pipelines by tribal militants and 71 innocent civilians killed in explosions, fighting between militants and security forces, in one month.

12/24/2005: Tribal leaders claim that at least 100 people killed in “military operation” being conducted against “unarmed” people in Kohlu, Balochistan.

Grare (2006), op. cit.


against the military operations have been held, supported by calls for a
demilitarisation of the province and political negotiations. The
confrontation between the tribal militants and the state security forces
has not yielded an amicable results. If the hostilities continue unabated, it
will only cause more devastation and undermine the development of
the province, which is clearly in nobody’s interest. The Balochistan
crisis presents an opportunity to bring all stakeholders from the province
to the negotiating table to present and discuss their grievances. A process
of reconciliation and confidence building is essential to offset separatist
tendencies, which may be a reaction to years of constant neglect and
alienation and/or the imposition of a politically motivated agenda.

At the macro level, the issue has primarily been that of provincial
autonomy and centre-province relations that have always worked against
the latter. The use of force against one’s own people if they dare to speak
out against the establishment is characteristic of an authoritarian/
military regime. The centre has worked against the people to preserve
its own power even in the face of hostilities and fierce violence, employing
its army to battle against its own people. In a bid to establish “the writ
of the state” the subjects of the state have been subject to torture and
humiliation. Even legitimate calls for basic rights by the provinces,
such as Balochistan, can be painted in secessionist colours to justify
suppression by force. It is unfortunate that Pakistan’s governance has
always been dominated by the military which has never allowed
democratic policies or interventions to flourish. Resorting to force and
violence has alienated not only the Balochis, but Sindhis, Mohajirs and
the Pathans, fuelling ethno-nationalism.

2.6.2 Mohajir Movement
The state has had to contend with threats of disension also from the
‘Mohajirs’ of urban Sindh. ‘Mohajir’ means a refugee, and in this
case refers to those Muslims who fled India at the time of partition
and came to settle primarily in the Sindhi urban centres of Karachi,
Hyderabad and Sukker. Historically, the Mohajir community always
called for a Pakistani nationalism as opposed to regional or ethnic
nationalism. They did not fit into any of the traditional power
structures of Pakistan. They did not support the idea of a race-based
identity. This could be because they had migrated from their own ethnic
regions in Northern India, Bihar, Gujarat and other areas, hoping to
integrate in a newly constituted Pakistan. They were more educated
than the locals and had been members of the Muslim League and of the founding fathers among the country. Identity demarcations and political organisation along ethnic lines would have left them fractious. The reasons for the rise of Mohajir nationalism are debatable. Mohajir community believes that various moves by the state and the indigenous Sindhi population left them marginalised and with no choice but to mobilise their community for attainment of their rights.

In the December 1964 presidential elections, the Mohajirs opposed Ayub Khan and were wary of the election results. They were also angry with Ayub Khan for moving the federal capital from Karachi to Islamabad and anticipated further moves to erode their power. The son of Ayub Khan launched a series of attacks on the Mohajir communities because of their opposition to the Ayub regime. The Mohajir-Pathan (Ayub Khan was pathan) clashes in late 1964 and early 1965 "were the first ethnic riots in Karachi and determined the future course of ethnic politics in urban Sindh." The 1972 language bill passed by the Sindh assembly declared Sindhi to be the official language together with Urdu. The Mohajirs, an Urdu speaking majority, were threatened by the language bill because it would make it more difficult for them to compete with indigenous Sindhis for employment and other opportunities. Sindhi nationalism was gaining momentum at the same time, with the patronage of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP). Bhutto's introduction of an urban-rural quota system in Sindh aroused Mohajir's fears about losing their jobs and socio-economic status. Sindhis started to take a significant number of the jobs in the lower and middle levels of the provincial bureaucracy. This period planted the seeds of discord between Mohajirs and Sindhis. The political desires of the Mohajir community had been relatively dormant for the most part of Pakistan's history until the communal riots began in April 1985. Mohajirs and Pathans clashed violently again due to the alleged mistreatment of the Mohajirs at the hands of Pathan transporters. They had also come to view the Pathan-Punjabi nexus in urban Sindh as detrimental to their interests. Feelings of alienation and the need for a separate identity sparked the idea of a "Mohajir nationalism", culminating in the formation of the Mohajir Qaumi (National)

62 Ibid.
63 Baxter (2002), op.cit.
Movement (MQM) in 1984 under the leadership of Altaf Hussain. Since then, the MQM has clashed with all major ethnic groups settled in urban Sindh, as well as, the state’s security forces. Hussain has complained: “if you were a Sindhi you got everything. If you weren’t, you got nothing.”

Army and later paramilitary troops and police were employed to deal with the war-like situation in Karachi and Hyderabad. Attacks against security forces and state installations became common, while the state even resorted to extra-judicial killings of MQM activists and leaders. Ethnic violence reached its peak in 1994-1996 claiming over 5000 lives.

“The grievances of the dominant Mohajir community include discrimination in employment and admission to educational institutions and persecution by the provincial government heavily composed of native Sindhis and by the Punjabi dominated federal bureaucracy and army.”

Also, Karachi had begun to outgrow itself. In 1947, there were 400,000 residents in the city but by the late eighties that number had reached 6 million. The battle for Karachi’s scarce resources was being fought out between the Pakhtoons, Punjabis and the Mohajirs. The majority lived in shanty towns with inadequate water and sanitation facilities. The city infrastructure was tottering under the population boom. In this context, a political alliance favouring provincial ethnicities at the expense of the Mohajir community was a crushing blow to Mohajir sentiments. A community that considered its sacrifices and contribution decisive in the independence of their country felt alienated. Though calls for a separate province or state for the Mohajirs were never pursued actively, the recognition of Mohajirs as a fifth identity was demanded. It is unfortunate that none of the grievances or demands of the Mohajirs as represented by the MQM have even been met.

### 2.6.3 Sindhi Regionalism

Sindhi regionalism was fuelled mainly by the rise of the Mohajir community that came to dominate commercial and industrial life in Karachi. Before partition, trade and businesses were dominated by Hindus, who then migrated to India leaving a vacuum to be filled by migrants to Pakistan. Because these situation and because Mohajirs

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66 Ahmar (1996), op.cit.
67 Jones (2002), op.cit.
were more educated they assumed positions of importance in not just business and trade but the bureaucracy. Successive attempts to make Urdu the national language of Pakistan aggravated the sentiments of Sindhi regionalism and demands for a 'Sindhu Desh' (Sindhi homeland). The integration of the four provinces into One Unit (1955-1970), with Lahore as the capital also added to Sindhi grievances. The measure was intended to balance power between East and West Pakistan and quell nationalist movements in the provinces. However, objections to the One Unit Plan tended to do the opposite. Sindh was further isolated when the federal capital was shifted to Islamabad. Sindhi grievances are similar to those of the Balochis in that they have not had a proportionate share of the successes and development working place in their province. Despite the rapid growth of Karachi, its strategic importance and its significance as the hub of commercial activity, the benefits of this growth have not trickled down to the rural Sindhi masses. Rural Sindh remains entrenched in a semi-feudal system where landlords dominate hapless peasants. The social patterns that prevailed in Sindh for centuries have largely remained.

Bhutto sympathised with Sindhi grievances and promised to rectify the injustices of the past. He introduced land reforms to weaken the power of the landed elite in Sindh. He introduced a rural-urban quota system (seen as detrimental to Mohajir interests) to increase participation of Sindhis in government and educational institutions. The 1972 language bill, vehemently opposed by the Mohajirs, was another attempt at restoring Sindhi ethnic identity. Sindhi regionalism was mobilised and it gained a focal point under Bhutto. However, with Bhutto's overthrow and eventual death, Sindhis felt left out and increasingly became hostile to the Zia regime. The Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD) was launched in rural Sindh and sparked disturbances in 1983. 'Sindhi separatists called for increased provincial autonomy, reduced disparities in economic development, claimed under representation in the military, bureaucratic, entrepreneurial and political elites of the state and charged that Sindhis were treated as second class citizens, even in their own province.68 Sindhis placed their confidence in Benazir Bhutto after Zia's assassination, assuaging their fears of marginalisation by the centre in the conviction that Benazir would be more accommodating. Since then the PPP has come to represent Sindhi interests.

68 Baxter (2002), op.cit.
2.6.4 North West Frontier Province (NWFP) Pakhtunistan movement

Calls for an independent 'Pakhtunistan' predate independence. After partition, development in the province was slow and uneven. Grievances engendered by the status of a minority province, such as those shared in Balochistan, of acute and widespread poverty, loss of socio-economic status and the erosion of cultural identity due to the designs of the central government gave momentum to the movement. In 1967, although the NWFP had 17.7 percent of West Pakistan’s population it had only 7 percent share in fixed assets and 6 percent in production of manufacturing industries. In the 1950s, the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) became a hotbed of political unrest and violence. The then government dealt with such situations through military operations, as well as, negotiations between the government and tribal leaders of the Northwest.

Concentrated and favourable economic activity in the south, especially Karachi, prompted large-scale migrations in search of better opportunities for investment and employment. By the early 1970s, the NWFP had become better integrated into the state structure and the movement for Pakhtunistan lost potency. This may be because the Pukhtoons had been recruited in large numbers in the colonial army and they rose in the ranks rapidly in a militarised state structure. Access to power in a military state was opportune for Pakhtun youth, who also made their way up the civil bureaucracy. “Unlike Sindh and Balochistan, where there is strong resentment that their land has been taken away by Mohajir and Punjabi settlers and their resources are in the control and use of the central government and Punjab, the NWFP’s land and resources are firmly in local hands. Indeed, many Pukhtoon civil and military personnel share the spoils with Punjabis and Mohajirs in Sindh.”

In recent past, the NWFP government was dominated by the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) and the Awami National Party (ANP). ANP is the traditional nationalist party of NWFP. Today, its largest support base lies in the regions with the utmost number of local investors, civil servants and army personnel. “For these groups nationalism means the protection of their privileges which emanate from the private and public sectors of Pakistan.”

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70 Khan (2005), Ibid.

71 Ibid.
2.6.5 The Punjab

The Punjab is the most stable province and the main suspect in the battle of ethnicities fought in Pakistan. The province of Punjab is blessed with flowing rivers, fertile land and a flourishing agricultural and industrial economy. The Punjabis comprise over 50 percent of the population of the country and thus constitute the largest ethnic group. Traditionally, The Punjabis have had high representation in the military (almost 80 percent) and bureaucracy. It is estimated that 65 percent of officers and 70 percent of the other ranks are Punjabis. The development outlay for the fiscal year 2005-2006 for Punjab was Rs. 43.4 billion, more than three times that of Balochistan.

The Seraiki people, an ethnic group from Punjab, has claimed an identity separate from those of the Punjabis. The Seraiki movement, concentrated in southern Punjab, was sparked by the perceived Punjabi domination in the government. There are grievances against the socio-economic neglect of the region. Despite its rich fertile lands and a productive economy, resources, it is claimed, were not invested back and the region lagged behind other parts of Punjab. Beginning in the 1960s, the movement took on nationalist colours in the 1970s, with proposed maps of 'Seraikistan' being circulated, including most of southern Punjab and parts of NWFP. Many Punjabis do not consider Seraiki culture distinct from Punjabi and dismiss the language as nothing more than a dialect of Punjabi. The main demands of the Seraiki people include their recognition as a distinct ethnic group, circulation of official documents in Seraiki, more Seraiki language programmes on the radio and television, increased employment quotas and the formation of a Seraiki regiment in the army. Today, calls for the division of Punjab are even supported by the MQM, Sindhi nationalists, as well as, the Baloch. The party claims that the division will lead to a more equitable distribution of resources and curb the power enjoyed by Punjab. There is a sense of injustice that prevails among the non-Punjabis that they have gotten a raw deal.

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72 Jones (2002), op.cit.
74 Ibid.
75 Ibid.
2.7 CONCLUSION

The political history of Pakistan shows that the country has continued to remain in the grip of centralised and authoritarian forms of governance since its early independence days. Such governments invalidate the reasons which justified the creation of a new nation-state: the serious political concern of the then Muslim League which opposed the idea of a nation with Hindu dominance. Although independence was gained, the rulers retained and passed on the British legacy of domination and control through injustice. Such problems of governance are apparent in the political systems and the constitutional practices of army rule, the actors of the bureaucracy and the feudal lords whose ultimate objective seems to be only grasp political space, use state resources for vested interests and perpetuate their hegemonic instincts. For this reason alone, they favour a strong executive as against a strong legislature, and a strong central government but weak provincial administrations. The Government is seen as more an administrative process rather than a political one. The dominant bureaucratic-military elite treats political parties with unconcealed disdain and suspicion, and as a result the latter's political power and influence is quite limited. As a result of the strained relationships between the two, political parties and elected politicians sitting in parliament had little to do, and political parties have little power. Over the years, political parties were suppressed and progressively debilitated.

In the recent attempts at decentralisation and devolution of power under the guise of a democratic setup by President Musharraf, the qualitative difference between democratic and authoritarian rule has blurred ever more. Although new leaders have come to power through so-called popular mobilisation and the electoral process, the leadership was drawn from a narrow ‘ruling’ elite, although their interests and outlook are not substantially different from those whom they have replaced. Both groups have a stake in preserving the social and economic status quo. Nor has the ability of the outgoing elites to intervene in the democratic process to protect their interests diminished. In fact, there is evidence to suggest that democratic regimes have entered into agreements or understandings which define and pretext the interest of that group. 77

Competition and participation, two essential ingredients of democracy, are evident at the state level, only tenuously. Important

77 Gowher Rizvi, op.cit.
democratic structural issues like land reforms, establishment of accountability and institutionalisation of a democratic order in accordance with constitutional provisions, the empowerment of the people and the creation of a plural civil society and upholding reform from below are ideas that have remained unfulfilled. More importantly, the influence of the elite coupled with mass political illiteracy, or for that matter, any literacy of cognition, and the magnitude of poverty has effectively underpinned and gradually eroded civil society's sensitivities to popular movements. In contrast, personal loyalties and personal enhancement have taken roots to ensure personal and family security. Such acts have promoted large scale corruption and nepotism, exercised openly and after exacerbated institutions of justice, including the police and the judiciary. Thus, all state institutions have become excessively politicised and are seen to bow down to have been co-opted by an officialdom that has evolved as a process and a consequence of undemocratic practices. Disenfranchisement, together with the fear of oppressive regimes has alienated academics, students, labourers and the working class, often pressuring then to submit to the whims of the government.

Officially, there are indeed gestures of freedom of press, participation of civil society organisations, electoral process of governance, mobilisation of support in rural areas through alliance with the dominant groups but what is notable is that the pattern of governance is essentially the same. The following examples provide sufficient proof of the overwhelming presence of the military at all levels and of problems of governance:

- The military occupies most key decision-making positions in the public offices, including the position of the vice-chancellor of a university. As such, decision-making at the state-level is entirely the prerogative of the military.

- A dual judicial system is in practice, confusing people and their confidence in the system of justice that prevails because of its non-democratic nature.

- The class composition of the leadership, including the nexus between the powerful elite and the military in successive regimes.

- A huge defence budget that has inflated progressively, as a response to perceived external threats, especially from India. Such anti-people budgeting are not discussed in the parliament. On the other hand, lop-sided development has left a large
segment of the population vulnerable to disease, impoverishment, illiteracy and civil strife.

- The inability of the non-democratic regimes to mitigate social and economic problems and rampant corruption has alienated the masses from their leaders and has created popular revulsion against governance.

- Weak federal-provincial relations and continuation of centralisation of power and control has created glaring socio-economic disparities amidst the different regions of the country. These disparities have fuelled provincial animosity and disruption in civil society. Expressions of ethnic sentiments and demands are viewed by the powers that are as a threat to the Pakistani state. Any uprising at the provincial level is dealt with coercion and violence rather than political negotiations and mutual compliance. Greater provincial autonomy and a genuine attempt at redressal of the grievances of smaller provinces, as opposed to Punjabi dominance, is essential through a consultative process.

These and all the other mentioned acts can be removed only if a democratically-based rule of law, with a strong ideological base, prevails. What is needed is government that follows the contours of egalitarianism, secularism, justice and freedom. Such a government is prerequisite of modern democracy with its tentacles in capitalism. The status quo can be stirred nor only through street power, and public criticism, so that the marginalised will raise their voice for basic rights which each citizen has a right to. Such a scenario can be imagined only through knowledge and greater understanding of the dynamics of citizenship rights and the role of governance. Certainly, people need to be actively involved in politics which should not merely be limited to political parties or confined to the whims of authoritarian regimes.